

# PROMISE

Studies in Judges – Malachi



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Awana Product #79784

Dear parents,

“The kids who make the most consistent progress through the Awana® program are those who have support and help at home.”

That’s the opening statement in the booklet *Awana Starts at Home*, a training guide for using Awana effectively as a parent. If you haven’t seen that booklet, we urge you to get a copy at [awana.org](http://awana.org).

The book you hold in your hand is also an important component. It was written with three goals in mind:

1. To disciple you as a parent in your own spiritual growth journey
2. To help you disciple your children as they begin their journey
3. To make you aware of the topics your child is studying and — more importantly — to allow you to model the pace your child should be on in his or her Awana handbook

This book is the second of three that parallel the Sparks® handbooks from Awana Clubs™. The sections do not match the sections in your child’s handbook one-for-one, but when you complete this book you will have memorized all the verses your child has learned and studied all the Bible biographies your child has studied.

That’s just the beginning! Though there is only room for a few biographies in the Sparks handbooks, in this book you’ll study all the major Bible characters from the Judges to Malachi. Sections fall into one of four categories:

- **Bible Survey:** Most sections take a particular, limited topic — a person or event — and delve into it, with Bible reading and Bible study questions.
- **The Big Picture:** Once in a while, we’ll come across a topic — the temple, Babylon, the prophets — that demands that we step back and look at what the entire Bible has to say about it.
- **In the New Testament:** God’s revelation to man unfolded over time. The Old Testament alone often doesn’t give us His final word. When we come across a topic where the Old Testament doesn’t fill in all the details — the Davidic covenant, prophecy — we’ll expand our study a bit and find out more about the subject.
- **Keeping Up With the Kids:** In these sections, we’ll take a break from our study of the Old Testament, learn the verses your kids have been learning, and find some practical tools for discipling your children.

We’ve used the New International Version® for the Scripture, including the memory verses. If you would prefer to memorize in another version to align with your child’s handbook or your own preference, feel free to do so. Memory cards in KJV and NKJV™ are provided in the back of the book.

At the end of each section, you’ll find a list of exactly what you have to do to complete that section. You’ll also find a signoff space so you can give yourself some accountability. You can choose your partner — it can be a friend, a spiritual mentor or your spouse. Or consider reciting your verses and showing your work to your child to give both of you a sense of shared progress as you each work through your books.

We believe you will find this book intriguing and challenging, and we trust that your achievement will help you grow spiritually and make you a more effective parent.

Enjoy!

LESSON 1: The Big Picture

## THE STORY SO FAR

Read Deuteronomy 28:1-68.

Here’s a quick look at a few different forms of government:

**Socialism** — You have two cows. The government takes one and gives it to your neighbor so that neither of you have enough milk.

**Communism** — You have two cows. The government takes them both and provides you with a little milk.

**Fascism** — You have two cows. The government takes them and sells you milk.

**Monarchy** — The king has a huge herd of cows. You get to take care of them for him.

**Capitalism** — You have two cows. You sell one and buy a bull.

**Theocracy** — You have two cows. They were provided for you by God who also sees to it that you have everything else you need.



The first Awana at Home® parent handbook, *Beginnings: Studies in Genesis — Joshua*, looked at the major events and characters in the first portion of the Old Testament. The book addressed two dominant themes — the sinfulness of humanity and the patience and provision of God.

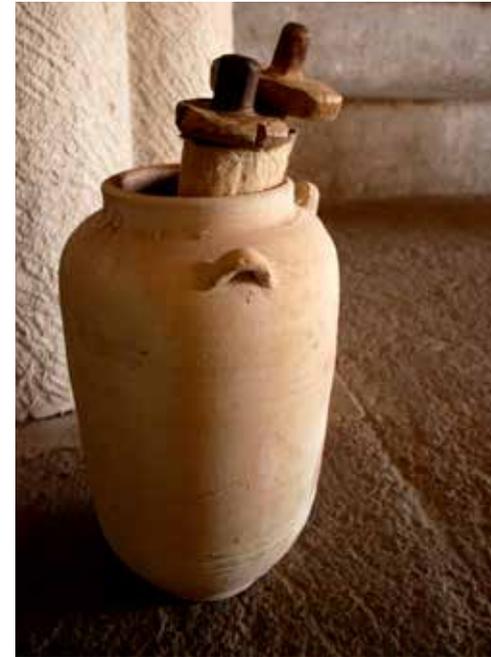
Adam and Eve were placed in a perfect world with no obligations except to worship and obey God. There was only one small, very specific thing they could possibly do to sin — and they sinned.

From that point forward, humanity — with very few exceptions — grabbed every opportunity to do wrong. God was as patient then as He is now. But when things got completely out of hand, He sent His judgment — the flood and the scattering of nations after the Tower of Babel.

None of this surprised God. He knew exactly what would happen. He had a plan to redeem humanity through the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ. Part of that plan involved calling out a particular group of people, fathered by Abraham. The Redeemer would come from this nation, and God provided for and protected this group of people in a supernatural way.

- When Abraham and his wife Sarah were old and had no children, God miraculously provided a son.
- When famine forced Jacob and his family to beg for food, God arranged for Joseph to be in a position to help.
- When the Israelites were slaves in Egypt, God miraculously provided an escape route across the Red Sea and wiped out the pursuing army.
- When the people were hungry and thirsty during their long wandering in the wilderness, God provided food and water.
- When God's nation finally arrived at the land He had promised them and were surrounded by stronger nations, God miraculously enabled them to win their battles and take the land.

And that's where our study left off at the end of *Beginnings*. Joshua, the great leader of Israel had died. The people were strong in the land that God gave them. He promised that He would continue to bless them. They had nothing to fear.



God also told the people of Israel exactly what would happen if they did obey. Read Deuteronomy 28:1-15 and write down at least three advantages for Israel if they obeyed God.

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The people also knew what would happen if they chose not to obey God. Read Deuteronomy 28:16-68 and write down at least three consequences of not obeying.

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The government God intended for Israel was a theocracy. There was to be no separation between "church" and state. God would be in complete authority. An obedient priesthood was established to provide communication between God and the people and to carry out ceremonial obligations. The people were expected to trust in and obey God.

The people knew exactly what was expected of them. Through Moses, God had given Israel over 600 laws to rule their lives. He knew they wouldn't keep them all — they were human, remember. But He did expect them to make keeping the law their goal and to observe the proper sacrifices and cleansings when they didn't. The purpose of the law was to show them (and us) that humans can't be perfectly obedient and that we need a Savior. Reread Lesson 37 in *Beginnings* for a reminder if needed.

### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Read Deuteronomy 28:1-68.
2. Write down three advantages and three consequences for Israel.

### SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# LOOK AT THIS!

In and around Chicago, softball is often played with a very soft, 16-inch (41 cm) ball and without mitts. I played first base on my church team. One Tuesday, it rained during our game — not enough for us to quit playing, but enough that we and all our equipment got drenched.

On Thursday, when we had our next game, we discovered that every ball we had was waterlogged. Sixteen-inch softballs are heavy when they're dry. When they're wet, catching one is like grabbing a large flying fish.

During pregame warm-ups, our coach was hitting ground balls to the infielders. They would then toss them to me at first base. Somebody wandered by and said something to me, and I turned my head

to respond. Our shortstop fielded a wet, heavy ball and threw it to me. When he saw I wasn't looking, he called my name. I turned just in time to get smacked right in the face with the full force of his throw.

My focus was in the wrong place. I should have been looking toward the field.

Looking is important in our physical lives, but it's also important in our spiritual lives. The key verse of Sparks is John 3:16. That verse is a continuation of a thought that begins back in verse 14. (Take a moment to look up and read John 3:14.)

When the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness, they accused God of leading them out of Egypt to die. God's judgment was to send poisonous snakes into their camp. Many people died. But God is love, so He also sent a way of escape. He had Moses put a bronze snake on a pole and set it up (Numbers 21:8-9). Anyone who had been bitten and looked at the snake would live. That bronze snake was a picture of Christ. We are dead in our sins, but when we look to Christ for salvation, we are saved. Why? Because God so loves the world.

Everything depends on where we look.

Consider Eve in the garden of Eden. God created a world of good things for Adam and her to eat. But what did Eve look at? *When the woman **saw** that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it (Genesis 3:6a).* Eve looked in the wrong direction.

In Isaiah's record of God's great plea to Israel to change its focus, he writes: "**Turn** [look] to Me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other" (Isaiah 45:22).

John the Baptist knew where to focus his attention. When he saw Jesus Christ approaching the place where he was ministering, he said: "**Look**, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29b).

The eyewitnesses to Christ's ministry looked and saw that this man, Jesus, was saying and doing things that could only be done by the Son of God. That's what the "S is for Savior" verse is talking about: *And we have **seen** and testify that the Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world (1 John 4:14).*

Our looking doesn't stop with our salvation either. *Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us **fix our eyes** on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:1-2a).*

We're to focus our eyes on Christ because He is our hope in a world filled with false attractions that look good but aren't satisfying. That's

## WINGRUNNER® RANK, PART 1

John 3:16

*For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

### S is for Savior.

1 John 4:14

*And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world.*

### P is for Power.

Psalms 147:5

*Great is our Lord and mighty in power; His understanding has no limit.*

because ... *our citizenship is in heaven. And we **eagerly await** [literally "look for"] a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables Him to bring everything under His control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like His glorious body (Philippians 3:20-21).*

From beginning to end, it's all about our focus. Hopefully, this lesson will give you some background to help you teach your children where they should look.

## TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Memorize and recite the three verses.**

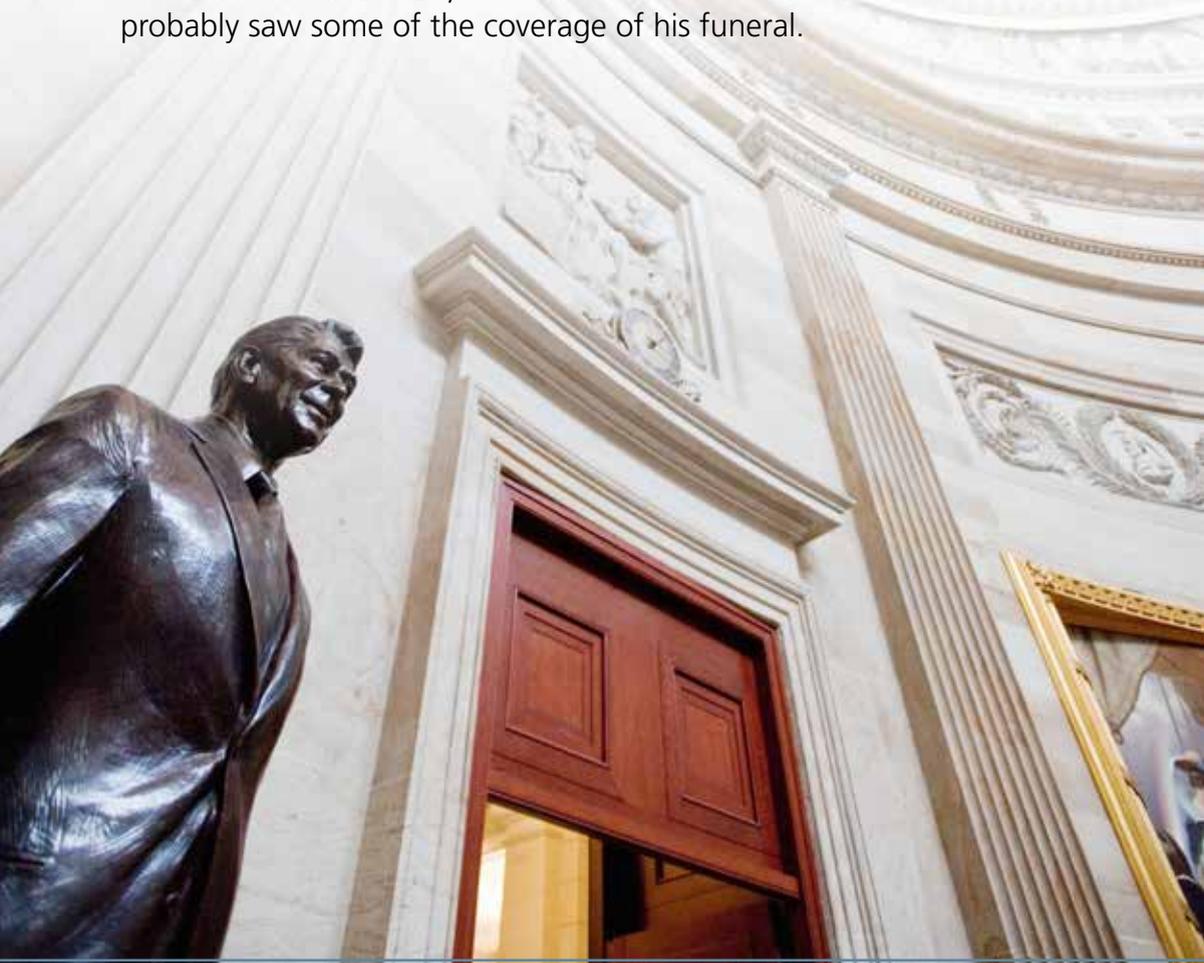
## SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# WHY THE VERSES IN YOUR CHILD'S HANDBOOK ARE IN YOUR CHILD'S HANDBOOK

If your neighbor told you that Ronald Reagan never really existed, that he was just a mythical figure and never president, you'd know he was crazy. You might be old enough yourself to remember Reagan. Maybe you saw him giving a campaign speech in your city or watched him give a press conference on TV. Or perhaps you've seen *Bedtime for Bonzo*, a movie he starred in back in 1951. You probably saw some of the coverage of his funeral.



Even if you aren't old enough to remember Reagan, you certainly know people who are. Your parents, relatives and coworkers can give you ample testimony that Ronald Reagan lived. And if that isn't enough, a quick search of the Internet will bring up hours of video footage.

Your neighbor is either insane or a liar.

Paul used a similar thought process in his first letter to the church in Corinth. Two verses from that letter are memory verses in your Sparkie's handbook. Paul's argument (in 1 Corinthians 15) went something like this:

- He reminded the Christians in the church that he'd been preaching the gospel to them (verse 1).
- He reinforced the fact that it is by this gospel, and only by this gospel, that they could be saved (verse 2).
- He stressed the importance of understanding exactly what the gospel is (verse 3).
- The gospel is:
  1. Christ died for their sins.
  2. He was buried.
  3. He rose again on the third day.
- This fact can be seen in two ways.
  1. Eyewitnesses:
    - Christ appeared to Peter.
    - He then appeared to all the apostles.
    - He then was seen by more than 500 people at once, and most of those people were still alive to testify to the fact.

## WINGRUNNER RANK, PART 2

### A is for According to the Scriptures.

1 Corinthians 15:3

*For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.*

### R is for Raised.

1 Corinthians 15:4

*That He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.*

### K is for Keep.

James 2:10

*For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.*

### S is for Saved.

Acts 16:31

*They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved — you and your household."*

- He appeared to James.
- He appeared again to all the apostles.
- He appeared to Paul himself.
- 2. Scripture, which is the Word of God (and therefore, God Himself), testifies that all these things happened.
- So, since it is obvious that Christ really did rise from the dead, how could some of them claim otherwise? (verse 12).



LESSON 4: The Big Picture

# JUDGES

Read Judges 2:8-23.

Suppose you had two neighbors, one who lived in the house just up the street from yours and one who lived in the house just down the street from yours.

And suppose that the neighbor who lived up the street was a taker. Every time you talked with the woman, she asked you for something:

- “My husband just bought a side of beef and is itching to get the grill going. Would you guys like to come over for dinner tonight?”
- “I’ve got this coupon for 50 percent off any purchase at the mall this weekend, but we’re going out of town. Would you like it?”
- “My son needs our car so he can get to his football game on Saturday. Can I borrow yours because I need to go clothes shopping?”
- “We’re having a cake sale at work. The money’s all going to charity. But I can’t bake to save my life. Would you make that lemon cake that you brought to the block party last year? It was so good.”
- “You know, our cabin on the lake sits empty when we’re not using it. Do you and your family want to spend a week there this summer?”
- “Do you have any good DVDs? I want to watch something, but there’s nothing good on TV.”

Suppose that the neighbor who lived down the street was a giver. Every time you talked to her, she offered you something:

Now suppose you walked out your door and saw both your neighbors standing in their yards. It’s very likely that either of them would strike up a conversation. Which way do you suppose you would most likely head — up the street or down?

The answer is obvious, isn’t it?



- If He didn’t rise from the dead, He couldn’t raise any of them.
- If Christ couldn’t raise them, then everything Paul told them and everything they believed was pointless (verse 17).
- Not only that, but if Christ didn’t rise from the dead, they were liars.
- And, if that’s not enough, if Christ didn’t rise from the dead, they weren’t saved and faced ultimate separation from God.
- To sum up, if the gospel isn’t true, they were the most pitiful of all people.
- But they knew it was true because of the evidence.

People who claim that Christ didn’t die and rise again or that His death and resurrection are not the only way to salvation are either liars or insane. That’s why the gospel is so important, and that’s why your kids memorize these verses.

### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Memorize and recite the four verses.**

### SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Or is it? Because we face a decision like that every day of our lives.

On one side is sin, which seems to give some enjoyment for a little while, but always ends up taking. On the other side is God, who gives and gives and gives. Which side do we most often walk towards?

You now have a basic understanding of what was happening during the period of the judges of Israel. We saw in the previous lesson that God intended the nation to be governed by Him alone, with priests as administrators. He promised the people great blessings if they would only trust and obey Him. He also warned them that if they turned away from Him and worshiped false gods, He would ... *bring a nation against*

*you from far away, from the ends of the earth, like an eagle swooping down ... (Deuteronomy 28:49).*

During the approximately 340 years of the period of the judges, Israel repeatedly turned to false idols. On six occasions, another nation invaded — just as God had promised. This was intended as discipline, to teach them to trust God alone, but the people sank deeper and deeper into sin.

God is just and will punish sin. But He is also a God of mercy and grace. Whenever there was oppression by foreigners, God would raise up a judge to lead the nation to victory. The word *judge*, in this context, means “one who serves as a leader.” It was a temporary position, one that only lasted for the

lifetime of the individual judge. These men and one woman didn’t have legal standing, and they had no official duties or government officials to assist them. They were strong characters who could inspire people to follow them. At the beginning of the period, there were gaps between judges, but as the nation sinned more and more, the judges’ rule became continuous and in some cases, more than one ruled at a time.

Not all the judges won major battles. Some were raised up to lead the nation out of a period of particularly grievous sin. We’ll look at some of the major judges in the following lessons.

From your studies so far in this book, from the Bible passages you’ve read and from the massive amount of knowledge

you already possess, why do you think God (who knew exactly what would happen) included this period of time and this form of government in Israel’s history as part of His plan for humanity?

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**TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:**

1. Read Judges 2:8-23.
2. Answer the question.

**SECTION COMPLETED**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



# THE FIRST FOUR JUDGES

Read Judges 3-5.

In one Awana T&T™ club, an Awana leader told the boys the story of Deborah and Barak and how Sisera was killed by Jael. At the end of the lesson, the leader asked the clubbers what they could learn from this story. One boy, who had been listening intently, volunteered this application:

“Beware of women with hammers.”



To keep you interested, we've left a few bits of information for you to fill in while you're reading.

God is just and must punish sin. He told the Israelites to drive out the people who were living in the land He gave them. He warned them very specifically what would happen if they didn't do as He instructed, and He told them exactly what the consequences would be.

Israel disobeyed, and God carried out His justice.

But God is also merciful. With His justice, He always offers grace. (Note: This offer of grace does not last forever. If a person refuses it and dies, he or she does not get a second chance.) God said He would raise up judges to lead the Israelites out from oppression, and He did.

The first judge was Othniel, probably the nephew of Caleb. We read about him first in Judges 1:11-13 when he defeated \_\_\_\_\_. He wasn't a judge at that time — just a brave man who did what was needed and got himself a wife in return.

Some time later, after the Israelites mixed with the local tribes and began worshiping their false gods, the first period of oppression occurred. Israel was invaded by the king of Aram (Judges 3:8). This army was probably from the Habiru, a group of wandering people who lived by raiding other nations. Othniel had experience, and he also had the calling of the Lord. He gathered an army and defeated the enemy. Othniel was from the tribe of Judah, so it's likely that this all took place on the southern end of the kingdom. God promised peace for as long as one of His judges lived. We

don't know how long Othniel led the people — He was probably at least 70 when the battle took place. We are told that it was \_\_\_\_\_ years before the sins of the people got so bad that God allowed another enemy to oppress His nation.

Bring on the Moabites. The next oppressors of Israel came from east of the Dead Sea. They were descendants of the child Lot fathered with one of his daughters way back in Genesis 19. For 18 long years, the people in the center of the kingdom had to suffer under the Moabites. Finally God had mercy on them after they \_\_\_\_\_. He raised up Ehud, a man with this particular physical characteristic — \_\_\_\_\_.

Ehud was sent to Eglon, the king of Moab, to pay tribute — a gift to show that the giver was inferior to the receiver. The king suspected nothing, and a little while later when Ehud asked to talk with the king alone, the king agreed. As soon as the two were alone, Ehud approached the king and \_\_\_\_\_. He then escaped and raised an army. The Moabites, seeing that their king was dead, tried to flee back to their own land. But Ehud and his men guarded the fords and killed all who tried to cross. After Ehud's victory, Israel enjoyed peace for \_\_\_\_\_ years.

We are told very little (one verse) about the next judge, Shamgar. But what we do know is amazing. His victory was over the \_\_\_\_\_ people, who lived in the southwest part of Israel. Shamgar's weapon was an oxgoad — a long pole, thick at one end and pointed at the other. We aren't told whether he killed all \_\_\_\_\_ of

his enemies at one time, but we can imagine that they didn't see what was coming when this man who looked like a simple farmer wandered up.

You might think that the Israelites would have learned their lessons by now. But Judges 4:1 tells us otherwise. God allowed another nation, this time the \_\_\_\_\_, to attack (verse 2). These people were the original inhabitants of the land, and God had instructed the Israelites to get rid of them, something they failed to do. Their king, Jabin, had a general named Sisera whose army was powerful because they had 900 \_\_\_\_\_. The influence of this enemy, which lasted for \_\_\_\_\_ years, was in the north, in the hill country around the Sea of Galilee.

Deborah was a prophetess, a woman to whom God gave information that the people of Israel needed. Probably because of this, she was regarded as a judge. Her home was in Benjamin, to the south. God told her to send for Barak, who lived in the north where the Canaanites were causing trouble, and have him "meet the enemy." Barak appears to have been timid. He wasn't totally unwilling, but knowing that Deborah spoke directly with God, he wanted her along. Maybe he wanted someone to blame if things went wrong.

Barak and Deborah went to \_\_\_\_\_ with an army raised from among the oppressed tribes. Sisera brought his chariots to attack them there, but the Lord had other ideas. The entire Canaanite army was destroyed except for their general.

Deborah's song of victory in Judges 5 makes it clear that God used the River \_\_\_\_\_ to destroy many of these troops.

The Kenites, descended from Moses' brother-in-law, were another people who were allies with the Canaanites. Sisera, fleeing from Barak, had every reason to expect help from them. He thought he found it in the tent of Jael, wife of \_\_\_\_\_. Deborah had told Barak that his initial hesitation to go to battle would result in his enemy Sisera being defeated by a woman and not him. We aren't told why Jael killed Sisera, but we know she made the right choice because in her song, Deborah calls Jael \_\_\_\_\_. After this victory, the Israelites had peace for forty years. God had been merciful once again.

### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Read Judges 3-5.
2. Fill in the blanks in the lesson.

### SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON 6: Bible Survey

# GIDEON

Read Judges 6-8.

We asked a mixed group of adults about their biggest fear. Here are a few of the things they mentioned (all of these were mentioned by at least two participants):

- Being alone for any length of time
- Having my children die before I do
- A terminal illness
- Sharks and snakes
- Being in front of people
- Failure
- Meeting new people
- Not finding a marriage partner

We all have fears. It's part of being human. But why is it part of being a Christian? God has promised us that we have nothing to fear. And yet ...

A thread of fear runs throughout the three chapters you just read in Judges. In fact, it seems like everybody in the entire account was afraid, with the notable exception of the Angel of the Lord. This exception isn't surprising — the Angel of the Lord was, in fact, the preincarnate Christ. ("Preincarnate" refers to Christ's appearances on earth in the Old Testament, before He came as a baby.)



But first a bit of background. After Barak defeated the Canaanites, Israel enjoyed 40 years of peace. By now, you should be able to predict what happened. Once again the people turned their backs on God and began worshipping false gods. Their punishment once again was oppression by another nation — this time the Midianites, descendants of Abraham and his second wife, Keturah. It was members of this tribe who purchased Joseph from his brothers. They were nomads who traveled about freely, and their attack on Israel is the first recorded instance in all history when camels were used in warfare. It appears from the account in Judges that the Midianites didn't occupy Israel year round. But each year at harvest time,

they would swarm in and take anything and everything — crops and animals — and ruin what they didn't steal. The Israelites hid in caves in the hills to save themselves from this powerful enemy. They were afraid.

Enter Gideon. We are told he was *threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites (Judges 6:11b)*. Threshing was normally done in an exposed area so the wind would blow away the straw and leave the heavier grain. A winepress was a cavity set in a rock where grapes were crushed into juice. It couldn't have been a very efficient place to thresh, but Gideon was afraid.

The Lord, with what may have been irony or perhaps just encouragement, called Gideon a "mighty warrior." Gideon's response didn't sound very brave: "Why has all this happened to us?" "The Lord has abandoned us." "My clan is the weakest and I am the least." Gideon demanded a sign, and the Lord gave him one — He burned up the meat and bread that Gideon had brought Him. But as soon as Gideon realized he had been talking to God, he had a whole different fear. He knew that anyone who saw God would die. The Lord reassured him that he wouldn't.

So Gideon no longer feared ... wait, yes he did. The Lord told him to take down his father's altar to the false god, Baal. Gideon obeyed, but he did it at night, in secret because he was afraid. Then Gideon called together an army, but he was still afraid. He challenged the Lord by laying out a fleece of wool and telling Him what He had to do to prove Himself. (This was not a wise thing to do, and certainly shouldn't be an example to us. God had given His Word and Gideon should have been satisfied.) But God is patient. He reassured Gideon not once but twice by performing miraculous signs with the fleece of wool.







# SAMSON AND THOSE OTHER GUYS

Read Judges 9-16.

Did all that weird stuff recorded in the book of Judges really happen?

The history of the period of the Judges seems very strange to us today. Keep in mind that, although the accounts of strange events come right after each other in the Bible, the actual timeline stretched for about 340 years.

To put that into perspective, if we were at the end of a similar period, it would have started in the late 1600s. And if we wrote a history of the major events that have happened in the past 340 years, it would sound pretty odd to the Israelites who lived in 1000 BC. Consider how these events might sound to them:

1692 — The citizens of Salem, Massachusetts, experienced an outbreak of mass hysteria that resulted in 20 of them being put to death as witches.

1731 — A Spanish ship captain quarrels with a British merchant captain named Jenkins and cuts off his ear. Eight years later, Jenkins displays his severed ear in the British Parliament, causing the members to declare war on Spain.

1773 — Yemelyan Pugachev convinces a large group of peasants that he is the dead Czar Peter III. He leads them in a revolt against the government that is put down after a few early successes. Pugachev is executed after his own followers turn him over to the government.

- 1804 — Aaron Burr, the vice-president of the United States, kills Alexander Hamilton, former Secretary of the Treasury, in a duel.
- 1859 — Charles Darwin publishes *On the Origin of Species* and convinces a large number of people that humans descended from apes.
- 1903 — The Wright brothers invent the airplane that enables man to fly through the air. Within a decade, man is able to cross the Atlantic Ocean in a single day.
- 1912 — The Titanic, the largest passenger steamship in history and billed as unsinkable, sinks on her first voyage. The massive loss of life was due largely to the fact that the lifeboats could only hold about a third of the people on board.
- 1945 — A bomb is dropped on Hiroshima, a city in Japan, that *instantly* kills 70,000 people. About that many more die from the aftereffects by the end of the year.

- 1994 — The Internet spreads to businesses and private users, making it possible for anybody with a computer to instantly contact anybody else who has a computer anywhere in the world.

This lesson covers a lot of ground, so we'll just hit some of the "highlights."

Abimelech was the son of Gideon by a concubine. He wasn't a judge, just a man who wanted to be king. His first act was to hire thugs and kill all of Gideon's other sons except for Jotham. Abimelech was probably only recognized as ruler by the people in the local area around Shechem. He never became king over all of Israel, but his emergence shows that the nation was beginning to desire a ruler.

Jotham's "Parable of the Trees," which he shouted from a mountaintop, is the first parable in the Bible. There is a rock shelf on Mount Gerizim that overlooks the area of Shechem. In the parable, all the valuable trees refuse to be king but the worthless thorn bush agrees. The thorn bush's boast to shade

the other trees was ridiculous because it's a low shrub that has a very little shadow. After three years, the people of Shechem had had enough and joined with Gaal to depose Abimelech. In return, Abimelech destroys the city. He is destroyed himself when a woman in the city of Thebez drops a heavy stone on his head.

After the judgeships of Tola and Jair, the Ammonites invaded Israel. Jephthah, an outcast, was asked to help. In what appears to be a rash decision, Jephthah vows to God to sacrifice "whatever comes out of the door of my house." This turns out to be his daughter. We are told that Jephthah kept his vow, though most commentaries say that this means that he dedicated her to service in the temple, not that he put her to death. (Keep in mind that human sacrifice was forbidden by the law given by God, that Jephthah made his vow right after the Spirit came upon him and that he is listed in Hebrews 11:32 as a man of faith.) But as she was his only child, his sacrifice did mean that his family line ended.

After Gideon defeated the Midianites, the Israelites from the tribe of Ephraim complained that they hadn't been included in the victory (Judges 8:1). They did so again here. It's obvious that they were in the habit of waiting to see which side won the battle and then scrambling for the spoils. Jephthah would have none of it and put 42,000 of them to death.

The minor judges, Ibzan, Elon and Abdon, reigned for several years and then *again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD (Judges 13:1a)*. God allowed the Philistines to oppress the nation for 40 long years before he raised up the next judge, Samson.

The Angel of the Lord who appeared to Manoah's wife was the preincarnate Christ. This was one of several occasions in the Old Testament when the Son of God appeared as a man prior to His birth in Bethlehem. He told Samson's mother that Samson was to be a *Nazirite*, which means to be "separated" or "consecrated" to God. Numbers 6:1-21 gives the strict





At random moments during the day, tell your child the name of a book of the New Testament. He or she has 10 seconds to tell you the name of the next book. For instance, if you say “Acts,” your child has 10 seconds to say “Romans.” But to be fair, your child gets to quiz you too, and you only have five seconds to respond. Keep score during the day. Every correct answer is worth two points. If one of you gets the right answer within the allotted period of time, but only after first saying a wrong answer, you only get one point. If you give a wrong answer or no answer at all, you get no points. At the end of the day, the winner gets a simple prize — a cookie or extra piece of chocolate or five extra minutes before bedtime.

Make up phrases with words that start with the same letters as the books of the New Testament. For example, the first four books start with M, M, L and J. Your phrase to help you remember that could be “My mother likes jelly.” If your child enjoys this type of game, see if you can come up with a sentence (or series of sentences) in which all the words start with the first letter of ALL the books in the New Testament.

Have your entire family sit in a circle. Pick someone to start with Matthew and go around the circle with each person saying the next book. If someone messes up, don’t make a big deal about it — just have the next person start again. When you’ve gotten through the entire New Testament without a mistake, pick another person to start and do it again. That way, the same people won’t be saying the same books all the time. Time yourselves and see how fast you can go. Set a goal of 30 seconds, and when you reach that goal, reward yourselves for your brilliant memory work.

When driving somewhere, play the alphabet game, but instead of finding letters in the order of the alphabet, find them in the order of the first letter of the books of the New Testament. In other words, the first letter you look for is M. When you see a letter M on a sign, say “M as in Matthew on the Mom’s Café sign.” Continue through all the books in that fashion. The first person to find the letters for all 27 books in order is the winner.

Learn and sing along with the “New Testament Books of the Bible Song” on the *WingRunner Verse Music CD*, available in the *Awana Ministry Catalog*.

### WINGRUNNER RANK, PART 3

John 20:31

*But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.*

Psalms 118:1

*Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; His love endures forever.*

Romans 6:23

*For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Memorize and recite the three verses.
2. Memorize and recite the books of the New Testament.

### SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



# SAMUEL

Read 1 Samuel 1-3, 7.

Before we begin studying Samuel, let's take a look at what he was up against.

The Canaanites, who inhabited the land God gave Israel, worshiped many gods. The one mentioned most often in the Bible is Baal (pronounced Baa-ahl, with the accent on the "ahl"). The weather in that part of the world can be very inconsistent, with long droughts that can ruin crops. The Canaanites, who included the Philistines, thought of Baal as the god of storms. In their minds, Baal brought the rain each growing season, then died in battle with Mot (god of death) when the dry season began. It was thought that Baal came back to life in time for the next growing season.

Tied in with this idea of growing crops was the idea of fertility. Baal was often portrayed as a bull, a symbol of fertility, and the worship of him involved wanton sexual practices.

God had promised to supply the Israelites with whatever they needed if they would obey and worship only Him. But repeatedly, the people found Baal worship more attractive — perhaps because of its wild sexual license in the name of religion contrasted with the strict laws of God.

God raised Eli as a judge in the central part of the nation at about the same time that Samson was judge farther south. Eli was a descendent of Ithamar, Aaron's fourth son. He was not a military leader like most of the judges. He was the high priest and also administered in areas of civil government. Eli trusted God, but he did a poor job of controlling his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas. It was their influence that brought Israel to one of the lowest points in its history.

The Philistines oppressed Israel for 40 years. During this period, the elders of Israel came up with what they thought was a clever idea — they would carry the ark of the covenant before them into battle. This was in opposition to God's will, and as a result, Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas, died along with 30,000 other Israelites. Worse yet, the ark was captured. When Eli heard the account of this battle, he fell over dead.

But God had already put the next part of His plan into action — the final judge, Samuel. We'll let you do the work on this one. Look up the reference in 1 Samuel after each statement to find the words to fill in the blanks.

Elkanah's wife \_\_\_\_\_ had no children (1:2). When she made the annual trip to Shiloh, she wept because \_\_\_\_\_ (1:7).

When Eli saw her weeping, he thought she \_\_\_\_\_ (1:13).

When Samuel was born, Hannah pledged \_\_\_\_\_ (1:22). In her prayer of thanksgiving, she credited God for many things (2:1-10). List three of them here:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Samuel served the Lord under Eli's tutelage and grew \_\_\_\_\_ (2:26).

The Lord spoke to Samuel and told him \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. (3:11-14).

When Samuel told Eli what the Lord had said, Eli responded \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (3:18).

As Samuel grew, everyone in Israel realized that he \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (3:20).

After Eli died, Samuel took over as judge. Under his leadership, the people  
determined to follow the true God once again. Samuel told them that the first  
thing they needed to do was \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (7:3).

What three things did the people do at Mizpah to show God that they had  
repentant hearts? (7:6)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

When the Philistines heard that Samuel had gathered the people at Mizpah, they  
decided to \_\_\_\_\_ (7:7). What was Samuel's response? (7:9)

How were the Philistines defeated? (7:10) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

In response to what God had done, Samuel set up a stone and called it Ebenezer,  
which means (7:12) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How long did Samuel continue as judge? (7:15) \_\_\_\_\_

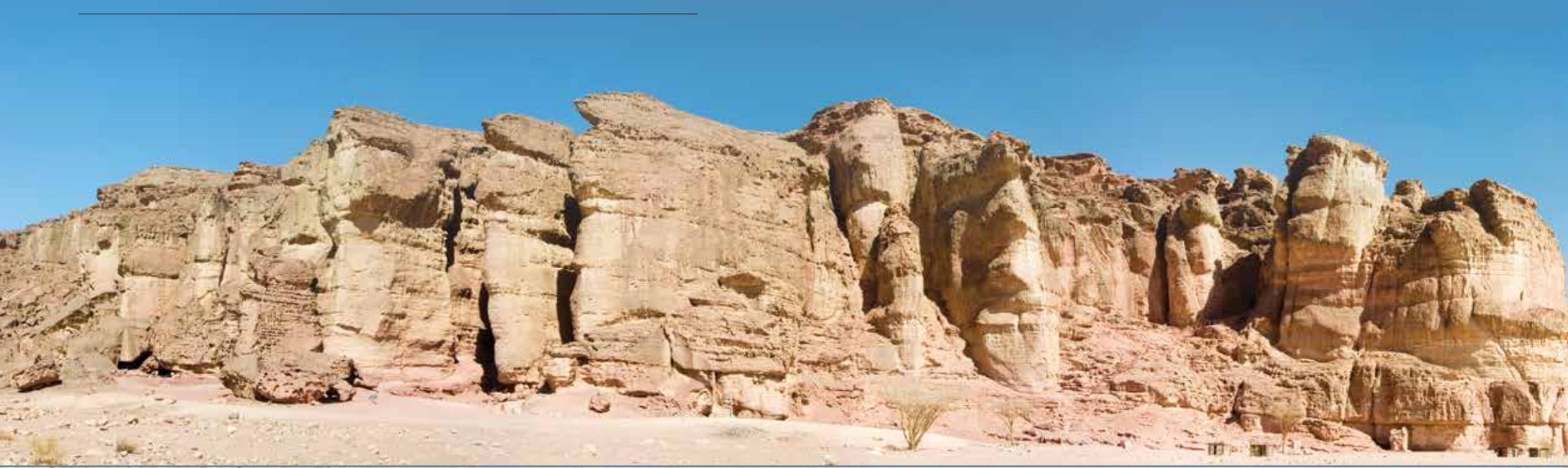
**TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:**

1. Read 1 Samuel 1-3, 7.
2. Look up the verses and fill in the blanks.

**SECTION COMPLETED**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



# SAUL

Read 1 Samuel 8-11.

Be careful what you ask for — you might get it. That is very good advice if the person you're asking is my uncle. I found him digging in the refrigerator at a family get-together several years ago and asked him to make me a sandwich. He immediately said, "Sure, be happy to. White bread or wheat?"

I said I preferred white.

"Mustard or mayonnaise?" he asked.

I said, "Mayonnaise." I stood next to him as he pulled out two pieces of bread and smeared them liberally with mayonnaise.

He then picked up the bread, turned to me and slapped the sloppy slices against the sides of my head. Through the mayonnaise that filled my ears and dripped down my cheeks, I heard him say, "There. You asked me to make you a sandwich. Now you're a sandwich." Be careful what you ask for — you might get it.



The Israelites could have used that advice too. They asked Samuel to "... *appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have*" (1 Samuel 8:5).

It is true that the period of government under the judges hadn't been successful. For much of the time, the nation had been oppressed by its enemies or at war. And Samuel's two sons, whom he had appointed as judges to replace him, were *after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice* (1 Samuel 8:3b).

But all of this was the fault of the people. They already had a king — God Himself. If they had trusted Him and obeyed Him, everything would have gone well with them. But as we've seen, they had repeatedly disobeyed and worshiped the false gods of their neighbors. Samuel knew they were out of line. He didn't want to appoint a king. But God told him: "... *it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected Me as their king*" (1 Samuel 8:7).

So God gave Israel exactly what the leaders had asked for — a king like all the other nations had. He made a divine appointment for Samuel to meet with Saul, a man from the tribe of Benjamin. It doesn't seem like a very promising start to a kingdom — Saul was out searching (unsuccessfully) for some donkeys that had wandered away from his father's fields. His servant suggested they ask the man of God, who was Samuel. Saul and the servant headed for town and met the prophet. He anointed Saul with oil and then gave him three signs to watch for to show that Saul was truly God's choice to rule the nation. Saul would:

1. Meet two men by Rachel's tomb who would tell him his father's donkeys were home.
2. Meet three men on their way to make a sacrifice to God. These men would give Saul two loaves of bread. By accepting this food which was intended for the priests, Saul would be accepting his anointing.
3. Meet a group of prophets playing music and prophesying. The Spirit would come on Saul and he would prophesy with them.

Everything happened just as Samuel said it would. On the surface, Saul seemed like the perfect choice to be king.

He was physically impressive, a head taller than any other Israelite (1 Samuel 9:2).

He was wealthy. His family owned oxen, donkeys and slaves (1 Samuel 9:3; 11:5).

He was able to inspire people to follow him (1 Samuel 10:24).

But those things were just on the surface. It didn't take long for Saul's real nature to show itself and for him to prove he was, indeed, a king *such as all the other nations have* (1 Samuel 8:5b).

- To begin with, he appears to have been a poor herdsman. He lost his father's donkeys and couldn't find them. In Israel, a man who couldn't lead animals was considered a poor leader of men.
- He relied on his slave for advice. It was his servant who suggested they talk with Samuel.



Our trip ended in a canyon. In front of us was a high waterfall that couldn't be safely scaled. Behind us was a long stretch of rapids that we didn't want to cross a second time. To our left was a deep stretch of river with a fast current. And to our right was a cliff maybe 30 feet (9.1 m) high that seemed to offer our best chance of extricating ourselves from our predicament.

A few scrawny trees grew along the rocks, and by holding on to these and choosing our hand and foot holds carefully, we all managed to make it to the top safely. All except Greg. He was no athlete and was already drenched from frequent slips into the river. And he was afraid of heights.

We helped him up as best we could, but about six feet (1.8 m) from the top there was a sheer stretch of rock that could only be scaled by gripping the trunk of an overhanging tree and pulling oneself up by brute strength. Greg couldn't do it. He was stuck, too afraid to go back down and unable to get up.

I climbed down onto the trunk, locked my legs around it and reached down as far as I could. Greg grabbed my wrist and started to climb. He was about halfway up when he slipped. He panicked and lost his footing. For about five seconds he hung there in space. If he had fallen, he would have surely gotten badly hurt on the rocks below and probably ended up in the river being swept down through the rapids.

But he didn't fall. He held onto my wrist in desperation. I somehow managed to pull him upward until a couple of other guys could grab his other wrist and pull him over the edge to safety.

Greg's experience that day was a lot like the life of David. This mighty warrior and king often found himself in hopeless situations, without the strength to save himself. Many times, these crises were caused by his own bad decisions. But there's a constant thread running through the history of David — while his gaze often wandered, he never lost his grip. He knew where his salvation was to be found — in God.

God, who knows everything (in His omniscience), knew of David's faith. He directed Samuel to the house of Jesse and told him to anoint the youngest son as the next king of Israel. That son, David, was a simple shepherd who wasn't even fully Jewish. (Remember the lesson on Ruth, David's Moabite great-grandmother?). Yet David had the one requirement that God looks for in all of us — faith in Him. God called David ... *"a man after My own heart"* and said, *"he will do everything I want him to do"* (Acts 13:22b).

Huh? How could the Holy Spirit have directed Paul to say this and Luke to write it? What about David's adultery with Bathsheba and his murder of her husband Uriah and the way David lost control of his sons and the census he took in direct disobedience to God?

In *Beginnings*, the first book in this Bible survey series, Lessons 16 and 17 covered Abraham and his many sins. We learned that Abraham wasn't honored because of what he did but because of his faith in God and what *He* did.

That same lesson is being taught here. David wasn't honored as a reward for the good he did. He was honored for the faith he had in what God did for him, for the nation of Israel and,

ultimately, for the world through David's descendent, Jesus Christ.

David realized this. In Psalm 103, one of many he wrote, he said: *As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him; for He knows how we are formed, He remembers that we are dust (Psalm 103:13-14).*

David knew he was a sinner. He knew that God knew he was a sinner. But he trusted in God's love and kept depending on that through the many struggles he faced. The key to David's position with God is found about halfway through the passage — he feared God. The word *fear* comprises honor, awe, submission and faith. In short, God considered David a man after His own heart because, in spite of David's faults, he trusted God.

We can see David's reliance on God throughout the period in which he had to flee from Saul. During that time, the young man wrote Psalm 59. Read that Psalm and answer the following questions.

What was David's problem when he wrote this Psalm? What historical event was happening and where in 1 Samuel can that event be found?

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Abraham wasn't honored because of what he did but because of his faith in God and what *He* did.

From the Psalm, what solution did David see to his problems?

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**TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:**

- 1. Read 1 Samuel 16-18.**
- 2. Read Psalm 59 and answer the questions.**

**SECTION COMPLETED**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# PSALMS

The book of Psalms is Israel's hymnbook, much like the hymnbook found in your church but with one huge difference — the songs in Psalms were inspired by the Holy Spirit. They were written over a period of about 1,000 years by several authors, beginning with Moses (Psalm 90). David wrote at least 73 of the Psalms.

Book of Psalms

To learn about the style and structure of Hebrew poetry, the Psalms included, see Lesson 3:7 in *Guide*, the Awana at Home® parent handbook that parallels *T&T Ultimate Adventure Book One*.

Originally, the Psalms were collected into five smaller books, some by David and others by Hezekiah and Ezra, before they were finally compiled into the book we have in our Bibles. Many of them have headings that include the author or musical directions.

In addition, the Psalms have been categorized by theme. These include:

- **Messianic** — The author points to Jesus Christ in some way, either through specific prophecies or with a reference to kings of Israel that will see their ultimate realization when Christ rules over the millennial kingdom.
- **Lament** — The author speaks of his distress in trying circumstances, but then states that he trusts God and, finally, that he knows God will see him through eventually.
- **Praise and Thanksgiving** — The author praises the Lord and thanks Him for who He is and what He has done for the individual or for the nation of Israel.
- **Royal** — The author sings about the king and how he is God's representative through whom God will accomplish His plans.
- **Wisdom** — The author describes life and how his relationship with God is central to it.
- **Penitential** — The author is sorry for his sin and begs God for forgiveness.

- **Imprecatory** — The author asks God to judge his enemies or the enemies of Israel.
- **Pilgrimage** — These Psalms were intended to be sung by Israelites as they traveled to Jerusalem for the annual feasts of Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles.

We don't have space to cover all the Psalms. Instead, you need to pick one. (You can choose a favorite, but it might be better if you searched for an unfamiliar one.) Read it a couple of times, then answer the following questions.

What Psalm did you choose?

\_\_\_\_\_

Who was the author (if known)?

\_\_\_\_\_

What type of Psalm is it?

\_\_\_\_\_

Give a short summary of the Psalm (including any prophecies, enemies or specific historic events mentioned, etc.).

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





“As an art form, anime has a proclivity toward violence and teen rebellion. That’s disconcerting but par for the course. More disturbing is *Avatar’s* mendacious spiritualism — explained, demonstrated and attractively packaged for young viewers.”

“What’s likely to disappoint parents is the lax authority shown at Pacific Coast Academy. If grown-ups aren’t playing the dummy role, they’re the target of silly jokes. And even when pranksters get caught, consequences are few. *Zoey 101* often portrays boundaries as unfair or pointless, so kids get off scot-free.”

The average child between the ages of 6 and 11 watches 28 hours of live TV every week.

We’re not saying TV is evil. What we *are* saying is that you, as a parent, should compare the amount of time your child is listening to the world’s messages with the amount of time your child is listening to God’s message. Or even just with the amount of time your child is listening to you. You might be surprised.

\* References to websites and resources not created by Awana are for your information and are not necessarily an endorsement of content.

Keep track for one week. The numbers don’t have to be exact. (If you have more than one child, keep separate track for each.)

Time my child spends watching TV

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Time my child spends watching DVDs

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Time my child spends on the Internet

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Time my child spends in church or involved with other activities that lead to spiritual development

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Time my child spent in conversation with me

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Have you ever sat down and really watched the shows your children are watching? This isn’t an arduous task that will take up hours of your time. Wander into the room where your kids are watching TV and plop down on the couch. Don’t say anything. Just watch. When the show is over, discuss the program with your kids.

- What positive messages did they get from it?
- What bothered them?
- What bothered you that they didn’t even notice?
- Did the show promote disrespect for authority?

## RED JEWEL 1, PART 1

Deuteronomy 6:5

*Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.*

Psalms 96:2

*Sing to the LORD, praise His name; proclaim His salvation day after day.*

- Did the show assume an evolutionary origin for the universe?
- Did the show have a political agenda?

If the show is detrimental, block it. Most TV systems give you the ability to block individual stations or shows. Use it. Your kids might be unhappy, but they’ll get over it. It might take a lot longer for them to get over the influence the show has on them.

If somebody was throwing rocks at your kids as they walked home from school, you’d want to know about it so you could take steps to eliminate the problem. It’s just as important (or maybe more so) to know who’s throwing rocks at your kids’ minds.

### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Memorize and recite the two verses.**
2. **Track the amount of time your children spend on certain activities.**

### SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# A TALE OF TWO GENERALS

Read 1 Samuel 15, 28, 30-31.

Ambrose Burnside, a Rhode Island native, was a general in the Union forces during the American Civil War. It was his name and his distinctive facial hair that gave us the word *sideburns* to describe side whiskers.

In spite of his uninspired performance early in the war, late in 1862 Abraham Lincoln gave Burnside command of the main Union army. The general had already turned down the command twice. He stated repeatedly that he had not sought command, nor did he want it. But an order is an order.

Burnside followed the Confederate forces under Robert E. Lee to the Virginia town of Fredericksburg. Lee's army was waiting in a sunken road and behind a strong stone wall. Unimaginatively, Burnside commanded his troops to attack these positions across an open field about which a Confederate general had said, "A chicken could not live on that field when we open fire." Burnside's men were shot down in droves — few, if any, made it as far as the wall. He ordered 16 separate attacks, suffered approximately 8,000 casualties (dead or too injured to continue fighting) and accomplished nothing.

Robert E. Lee, watching the battle from a hill behind his lines, said, "It is well that war is so terrible, or we should grow too fond of it."

Two commanders, two approaches to battle. One made a wise choice and won the day. The other made repeated foolish decisions and lost, costing many men their lives.

The Bible gives us the history of two other military commanders who made different choices and makes it clear which one was right.

To begin, we have to step back several years from our previous lesson to a time before David was on the scene. Saul was king of Israel and had won several battles. The Lord gave Samuel a message for Saul: *This is what the LORD Almighty says: "I will punish the Amalekites for what they did to Israel when they waylaid them as they came up from Egypt. Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy everything that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys"* (1 Samuel 15:2-3).

This sounds extremely harsh to us today. Why kill women and children? Why couldn't the Israelites plunder their enemies property? The short answer is that God gave them these instructions, and the short answer should have been good enough. But in this case, God explained His reasons: *... in the cities of the nations the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, do not leave alive*

*anything that breathes. Completely destroy them ... Otherwise, they will teach you to follow all the detestable things they do in worshiping their gods, and you will sin against the LORD your God (Deuteronomy 20:16-18).* The book of Judges tells us that Israel didn't obey God in this matter and the consequences were just as God foretold.

After the Amalekites, Saul had another chance. We aren't told anything about the battle, only that the Israelites hid in a ravine and surprised the Amalekites and won a great victory. Saul decided that he knew better than God. He took the king of the Amalekites, Agag, captive and kept the best of their sheep and cattle. Saul was very proud and even set up a monument to himself. When Samuel arrived, Saul bragged about how he had obeyed the Lord. Samuel immediately told the king that he was arrogant and that his disobedience had cost him the crown. God would appoint another leader for the nation.

Jump forward a second time. David has been anointed as king and Saul is trying to kill him. David takes refuge with Achish, the king of the Philistines. Achish asks David to join in his fight against Saul's army. David pretends to go along, but God provides a way for him to avoid fighting his own people. David's army returns home to discover that the Amalekites have destroyed their houses, kidnapped their wives and children and stolen their belongings.

And here is where we see the great contrast between these two military men. David is about to battle the Amalekites. Saul is about to battle the Philistines. Both nations are enemies of Israel and, with God's help, should be easily defeated. But what do we find?

Saul was afraid. He asked the Lord for help, but the Lord wasn't talking to Saul any longer. So Saul went to a woman in Endor who was a sorceress and said she could contact the dead. The king knew this was wrong — he had earlier kicked all the mediums out of Israel. But he was desperate. The woman called forth the spirit of Samuel (who was dead, remember). Surely this was a miracle of God to punish Saul and not a result of the woman's own ability. Samuel prophesied destruction for Saul and his army. And so it happened. Saul's sons, including Jonathan, were killed. Saul was injured and took his own life rather than be killed. The army was defeated and the Philistines occupied the area.

Meanwhile, David was also worried. His soldiers were angry with him because they'd lost their families and property. They talked of stoning him to death. And then we read of the huge difference between David and Saul — *... But David*

*found strength in the LORD his God (1 Samuel 30:6).* Instead of going to a heathen sorcerer, David called a priest and asked God for direction. The Lord promised him success.

David led his army in pursuit of the Amalekites. He found them partying, enjoying the fruits of their victory. The battle lasted an entire day and only 400 Amalekites escaped. David recovered everything — *Nothing was missing: young or old, boy or girl, plunder or anything else they had taken ... (1 Samuel 30:19).* After mourning for the death of his friend, Jonathan, David was made king.

Two commanders, two approaches to battle. One made a wise choice and won the battle and the crown. The other made repeated foolish decisions and lost his battle, his crown and his life. One trusted God, one trusted himself.

From your reading, pick one verse that best sums up David's attitude and write it here.

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### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Read 1 Samuel 15, 18, 30-31.
2. Write down the verse you think best sums up David's attitude.

### SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



# DAVID THE KING

Read 2 Samuel 22:1-23:7.

We have to cover a lot of ground in this lesson, so keep your Bible handy and fill in the blanks. We've given you the references where you can find the answers in 2 Samuel.



After Saul's death, David went to Hebron to be \_\_\_\_\_ (2:4).

Meanwhile, Saul's commander, Abner, took Saul's only living son \_\_\_\_\_ (2:8) and made him \_\_\_\_\_ (2:10).

After a short and unsuccessful reign, the king of Israel was killed by \_\_\_\_\_ (4:5-6) and \_\_\_\_\_. When they told David what they'd done, he \_\_\_\_\_ (4:12).

\_\_\_\_\_ (5:3) came to David and anointed him king of \_\_\_\_\_ (5:3).

David set out to establish the nation's new capital in Jerusalem, but first he had to capture it from the \_\_\_\_\_ (5:6). Because God was with David, he became \_\_\_\_\_ (5:10).

The \_\_\_\_\_ (5:17) heard that David was king and attacked, but they were defeated because David \_\_\_\_\_ (5:25).

David's next act was to bring the \_\_\_\_\_ (6:12) to Jerusalem. In time, David defeated \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and the king of \_\_\_\_\_ (8:11-12).

To honor the vow he made to Jonathan years before, David brought \_\_\_\_\_ (9:6) to Jerusalem and treated him \_\_\_\_\_ (9:11).

The Ammonites rejected David's offer of friendship, so Israel's army attacked them and killed \_\_\_\_\_ (10:18).

In the book of 1 Samuel, David's life was presented as almost faultless, but in 2 Samuel things change. His big troubles began when he saw \_\_\_\_\_ (11:2-3) bathing. He sent for her, and she became pregnant. David called her husband, \_\_\_\_\_, (11:6) home to Jerusalem to cover his sin, but when his plan didn't work, he ordered Joab

to \_\_\_\_\_ (11:15). After her husband died, Bathsheba \_\_\_\_\_ (11:27). God sent \_\_\_\_\_ (12:1) to talk with David. The penalty for adultery was death, but David didn't die. Instead, \_\_\_\_\_ (12:14) died. Bathsheba had another son named \_\_\_\_\_ (12:24). David's life began getting more and more complicated and full of problems. His son \_\_\_\_\_ (13:1) raped his half sister \_\_\_\_\_ (13:22). This angered their brother \_\_\_\_\_ (13:22), but he didn't do anything about it for two years. He then had Amnon \_\_\_\_\_ (13:28) and fled the nation. \_\_\_\_\_ (14:23) brought Absalom back to Jerusalem and worked out a reconciliation with David. Absalom traveled to \_\_\_\_\_ (15:9-10) and plotted to take his father's throne and become king. When David heard about this, he \_\_\_\_\_ (15:14). Absalom follows him with \_\_\_\_\_ (17:24). The two armies fought in the forest of \_\_\_\_\_ (18:6). Absalom was caught when \_\_\_\_\_ (18:9). In spite of David's order, \_\_\_\_\_ (18:14) killed him.

David returned to Jerusalem, but the men of \_\_\_\_\_ (19:43) and \_\_\_\_\_ quarreled. Israel rebelled under the leadership of \_\_\_\_\_ (20:2). Joab took the army that remained loyal to David to the city of \_\_\_\_\_ (20:15) and the people of that city \_\_\_\_\_ (20:22) of Sheba. The nation suffered a three-year \_\_\_\_\_ (21:1). It ended when David \_\_\_\_\_ (21:14). David took a \_\_\_\_\_ (24:1). God allowed this, but David's motivation came from \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Chronicles 21:1). As a result, God punished Israel with a \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Samuel 24:15) that lasted \_\_\_\_\_ (24:13). In spite of all David's trouble, his last words showed that he was still trusting in \_\_\_\_\_ (23:5).

- TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:**
- 1. Read 2 Samuel 22:1-23:7.**
  - 2. Fill in the blanks in the overview of David's life.**

**SECTION COMPLETED**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_





LESSON 17: The Big Picture

# JERUSALEM

Three key factors most likely explain the location of the city of Jerusalem:

Water from two springs

Defense on a group of five hills

Placement on the major north-south trading route through the area

The city became the center of the nation of Israel during the reign of David. But even before that time, it shows up in Scripture. When Abraham and his men were returning from a successful battle, Melchizedek — the priest-king of Salem (Jerusalem) — brought them supplies and blessed them. Later, Abraham returned to the area to sacrifice his son, Isaac — a picture of the later, greater sacrifice that would take place in this same area.

When David became king, the Canaanites had long held the city and had built a strong fortress called Zion. It sat squarely between the king's own tribe of Judah and the northern tribes. David moved against the city almost immediately, but found the fortress too strong to attack directly.

One of the springs mentioned earlier was called Gihon. It was located in the Kidron Valley to the east of the city. To ensure that the city had water during a siege, a tunnel had been dug through the rock leading from behind the walls down to the water. David offered the position of commander-in-chief to whoever led an attack through this tunnel. His nephew Joab volunteered (1 Chronicles 11:6). We aren't told anything about the battle, but we know it was successful because the very next verse informs us that: *David then took up residence in the fortress (1 Chronicles 11:7a).*

David named the city after himself — the City of David. After all, he had conquered it from Israel's enemies. And taking it from enemies gave him a capital that wasn't part of the territory of any individual tribes. It was centrally located and strategically based between the northern tribes and Judah.

David began an ambitious building plan that included a palace and a reinforcement of the walls. The most important move he made, however, was bringing the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem, making the city the center of worship for the entire nation.

David's son, Solomon, was born in Jerusalem. (His mother was Bathsheba.) He became king after David's death. He built the first temple (see Lesson 21), which God honored by filling it with His glory. Solomon also enlarged the city and completed many other building projects including his famous stables and a palace large enough to house his harem of 1,000 women. It must have been an amazing city: *The king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stones, and cedar as plentiful as sycamore ... (1 Kings 10:27).*

We don't have space to cover the entire history of the city: how it was destroyed by the Babylonians, lay in ruins for 50 years, was restored under Ezra and Nehemiah, conquered by Greeks and Romans, how it became the location of Christ's death and resurrection and how it awaits its place in the still-future millennial kingdom.

The capital city of a nation is usually the most important place in that nation, either literally or symbolically. This was, and is, particularly true of Jerusalem because of God's blessings on the city. To get a glimpse of the importance of Jerusalem (also called Zion) in Scripture, look up the following passages and write down what they have to say about the city. Note how, in many of these verses, the city represents the entire nation or the dwelling place of God.

Psalm 48:1-2

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Psalm 87:5-6

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Psalm 132:13

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Isaiah 52:1-2

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Joel 3:17

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Luke 13:34

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Galatians 4:25-26

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Hebrews 12:22

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### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Look up the listed verses and write down what they say about Jerusalem.

### SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

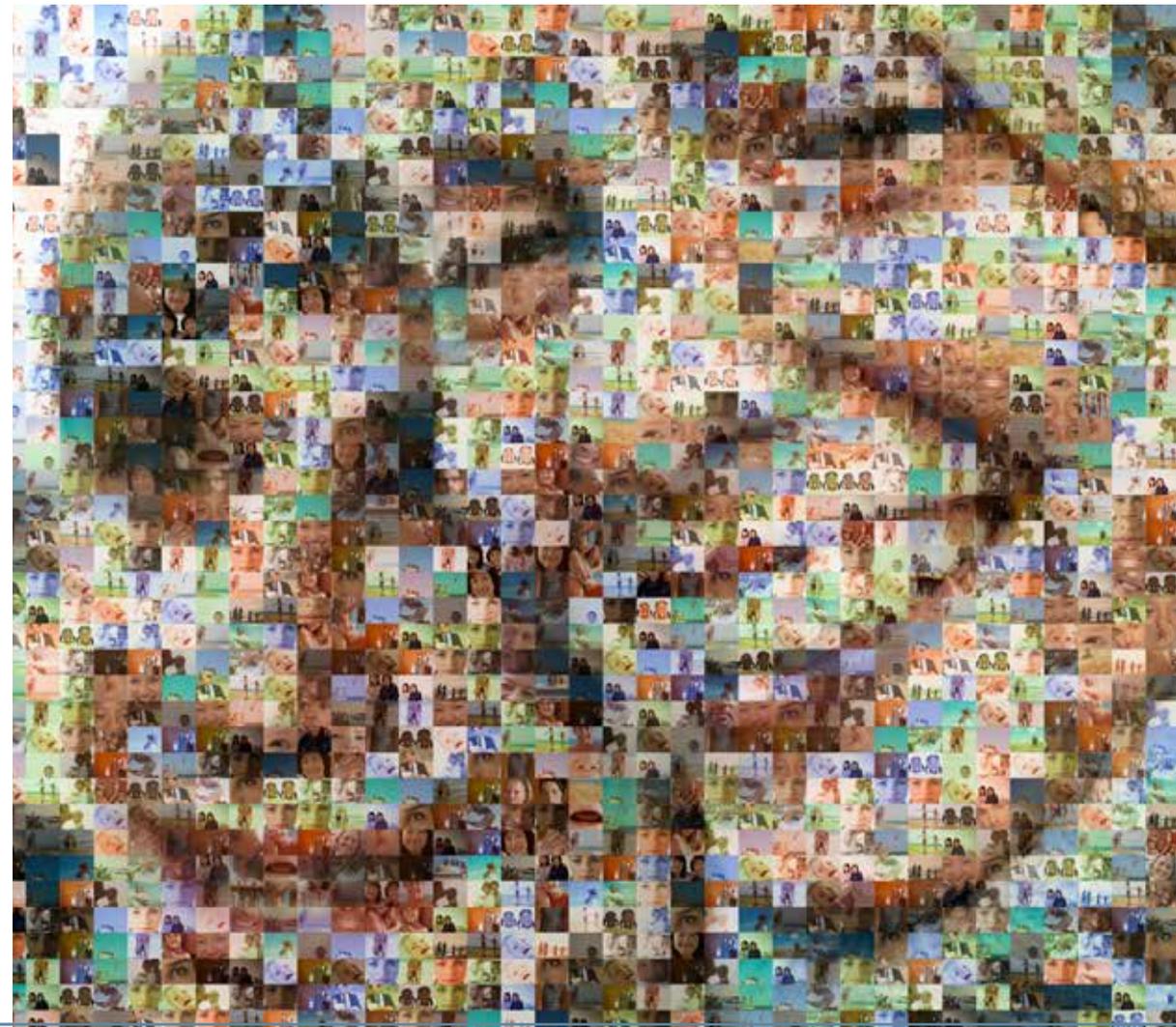
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LESSON 18: Beyond the Old Testament

# THE DAVIDIC COVENANT

Read 2 Samuel 7:4-17.

At first glance, it's just a photo of two kids. But if you take a closer look, you can see that it's made up of smaller photos. If you could zoom in, you could see the individual photos and then the detail of the smaller shots. Each level gives you more of the details.



In Lesson 22 of *Beginnings*, the first book in this series, we studied the covenant God made with Abraham. Some of the promises concerned Abraham personally, but others pointed forward to the nation of Israel and the entire world. But that covenant only gave us the big picture. Abraham was told that he would be the father of a great nation, but it wasn't until later that God revealed that nation to be Israel. Abraham learned that all the nations of the world would be blessed through him, but he wasn't told how this would happen.

Zoom forward about 900 years and we get a little more of the detail. David, a descendent of Abraham and thus included in all the promises made to him, had defeated his enemies. His kingdom was safe. He realized that he was living in a beautiful palace made of cedar but that the place where God's glory dwelt with the nation of Israel was a tent. David wanted to make a permanent temple for the Lord. At first, the prophet Nathan told him to go ahead, but that very night God spoke to Nathan and gave him a message for David.

First of all, God said that David wouldn't be building a temple. God had been with the Israelites ever since they left Egypt and He had never needed a permanent building. God went on to say that His presence had been evident in the life of David himself. He brought David from being a simple shepherd to being king.

In addition, David was a man of war. His son, Solomon, would be a man of peace and a better person to build a temple to God (1 Chronicles 22:7-10).

But God's rejection of David's desire didn't mean that God was unhappy with the king. He called David His servant and made a promise concerning David

himself. (As with Abraham, this promise was not based on anything David did.) ... *I will make your name great ... (2 Samuel 7:9).* God had not made this promise to anybody since He made it to Abraham.

God then made several promises regarding the future. This prophetic portion of the Davidic covenant has several layers of fulfillment.

- A house — David wanted to build a house (temple) for the Lord. God promised to establish a *house* (dynasty) for him. This meaning of the word *house* is still used in reference to the kings and queens of Great Britain — the House of Windsor. God was promising that David's descendents would rule Israel. Of course, this included his son, Solomon — who built the temple David wanted to build — but it also pointed forward to Jesus Christ (Acts 13:22-23).
- Kingdom — Israel reached its greatest historical glory under David's son, Solomon, but there's a much more glorious kingdom coming when Christ returns. In the next sentence, God proclaims that this kingdom will last forever (2 Samuel 7:13) — a statement that could not refer to Solomon, whose kingdom hardly lasted (as we will see) beyond his death.
- God would be His Father and He would be God's Son — This is an obvious reference to Jesus Christ and a prophecy of the virgin birth. All of this is neatly summed up in the angel's words to Mary: *"You will be with child and give birth to a Son, and you are to give Him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The*

*Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; His kingdom will never end."* *"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the Holy One to be born will be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:31-35).* To study more about Mary's relationship to David, see Lesson 7.

- I will punish him — The promise swings back to David's nation, Israel, and to its kings — most of whom needed a great deal of punishment, as we will see.
- God's love would never cease — Israel's greatest days are yet ahead of her. Jesus Christ will return someday to establish His kingdom over the nation, and that kingdom will last forever.

David certainly didn't understand all of this. It wasn't until Jesus Christ appeared on earth that it became clear

to whom many of these promises given to David were referring. But much more remains. Other prophets and the book of Revelation give us some glimpses into the glory that is yet coming. But as with a photo mosaic, we can't yet see all the details.

David is mentioned 57 times in the New Testament, sometimes as the ancestor of Jesus Christ and sometimes as the writer of prophecy. Look in a Bible concordance and find the three references to David in the book of Romans. Write down the verses and give a short explanation of why David's name was used in each passage.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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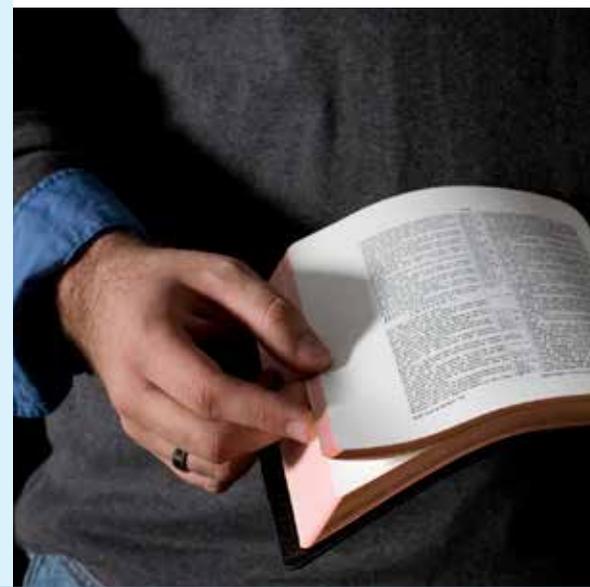
### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Read 2 Samuel 7:4-17.**
2. **Find the three references to David in Romans and briefly explain them.**

### SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



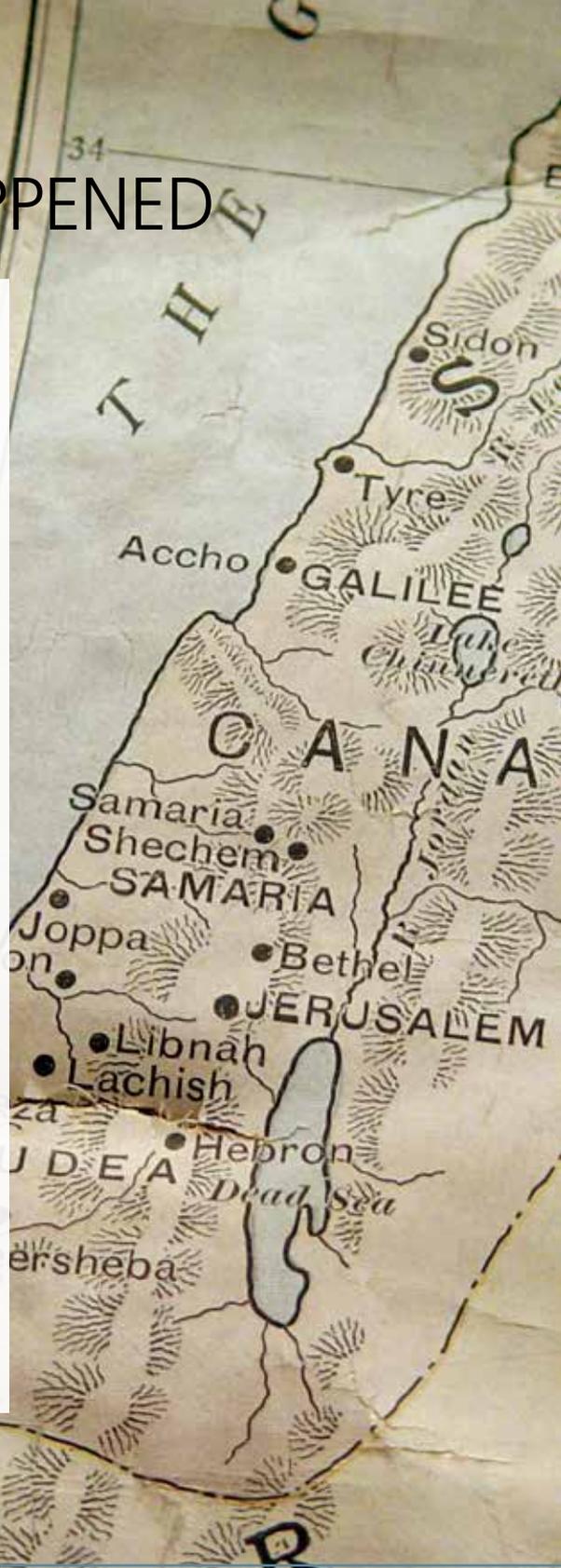
# IT REALLY HAPPENED

In an attempt to feed their children's minds on something more substantial than typical television cartoons, many parents sit them down in front of "Christian" cartoons. The motivation is good, but from the kids' perspective, are they really any different?

As we saw in Lesson 14, kids spend 28 hours a week watching TV. During many of those hours, they are entertained by young actors and actresses portraying kids in situations that are somewhat like those your kids face, but with a touch of magic or fantasy thrown in. It all seems so real. And then we take our kids to church where they get a Sunday school lesson illustrated with figures in bathrobes. It doesn't seem very real at all.

There is nothing wrong with using a variety of methods to get kids interested in the Bible. But if we only do that with cartoons, comic books and picture Bibles, most kids will probably see the Bible as just another source of stories — and rather weird stories at that.

What are you doing to impress upon your children that everything in the Bible is true?



In your child's Sparks handbook, we've met this challenge in several ways.

- The books are filled with stories about several fictional children — Chloe, Joel, Jacob, Emma — and a firefly named Sparky. But these characters are always portrayed as cartoons. And the firefly never speaks of spiritual truths.
- The books also include biographies of real people from the Bible. These sections are always called "biographies," never stories, to stress that they are life stories of real people. And the visuals for these sections are usually photographs to reinforce the sense of authenticity.
- Throughout the biographies, we've included a timeline that gives kids an idea of when in history these events occurred.

As a parent, there are several other steps you can take.

- Use maps as illustrations. Begin by showing your child a map of your area, including your town and neighborhood. Make the connection between places on the map and the actual locations. Then look at a map of the world and point out where Israel is located. Teach your kids that Israel is a real place where people, including kids like them, live and work and go to school.
- Is there someone you know who has been to Israel? Ask that person to show your kids the photos from the trip. Connect the locations in the photos with the locations in the biographies your child has studied in Sparks. If you don't know someone, get on the Internet and find a site with photos of the various locations.

## RED JEWEL 1, PART 2

Jeremiah 32:27

*"I am the LORD, the God of all mankind. Is anything too hard for Me?"*

Leviticus 19:2

*"Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: 'Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy.'"*

Proverbs 20:11

*Even a child is known by his actions, by whether his conduct is pure and right.*

- It is unlikely that you live near any locations mentioned on the Bible, but you might live near a museum that includes artifacts from Israel and the surrounding lands. Do a little research on the museum's collection, then take your children on an outing and show them the items from the Middle East.
- Make it a priority to teach your children to distinguish the truth of Scripture from the mix of messages they get from TV, school and other sources. It's one of the most important aspects of your job as a parent.

### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Memorize and recite the three verses.**

### SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# SOLOMON

Read 1 Kings 3-4, 9-10.

"Some terms and conditions might apply."

- We have the right to cancel, terminate, divert, postpone or delay without cause.
- We may change this contract at any time, including an adjustment of the fees and terms.
- Employees of this station and their families are not eligible.
- We are not responsible for unsolicited submissions.
- Void where prohibited.
- Very rarely, users have had serious heart-related problems. The most common side effects are dizziness, nausea, tiredness and pain or pressure in the chest.
- Don't use this product if you have high blood pressure.
- Only legal residents are eligible.
- Sponsor is not responsible for errors in administration or fulfillment, including without limitation mechanical, human, printing, distribution or production errors and may modify or cancel based upon such error at its sole discretion without liability.
- By providing your email, you grant the right to share your address with others.

You can't read a magazine, watch TV or buy a product without subjecting yourself to long lists of terms and conditions. They're everywhere.

That's what makes God's promises to Abraham and David so amazing — there were no conditions. He told them what He would do for them, and then He did it. He promised David that his son would reign and build a house for the Lord. Solomon did exactly that.



But things were a bit different with Solomon. God never broke His promises to Abraham and David that were fulfilled through Solomon, but His dealings with Solomon were on a conditional basis.

- *Solomon showed his love for the LORD by walking according to the statutes of his father David, except that he offered sacrifices and burned incense on the high places. The king went to Gibeon to offer sacrifices, for that was the most important high place, and Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar (1 Kings 3:3-4).* We aren't told specifically that Solomon's behavior was a condition, but that very night God offered Solomon "whatever you want Me to give you" (v. 5).
- Solomon asked for wisdom to rule God's people. God's response was a series of promises that were based on what the king had done. ... *"Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice, I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be. Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for — both riches and honor — so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings" (1 Kings 3:11-13).*
- Up to this point, God's promises had been based on conditions Solomon had already met. But He now gives one more promise that was decidedly based on Solomon's future behavior. ... *If you walk in My ways and obey My statutes and commands as David your father did, I will give you a long life (1 Kings 3:14).*

This promise was based directly on a promise God had made to the Israelites through Moses when He gave the Ten Commandments. *Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you (Exodus 20:12).* God was telling Solomon to honor his earthly father, David, by obeying his heavenly Father.

To put this another way, God's promise to David that He would establish an eternal dynasty was unconditional. But the line didn't have to go through Solomon. He could be replaced by another son of David.

Solomon received the wisdom and wealth and honor that God had promised, and he became known around the world.

The Lord had other conditional promises for Solomon during the construction of the temple in Jerusalem. *"As for this temple you are building, if you follow My decrees, carry out My regulations and keep all My commands and obey them, I will fulfill through you the promise I gave to David your father" (1 Kings 6:12).*

And after the temple was completed, God said to Solomon, *"As for you, if you walk before Me in integrity of heart and uprightness, as David your father did, and do all I command and observe My decrees and laws, I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father when I said, 'You shall never fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.' But if you or your sons turn away from Me and do not observe the commands and decrees I have given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them, then I will cut off Israel from the land I have given them and will reject this temple I*

*have consecrated for My Name. Israel will then become a byword and an object of ridicule among all peoples" (1 Kings 9:4-7).*

We'll discover how Solomon's sons fared in future lessons. But how did Solomon do?

Read 1 Kings 11:1-13. What was Solomon's downfall?

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Since Solomon broke his part of the agreement, how did God respond?

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God never broke His promises to Solomon. He won't break His promises to you either. Look up the following verses and write down God's promises. For each one, note whether the promise is conditional or unconditional.

Revelation 20:15

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Romans 10:9

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Romans 8:1-2

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### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

### SECTION COMPLETED

1. Read 1 Kings 3-4, 9-10.
2. Read 1 Kings 11:1-13 and answer the two questions.
3. Look up the references and write down God's promise in each.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# THE TEMPLE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

As we saw back in Lesson 17, Jerusalem was the center of worship for the nation of Israel. And beginning with the reign of Solomon, the temple was the center of worship in the city of Jerusalem.

Throughout history, whenever people have gathered for very long in one spot, they've built temples to their god or gods. The difference between these temples and the one Solomon built is the presence of idols — there were none in the temple in Jerusalem. God is omnipresent and isn't confined to the walls of a man-made structure.

So why have a temple at all? The answer can be found in two portions of Scripture.

In Deuteronomy 12, God instructs the Israelites to separate themselves from the wicked practices of the nonbelieving nations that surround them. The tabernacle (later replaced by the temple) was to be a place where the people of God would be able to worship with God's blessings. It was meant to turn them away from pagan worship. In addition, God tells them: *... To that place you must go; there bring your burnt offerings and*



sacrifices, your tithes and special gifts, what you have vowed to give and your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks. There, in the presence of the LORD your God, you and your families shall eat and shall rejoice in everything you have put your hand to, because the LORD your God has blessed you (Deuteronomy 12:5-7).

In other words, the temple wasn't a building made by men for a god, it was a building designed by God for men. It was to be a place where they could remember what God had done for them and thank Him with offerings, sacrifices, tithes and gifts.

In 2 Samuel 7, God gave this message to David: *"Now then, tell My servant David, 'This is what the LORD Almighty says: ... I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men of the earth. And I will provide a place for My people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over My people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies. The LORD declares to you that the LORD Himself will establish a house for you: When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for My Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he will be My son ... But My love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. Your house and your kingdom will endure*

*forever before Me; your throne will be established forever'" (2 Samuel 7:8-16).*

David was a man of war, so the building of the temple of worship was left to his son, Solomon. The temple was a visible symbol of the covenant God made with Israel. He promised that a king from the line of David would reign on the throne forever.

Although David wasn't to build the temple, he had a large role in preparing for it. Remember what you learned in Lesson 16? David, near the end of his life, sinned against God by taking a census. As punishment, God sent a plague that killed 70,000 men. The city of Jerusalem was on the verge of destruction when God, in His mercy, called a halt to His punishment. The angel, who was God's instrument, was at that moment standing ... *on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite (2 Samuel 24:16; 1 Chronicles 21:18).* David was instructed to build an altar at that very spot. This location, also known as Mt. Moriah, was the same place where Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice. David began gathering the materials that Solomon would use to build the temple on that very spot. Vast amounts of gold, silver and jewels were collected and used in the building. Almost 200,000 craftsmen and laborers were used to build it.

The furniture in the temple was very similar to that in the tabernacle. For a review, see Lesson 39 in *Beginnings: Studies in Genesis – Joshua*.

People, unfortunately, are people. Very shortly after the death of Solomon, the nation of Israel split into two separate kingdoms. What followed is a sad record of how the worship of God, and as a result, the temple, was neglected and abused. The precious metals and

jewels in the temple were removed by a succession of invaders and Jewish kings trying to appease their enemies with gifts. Its destruction by the Babylonians occurred in 686 BC, approximately 400 years after it was built.

The temple was rebuilt under the leadership of Zerubbabel, beginning 50 years after its destruction (see Lesson 47). Over the centuries, that building, smaller and less ornate than Solomon's original, was turned into more of a fortress than a place of worship. Herod rebuilt it on a large scale about 15 years before the birth of Jesus Christ. That temple also had a tumultuous history which is beyond the scope of this book.

As we've seen, the temple was the place where, through the priests, the people could communicate with God. But there is no temple today. Where does that leave us? How do we worship and communicate with God? What is our "temple"? Look up the following verses and write what they say in your own words.

1 Corinthians 3:16

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1 Corinthians 6:19-20

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Ephesians 2:21-22

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Now that you have these verses to look at, how do we worship and communicate with God?

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## TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Paraphrase the listed verses and answer the question.

## SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# PROVERBS — SOLOMON'S WISDOM

Read Proverbs 1.

Remember those things your father used to say to you that you vowed you would never say to your kids — but do? My father had several:

- Cheer up, the worst is yet to come.
- When it's time to work, work hard. When it's time to play, play hard.
- (Anytime I complained about anything) Things are tough all over.

I've used all of those on my kids and added many of my own, some of which I've created and some of which I've heard elsewhere:

- When you find yourself in a hole, the first thing to do is stop digging.
- (When my kids didn't want to go along somewhere) If you go, you might not have any fun. But if you don't go, you won't have any fun.
- (When giving my teenagers some new privilege) I'm letting go of the reins, but I'm not getting out of the wagon.

That's what the book of Proverbs is — wise sayings from a father to a son. There is an important difference: Solomon got his sayings from his heavenly Father.

Wisdom is the ability to take facts, arrange them in your mind in a way that makes sense and then use that knowledge to improve your life and the lives of others.

In Lesson 20, we took a quick look at how Solomon got his wisdom. He began his reign well, and God offered him anything he asked for. Solomon replied, "... give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong ..." (1 Kings 3:9). The Lord was pleased with Solomon and honored his request.

*God gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight, and a breadth of understanding as measureless as the sand on the seashore. Solomon's wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the men of the East, and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt. He was wiser than any other man, including Ethan the Ezrahite — wiser than*

*Heman, Calcol and Darda, the sons of Mahol. And his fame spread to all the surrounding nations. He spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs numbered a thousand and five. He described plant life, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of walls. He also taught about animals and birds, reptiles and fish. Men of all nations came to listen to Solomon's wisdom, sent by all the kings of the world, who had heard of his wisdom. (1 Kings 4:29-34)*

Eight hundred of Solomon's proverbs have been gathered in the collection we know as the Old Testament book of Proverbs. In addition, he collected wise sayings from other sources. Hezekiah, king of Judah, collected Solomon's proverbs and added some from other writers. In addition, Chapters 30 and 31 are wisdom from Agur and King Lemuel (about whom we know very little apart from the fact that he listened to and revered his mother).

In the first six verses of Proverbs, we're told exactly why we should study these wise sayings. Write out four of these reasons:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

A recurring theme throughout the book of Proverbs that most differentiates it from other books of wisdom is that wisdom comes from (1:7), and leads to (2:5), God. But it is important to remember that these proverbs are principles, not promises. Many parents have relied on Proverbs 22:6: *Train a child in the way he should go, and*





Because that's what the book is, basically — a music video, 900 BC-style. There are two main leads, one male and one female, who sing about their pasts, their hopes, their dreams and their feelings.

There is a backup group known as The Daughters of Jerusalem.

And there is a lot of symbolic, poetic language that doesn't mean exactly what it appears to say — for example, the poet compares his love's hair to a flock of goats.

Why is Song of Solomon included in the canon of Scripture? It's hard to understand and it's rather sensual in nature. What is God telling us here?

For an answer to that, we need to step back in time.

In Genesis 1 and 2, we read about Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden before they sinned. God created them naked and attractive. (We know this because everything God created was good; therefore nothing was unpleasant in any way.) God also told them to be fruitful and increase in number, thereby ordaining sex between a man and a woman in the context of a marriage relationship. (For more on Adam and Eve, see Lesson 6 in *Beginnings: Studies in Genesis – Joshua*.)

When Adam and Eve sinned, they immediately realized they were naked and they hid. There was something shameful in their exposure. Suddenly this wonderful aspect of a God-ordained relationship was tainted.

The Bible has a great deal to say about the dangers of misusing sex. Solomon himself, the poet who wrote this song, warns his son about these dangers throughout Proverbs. The Old Testament contains pages and pages of laws regulating sexual behavior because of these same dangers. Paul instructed the Corinthians to *Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body (1 Corinthians 6:18).*

Many people have gone too far in the other direction. They saw what the Bible has to say about sexual sin and erroneously concluded that all sex is sinful. Some have preached and practiced abstinence from all sex (and therefore, from marriage) as a means to gain holiness.

The Song of Solomon demonstrates that sex between a man and woman who are married to each other is a good thing in God's sight. We were created with our desires. Yes, sin has perverted them as it has perverted everything else in this world. But as long as we stick with God's guidelines, the physical desires He gave us are good.

The poet describes the desire of the two lovers for each other in terms of visual and physical attraction. It's pretty clear that — within the context of marriage — desire, affection and sex are good. For the record, Song of Solomon isn't the only place where God talks about this. The writer of Hebrews wrote: *Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled ... (Hebrews 13:4, KJV).*

For Christian parents, this is often a difficult topic. We want to model a sound marriage that includes mutual desire and affection. But we also need to

teach our children that sexual desire can quickly get out of hand — and that sex in any form outside of marriage is wrong.

What can we learn and apply from the Song of Solomon? Don't be afraid to kiss and hug (appropriately) around your kids. Show them what a healthy marriage looks like. Your example will form the basis to teach what a healthy marriage looks like.

To maintain a strong relationship, you and your spouse need time alone together. The demands of children, work and the home often make this time alone a rare thing.

Find time. Set aside one night a week for just the two of you. If you have older kids, impress upon them that they are family and as part of the family are expected to help out by watching the younger kids when you go out to dinner. If you don't have older kids who can help out, find another couple in the same situation and trade babysitting nights — you watch their kids for a few hours on Monday, they watch yours for a few hours on Thursday.

Relationships require work. God has ordained marriage as the joining together of two people to form one. The Song of Solomon can help show you how.

## TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Read the Song of Solomon.

## SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# ECCLESIASTES

Read Ecclesiastes 1-2, 12.

Which group of people are more content with life, optimists or pessimists?

Think about it.

Optimists expect everything to be pleasant and successful and to meet or exceed expectations. And since life frequently (usually) doesn't work out that way, they're bound to be disappointed.

Pessimists, on the other hand, expect the worst. When bad things happen, they're prepared to deal with it and are not discouraged. And when things occasionally go well, they're pleasantly surprised. (Yes, of course, you can take pessimism to a ridiculous and even destructive extreme.)

As we saw in an earlier lesson, Solomon had an amazing life.

*... I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be. Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for — both riches and honor — so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings. (1 Kings 3:12-13)*

*Solomon's wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the men of the East, and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt ...*

*And his fame spread to all the surrounding nations. Men of all nations came to listen to Solomon's wisdom, sent by all the kings of the world, who had heard of his wisdom. (1 Kings 4:30-31, 34)*

It would appear, by the world's standards, that Solomon had things going his way. If ever there was a man you would expect to be an optimist ...

And then we come to Ecclesiastes. Solomon probably wrote this book as an old man looking back at his life. He appears to be rather pessimistic. But not right away — we have to read all the way to the second verse. *Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless (Ecclesiastes 1:2b).*

Wow! Meaningless! Other translations use "vanity," "vapor," "futility," "no purpose" and "pointless." Whatever word is used, it sounds bleak.

The Hebrew word used here is *hebel*. As with many foreign words, its full meaning can't easily be captured with one English word. Its basic meaning is "vapor" or "breath," but its full meaning includes a great deal more — vapid, fleeting, ineffectual, ephemeral, absurd, unable to satisfy and transitory.

Solomon's point is that the things of this world, when pursued for their own value or in expectation of achieving satisfaction, are worthless. Everything is ephemeral and without lasting value.

Fame? *There is no remembrance of men of old, and even those who are yet to come will not be remembered by those who follow (1:11).*

Wisdom? *For with much wisdom comes much sorrow; the more knowledge, the more grief (1:18).*



Pleasure? *“Laughter,” I said, “is foolish. And what does pleasure accomplish?” (2:2).*

Unbridled sex? *I amassed ... a harem as well — the delights of the heart of man. Yet ... everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind ... (2:8, 11).*

Work? *What does a man get for all the toil and anxious striving with which he labors under the sun? All his days his work is pain and grief; even at night his mind does not rest. This too is meaningless (2:22-23).*

Government? *If you see the poor oppressed in a district, and justice and rights denied, do not be surprised at such things ... (5:8).*

Wealth? *Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless (5:10).*

The good old days? *Do not say, “Why were the old days better than these?” For it is not wise to ask such questions (7:10).*

The words of other people? *Do not pay attention to every word people say, or you may hear your servant cursing you — for you know in your heart that many times you yourself have cursed others (7:21-22).*

Justice? *There is something else meaningless that occurs on earth: righteous men who get what the wicked deserve, and wicked men who get what the righteous deserve ... (8:14).*

Solomon’s conclusion was that nobody has any control over what happens in life and that nobody understands it either. Attempting to find satisfaction in this world is pointless.

That sounds decidedly pessimistic, don’t you think? So what’s the solution?

Solomon recommends that we enjoy the things God has given us — food and drink, friends, our spouse, our labor — but not to expect them to satisfy us.

Look at Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 and sum up Solomon’s closing statement in your own words.

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**TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:**

- 1. **Read Ecclesiastes 1-2, 12.**
- 2. **Sum up Solomon’s closing statement.**

**SECTION COMPLETED**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

LESSON 25: Bible Survey

# THE KINGDOM IS DIVIDED

Read 1 Kings 12-14.

In 1861, Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated as president of the United States. Eleven southern states were unhappy with Lincoln’s position on slavery and seceded from the Union to form the Confederacy under the leadership of Jefferson Davis. The United States government did not agree that states had the right to secede, and for the next four years fought the armies of the Confederacy. Eventually, after many battles and much bloodshed, the eleven states were defeated and brought back into the United States.



In 928 BC, 2,879 years earlier, Solomon's son Rehoboam was crowned as king of the Hebrew people. Ten tribes were unhappy with Rehoboam's position on slavery and seceded from the kingdom to form the kingdom of Israel under the leadership of Jeroboam. Rehoboam's portion of the kingdom, now known as Judah, did not agree that the tribes had the right to secede, and for the next 17 years there was continual warfare between the armies of the two kings. Eventually, after many battles and bloodshed, Rehoboam died. But in this case, the two parts of the kingdom were never reunited.

The kingdom of Israel reached its greatest glory under David and Solomon. But as we saw in an earlier lesson, God's promises to Solomon were conditional, based on his obedience to God. Solomon had access to wisdom from God, but instead began listening to the foreign wives he shouldn't have married to begin with.

*So the LORD said to Solomon, "Since this is your attitude and you have not kept My covenant and My decrees, which I commanded you, I will most certainly tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your subordinates. Nevertheless, for the sake of David your father, I will not do it during your lifetime. I will tear it out of the hand of your son. Yet I will not tear the whole kingdom from him, but will give him one tribe for the sake of David My servant and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen." (1 Kings 11:11-13)*

And so it came about. Jeroboam was one of Solomon's court officials. The prophet, Ahijah, appeared to Jeroboam and told him of God's plans to divide

the kingdom and make him king of the northern portion (1 Kings 11:29-40). Solomon found out about this and tried to kill his rival, but Jeroboam fled to Egypt and stayed there until the king was dead.

Solomon's son, Rehoboam assumed the crown after his father died. He traveled to Shechem, in the northern part of his kingdom, to consolidate his rule. At first, the northern tribes were willing, but they had a request. Solomon had built the temple and a huge palace, including a stable with stalls for 4,000 horses. To accomplish all this, he had taxed the people heavily and conscripted laborers who had to work for one-third of the year on Solomon's building projects. The people said to Rehoboam, *"Your father put a heavy yoke on us, but now lighten the harsh labor and the heavy yoke he put on us, and we will serve you" (1 Kings 12:4).*

The men who had served the king's father during his days of glory and wisdom were still around. They advised the young king to agree to the request of the men of Israel. But Rehoboam had another idea — he decided to listen to the counsel of his buddies with whom he'd grown up. They advised Rehoboam to say ... *"My little finger is thicker than my father's waist. My father laid on you a heavy yoke; I will make it even heavier. My father scourged you with whips; I will scourge you with scorpions" (1 Kings 12:10-11).*

And that was it. The men of Israel went home and made Jeroboam their king, just as Ahijah had prophesied. Rehoboam gathered an army from the two tribes that still supported him — Judah and Benjamin — but the Lord told him to stop. Battle was avoided for

the moment, but in 1 Kings 14:30 we find out that during the entire 17 years that Rehoboam reigned in Jerusalem, *there was continual warfare between Rehoboam and Jeroboam.*

You might think that the two kings, Rehoboam and Jeroboam, having seen God's punishment of Solomon, would focus their attention on God and direct their people to worship and obey Him. Look up the following verses and write down how well they did.

Jeroboam (Israel)

1 Kings 14:7-11

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Rehoboam (Judah)

1 Kings 14:22-28

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The kingdom was divided and to this day has not yet been reunited. Those that returned were almost all from Judah. But the story doesn't end there. The prophet Ezekiel writes: ... *This is what the Sovereign LORD says: "I will take the Israelites out of the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from all around and bring them back into their own land. I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. There will be one king over all of them and they will never again be two nations or be divided into two kingdoms. They will no longer defile themselves with their idols and vile images or with any of their offenses, for I will save them from all their sinful backsliding, and I will cleanse them. They will be My people, and I will be their God (Ezekiel 37:21-23).*

That part, however, is still in the future.

### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Read 1 Kings 12-14.
2. Write down how well Jeroboam and Rehoboam obeyed God.

### SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

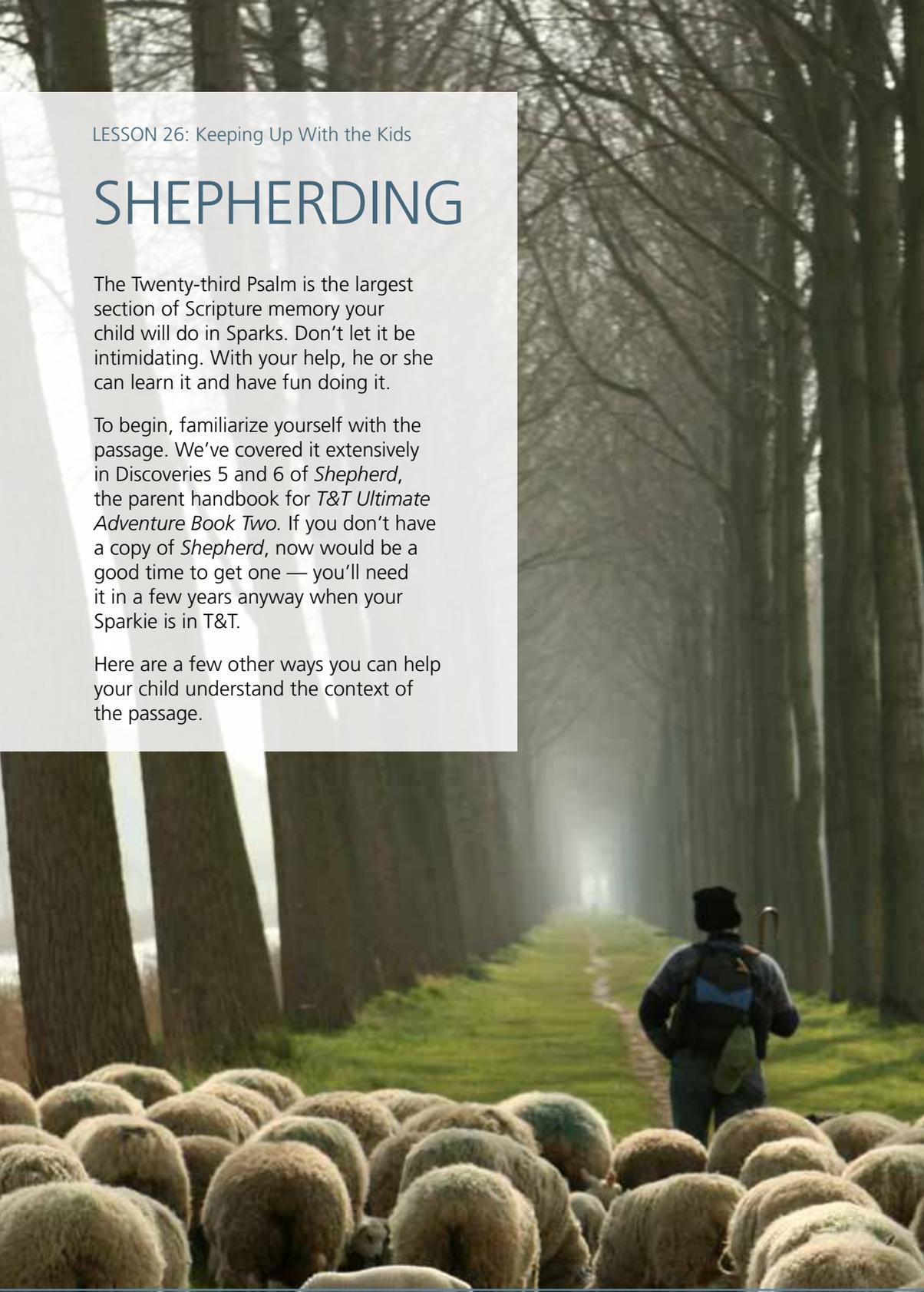
*"They will be My people, and I will be their God." Ezekiel 37:23*

# SHEPHERDING

The Twenty-third Psalm is the largest section of Scripture memory your child will do in Sparks. Don't let it be intimidating. With your help, he or she can learn it and have fun doing it.

To begin, familiarize yourself with the passage. We've covered it extensively in Discoveries 5 and 6 of *Shepherd*, the parent handbook for *T&T Ultimate Adventure Book Two*. If you don't have a copy of *Shepherd*, now would be a good time to get one — you'll need it in a few years anyway when your Sparkie is in T&T.

Here are a few other ways you can help your child understand the context of the passage.



## IDEA 1 — VISIT A FARM

In many parts of the country, local farms offer tours where farm life is demonstrated. A lot of historical sites also have “living farm” programs in which costumed interpreters do farm work as it was done in the past. If you can find one of these locations near you, or if your family is headed for vacation soon, visit one of these places. Ask the workers about the details of animal care — feeding, health, raising young, protection from weather and other dangers. Remind your kids about what they're learning in (or learned from) Psalm 23. Discuss how the things they've learned about taking care of animals can be applied to the Lord's care for them.

## IDEA 2 — TAKE A HIKE

Take a hike through a local forest preserve. With your kids, find spots that most remind you of the settings in Psalm 23. Find a green pasture, some still water and a scary-looking place that can stand in for “the valley of the shadow of death.” Explain to your kids how those settings symbolize our situation on earth and how the Lord helps us with all of them. To end the day, have a picnic and talk about God's provisions.

## IDEA 3 — MAKE A TABLE-TOP PSALM

If the first two ideas won't work because of where you live or the time of year, here's one you can do at your kitchen table. Gather a large supply of Play-Doh® or other modeling clay and construct props to illustrate the psalm. You can make a flock of sheep, a shepherd with a staff and rod, a green pasture, a quiet brook, a valley with dangers, a table, etc. Once you've made your visual psalm, go over the verses with your Sparkie and have him or her point to the various scenes in turn.

## GREEN JEWEL 1

Psalm 23:1-6

*The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.*

*He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters.*

*He restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake.*

*Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.*

*You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.*

*Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.*

1 Peter 5:7

*Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.*

## IDEA 4 — YOUR IDEA HERE.

Our purpose is to get your creative juices flowing. You don't have to use one of our ideas, but you can and should do something to make memorization enjoyable and memorable for your kids.

## TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Memorize and recite all seven verses.**

## SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# GOOD KINGS AND BAD KINGS

For the next 387 (give or take a couple) years after the death of Solomon, a progression of kings ruled over the separate nations of Judah and Israel. Some were good, but most weren't. Some lasted 50 years or more, others only a matter of days. Before we delve into the lives of a few of the more significant and interesting kings, let's take a look at the big picture. Look up the verses after each name and write down what sort of king each man was.



## The Kings of Judah

**1. Rehoboam** (17 years): 1 Kings 14:22-24 did evil, worshiped other gods

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**2. Abijah** (3 years) 1 Kings 15:3

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**3. Asa** (41 years) 2 Chronicles 14:2-6

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**4. Jehoshaphat** (25 years) 2 Chronicles 17:3; 19:2-3

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**5. Jehoram** (8 years) 2 Chronicles 21:4-6

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**6. Ahaziah** (1 year) 2 Chronicles 22:2-4

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(Athaliah, Ahaziah's mother, killed all the members of the royal family except for Joash who escaped. Athaliah ruled for 6 years.)

**7. Joash** (40 years) 2 Kings 12:2-3; 2 Chronicles 24:17-22

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**8. Amaziah** (29 years) 2 Chronicles 25:2

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**9. Uzziah** (52 years) 2 Chronicles 26:4-5; 16

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**10. Jotham** (16 years) 2 Chronicles 27:2

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**11. Ahaz** (16 years) 2 Kings 16:2-4

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(approximately 5 years without a king)

**12. Hezekiah** (29 years) 2 Kings 18:5-7

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13. **Manasseh** (55 years) 2 Chronicles 33:1-7; 12-13

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14. **Amon** (2 years) 2 Chronicles 33:22-23

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15. **Josiah** (31 years) 2 Chronicles 34:2

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16. **Jehoahaz** (3 months) 2 Kings 23:32

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17. **Jehoiakim** (11 years) 2 Kings 23:36-37

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18. **Jehoiachin** (3 months) 2 Kings 24:8-9

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19. **Zedekiah** (11 Years) 2 Kings 24:19

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## The Kings of Israel

1. **Jeroboam I** (22 years) 1 Kings 14:7-11 did evil, worshiped other gods

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2. **Nadab** (2 years) 1 Kings 15:26

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3. **Baasha** (24 years) 1 Kings 15:34

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4. **Elah** (2 years) 1 Kings 16:9; 13

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5. **Zimri** (7 days!) 1 Kings 16:18-19

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6. **Omri** (12 years) 1 Kings 16:25

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7. **Ahab** (22 years) 1 Kings 16:30

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8. **Ahaziah** (2 years) 1 Kings 22:52-53

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9. **Joram** (12 years) 2 Kings 3:2-3

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10. **Jehu** (28 years) 2 Kings 10:28-31

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11. **Jehoahaz** (17 years) 2 Kings 13:2

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12. **Jehoash** (16 years) 2 Kings 13:11

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Are you detecting a trend here?

**13. Jeroboam II** (41 years) 2 Kings 14:24

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**14. Zechariah** (6 months) 2 Kings 15:9

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**15. Shallum** (1 month) 2 Kings 15:10; 13-15

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**16. Menahem** (10 years) 2 Kings 15:18

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**17. Pekahiah** (2 years) 2 Kings 15:24

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**18. Pekah** (20 years) 2 Kings 15:28

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(9 years without a king)

**19. Hoshea** (9 years) 2 Kings 17:2

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People often speak of the anger and cruelty of the "God of the Old Testament." But after taking a quick look at the way His chosen people behaved, it seems, rather, that God exhibited a great deal of patience.

**TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:**

- 1. Look up the listed verses and write a few words about each king.**

**SECTION COMPLETED**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

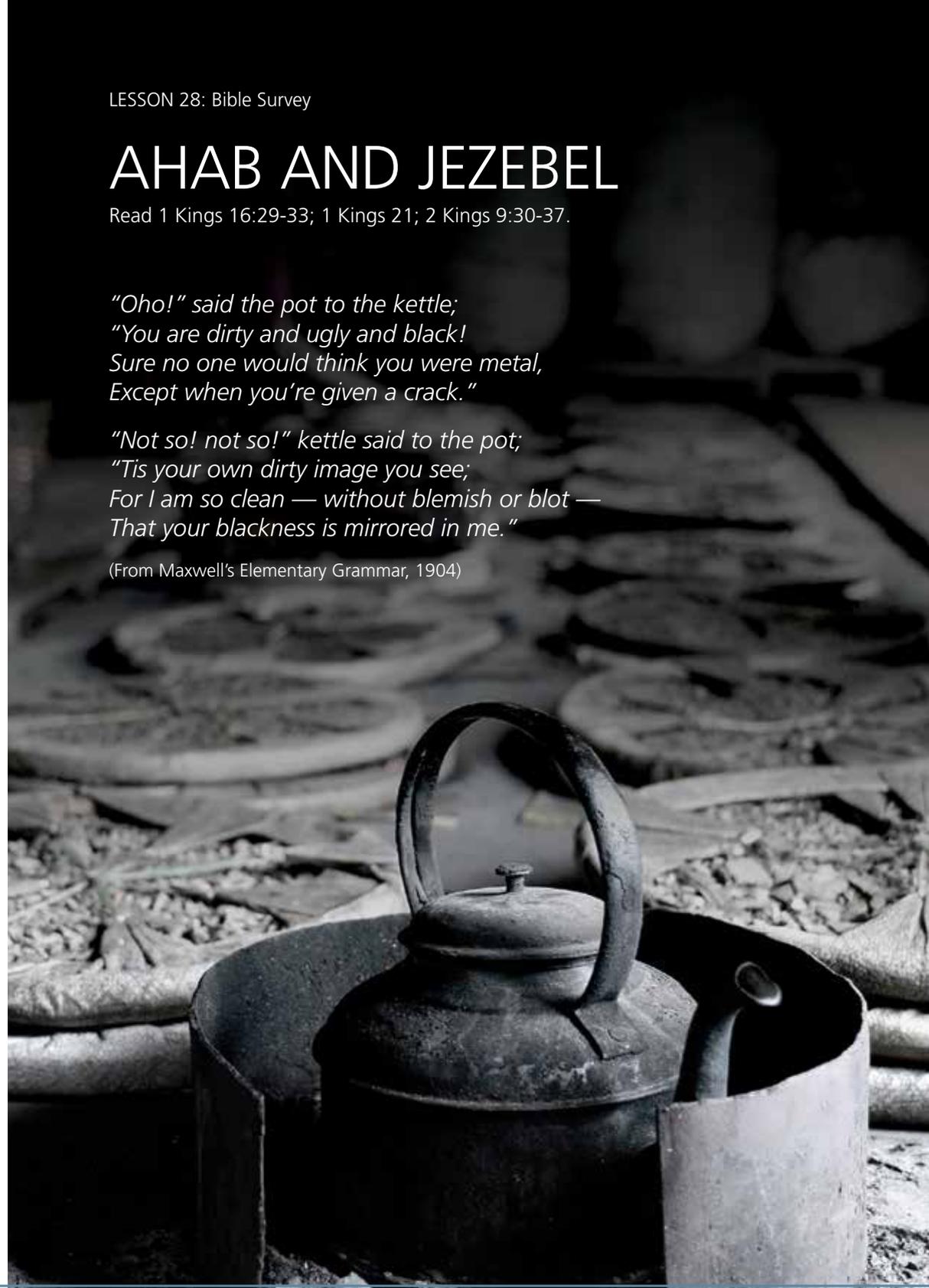
# AHAB AND JEZEBEL

Read 1 Kings 16:29-33; 1 Kings 21; 2 Kings 9:30-37.

*"Oho!" said the pot to the kettle;  
"You are dirty and ugly and black!  
Sure no one would think you were metal,  
Except when you're given a crack."*

*"Not so! not so!" kettle said to the pot;  
"Tis your own dirty image you see;  
For I am so clean — without blemish or blot —  
That your blackness is mirrored in me."*

(From Maxwell's Elementary Grammar, 1904)



Ahab wasn't much of a man. Consider the facts:

1. He allowed his wife to take over the affairs of the kingdom and to attempt to wipe out all the prophets of God (1 Kings 18:4).

2. Though the famine was punishment for his own disobedience, he whined when he met Elijah during the famine, "Is that you, you troubler of Israel?" (1 Kings 18:17b).

3. While Ahab was content to obey Elijah, his wife, Jezebel, set about destroying the prophet (1 Kings 19:2).

4. Ben-Hadad, the king of Syria sent word to Ahab — "Your silver and gold are mine, and the best of your wives and children are mine" (1 Kings 20:3). And Ahab said, "OK."

5. A prophet told Ahab that the Lord would enable Israel to destroy the Syrian army, and Ahab's response was to ask who was supposed to begin the battle (1 Kings 20:14).

6. Once the battle started, the 232 servants advanced and routed the entire enemy. They were followed by Ahab's army and then, when all the actual fighting was done, by Ahab himself (1 Kings 20:21).

7. Ahab was instructed by God to kill Ben-Hadad, but instead he invited his enemy to join him in his chariot (1 Kings 20:33).

8. When Naboth wouldn't sell his orchard to Ahab, the king ... lay on his bed sulking and refused to eat (1 Kings 21:4).

We could go on, but let's switch our study to Ahab's lovely wife, Jezebel. She walked in and found her husband sulking like a child. She always had been the stronger person in the marriage, so she decided to take over. Jezebel wrote letters to the rulers of Jezreel. She told them: ... "Proclaim a day of fasting and seat Naboth in a prominent place among the people. But seat two scoundrels opposite him and have them testify that he has cursed both God and the king. Then take him out and stone him to death" (1 Kings 21:9-10).

Amazing, isn't it? This evil woman — who influenced her husband toward worshiping the false god Baal, who did her utmost to wipe out all the prophets of the true God and who pronounced a vendetta against Elijah — had the audacity to accuse Naboth of ... blasphemy!

Ahab and Jezebel were quite the pair.

God sometimes allows evil to flourish for a season, but eventually His justice will prevail. Ahab and Jezebel both learned about their deaths in advance. Look up the following passages and answer the questions.

Why did God say Ahab would die? (1 Kings 20:42)

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Elijah gave Ahab the details of his death. What were they? (1 Kings 21:19)

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The prophet Micaiah gave some more details. What did he say? (1 Kings 22:20)

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How were all these prophecies fulfilled? (1 Kings 22:34-38)

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How did Elijah predict Jezebel's end? (1 Kings 21:23)

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How did Jezebel die? (2 Kings 9:30-37)

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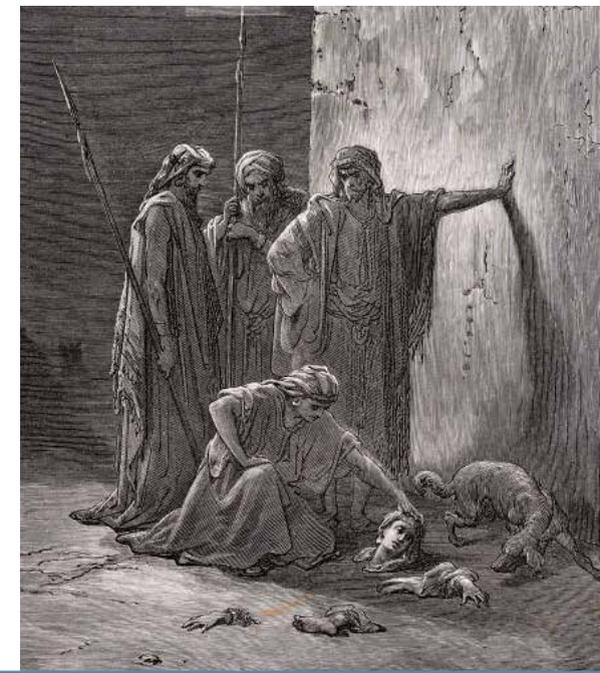
### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Read 1 Kings 16:29-33; 1 Kings 21; 2 Kings 9:30-37.
2. Look up the passages about Ahab and Jezebel and answer the questions.

### SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



# ELIJAH

Read 1 Kings 18-19.

Poison ivy. Or maybe a cornered skunk. Where I've lived all my life, those are the most dangerous wild things I'm likely to run into. That's why, when I took a walk by myself through a nature preserve in central Florida several years ago, I was a little out of my comfort zone. This place had alligators and several species of poisonous snakes.

The trail loop ran along a low levee with large patches of marsh on both sides. I proceeded cautiously, but after a couple of miles I hadn't seen anything frightening. I started to relax.

That's when I spotted the alligator. It was about four-feet (1.2 m) long. It was resting on the side of the levee, facing away from me down towards the water. I stopped and considered my choices. I could turn around and walk the two

miles (3.2 km) back the way I'd come. Or I could summon the courage to walk past the alligator and only have to walk a half-mile (.8 km) to my car.

I decided to go for it. I quietly and quickly strode past the beast, my eyes searching for any sign of movement. It never budged. Might as well have been a log for all the threat it presented. I continued on, feeling rather proud of myself.

That's when I spotted the second alligator. This one was quite a bit larger than the first one, maybe as long as six feet (1.8 m). (I didn't bother with an exact measurement.) It was facing up the levee, toward me, staring me in the face. I was now between the two alligators, with who knew how many more moving in for the feeding frenzy. (I know about these things — I've seen it in movies.)

Standing there, waiting to die, didn't seem like a very attractive option. I pondered and came up with a plan. I was carrying a camera tripod. I extended the legs to their full length, pointed them at the alligator and started walking. If that thing wanted me, it would have to eat five feet (1.5 m) of metal tripod first.

The alligator didn't move as I walked swiftly by. It might still be lying there, for all I know.

To any of you who live where alligators are regularly seen, my predicament that day probably sounds silly. But for a city boy from the north, I felt rather brave. I faced the danger, found courage from somewhere and proceeded to my goal.

This situation gave me a very, very small taste of what Elijah might have felt when he had to confront Ahab and Jezebel.

To begin with, *Ahab did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger than did all the kings of Israel before him (1 Kings 16:33b)*. God was angry because Ahab had established the worship of Baal throughout Israel.

The first time we get acquainted with Elijah, he's confronting this evil king and predicting a drought. Why a drought? Because Baal was thought to be the god of storms. In other words, Elijah went before this evil king and told him that he, Elijah, was more powerful than



the king's god. Of course we know that Elijah's power came from God, and Elijah knew it too, but that doesn't lessen the impact of what he said.

For three and a half years, Elijah made himself scarce. During that time, Jezebel was searching for and killing all the prophets of God that she could find. In fact, Elijah was told by Obadiah that ... *there is not a nation or kingdom where my master [Ahab] has not sent someone to look for you ... (1 Kings 18:10).*

Elijah stood up to Ahab and told him he was the cause of all the nation's problems. Then he challenged Ahab's god to a duel — and won.

*Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, "May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them." (1 Kings 19:1-2)*

Suddenly, Elijah found himself way out of his comfort zone. As far as we know, this is the only time in his life that Elijah gave in to fear. For a moment, he stopped relying on the Lord. He ran for his life.

Our God doesn't abandon us when the pressures of life weigh down on us. He comforted Elijah in several ways — just as He comforts us in our difficulties. Look up the following verses and write down how God comforted Elijah and how He comforts us in similar ways.

1 Kings 19:5-6

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Philippians 4:19

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1 Kings 19:12-13

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Colossians 1:5

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1 Kings 19:18

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1 Thessalonians 5:11

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### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Read 1 Kings 18-19.**
2. **Look up the passages and write down how God comforts Elijah and us.**

### SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

LESSON 30: Bible Survey

# ELISHA

Read 2 Kings 4-6.

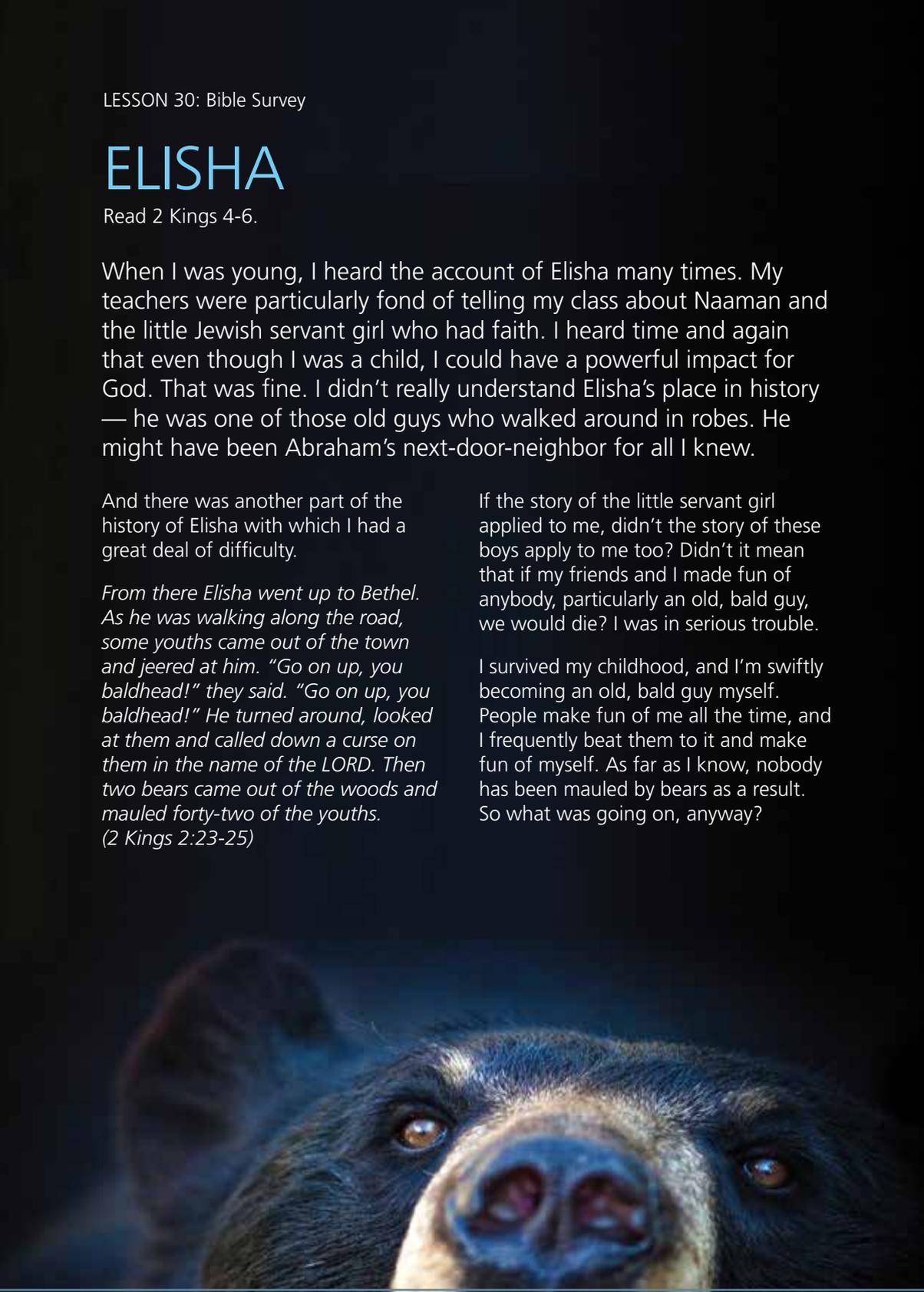
When I was young, I heard the account of Elisha many times. My teachers were particularly fond of telling my class about Naaman and the little Jewish servant girl who had faith. I heard time and again that even though I was a child, I could have a powerful impact for God. That was fine. I didn't really understand Elisha's place in history — he was one of those old guys who walked around in robes. He might have been Abraham's next-door-neighbor for all I knew.

And there was another part of the history of Elisha with which I had a great deal of difficulty.

*From there Elisha went up to Bethel. As he was walking along the road, some youths came out of the town and jeered at him. "Go on up, you baldhead!" they said. "Go on up, you baldhead!" He turned around, looked at them and called down a curse on them in the name of the LORD. Then two bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of the youths. (2 Kings 2:23-25)*

If the story of the little servant girl applied to me, didn't the story of these boys apply to me too? Didn't it mean that if my friends and I made fun of anybody, particularly an old, bald guy, we would die? I was in serious trouble.

I survived my childhood, and I'm swiftly becoming an old, bald guy myself. People make fun of me all the time, and I frequently beat them to it and make fun of myself. As far as I know, nobody has been mauled by bears as a result. So what was going on, anyway?



To begin with, the word for *youths* indicates that these “children” were likely older teenagers or even in their twenties. In other words, they were old enough to know exactly what they were doing. The “baldhead” term was probably in reference to some hairstyle or clothing that Elisha wore to show he was a prophet. And their jeers of “Go on up,” might well have been a taunt, daring Elisha to travel to heaven as Elijah had.

A group of young men, knowing full well that Elisha was a prophet of God, came out — maybe with the knowledge and urging of their parents — and ridiculed him. They were showing willful disrespect to God, and they paid the price.

Why? Because Elisha was the representative of God to a nation that had turned its back on Him. Elisha performed many miracles, but none of them were done in his own power. They were intended to show people that God was very real and very worth listening to.

Let’s take a look at Elisha’s career.

After Elijah was taken up to heaven, Elisha picked up his cloak and walked to the Jordan River. He hit the water with the cloak. What happened then? (2 Kings 2:13-14)

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What do you think that showed? \_\_\_\_\_

Elisha traveled to Jericho where the men told him (2 Kings 2:19-22) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_. What did Elisha do? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_. Whom did he give credit to? \_\_\_\_\_

King Joram of Israel asked King Jehoshaphat to help him fight the rebel king of Moab. Their army ran out of water and called Elisha. What did he tell them to do?

(2 Kings 3:15-24) \_\_\_\_\_

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What happened the next morning? \_\_\_\_\_

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A widow of another prophet appealed to Elisha because (2 Kings 4:1-7) \_\_\_\_\_

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Elisha told her to \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think this miracle demonstrated? \_\_\_\_\_

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A woman in Shunem went out of her way for the prophet, building him a room on her house for him to stay whenever he was in town. In response, Elisha told her (2 Kings 4:8-37)

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What other miracle did Elisha perform in God's power for this woman? \_\_\_\_\_

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In Gilgal, Elisha used flour to (2 Kings 4:38-41) \_\_\_\_\_

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There was famine in the land, but Elisha fed 100 men with (2 Kings 4:42-44) \_\_\_\_\_

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Syria was one of Israel's enemies, and Naaman was the commander of its army. He wasn't a Jew, but that didn't mean that he couldn't be saved. After Elisha cures him of his leprosy, Naaman says (2 Kings 5:17)

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The army of Syria (Aram) attacks Israel again. The king finds out that Elisha knows his every move, so he orders his army to surround Dothan and capture the prophet. How did Elisha deal with this threat? (2 Kings 6:16-23)

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Elisha lived many more years and made several other prophecies. He died when Jehoash was king of Israel. But even death didn't stop his miracles. What miracle occurred after Elisha's death? (2 Kings 13:20-21)

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The ministry of Elisha contained a very important lesson for God's people. When they listened to the prophet and obeyed God, they prospered. And when they didn't, they didn't.

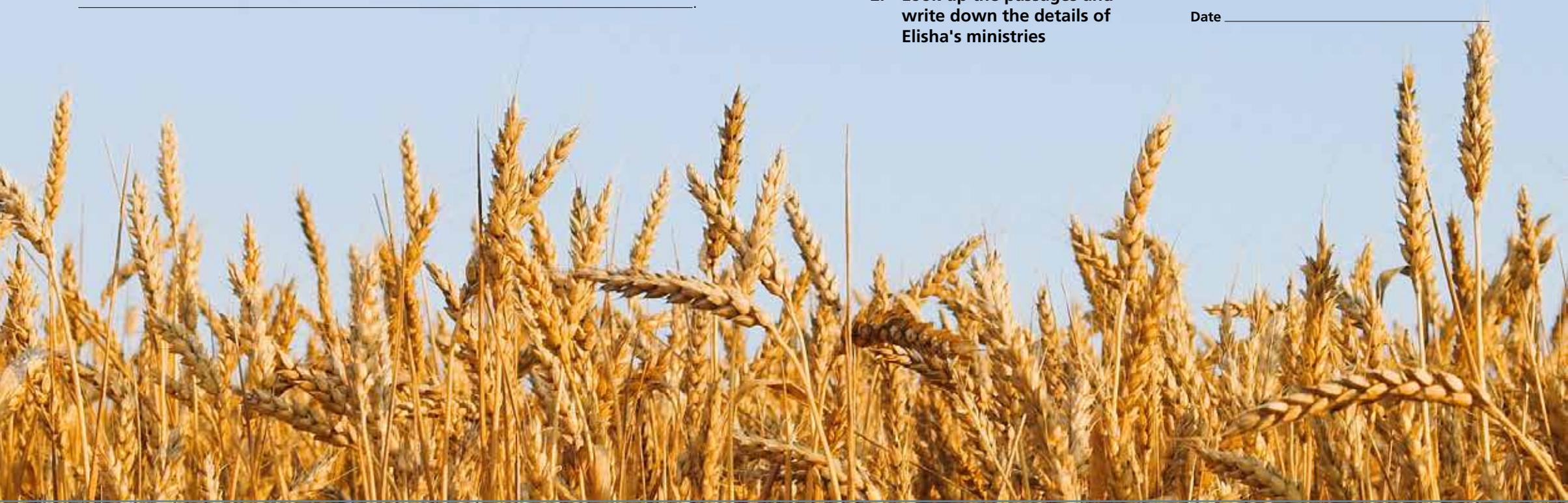
### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

### SECTION COMPLETED

1. Read 2 Kings 4-6.
2. Look up the passages and write down the details of Elisha's ministries

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



# MISSIONS

The first three lessons in Red Jewel 2 in your child's WingRunner handbook are on missions. You and your child are asked to pick a country and discover some information about it. As a parent, you are in a great position to make these lessons come to life.



To begin, help your child pick an interesting country and look up the required information. This includes:

1. A popular kids' name in that country
2. Two facts about the country
3. A picture of something from that country (a person, a flag or food)

But why stop there? On the Internet, you should be able to find recipes for food from your country of choice. Have a family dinner that features that food and discuss what dinner might be like for someone living in that country. See if your library has a travel video about that country and watch it together as a family.

Does your church support missionaries? Pick a country that one of your church's missionaries serves in. When that missionary visits, invite him or her over for dinner and talk about the country. If you can't do that, write him or her a letter or email and have your children ask some questions. Missionaries will be thrilled to know that people are thinking and praying about them.

But there's another way your family can get involved. Awana has clubs all around the world, many of them in countries where churches need financial assistance to run a Sparks club. Visit the Awana Web site at [awana.org](http://awana.org) and take a look at the Awana International page. It includes several options for giving, and you can target a particular country with your financial gifts.

The Web page also includes calendars that make it easy for you to pray for specific needs of clubs in particular regions of the world.

What can your family do to raise money to help support clubs in other countries?

- Have a family garage sale and allow your Sparkie to sell clothes and toys she's outgrown.
- Get together with other families in your church and have a bake sale to raise money.
- Organize a pot-luck dinner with a per-plate cost to raise money. Let your Sparkie decorate the tables.
- Talk with your child's Sparks leader about other ideas.

## TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Memorize and recite the verse.

## SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### RED JEWEL 2

Mark 16:15

*He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."*



# JONAH

Read Jonah.

Q. Did this really happen?

A. Yes. Jesus Christ compares His own death on the cross with Jonah's experience (Matthew 12:40). He wouldn't have done that if Jonah's story wasn't true.

Q. So God created a special huge fish just to eat Jonah?

A. Maybe. God certainly has the power to create a fish for the occasion. But He didn't need to. There are several species swimming around the ocean today that could have done it.

Q. But it was a fish, right? Not a whale?

A. We don't know for sure. The Hebrew word used in the Bible can mean either BIG fish or whale. It literally means a "large sea creature" or "sea monster."

Q. Monster?

A. Not a monster like the Creature from the Black Lagoon. Monster like "monster" truck — a really BIG truck. Therefore, a really BIG fish.

Q. But don't whales have tiny little throats?

A. Some do, some don't. The sperm whale eats giant squid that get as long as 40 feet (12 m).

Q. If it was an existing fish, what kind could it be?

A. There are four species of shark large enough: the whale shark and the white shark are prime candidates. And here's a fun fact to know: sharks don't have throats. Anything that gets past the teeth goes straight to the stomach. Anything. One shark stomach contained the front half of a crocodile, a sheep's leg, three seagulls, two unopened cans of peas and a tin of cigarettes. Another was found with two (2!) six-foot (1.8-m) sharks in its stomach.

Q. So a shark just happened to be wandering by?

A. Jonah says God provided a fish. The word *provided*, in the Hebrew, means "assigned." So God probably directed this particular fish to be in this particular spot at just the right time. Think about it. While Jonah was running away to hop on a boat to Tarshish, this huge fish may well have already been swimming from hundreds of miles (kilometers) away for its rendezvous with the boat.

Q. How did Jonah live for three days in the fish?

A. We aren't told. Sometimes there are pockets of air in whales' stomachs. Or, God easily could have kept him alive miraculously. But we aren't actually told that he did live that long. Maybe he died and God resurrected him. Read chapter two carefully. Jonah mentions being in the *depths of the grave* and says that God brought his *life up from the pit*.

Jonah prophesied during the reign of King Jeroboam II. God instructed him to give a message of warning to the people of Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian Empire. The people of that nation were known for being wicked and for torturing their captives. Jonah didn't want to go to the Gentiles, and he probably didn't want to be tortured. Who does?

Jonah made other plans, but God didn't. God brought on a storm that threatened to destroy the ship on which Jonah was fleeing. The prophet told the sailors that it was his God who caused the storm because of him. Reluctantly, they tossed him overboard.

Jonah got the point. He prayed inside the fish and after he was vomited out on the beach, God spoke to him again. This time Jonah obeyed. He told the Ninevites that they had 40 days to repent of their sins. Amazingly, they believed him. They fasted and prayed, and God forgave them.

Jonah was upset. He had obeyed God and delivered His message to the Ninevites, but he really felt that the Assyrians should be destroyed. He was so mad about God's mercy toward them that he asked God to take his life. God sent a vine and a scorching wind to make His point — that His purpose is for people to turn to Him and that He takes no pleasure in the death of anyone.

OK, that's a nice anecdote. Man disobeys; man gets swallowed by a fish. Man gets out of the fish and obeys but isn't happy about it. Why does God want us to know this?

God uses the event to make the point that He is *a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity (Jonah 4:2b)*.



- September, 1939 — British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, concerned with the increasing belligerence of Germany, meets with Hitler. He returns to London and makes this statement: *“We, the German Führer and Chancellor, and the British Prime Minister, have had a further meeting today and are agreed in recognizing that the question of Anglo-German relations is of the first importance for two countries and for Europe. We regard the agreement signed last night and the Anglo-German Naval Agreement as symbolic of the desire of our two peoples never to go to war with one another again. We are resolved that the method of consultation shall be the method adopted to deal with any other questions that may concern our two countries, and we are determined to continue our efforts to remove possible sources of difference, and thus to contribute to assure the peace of Europe. My good friends this is the second time in our history that there has come back from Germany to Downing Street peace with honor. I believe it is peace in our time.”*
- September, 1939 — Germany invades Poland and World War II begins.

Chamberlain tried appeasing a power-hungry leader, giving Hitler what he wanted in hopes that he would be satisfied. It didn't work. It never does. Just look at the kingdom of Israel.

Things weren't going very well for the nation to begin with. King Zechariah was assassinated by Shallum in 753 BC. One month later, Shallum was assassinated by Menahem (2 Kings 15:10-14). Menahem lasted 10 years, but they weren't good years.

Pul, from Assyria (near today's northern Iraq), formed an army and began attacking the surrounding nations. He wasn't satisfied with plundering his victims — he made the conquered nations part of the Assyrian empire. Soon it was Israel's turn.

*Then Pul king of Assyria invaded the land, and Menahem gave him a thousand talents of silver to gain his support and strengthen his own hold on the kingdom. Menahem exacted this money from Israel. Every wealthy man had to contribute fifty shekels of silver to be given to the king of Assyria. So the*

*king of Assyria withdrew and stayed in the land no longer. (2 Kings 15:19-20)*

Israel was spared for the moment, but was decidedly in an inferior position. Then Menahem died and his son, Pekahiah became king. He lasted two years before he was assassinated by Pekah. (Are you noticing a pattern here?)

Then Pul (also called Tiglath-pileser) came back with the Assyrian army and things got complicated. Israel (the northern kingdom) joined with Syria to fight Assyria. They tried to get Judah (the southern kingdom) to join them in their battle but Ahaz, the king of Judah resisted. He decided to throw his nation's fate in the hands of Assyria. The prophet Isaiah warned Ahaz against this risky move. He called the combined forces of Israel and Syria ... *two smoldering stubs of firewood ... (Isaiah 7:4)* or, in other words, not nearly as much of a threat as Assyria. But Ahaz didn't listen. He made a deal with Assyria, which then attacked Israel and laid waste to the northern part of the nation. As a result — here we go again — Pekah, king of Israel, was assassinated by Hoshea.

There's not much more to add. Hoshea reigned over the remnants of Israel for nine years. He paid tribute to Assyria for a while, but then he decided to join up with Egypt instead. When Shalmaneser (who was now the king of Assyria) heard about this, he captured Hoshea and threw him in prison. The final city in Israel to hold out was Samaria. It lasted three years and then it was all over. The Israelites were taken out of their land and settled in other nations. Israel had ceased to exist.

Way back in 1 Kings 14:15-16, the prophet Ahijah had warned Israel what would happen if they worshiped false gods: *... the LORD will strike Israel, so that it will be like a reed swaying in the water. He will uproot Israel from this good land that He gave to their forefathers and scatter them beyond the River, because they provoked the LORD to anger by making Asherah poles. And He will give Israel up because of the sins Jeroboam has committed and has caused Israel to commit.*

The throne of Israel was continually overthrown by plots and assassinations. Assyria, a large and aggressive nation, was out looking for conquest. But the Bible makes it very clear why Israel was defeated. Read 2 Kings 17:7-23 and write down at least five reasons for Israel's destruction.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Scattered individuals from the 10 northern tribes show up here and there in Scripture after this point, but the nation and the individual tribes no longer appear in the record.

### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

- Read 2 Kings 15, 17.**
- Read 2 Kings 17:7-23 and write down five reasons Israel was destroyed.**

### SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# PROPHETS

Type “How can you tell if” into an Internet search site and here’s what you’ll find (along with about 4,640,000 other results).

- How can you tell if a watermelon is ripe?
- How can you tell if your girlfriend really likes you?
- How can you tell if a crescent moon is waxing or waning?
- How can you tell if you’re a victim of credit fraud?
- How can you tell if some kid is the reincarnation of the Buddha?
- How can you tell if a nonresponsive reptile is dead?
- How can you tell if your house is haunted?
- How can you tell if someone has Alzheimer’s?
- How can you tell if your cat is in labor?
- How can you tell if your timing belt needs replacing?
- How can you tell if your child is a computer hacker?
- How can you tell if you have a flea problem?
- How can you tell if your opinion of your own body is distorted?
- How can you tell if you’re being followed?
- How can you tell if your rabbit is male or female?

This can be a confusing world, and all of us are looking for answers of one sort or another. But where do we find our information? Whom can we trust?

Things weren’t much different 2,500 years ago. There were prophets walking around back then, and people needed to know if what they said was true. How can you tell if a prophet really has a message from God?

There were two tests.

1. *If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a miraculous sign or wonder ... and he says, “Let us follow other gods ... and let us worship them” you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer ... (Deuteronomy 13:1-3).* In other words, if a prophet encourages you to do something that violates any previous word of God, he’s not a true prophet.

2. *If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the LORD does not take place or come true, that is a message the LORD has not spoken (Deuteronomy 18:22a).* In other words, if a prophet makes a specific prediction and it doesn’t happen just as he said it would, he’s not a true prophet.

Because if a prophet is a true prophet, what he has to say is a message from God — and God is always true. He cannot contradict Himself. It’s that simple.

That’s what a prophet is — a person who is given a message by God to give to God’s people.

The back half of the Old Testament, from Isaiah to Malachi, is books of prophecy. Each of them is named for

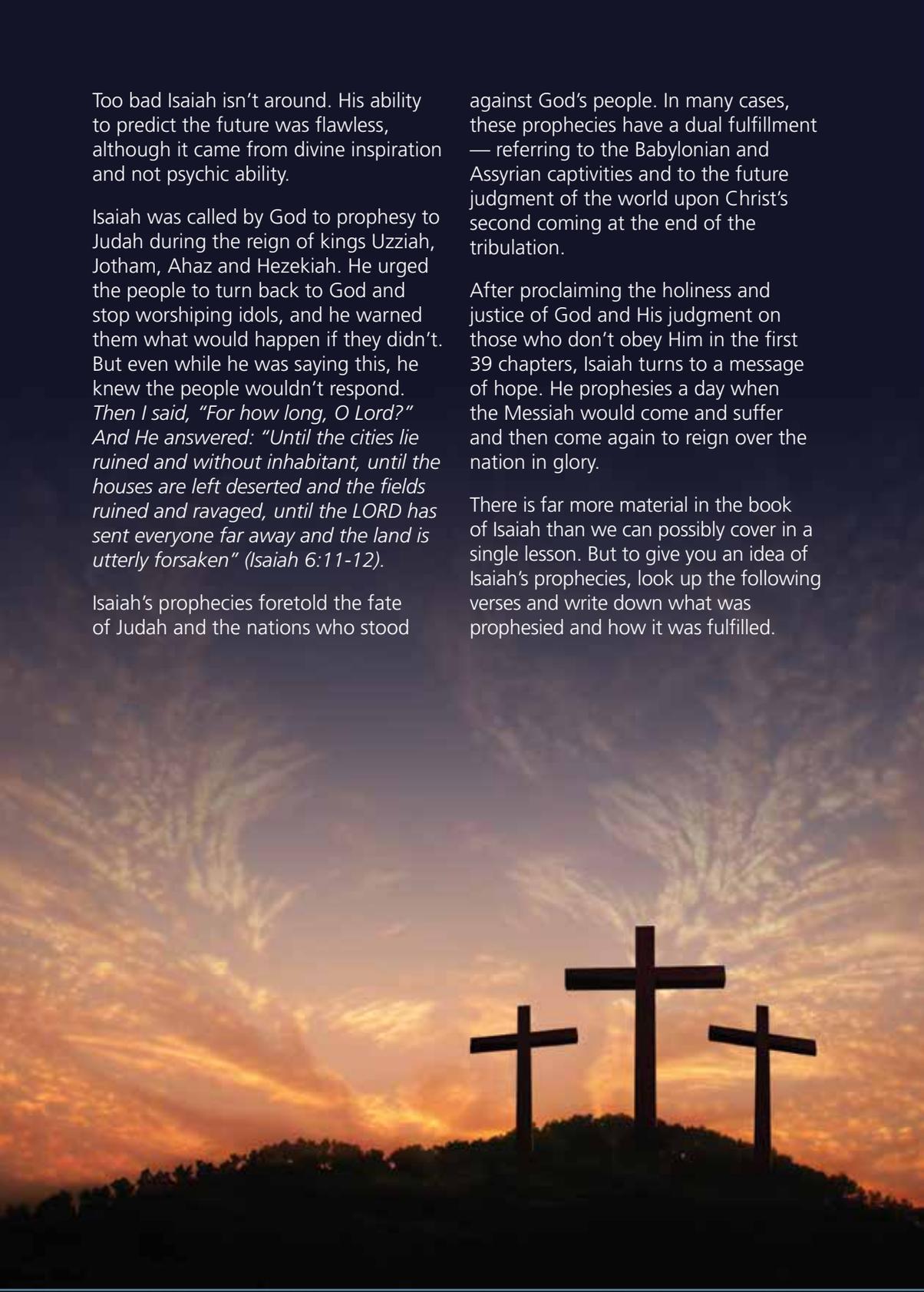
the prophet who gave that particular message. Some of them wrote down the words themselves while others had scribes or followers who collected their words.

There were other prophets besides those who wrote books of prophecy. We’ve already looked at Samuel, Elijah and Elisha. Others show up for a verse or two and some are mentioned without being named.

What do you think of when you hear the word *prophet*? Do you envision crazy dudes with long beards who run around shouting and tearing their clothes and wearing sandwich boards that say “The End Is Near!”? Old Testament prophets did tear their clothes and pull their hair from time to time, but for the most part, they wouldn’t have stuck out in a crowd. They did have some identifying characteristics, however.

- They loved God and were dedicated to serving Him. This doesn’t mean they were perfect (Jonah, for example), but they were willing to serve God even in the face of persecution.
- They were called by God. An individual didn’t choose to be a prophet. He or she was chosen by God for the ministry. Some were set apart when they were young. Amos, on the other hand, was a shepherd and gardener when he was called.
- They conveyed God’s messages to the people. They weren’t fanatics who came up with crazy ideas and went about ranting. They were given God’s words of judgment and promise and took them seriously.





Too bad Isaiah isn't around. His ability to predict the future was flawless, although it came from divine inspiration and not psychic ability.

Isaiah was called by God to prophesy to Judah during the reign of kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. He urged the people to turn back to God and stop worshiping idols, and he warned them what would happen if they didn't. But even while he was saying this, he knew the people wouldn't respond. *Then I said, "For how long, O Lord?" And He answered: "Until the cities lie ruined and without inhabitant, until the houses are left deserted and the fields ruined and ravaged, until the LORD has sent everyone far away and the land is utterly forsaken" (Isaiah 6:11-12).*

Isaiah's prophecies foretold the fate of Judah and the nations who stood

against God's people. In many cases, these prophecies have a dual fulfillment — referring to the Babylonian and Assyrian captivities and to the future judgment of the world upon Christ's second coming at the end of the tribulation.

After proclaiming the holiness and justice of God and His judgment on those who don't obey Him in the first 39 chapters, Isaiah turns to a message of hope. He prophesies a day when the Messiah would come and suffer and then come again to reign over the nation in glory.

There is far more material in the book of Isaiah than we can possibly cover in a single lesson. But to give you an idea of Isaiah's prophecies, look up the following verses and write down what was prophesied and how it was fulfilled.

Prophecy — Isaiah 7:14

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Fulfillment — Matthew 1:18-23

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Prophecy — Isaiah 40:3

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Fulfillment — Matthew 3:1-2

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Prophecy — Isaiah 44:28-45:1

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Fulfillment — 2 Chronicles 36:22-23

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Prophecy — Isaiah 52:14

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Fulfillment — Luke 23:36-38

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Prophecy — Isaiah 53:3

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Fulfillment — John 11:47-50

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Prophecy — Isaiah 53:7

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Fulfillment — Mark 14:60-61

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Prophecy — Isaiah 53:9

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Fulfillment — Mark 15:27-28, 43-46

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All of the prophecies you've looked at so far have already been literally fulfilled between the time when Isaiah made them and the time when Christ lived on earth. But Isaiah also made many prophecies about the future restoration and kingdom of Israel that have not yet been fulfilled. Read Isaiah 60 and list at least five things that will take place in Jerusalem when God restores His people to their land and reigns over them in glory.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:**

1. **Read Isaiah 1, 53, 66.**
2. **Look up the listed passages and write down the prophecy and fulfillment.**
3. **Read Isaiah 60 and list five things about Jerusalem's future glory.**

**SECTION COMPLETED**

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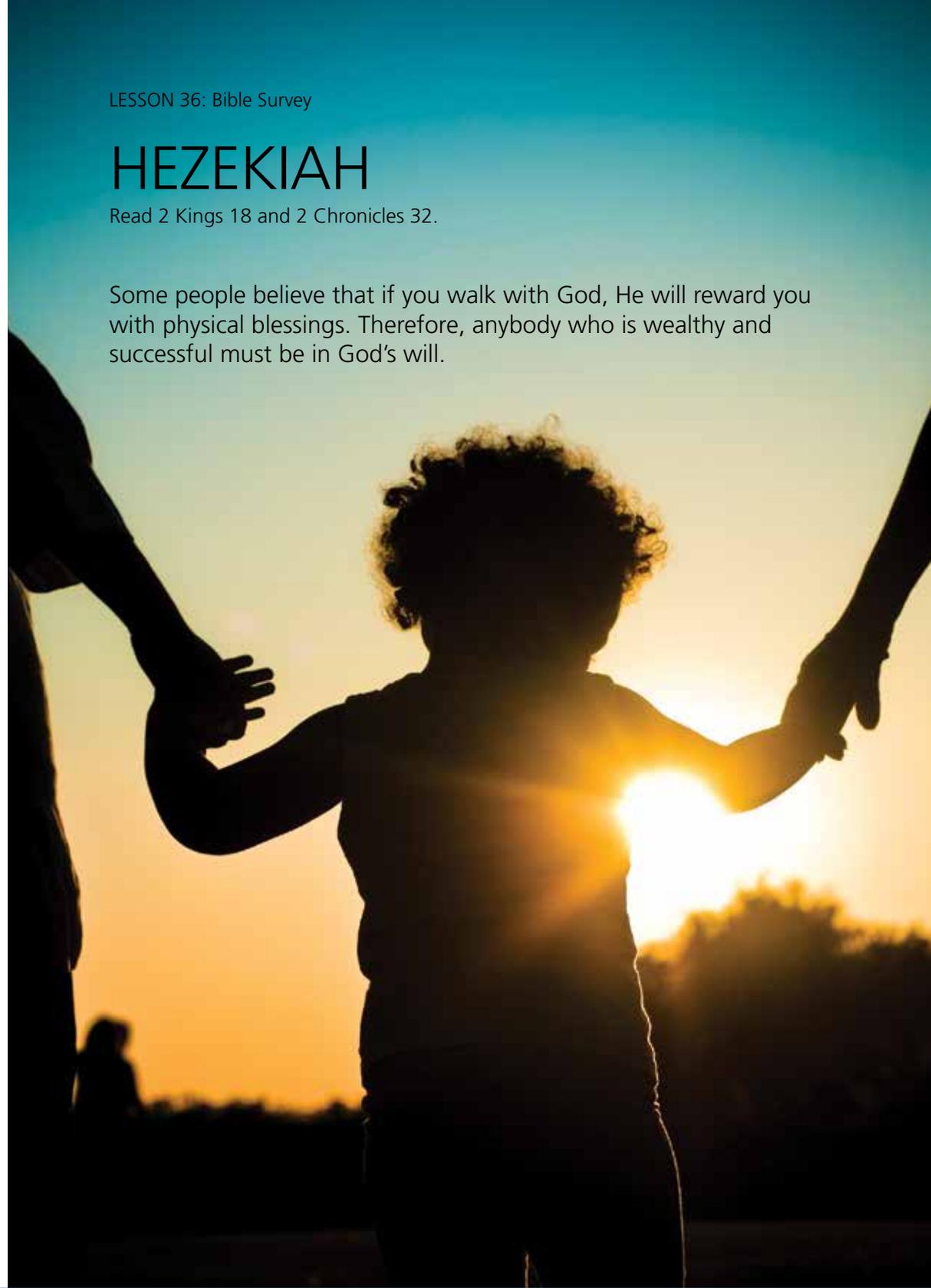
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LESSON 36: Bible Survey

# HEZEKIAH

Read 2 Kings 18 and 2 Chronicles 32.

Some people believe that if you walk with God, He will reward you with physical blessings. Therefore, anybody who is wealthy and successful must be in God's will.



While most of us wouldn't go quite that far, we often convey that idea when we talk with children. We need to be careful not to give kids the impression that trusting Christ as Savior will end all their struggles and problems. Nor should we ever imply that their struggles and problems are a result of some fault on their part.

God does care for us spiritually, and He does give us everything we need to deal with the challenges of life. But that doesn't always translate into a smooth ride while we're here on earth. Our full realization of God's blessings will occur in the future, when we get to heaven.

The history of Hezekiah, king of Judah, gives a clear example of this.

His predecessor and father, Ahaz, was a bad guy. He worshiped Baal, sacrificed his own son by fire and attempted to appease the Assyrians — ... *but that did not help him* (2 Chronicles 28:21).

Things were bad and getting worse, but Ahaz — instead of turning to God, the one reliable source of help — made a different choice. *In his time of trouble King Ahaz became even more unfaithful to the LORD. He offered sacrifices to the gods of Damascus, who had defeated him; for he thought, "Since the gods of the kings of Aram have helped them, I will sacrifice to them so they will help me." But they were his downfall and the downfall of all Israel* (2 Chronicles 28:22-23).

Exit Ahaz, enter Hezekiah. He immediately set about cleansing the kingdom and restoring the proper worship of God. *Hezekiah did ... what was good and right and faithful before the LORD his God. In everything that he undertook in the service of God's*

*temple and in obedience to the law and the commands, he sought his God and worked wholeheartedly. And so he prospered* (2 Chronicles 31:20-21). We're told that ... *he was successful in whatever he undertook* (2 Kings 18:7).

Sounds pretty good, doesn't it? Surely Hezekiah had an easy road from that point on. Surely he had no problems in life, right? Well ...

There was this one little thing that didn't go so well. Sennacherib, king of Assyria, invaded Judah and captured all the fortified cities. Only Jerusalem was left, and that was under siege. Hezekiah was human, which means that he had faults. He tried to appease the Assyrians with silver and gold, but it didn't work. Sennacherib sent his officers to demand Hezekiah's surrender. When that didn't work, he taunted people about how his gods were greater than their God. Things looked bleak. Hezekiah ... *tore his clothes and put on sackcloth ...* (2 Kings 19:1).

But then he did what made all the difference. His father, Ahaz, in similar circumstances, had turned to the gods of the nation that was attacking him. Hezekiah turned to the true God. He never lost his faith. He talked with Isaiah, who reassured him that God was in control.

That very night, an angel sent from the Lord killed 185,000 enemy soldiers. Those that were left fled home. Sennacherib fled too, only to be killed by his own sons.

God didn't keep Hezekiah from struggles and problems, but He never left him either. In the end, God provided everything that was needed.

Hezekiah's not the only person who experienced this. The apostle Paul was fully dedicated to the Lord and to His ministry. So much so that he considered

\_\_\_\_\_ (Philippians 1:21).

And near the end of his life, he was able to say

\_\_\_\_\_ (2 Timothy 4:7).

If all that was true (and it was), then Paul must have had a prosperous and easy life, right? Look up 2 Corinthians 11:22-28 and write out a summary of Paul's life and ministry.

\_\_\_\_\_

When Paul asked the Lord to remove just one of the hardships he faced, the Lord told him

\_\_\_\_\_ (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Like Hezekiah and Paul, we too have this comfort:

\_\_\_\_\_ (Romans 8:18).

### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Read 2 Kings 18 and 2 Chronicles 32.
2. Look up the listed passages and fill in the blanks.

### SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

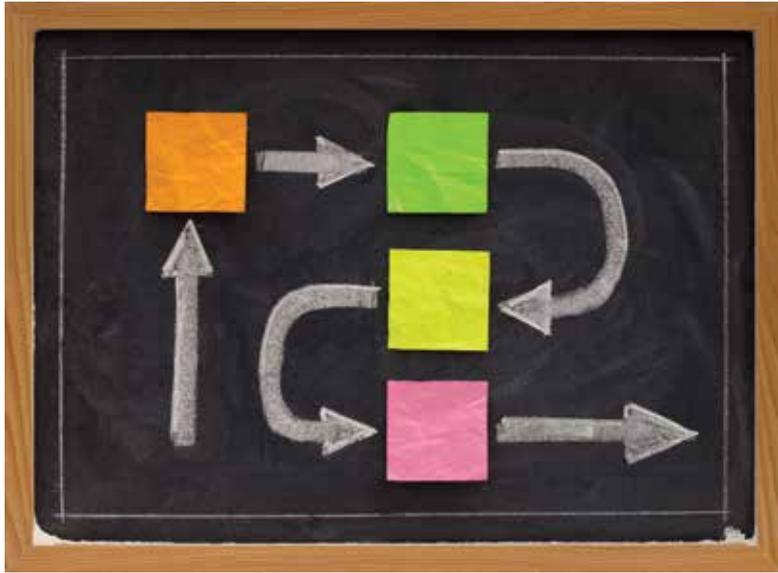
# TIMELINE

Here's a project that will help you and your child. Create a timeline that maps out all the major events your Sparkie has been learning about over the past two years. Make it big — as big as you have space for in your home. Use a long roll of paper or several sheets taped together. Or, if you feel brave and have space in your basement or playroom, draw right on the wall!



On the far left, write “Creation.” On the far right, put an arrow pointing off the right edge of the paper and write “Eternity Future.” About two-thirds of the way down the line, draw the cross. We don’t always know exactly how many years there were between major events early in the Bible timeline, but you can still put them in the proper order. Noah and the flood can go halfway between creation and the cross. Abraham was born around 2000 BC, perhaps 300 years later. Once you have these in place, you can add these other people and events in their proper locations. Some of the events and people listed below were covered in *Beginnings: Studies in Genesis – Joshua*. (The dates below were taken from *The Chronology of the Old Testament*, by Dr. Floyd Nolen Jones, Master Books.)

- Birth of Isaac — 1896 BC
- Birth of Jacob and Esau — 1836 BC
- Birth of Joseph — 1745 BC
- Jacob moves his family to Egypt — 1706 BC
- Birth of Moses — 1571 BC
- The Exodus from Egypt — 1491 BC
- Joshua leads the Israelites across the Jordan — 1451 BC
- Barak and Deborah — 1260 BC
- Samson dies — 1101 BC
- Saul is made king — 1095 BC
- David becomes king — 1055 BC
- Solomon builds the temple — 1004 BC
- The kingdom splits in two — 975 BC
- Elijah prophesies — 918 BC
- Hezekiah becomes king of Judah — 726 BC
- Josiah becomes king of Judah — 640 BC
- Daniel is carried off to Babylon — 606 BC
- Jerusalem is destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar — 586 BC
- Ezra returns to Jerusalem — 467 BC
- The walls of Jerusalem are rebuilt — 454 BC
- Malachi writes the last book in the Old Testament — 441 BC



To make your timeline more exciting for your kids, help them illustrate the major events on the paper as you go. (The “Parent Ideas” for Biography 12 on the *WingRunner* handbook CD contain biography I.D. cards that you may want to tape on your timeline as visuals.)

## GREEN JEWEL 2

1 Peter 1:25a

*But the word of the Lord stands forever.*

1 Thessalonians 5:17-18

*Pray continually.*

*Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

Colossians 3:23

*Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.*

## TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Memorize and recite all four verses.**
2. **Create a timeline.**

## SECTION COMPLETED

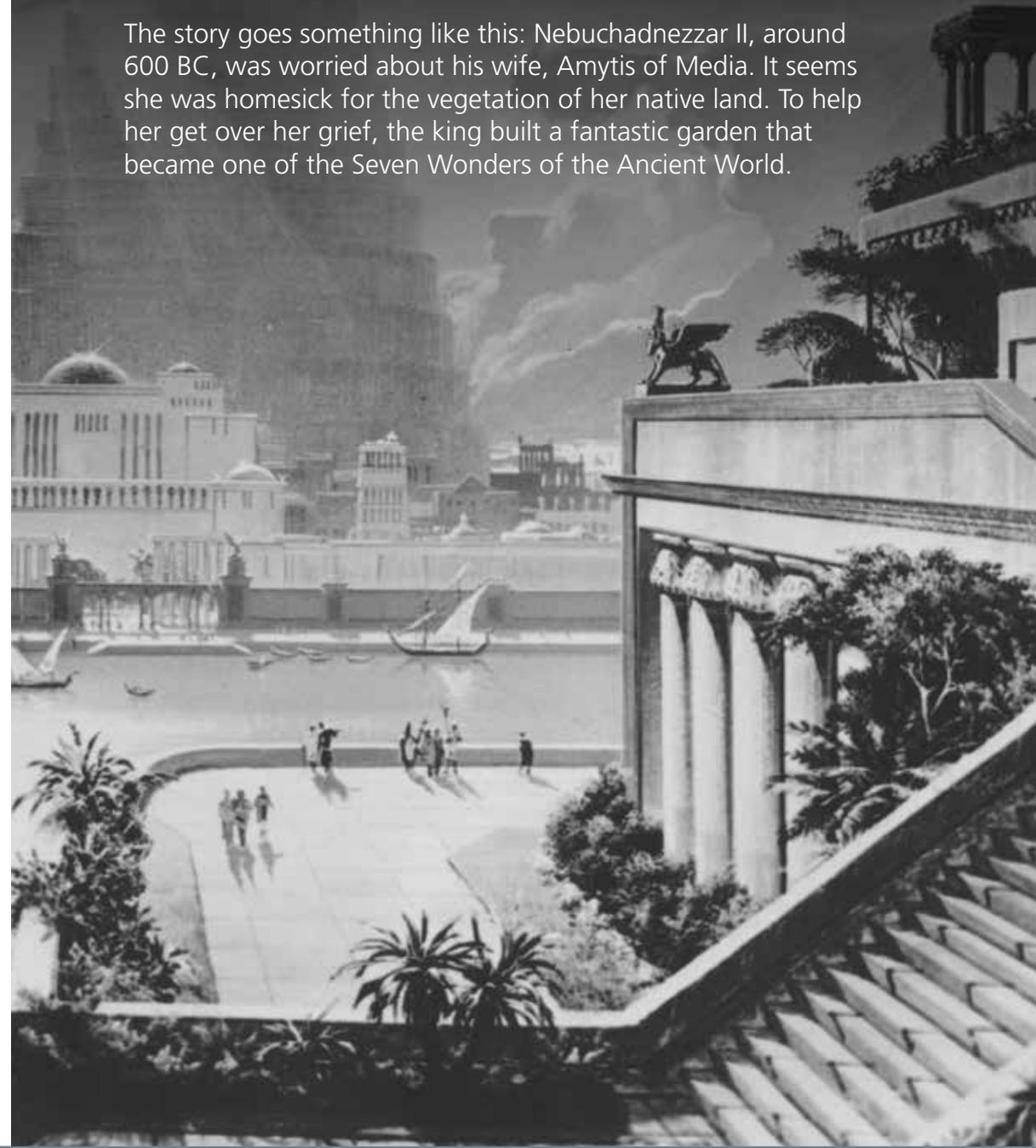
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LESSON 38: The Big Picture

# BABYLON

The story goes something like this: Nebuchadnezzar II, around 600 BC, was worried about his wife, Amytis of Media. It seems she was homesick for the vegetation of her native land. To help her get over her grief, the king built a fantastic garden that became one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.







LESSON 39: Bible Survey

## THE LAST GOOD KING — JOSIAH

Read 2 Kings 22-23.

A poll taken by George Gallup a few years back discovered that 92 percent of homes in the United States contain a Bible, and most of them contain more than one. Fifty-nine percent of Americans say they actually read the Bible once in a while, but only 37 percent of them do so as often as once a week. And among those who do claim to read it once a week, their reading lasts for an average of 52 minutes.

That 37 percent who read it once a week are probably the same 37 percent who can actually name all four Gospels. About half of all Americans couldn't remember even five of the Ten Commandments. Forty-two percent don't know who gave the Sermon on the Mount.

It's a rather sad situation, but not nearly as sad as the situation in Judah in 622 BC. Josiah was king. He'd been made king when he was 8 years old. When he was 20, he set about cleaning up his kingdom (2 Chronicles 34:3). He worshiped God and took steps to get the people to obey Him. He instructed the high priest, Hilkiah, to repair the temple.

The temple was in great need of repair. Manasseh, Josiah's grandfather ... *did evil in the eyes of the LORD, following the detestable practices of the nations the LORD had driven out before the Israelites. He rebuilt the high places his father Hezekiah had destroyed; he also erected altars to Baal and made an Asherah pole, as Ahab king of Israel had done. He bowed down to all the starry hosts and worshiped them. He built altars in the temple of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, "In Jerusalem I will put My Name."* In both courts of the temple of the LORD, he built altars to all the starry hosts. He sacrificed his own son in the fire, practiced sorcery and divination, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the eyes of the LORD, provoking Him to anger (2 Kings 21:2-6).

Did you catch that? Manasseh had actually placed altars to false gods inside the temple built as the dwelling of the one true God! He repented

and turned to God later in his reign, but the idols he had set up weren't all destroyed. His son, Josiah's father Amon, was just as bad as Manasseh had been. So, by the time Josiah became king, the temple was in dire need of repair.

Hilkiah found a book while he was cleaning the temple. He gave it to Shaphan, the king's secretary, who read it to the king. When Josiah realized what the book was — the Law given to Moses for Israel to obey — he tore his clothing in despair.

And well he should have. We aren't told exactly what portion of the Law Shaphan read to Josiah, but it might have been the part we know as Deuteronomy 29:24-27: *All the nations will ask: "Why has the LORD done this to this land? Why this fierce, burning anger?" And the answer will be: "It is because this people abandoned the covenant of the LORD, the God of their fathers, the covenant He made with them when He brought them out of Egypt. They went off and worshiped other gods and bowed down to them, gods they did not know, gods He had not given them. Therefore the LORD's anger burned against this land, so that He brought on it all the curses written in this book."*

Josiah sent Hilkiah and Shaphan, along with some other men, to visit Huldah, a prophetess. He wanted to know if it was too late for the nation to turn back to God. Huldah gave the men some good news — and a lot of bad news. Read 2 Kings 22:14-20 and write down what she said.





January 5

To All Employees:

*Our latest sales figures show an increase in profits to the point where we are no longer in debt. Your tenacious, hard work has enabled us to weather this crisis.*

*But we in management wish to encourage all of you not to get complacent. If we don't continue to fight like tigers for every dollar, our profitability could easily slip once again.*

*For that reason, we have decided to implement another change in the dress code. We have purchased a supply of Westmont Tigers football helmets and will issue one to each employee. Until further notice, all employees are required to wear their helmet during business hours as a reminder that we all need to keep working diligently.*

*You are no longer required to wear red clothing.*

*Thank you,*

*The Management*

Not many of us have jobs that require quite that degree of symbolic involvement. But Jeremiah did. Throughout his ministry as a prophet to Judah, the Lord commanded him to demonstrate his message with symbolic actions.

Jeremiah began his ministry as a young man, during the reign of Josiah, the last good king. When Josiah died, Jeremiah lamented, and with good reason — the people quickly slipped back into idolatry. God sent warnings to the nation through the prophet, but the people didn't listen. Jeremiah was persecuted. In the limited space available, we'll look at several of his symbolic acts and study their meanings. Where we've left spaces, fill in the appropriate information.

1. Jeremiah 5:1-2 — The prophet was told to walk up and down the streets of Jerusalem and search for \_\_\_\_\_ . He was told that if he could find even one, then God would \_\_\_\_\_ .

2. Jeremiah 13:1-11 — Jeremiah was instructed to buy a \_\_\_\_\_ and hide it in the rocks at Perath (near the Euphrates River), which is about 350 miles (563 km) from Jerusalem. Later, the Lord told Jeremiah to retrieve it. The prophet had to walk at least 1,400 miles (2,253 km) to complete both trips. As the item was ruined, so the Lord promised to ruin Judah's \_\_\_\_\_ .

3. Jeremiah 16:1-4 — The prophet was forbidden to marry. In that culture, marriage, children and the continuance of the family line were very important. Jeremiah's example was intended to show the people what was in store for the nation: \_\_\_\_\_ .

4. Jeremiah 18:1-12 — Jeremiah was instructed to visit a \_\_\_\_\_ and watch him work. God was telling the nation that He \_\_\_\_\_ .

The symbolism continues in Jeremiah 19:1-15 where the prophet is instructed to buy a \_\_\_\_\_ to show \_\_\_\_\_ .

5. Jeremiah 27:1-11 — The Lord instructed Jeremiah to construct and wear a \_\_\_\_\_ as a message to \_\_\_\_\_ .

He was to tell them that in the future, they would be under the control of \_\_\_\_\_ .

6. Jeremiah 32:1-15; 37-41 — At this point, Jeremiah was in \_\_\_\_\_ . The Lord instructed him to purchase \_\_\_\_\_ .

This act was intended to show that one day \_\_\_\_\_ .

The people of Israel refused to listen to Jeremiah's warnings. As a result, God allowed the army of Babylon to conquer the land and destroy Jerusalem. The prophet mourned for his land and wrote a series of acrostic poems about Israel's sin and God's wrath. These poems make up the book of Lamentations. But even in the midst of sorrow, Jeremiah looked to God for hope. *Because of the LORD'S great love we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness (Lamentations 3:22-23).*

**TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:**

**1. Read the listed passages and fill in the blanks.**

**SECTION COMPLETED**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# THE END OF JUDAH

Read 2 Kings 24-25.

Garry Kasparov is widely considered to be the best chess player in the world. At age 22, he became the youngest world chess champion in history and held that title for almost 20 years. He retired from competitive chess as the highest-ranking player ever. Kasparov has said that he normally thinks three to five moves ahead. More than that, he says, is usually unnecessary. But when the situation calls for it, he can plot as many as 14 moves in advance.



God planned all of human history before creation. Every bit of it. He knew what would happen and arranged for all the pieces to be in place at exactly the right moments to make everything come out as He intended.

For most of history, people have gone about thinking they were in control of their own destinies. Not so. It's true that God has given us free will and that we are held accountable for our choices. But God's sovereignty, foreknowledge, omniscience and wisdom causes everything to fit together into His master plan.

Before God created Adam and Eve, He knew they would sin and pollute the entire race of humanity. That's why Jesus Christ is referred to in Revelation 13:8b as *the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world*.

Before God set aside Israel as His own people, He knew they would reject Him repeatedly and worship false gods. That's why He allowed the surrounding nations to grow strong.

For over 100 years after the northern kingdom of Israel was conquered by the Assyrians, the southern kingdom of Judah stumbled on. Hezekiah and Josiah followed God, but as soon as these two men were gone from the scene, the people turned immediately to sin. *Therefore this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: I am going to bring such disaster on Jerusalem and Judah that the ears of everyone who hears of it will tingle. I will stretch out over Jerusalem the measuring line used against Samaria and the plumb line used against the house of Ahab. I will wipe out Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down. I will forsake the remnant of*

*My inheritance and hand them over to their enemies. They will be looted and plundered by all their foes, because they have done evil in My eyes and have provoked Me to anger from the day their forefathers came out of Egypt until this day (2 Kings 21:12-15).*

God keeps His Word, and the pieces were in place.

1. Assyria — After conquering Israel, Assyria continued as the super-power in the region. At its height, the nation controlled an area stretching from modern-day Turkey through Iraq and Iran and down the coast of the Mediterranean into Egypt. One of its subject states, Babylon, rebelled but the rebellion was put down by King Sargon II in 710 BC — leaving Assyria more powerful than ever.

2. The rise of Babylon — This upstart nation didn't stay subdued for long. By 609 BC the Babylonians had captured the Assyrian capital, Nineveh, and quickly moved against the surrounding nations. In time, the kingdom of Babylon gained most of the land once controlled by Assyria.

3. The intervention of Egypt — Egypt was allied with Assyria. Shortly after the rise of Babylon, an Egyptian army under King Neco marched across Judah to help Assyria. King Josiah marched out against the Egyptians, even though he was warned to stay away. As a result, Josiah was killed and his son, Jehoahaz was made king in Jerusalem. After only three months, the Egyptians captured Jehoahaz and sent him off to Egypt, where he died.

4. The reign of Jehoiakim — The Egyptians made Jehoahaz' brother Jehoiakim king of Judah. He followed

most of his predecessors and did evil in God's eyes.

5. The arrival of Babylon — King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon didn't let Egypt call the shots for long. He defeated its army in two battles north of Judah and ended its influence in the area. When Jehoiakim attempted to withstand the stronger nation, Jerusalem was besieged and the king was killed.

6. Jehoiachin — Jehoiakim's son — became king and reigned for about as long as it takes you to read this. He lasted 3 months and 10 days before Nebuchadnezzar captured him and sent him off to Babylon in chains.

7. The last king — Zedekiah was Jehoiachin's uncle (Jehoiakim's brother). He didn't learn a thing from his predecessors. He not only disobeyed God, he ignored God's prophet, Jeremiah — and he rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar.

8. God's promise carried out — Nebuchadnezzar lost no time returning to Judah, killing many and carrying off to exile in Babylon those few who escaped his army. But note what the Bible says in 2 Chronicles 36:17: ... *God handed all of them over to Nebuchadnezzar.*

Sargon and Neco and Nebuchadnezzar thought they were big shots at the head of large armies with large kingdoms to command. They had no idea they were just tools in the hand of God to punish His people for their disobedience.

There are many verses in the Bible that speak of God's sovereignty over the world — and that includes kings and nations. Look up the following verses and summarize what they say.

1 Samuel 2:6-8

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Romans 13:1

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**TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:**

- 1. **Read 2 Kings 24-25.**
- 2. **Look up the listed verses and summarize what they say about God's sovereignty.**

**SECTION COMPLETED**

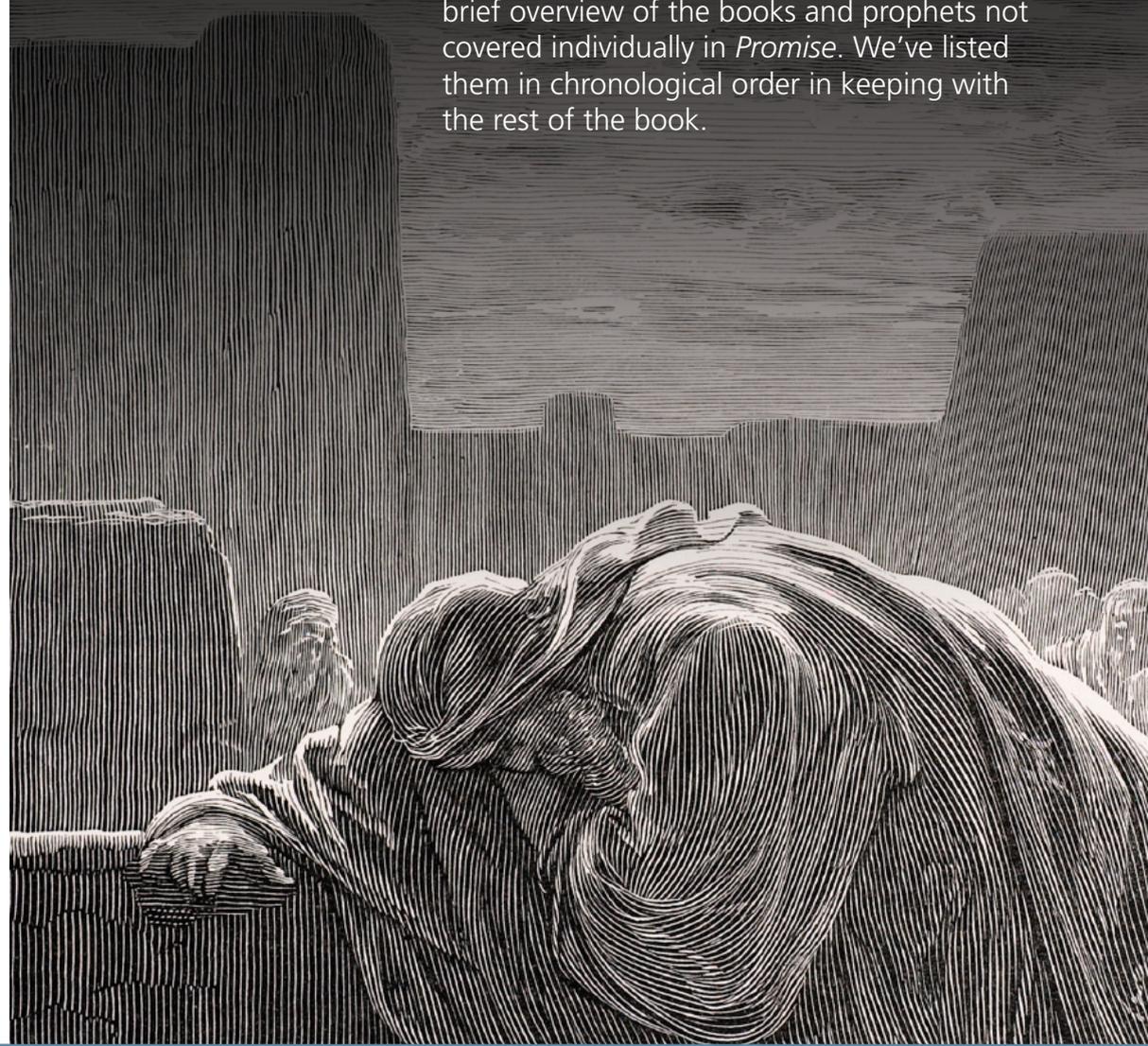
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LESSON 42: The Big Picture

# THE REST OF THE PROPHETS: PART ONE

The back end of the Old Testament is filled with shorter books bearing strange names. Most of us are unfamiliar with this portion of Scripture. This lesson and the next contain a brief overview of the books and prophets not covered individually in *Promise*. We've listed them in chronological order in keeping with the rest of the book.



**Obadiah** — Way back in Genesis, we studied Isaac’s twin sons, Jacob and Esau (See Lessons 24 and 25 in *Beginnings*). Jacob’s name was changed to Israel and his offspring became the 12 tribes of Israel. Esau’s descendents became the Edomites, a nation located to the south of Israel. During the reign of Jehoram, around 850 BC, the Philistines and Arabians invaded Judah. Edom joined up with Judah’s enemies. Obadiah, about whom we know very little, prophesied Edom’s approaching destruction: *Because of the violence against your brother Jacob, you will be covered with shame; you will be destroyed forever (Obadiah 1:10).*

**Joel** — Joel probably made his prophecy around 835 BC, when Joash was king. A huge swarm of locusts had just scoured the nation of Judah. *Despair, you farmers, wail, you vine growers; grieve for the wheat and the barley, because the harvest of the field is destroyed (Joel 1:11).* The prophet likens the destruction by the insects to the destruction that will be visited on the earth when the Lord returns in judgment. But he also offers hope: *... Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved ... (Joel 2:32).*

**Amos** — Amos was a farmer from the country south of Jerusalem during the reign of King Uzziah, about 755 BC. He raised sheep and grew figs until he was called by God as prophet. Although he was from Judah, his message was for the kingdom of Israel under Jeroboam II. The nation was enjoying prosperity and was, for the moment, at peace. But Amos warned the people: *... I know how many are your offenses and how great your sins. You oppress the righteous and take bribes and you*

*deprive the poor of justice in the courts (Amos 5:12).* He warned of coming destruction (which took place about 30 years later). But he also ended with hope, looking forward to a still-future time when Jesus Christ will reign over Israel in the land God gave them.

**Hosea** — Hosea prophesied in Israel at about the same time as Amos did, beginning in the reign of Jeroboam II and continuing through the period of the last six kings. The book covers about 40 years. God instructed this prophet to marry Gomer, a prostitute who continued her ways after their marriage. Hosea likened her unfaithfulness to Israel’s unfaithfulness to God and warned them of God’s wrath. He even gave his children names that symbolized the coming judgment. But although people are unfaithful, God never is. Hosea demonstrated this by purchasing Gomer back after she had left him to pursue her profession — God will one day do the same for Israel.

**Micah** — Micah ministered for approximately 25 years, spanning the time when Israel was conquered by Assyria. He mentions the sins of both Israel and Judah and implores the people *To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God (Micah 6:8b).* He closes with a courtroom scene in which God brings His people to trial and finds them guilty, but there’s also a closing message of a future hope.

**Nahum** — Nahum prophesied around 660 BC. A hundred or so years earlier, God had sent Jonah to warn the people of the Assyrian city of Nineveh about their sins (See Lesson 32). They repented for a time, but now they were back to

their old ways. They had invaded and conquered the northern kingdom of Israel and were throwing their weight around. Nineveh was a huge fortress, with walls 100 feet high (30.5 m), and thick enough for three chariots to ride side-by-side on the top. It seemed impregnable. Nahum relayed a message: *“I am against you,” declares the LORD Almighty ... (Nahum 3:5).* He warned that God’s judgment was approaching in the form of a flood and fire. In 612 BC, the Tigris River overflowed and destroyed part of the wall. The Babylonian army entered through the gap and destroyed the city so thoroughly that for centuries (until AD 1842), nobody knew where it had stood.

Choose one of the books covered in this lesson and read it. Write down the verse or verses that you think best sum up the theme of that particular book. Then write down how you can apply the message of that book to your own life situation.

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The theme verse(s)

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This book has taught me that

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**TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:**

- 1. Choose one of the six books covered in the lesson and read it.**
- 2. Answer the questions from your reading.**

**SECTION COMPLETED**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



**Habakkuk** — The name *Habakkuk* means “one who embraces.” This is appropriate because, at the very end of the book, the prophet embraces God in the midst of calamity. *Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior (Habakkuk 3:17-18).* Habakkuk was confused — how long could God put off punishing a wicked nation? When God explained that Babylon was about to bring the punishment (which places Habakkuk somewhere around 600 BC), the prophet is even more confused — Babylon was even more wicked than Judah! God gives him encouragement that can be found in the two verses below.

Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17

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**Ezekiel** — Ezekiel was both a priest and a prophet. His ministry took place during the Babylonian captivity of Judah, around 580 BC, overlapping Jeremiah at the beginning and Daniel at the end. The prophet told the people why God had punished them and promised His future faithfulness and blessing. A recurring message throughout the book is for God’s people to ... *know that I am the LORD* (Ezekiel 6:7, and more than 30 other places in the book). Ezekiel points forward to the coming of the Messiah when ... *I [Jesus Christ] Myself will search for My sheep and look after them. As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after My sheep ... (Ezekiel 34:11-12).*

Ezekiel 37:27; 2 Corinthians 6:16

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**Haggai** — We’ll read more about Haggai’s ministry in Lesson 47. Cyrus, king of Persia, allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem. They got off to a good start worshiping God, but after 16 years the temple still wasn’t completed. In 520 BC, Haggai stepped forward to encourage everyone to get to work. Twenty-three days later, the people resumed constructing the temple. ... *“Give careful thought to your ways. Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build the house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored,” says the LORD (Haggai 1:7-8).*

Haggai 2:20-23; Hebrews 12:26-29

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**Zechariah** — Zechariah was a contemporary of Haggai and he made his prophecy just a few months later. His message was one of hope — the Messiah was coming and the nation would be restored. Many of Zechariah’s prophecies have a two-fold fulfillment; one when Jesus Christ was on earth and another when He will come again to reign on the throne in Jerusalem.

When Christ was on earth, most Jews failed to grasp the two-fold nature of these prophecies. As a result, they expected Him to defeat Rome and restore Israel at that time. An example of this can be seen in the verses below.

Zechariah 9:9-10; Matthew 21:1-11

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### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Look up the verses and explain how the two passages are connected.

### SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# DANIEL'S CAREER

Read Daniel 1 and 6.

Remember that kid back in high school who was BMOC (big man on campus)? He was student council president, dated the cutest cheerleader and quarterbacked the championship football team. He was class valedictorian and earned a citation from the mayor for rescuing an elderly couple from a burning house. And to top it all off, he was a really nice guy. You were jealous, and you wanted to hate him, but you just couldn't — because he knew your name, said hi every time he saw you and even came to your rescue back in fifth grade when you were running from a gang of bullies.



Maybe we exaggerate a little, but keep that guy in mind when you read about Daniel. He was kind of like that guy.

When King Nebuchadnezzar defeated Jehoiakim of Judah, he carried the conquered king and a lot of the nation's riches back to Babylon. He gave instructions to his chief officer, Ashpenaz, to pick some of the best Israelite youths and bring them along to be trained as servants.

But before we go further, why did Nebuchadnezzar want to surround himself with foreign servants? There are several possibilities that may have factored into his decision.

1. Hostages — These youth were the relatives of the decision-makers in Judah. Chances are the "government" wouldn't rebel when the lives of loved ones were at stake.
2. Pride — Every time the king saw one of these servants, he'd be reminded of his great military conquests.
3. Influence — These youths could help him with any further dealings with Judah or the captives in Babylon.

There were several requirements these youth had to meet:

1. They had to be of the royal family or of the nobility.
2. They had to be strong and healthy.
3. They had to be good-looking.
4. They had to be intelligent.
5. They had to be well-educated.
6. They had to have the skills required of servants.

Daniel not only met all these requirements, but he soon rose to the top of the list. He also managed to thrive in that environment without violating the laws God had given to his people. This couldn't have been easy, especially as the Babylonian name given to Daniel, Belteshazzar, probably means "May Baal protect his life" — in reference to the false god. Daniel and his friends Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego determined not to eat the food supplied to them from the king's table. We aren't given specifics except that the food would have defiled them, probably because it wasn't prepared according to Jewish law and it had been dedicated to idols.

Daniel was trained by Nebuchadnezzar's officials, but the Bible makes it very clear ... *God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds (Daniel 1:17).*

Daniel soon caught the attention of the king because of his ability to interpret his dreams. The king went so far as to worship Daniel (Daniel 2:46), also appointing him a ruler over all Babylon and chief of the king's wise men.

Skip forward many years. Nebuchadnezzar died and Daniel was an old man who was apparently no longer holding an important position in the kingdom. Belshazzar was now king and he needed somebody to interpret the mysterious handwriting that appeared on his wall. The queen had heard stories of Daniel's abilities and suggested the king call him. Daniel was ready and, as always, gave the credit to God for his skill.

His interpretation couldn't have given Belshazzar much comfort. Daniel prophesied that the kingdom would be conquered by the Medes and the Persians. The king was apparently impressed by Daniel's wisdom. He made Daniel third in rank in the entire nation. Within hours, Daniel's prophecy came true.

If we haven't gotten a good picture of the sort of man Daniel was by now, the next event should certainly clue us in. Babylon was conquered by the Medes and the Persians who put Belshazzar to death. You would expect Daniel to be in serious danger. Instead, the new king, Darius, made Daniel one of three officials who oversaw the government.

The other officials were jealous. They plotted to get rid of Daniel by influencing the king to pass a law forbidding anyone to pray to anyone other than the king himself. Daniel defied the law and was thrown into the lions' den. In spite of all the challenges Daniel faced, he never turned his back on God — and God never turned His back on Daniel. God protected Daniel from the lions, and the plotters were destroyed.

Daniel lived to serve King Cyrus, who allowed the Israelites to return to their homeland and rebuild their temple. Daniel was too old to make the journey, but he was given a promise by God. ... *Go your way till the end. You will rest, and then at the end of the days you will rise to receive your allotted inheritance (Daniel 12:13).*

Daniel served God and gained a reputation for his character. Look up the following verses and write down what the prophet Ezekiel had to say about this great man.

Ezekiel 14:14, 20

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Ezekiel 28:1-3

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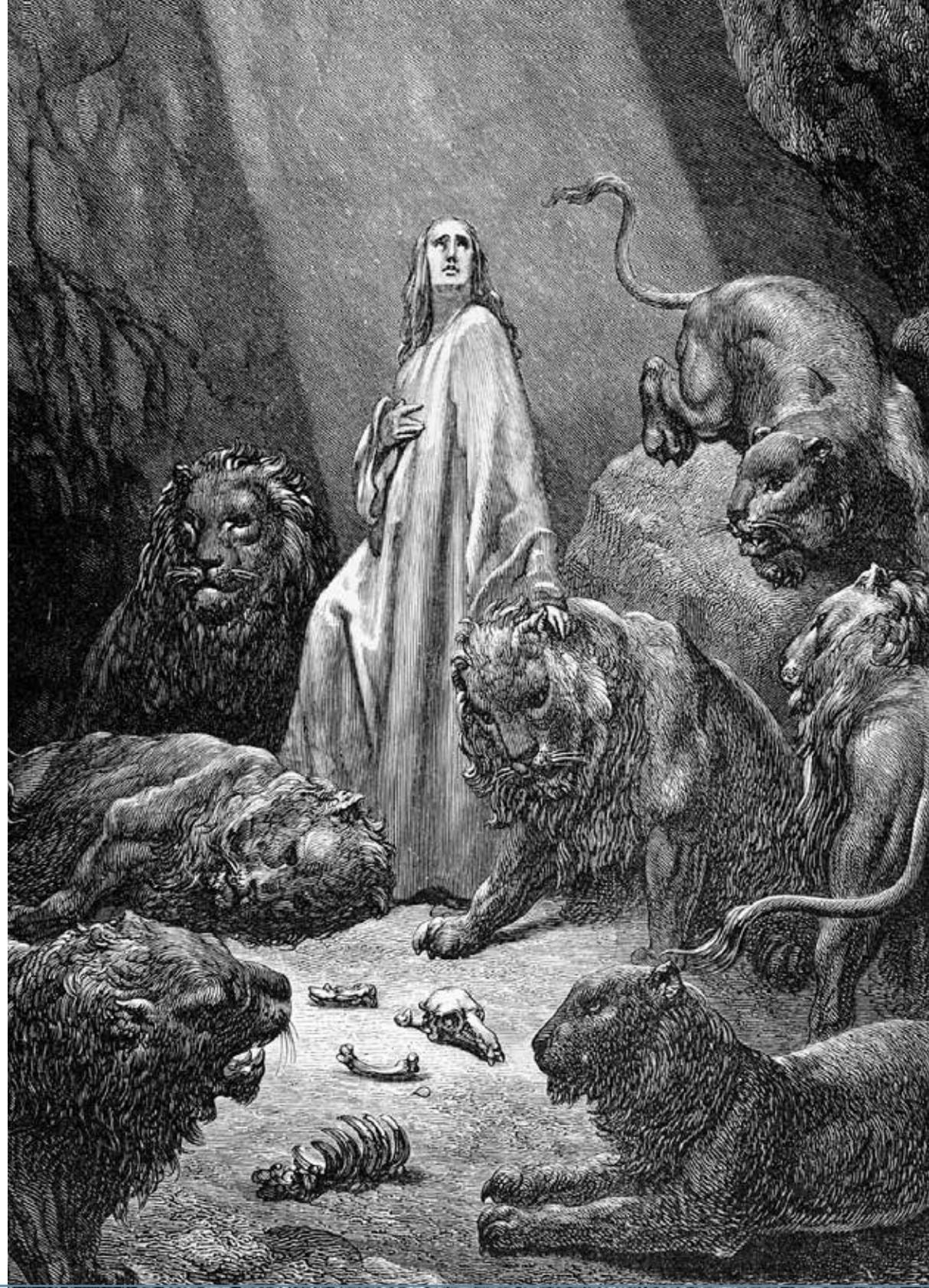
### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Read Daniel 1 and 6.
2. Look up the verses in Ezekiel and write down what the prophet says about Daniel.

### SECTION COMPLETED

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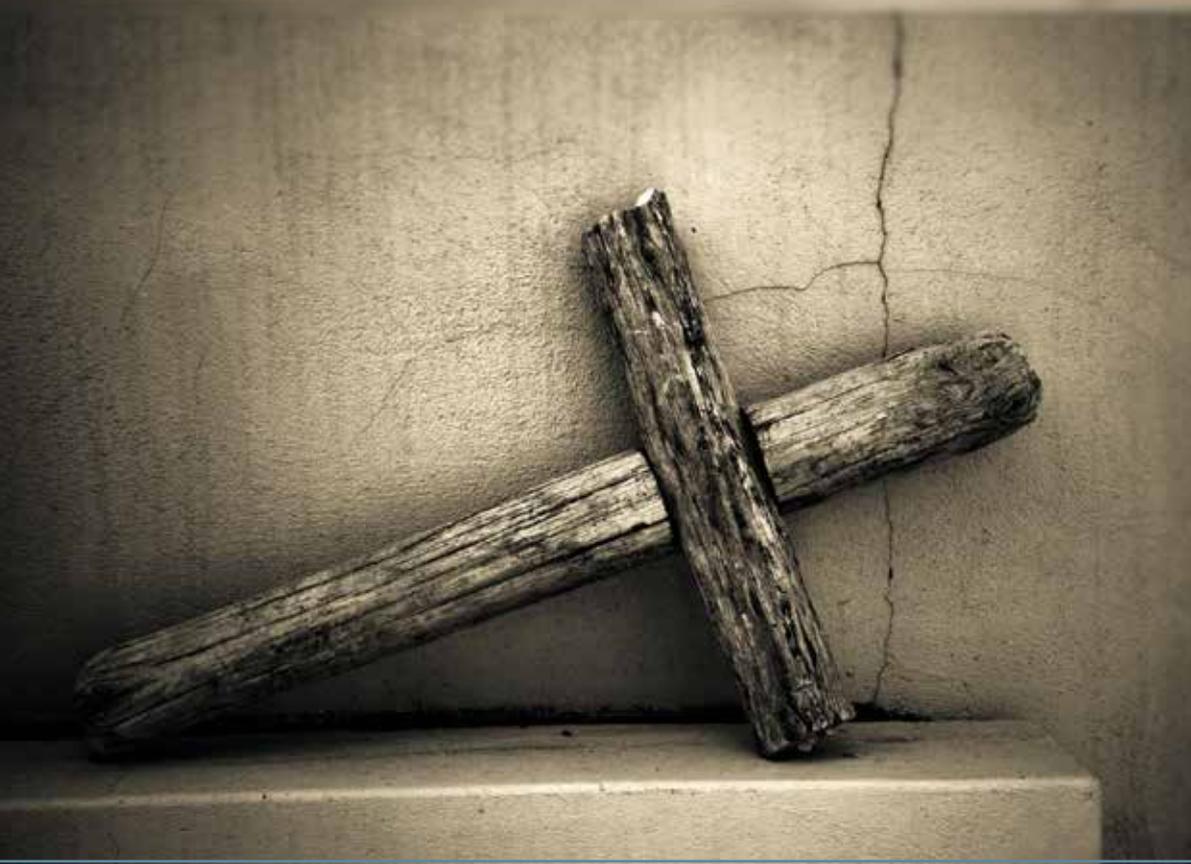
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# DANIEL'S 70 SEVENS

Read Daniel 9.

We frequently don't understand the depths of truth in a given portion of Scripture. And God sometimes uses figurative language in the Bible. But it's also true that many times He tells us exactly what the figurative language means. The Bible prophecies that have been fulfilled already (such as those in Daniel 8 and 11 that we'll look at in Lessons 55 and 56 and the many that foretold the birth and death of Christ) have each had a literal fulfillment. There is every reason to believe that the prophecies that have not yet been fulfilled will also be fulfilled literally.



For example, take the vision of 70 weeks in Daniel 9. There have been all sorts of interpretations of what exactly this prophecy is referring to. But there isn't any reason to come to the conclusion that it doesn't mean just what it says.

Daniel begins the chapter by saying, *... I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years (Daniel 9:2).* Daniel assumed that Jeremiah's prophecy should be taken literally, and he knew that Judah's captivity in Babylon had been going on for 67 years. He prayed to God for his nation and asked that God would have mercy on them in spite of their sins.

In response, God sent the angel Gabriel to give Daniel a prophecy. Jeremiah's prophecy would be fulfilled, but that wouldn't be the end of Israel's punishment — there would still be 490 more years until it ended. Gabriel spoke of 70 *shabuwa*. This Hebrew word is sometimes translated "weeks," but it is actually the plural of the word *seven*. It can refer to any period — seven days, seven months, seven years. But because of the context — Jeremiah's 70 years — and the way we can now see that the prophecy was fulfilled, we can know for certain that Gabriel was speaking of literal years.

Daniel was told exactly why it would take 490 years.

1. To finish (bring to an end) Israel's period of rebellion

2. To put an end to sin in the daily lives of the Israelites

3. To atone for wickedness. Christ atoned for sins when He died on the cross, but Israel has not accepted that atonement yet

4. To bring in everlasting righteousness (probably beginning with the millennial kingdom)

5. To seal up vision and prophecy (after the final fulfillment of what has been given)

6. To anoint the most holy (when the temple will be consecrated during the millennial kingdom)

Gabriel indicated that the 490 years would be divided. First would come a time of seven sevens (49 years) and a time of 62 sevens (434 years), for a total of 483 years. The angel indicated that this period would begin with the issuing of a decree that included rebuilding the streets of Jerusalem and a trench around the city for defense. There were four decrees issued by the Medo-Persian kings regarding the Israelites and Jerusalem, but only one of them, the decree of Artaxerxes to Nehemiah in 445 BC (see Lesson 50), specifically gave permission to rebuild the walls. So, if that's the date Gabriel was referring to, something significant must have happened 483 years later. It did.

Daniel's vision said that the Anointed One, the Ruler, would come. Four hundred and eighty three years after Araxerxes decree, Jesus Christ rode into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey, officially presenting Himself as Messiah. Based on the Jewish year of 360 days, this event occurred exactly 483 years later.

But what about the 70th week, the remaining seven years? Gabriel said, ... *"The Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed. He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing [of the temple] he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him"* (Daniel 9:26-27).

The Anointed One was cut off — Christ presented Himself in Jerusalem but was rejected and crucified. As with many prophecies, this one has a two-fold fulfillment divided by a gap of many years. (See Isaiah 9:6 and Zechariah 9:9-10 for two obvious examples.) The temple and city were destroyed by Rome but the *ruler who will come* also refers to the Antichrist who is yet to come.

Israel has been set aside for a time. But God is faithful, and His promises and prophecies will be fulfilled. The 70th week of Daniel's prophecy is still future. All that God promised Israel in the past will take place. Daniel returned to the prophecy at the end of the last chapter of his book. He asked God for more details. How did God respond? See Daniel 12:9-10.

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We can't know exactly what the future will look like. But we know that God will do what He says. And we know that those who are alive on earth when these events take place will recognize the working of God because of Daniel's vision.

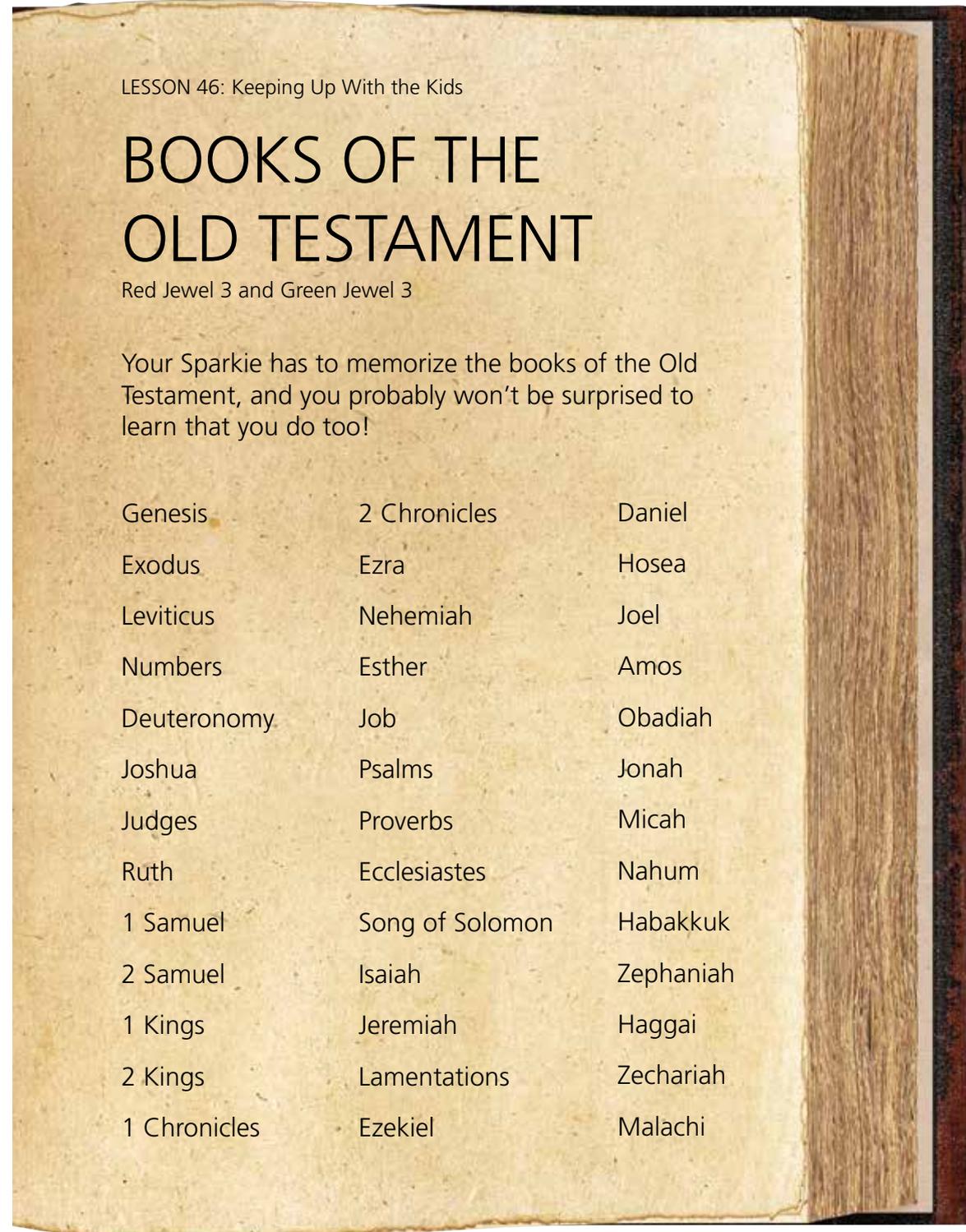
**TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:**

1. **Read Daniel 9.**
2. **Write down God's response to Daniel's question in Daniel 12:9-10.**

**SECTION COMPLETED**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



LESSON 46: Keeping Up With the Kids

# BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Red Jewel 3 and Green Jewel 3

Your Sparkie has to memorize the books of the Old Testament, and you probably won't be surprised to learn that you do too!

Genesis	2 Chronicles	Daniel
Exodus	Ezra	Hosea
Leviticus	Nehemiah	Joel
Numbers	Esther	Amos
Deuteronomy	Job	Obadiah
Joshua	Psalms	Jonah
Judges	Proverbs	Micah
Ruth	Ecclesiastes	Nahum
1 Samuel	Song of Solomon	Habakkuk
2 Samuel	Isaiah	Zephaniah
1 Kings	Jeremiah	Haggai
2 Kings	Lamentations	Zechariah
1 Chronicles	Ezekiel	Malachi

Many of the books are named after their authors or for the chief character or characters. Here's how the rest of the books got their names.

**Genesis** — A Greek word meaning “origin” or “beginning.” The Hebrew name for the book was *Bereshith*, which also means “In the Beginning.”

**Exodus** — A Greek word meaning “exit” or “leaving.” The Hebrew name was *We'elleh Shemoth*, for the first part of the first verse in the book, *And These Are the Names*.

**Leviticus** — The name is from Latin and was derived from the Greek. It means “that which pertains to the Levites.” The original Hebrew name meant “And He Called.”

**Numbers** — The title comes from two numberings or censuses that occur in the book: the generation that left Egypt and the generation that conquered Canaan.

**Deuteronomy** — The name comes from Greek and means “second law.” It's not really a recording of a second law but additional instructions based on the Law given to Moses on Mt. Sinai, as recorded in Exodus.

**Chronicles** — The name means “history.” The books of 1 Chronicles and 2 Chronicles were originally one book called “The Events of the Days.”

**Psalms** — From a Greek word meaning “poems sung to music.”

**Proverbs** — The word *proverb* combines the Latin word *pro*, which means “for” and *verba*, which means “words.” The sense is that a proverb condenses many words into a few.

**Ecclesiastes** — The Greek word *ekklesia* means “congregation,” or “church.” Ecclesiastes means “preacher,” or “the one who speaks to an *ekklesia*.”

**Lamentations** — A lament, from a Latin word that also means “tears.” The original Hebrew name for the book was *Ekah*, taken from the first phrase in the first verse. It means “Ah, how!”

For some ideas on how to help your kids memorize the books, see Lesson 9 on the New Testament books of the Bible. The CD that is included with your child's *WingRunner* handbook contains an “Old Testament Books of the Bible” song that can help them (and you?) memorize the books.

### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Memorize and recite the books of the Old Testament.**

### SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON 47: Bible Survey

# REBUILDING THE TEMPLE

Read Haggai 1-2.

I was 14 and on my way to summer camp. My parents were a bit worried about sending me alone on a Greyhound® bus to a town 300 miles (483 km) away. But the camp director promised that he'd meet me at the station. Promised.

When I arrived in the early afternoon, there was nobody there to pick me up. I waited while the other bus passengers went their separate ways. I waited through the long, hot afternoon. I waited.

Mom had supplied me with the phone number for the camp, but nobody was answering the phone, so I waited. Finally, after I'd been there for four hours or so, I got through to a woman who didn't know who I was and had no idea anybody was supposed to pick me up. She told me she'd find someone to come get me.



I waited. It was suppertime and I had nothing to eat, but I wasn't about to leave the bus station in case somebody showed up. I bought a candy bar from a vending machine. The camp was 20 miles (32 km) outside of town, but it was another couple of hours before a young guy in a jeep drove up and asked if I was the kid waiting to get to camp. When I told my dad what had happened, he was very angry. He'd been given a promise.

Promises. We make them easily. Some of us keep them faithfully, others not so much.

When God makes a promise, He keeps it. Every time.

Through His prophet, Jeremiah, God made several promises to the nation of Israel. Read Jeremiah 32:28-29 and write down God's promises.

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Fortunately for Israel, God didn't stop there. He made some more promises. Read Jeremiah 32:37-44 and write down God's promises.

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God kept His promise. Judah was captured by Babylon and most of the Jewish people were carried off and settled in other areas. The temple and the city of Jerusalem were destroyed. The people of Judah were allowed to work in agriculture, trade and even administrative roles in the areas in which they were settled. But even though they participated in the everyday aspects of the pagan nation, many of them kept their faith in God — probably because of Jeremiah's prophecies. These prophecies foretold that the Jews would return to their homeland and that the promised Messiah would still be sent.

About 50 years after Jerusalem was destroyed and the people captured, Babylon was conquered by the Persians under King Cyrus. In 538 BC a small group of Jews (42,360 to be exact) were allowed to return to their own land. It was Cyrus who issued the orders giving them permission, but the Bible makes it very clear that God moved his heart. The Jews settled in a small area around Jerusalem where they were surrounded by other provinces of Persia, including Samaria.

One of the first things the people did was build an altar and sacrifice burnt

offerings to the God who had brought the nation out of captivity for a second time. A year after their return, they began rebuilding the temple that had been destroyed by the Babylonians.

These events might seem like unimportant details, but way back in Genesis we saw that God made promises to Abraham about the land and the Messiah. Israel's sin resulted in its destruction as a nation, but God never breaks His promise. The people returned and began rebuilding the nation — God's plan for the Messiah's arrival was still active.

The leaders of the surrounding provinces were concerned about the growing strength of the Israelites. They volunteered to help them rebuild the temple, but when their help was refused, their true motives came forth. They began doing whatever they could to discourage the Jews, including writing letters to the Persian king. The rebuilding of the temple began, but soon the antagonism of their enemies convinced the people to stop.

For the next 16 years, no work was done. But then, under the guidance of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, work began again. The two leaders were Zerubbabel, a descendent of King Jehoiachin, and Jeshua, the high priest. Israel's enemies sent off another letter, this time to Darius who was then king of Persia. Darius searched the records and found Cyrus's original order for the rebuilding of the temple, and he sent word to allow the building to go on. When it was finished, the people celebrated by worshiping God with sacrifices and celebrating the Passover. God kept His promises.



God encouraged His people through the prophets Haggai and Zechariah. You've already read Haggai's words. Now look at the first two chapters of Zechariah and write down the meanings of the visions as the angel explained them to the prophet.

The four horns

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The man with the measuring line

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**TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:**

1. Read Haggai 1-2.
2. Explain the visions in Zechariah 1 and 2.

**SECTION COMPLETED**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

The man on the red horse in the myrtle grove

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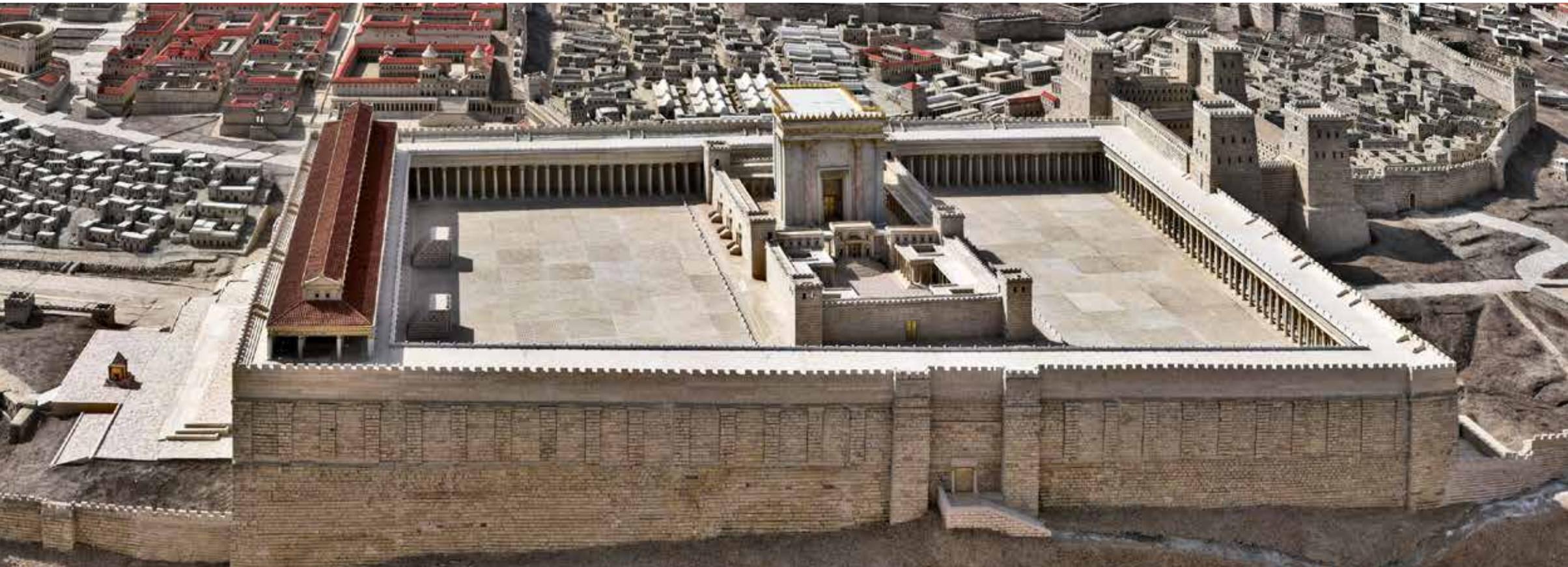
The four craftsmen

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# ESTHER

Read Esther.

For 'tis the sport to have the engineer  
**Hoist with his own petard;** and 't shall go hard  
But I will delve one yard below their mines  
And blow them at the moon.

This famous quotation is from William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. In the scene, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern were carrying a letter from King Claudius that called for Hamlet's death. When he found out about it, Hamlet altered the letter so that it would result in the deaths of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

A petard was an explosive device that was used to break through walls or doors. Literally, Shakespeare was saying that the two men would be blown up with their own bomb. The phrase has entered the language and is often used whenever somebody is harmed by his own plot or device intended to harm another.

Perhaps the best example of this in history is Haman. But we're getting a bit ahead of ourselves.

The events in the book of Esther took place during the reign of Xerxes, king of Persia, sometime between the returns of Zerubbabel and Ezra to Jerusalem. Xerxes was the father of Artaxerxes, the king who allowed Ezra and Nehemiah to return.

Xerxes was conceited. He held a huge feast to display his wealth. His queen, Vashti, gave a banquet for women in a separate area. This was not normal in Persian courts, but the couple probably didn't get along, and we soon see why. Xerxes wanted to show off Vashti's beauty. He sent some messengers to tell her to come display herself, but she

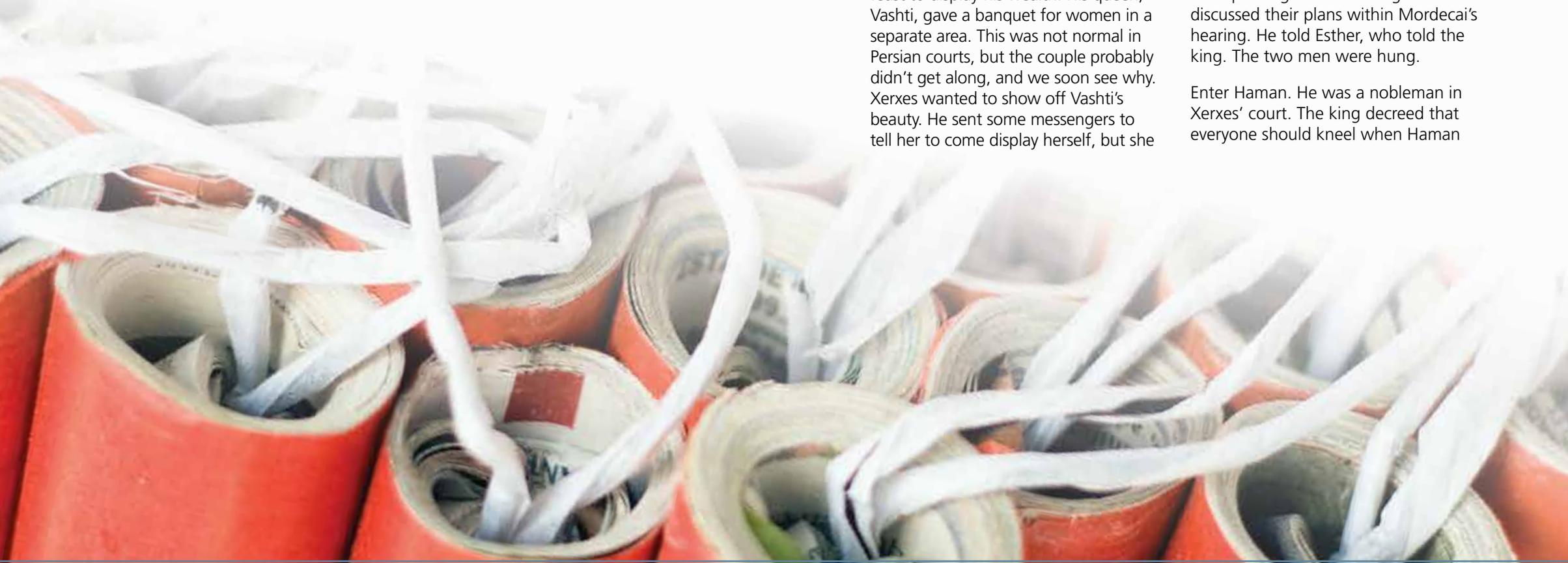
refused. Xerxes met with his council, and on its advice, banished Vashti from his presence and from her office as queen.

A short time later, Xerxes decided he wanted a new queen. All the most beautiful women in the kingdom were gathered and prepared for his inspection.

At that time, a Jew named Mordecai lived near the palace. He was raising his orphaned cousin, Esther. She was very beautiful and was chosen as one of the virgins to be taken to the palace. She hid her identity as a Jew on Mordecai's instructions. When Esther's turn came, she pleased the king, and he made her his queen. He gave a great banquet in her honor.

Meanwhile, two of Xerxes' officials were plotting to kill the king and discussed their plans within Mordecai's hearing. He told Esther, who told the king. The two men were hung.

Enter Haman. He was a nobleman in Xerxes' court. The king decreed that everyone should kneel when Haman



was near, but Mordecai refused. In response, Haman vowed to destroy Mordecai and all the Jews. He told the king the Jews wouldn't obey his laws. Xerxes issued a decree allowing Haman to kill the Jews.

Mordecai and the Jews mourned and fasted. Esther wanted to talk to the king, but to approach him without being asked meant death. The king could, if he was so disposed, extend his scepter and forgive a person for the affront, but it was a risk. Esther hadn't seen the king in a month. If she waited until he called for her, it might be too late.

Mordecai had faith. He knew God would spare the Jews, even if Esther didn't step forward. But he challenged Esther that she might be in her place for just such a time. Esther approached the king, who granted her an audience and promised her anything up to half the kingdom. The king knew Esther had risked her life by approaching him and so knew that she had something important on her mind.

Esther asked that the king and Haman come to a banquet. She then requested their presence at a second banquet. Haman bragged that he had been invited to the banquet, but he still seethed that Mordecai refused to honor him. Haman's wife, Zeresh, told him to build a gallows 75 feet (23 m) high on which to hang Mordecai.

The king (no doubt prompted by God) "just so happened" to read his annals that night and saw that Mordecai hadn't been honored for saving his life when his officials planned to assassinate him. The king called Haman and asked how he could honor a great man. Haman, thinking the king wanted to

honor him, suggested a robe, a crest and a parade on a horse.

Haman was forced to honor Mordecai with his very own suggestions, and he wasn't happy about it as he headed to Esther's banquet. Esther told Xerxes that Haman was attempting to destroy her people. The king was angry. Haman appealed to Esther, but it did him no good. Xerxes demanded that Haman be hung on the gallows built for Mordecai. Esther was given Haman's estate and Mordecai was made the manager of it.

The king's order to destroy the Jews couldn't be revoked — the law forbade it — but the king allowed Mordecai to issue a decree in his name giving the Jews the right to defend themselves against anyone who tried to harm them. The local officials, afraid of Mordecai and his new position of power, helped the Jews. All who tried to harm the Jews, including Haman's sons, were killed. Mordecai was raised to be second only to the king and he worked for the welfare of the Jews.

These events were the inspiration for the feast of Purim. The word *Purim* comes from *pur*, the word for "lot," because Haman cast lots to decide when to attack the Jews.

Look up Genesis 50:20 and Romans 8:28. How do the principles laid out in these verses apply to the history of Esther?

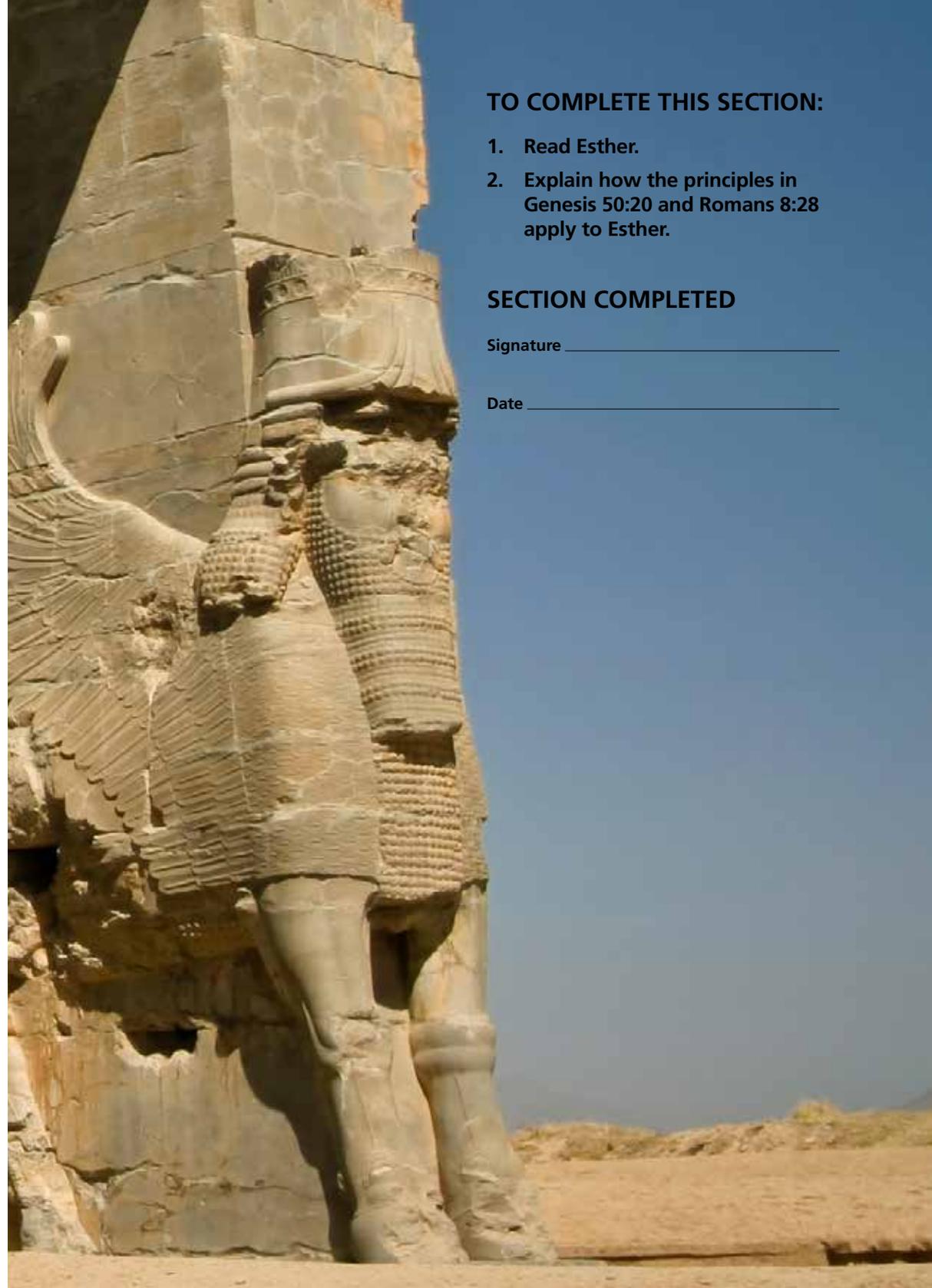
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## TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Read Esther.
2. Explain how the principles in Genesis 50:20 and Romans 8:28 apply to Esther.

## SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# EZRA

Read Ezra 7:1-10:17.

You've probably seen the popular bumper sticker that uses symbols from various philosophies and religions to spell out the word "Coexist." Religious tolerance is a popular theme in our society. But what do people mean by "coexistence" and "tolerance"?

Here's what the website for the Interfaith Marketplace, where you can buy the Coexist bumper sticker, says: *Imagine an old wagon wheel with a spoke for each faith. Each spoke is needed to hold the wheel as we turn on this interconnected journey.*

Here's what the website for the Baha'i Faith says: *Baha'is view the world's major religions as a part of a single, progressive process through which God reveals His will to humanity. Baha'u'llah (1817-1892), the*

*Founder of the Baha'i Faith, is recognized as the most recent in a line of Divine Messengers that includes Abraham, Moses, Buddha, Zoroaster, Christ and Muhammad. The central theme of Baha'u'llah's message is that humanity is one single race and that the day has come for humanity's unification into one global society. While reaffirming the core ethical principles common to all religions, Baha'u'llah also revealed new laws and teachings to lay the foundations of a global civilization.*



This isn't new. Here's what Cyrus, the king of Persia who gave Ezra permission to return to Jerusalem, had to say in one of his edicts: *At the command of Marduk, Great God of Babylon, I restored the gods taken by Nabonidus. He had angered Marduk by taking captive the gods of Sumer and Akkad and placing them in Babylon. But I resettled them peacefully in their former chapels where they are happy. May all the gods whom I have resettled in their former sanctuaries intercede daily on my behalf to Marduk and his son Nabu. May they ask for me to have a long life ...*

But here's what God said: ... *"The land you are entering to possess is a land polluted by the corruption of its peoples. By their detestable practices they have filled it with their impurity from one end to the other. Therefore, do not give your daughters in marriage to their sons or take their daughters for your sons. Do not seek a treaty of friendship with them at any time, that you may be strong and eat the good things of the land and leave it to your children as an everlasting inheritance" (Ezra 9:11-12).*

Ezra was a teacher well-versed in the law of Moses, which the Lord, the God of Israel, had given. ... *the hand of the LORD his God was on him (Ezra 7:6).*

Shortly after Ezra returned to Jerusalem, the leaders told him: ... *"The people of Israel, including the priests and the Levites, have not kept themselves separate from the neighboring peoples with their detestable practices, like those of the Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians and Amorites. They have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons, and have mingled the holy race with*

*the peoples around them. And the leaders and officials have led the way in this unfaithfulness" (Ezra 9:1-2).*

Ezra replied, "That's a wonderful thing. We need to be tolerant of other religions and realize that all people, no matter what their beliefs, have something to offer to the benefit of all."

No, he didn't.

Here's what he did: ... *I tore my tunic and cloak, pulled hair from my head and beard and sat down appalled ... until the evening sacrifice. Then, at the evening sacrifice, I rose from my self-abasement, with my tunic and cloak torn, and fell on my knees with my hands spread out to the LORD my God and prayed ... (Ezra 9:3-6).*

Ezra was upset because this was the same sin that had resulted in Israel's captivity by Babylon. God had graciously allowed a remnant to return, and they were falling into the exact same sin!

Ezra prayed before the people, thanking God for what He'd done and for His kindness toward Israel. He confessed the nation's sin. The gathered crowd made a covenant to rid the nation of the wives and children who worshiped other gods. The entire nation gathered three days later. Picture the scene — thousands upon thousands of people gathered in the city in a driving rain. They were wet and cold and ashamed and probably frightened. They knew that God hadn't tolerated their sin in the past and wouldn't tolerate it then.

The decision they made was almost unanimous. Only four men disagreed. Everyone who had married a foreign wife had to appear before the elders and judges and rid himself of the

woman and her children. Ezra gives us a list of the offenders. There aren't a lot of them — just over 100. You might wonder what danger a handful of foreign women could do to an entire nation of people. But Ezra knew, as Paul wrote to the Corinthians several hundred years later, ... *a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough* (1 Corinthians 5:6).

"But," you say, "how does this apply to us today? Are we supposed to completely withdraw from everyone who doesn't share our faith? I work with non-Christians and have non-Christian friends. Am I wrong?"

No. We can't help buying our gas or groceries from those whose faith differs from ours. Indeed, we are supposed to bring God's message of reconciliation to them and to the world. We can't do that very well from inside a cloistered encampment. Read what Paul has to say in 1 Corinthians 5:9-13 and write in it your own words.

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But keep in mind that the issue — in Ezra's day and today — is one of influence. If another person (and especially another self-proclaimed believer) is influencing you to focus on things other than the Lord, the relationship is wrong. If you are influencing the other person to consider Jesus Christ, the relationship is good. There is a fine line between tolerance and respect for other people and tolerance and respect for their sinful beliefs. We must be constantly diligent to maintain that line by studying the truth of Scripture and by allowing the Holy Spirit to lead in our lives.

*Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil.*  
(1 Thessalonians 5:21-22)

### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Read Ezra 7:1-10:17.
2. Write out 1 Corinthians 5:9-13 in your words.

### SECTION COMPLETED

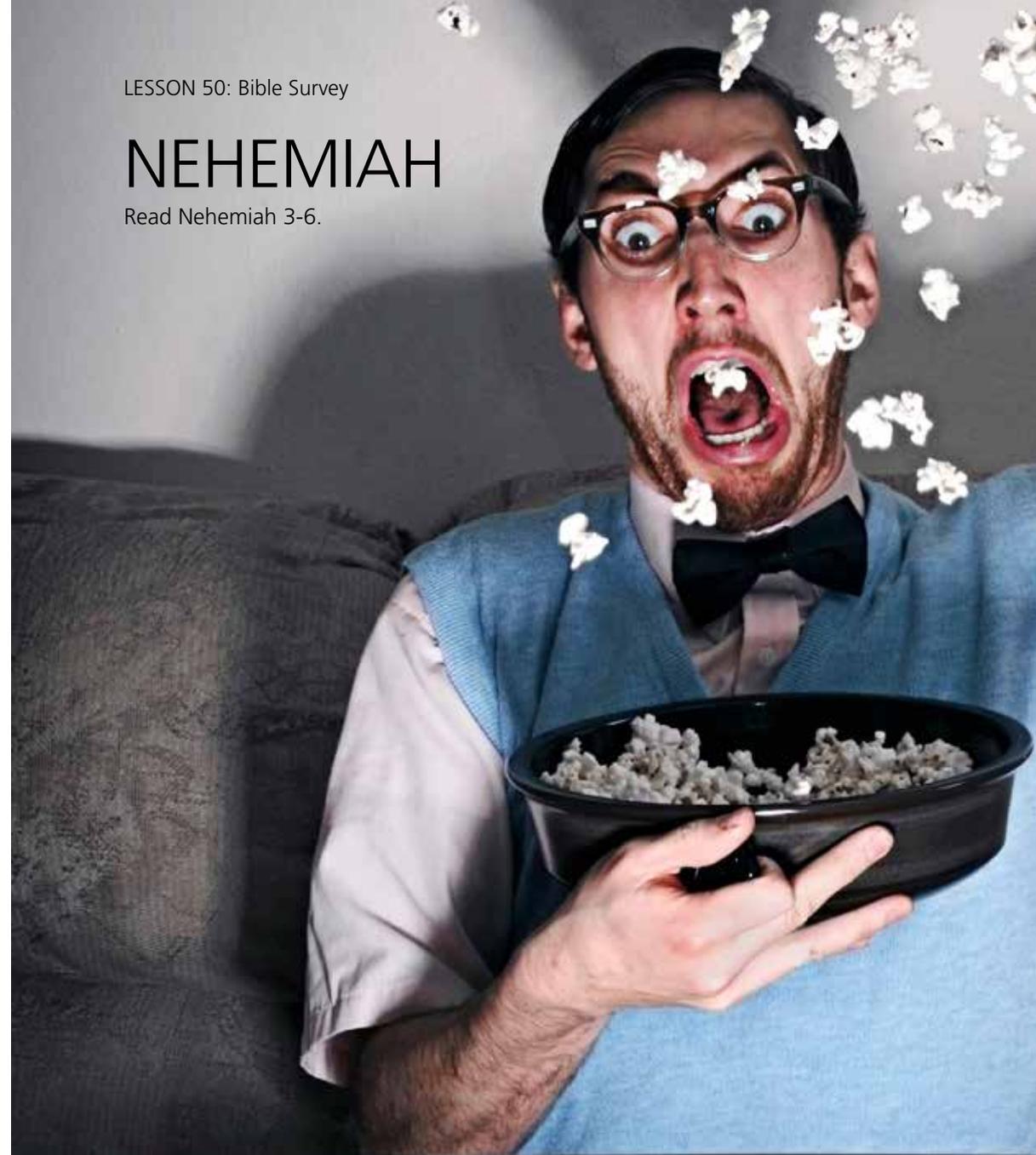
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LESSON 50: Bible Survey

# NEHEMIAH

Read Nehemiah 3-6.



I went home one weekend during my final year of college. My parents were out of town, and nobody knew I was there. After the congestion of the city, the throngs of students at school and the constant presence of a roommate, I was enjoying the solitude. An old suspense movie was on the late show. I made some popcorn, turned off all the lights and settled on the couch to watch it.



# THE TRUE LIGHT

The three memory verses in this lesson and the verses that follow them are some of the most amazing verses in Scripture — both for conciseness and depth of information.

In this short passage, we learn several amazing truths. After each statement below, write down the phrase from John 1:1-14 that supports that point.

1. Jesus Christ has existed from the beginning.

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2. Jesus Christ has a distinct personality within the Trinity.

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3. Jesus Christ is God.

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4. Jesus Christ has an unchanging relationship with God the Father.

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5. Jesus Christ is the Creator of all things.

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## RED JEWEL 4

John 1:1-3

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

*He was with God in the beginning.*

*Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made.*

6. Jesus Christ has the power to give life.

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7. Jesus Christ became human.

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8. Jesus Christ was rejected by those He came to save.

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9. Jesus Christ offers us the opportunity to become children of God.

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10. Jesus Christ brings grace (loving-kindness) and truth (reality, verity).

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It's important to understand the meaning of the word *light* as used in verse four. Imagine walking through the woods late at night. Off on one side you see a large silhouette that appears to be a bear. You shine your flashlight on it and see that it's only a bush. Then on the other side, you see a large, dark shadow that might conceal anything. You point your light and discover there's nothing there. The way ahead is hidden in darkness, but your flashlight reveals a poisonous snake slithering across the path. You

watch it until it is safely out of the way. (Consider doing this as a family activity in your house or yard to help your kids understand Jesus as the Light.)

Your flashlight revealed the true nature of the darkness. Things were shown in their reality. The light Jesus Christ shines does the same thing.

On the one hand, Christ reveals His own nature. For those of us who believe in Him, He reveals His nature in us.

On the other hand, for those who have not believed in Christ, His light exposes their sinful nature. There is no hiding. Either we are in Christ or we are not, and His light will reveal the truth.

#### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Memorize and recite the three verses.**
2. **Read John 1:1-14 and fill in the blanks.**

#### SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



LESSON 52: The Big Picture

## THE OLD TESTAMENT CANON

The Old Testament Canon was an ancient artillery device fashioned from iron and wood. The heavy weapon was pulled by a team of camels harnessed with slings that circled their bellies and fit over their humps. The wheels, fashioned of olive wood, were twice as wide as wagon wheels to keep the weighty load from sinking into the soft sand of the desert.

The Israelites had several of these canons at the siege of Jericho. When the priests blew their trumpets, the canoneers fired the weapons, knocking large holes in the walls that enabled the army to enter the city.

**Nothing** that you've read **so far** in this lesson **is even a little bit true**. The true part begins now.

The Canon is the list of books that have been included in the Bible. The word comes from the Greek word *kanon*, which means “a reed or measuring rod.” The meaning shifted somewhat over time and is now used for the thing being measured — something like the way we use the word *rule* (as in “rule of thumb”). When referring to Scripture, the Canon is the list of books that have met the standard or passed the test.

The most important thing to remember about the Old Testament Canon (and the New Testament Canon too) is that God is in control. He inspired the writers to record what He wanted recorded, and then He saw to it that their records that He wanted in the Bible are there. It’s easy to get confused on this point. Several councils of religious men have been held over the years to decide what books should and should not be included in Scripture. But the effect of these councils has been not to determine canonicity, but to affirm it to the Church.

Which brings up the obvious question: How did God see to it that the writings He wanted in the Bible are there? There are several principles that guide us.

**Was the book written by a prophet of God?**

As we saw back in Lesson 32, a prophet is a person who is given a message by God to give to God’s people. Sometimes this message includes prophecies about things that will happen in the future, but not always. Lesson 32 explained two ways you could tell if a person was, indeed, a prophet. Most of the books of the Old Testament include some very obvious statements that identify God as the source. Look up the following verses and write down the evidence. (For this principle, and for all those that follow, there are many, many more examples in the Bible than what we’re having you look at here.)



Amos 1:3

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Micah 1:1

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Haggai 1:1

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**Did God do or say something to show that the writer was communicating with Him?**

God used miracles throughout history to confirm that a person was acting or speaking with His power. Look up the following verses and write a brief summary of this principle in action.

Exodus 4:1-5

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1 Kings 18:36-38

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**Does the book’s message speak the truth about God, and everything else?**

God can’t contradict Himself. If a book included statements that contradicted anything written in a previous revelation from God, it wasn’t Scripture. We’ve looked at this in more detail in Lesson 32, so we won’t cover it again here.

**Does the book show evidence of God’s power?**

God, and only God, has the power to change lives. All humans are born dead in sin. Only God can redeem a life and make it live. Look up the following verses and write down what they say about the power of God’s Word to change lives.

Psalms 19:7

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Isaiah 55:11

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**Was the book considered Scripture by those it was originally written for?**

No books of the Bible were written by guys who sat down one day and decided, just for fun, to write Scripture. God was behind every bit of the Word, and the people who first read His Word knew it. Look up these verses to see how the original readers treated Scripture, then write down a simple explanation.

Deuteronomy 31:26

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Joshua 24:26-27

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All of this leads to the question — when did the books of the Old Testament become the Old Testament Canon we know today?

As the writers wrote their histories and prophecies, their books were added to “the Law and the Prophets,” the name by which the Scriptures were generally known. When Malachi finished writing the final book, in about 425 BC, it was added to the collection and the Canon was closed. Nobody probably realized this at the time, but no other books were written that met the requirements. There were people back then who claimed that other books should be added, just as there are today. But the chief rabbis within the Jewish nation accepted only those books known to be inspired by the Holy Spirit — the Old Testament we have today. (Note that

the order of the Old Testament books has changed over time and some books have been split into two books).

These are the Scriptures that were studied by Jesus when He was on earth. And as a final seal on their authority, these are the books He (and the New Testament writers) quoted from and referred to as the Word of God. In fact, every book in the Old Testament is quoted from or referred to in the New Testament except for Song of Solomon and Esther. (And there is plenty of evidence that these two books were never doubted by those who sought the truth.)

There’s one more reason to believe the Bible is the Word of God — pick it up and search out its riches. More than 40 writers, over a period of 1,500 years, were inspired by the Holy Spirit to record God’s Word. No person or group of people could ever write a book that is so wise, so accurate and so influential in the lives of men and women, boys and girls.

**TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:**

- 1. Look up the listed verses and answer the questions.

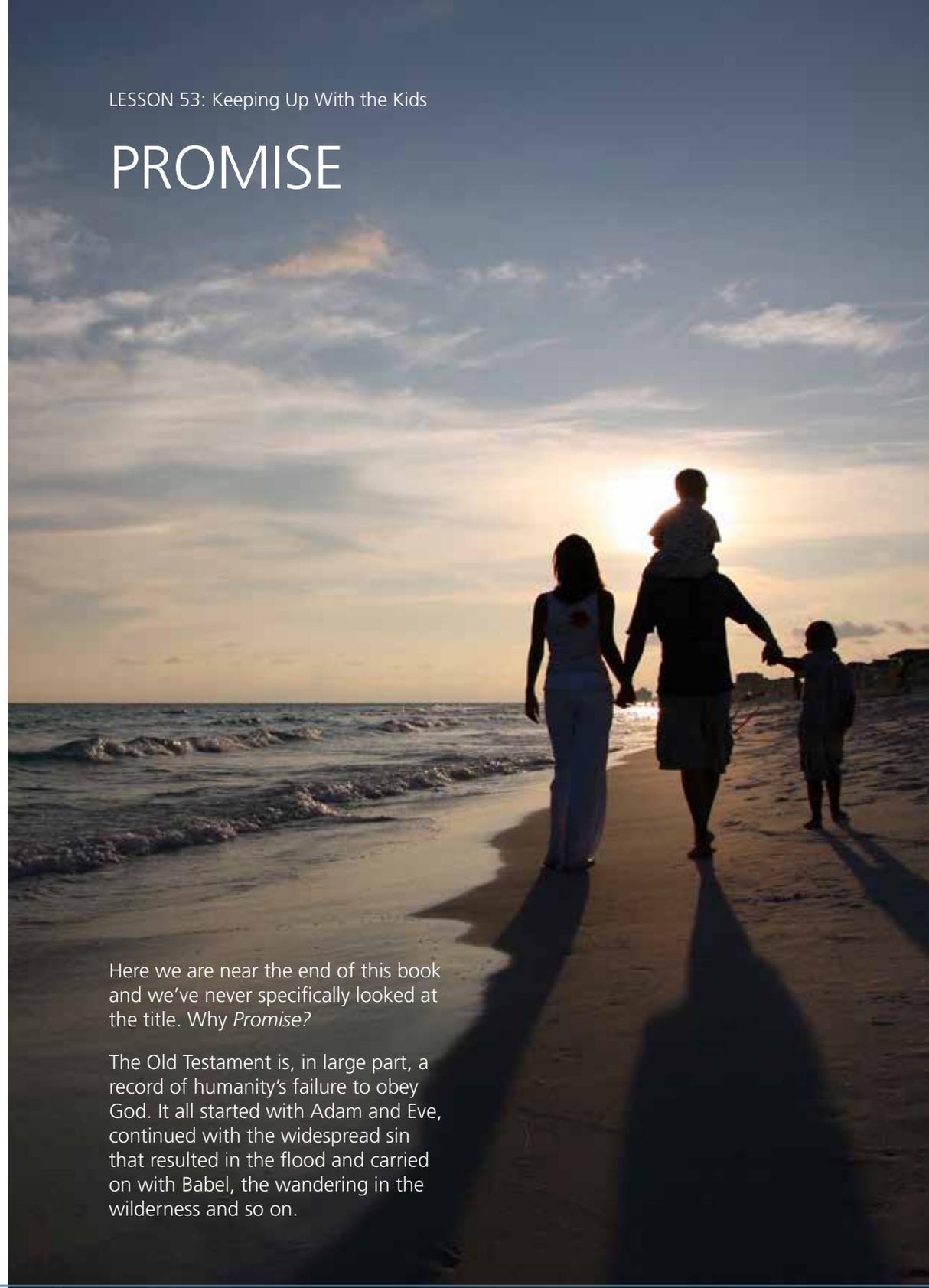
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LESSON 53: Keeping Up With the Kids

# PROMISE



Here we are near the end of this book and we’ve never specifically looked at the title. *Why Promise?*

The Old Testament is, in large part, a record of humanity’s failure to obey God. It all started with Adam and Eve, continued with the widespread sin that resulted in the flood and carried on with Babel, the wandering in the wilderness and so on.



#### GREEN JEWEL 4

Ephesians 4:32

*Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*

Philippians 2:14

*Do everything without complaining or arguing.*

Time after time, people have gone against God and against their own best interests. God is a God of justice — He has, and will, punish sin. But He's also a God of love. From before creation, He planned to send Jesus Christ, His Son, as our Redeemer.

God's promise of redemption unfolds all through the Old Testament:

Right after Adam and Eve sinned and were thrown out of the garden — *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will crush your head, and you will strike His heel (Genesis 3:15).* (For more on this verse, see Lesson 7 in *Beginnings: Studies in Genesis* — *Joshua.*)

When God called Abraham to be the father of Israel — *and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed Me (Genesis 22:18).* Paul makes it clear that God was referring to Christ. *The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say*

*“and to seeds,” meaning many people, but “and to your seed,” meaning one person, who is Christ (Galatians 3:16).*

When Jacob and his sons were driven by famine to live in Egypt, God had a message for Judah about the coming King: *The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until He comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is His (Genesis 49:10).*

When David was warring with his enemies, God told him: ... *I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for My Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever (2 Samuel 7:12-13).*

When the psalmist considers whether God had abandoned His covenant with David: *He will call out to Me, “You are my Father, my God, the Rock my Savior.” I will also appoint him My firstborn, the most exalted of the kings of the earth. I will maintain My love to him forever, and My covenant with him will never fail. I will establish his line forever, his throne as long as the heavens endure (Psalm 89:26-29).*

When Isaiah was prophesying amidst a sinning people, God gave him this message: *For to us a Child is born, to*

*us a Son is given, and the government will be on His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over His kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever ... (Isaiah 9:6-7).*

When Judah was in captivity in Babylon, Daniel received this promise: *In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into His presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and His kingdom is one that will never be destroyed (Daniel 7:13-14).*

And when the Israelites returned to their homeland, God sent this word through the prophet Zechariah: *Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your King comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey (Zechariah 9:9).*

God has already fulfilled some of these promises when Jesus Christ came to



earth in humility and gave Himself up to die. God will keep the others when Christ returns in glory. Look up the following verses and write down what they have to say about God's promises.

Numbers 23:19

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Joshua 23:14

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Romans 4:21

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Titus 1:2

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Hebrews 6:18

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Hebrews 11:11

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**TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:**

1. Memorize and recite the two verses.
2. Look up the verses and write down what they say about God's promises.

**SECTION COMPLETED**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

LESSON 54: Bible Survey

# MALACHI

Read Malachi.

Your boss called.

Did he leave a message?

Probably, even if you get along great with your boss and have no fear of being fired or laid off, your first reaction to getting a message from him or her would be to pay attention.

Whatever the message is, you'd better listen.

And if that's true of your boss, it's certainly true of God.



Israel got a message from God — the book of Malachi. In fact, Malachi’s name means “my messenger.”

Malachi’s prophecy was written after the Israelites had returned from their captivity in Babylon. The temple had been rebuilt and was once again the center of worship for the nation. But God was upset about the way the people were worshiping, so He sent them a message in six parts. Malachi delivers the message in a series of questions and answers.

We’ve done a lot of the work for you, but we’ve left a couple of blanks for you to fill in.

Part 1 — How has God loved Israel? (Malachi 1:2-5)

God reminded the people of His blessings on Israel through Jacob. Esau wasn’t blessed, and his descendants, the Edomites, have been ... *a people always under the wrath of the LORD (Malachi 1:4).*

Part 2 — How have the priests honored God? (Malachi 1:6-2:9)

God reminded the priests that He is their Father, Master and King and deserves their respect. But instead of respect, the priests had been

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Part 3 — How were the people breaking faith with each other? (Malachi 2:10-16)

The men were divorcing their Jewish wives and marrying women from other nations. Ezra had dealt with this same problem just a few years earlier. Look back at Lesson 39. Why was Ezra so upset about this practice?

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Part 4 — How had God been patient with Israel? (Malachi 2:17-3:6)

Evil people had flourished and not suffered punishment for their wrongdoing. God is patient. He promised to come and judge the wicked after sending another messenger (John the Baptist) to herald His approach. And when He comes, the righteous will be blessed and the wicked will suffer.

Part 5 — How had the people robbed God? (Malachi 3:7-12)

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The Law God gave to Israel required them to tithe. As a result of their failure to do so, God was withholding His blessing. But if they obeyed God, He promised to

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Part 6 — How would God remember those who were faithful to Him? (Malachi 3:13-4:3)

God promised that one day they would

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God, through Malachi, summed up His message (Malachi 4:4-6) with a final call to remember His Law and a reminder that the Judge was coming.

Based on what you’ve learned in this book, you probably won’t be surprised to discover that Israel didn’t get the message. As a result, God had nothing to say to them for the next 400 years. When He finally spoke to them again, He did so in the person of His own Son.

**TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:**

- 1. Read Malachi.
2. Fill in the blanks from your reading.

**SECTION COMPLETED**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



# ALEXANDER THE GREAT

Read Daniel 8 and Ezekiel 26.

As we saw at the end of Lesson 54 on Malachi, God did not speak to Israel for 400 years. But that does not mean He did not have anything to say about those years. Daniel had received a vision about this time period 150 years earlier and wrote about it in his prophecy. So even though God wasn't giving them any new revelation, the Israelites could watch events unfold and see that God was still in control.

In Daniel's vision, he saw: ... *a ram with two horns ... I watched the ram as he charged toward the west and the north and the south. No animal could stand against him, and none could rescue from his power. He did as he pleased and became great (Daniel 8:3-4).*



There can be no question about what the ram represents because the angel, Gabriel, appeared to Daniel and told him. The ram was the Medo-Persian Empire. Twelve years later (as we've seen briefly in Lesson 44), Darius the Mede (the smaller horn) captured Babylon. Cyrus (the larger horn) the Persian rose to power a short time later.

Daniel's vision continues: ... *suddenly a goat with a prominent horn between his eyes came from the west, crossing the whole earth without touching the ground. I saw him attack the ram furiously, striking the ram and shattering his two horns. The ram was powerless to stand against him; the goat knocked him to the ground and trampled on him, and none could rescue the ram from his power. The goat became very great ... (Daniel 8:5, 7-8).*

Gabriel told Daniel that the goat represented the king of Greece. While Alexander's name isn't mentioned, there can be no question he was the goat.

The area known as Greece had consisted of a group of small republics under the influence of Persia. Alexander's father, Philip, formed a coalition of these states and then was assassinated in 336 BC. His son, Alexander, was only 20 years old, but he was equal to the task. He established his power in Greece, then formed a huge army and headed east. In a series of brilliant battles against a larger, better supplied army, Alexander conquered the Medo-Persian Empire, just as Daniel had prophesied 200 years earlier.

Alexander took a side trip during his conquest of Persia and conquered all the nations along the Mediterranean Sea, including Israel. Although Scripture doesn't

say anything specific about it, God's protection is evident. Jerusalem and the temple were not plundered or destroyed.

Alexander continued his exploits, capturing the region now encompassed by Afghanistan, Kazakhstan and Pakistan. His army finally had enough and refused to go farther. Alexander was planning an attack on the Arabian Peninsula when he died at the age of 32, perhaps of poisoning.

Alexander also played a large role in the fulfillment of another prophecy, this one regarding the city of Tyre.

Tyre was a major trading port on the Mediterranean coast a short distance north of Israel. The city consisted of two parts — a mainland city with two ports and an island located a short distance off shore. Hiram, the king of Tyre, was a friend of David and Solomon who supplied material for building projects in Jerusalem. Tyre was also the home of Jezebel (see Lesson 28). The Bible doesn't mention any particular incident in which Tyre opposed Israel. But the people were totally caught up with riches and materialism, and when Jerusalem fell to Babylon, they rejoiced because they would no longer have to pay taxes on goods carried through Judah.

As a result, God punished the city. Ezekiel prophesied this in Ezekiel 26-28. It appears that Nebuchadnezzar would be responsible for fulfilling the entire prophecy, but as it happens so often in Scripture, the prophecy has a dual fulfillment. Nebuchadnezzar spent 13 years attacking the city on the mainland and finally succeeded in reducing it to rubble around 572 BC. But the island city still survived.

Move forward 240 years. Tyre was still a major player in the region's trade, under the authority of Persia, when Alexander appeared on the scene. Ezekiel had prophesied that ... *they will break down your walls and demolish your fine houses and throw your stones, timber and rubble into the sea (Ezekiel 26:12)*. That's exactly what Alexander did. His men spent seven months gathering the ruins left by Nebuchadnezzar's army and throwing them into the sea. They built a causeway out to the island city and destroyed it.

God prophesied that the city would never be rebuilt. While there is a town in Lebanon today called Tyre, covering a portion of the causeway built by Alexander's men, much of the area on the former island is now an archaeological dig.

### TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Read Daniel 8 and Ezekiel 26.

### SECTION COMPLETED

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



### LESSON 56: Beyond the Old Testament

# THE SILENT YEARS

Read Daniel 11.

There were approximately 350 years between the death of Alexander and the birth of Christ. We don't have time to cover the period with any degree of detail, but let's take a look at a general outline that will help you understand the setting when Christ came to earth.

After Alexander's death, the Greek Empire was split into four pieces, each ruled by one of his army's generals (the four horns of Daniel 8:8). The ruler over the area that included Israel was named Seleucus. His kingdom engaged in a series of wars with the kingdom of Egypt under the Ptolemies. (Ptolemy was another of Alexander's generals.) These wars raged for about 150 years. Daniel, in Daniel 11, gives a prophetic summary of these wars that was fulfilled exactly as God had foretold. Many Jews went to Egypt where they settled and gained influence in local affairs. Others joined with Syria for protection and over time many of these adopted Greek manners and language. The Sadducees emerged from this group, having embraced the Greek philosophy of aristocracy and free will.



There remained a remnant of Jews who continued faithfully to worship God and worked to remain separate from the surrounding nations. Unfortunately, their zealousness led many to the extreme self-righteousness of the Pharisees, as we'll see in *Glory: Studies in Matthew — Revelation*, the third book in this series.

When the Ptolemies ruled over Israel in 277 BC, the Old Testament was translated into Greek. The result was the Septuagint, the Scriptures used by most of the New Testament writers.

Next on the stage was Antiochus Epiphanes, a Seleucid ruler who gained power illegally. The Jewish high priest, Menelaus, gained control of Jerusalem by bribery, murder and influence and plundered the temple of its riches. When

the people resisted him, Antiochus (who supported him) considered it an attack against his rule and set out to destroy the Jewish religion.

He attacked Jerusalem on the Sabbath, killing many and taking many slaves. The city was burned and all observance of Jewish law was made illegal and punishable by death. As an ultimate act of sin, Antiochus desecrated the temple. He offered swine's flesh on the altar as a sacrifice to Zeus. All of this was also prophesied by Daniel. *His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation (Daniel 11:31).* Antiochus is portrayed in Scripture as a type of the Antichrist who will come to power during the tribulation.

At that time, Mattathias, a powerful priest, led a revolt with the help of his five sons and their followers. This group, known as the Maccabees, defeated Antiochus's forces in battle. The evil ruler died of a horrible disease that rotted his flesh. And, in accordance with Daniel's vision from Daniel 8:14, the desecration of the temple would last for 2,300 days, or six-and-a-half years. The temple was then purified and proper worship of God was re-established.

The Maccabees' influence remained strong for a while, but was eventually watered down by the death of some of the leaders and by an alliance with Rome. Simon, one of Mattathias' sons, became high priest and governor. The nation of Israel was allowed a great deal of economic and religious autonomy as a result of a treaty with Rome.

In 135 BC, Simon was murdered. His death was followed by a series of internal wars and wars with surrounding nations. At one point during this time, the boundaries of the nation were larger than they had been under David and Solomon, but it didn't last long.

The Roman Empire under Pompey attacked Jerusalem in 63 BC and reduced it to a subject state. An Edomite (descendants of Esau and enemies with Israel) named Antipater gained influence and power and appointed his sons, Phasael and Herod as prefects (rulers). Herod shared his father's political savvy and maintained good relations with Rome. When the Parthians (from what is now Iran) attacked Judaea (as Judah was now called), Herod fled to Rome and





**LESSON 19**

Jeremiah 32:27  
*"I am the LORD, the God of all mankind. Is anything too hard for Me?"*

Leviticus 19:2  
*"Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: 'Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy.'"*

Proverbs 20:11  
*Even a child is known by his actions, by whether his conduct is pure and right.*

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**LESSON 9 CONT.**

**BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT**

- Matthew
- Mark
- Luke
- John
- Acts
- Romans
- 1 Corinthians
- 2 Corinthians
- Galatians
- Ephesians
- Philippians
- Colossians
- 1 Thessalonians
- 2 Thessalonians
- 1 Timothy
- 2 Timothy
- Titus
- Philemon
- Hebrews
- James
- 1 Peter
- 2 Peter
- 1 John
- 2 John
- 3 John
- Jude
- Revelation

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**LESSON 3**

1 Corinthians 15:3-4  
*For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.*

*That He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.*

James 2:10  
*For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.*

Acts 16:31  
*They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved — you and your household."*

NIV®

**LESSON 46**  
**BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT**

- Genesis
- Exodus
- Leviticus
- Numbers
- Deuteronomy
- Joshua
- Judges
- Ruth
- 1 Samuel
- 2 Samuel
- 1 Kings
- 2 Kings
- 1 Chronicles
- 2 Chronicles
- Ezra
- Nehemiah
- Esther
- Job
- Psalms
- Proverbs
- Ecclesiastes
- Song of Solomon
- Isaiah
- Jeremiah
- Lamentations
- Ezekiel
- Daniel
- Hosea
- Joel
- Amos
- Obadiah
- Jonah
- Micah
- Nahum
- Habakkuk
- Zephaniah
- Haggai
- Zechariah
- Malachi

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**LESSON 34**

2 Peter 1:19-21  
*And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.*

*Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation.*

*For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

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**LESSON 26 (CONT.)**

Psalms 23:1-6 (cont.)  
*You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.*

*Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.*

1 Peter 5:7  
*Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.*

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**LESSON 2**

John 3:16  
*For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

1 John 4:14  
*And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.*

Psalms 147:5  
*Great is our Lord, and of great power: His understanding is infinite.*

KJV

**LESSON 9**

John 20:31  
*But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name.*

Psalms 118:1  
*O give thanks unto the LORD; for He is good: because His mercy endureth for ever.*

Romans 6:23  
*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

KJV

**LESSON 14**

Deuteronomy 6:5  
*And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*

Psalms 96:2  
*Sing unto the LORD, bless His name; show forth His salvation from day to day.*

KJV

**LESSON 26**

Psalms 23:1-6  
*The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.*

*He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters.*

*He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.*

*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.*

KJV

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**LESSON 31**

Mark 16:15  
*And He said unto them, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."*

**LESSON 37**

1 Peter 1:25a  
*But the word of the Lord endureth for ever.*

1 Thessalonians 5:17-18  
*Pray without ceasing.*

*In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*

Colossians 3:23  
*And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.*

KJV

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KJV

**LESSON 19**

Jeremiah 32:27  
*"Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for Me?"*

Leviticus 19:2  
*"Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, 'Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy.'"*

Proverbs 20:11  
*Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.*

KJV

**LESSON 9 CONT.**

**BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT**

- Matthew
- Mark
- Luke
- John
- Acts
- Romans
- 1 Corinthians
- 2 Corinthians
- Galatians
- Ephesians
- Philippians
- Colossians
- 1 Thessalonians
- 2 Thessalonians
- 1 Timothy
- 2 Timothy
- Titus
- Philemon
- Hebrews
- James
- 1 Peter
- 2 Peter
- 1 John
- 2 John
- 3 John
- Jude
- Revelation

KJV

**LESSON 3**

1 Corinthians 15:3-4  
*For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.*

*And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.*

James 2:10  
*For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.*

Acts 16:31  
*And they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."*

KJV

**LESSON 2**

John 3:16  
*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

1 John 4:14  
*And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world.*

Psalms 147:5  
*Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite.*

NKJV™

**LESSON 9**

John 20:31  
*But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.*

Psalms 118:1  
*Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.*

Romans 6:23  
*For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

NKJV™

**LESSON 14**

Deuteronomy 6:5  
*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.*

Psalms 96:2  
*Sing to the LORD, bless His name; Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day.*

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**LESSON 46**  
**BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT**

- Genesis
- Exodus
- Leviticus
- Numbers
- Deuteronomy
- Joshua
- Judges
- Ruth
- 1 Samuel
- 2 Samuel
- 1 Kings
- 2 Kings
- 1 Chronicles
- 2 Chronicles
- Ezra
- Nehemiah
- Esther
- Job
- Psalms
- Proverbs
- Ecclesiastes
- Song of Solomon
- Isaiah
- Jeremiah
- Lamentations
- Ezekiel
- Daniel
- Hosea
- Joel
- Amos
- Obadiah
- Jonah
- Micah
- Nahum
- Habakkuk
- Zephaniah
- Haggai
- Zechariah
- Malachi

KJV

**LESSON 34**

2 Peter 1:19-21  
*We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.*

*Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation.*

*For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

KJV

**LESSON 26 (CONT.)**

Psalms 23:1-6 (cont.)  
*Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.*

*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.*

1 Peter 5:7  
*Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you.*

KJV

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**LESSON 26**

Psalms 23:1-6  
*The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.*

*He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.*

*He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.*

*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.*

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**LESSON 31**

Mark 16:15  
*And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."*

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**LESSON 37**

1 Peter 1:25a  
*But the word of the LORD endures forever.*

1 Thessalonians 5:17-18  
*Pray without ceasing.*

*In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

Colossians 3:23  
*And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men.*

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KJV

KJV

**LESSON 53**

Ephesians 4:32  
*And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*

Philippians 2:14  
*Do all things without murmurings and disputings.*

KJV

**LESSON 51**

John 1:1-3  
*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

*He was in the beginning with God.*

*All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.*

NKJV™

NKJV™

NKJV™

**LESSON 19**

Jeremiah 32:27  
*"Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?"*

Leviticus 19:2  
*"Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: 'You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.'"*

Proverbs 20:11  
*Even a child is known by his deeds, whether what he does is pure and right.*

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**LESSON 9 CONT.**

**BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT**

- |                 |            |
|-----------------|------------|
| Matthew         | 1 Timothy  |
| Mark            | 2 Timothy  |
| Luke            | Titus      |
| John            | Philemon   |
| Acts            | Hebrews    |
| Romans          | James      |
| 1 Corinthians   | 1 Peter    |
| 2 Corinthians   | 2 Peter    |
| Galatians       | 1 John     |
| Ephesians       | 2 John     |
| Philippians     | 3 John     |
| Colossians      | Jude       |
| 1 Thessalonians | Revelation |
| 2 Thessalonians |            |

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**LESSON 3**

1 Corinthians 15:3-4  
*For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.*

*And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.*

James 2:10  
*For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.*

Acts 16:31  
*So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."*

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**LESSON 46**  
**BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT**

- |              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| Genesis      | Proverbs        |
| Exodus       | Ecclesiastes    |
| Leviticus    | Song of Solomon |
| Numbers      | Isaiah          |
| Deuteronomy  | Jeremiah        |
| Joshua       | Lamentations    |
| Judges       | Ezekiel         |
| Ruth         | Daniel          |
| 1 Samuel     | Hosea           |
| 2 Samuel     | Joel            |
| 1 Kings      | Amos            |
| 2 Kings      | Obadiah         |
| 1 Chronicles | Jonah           |
| 2 Chronicles | Micah           |
| Ezra         | Nahum           |
| Nehemiah     | Habakkuk        |
| Esther       | Zephaniah       |
| Job          | Haggai          |
| Psalms       | Zechariah       |
|              | Malachi         |

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**LESSON 34**

2 Peter 1:19-21  
*And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.*

*Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation.*

*For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*

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**LESSON 26 (CONT.)**

Psalms 23:1-6 (cont.)  
*You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.*

*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.*

1 Peter 5:7  
*Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.*

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**LESSON 53**

Ephesians 4:32  
*And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.*

Philippians 2:14  
*Do all things without complaining and disputing.*

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