

BEGINNINGS

Studies in Genesis – Joshua



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Awana Product Number 78124

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.

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 to allow you to model the pace your child should be on in his or her Awana handbook.

This book is the first 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 Adam to Joshua. 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 — God's purpose, Israel, the law, etc. — 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 information leaves us hanging, we'll jump ahead and see God's final revelation on 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.

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

IN THE BEGINNING

Winston Churchill was serving as First Lord of the British Admiralty when he gave a speech on the topic of Russia. Referring to the then-Communist nation, he said, "It is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma."

The same could be said about God, if all the information we had about Him was what we could gather from observation of the world around us. Romans 1:19-20 says: ... *what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities — His eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.* (See also Psalm 19:1-3.)

From the study of creation, we can figure out that God is powerful, that He is above creation and that He has a personality (and isn't just an abstract principle). When Paul says that this information is "plain," he means that we are capable of knowing it. And that means that ignorance is willful disregard of God, and that is sin. The difficulty is that we can know some things about God from creation alone, but we can't know God. He's a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.

About Russia, Churchill went on to say, "Perhaps there is a key. That key is Russian national interest." The key to our knowledge of God is His self-interest — His purpose. But we could know nothing of God's purpose if God hadn't chosen to tell us in His Word.

He hasn't told us everything there is to know. *The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever ... (Deuteronomy 29:29).*

But He has told us everything we **need** to know. There are verses in John that refer to Christ's ministry on earth, but they can be applied to the entire Bible. *Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 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 (John 20:30-31).*





The men and women we will study in this book, the people whose history is told in the Old Testament, lived through the events recorded in the Bible. It was their life. It was God interacting with them. But from God's perspective, there was much more to it — the things that happened to Adam, Abraham, Moses and Joshua happened for our benefit — so we would know everything we need to live our lives now. Read 1 Corinthians 10:1-12, then write out verse 11 here:

Let's go one step further. We've seen God's purpose in giving us His Word. We've seen His purpose for interacting with the Old Testament men and women (there's a lot more of that to come). But what was God's purpose for creating this universe and placing us here in the first place? Here it is in His own words:

"You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for You created all things, and by Your will they were created and have their being." (Revelation 4:11)

... That the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Thessalonians 1:12)

There you have it — everything is for God's will and glory. *Will* in this context, means "determination." In other words, God created because He wanted to —

He's a creator, and creators create things. You can't be a creator if you haven't created anything.

The word *glory* means "the unveiling of God's character." It might, at first, seem selfish that God created things for His glory. But think about it for a minute. What are the best possible circumstances that we could live in? Total dependence upon God — in other words, immersion in God's character. So what God wants for us is the very thing that is best for us. Notice that 2 Thessalonians 1:12 includes the words *and you in Him*. This isn't God's selfishness; it's His love.

As long as we live on this earth, we won't fully understand. Perhaps when we get to heaven we'll comprehend a little more. In the meantime, we need to study diligently to find out all we can about God's revelation to us (2 Timothy 2:15).

We can be very thankful that God has taken an interest in us and revealed Himself to us. God's love may be the most incomprehensible aspect of God's

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.

purpose. It's the first thing we teach to Sparkies as they begin club, and it's the first verse you need to memorize too.

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Read 1 Corinthians 10:1-12.**
2. **Write out 1 Corinthians 10:11.**
3. **Memorize and recite John 3:16.**

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____

WHY DID GOD . . . ?

What does the faith of a child look like? To find out, Awana surveyed several hundred kids with this question: "What is your biggest question about God and the Bible?"

We saw a definite pattern to the answers given by particular age groups.

Children ages 3 and 4 wanted to know how God related to them. "Can Jesus play with me?" "Can God ride bikes with me?"

Children ages 5-7 wanted the facts and details. We will look at this in more detail later.

Children ages 8-11 wanted answers as well, but from a perspective that showed they were thinking through their faith. "How do I know the Bible is true?" "What will happen in the future?" "Why did God create Adam and Eve if He knew they would sin?"

Young people ages 12-13 asked personal questions like "Why am I here?" "What is my purpose?"



High schoolers asked questions dealing with apologetic issues ("How can I defend my faith in school where I'm taught evolution?") and with sharing their faith. ("How can I tell my friends about the Bible?")

Back to those 5-7 year olds — "Sparkies" in our Awana Clubs program. Many Sparkies wanted to know about the Lord Jesus Christ. Their number one question was "Why did Jesus die?" They also wanted to know about His burial and resurrection and when He was returning. Sparkies also wanted to know more about Bible events. Some of their questions can be very detail-oriented and specific.

Here's a list of their top questions:

1. Why did Jesus die?
2. Where did God and Jesus come from?
3. What does heaven look like?
4. How did God create the world?
5. Who wrote the Bible?
6. Why did God make me?
7. How can I be saved?
8. Why does God love me?
9. What was it like when Jesus was a baby?
10. When will Jesus come back to earth?
11. What was Jesus' death and resurrection like?
12. Where did God get His power?
13. What was Jesus' childhood like?
14. Tell me about Adam and Eve.
15. What does God look like?
16. How do I know the Bible and God are true?

At Awana, we design our materials to answer the questions most frequently asked by children and youth at each level. We are convinced that children who get sound Bible-based answers to their questions at each level of spiritual growth are much more likely to grow into adults with solid, biblical worldviews.

Your local church, using Awana and other ministry tools, is doing what it can to provide these answers. But there is a much greater chance that the person who will be asked the questions is a parent — is that you? (If so, that's great — God intends for you to be your child's primary "question answerer.")

Here's the first question you must answer:
Are you ready for the questions?

Pick three of the questions listed and on the following page, write down your answers as you would give them to a 5- to 7-year-old child. (Use a separate sheet of paper if you need it.)

HANGGLIDER® RANK, PART 1

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.

Psalm 147:5

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

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.

QUESTION: _____

ANSWER: _____

QUESTION: _____

ANSWER: _____

QUESTION: _____

ANSWER: _____

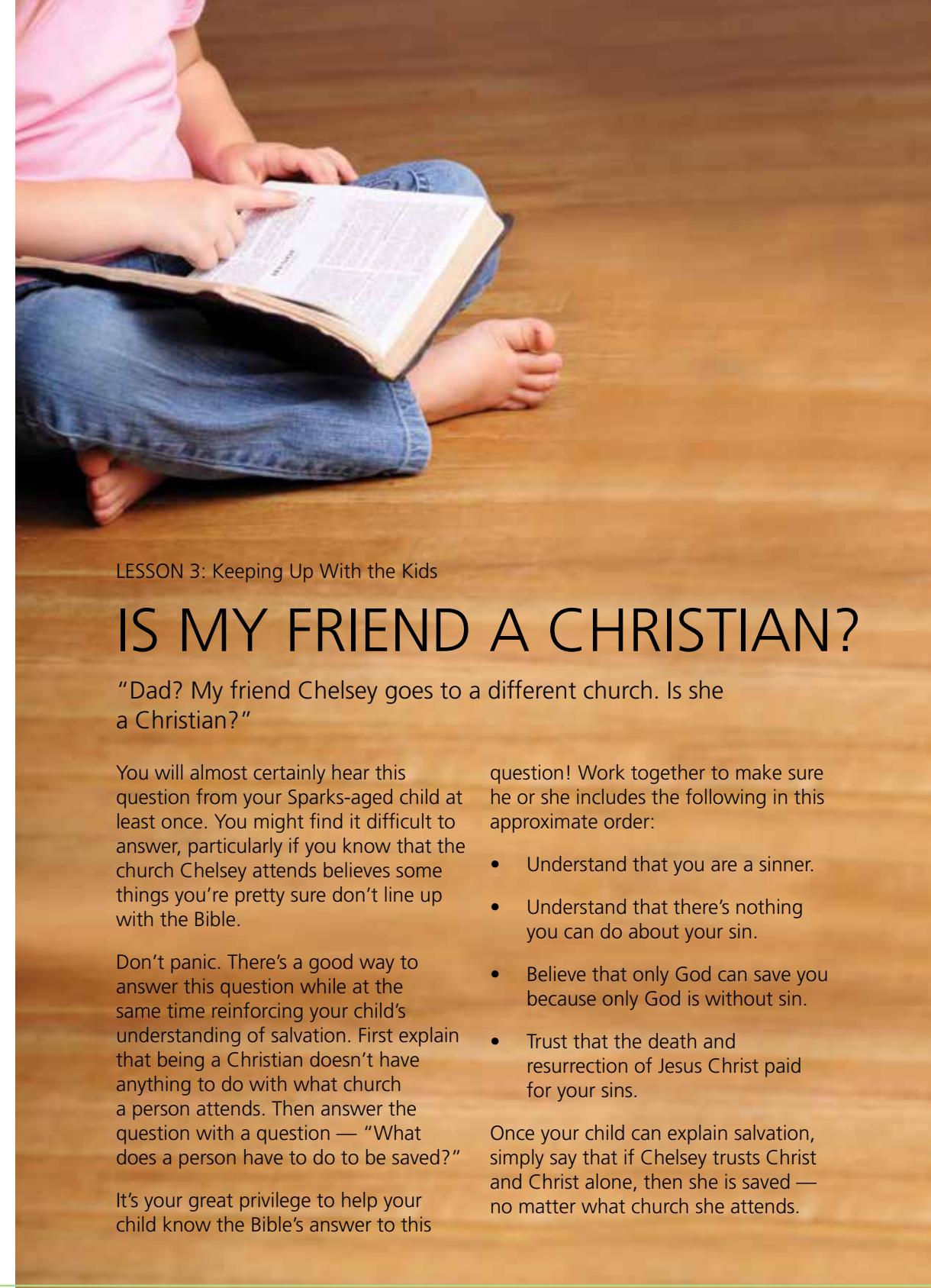
TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION: **SECTION COMPLETED**

1. Memorize and recite the three verses.

Signature _____

2. Answer three of the questions.

Date _____



LESSON 3: Keeping Up With the Kids

IS MY FRIEND A CHRISTIAN?

"Dad? My friend Chelsey goes to a different church. Is she a Christian?"

You will almost certainly hear this question from your Sparks-aged child at least once. You might find it difficult to answer, particularly if you know that the church Chelsey attends believes some things you're pretty sure don't line up with the Bible.

Don't panic. There's a good way to answer this question while at the same time reinforcing your child's understanding of salvation. First explain that being a Christian doesn't have anything to do with what church a person attends. Then answer the question with a question — "What does a person have to do to be saved?"

It's your great privilege to help your child know the Bible's answer to this

question! Work together to make sure he or she includes the following in this approximate order:

- Understand that you are a sinner.
- Understand that there's nothing you can do about your sin.
- Believe that only God can save you because only God is without sin.
- Trust that the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ paid for your sins.

Once your child can explain salvation, simply say that if Chelsey trusts Christ and Christ alone, then she is saved — no matter what church she attends.

Be sensitive to the situation. It's OK to explain to a child why someone's beliefs don't agree with the Bible, but be sensitive. Don't ever criticize the person involved — children have a way of repeating things. You don't want your child telling the neighbors, "My Dad says you're not going to heaven because ..." But you do want your child to know what the Bible says and be able to recognize the truth.

The best way to deal with the situation is to encourage your child to invite his or her friends to your church whenever possible — Sparks or Sunday school or a social event. You can help by talking with your son or daughter about conversations with friends and advising him or her on what to say in various situations. Get to know the parents of your child's friends. When they see that you aren't scary, they'll be more likely to let their child go to church with you. (You aren't scary, are you?)

Talk with your Sparkie and decide on a particular friend he or she can pray for and talk with and invite to club.

If that friend doesn't attend church or attends a church that doesn't base its beliefs on the Bible, discuss the situation with your child. In either case, the important thing is to talk about what the Bible says, not what you or they believe.

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Memorize and recite the three verses.
2. Choose a friend to pray for and invite to Sparks club.

HANGGLIDER RANK, PART 2

R is for Raised again.

1 Corinthians 15:4

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

K is for Keep.

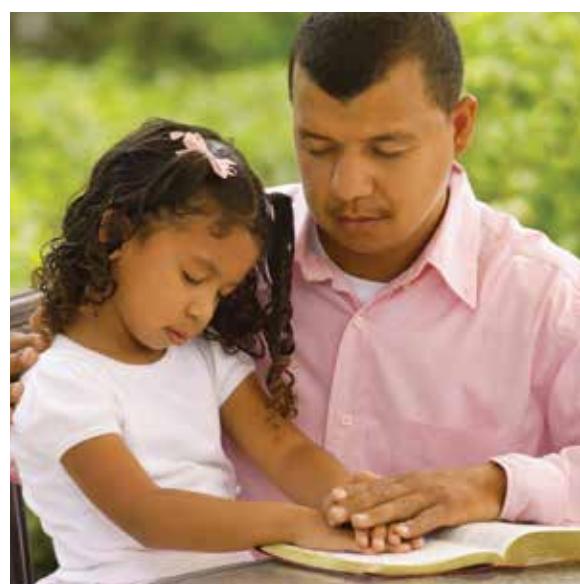
James 2:10

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

... "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved ..."



SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____

LESSON 4: The Big Picture

GOD'S PLAN AND TIMELINE

I never was much of a golfer. I didn't swing a club until I was almost 30 and even then only played, at most, six or seven times a year.

At a course near my house, the first fairway runs parallel with a busy road. It's 380 yards (347.5 m) from the tee to the hole. At the 300-yard (274.3 m) mark, the ground slopes down sharply, and on the right, a stepped retaining wall separates the course from the road.

On one of my early rounds, I hit a really impressive (for me) drive that carried straight down the fairway and landed about 220 yards (201 m) away. Feeling good about myself, I approached my second shot with a six iron, took a look at the green and swung away. I hit it hard but sliced it horribly. The ball shot off to the right, off the fairway, smashed into the retaining wall and ricocheted back to the left. It bounced once or twice and rolled up onto the green about 15 feet (4.6 m) from the hole.

Just the way I planned it — sort of. Then I four-putted for a double bogey — not at all what I'd planned.



In life, even when things go well, they very rarely go according to our plans.

God, on the other hand, has a plan for us, and even when it appears that things are going badly, we can be sure that He has everything under control.

We saw in Lesson 1 that God created everything for His pleasure and His glory.

And yet, we know that God is omniscient — He knew before He created us that we would sin and be separated from Him. So God created us for a distinct purpose but knew in advance that we wouldn't live up to that purpose.

So now what?

God's purpose hasn't changed. How do we get from point X (sin and separation) to point A (God's pleasure and glory)? God has a plan. And the amazing thing is that He had this plan in place before He created us.

Ephesians 1:3-6

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will — to the praise of His glorious grace, which He has freely given us in the One He loves.

Let that passage sink in for a minute or so. Reread it a couple of times. (You might as well, you're about to memorize it.)

Before the foundation of the world, and according to His desire, God chose Jesus Christ as the conduit for our

Ephesians 1:3-6

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight.

In love He predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will —

To the praise of His glorious grace, which He has freely given us in the One He loves.

reconciliation with Him so that we will be holy and He will be glorified.

We don't fully understand how God's plan works — we can't because we aren't God. We know that He is sovereign and has all things under control. We also know that He has given us a certain amount of free will to make our own choices (see Revelation 22:17). God, through His foreknowledge, His power and His Word, is seeing to it that the result (and the entire process) is exactly what He wants it to be.

Although the working of God in human hearts is inscrutable, the Bible is plain that on the one hand what man does has been included in God's eternal decree and on the other hand man operates with freedom of choice and is held responsible for his choices. The decree of God is not fatalism — a blind, mechanical control of all events — but is an intelligent, loving, and wise plan, in which man, responsible for his choices, is



GOD'S TIMELINE

God creates the world.

Sin enters the world. Adam and Eve were the first people, and they were the first people to sin.

God tells Noah to build an ark to get ready for the flood.

God saves the Israelites from slavery.

The Israelites walk in the desert for 40 years.

The Israelites live in Canaan, God's Promised Land.

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Memorize and recite Ephesians 1:3-6.

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____

CREATION

You've just been hired as a carpenter, and it's your first day on the job. The boss drives you across town to a large field of dirt and stops right in the middle. The two of you get out of the car and look around. "OK," he says. "I want you to build a two-car garage right here." He then gets back in the car and begins to drive away.

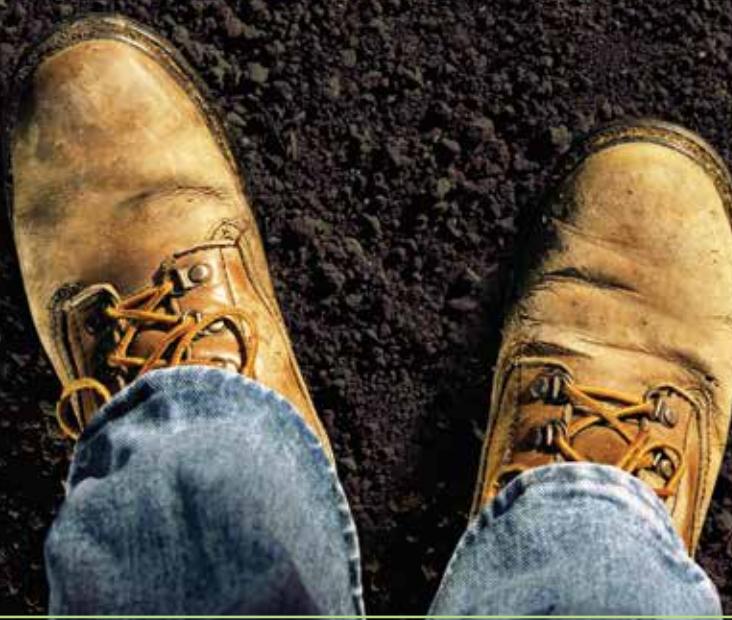
"Wait!" you scream after him. When he stops, you run up to the window. "What do you want it to look like? Which way should it face?"

He says, "There are no plans. Just get busy."

"But I don't have a hammer or saw or a level," you explain.

"No tools," he says. "Just get to work."

"But there's no lumber," you reply. "And no nails or cement for the foundation or ..."



He interrupts, "No materials either. Now for the final time, get going." He drives away.

Ridiculous, right? You couldn't possibly build a garage without a plan, without tools or without materials, let alone without all three.

That's what's so amazing about the universe we live in. God came up with the plan and built it without tools or materials except for His word. He spoke, and what He called for came into existence.



Creation shows God's power — Read His words to Job. *Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand. Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone* — (Job 38:4-6).

Creation shows God's ownership and authority — *But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? "Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?'"* (Romans 9:20).

Creation shows God's creativity — *The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge* (Psalm 19:1-2). If you want an example on a smaller scale, look at a parrot fish or a toucan. God managed to make them beautiful and hilarious.

Creation shows that God has personality — So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them (Genesis 1:27). Humans have personality — emotions, desires, will — so they could only have come from a creator with personality.

Creation shows God's love — And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground — trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food ... (Genesis 2:9). God could have made a world colored in shades of gray. He could have created us to survive on a diet of dirt. But instead He made a world for us that is surprising and varied and beautiful and very good.

Creation shows God's consistency and order — And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years (Genesis 1:14). We know the sun will shine tomorrow (even if it's cloudy where we live), because God created the universe that way.

A personal God is set forth in Genesis as the ultimate reality, distinct from and yet the ground of being of all that exists. And every fact of existence is to be understood in the light of His personality and His purposes ... We live in a purposive universe. The personal God who shaped all that exists remains involved!

— Larry Richards, *Let Day Begin*. David C. Cook Publishing Company, Colorado Springs, CO, 1976, pp. 18-19.

THE DAYS OF CREATION

Read Genesis 1:1-2:6 and write in the spaces below what God created on each day.

DAY ONE

DAY TWO

DAY THREE

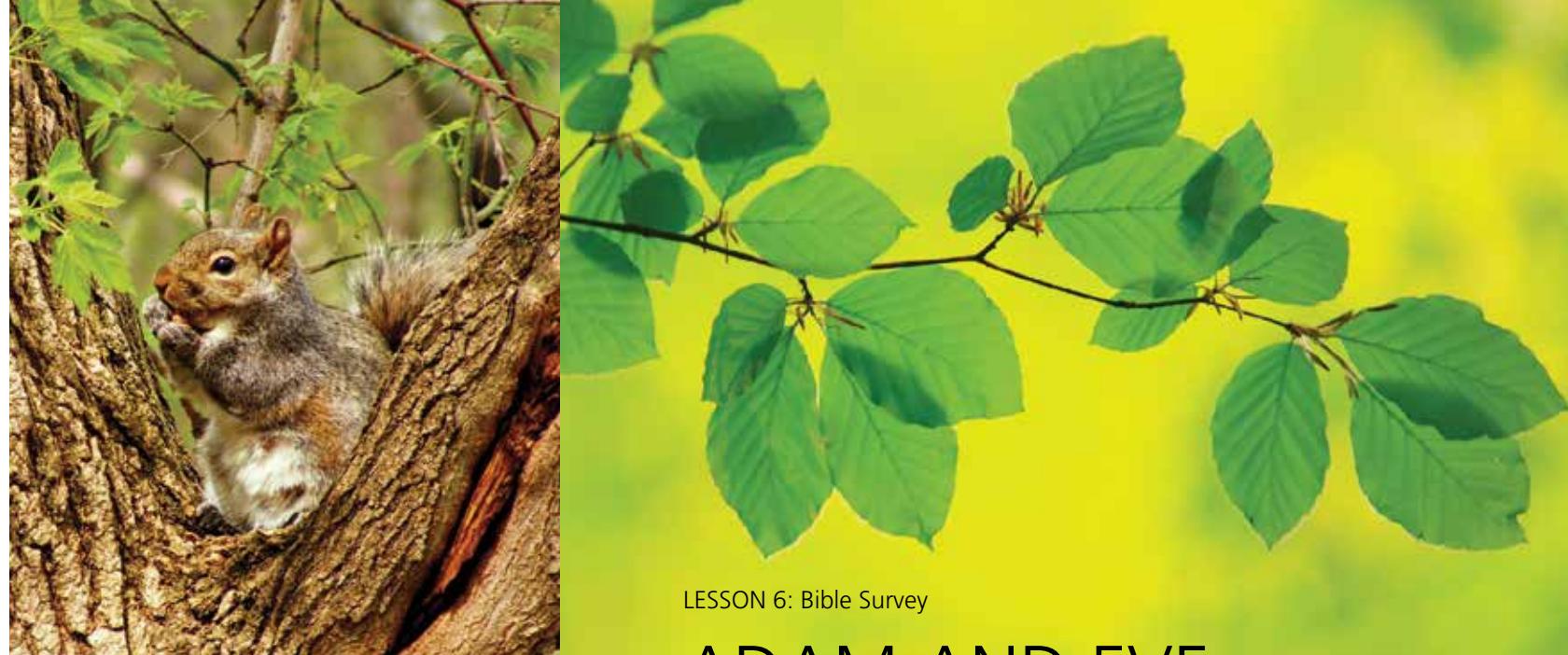
DAY FIVE

DAY SIX

Memorize the list you just made.

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Read Genesis 1:1-2:6.**
2. **List what occurred on each of the six days of creation.**
3. **Recite the list from memory.**



LESSON 6: Bible Survey

ADAM AND EVE

You have a lot of Bible knowledge, right? OK, quick — what Bible verse informs us that Eve always wore her hair long and down her front and that she always stood behind bushes?

What? There's no verse that says that? Amazing. Can you remember ever seeing a picture of Adam and Eve where that wasn't the case?

There's a good reason why those pictures are all drawn that way. Adam and Eve were (*sshhh, whisper here*) naked! We can't show them like that!

But why not? Because of sin. Because we are aware of our shortcomings before God and know that we have reason to be ashamed. We'll get into the subject of sin more in the following lessons, but think ...

Before they sinned, Adam and Eve walked around naked and didn't even know it. That is just one of the drastic differences between the life they knew before they sinned and the life

we know now. We aren't given much information about what their life was like in the garden, just 18 verses in Genesis 1 and 2 and a few bits and pieces elsewhere. But from those bits and pieces we discover a wealth of information — so much, in fact, that we can only look at a bit of it.

Read Genesis 1:26-2:25.

1. *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, in Our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them (1:26-27).* We aren't told exactly what it means to be in

the image of God, but we know it encompasses several things. First, we are different from all other created things. Second, we have value as individuals. Third, like God, we have emotions, we make choices, we appreciate beauty, we are creative, we know right from wrong and make value judgments. Fourth, we are capable of doing things God can do — see, hear, smell, touch and speak and make sense of what our senses tell us — although we do them physically and He is spirit. And last, we were created in such a way that when God became man, He was able to function in a way that enabled Him to accomplish His will.

2. *God blessed them ...* (1:28). Bless is one of those words we use all the time without thinking. What does it mean that God blessed Adam and Eve? He set them up in a situation and gave them the power to be healthy, successful and fertile (see the next point). In short, God valued the man and the woman. In Deuteronomy 30:1, the blessings of God for Israel are contrasted with the curse He puts upon their enemies. The word *curse* literally means "to make small or vile or of little value." A blessing is the opposite of that.

3. *God blessed ... said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth ... "* (1:28). Why did God want Adam and Eve to have many children who would have many more children? For an answer, we can go to Isaiah 45:18: *For this is what the LORD says — He who created the heavens, He is God; He who fashioned and made the earth, He founded it; He did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be*

inhabited ... It was God's purpose that humans live all over the earth.

4. *God ... said to them: ... "fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground"* (1:28). The word *subdue* has to be understood in context. There's no sense of correction or improvement here. God had already proclaimed everything "good" and was about to proclaim it all "very good." In other words, it was perfect. What God was saying was that Adam should be in charge. He was the boss, not in the sense of ordering creation around, but in the sense that he was wiser and superior in every way. This instruction wasn't rescinded after the fall, so in a sense it is God's stamp of approval on science and technology. It is OK for humans to use the raw material of creation to manufacture things they can use.
5. *Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food"* (1:29). There was no death before the fall, so there could be no eating of meat. God provided vegetables, fruits and grains that would replenish themselves. This food would be beneficial for humans and readily available.

That's it for Genesis 1. There's more pre-fall information in Chapter 2. Pick one of the following themes. Check the meaning of the words in the verses, look for other Scriptures that give additional information, read commentaries and write your own study similar to what we've provided so far.

- The formation of man (2:7)
- The trees in the garden (2:8-9)
- Working and keeping the garden (2:15)
- God's do and don't list (2:16-17)
- Adam naming the animals (2:19-20)
- God creating woman (2:18, 21-22)
- The creation of marriage (2:23-24)



TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Read Genesis 1:26-2:25.**
2. **Pick a topic from the list on Genesis 2.**
3. **Write down the results of your study on your chosen topic.**

SECTION COMPLETED

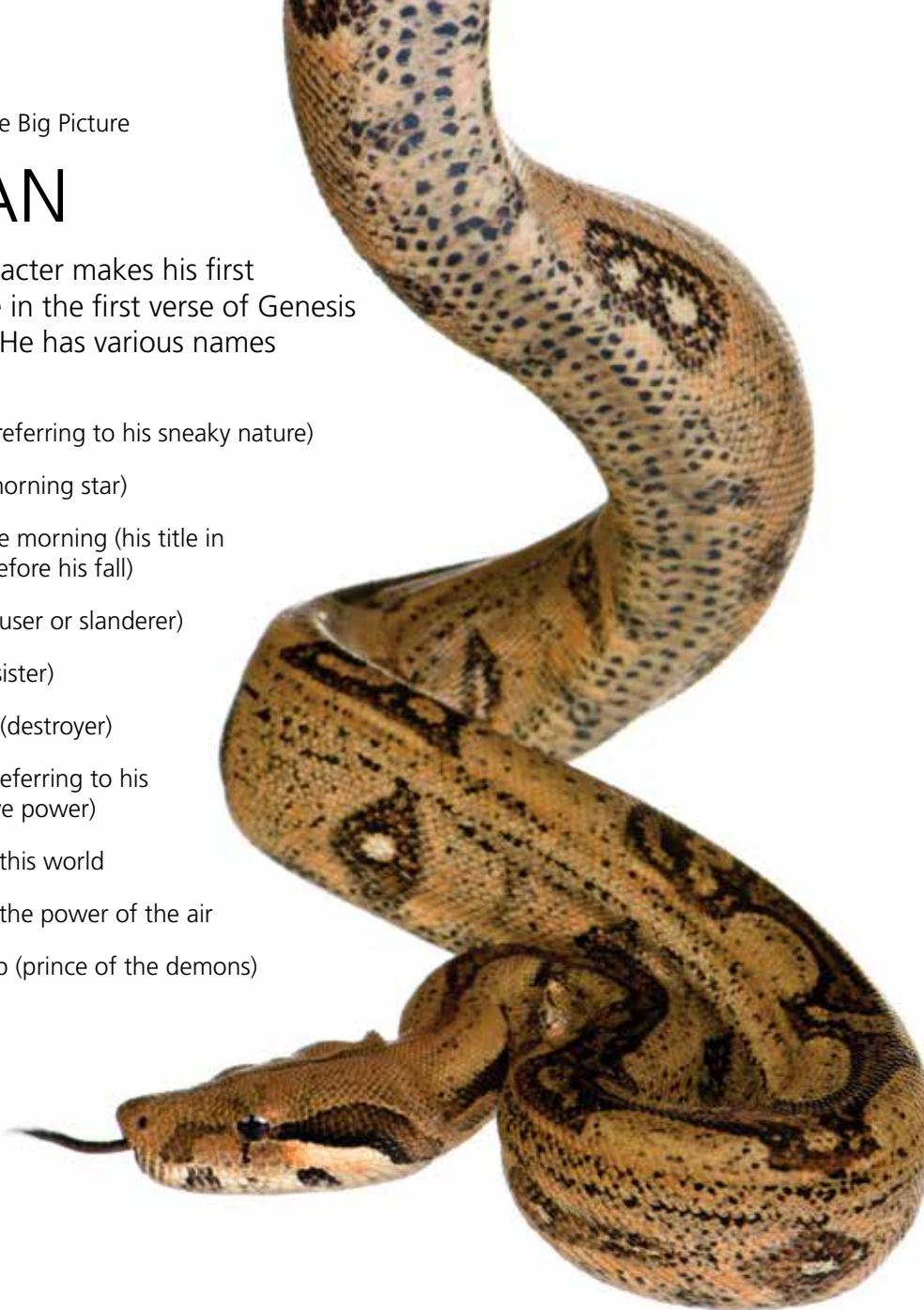
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SATAN

A new character makes his first appearance in the first verse of Genesis Chapter 3. He has various names and titles.

- Serpent (referring to his sneaky nature)
- Lucifer (morning star)
- Son of the morning (his title in heaven before his fall)
- Devil (accuser or slanderer)
- Satan (resister)
- Apollyon (destroyer)
- Dragon (referring to his destructive power)
- Prince of this world
- Prince of the power of the air
- Beelzebub (prince of the demons)



Massive books have been written about his career, and we only have space for a general outline. Get your Bibles ready — it's time for some research. Look up the following verses and fill in the blanks.

The Bible tells us very little about Satan before his fall, and that little bit is contained in Ezekiel's prophecy about the destruction of the city of Tyre. After telling the fate of the earthly king, Ezekiel writes about the power behind the evil government — Satan. Look up Ezekiel 28:12-15.

- Satan was created full of _____ and perfect in _____.
- How is his appearance described in this passage? _____

- Satan was blameless until _____.

Satan was the highest created being, but that wasn't enough for him. He decided to follow his own will instead of God's. Look up Isaiah 14:13-14 and write down the five "I wills."

1. I will _____.
2. I will _____.
3. I will _____.
4. I will _____.
5. I will _____.

Although Satan's fall sealed his ultimate doom, he still has vast powers.

- He has the power to give _____ (Luke 4:5-6).
- He has the power of _____ (Hebrews 2:14).
- He has power to give Job _____ (Job 2:7).
- He is able to _____
_____ (Isaiah 14:16-17).
- He is able to blind the minds of _____ (2 Corinthians 4:4).

Satan's methods aren't always obvious. In the next lesson, we'll see how sneaky he was in Eden.

- He disguises himself as _____ (2 Corinthians 11:14).
- Night and day, he never stops _____ (Revelation 12:10).



- On at least one occasion, he quoted _____ out of context (Luke 4:9-11).
- He is a _____, and there is no _____ in him (John 8:44).
- He uses false _____ (1 Timothy 4:1).

He's subtle, so we are rarely aware of him. But the Bible makes it clear that there's a war going on.

- We struggle against _____, against _____, against _____, against _____ (Ephesians 6:11-12).
- He prowls about like a _____ looking for someone to _____, and he's called our _____ (1 Peter 5:8).
- Before we trusted Jesus Christ, we were _____ and followed the ways of _____ (Ephesians 2:1-2).

God hasn't left us unprotected. He's given us an insurmountable defense against Satan.

- Although Satan still has power, he has already been _____ (John 16:11).
- Jesus Christ made a _____ of him on the cross (Colossians 2:15).
- We can rest assured that He that _____ is greater than he that _____ (1 John 4:4).
- He's given us _____ (Ephesians 6:11).
- And the best news of all — nothing can separate us from the love of God, and that includes _____ and _____ (Romans 8:38-39).

Immediately after Satan convinced Adam and Eve to sin, God prophesied his ultimate doom.

- The seed of Satan would _____ of the offspring (Jesus Christ) of Eve, which indicates that the wound would not be fatal. But the offspring of Eve would _____ of the offspring of Satan, which would be a death blow (Genesis 3:15).
- It is apparent that God has allowed Satan to be more active in the affairs of this world during those periods when God was giving man new revelation. By doing so, God clearly shows His power and authority over Satan. The same will be true in the future, after the Church has been raptured. The Antichrist will come forth and, with the power of Satan, will do _____
_____ (2 Thessalonians 2:9-10).
- In the middle of the tribulation, there will be a war between _____ and the angels against Satan and his forces. The result is that Satan will be _____ (Revelation 12:7-9).
- At Christ's second coming, at the end of the tribulation, an angel will do this to Satan: _____ (Revelation 20:1-3).
- At the end of the 1,000 years, Satan will have one last (brief) fling. He will be let loose and will _____ the nations and gather them for _____ (Revelation 20:7-9).
- His final fate will be sealed and he will be _____, and will remain there _____ (Revelation 20:10).

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION: SECTION COMPLETED

1. **Look up the verses and fill in the blanks with the proper answers.**

Signature _____

Date _____

MAN'S FALL

Read Genesis 3:1-24.

A world-renowned artist has agreed to paint a picture for your city's new civic center. He takes his work very seriously and moves into an apartment downtown to catch the mood and spirit of the community. He works carefully, crafting his artwork to be a perfect fit for the center.

Finally, the day of the unveiling arrives. Thousands of people gather to get a first glimpse of the canvas. The press, with rows of cameras, is lined up across the room. The mayor makes a speech of appreciation. The artist steps forward and tugs on a rope. The covering falls and the picture appears.

The crowd gasps. It is magnificent — far beyond anyone's expectations. Many people are moved to tears. Suddenly there's a commotion. A scraggly-looking character pushes through the crowd. He squeezes between two cameramen and runs up to the painting. Before anyone has time to react, he pulls out a can of spray paint and scribbles his own name in huge letters right across the center of the canvas. He turns, bows and says in a loud voice, "It's all about me!"

That's very much what Adam and Eve did in the garden of Eden. God had created a masterpiece, perfect in every way. And while it was every bit a reflection of God and His character, in His wisdom He had made it to be perfectly suited to humanity.

And then Adam and Eve took a bite of fruit and said, in essence, "It's all about me!"

On the surface, their sin might not seem like a big deal. After all, Eden was still Eden, God was still God and Adam and Eve didn't look any different. The only apparent change was a piece of fruit with two bites missing. But that changed EVERYTHING.

We saw in the previous lesson that Satan is a liar. This aspect of his character is evident in his first appearance in Genesis 3.

What God said: ... *"You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil..."* (Genesis 2:16-17).

What Satan said God said: ... *"You must not eat from any tree in the garden"* (Genesis 3:1).

What God said: ... *"when you eat of it you will surely die"* (Genesis 2:17).

What Satan said: *"You will not surely die..."* (Genesis 3:4).

What God said: ... *"I give you..."* (Genesis 1:29).

What Satan said: *"For God knows... your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God..."* (Genesis 3:5).

Eve had a choice. She could trust God and obey Him, or she could listen to Satan. But there was more to Eve's choice than deciding whom to believe. She was deciding whom to love.

Where does love come in? *Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength* (Deuteronomy 6:5).

As Israel is brought face to face with the loving Creator who is there, Israel is not merely to say, "I love you," rooting their reaction only in emotions. The kind of love proper here is also rooted into obedience simply because of the nature of the relationship between the two parties. Love of the creature toward the Creator must include obedience or it is meaningless... With

this principle in mind, then, we can begin to understand Adam and Eve's relationship to God in the early chapters of Genesis. The first law for man is [and was] to love God with all his heart and all his soul and all his mind.

— Francis A Schaeffer, *Genesis in Space and Time*. InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL, 1972, p. 70.

Whom did Eve decide to love? *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. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it* (Genesis 3:6).

There is a direct correlation between Eve's temptation and the temptation that John teaches about in 1 John 2:16: *For everything in the world — the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does — comes not from the Father but from the world.*

Eve had the choice to obey God or to satisfy her own desires. She decided it was all about her. If she had taken a moment to think, she would have realized that it would only take a few minutes to eat a piece of fruit and that, no matter how good it tasted, it would be a pleasure of very short duration. She could have turned and walked away. She probably could have walked 10 feet (3 m) to another tree and eaten a fruit that tasted every bit as good. She could have loved God.

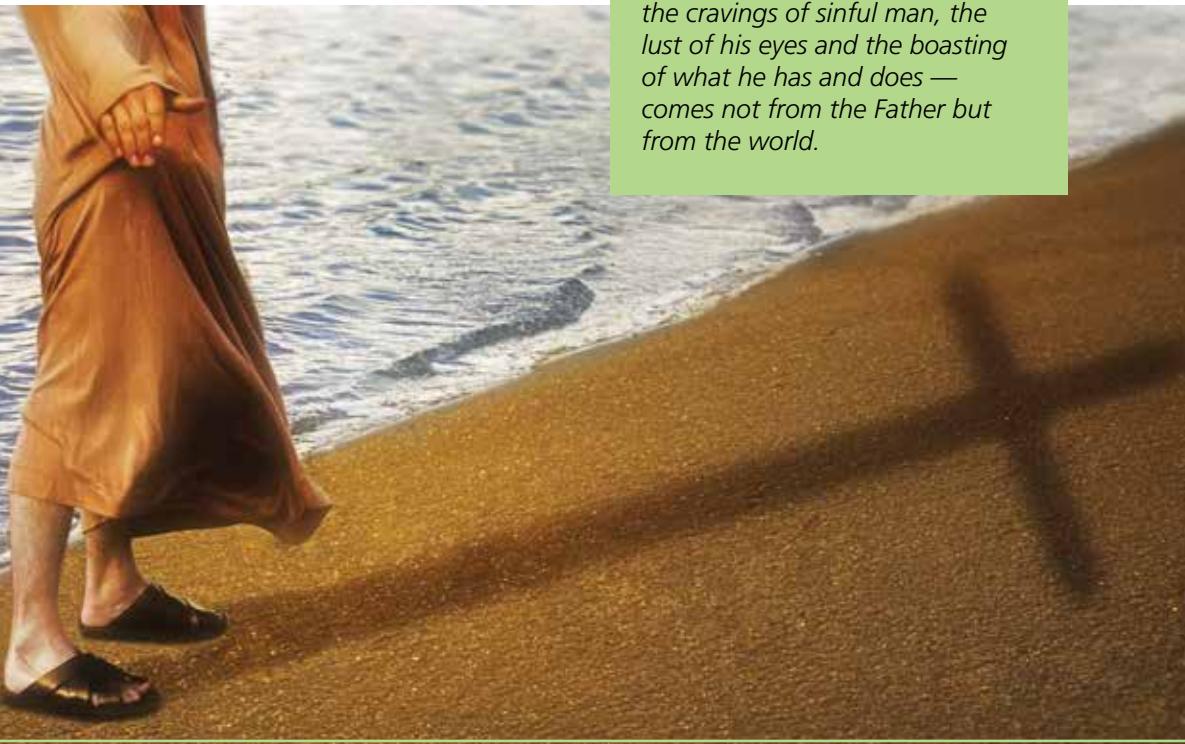
She didn't. She loved herself. That was her sin. Yes, she ate the forbidden fruit, but what she was really doing was making the statement that she loved herself more than she loved God.

Adam should have obeyed God merely as an expression of his love. But God, in grace, provided him still further incentive by giving clear warning of the consequences of disobedience. Rejecting God's love would necessarily raise a barrier between man and God, and would break the sweet fellowship for which man was created. Since God was the source of life itself, real life is found only in communion and connection with the divine life. The essence of death (the opposite of life) is therefore separation from God (the opposite of fellowship with God).

— Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record*. Creation-Life Publishers, San Diego, CA, 1976, p. 94.

That's the decision we make every time we knowingly sin.

Oh, we're good at justifying ourselves
— "It's not a big deal." "It won't hurt



anyone." "Nobody will even know." But think of this the next time you're debating whether to commit a small, harmless, secret sin — in Eden, a small bite of fruit condemned the world to pain, loneliness, separation and death.

Sin is a very big deal. Sin is the choice between loving God and loving ourselves.

And sin has very big consequences.

Genesis 3:6

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. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

1 John 2:16

*For everything in the world —
the cravings of sinful man, the
lust of his eyes and the boasting
of what he has and does —
comes not from the Father but
from the world.*

You've read Genesis 3 already. Read it again, concentrating on verses 7-24. List as many immediate consequences of sin as you can find. Then, after each, list what impact that consequence has on you.

CONSEQUENCE OF SIN

PERSONAL IMPACT

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

SECTION COMPLETED

1. Read Genesis 3:1-24.
 2. Memorize and recite Genesis 3:6 and 1 John 2:16.
 3. List the consequences of sin and the impact they have on you.

Signature _____

Date _____

ADAM

Read Romans 5:12-19.

Sometimes life just doesn't give you a break. Make one mistake, do one thing a bit oddly and next thing you know, your name's a word.

Take Vidkun Quisling, for example. He agreed to be the puppet governor of Norway during the Nazi occupation and now traitors everywhere are known as quislings.

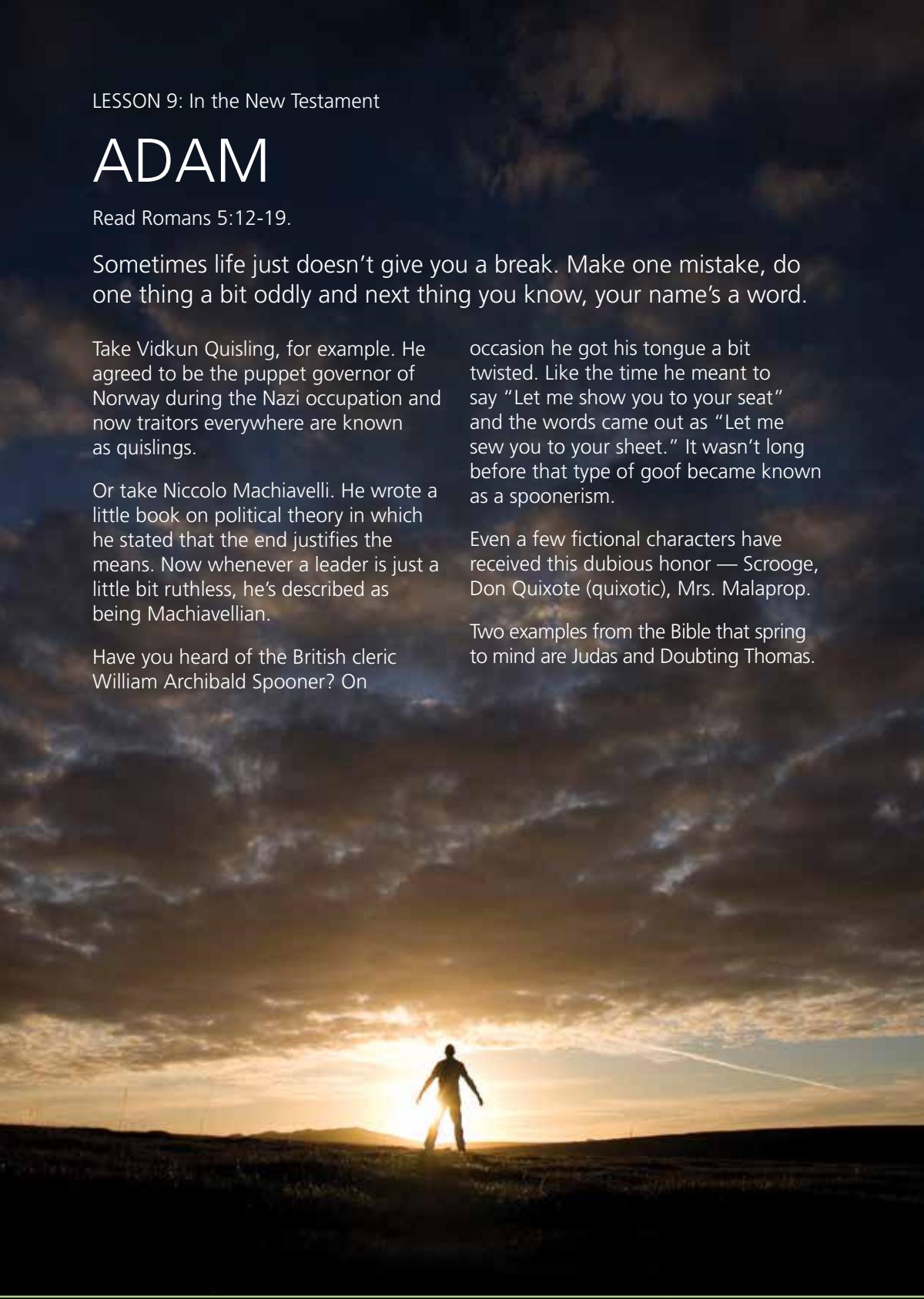
Or take Niccolo Machiavelli. He wrote a little book on political theory in which he stated that the end justifies the means. Now whenever a leader is just a little bit ruthless, he's described as being Machiavellian.

Have you heard of the British cleric William Archibald Spooner? On

occasion he got his tongue a bit twisted. Like the time he meant to say "Let me show you to your seat" and the words came out as "Let me sew you to your sheet." It wasn't long before that type of goof became known as a spoonerism.

Even a few fictional characters have received this dubious honor — Scrooge, Don Quixote (quixotic), Mrs. Malaprop.

Two examples from the Bible that spring to mind are Judas and Doubting Thomas.



And then there's Adam. On the face of it, all he did was take a bite of a piece of fruit. But ever since, the basic nature of humanity (the part that sins) has been known as the Adamic nature.

And rightly so.

Adam's sin resulted in three separations (deaths).

1. The immediate separation from fellowship with God
2. The separation of the soul and spirit from the body at physical death
3. The ultimate separation from God is eternal punishment for those who don't receive God's salvation.

Adam's name only appears eight times in the New Testament, but it's hard to find more than a couple of verses where his influence isn't felt. Let's take a look at Romans 5:12-19 where the first Adam is compared to and contrasted with the second Adam — Jesus Christ. It's a complex passage that can be hard to grasp at first glance. Let's take a closer look.

12 — *Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.* One act of disobedience by one man — Adam — was sufficient to allow sin to enter the world. Although sin and death entered with Adam, and all people sin in Adam, all also sin on their own.

13-14 — *For before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by*

breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come. Adam's sin was breaking God's law, but that wasn't the case with those between Adam and Moses (who did not have God's law) — their deaths were a result of Adam's sin. The word *pattern* means "a type, or a figure, an impression made by striking with a hammer." Adam was a type of Christ because he had headship as the first in a line of descendants, but the analogy shouldn't be carried too far — watch for the "not like" in the next verse.

15 — *But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!* Both Adam and Jesus Christ are heads, and their actions influenced those under their headship. But while there are similarities between Adam's and Jesus Christ's headships, the dissimilarity is grace, which extends far beyond the scope and power of sin. The words "much more," which appear twice in this passage in reference to God's grace, give the sense of legal certainty.

16 — *Again, the gift of God is not like the result of the one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification.* Our guilt is from **one** sin of **one** man — Adam. The righteousness imputed to us by Christ is for **all** offenses. The gift is contrasted with judgment — the gift for many is contrasted with condemnation because of one. Therefore, justification is greater than condemnation.

17 — *For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.* Paul presents a contrast in effects — the legal effect of sin is death but the effect of Jesus Christ's gift is abundant life. But where death is universal, life is limited to believers. Once we receive grace, we leave our old existence, ruled by death, and enter a new existence ruled by Jesus Christ. We do more than participate in eternity; we live abundantly, reigning with Jesus Christ.

18 — *Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men.* The righteousness referred to here is not general, but the specific righteous act of Jesus Christ on the cross. That act brought about the justification that results in life. It is for all, but only those who accept it are justified.

19 — *For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.* The obedience in this verse isn't referring to Jesus Christ's sinless life but specifically to His death (just as in verse 18). His work on the cross was an act of obedience. So in these two verses, we see Christ's righteousness, which satisfied the legal requirements, and His obedience, which satisfied the moral requirements. The first "many" in this verse includes everyone. The second "many" refers to those who trust Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:19

For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

Paul again compares and contrasts Adam and Jesus Christ in 1 Corinthians 15:21-22. *For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.* Based on what you just studied in Romans 5, how would you explain the point of these verses in 1 Corinthians in your own words?

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Read Romans 5:12-19.**
2. **Memorize and recite Romans 5:19.**
3. **Explain 1 Corinthians 15:21-22.**

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____



LESSON 10: Bible Survey

ADAM TO NOAH

Read Genesis 4:1-6:7.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I —
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

— Robert Frost, from "The Road Not Taken"

Poet Robert Frost wrote this as a statement on individuality. But it's amazing how well it fits as an illustration of humanity's first 1,600 years (approximately).

Before the fall, Adam and Eve were in fellowship with God. They had no restrictions apart from the fruit of one tree. They had to choose NOT to obey God. After they sinned and were thrown out of Eden, they had to choose TO obey God because their inclination was to sin.

They had two sons, Cain and Abel. Abel raised sheep. At this point, God had not given humans permission to eat meat, but sheep were still needed for sacrifices, and their wool could be used for cloth. Cain probably grew crops for food.

We don't know how old the two were, but after a while, Cain decided he wanted to bring his own offering to the Lord. Or perhaps he was tired of having to appeal to his brother for sheep. Whatever his motive, he brought an unacceptable sacrifice. God looked with favor on Abel's gift, but not on Cain's.

God was as much a God of grace back then as He is now. He gave Cain an opportunity to get things turned around: ... "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? ..." (Genesis 4:6-7).

God showed Cain a way out of sin, but Cain chose a different way. He got angry, killed his brother in a fit of jealousy and then lied to God about it. He was cursed with an inability to pursue his profession — the ground would no longer bear for him. And he was forced to be a wanderer away from home.

Let's skip ahead a bit. Abel had made a proper sacrifice to God, but Abel was gone. Adam lay with his wife again, and she gave birth to a son and named him Seth, saying, "God has granted me

another child in place of Abel, since Cain killed him" (Genesis 4:25). Seth had a son named Enosh, and that fact is followed immediately — in the same sentence, in fact — with this: ... At that time men began to call on the name of the LORD (Genesis 4:26).

Two brothers: two choices: two ways of life.

CAIN'S WAY

Yet these men speak abusively against whatever they do not understand; and what things they do understand by instinct, like unreasoning animals — these are the very things that destroy them. Woe to them! They have taken the way of Cain ... (Jude 1:10-11)

This is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous.
(1 John 3:11-12)

Five generations later, Cain had a descendant named Lamech. This man was decidedly following in his great-great-grandfather's footsteps. Look up Genesis 4:19-24 and write down three sins Lamech committed.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



ABEL'S WAY

By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead. (Hebrews 11:4)

Abel is the first person mentioned in Hebrews' list of men and women of great faith. His nephew Enosh is mentioned as participating in the time when men began to call on God (Genesis 4:26).

Enoch came five generations later (which made him a contemporary of Lamech). We read this about Enoch: *Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away* (Genesis 5:24). We get a little more information in Hebrews 11:5: *By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God.*

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Read Genesis 4:1-6:7.
2. Write down three sins Lamech committed from Genesis 4:19-24.

There were some descendants of Adam who chose Abel's way, but unfortunately, not many. Just two generations after Enoch, God looked at humanity and ... saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time (Genesis 6:5).

God determined to punish humanity with the flood. Everyone would die except Noah and his immediate family. Noah was in the line of Seth and he had chosen Abel's way. ... Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD (Genesis 6:8).

Two ways, two choices —

There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death. (Proverbs 14:12)

As for God, His way is perfect; the word of the LORD is flawless. He is a shield for all who take refuge in Him. (Psalm 18:30)

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____

EXPLAINING SALVATION

Daughter: Me and Mommy bought ice cream.

Dad: Mommy and I bought ice cream.

Daughter: You weren't there Daddy. It was me and Mommy.

Dad: Yes, but you should say
"Mommy and I bought ice cream."

Daughter: But you didn't. It
was me and Mommy.

Dad: I know, honey. But you
need to say it like this: "Mommy
and I bought ice cream."

Daughter (sighing):
Mommy and Daddy bought
ice cream.

Children are eager to please.
With very little effort, you can
get them to agree to pretty
much anything. It's
very important that you
don't encourage them
to "be saved" to
please you.



Here's a list of things to avoid:

- **Fear** — Don't threaten your kids with hell if they don't trust Christ immediately. Don't make them afraid by warning that they could die tonight. Be patient. Gently help them understand the nature of sin and their need for a savior.
- **Peer pressure** — Kids, and adults, like to be part of a group. Be careful that your child isn't claiming to trust Christ just because an older sibling or friend has done so. Never compare your child with other children in any context, including salvation.
- **Symbolism** — Kids take things literally. Be careful not to confuse them with symbols. Just because someone wears a cross around his neck or has a fish on her bumper doesn't mean that person has trusted Christ.
- **Formulas** — Salvation is a personal trust in Jesus Christ. Each person's relationship with the Lord is individual. Your child needs to see his or her own need for a savior and trust Christ personally. Formulas lead to confusion. It isn't the three steps or the prayer or walking to the front of a church that saves — it's trusting Jesus Christ.
- **Clichés** — This is an easy trap to slip into. We often use "Christianese" when we talk about spiritual things without realizing we're doing it. For example, how often have you heard the phrase "Ask Jesus into your heart"? Children are literal and won't understand that or many other clichés we frequently use.

- **Stories** — The need for salvation — and the death and resurrection of Christ that makes salvation possible — are serious subjects. Don't trivialize them by folding them into a cute story. Your child could easily mistake the truth for just more of the story.

One last "don't" for you. Don't put pressure on yourself to "get your child saved." Of course your child's soul is immensely important to you. And of course you will do everything you can to help your child understand and to create an environment in which your child feels comfortable asking questions. But it isn't up to you — it's between your child and the Lord Jesus Christ. He wants your child to trust Him even more than you do. If you can trust Him for your salvation, you can also trust Him to bring about your child's salvation.

RED JEWEL 1

John 20:31

... These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God ...

Psalm 118:1

Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good ...

1 John 4:19

We love because He first loved us.



Who does the saving?

- God loves your child and provided a means of salvation through His Son.
- The Holy Spirit gives the grace your child needs to make the decision.
- Jesus Christ did the work of salvation.
- Your child simply makes a decision to trust.
- You are only the messenger and probably not even the only messenger.

Which brings us to one last point: While you as a parent are primarily responsible before God for your child's spiritual development, that doesn't mean you are exclusively responsible. Don't be jealous of other spiritual influences on your child's life. The desired result is that your child trusts Christ. If you happen to be there talking with him or her when

it happens, fantastic. But if it's a Sparks leader or Sunday school teacher or Grandma who helps the child fit in the final piece of the puzzle, that's fantastic too. It's very likely that your influence brought your child to the place he or she needed to be, and you still have a very important role in discipling your child to grow in Christ.

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Memorize and recite the three verses.**
2. **Memorize and recite the six things to avoid.**
3. **In your own words, explain who does the saving.**

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____

LESSON 12: Bible Survey

NOAH

Read Genesis 6:1-8:22.

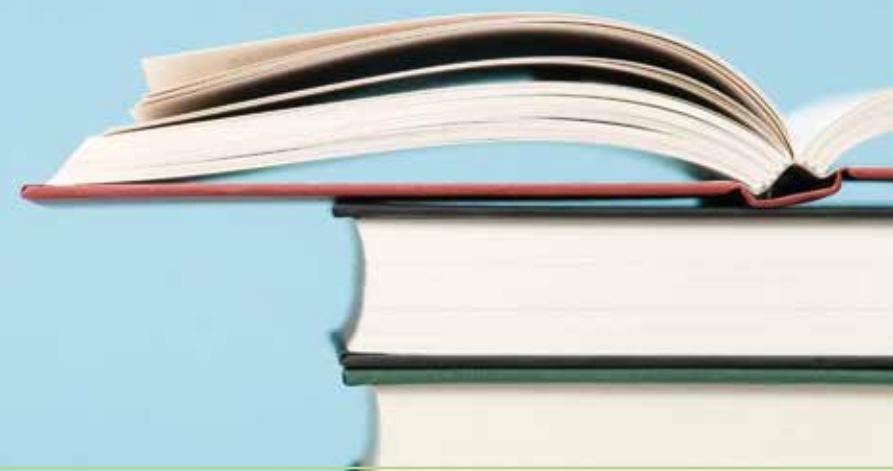
Years ago, on the *Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson*, the comedian George Gobel appeared immediately following Bob Hope and Dean Martin. Gobel was well known, but not nearly to the degree of the other guests or the host, and he was feeling a little insecure. To add to his confusion, the audience kept laughing at odd moments unconnected to anything he was saying.

What Gobel didn't realize was that whenever he turned to talk to Johnny Carson, Dean Martin would flick ashes from his cigarette into Gobel's drink. Finally, Gobel turned to the cameras and said, "Did you ever get the feeling that the world was a tuxedo and you were a pair of brown shoes?"

You know the feeling, don't you, especially in regards to your faith? Maybe you saw some new finding on TV that the experts claimed sealed the fate once and for all of belief in creation as opposed to evolution. Maybe you found yourself the lone voice in a stand against a compromise with sin in your community. You wondered if you were the only person on the planet who still trusted the Lord and His Word.

When that happened, you had resources. You could read your Bible or books written by Christians. You could call a Christian friend or talk with a pastor at your church. Even if all that was unavailable, today you can get online and find hundreds of websites and blogs that teach the truth.

But what about Noah? The Bible hadn't been written yet. There was no Internet. He had no church to turn to and, in fact, no believing friends. *The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time* (Genesis 6:5).



There was one resource Noah did have that we don't — God spoke with him directly (Genesis 6:13). But still, to be the only person on earth who hadn't totally sunk into evil ...

Moses writes that at that time: *The sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose* (Genesis 6:2). Theologians have various opinions on who these sons of God were. Some think they were fallen angels who had assumed human form. Others think they were humans who were demon-possessed. Whatever they were, it wasn't good. God determined to punish humanity by wiping out the race with a flood.

Noah was a just man who walked with God, but he wasn't perfect. (We find that out soon enough after the flood.) Why did God bother with him and the ark and all the rest? There are two reasons we can know for sure and a third that we can speculate on.

1. Grace. God's unmerited favor. Justice demands that all of us die because of sin. The only reason any of us are saved is because of God's grace. ... *Noah found favor [grace] in the eyes of the LORD* (Genesis 6:8).
2. Promise. Remember God's promise to Eve (Lesson 7)? ... *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). God promised that a descendant (seed) of Eve would bring about the destruction of Satan. That seed is Jesus Christ, and because of God's promise, He had to be in a direct line. Luke, in the third chapter of his Gospel, gave the genealogy of Jesus through His mother, Mary, all the way back to Adam. And there, in verse 36, is Noah. (For more on this, see Challenge 2.2 in the Awana at Home® Witness book.)

3. There may have been another factor. Those sons of God who were having offspring with the daughters of men were corrupting the gene pool of humanity. *The Nephilim were on the earth in those days ...* (Genesis 6:4). Again, we can't be entirely sure what these creatures were, but we know they weren't part of God's plan. *God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways* (Genesis 6:12). Noah and his sons weren't corrupted with this evil.

You know what happened next. God appeared to Noah and told him to build an ark and fill it with supplies and that God would send the animals to be preserved. Noah, who kept his faith when surrounded by evil, didn't falter. *By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith* (Hebrews 11:7).



NUMBERS

We have heard the account of the building of the ark and the flood so often that we can easily skim the passage without paying it much attention. To help you slow down and read more carefully, we've provided this list of numbers. Find each number mentioned in Genesis Chapters 6-9 and write down what it refers to.

2 of every type of animal on the ark _____

7 _____

10 _____

17 _____

27 _____

40 _____

45 _____

50 _____

120 _____

150 _____

350 _____

450 _____

600 _____

950 _____

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION: SECTION COMPLETED

1. Read Genesis 6:1-8:22.

Signature _____

2. Find the listed numbers and write down what they refer to.

Date _____

THE TOWER OF BABEL

Read Genesis 11:1-32.

I once met a couple named Louie and Marie. They'd been married for about six years and loved each other deeply even though their marriage had gotten off to an unusual start.

Their mothers were friends and introduced the two to each other with a strong suggestion that they should become husband and wife. And so they did. There was just one problem — they didn't share a common language. Louie spoke Russian and English. Marie spoke Italian and Spanish.

I asked Marie how that worked out. (By the time I met her, she was fluent in English.) She said they were usually able to figure out the simple stuff — "Time for dinner," "I'm going to bed," "Let's go to Mom's house." But they had a

lot of trouble with more complicated communication. They couldn't even argue. "Whenever we got angry with each other," Marie said, "we'd start talking really fast and revert to our native tongues. We would have no idea what the other person was saying. Sometimes it was frustrating, but other times, we'd just start laughing at the silliness of it all."

Imagine how impossible it would be to build a skyscraper if none of the workers shared a common language. That's exactly what happened at Babel.



But before we take a look at what happened there, let's review for a moment.

Adam and Eve had been created in a state of innocence, without sin and in full fellowship with God. Their responsibility was to worship and obey God, but they chose their own way and sinned.

Humanity was removed from the garden and separated from God, which means death. To cover the sin that results in death (Romans 6:23), men had to sacrifice animals. Because of Adam's sin, men knew good and evil and were expected to pursue good. Again, everyone chose his or her own way and sinned. (Only Noah followed God's way.)

God punished humanity with the flood. Eight people were left on the earth when the waters receded. It was obvious that man couldn't govern himself simply on the basis of his own knowledge of good and evil, so God set up human governments to rule. We can see this in Genesis 9:1-7. All the world was to be in subjection to man. The price for taking a human life was death — capital punishment. In order for this to occur, other men had to judge and carry out the sentence. And of course, man was still expected to worship and obey God.

Right after the flood ... God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth" (Genesis 9:1).

At this point, everyone on earth still spoke the same language. As a group,

they wandered until they came upon the plain Shinar, in the area that is now Iraq. The people had a choice. They could:

1. Spread out and replenish the earth and form local governments, as God commanded.
2. Gather in one spot and build a huge city from which they could rule the world.

Based on the wisdom humans had displayed up to this point in their history, guess which choice they made?

Men built a tower, which might seem harmless on the face of it. But their motivation was wrong. They did it to ... *make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth* (Genesis 11:4). Once again, man said, "It's all about me." Instead of worshiping and exalting God, they sought to worship and exalt themselves.

The original Hebrew text reads, not that the tower was designed to reach heaven, but "unto heaven." In other words, it had some religious significance, perhaps involving astrology. In any case, it wasn't what God wanted.

God saw that this one-world government was too powerful and that ... *nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them* (Genesis 11:6). He took care of the problem in a simple and brilliant fashion — He confused their languages. The differences in languages can be very amusing.

In Hebrew the word *Babel* means confusion. The Babylonians themselves used the word to mean "the gate of God." So the Babylonians said, "We are the gate of God," and the Jews said, "No, you are confusion."

— Francis A. Schaeffer, *Genesis in Space and Time*. InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL, 1972, p. 153.

As a result, people were forced to do what God had wanted them to do by choice — scatter around the world and fill it.

It's interesting that man is still separated by language. There are almost 7,000 different ones spoken in the world today. The people in the country of Papua New Guinea speak over 800 different languages.

About 900 million people speak Mandarin. That's the most speakers for any language, but that's still only about 16 percent of the world's population. English is the second most-used language with about 500 million speakers.

Many attempts have been made to create a universal language, the most well known of which is Esperanto. It's been around since 1887, and there are still societies promoting its usage in many countries. The total number of speakers is estimated at below one million, and that is probably optimistic.

God has a purpose and a plan, and He will see it through. He punished mankind with a flood and with a confusion of languages, but He preserved Eve's seed through Noah's son, Shem.

After each of the men listed below, write down their age when they died. (This will involve a bit of simple arithmetic.)

Shem _____

Arphaxad _____

Salah _____

Eber _____

Peleg _____

Reu _____

Serug _____

Nahor _____

Terah _____

What do you notice (if anything) about their ages?

Why do you think this is?

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Read Genesis 11:1-32.
2. Find the ages of the listed men and answer the questions.

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____

LESSON 14: Bible Survey

JOB

Even if you've never been a parent, you've almost certainly been involved in a conversation like this — because you have been a kid. But in this case, imagine you're the mom.

Kid: Mom, can I stay overnight at Cassie's house tonight?

Mom: No, you have homework to do.

Kid: I've already finished. Dad checked it.

Mom: Then you have piano practice to do.

Kid: My teacher's in Belgium for three weeks, so I don't have lessons this month. She said I only have to practice every other day until she gets back.

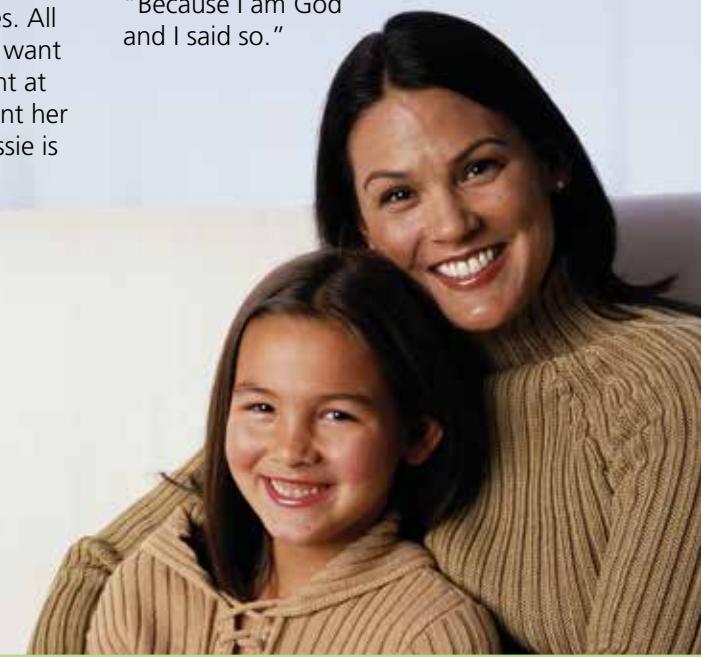
Mom: It's still a school night. You can't stay up late.

Kid: Cassie's mom said she'd make us go to bed by 10:00.

And so the negotiation continues. All along, the real reason you don't want your daughter spending the night at Cassie's is because you don't want her watching the type of movies Cassie is allowed to watch.

And then it dawns on you — you're the parent. "Because I'm uncomfortable with the situation" is a perfectly good reason to tell your daughter no. In fact, "because I'm the parent and I said so" is all the reason you need. You don't need to go through the negotiation. (There are times when you might want to help your child make proper choices or to teach him or her a lesson. At those times, explanations and negotiations are fine. But there are also times when enough is enough.) You are the sovereign over your children — you have the controlling power.

In the book of Job, God speaks of His sovereignty. He doesn't negotiate with Job — He simply says, "Because I am God and I said so."



Before we get into that, let's take a quick look at the background of Job. We aren't told exactly when he lived, but it was probably around the same time as Abraham. He lived 140 more years after the events of the book take place, so we know he lived fairly soon after the flood. His wealth was in livestock, which was true of the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob).

He lived in Uz, which is southeast of the Dead Sea in Arabia. He had flocks and a huge household and was, according to Job 1:3, ... *the greatest man among all the people of the East.*

He wasn't outstanding only for his wealth, but also for his righteousness. Job 1:1 describes him as *blameless* and *upright*. We shouldn't take this to mean that Job was without sin. But he was righteous in God's eyes because he took God at His word and did what God said was necessary to demonstrate his faith. Job served as priest for his family. Regularly and consistently he offered sacrifices for his sins and the sins of his family. Job 1:5 says: ... *This was Job's regular custom.* So, because he offered the sacrifices according to God's plan, Job's sins were covered and he was *blameless and upright.*

Here's the book of Job in a nutshell:

- Satan accused Job before God, saying that Job was obedient simply because God had given him a lot of stuff.
- God allowed Satan to test Job, with the only condition being that Job could not be killed. Satan took everything that Job had except his wife (which may not have been a good thing — her advice to her husband was to ... *curse God and die [Job 2:9]*).

- Three of Job's friends came to commiserate with him. They cared about Job, but their advice wasn't very good — they told Job his misfortunes were a result of sin. (We know they were wrong because God said so in Job 42:7.)
- Job, in turn, became angry and depressed, but he never turned his back on God.
- A fourth friend, Elihu, told Job that God sometimes instructs men through rough circumstances and that He has a purpose — to show men that they have no reason for pride but should rely on God's grace and love.
- God Himself spoke to Job, and said, in short, "Because I am God, and I said so."



Read Job 38-41. Pick out a section of two or three verses that personally speak to you about the sovereignty (authority to rule) of God. Write them below in your own words:

What does God's sovereignty mean in your life, with the circumstances you are facing? Are you angry, depressed, facing a lot of troubles, or are you living the good life (materialistically speaking)?

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION: SECTION COMPLETED

1. **Read Job 38-41.**
2. **Write down a section that shows you the sovereignty of God.**
3. **Explain the sovereignty of God in regard to your circumstances.**

Signature _____

Date _____

ISRAEL

God, in His sovereignty and wisdom, chose to carry out His plan for humanity by choosing a particular nation and making them His people. Paul, in Romans 9:4-5, gives a comprehensive list of what it means, exactly, to be God's people: *The people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.*



Israelites — This is the national name of the Jews. It refers back to Jacob, at the time he wrestled with God (Genesis 32:22-32). The name *Jacob* means "supplanter" (remember how he got his birthright from his brother, Esau?). But now God gave him a new name, *Israel*, which means "prince with God" or "one who prevails with God." God was pleased with Jacob's determination to be blessed. But the name Israel doesn't apply to all of Jacob's descendants because many of them chose not to believe. In Romans 9:6 Paul explains: ... For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel.

Adoption — God brought the nation into a special relationship with Him, separate and different from His relationship with other nations. We see this in Exodus 4:22 where God instructs Moses: ... say to Pharaoh, "This is what the LORD says: Israel is My firstborn son." Again, in Deuteronomy 14:1-2, God says: You are the children of the LORD your God. ... for you are a people holy to the LORD your God. Out of all the peoples on the face of the earth, the LORD has chosen you to be His treasured possession.

Glory — The glory given to Israel was the physical evidence of the presence of God with them. *By day the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night (Exodus 13:21).* It was an always-visible reminder that God was protecting them and that they had a special relationship with Him. This glory was also present in the tabernacle (Exodus 40:34) and in the temple (2 Chronicles 5:14).

Covenants — We'll get into this more in Lesson 22. The covenants were promises made to Israel by God.

Law — Israel was given the Ten Commandments and hundreds of other laws and regulations. This was Israel's downfall because, having a law, they were obligated to keep it. So how was the law an advantage? Paul tackles this question in Romans 7:7, 12-13. *What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law ... So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good. Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! But in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it produced death in me through what was good ...*

In other words, it was through their failure to keep the law that Israel should have realized their need for total reliance on God. *So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith (Galatians 3:24).* Israel had the law to show them that faith in God was the only path to salvation. Prior to the cross, no other nation was so blessed.

Service — This refers to the worship and ceremonies of the tabernacle and temple. God gave Israel the law to show them their sin, but He also provided the sacrifices and services that would cover their sins until the Savior died once for all. Read Hebrews 9:1-15 to get the full picture.

Promises — God promised Abraham that he and his descendants would receive a land, become a great people and be a blessing to the entire world. *The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your*

father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (Genesis 12:1-3). Because of Israel's sin and rejection of Jesus Christ, not all of the promises of God to the nation have been fulfilled — yet. But God's promises to Abraham were not conditional (read them again), and the day will come when all that God promised will be given.

Patriarchs — Paul, here, is referring back to the patriarchs of the nation — Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and so forth. God chose these men and revealed Himself to them. They were people just like us, with flaws and sins, but they also had faith in God. Because of their faith, they were given to Israel, and to us, as examples of men who were in God's will (Hebrews 11).

From them is traced the human ancestry of Christ — Paul isn't saying that Jesus Christ belonged to Israel, but that it was through Israel that He came to save the world. All through the history of the nation, the lineage of Jesus Christ can be traced. It's an amazing unveiling of how God uses a spectrum of circumstances to carry out His plan — and it was through Israel that it all happened.

But in spite of all they had going for them, Israel did reject the Messiah. As a result, they were set aside for a time. At the end of his ministry, Paul called together the leaders of the Jews in Rome. *They arranged to meet Paul on a certain day, and came in even larger*

numbers to the place where he was staying. From morning till evening he explained and declared to them the kingdom of God and tried to convince them about Jesus from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets. Some were convinced by what he said, but others would not believe. They disagreed among themselves and began to leave after Paul had made this final statement: "The Holy Spirit spoke the truth to your forefathers when he said through Isaiah the prophet: 'Go to this people and say, You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.' Therefore I want you to know that God's salvation has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen!" (Acts 28:23-28).

So that's it, right? Israel rejected the message and lost their opportunity, right?

Wrong. Although currently there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles, Paul explains in Romans 11:1-5 that a remnant of Israel (himself included) is being saved during this church age.

And there's more — Israel's current position is a blessing to the world because salvation is now offered freely to all. But God's promises will be fulfilled, and Israel's future restoration will bring even greater blessing to the world. Look up the following verses and write down what they have to say about Israel's future.



Romans 11:26-29

Jeremiah 31:31-32

Jeremiah 31:33

Jeremiah 31:34

Note what you've just written down. It's proof that Israel will one day be restored. God always keeps His promises. The things He promised in these verses haven't happened yet, so we can know that they will happen in the future.

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION: SECTION COMPLETED

- 1. Look up the listed verses and write down God's promises to Israel.**

Signature _____

Date _____

ABRAHAM'S FLAWS

Here's something to think about. In Genesis 20, Abraham and Sarah traveled to Gerar, the main city of the Philistines, near the Egyptian border. Evidently when they arrived, they found the situation stressful. King Abimelech found Sarah attractive. To avoid problems, Abraham tried a ploy he'd used once before — he told the king that Sarah was his sister.

This wasn't actually a lie. Sarah was his half sister. But she was also his wife. And who knows what sort of treatment she would have received if God hadn't intervened.

Oops!

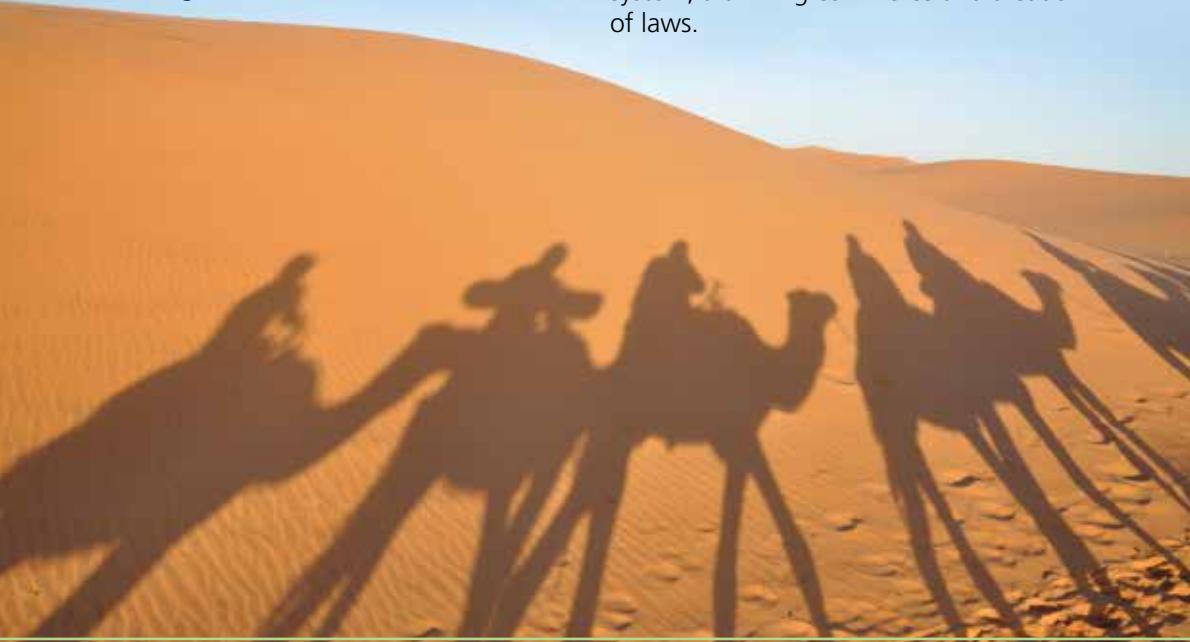
But here's the odd part of this account — at the time, Sarah was 90 years old — and possibly pregnant!

That incident is just one indication that Abraham was a normal human, with a normal sin nature. He is spoken of in Scripture as a great man of faith, and we'll get into that more in the next

lesson. But first let's take a look at his life from a different angle and remind ourselves who it is that deserves the praise.

When we first meet him, in Genesis 11, his name was still Abram. *Abram* means "exalted father." Later, God changed his name to *Abraham*, which means "father of a multitude."

Abram lived in Ur, in Mesopotamia — a city in what is now eastern Iraq, not far from Baghdad. Archaeologists have discovered that Ur was a prosperous place, with a library, schools, a postal system, a thriving commerce and a code of laws.



Abram was a wealthy man. At a time when wealth was measured by the number of animals a man owned, the Bible says: *Abram had become very wealthy in livestock and in silver and gold* (Genesis 13:2).

And then one day Abram got a visit — from God. He was told that he had been chosen to be the father of a great nation and a blessing to the entire world. God told him: *"Leave your country and your people ... and go to the land I will show you"* (Acts 7:3).

The record seems to show that Abram didn't exactly follow the directions. He took his family with him, or at least his father, Terah, and his nephew, Lot. His brother, Nahor, followed them at some point. Abram didn't really leave the country, but traveled up the Euphrates River to the town of Haran (which may well have been named after his other brother, Haran). Instead of following God, he stayed in Haran, with disastrous results for Terah: ... *"Long ago your forefathers, including Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the River and worshiped other gods"* (Joshua 24:2).

Oops!

After Terah died, ... *Abram left, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran* (Genesis 12:4). Abram still took Lot with him, which didn't work out very well, as we'll see a few lessons from now.

Oops!

Abram, with his family, finally arrived where God wanted them, in Canaan. God appeared to him again and told him that was the place. But Abram didn't stay long. The place was crawling

with Canaanites and, besides, there was a famine. Abram kept traveling and ended up in Egypt.

Oops!

There, Abram and Sarah pulled the "sister ploy" for the first time. Abram was afraid that Pharaoh would kill him to get his wife, but would reward him for providing an attractive sister for Pharaoh to marry. Imagine selling your wife for sheep and camels and servants (Genesis 12:16)!

Oops!

So Abram headed back to Canaan. But all was not well. His herdsmen and Lot's herdsmen quarreled because there wasn't enough good land for both of them. The two men split up.

By now, Abram had surely learned his lesson, right? When the Lord says to do something, it's best to do it exactly as He says, right?

Well ... Abram still had some issues. God had promised him that his descendants would inherit the land, but Abram had no descendants. If he died, everything would be owned by his steward, Eliezer. God repeated His promise, but Abram decided to help God out. Sarah had a servant, an Egyptian girl named Hagar. Even though their past plottings hadn't worked out so well, Abram and Sarah plotted again. Sarah gave Hagar to Abram and the servant had a son, Ishmael. The child hadn't even been born and already Sarah regretted it. The ploy didn't work out real well for Abram and his descendants, either.

Oops!



So what do we learn from all this? Abraham was a sinner. He was human, just like the rest of us. He dragged his feet when he had a job to do. He tried to solve problems his own way.

And yet Abraham is presented as a righteous man and called a friend of God. We'll find out why in the next lesson, but before we do, write down how you explain Abraham's greatness in light of his repeated failings. What was it that makes Abraham a good example for us?

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Write down your own explanation for why Abraham is considered a great man of faith in spite of his sins.

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____



LESSON 17: In the New Testament

ABRAHAM

Good evening. I'm Mark Bodmin with the latest on today's presidential election.

I hardly know where to begin. Apparently, there's a great deal of dissatisfaction with the major party candidates. Both of them are trailing by a large margin and only a few states have yet to report. I think it's all over for both of them.

But here's the amazing thing — it seems our next president will be a write-in candidate named your name here. Nobody I've spoken to here in the newsroom, or in the headquarters of the two major parties, has ever heard of this person. This is truly an unprecedented happening. I'm attempting to get your name here on the phone.

You: Hello?

Mark: Hi. I'm Mark Bodmin from RTC News. Is this your name here?

You: Yes, it is.

Mark: With almost all the votes in today's presidential election counted, it appears that you've been elected the next president of the United States.

How on earth did you organize such a widespread write-in campaign without any of the news networks or political parties finding out?

You: I didn't. I had no idea people were writing in my name. I only heard about it when I saw the news a few minutes ago. I didn't even vote for me!

Mark: You're kidding! That's amazing. Are you involved in politics in any way?

You: I usually manage to vote, but other than that, no.

Mark: What are your plans now?

You: I've hardly had time to make any. I guess I'll just take it one step at a time and do my best.

Not very likely, is it? But that's something like what happened to Abram.

We saw in the last lesson that Abraham was a pretty normal guy. He was capable of making wrong decisions and exercised that capability on several occasions. And yet he's set forth in the Bible as a great man of faith who was called a friend of God. How can this be?

For starters, God's choosing of Abraham didn't have anything to do with Abraham. *The LORD did not set His affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. But it was because the LORD loved you ... (Deuteronomy 7:7-8)*. It was grace, pure and simple. God had a plan. He intended to select a group of people and, through them, bring the world His Word and His Son. Abram was chosen, by God's grace, as the father of that people.

It wasn't a matter of Abraham doing something good and then God rewarding him. Instead, God did something and Abraham responded. That's the way it always works — God starts the process and we respond. It's the only way it can work because ... *nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature ... (Romans 7:18)*. We have nothing to offer except our faith (and even that comes from God — Ephesians 2:8).

Quickly, let's look at Abraham's faith from two angles. The first is found in

Now read Hebrews 11:8-19. Abraham is shown to have had faith in God in three areas.

1. Verses 8-10. Abraham took God at His word when He said:

Romans 4. Read the entire chapter and notice these points:

- If Abraham was justified by works, he could glory before men. But before God, he would simply be doing his duty and not worthy of glory. But no man, Abraham included, can be justified by works.
- Abraham received righteousness because he took God at His word. God told him his seed would become a nation. He didn't know about Christ — who actually saved him. But his belief in God and what God said was reckoned as righteousness until the cross.
- Abraham was imputed (counted as) righteous at least 14 years before he was circumcised, so justification isn't just for those who have the law (Genesis 15).
- Abraham believed against all hope (verse 18), which means that he believed contrary to all normal expectations. He did not waver (verse 20), which means that he didn't have a divided mind about it.
- As Abraham believed God could bring life to his body, so we believe God brought life to Christ after His death on the cross.

2. Verses 11-12. Abraham took God at His word when He said:

3. Verses 17-19. Abraham took God at His word when He said:

In the last lesson, you wrote down why you thought Abraham was considered a righteous man in spite of all his sins and wrong choices. Now that you've studied this lesson, how would you answer the same question?

What application can you make about how you become righteous before God?

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

SECTION COMPLETED

1. **List the three examples of Abraham's faith from Hebrews 11.**
2. **Write down your revised explanation for why Abraham is considered a righteous man in spite of his sins.**
3. **Write down how the example of Abraham applies to your own righteousness.**

Signature _____

Date _____

LOT

Read Genesis 13 and 19.

Timothy Treadwell was a self-proclaimed grizzly bear expert. He disagreed with the consensus opinion that grizzlies were to be avoided or, at least, treated with a great deal of caution. Treadwell called them "party animals" and enjoyed approaching and even touching them.

National Park Service rangers disagreed. They were very unhappy about the message he was spreading to park visitors. One park manager said, "At best he's misguided, at worst, he's dangerous. If Timothy models unsafe behavior, that ultimately puts bears and other visitors at risk."

Treadwell responded that he felt safer around grizzlies than he did in New York's Central Park.

In 2003, Treadwell and his girlfriend were mauled and killed by grizzlies in Alaska. Their remains were discovered near the campsite, partially buried by a bear. When rangers approached the camp to recover the bodies, they were attacked by, and had to kill, two aggressive bears.

Timothy Treadwell thought he was different. He thought he could get away with things that others were warned to avoid. He felt he could handle the situation. He found out differently.



In some ways, he was very similar to Abraham's nephew, Lot. When the herdsmen of the two families began quarrelling over grazing their flocks and herds, Abraham decided they should split up. He said to Lot: ... *Let's part company. If you go to the left, I'll go to the right; if you go to the right, I'll go to the left* (Genesis 13:9).

Lot had a choice to make. He looked at his options. On the one hand was the hill country of Canaan. On the other hand were the Jordan River plains, a lush, beautiful land that reminded him of Egypt. The city of Sodom was down on the plains, a place about which the Bible has this to say: ... *the men of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the LORD* (Genesis 13:13).

Lot didn't have Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, where he could have read: *Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character"* (1 Corinthians 15:33). But even if he had, he probably would have ignored it.

And he didn't have Proverbs 14:11-12: *The house of the wicked will be destroyed, but the tent of the upright will flourish. There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.* But even if he had, he probably would have ignored it.

And Lot wasn't aware of Psalm 1:1: *Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.*

In fact, that's exactly what Lot did. He walked down into the plains where the

ungodly lived, he pitched his tent right next to Sodom, and a little while later (Genesis 19:1), we find out that *Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city.* City gates, in Bible times, were gathering places. Merchants would spread out their goods, the men in the town would gather to chat or listen to speeches, and local courts were held there. Lot was totally involved with the culture.

He didn't have the Bible, but he knew right from wrong. His attitude when the two angels appear proves this. He thought he could handle it. He thought he could court danger and get away with it.

Lot invited the angels into his house and fed them. The degenerate townspeople came to the door and requested that Lot send out the angels so they could exercise their perverted wishes.

Talk about bad companionship corrupting good morals — Lot's response was to offer his two virgin daughters instead!

That's not the end of the sordidness. The angels hustled Lot and his family out of the city before God destroyed it. God told him to head for the mountains, but Lot argued with God and said he'd be more comfortable in the city of Zoar. God, in His grace, said He would spare that city, but that nobody should look back at Sodom. Lot's wife disobeyed, and was destroyed. Almost the last thing we hear about Lot is that he'd gotten drunk and his two daughters used him to get pregnant. It's not a pretty picture.

moral (môr'äl, môr'əl) adj.
ment of the goodness or rightness of a person's character or action; ethical: moral scriptural: moral correctness of character.

Peter tells us that Lot was a righteous man who was "distressed" with the morals of Sodom (2 Peter 2:7-8). It's evident that he was righteous based on his faith in God and not on the wisdom of his choices.

Write out two or three other verses that apply to Lot's choices and their consequences.

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:	SECTION COMPLETED
1. Read Genesis 13 and 19.	Signature _____
2. Write down two verses (not already used) that apply to Lot's choices and their consequences.	Date _____

LESSON 19: Keeping Up With the Kids

THREE ESSENTIAL TRUTHS

GREEN JEWEL 1

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1:31

God saw all that He had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning — the sixth day.

Romans 3:23

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

1. God
2. Creation
3. Sin

By the age of 6 or 7, most kids can grasp the concept of God. They will probably wonder where He came from or where He is, and they might be afraid of Him because He can see everything. Explain to them that even though they can't see God, He is real. If your family has a relative or friend that your child has never met but has received mail from, you can use that as an illustration (although, as with all illustrations, it breaks down if you take it too far). Your child reads that person's words and knows that he or she is really alive and living somewhere. It's the same with God. We can read His words and know that He is alive and in heaven.

The three verses you are memorizing for this lesson contain three essential truths that your Sparks-aged child should be able to understand.





Creation is a great way to explain the power of God to your kids. To demonstrate this, sit them down at an empty table and ask them to make you a house. Of course, they will realize that they can't make a house if they don't have the raw materials. Then give them some blocks and build a house together. While working on it, explain that God didn't need raw materials when He created the world. All He had to do was speak and His words became reality.

Impress upon your kids that God loves us and wants the best for us. When He created the world, He made it good. He created things just for us to enjoy. If you have a digital camera in your family, why not go for a walk through a local park with your child and take pictures of things God created — ducks, squirrels, clouds, trees, flowers and each other. Whenever possible, let your child find the things and take the pictures. Then create an album of photos to remind you both to appreciate what God has done.

Despite being surrounded by a perfect creation, Adam and Eve made the

decision to disobey God — and sin came into the world. We can't put all the blame on Adam and Eve, however. Each one of us also sins by choice. By the time they get into Sparks, kids can understand the concept of sin and realize that they can choose between right and wrong. When your child gets angry or disobeys, gently point out that he made the wrong choice. Discuss with him what a better choice would have been.

Sin isn't just responsible for disobedience or anger. It's the reason we have to deal with all sorts of inconveniences — colds and flu, the death of family members or pets, broken bones and flat tires and ... the list goes on. Use the annoyances of life to explain to your child how sin has messed things up. But make sure you don't blame things that go wrong on your — or your child's — sin. It's our sinfulness that makes us sin, not our individual sins that make us sinful. And we get sick and hurt because of sin in the world, not because of individual sins in our lives.

Everything you've read so far in this lesson has been an illustration of how you can take a Bible verse and make it understandable to your child through simple activities and everyday occurrences. Teaching your child the truth doesn't have to be a formal, sit-up-straight-and-pay-attention activity (although there are times when that is appropriate). Watch for ways to teach the lessons your child is learning whenever you can.

Pick one of the verses you've memorized earlier in this book and write down a way you can help your child understand it through a simple activity or everyday occurrence.

VERSE

TEACHING OPPORTUNITY

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION: **SECTION COMPLETED**

- 1. Memorize and recite the three verses.**
- 2. Pick a verse you've memorized previously and write down a way to teach it to your child.**

Signature _____

Date _____

ISAAC

Read Genesis 26.

It's been said that the past is a different planet. The account of Isaac is a good example.

Today, what would human rights activists have to say about a father who tied up his son, laid him on an altar and threatened to kill him with a knife and then burn him?

Today, what would animal rights activists have to say about a man who found a wild goat caught in a bush and killed it and burned it to worship his god?

Today, what would a 40-year-old man have to say if his father sent an assistant to find him a bride? And what would he do if, when the bride arrived, she was covered from head to toe so that, before the wedding, he had no idea what she looked like?

But through Isaac's history, we can trace the thread of God's plan for all humanity.

Isaac isn't one of the big stars of the Old Testament. He didn't participate in a lot of ground-breaking events like his father did. Primarily, he serves as a link between Abraham and Jacob, a way for God to preserve the promises He made. He's somewhat like the third man on a four-man relay team. The first man is there at the beginning when everyone is paying attention. The last man gains the victory and receives the reward. The third man performs an important role, but nobody really notices.



But that's not to say he wasn't a righteous man. He has his place in the faith hall of fame in Hebrews 11. *By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau in regard to their future (Hebrews 11:20).* That's it — he believed the promises that God gave his father and passed them on to his son.

Isaac knew he was a link. God spoke to him directly and said: *Stay in this land for a while, and I will be with you and will bless you. For to you and your descendants I will give all these lands and will confirm the oath I swore to your father Abraham. I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My requirements, My commands, My decrees and My laws (Genesis 26:3-5).*

Did you notice what that passage said? God was blessing Isaac because of the oath He gave to Abraham. The nations will be blessed because Abraham had faith. Isaac might have said, "Hey! What about me? I'm a good guy too!" But he didn't. He simply believed.

Remember when God told Abraham that he would have a son? What did Abraham do? He tried to help God a little bit and had a child with Hagar. Isaac found himself in a similar situation. Rebekah was unable to have children — she was barren. Isaac knew that God had promised that the seed would come through him. What to do? Did Isaac find a willing servant girl to have his child? No. *Isaac prayed to the LORD ... and his wife Rebekah became pregnant (Genesis 25:21).*

When Rebekah gave birth to twins, Isaac preferred the older one, Esau, because he was a good hunter and brought Isaac meat. He wanted to give a blessing to this son — he even tried to, but was fooled by Jacob. At the time, a father's death-bed blessing was the same as a will.

But God had said that *the ... older will serve the younger (Genesis 25:23).* And Isaac, though he knew Jacob had tricked him, also knew God's plan. He called Jacob and said: *May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and increase your numbers until you become a community of peoples. May He give you and your descendants the blessing given to Abraham, so that you may take possession of the land where you now live as an alien, the land God gave to Abraham (Genesis 28:3-4).*

And so the seed was passed on, just as God had promised.

We aren't carriers of the promised seed of Abraham, but God is still working out His plan and He has a role for you. It's simply this — to tell others that God has reconciled the world to Himself through Jesus Christ. We are given the ministry of reconciliation.

Write down 2 Corinthians 5:19 and memorize it.



How will you intentionally pass on the message of reconciliation to the children in your family (or ministry)?

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Read Genesis 26.**
2. **Write down and memorize 2 Corinthians 5:19.**
3. **Write down your plan for spreading the message of reconciliation.**

SECTION COMPLETED:

Signature _____

Date _____

2 Corinthians 5:19

That God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

LESSON 21: Bible Survey

ABRAHAM'S SACRIFICE OF ISAAC

Read Genesis 22:1-19.

It's Sunday morning. You're tired because the neighbor's dog was barking half the night. You're trying to listen to the pastor's message, but your attention keeps wandering and soon all you hear is a drone.

Mumblemumble I heard the sirens, and that quickly, I had a speeding ticket ...

What! Pastor got a speeding ticket! Immediately you're focused on what he's saying. You listen intently and quickly catch up with the point. But after a few minutes, your mind begins drifting again.

Mumblemumblemumblemumblemumblemumblemumblemumblemumblemumblemumblemumblemumblemumblemumblemumblemumblemumblemumble my wife spilled soup on the mayor's dog.

You're back again.

It's no mistake. Pastors use illustrations on purpose. Not only do they help explain the point, but they're interesting and they keep you involved.



The Holy Spirit uses illustrations in the Bible too. The Lord often used parables when He was on earth. At other times, He referred to an actual historical event in the Old Testament and used it as an illustration to point to His own ministry. In fact, it is apparent that many actual historical events recorded in the Old Testament happened largely so we could understand New Testament truth. These illustrations are often called *types*.

For example: during their wanderings in the wilderness, the people of Israel became discouraged and spoke against God. As punishment, God sent poisonous snakes among them and many people died. But God, in His grace, also made a way of deliverance. He instructed Moses to make a snake of bronze and place it on a pole. Anyone who looked at the snake in faith was saved (Numbers 21:4-9). Fast-forward a couple of thousand years. Jesus Christ was explaining to Nicodemus the way of deliverance. He said: *Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life* (John 3:14-15).



Genesis 22:1-19 records an event that helps us understand God's sacrifice of His Son on the cross.

Abraham had been chosen by God to be the father of a mighty nation. He left his family and traveled among strangers, not knowing what the future held but trusting God to guide him. A long time passed, and Sarah failed to get pregnant. How could he father a nation if he didn't father a son?

Abraham and Sarah hatched the plan to have him father a child by Hagar, his wife's servant. That didn't work out very well. More time passed. Sarah grew old and beyond her child-bearing years. Still no heir.

Finally, Isaac was born when Sarah was 90. God's promise had come true. Abraham had a son. More years passed. Isaac was now a teenager or a young adult. He had no children of his own, so the mighty nation hadn't exactly gotten off to a great start yet.

And then God talked to Abraham and told him to offer Isaac as a sacrifice.

Huh??!!?

It's your turn to do some searching. We'll list something about the account of Abraham and Isaac and then give you a verse to look up. Read the verse and write down what Isaac's sacrifice was illustrating.

- ... Take your son, your only son ... (Genesis 22:2)
- John 3:16 _____
- ... Whom you love ... (Genesis 22:2). This is actually the first appearance of the word *love* in the Bible, and it refers to the love of a father for his son.
- Matthew 3:16-17 _____
Not coincidentally, this is the first use of the word *love* in the New Testament. And the first use of the word *love* in the Gospel of John? John 3:16. Interesting, isn't it?
- ... To the region of Moriah ... on one of the mountains ... (Genesis 22:2)
- 2 Chronicles 3:1 _____
(Think about what took place there over the years.)
- On the third day ... (Genesis 22:4). For three days, Abraham considered his son "as dead."
- Luke 24:46 _____
- Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering, and placed it on his son Isaac ... (Genesis 22:6)
- Isaiah 53:6 _____
- ... The two of them went on together ... (Genesis 22:6). (Isaac went willingly.)
- Luke 22:42 _____
- Then he [Abraham] reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. (Genesis 22:10)
- Romans 8:32 _____
- Abraham ... took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering ... (Genesis 22:13)
- John 1:29 _____

If you think we're making more of this than we should, look up Hebrews 11:17-19. Isaac is called a *figure*, which means "comparison" or "symbol." It's clear that the ram, offered instead of Isaac, is also a type of Christ, who was offered in our place.

Don't overdo it. Not everything in the Old Testament is a type. If the Bible doesn't specifically refer to a person or event as a type, be very careful coming to your conclusions. But in the case of Isaac, and in many other places, God does give us illustrations to help us understand His amazing truth.

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Read Genesis 22:1-19.**
2. **Look up the listed verses and write out the types as portrayed in the passage.**

SECTION COMPLETED:

Signature _____

Date _____



LESSON 22: Bible Survey

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

Read Genesis 15:1-21 and Genesis 17:1-21.

"OK, Mr. and Mrs. Cooper, we're about to complete the signing for your new home. I know you're very excited, so we'll get started right away. The bank has approved your loan and we're ready to fund it. The home has been inspected, and you've brought your proof of insurance. I think there's just one more step we need to take. Did you bring a goat?"

"Did you say 'goat'?"

"Yes, did you bring a goat?"

"No, we didn't bring a goat. Why do we need a goat?"

"Well, actually, you should have brought a cow, a sheep, two birds AND a goat. It's part of the contract agreement. We sacrifice the animals, split them in two and then walk between the pieces."

"We have a cat, but we didn't bring it with us, and we have no intention of slaughtering it."

"That's that, then. You obviously aren't ready to commit to buying this house. Good day."



At the time that Abraham lived, agreements, or covenants, between two parties looked considerably different than they do now. Animals were sacrificed to demonstrate what would happen to one of the contracting parties if he broke the agreement.

Here is a portion of a contract dating to the eighth century B.C. It's between Ashurnirari, the king of Assyria, and Mati'ilu, a ruler in Syria.

This spring lamb ... has been brought to sanction the treaty between Ashurnirari and Mati'ilu ... This head is not the head of a lamb, it is the head of Mati'ilu, it is the head of his sons, his officials, and the people of his land. If Mati'ilu sins against this treaty, so may, just as the head of this spring lamb is torn off ... the head of Mati'ilu be torn off.

— Bill T. Arnold and Bryan E. Beyer, *Encountering the Old Testament*. Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI, 1999, p. 94.

When God made His covenant with Abraham, He told him to: ... "Bring Me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon." (Genesis 15:9). The animals were slaughtered and divided into two sections. These sections were laid out in two rows, one half of each animal in each row. The birds were not divided, and one of them was placed in each row.

Normally, the two parties to the contract would walk between the two rows to signify their commitment to the agreement being made. But notice what happened with Abraham. God told Abraham to arrange the rows, but then nothing happened. A long enough time passed that Abraham had to chase birds (probably vultures or

other carrion-eating types) off the meat. Night came, and Abraham fell asleep. While he slept, ... a smoking firepot with a blazing torch ... passed between the pieces (Genesis 15:17).

The firepot and torch were evidence of God's presence. Only God passed between the rows of slain animals. God made a covenant with Abraham, but Abraham made no promise in return. It was unconditional. God used the covenant ceremony of Abraham's culture to show Abraham the seriousness of His promises, but He asked nothing in return.

This ceremony was an official seal on the promises God made back in Genesis 12:2-3. *I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.*

What, exactly, did God promise?

1. *I will make you into a great nation* — This refers to Israel, God's chosen people. For a refresher on what God did for that nation, see Lesson 15.
2. *I will bless you* — This was personal. Abraham was given blessings that were:
 - a. Material — *Abram had become very wealthy in livestock and in silver and gold* (Genesis 13:2).
 - b. Spiritual — *Abraham ... was called God's friend* (James 2:23).

3. *I will make your name great* — How great? Abraham had been dead for more than 2,000 years, but he is the fourth most-frequently-mentioned person (apart from Jesus Christ) in the New Testament — after Paul, Peter and John the Baptist.

4. *All peoples on earth will be blessed through you* — Jesus Christ, the Savior of all mankind, came through Abraham's line.

As we saw in Lesson 17, Abraham was known for his faith. He believed God contrary to normal expectations and didn't have a divided mind about it. As time went on, God gave Abraham more information. In each instance, Abraham's response was faith.

We've seen God's promises in Genesis 12. Now look up the following passages and write down what further information God gave to Abraham in each.

Genesis 15:4-5 _____

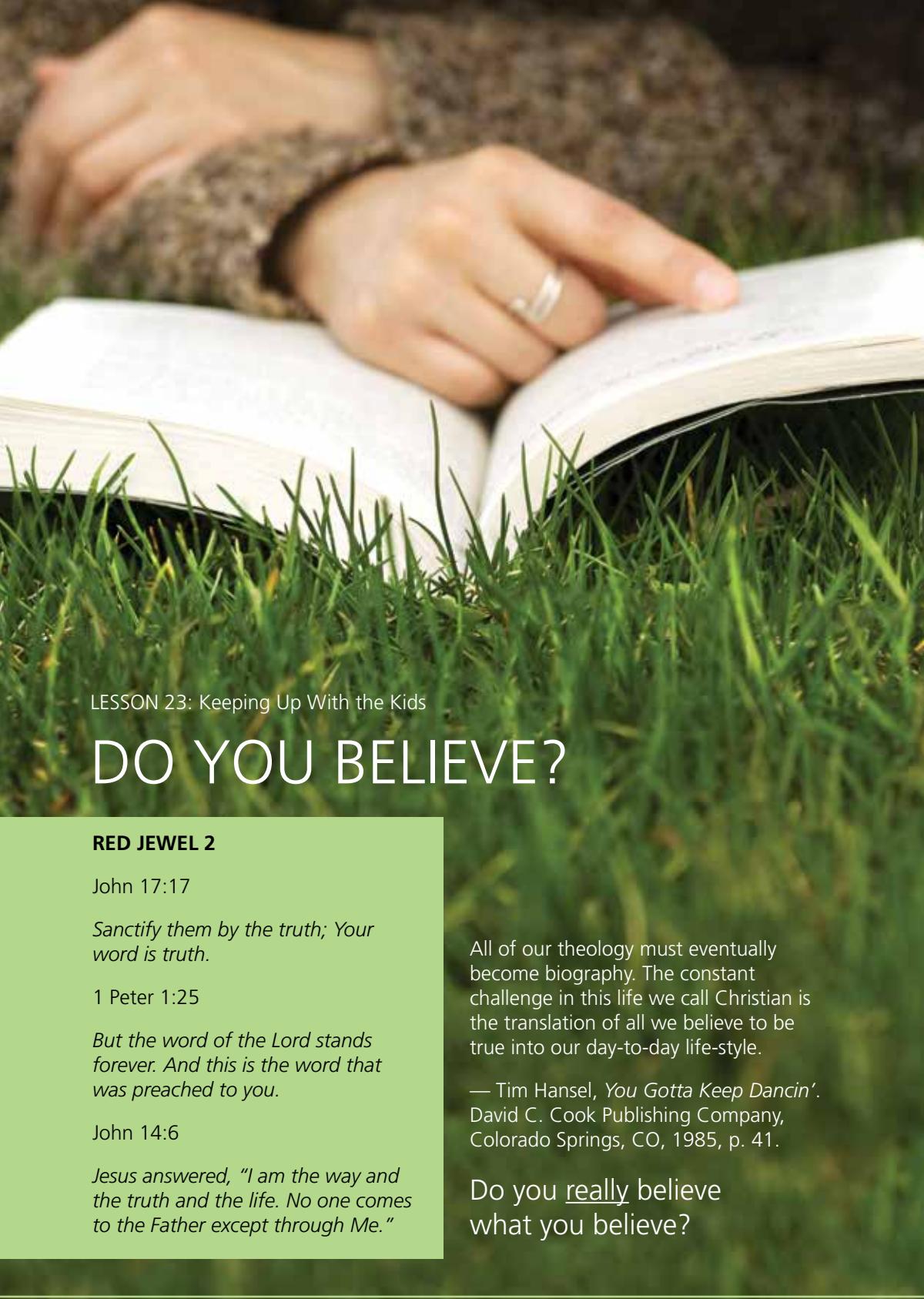
Genesis 17:1-21 _____

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION: **SECTION COMPLETED**

1. **Read Genesis 15:1-21 and Genesis 17:1-21.**
2. **Write down God's promises to Abraham in these verses.**

Signature _____

Date _____



LESSON 23: Keeping Up With the Kids

DO YOU BELIEVE?

RED JEWEL 2

John 17:17

Sanctify them by the truth; Your word is truth.

1 Peter 1:25

But the word of the Lord stands forever. And this is the word that was preached to you.

John 14:6

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

All of our theology must eventually become biography. The constant challenge in this life we call Christian is the translation of all we believe to be true into our day-to-day life-style.

— Tim Hansel, *You Gotta Keep Dancin'*.
David C. Cook Publishing Company,
Colorado Springs, CO, 1985, p. 41.

Do you really believe what you believe?

That's the question I had to ask myself the day my father died. He was gone. How did I feel about that? I would miss him, of course. But down deep, how did I feel? Did I really believe what I believed? Was my dad in heaven or not? Was this goodbye or just "see ya later"? I took a walk by myself and during the course of that walk actually stopped and asked myself the question out loud: "Do you believe that Dad is in heaven so securely that you can live your life as though it is a rock-solid fact?"

My faith was put to the test and held firm. It made the next days and weeks much easier.

There was another time a few years after that when I found my faith put to a much more difficult test. My children were growing up. They were starting to make their own decisions, some of which I wasn't entirely comfortable with and a few that flat-out frightened me.

I knew what the Bible had to say.

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him ... (Romans 8:28). But what if my son has never made the decision to love Him?

Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it (Proverbs 22:6). But what about my daughter who has rejected the values she was taught as a child?

Give thanks in all circumstances ... (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Surely God doesn't want me to be thankful that my child is out of control.

Rejoice in the Lord always ... (Philippians 4:4). There's no way I can rejoice when someone I love and am responsible for is making one bad

decision after another. If I was joyful under those circumstances, I'd feel guilty, and then I wouldn't be joyful anymore.

I went around and around on this issue for several years. I found faith fairly easy when applied to myself. I could see the Lord working in my life and knew I was growing spiritually. But living by faith when it came to my children was a whole different story. I wasn't able to stop relying on my own efforts and rely on God because I knew my children have free will and might never listen to what God has to say.

The more I struggled with the issue, the more frustrated I became. Finally, in the midst of one particularly troublesome time, I had to give up. I had no recourse left except to take God at His Word. I began to live by faith.

For a time, it was a desperate faith, one that resulted from the elimination of all other options. But then I began to see a change. That's not to say my children are now perfect. But I could see evidence that God was working in their lives, and He was also very active in mine. Living as though He really is in control became a habit.

The verses I knew so well took on a new meaning.

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him ... (Romans 8:28). God has a master plan and He's in control. We don't know how He works (see Romans 8:26), but we can trust that He is working.

God could never have worked with the human race if He had not worked with them as sinners. We are sinners, and the whole pattern of the life of each of us is made by the interweaving of the

acts of our Adamic [descended from Adam] natures and the results of those acts. Even when we have been born again the flesh is present with us, and even after we know that we have been joined to Christ the living Head of our new spiritual relationship to God, we are aware of the continuing presence of the body of death within us.

— Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle of Romans as a Point of Departure*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI, 1963, Volume III, Part 7, "God's Heirs", pp. 154-155.

Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it (Proverbs 22:6). This is a principle, not a promise. Each of my children has to make his or her own decision to trust the Lord. I have assignments, but the ultimate decision is between my children and God.

Give thanks in all circumstances ... (1 Thessalonians 5:18). The verse doesn't say "for every thing," it says "all circumstances." No matter how difficult the circumstances, I can be thankful that God loves me, that Christ died and rose again for me and that the Holy Spirit dwells within me.

Rejoice in the Lord always ... (Philippians 4:4). This one is tough, but just as with thanksgiving, I can rejoice in what God has done, is doing and will do. As the Lord told Paul: ... "My grace is sufficient for you ..." (2 Corinthians 12:9).

How about you? Do you believe what you believe so firmly that you are able to live as though it was a rock-solid fact? Do the decisions you make reflect your theology?



TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Memorize and recite the verses.

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____

LESSON 24: Bible Survey

JACOB AND ESAU

Would you like to be a millionaire?

You can reach your goal by following these fun and simple steps:

1. Assemble these ingredients: 1 large chopped onion; 1 tablespoon (15 mL) olive oil; 4 chopped garlic cloves; 1 teaspoon (5 mL) ground cumin; ½ bay leaf; 1 sprig fresh thyme; 1 cup (198.4 g) rinsed red lentils (7 ounces [198.4 g]); 3 ½ cups (828 mL) chicken broth; 3 cups (708.8 mL) water; 2 tablespoons (5 g) chopped flat-leaf parsley; 1 teaspoon (5 mL) salt, ½ teaspoon (2.5 mL) pepper, 1 loaf fresh-baked bread (optional, but a good addition for best results).
2. Cook the onion in oil with ½ teaspoon (2.5 mL) salt in a saucepan over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 8 minutes.
3. Add garlic, cumin, bay leaf, and thyme and cook and stir for 1 minute more. Add lentils, broth, water, ½ teaspoon (2.5 mL) salt, and pepper and simmer, partially covered, stirring occasionally, until lentils are very soft and falling apart, about 30 to 45 minutes.
4. Discard bay leaf and thyme sprig, then purée 2 cups (440 g) of mixture in blender (use caution when blending hot liquids) and return to pan.
5. Stir in parsley and season with salt.
6. Offer a bowl, along with a piece of bread, to your hungry brother in return for his inheritance.

Read Genesis 25:20-34 and 27:1-46.

What's your overall impression of Jacob? Overly ambitious? A conniver? A liar? Here's an interesting fact you may not know — there is not one word of criticism of Jacob in the Bible. That's not to say he wasn't sinful, but the Bible doesn't focus any attention on that.

One thing that can be said about Jacob — he was tenacious. He knew what he wanted and was determined to get it. His name means "heel-catcher" or "supplanter," because he ... came out, with his hand grasping Esau's heel ... (Genesis 25:26).

So, in light of what we know about Jacob, isn't it rather strange to read in Genesis 25:27 that *Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the open country, while Jacob was a quiet man, staying among the tents?* Does anything else we've read about Jacob — his grasping of his brother's heel, his purchase of the birthright, his trick to gain his father's blessing, his determination to get Rachel, and means of obtaining healthy flocks from Laban and his wrestling with the angel — does any of that sound like a quiet man?

The word translated *quiet* (plain in the KJV) means "morally upright or mature." Jacob was younger in age (by a few minutes) than his brother Esau — but more advanced in maturity.

While Jacob stayed around home and probably tended the flocks and carried out his responsibilities, Esau was out hunting. (What need would there be to hunt when the family owned flocks? We do know that Isaac had a taste for wild meat. Esau provided it, but it wasn't a necessity. Was he shirking his family duties?)

The Lord had told Rebekah: ... *Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you will be separated; one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger* (Genesis 25:23). Rebekah probably passed this information on to her younger son.

Jacob valued the birthright, and worked hard to get it. This wasn't an easy task. Not only did the inheritance usually go to the older son, but Isaac clearly preferred Esau. Isaac should have known better than to show favoritism. He certainly knew what the Lord had told his wife. Isaac had a choice. He could have passed the birthright to a younger son, as Jacob himself did years later (1 Chronicles 5:1-2).

Have you ever found yourself a little sympathetic toward Esau who was tricked out of his birthright and cheated out of his blessing? Here's what the Bible has to say about him: *See that no one is sexually immoral, or is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son* (Hebrews 12:16). Esau was named "hairy," because of his appearance at birth. The nation he founded was named Edom, which means red, for the red lentil soup he desired so strongly. There's not a single word about his faith. How's that for a legacy?

To sum up:

1. God wanted the birthright to go to Jacob.
2. Isaac wanted it to go to Esau.
3. Esau didn't value it.
4. Rebekah knew God would give it to Jacob.

5. Jacob wanted it very much.
6. Esau didn't just trade his birthright for a bowl of soup, he swore an oath to give the birthright away.

What exactly was this birthright that was at stake between the two brothers? It was the right of the firstborn male to be head of the clan. In the case of Jacob and Esau, it included the privilege of being in the line of God's promised Redeemer.

Back in Lesson 4, you read this:

Before the foundation of the world, and according to His desire, God chose Jesus Christ as the conduit for our reconciliation so that we will be holy and He will be glorified.

We don't fully understand how God's plan works — we can't because we aren't God. We know that He is sovereign and has all things under control. We also know that He has given us a certain amount of free will to make our own choices. God, through His foreknowledge, His power and His Word, is seeing to it that the result (and the entire process) is exactly what He wants it to be.

God, in His wisdom, selected Jacob to carry out His plan. Nobody in the family — Isaac, Jacob, Esau or Rebekah — handled the circumstances very well, but none of them changed God's plan.

Finally, Isaac blessed Jacob (Genesis 28:1) before sending him to Laban.

Read Genesis 29 and give a short outline of how Jacob obtained his wives.

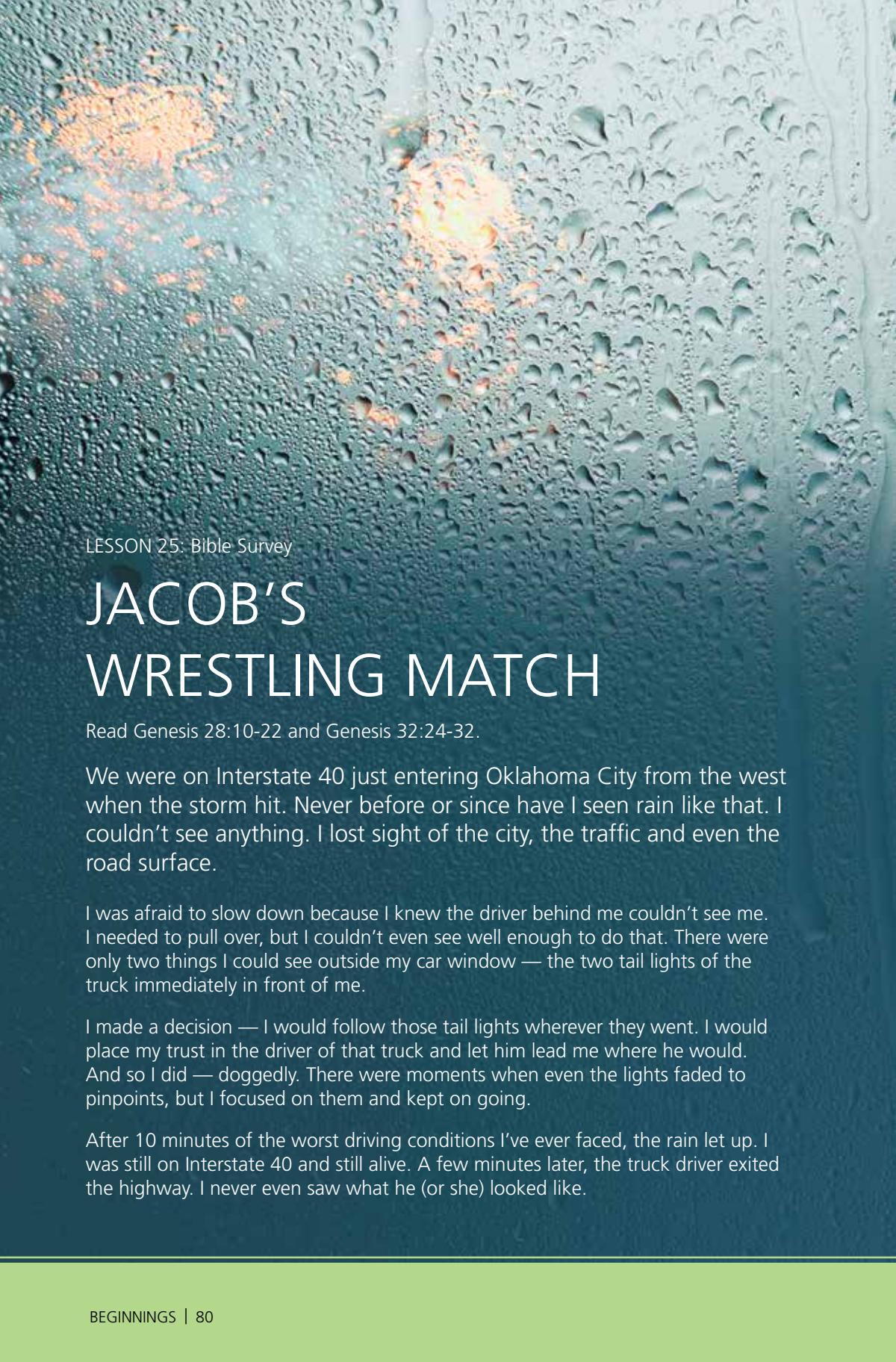
TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Read Genesis 25:20-34 and 27:1-46.**
2. **Read Genesis 29 and write a short outline of how Jacob obtained his wives.**

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____



LESSON 25: Bible Survey

JACOB'S WRESTLING MATCH

Read Genesis 28:10-22 and Genesis 32:24-32.

We were on Interstate 40 just entering Oklahoma City from the west when the storm hit. Never before or since have I seen rain like that. I couldn't see anything. I lost sight of the city, the traffic and even the road surface.

I was afraid to slow down because I knew the driver behind me couldn't see me. I needed to pull over, but I couldn't even see well enough to do that. There were only two things I could see outside my car window — the two tail lights of the truck immediately in front of me.

I made a decision — I would follow those tail lights wherever they went. I would place my trust in the driver of that truck and let him lead me where he would. And so I did — doggedly. There were moments when even the lights faded to pinpoints, but I focused on them and kept on going.

After 10 minutes of the worst driving conditions I've ever faced, the rain let up. I was still on Interstate 40 and still alive. A few minutes later, the truck driver exited the highway. I never even saw what he (or she) looked like.

That's somewhat the way it was for Jacob.

From the moment he emerged from the womb, Jacob had focus. He had heard from his parents the promises that God had made to his father and grandfather. He'd probably heard from his mother that God had told her the older son would serve the younger son. He did what he thought he had to do to get the birthright and blessing. He believed God would keep His promises. He didn't know exactly what the fulfillment of those promises would look like, but he kept on going. Jacob's faith was tenacious.

Let's skip ahead — Jacob dashed off to avoid Esau and to find a wife. He worked for Laban for 20 years and ended up with two wives (and their two servant women) and large flocks. Then he dashed off to escape Laban — out of one danger and into another. Esau was waiting for him. Angels appeared to him on his journey, and Jacob knew God was protecting him, but he was still afraid. He divided his party in half, sent servants ahead with gifts and arranged to be alone by the ford of Jabbok (which means "wrestler" — probably a name given later).

Have you ever noticed how the Bible gives the essential information without embellishment? We come now to one of the quickest segues you'll ever find *So Jacob was left alone, and a Man wrestled with him till daybreak* (Genesis 32:24).

What man? Where did he come from? How did the wrestling match begin? We aren't told. Although the individual looked like a man, Jacob knew He was something more. In fact, ... *Jacob called the place Peniel (face of God), saying,*

"It is because I saw God face to face ..." (Genesis 32:30).

The wrestling match continued until dawn. The man asked Jacob to stop but Jacob refused until the man blessed him — more proof that he knew he was wrestling with God. The man asked Jacob his name, which Jacob gave him. By giving in to this request, Jacob was acknowledging his inferiority, but Jacob wasn't one to give in easily. He asked the man his name too. In reply, the man simply said, ... *"Why do you ask My name?"* ... (Genesis 32:29). Jacob knew who He was.

The name *Jacob* means "supplanter." But now he was given a new name. The word *Israel* comes from the words *Sarah* which means "fight or rule as a prince" and *el* which means "God." The basic meaning is "prevailer" (one who fights victoriously with God or rules as a prince with God).

While the occasion is clearly meant to be taken literally, it is also meant to show the tenacity of Jacob's prayer of faith. Hosea points this out: *He struggled with the angel and overcame Him; he wept and begged for His favor. He found Him at Bethel and talked with Him there — the LORD God Almighty ... (Hosea 12:4-5).*

Jacob had faith in God, but he didn't know the details. He knew God would work things out, but he didn't know how. How did he know?

Travel back 20 years in Jacob's life. Jacob was fleeing his home and the wrath of his brother. He was entering a strange land to look for a wife. He camped out under the stars one night in a place where, years before, his grandfather, Abraham, had stopped



and built an altar to the Lord (Genesis 12:8). In these significant surroundings, Jacob had a dream.

... Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep. He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. There above it stood the LORD, and He said: "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth ... All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring." (Genesis 28:11-14)

Jacob understood that his dream meant that God was providing a means of access that was otherwise unavailable. There's nothing Jacob could do on his own to bridge the separation between man and God. But God could.

Jacob believed. He named the place *Bethel*, which means "house of God." He built an altar and made an offering. He vowed to tithe to God. But none of this was part of any agreement with God. God's promises were unconditional. And they still are.

In John 1:51, we find out who that bridge is between us and God. In this passage, Jesus Christ tells Nathanael: *... "I tell you the truth, you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."* He was Jacob's ladder — He is the only way to heaven.

How tenacious is your faith? It may not feel very strong, but do you keep on wrestling and fighting for what you know is true? Do you grasp Jesus Christ and refuse to let go?

God gave Jacob a permanent limp as a reminder to keep the faith. Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. What similarities are there between what you read there and Jacob's limp?

What lesson can you take away that applies to a situation you're dealing with?

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION: **SECTION COMPLETED**

1. **Read Genesis 28:10-22 and Genesis 32:24-32.**
2. **Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 and answer the questions.**

Signature _____

Date _____

JOSEPH (AN OVERVIEW)

Jack and Jill went up the hill

To fetch a pail of water.

Jack fell down and broke his crown,

And Jill came tumbling after.

Some narratives take on a different appearance when you look at them from a different angle. Take Jack and Jill for example. Why did they go up the hill for water? Doesn't water run downhill on its own? Were they really going up there for some other purpose? And how did Jack fall? Was he pushed? Did Jill push him and then lose her balance? Is this really a crime scene?

Enough of that.



Read Genesis 37.

Let's take a look at the life of Joseph from back to front and see what it looks like. The final verse in the book of Genesis says: *So Joseph died at the age of a hundred and ten. And after they embalmed him, he was placed in a coffin in Egypt* (Genesis 50:26).

Q. Why was Joseph in Egypt?

We'll find out later how he arrived there, but he remained because his family settled there (Genesis 47:27).

Q. Why didn't they settle in Canaan, which God promised them they would someday own?

In Canaan, they were surrounded by hostile tribes and nations with false gods. They had several run-ins with these other people and were in danger of being overrun or absorbed into other tribes.

Q. Weren't they afraid of being absorbed into the Egyptian people?

That was a danger, but they knew the Egyptians detested shepherds, so they informed Pharaoh that they took care of animals (Genesis 46:34). That enabled them to live separately.

Q. But why did they choose Egypt in the first place?

Because Joseph was second-in-command in the nation and could look after their interests. Pharaoh was inclined to help them because of his regard for Joseph.

Q. So they knew Joseph was in Egypt and went there to ask him for help?

No. They didn't know he was there.

Q. So why did they go there?

There was a famine in the land, and Egypt had extra food to sell (Genesis 42:1).

Q. Why did Egypt have extra food when nobody around them did?

Joseph used his high position to store food during seven years of plenty (Genesis 41:47-49).

Q. Joseph was a foreigner. How did he get into a high position?

Pharaoh put him there when he interpreted one of his dreams (Genesis 41:25-40).

Q. How did Pharaoh know Joseph could interpret dreams?

The cupbearer told him (Genesis 41:9-13).

Q. How did the cupbearer know about Joseph?

They were in prison together (Genesis 40:1-4).

Q. Why was Joseph in prison?

His master, Potiphar, threw him there after Potiphar's wife accused him of attacking her (Genesis 39:16-20).

Q. How did Joseph get to Potiphar's house to begin with?

Potiphar bought him from Ishmaelite slave traders (Genesis 39:1).

Q. Why was he a slave?

His brothers sold him (Genesis 37:28).

Q. Why did his brothers sell him?

They hated him.

Now it's your turn to answer the questions.

Q. Why did Joseph's brothers hate him?

(Genesis 37:3-8)

Q. Why did God allow all these things to happen to Joseph?

(Genesis 45:7 and 50:19-20)

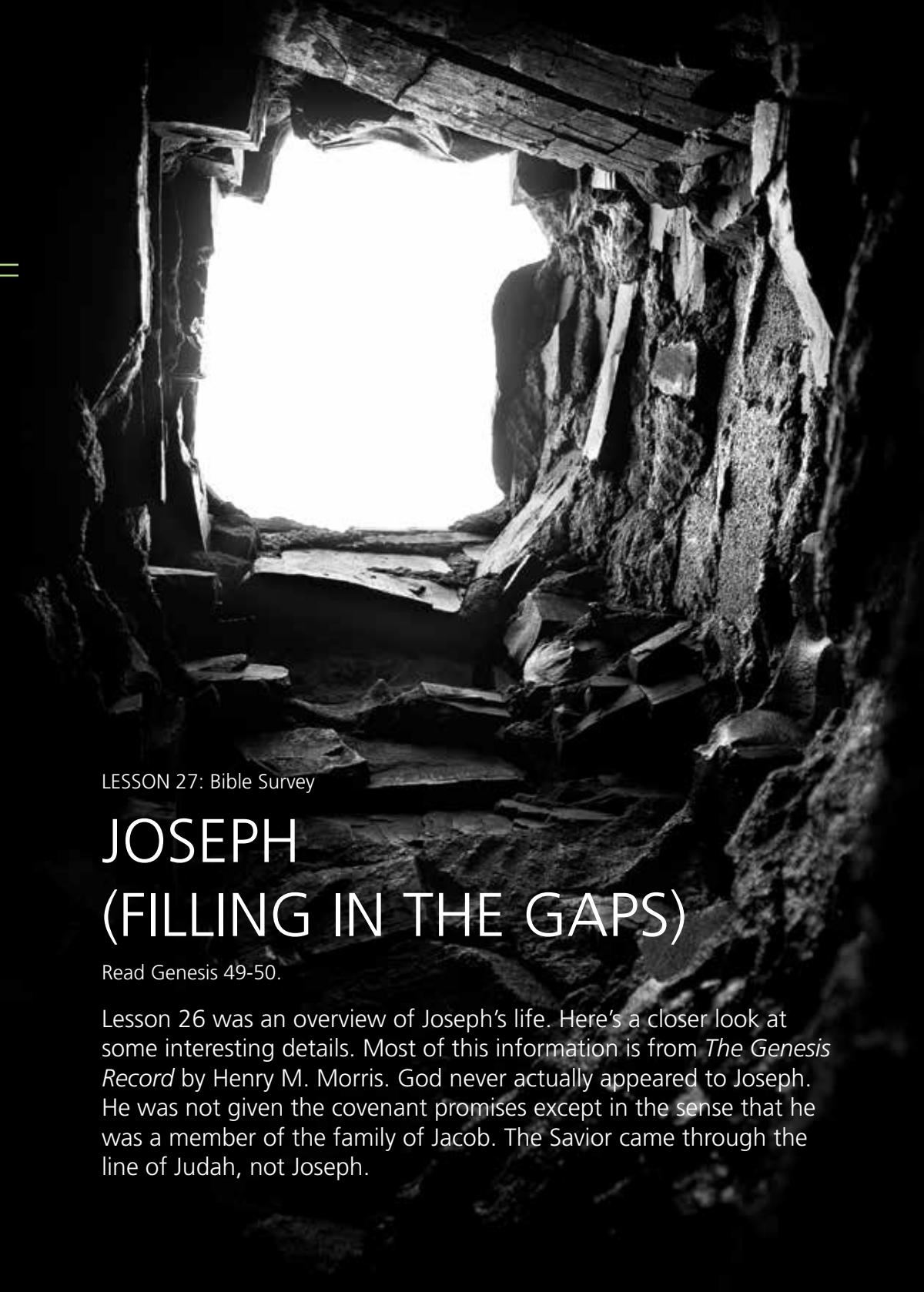
TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION: SECTION COMPLETED

1. Read Genesis 37.

Signature _____

2. Answer the questions.

Date _____



LESSON 27: Bible Survey

JOSEPH (FILLING IN THE GAPS)

Read Genesis 49-50.

Lesson 26 was an overview of Joseph's life. Here's a closer look at some interesting details. Most of this information is from *The Genesis Record* by Henry M. Morris. God never actually appeared to Joseph. He was not given the covenant promises except in the sense that he was a member of the family of Jacob. The Savior came through the line of Judah, not Joseph.

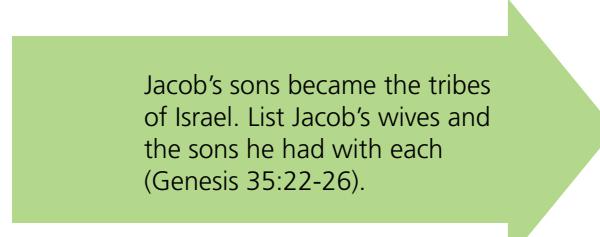
- Jacob loved Joseph because he was the oldest son of his favorite wife, Rachel. Reuben was the oldest son and normally would have received the rights of a firstborn, but he lost them because of his sin (Genesis 35:22). And the next two oldest sons, Simeon and Levi, slaughtered the Shechemites, which angered Jacob.
- We don't know what the coat (or robe) looked like. The Hebrew can be translated in different ways. It may have been colorful, it may have been ornamented or it may have had long sleeves. Whatever its appearance, it was special and indicated that Joseph had a favored status with his father.
- Why did Joseph's brothers take the family flock so far away? They went to Shechem, about 50 miles (80.5 km) north, which is surprising in light of the slaughter of the people of that region by Simeon and Levi some years previously. By the time Joseph arrived, they had moved on another 20 miles (32 km) or so north (further from home) to Dothan. Were they trying to get away from Joseph?
- Dothan means "two cisterns." It was probably into one of these (a dry one) that Joseph was thrown by his brothers.
- Joseph was taken to Egypt and sold to Potiphar, the captain of Pharaoh's guard, which probably means that Potiphar was Pharaoh's executioner.
- Potiphar himself was the ruler of the prison, and he probably knew Joseph was innocent. Joseph soon

was put in charge of the other prisoners. That's not to say his life in prison was comfortable, at least not at first. It says in Psalm 105:17-18 that ... *Joseph [was] sold as a slave. They bruised his feet with shackles, his neck was put in irons.*

- Joseph grew up in a pagan nation, without contact with anybody who believed in the same God he did. His sole motivation for righteous living was his heart's desire to know, love and serve God. (This should be our prayer and aim for our children and for those we minister to.)
- The king's cupbearer (in charge of the vineyard and responsible for what the king drank) and baker (responsible for the king's food) were also prisoners. We aren't told why they were thrown in prison — perhaps the king had suffered from heartburn or an upset stomach after a recent meal. Or maybe the king received word that someone was trying to poison him.
- When Joseph talked to the Egyptians, he used the name Elohim for God to point to the Creator and Ruler. But when Genesis refers to God's dealing with Joseph, the name Yahweh (LORD) is used.
- Joseph didn't stop with the interpretation of Pharaoh's dream, but also told him how to respond — find a capable man and have him spend the seven years of plenty collecting a 20 percent tax on the crops of the kingdom. This man had to be discreet (to keep the people from resenting him) and honest (so he wouldn't gain personally from his position of power). Pharaoh

immediately appointed Joseph to be this official for all Egypt, second only to the king. This has to be the most amazing rise to power in history — from foreigner, slave and prisoner to prime minister in no time at all. He was given fine clothes, gold jewelry and a parade. Nobody in Egypt could *lift hand or foot* without his permission.

- Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Zaphnath-paaneah, which has something to do with life. The meaning isn't exactly clear, but it clearly points to Joseph's saving of the kingdom. He was also given an Egyptian wife, Asenath, who was the daughter of a high priest. This girl probably grew up worshiping Egyptian gods, but she may have become a believer in Joseph's God and a faithful wife and mother.
- Joseph had two sons: *Manasseh* ("Forgetting" because God enabled Joseph to forget his troubles) and *Ephraim* ("Doubly Fruitful" because God had blessed him).
- Joseph says he is a father to Pharaoh (Genesis 45:8). He's referring to his position as advisor and confessor.



Jacob's sons became the tribes of Israel. List Jacob's wives and the sons he had with each (Genesis 35:22-26).

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

- 1. Read Genesis 49-50.**
- 2. Fill in the names of Jacob's wives and sons.**

Wife: _____

Sons:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Wife: _____

Sons:

7. _____

8. _____

Wife: _____

Sons:

9. _____

10. _____

Wife: _____

Sons:

11. _____

12. _____

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____

HOW DO YOU LEARN?

If I have to pull over in an unfamiliar town and ask directions to my destination, I'm in trouble. If the directions involve more than two turns, I'll never get there. My mind simply can't take in detail that way.

But if you show me the way to my destination on a map, even if it involves four or five turns, a 15-second glance will be all I need to get where I'm going without fail. I'm wired for maps. I can translate the information on a map into practice without effort. And once I get to a given destination, the chances are very good that I could get there again several years later, just by remembering my route from the first time.

All of this means that I don't learn much from what I hear, but I retain a great deal from what I see and do. I could give you plenty of other illustrations from my life to back this up. I've learned to deal with it. If my wife wants me to stop at the store on the way home from work to pick up five items, she's learned to not even bother telling me what she wants. She just writes out a list.



We all have different learning styles. Frequently, they are broken into three main categories:

1. Visual — People with this learning style gather information from what they see.
2. Auditory — People with this learning style gather information from what they hear.
3. Kinesthetic — People with this learning style gather information from what they experience.

There are variations, and some studies include other styles such as:

- Verbal — people who gather information from words, whether spoken or written
- Musical — people who translate much of what they take in and produce to music
- Logical — people who think in mathematical terms and like to reduce things to formulas
- Social — people who learn best in groups
- Individual — people who learn best on their own
- Natural — people who gather information best when interacting with the outdoors

What all this means is that all of us learn in our own fashion and there are probably as many "styles" as there are people.

So what good does any of this do for you as a parent?

GREEN JEWEL 2

Colossians 1:3

We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you.

First, you need to be aware of the idea of learning styles. Let's say you are a self-starter who tackles a subject by bringing home a stack of books from the library and digging into them until the early hours of the morning. You might think the best way to teach your child is to load him or her up with a stack of books and expect some great results. But if that child learns best by doing, the results won't be satisfying. It doesn't mean your child is dumb. It means you need to discover how your child learns.

Explore various methods, including the ones that work for you. But be willing to use what works with your child.

Second, realize that very few of us fit neatly into one particular style, and your children probably won't either. You might have a son or daughter who is perfectly content to sit in a corner and read from dawn to dusk and who can recite hours of detail about the books. But you also might have a child who remembers song lyrics and likes to draw and enjoys playing with building blocks and receives some benefit from all of it.

Third, the activity or environment your child most enjoys may not be the most effective learning environment. One teenage girl I know was hugely



social. She attracted friends the way picnics attract ants. She loved school and couldn't wait to get there in the morning. Her teachers all liked her and complimented her on the way she participated in class. But her grades were awful — at the very bottom of her class. After trying every motivator they could, her parents, in desperation, decided to pull her from school. They bought on-line teaching software. This girl now gets up every morning and goes into a room by herself. She signs on to the computer and studies and does her homework in solitude. She's getting straight As.

So how do you teach your children? Simple. Try everything you can think of and notice what works. When you find it, seek out variations and go with it.

Do you know your child's learning style(s)? Use the verse in this section to help you figure it out.

- Put it to music and sing it (auditory/musical).
- Make up hand motions (kinesthetic).

Come up with three other ways of learning the verse and list them here, along with the learning style they best fit.

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Memorize and recite the verse.**
2. **List three methods of teaching the verse and the learning style they represent.**

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____

LESSON 29: Bible Survey

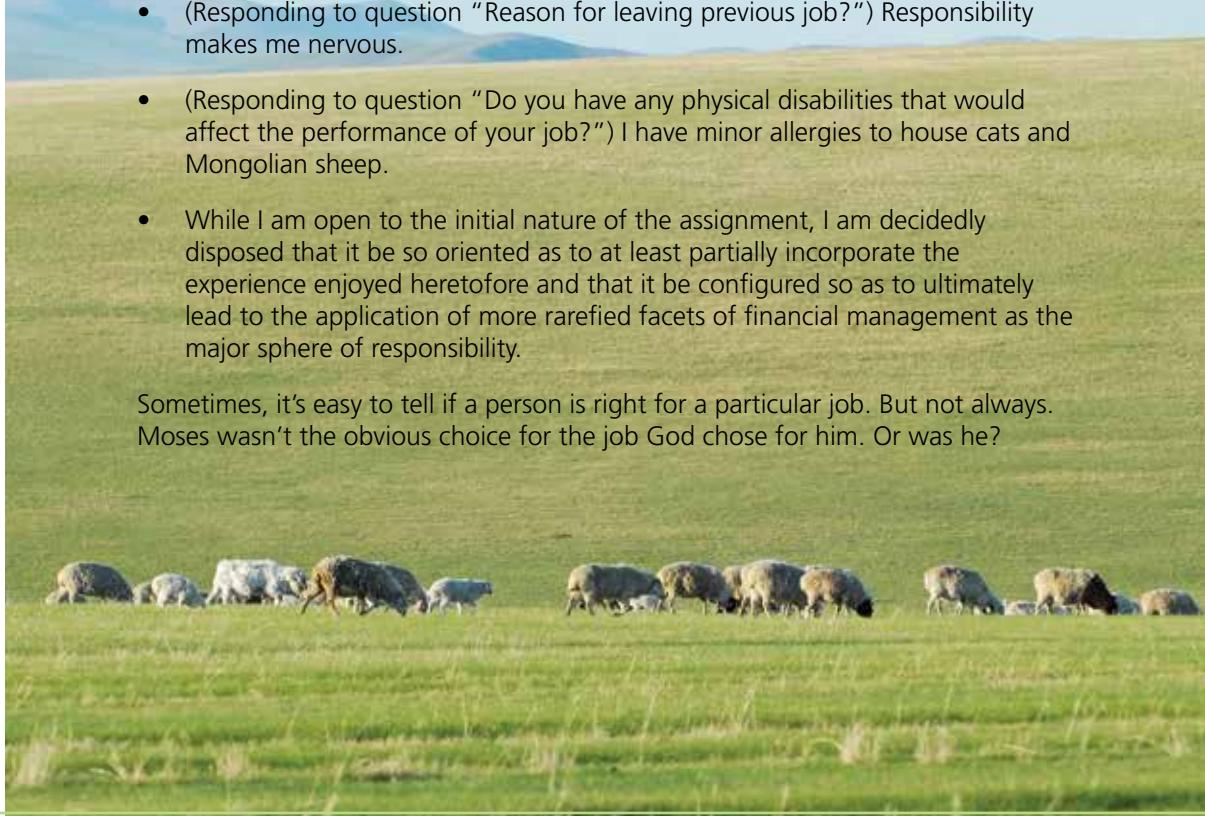
MOSES IN EGYPT

Read Exodus 2-4.

The following is a list of things that people supposedly wrote on real job applications.

- (Responding to question "May we contact your current employer?") If I had one, would I be here?
- (Responding to question "Have you received any special awards or recognition?") I may already be a winner of the Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes.
- I received a plague for Salesperson of the Year.
- It's best for employers that I not work with people.
- Am a perfectionist and rarely if ever forget details
- As indicted, I have over five years of analyzing investments.
- Please don't misconstrue my 14 jobs as "job-hopping." I have never quit a job.
- (Responding to question "Reason for leaving previous job?") Responsibility makes me nervous.
- (Responding to question "Do you have any physical disabilities that would affect the performance of your job?") I have minor allergies to house cats and Mongolian sheep.
- While I am open to the initial nature of the assignment, I am decidedly disposed that it be so oriented as to at least partially incorporate the experience enjoyed heretofore and that it be configured so as to ultimately lead to the application of more rarefied facets of financial management as the major sphere of responsibility.

Sometimes, it's easy to tell if a person is right for a particular job. But not always. Moses wasn't the obvious choice for the job God chose for him. Or was he?



Moses was born into slavery. From 1725 to 1546 B.C., Egypt was ruled by foreigners known as the Hyksos. When they were overthrown, there was a national outcry against all foreigners, including the Israelites — especially because by this time there were a lot of Israelites. The Pharaoh was at war at the time and didn't want the Israelites to join his enemies. He responded by enslaving them (Exodus 1:9-11).



Moses was the son of a queen. Pharaoh's daughter, who found and adopted Moses, may have been Hatshepsut, who ruled Egypt for about 20 years. Or she may have been Ahmose, who became queen herself. We don't know for sure if it was either of them — the Bible doesn't say. But have you ever thought about this? If Moses was the adopted son of the Egyptian ruler, he may have been next

in line to be Pharaoh. Think of that when you read Hebrews 11:24-25: *By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time.*

Moses was a murderer. He lived in Egyptian court circles until he was 40 years old, but he didn't lose sight of who he was. He visited his people and saw one of them being mistreated by an Egyptian slave master. He killed the Egyptian and had to flee from his own people and from the splendor in which he was raised.

Moses was a shepherd. Remember in Lesson 26 we learned that the Egyptians despised shepherds (Genesis 46:34)? How ironic that this man, who was raised in Pharaoh's house and may have been in line for the throne, spent a considerable portion of his life in an occupation he was raised to scorn.

Moses was educated for the role God had for him. Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and action (Acts 7:22). Training in the courts of the leaders of a great nation prepared Moses for leadership over his own people and to be the historian who authored (by the Holy Spirit's inspiration) the first five books of the Bible. After he was forced to flee, Moses settled in Midian, on the Sinai Peninsula. The inhabitants of this region were descended from Abraham and his second wife, Keturah. They were a nomadic people who traveled with their livestock. For 40 years, Moses took care of his father-in-law's flocks. This was perfect training for survival in the wilderness — which would come in handy.

The life of Moses presents a series of striking antitheses. He was the child of a slave, and the son of a queen. He was born in a hut, and lived in a palace. He inherited poverty, and enjoyed unlimited wealth. He was the leader of armies, and the keeper of flocks. He was the mightiest of warriors, and the meekest of men. He was educated in the court, and dwelt in the desert. He had the wisdom of Egypt, and the faith of a child. He was fitted for the city, and wandered in the wilderness. He was tempted with the pleasures of sin, and endured the hardships of virtue. He was backward in speech, and talked with God. He had the rod of a shepherd, and the power of the Infinite. He was a fugitive from Pharaoh, and an ambassador from heaven. He was the giver of the Law, and the forerunner of grace. He died alone on Mount Moab, and appeared with Christ in Judea. No man assisted at his funeral, yet God buried him.

— Arthur W. Pink, *Gleanings in Exodus*. Moody Press, Chicago, IL, 1981, p. 16, quoting Dr. I. M. Haldeman.

Moses was, in short, the man God chose for the job. God provided him with everything he needed for his role. What did Moses have to offer? What was there in him that made him worthy? Just this — he took God at His word. That made him perfect for the job.

When God appeared to Moses in the burning bush, He said to him: ... *I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring My people the Israelites out of Egypt* (Exodus 3:10). Moses balked. He gave five reasons why he shouldn't be sent. Look up the following verses and write down his arguments and God's response to each.

1. Exodus 3:11 _____

2. Exodus 3:13 _____

3. Exodus 4:1 _____

4. Exodus 4:10 _____

5. Exodus 4:13 _____

And yet, Moses is set forth as a great man of faith because he believed God. How do you reconcile this fact with what you've just written?

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION: **SECTION COMPLETED**

1. Read Exodus 2-4. Signature _____

2. Fill in the information and answer the question. Date _____

LESSON 30: The Big Picture

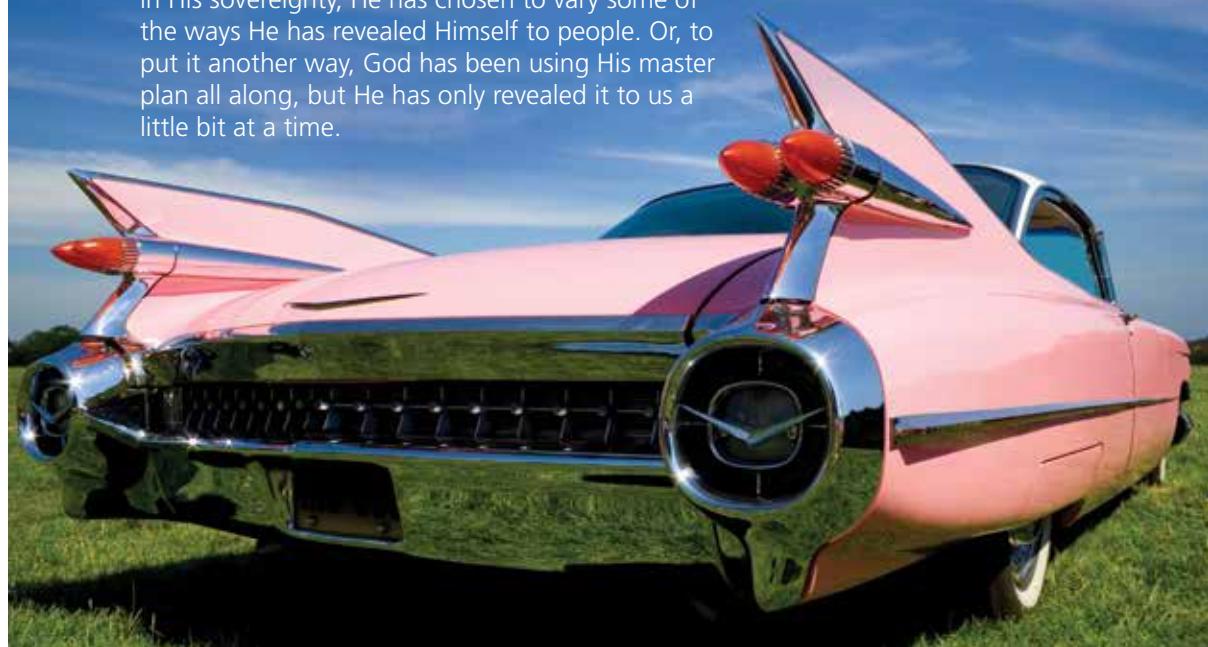
WHERE WE'VE GONE SO FAR

In 1973, Johnny Cash recorded a song titled "One Piece at a Time" (written by Wayne Kemp). The lyrics tell the story of a man working at a Cadillac® assembly plant. After watching thousands of luxury cars roll past, the man decided he wanted one of his own. He couldn't afford to buy one, so he tried something else — every day he'd take a piece home until he'd collected the entire car.

After more than 20 years, he had all the parts. He assembled the car, and that's when he discovered a problem. Styles had changed. A 1973 Cadillac didn't look much like a 1949 Cadillac. Pieces didn't fit together very well. There were an odd number of headlights and tail fins. In short, it was a mess. It was recognizable as a car, but it was decidedly strange looking.

Many Christians assemble a theology that looks a lot like Johnny Cash's Cadillac. They don't realize that God has dealt with humanity differently at different points in history. And because they don't realize this, they mix in parts from all over and come up with something that — while recognizable as Christianity — is decidedly strange-looking.

Don't get me wrong. God doesn't change. But in His sovereignty, He has chosen to vary some of the ways He has revealed Himself to people. Or, to put it another way, God has been using His master plan all along, but He has only revealed it to us a little bit at a time.





ADAM AND EVE IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN

Adam and Eve were created without sin. That right there is a major difference from you and me. They were innocent and in complete fellowship with God. The few responsibilities God gave them were based on their sinless state. They could go anywhere and do anything with just one exception — don't eat the fruit of one tree. Adam and Eve didn't need salvation because they had nothing to be saved from.

If you try to live by their theology, you won't succeed. First, there are the difficulties you would encounter from walking around naked eating fruit from other people's trees. But the largest problem is that you have been born in (and chosen to commit) sin and do need to be saved. Your fellowship with God has been broken. Your physical needs aren't taken care of without labor on your part, and the world you live in isn't perfect.

Even with all they had going for them, Adam and Eve failed. They listened to Satan and allowed him to spur their pride. They disobeyed God and they ate the fruit.

FROM EDEN TO NOAH

The first sin brought about a huge change. God immediately killed an animal and used the skins to cover Adam and Eve — a picture of how

blood would cover sin until the ultimate sacrifice of God's Son would take place. Instead of one rule about eating fruit, there were now at least two rules — sacrifice animals (Genesis 4:4) and do what is right (Genesis 4:7). Because Adam and Eve ate the fruit, they knew good and evil, and they were expected to govern their behavior based on this knowledge. God was still in direct communication with humanity, but humans were pulling away from God. Before long, with the sole exception of Noah ... *every inclination of the thoughts of his [humanity's] heart was only evil all the time* (Genesis 6:5).

If you tried to live your life today based on God's revelation at this point in history, you'd get into a lot of trouble with the local anti-cruelty society for slaughtering animals. You'd also wallow in sin because time has shown that our consciences, while always nagging us, aren't enough to keep us on the right track. We know to do good, but we don't do it (Romans 7:21). We'd end up just like the people in Noah's generation.

FROM NOAH TO ABRAHAM

When Noah stepped off the ark, God made some changes in how humans' behavior would be controlled. The death penalty was enacted — "*Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed ...*" (Genesis 9:6). This implies some form of

government. And if the governments are authorized to administer capital punishment, they are certainly authorized to carry out lesser penalties. In addition, the rest of creation would now fear humans and be subject to them. God told mankind to fill the earth, to spread out and rule.

God has never rescinded the rule of human government. Paul makes this very clear in Romans 13:1: *Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.* He expands on the theme in the next six verses.

But while we still are to be subject to human government, God has made other changes. Men and women failed to live righteously under governments just as they failed to live righteously when ruled by their own consciences. Instead of spreading out and filling the earth, they gathered in one place and built a tower. As we saw in Lesson 13, God saw that this one-world government was too powerful, and that ... *nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them* (Genesis 11:6). Instead of allowing one central government, God confused the languages and forced humans to develop many governments.

FROM ABRAHAM TO MOSES

God knew from before creation exactly what would happen on earth. But

He allowed humans to discover for themselves that apart from God, they would fail miserably. So He unveiled the next part of His plan for human history — He chose one man, Abraham, to be the father of one chosen nation, Israel. He made an unconditional promise to Abraham. *I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you* (Genesis 12:2-3).

Humanity had fallen into sin and was condemned to die. God put the next part of His plan into action — He would do all that needed to be done. He would provide salvation. Of course, this was His plan from the beginning, but now He revealed to Abraham a little more of it.

Abraham's responsibility was just to take God at His word. That hasn't changed. But for Abraham, this still included the offering of blood sacrifices. And while the promises that God made to Abraham were for him and his descendants (the nation of Israel) only, the entire world would be blessed through the things God would do through Israel. If we tried to live according to revelation given to Abraham, we would confuse Israel and the Church and still be offering sacrifices.

MOSES AND THE LAW

With Moses, God revealed another portion of His plan — the law and the tabernacle. Once again, there were differences in God's relationship with humanity. We'll look at this more thoroughly in coming lessons.

Already we can see the problems of trying to mix different parts of God's plan together without an understanding of how God unfolded that plan.

- If we attempt to live without restraint, as Adam and Eve did, it would quickly lead to sin and confrontations with the authorities.
- If we offered blood sacrifices, we would be denying the sufficiency of Christ's ultimate sacrifice.
- If we assume that the promises made to Israel all apply to us, we will soon begin wondering why God isn't keeping His word.
- And while we should still be subject to the government, we need to understand that God is allowing governments to rule that are antagonistic toward Him. (This was sometimes, but not always, true throughout history.)

2 Timothy 2:15

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

Paul mentioned the importance of studying Scripture carefully to avoid these difficulties. Write down 2 Timothy 2:15 in the version you use and memorize it. (You might recognize this as the Awana key verse.)

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Write down, memorize and recite 2 Timothy 2:15.

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____

Adam to Joshua

LESSON 31: Bible Survey

THE PLAGUES

Read Exodus 7-10.

The Egyptians were a polytheistic (having many gods) people. Nobody knows for sure exactly how many they had, but most estimates include at least 80 different deities. They worshiped gods that were represented by almost every living creature, including lions, oxen, dogs, cats, vultures, crocodiles, cobras, fish, trees, frogs, beetles, locusts ... The list goes on and on. Priests were huge in Egyptian government. There was no separation between church and state — the church was the state — and the priests were the government officials. Pharaoh was considered a god. He was thought to have been born of a divine father and a queen mother. Pharaoh's failure to protect Egypt from the plagues showed his failure as a god.





The area around Egypt is desert. The kingdom existed because the Nile River existed. The river provided the people with transportation, which led to trading with other nations, which led to wealth. The river provided water for crops, and frequent floods created fertile ground. Fish and other river life provided food. Most of the nation's gods were connected to the river in some way, and in addition, the river was considered the source of fertility and happiness. Life in Egypt was centered around the Nile's cycles. It flooded from July to September and reached its lowest level in May.

It was against this nation, this system of false worship, this denial of the true God that the plagues were directed (Exodus 12:12, Numbers 33:4). And God clearly meant to hit where it hurt the most.

... Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the desert.'" Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey Him and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD and I will not let Israel go" (Exodus 5:1-2). That pretty much sums up the dialogue between Moses, Aaron and Pharaoh. Oh, occasionally, Pharaoh would relent for a short time, but as soon as the pressure let up, he returned to his original obstinacy.

And so the plagues:

1. **The water, including the Nile River turned to blood** (Exodus 7:19-21). We've seen how important the river was to the people of Egypt. The first plague was a judgment on their priorities. Yes, the river was important. But they gave the credit to their gods

— they even thought the river was the bloodstream of the god Osiris! Other gods were considered the source and spirit of the river. The plague killed the fish, many of which represented other gods.

2. **Frogs** (Exodus 8:1-6). Frogs were closely associated with the Nile River. Each fall, when the river receded, the pools of water left behind were filled with frogs. The Egyptians associated the frog with the goddess Heqt, whom, they believed, helped women during childbirth. Frogs were common along the river — so much so that the hieroglyphic symbol for the number 100,000 was a tadpole. The frog was so revered that killing one intentionally, and sometimes even by accident, could be punishable by death. Imagine the reaction of the Egyptian people when there were so many frogs

around that they couldn't help stepping and sitting on them.

3. **Gnats** (Exodus 8:16-19). The plague of gnats (or perhaps mosquitoes) doesn't seem to have been directed at any one god, but it may have been a judgment on the priests of Egypt. They had an obsession about cleanliness and bodily purity, but there was nothing they could have done to keep the gnats off. In addition, this was the first of Moses' miracles they weren't able to duplicate in some way. They had to admit ... *This is the finger of God* ...
4. **Flies** (Exodus 8:20-24). Moses actually used the word for *swarm* to describe this plague. We don't know exactly what creature formed the swarms, but flies are a pretty good guess. The Egyptians considered at least one type of fly (an unpleasant creature that laid its eggs on living creatures so the larvae would have something to eat) to be a god. The plague pointed out the weakness of this belief. During the first three plagues, the Israelites suffered along with the Egyptians, but from now on, they would be spared. This showed, once again, that their God was far superior to the gods of Egypt.
5. **Plague on livestock** (Exodus 9:1-6). This plague was probably some sort of disease. Domestic animals in Egypt, as we saw earlier in Canaan, were a source of wealth. And, of course, the Egyptians worshiped them. They had bull gods and cow gods, some of whom had their own temples. There is

also livestock mentioned during the seventh plague, so the livestock here might only refer to animals that were out in the open air. In any case, the Egyptians' animals died; the Israelites' animals did not.

6. **Dust and boils** (Exodus 9:8-11). Moses threw some soot into the air and it became dust which caused boils — painful and perhaps open sores on people and animals. Again, the weakness of the Egyptian priests and magicians was demonstrated — not only could they not duplicate or eliminate the plague, they were too miserable to appear and make the effort. It also exposed the false gods associated with healing.
7. **Hail** (Exodus 9:18-26). The worst hailstorm in history destroyed the flax and barley crops as well as the unprotected animals that were still alive after the fifth plague. Notice in verse 20 that some of Pharaoh's officials were starting to believe in the power of Israel's God. They warned people to protect their livestock. Even Pharaoh admitted (for a little while) that he had sinned. The storm showed the power of God and exposed Nut, the Egyptian goddess of the sky, as unable to resist Him.
8. **Locusts** (Exodus 10:12-15). The Egyptians had a locust god too. He didn't do them any good. Locusts covered the land and ate everything green. Locust swarms have been estimated to contain as many as 200 million insects per square mile (2.6 square km), and each insect

can eat its weight in a day. God reveals at this point that one of the purposes of the plagues is so the Israelites will see ... *how I dealt harshly with the Egyptians and how I performed My signs among them, and that you may know that I am the LORD* (Exodus 10:2).

9. **Darkness** (Exodus 10:21-23). The Egyptian sun god, Re, was one of their greatest deities. They had other gods and goddesses also associated with the sun. They also worshiped the moon god, Thoth. These gods were nowhere to be seen during the three days of this plague.

These plagues almost certainly took place over several months, or perhaps an entire seasonal cycle of a year. Although Pharaoh saw time and again the superiority of Israel's God over his own, he remained stubborn. He offered various compromises to Moses, but none of them were acceptable. One last plague remained; we'll look at it in the next lesson.

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Read Exodus 7-10.**
2. **Memorize and recite the nine plagues listed in this lesson.**

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____



LESSON 32: In the New Testament

THE PASSOVER

Read Exodus 11-12.

As a parent, have you ever given one of your kids an ultimatum and then regretted it? Maybe you were planning an afternoon at the pool. You tell your 6-year-old that he's not going if he doesn't get all his toys picked up. He dawdles, and you get frustrated. You point at him and say in a stern voice, "If these toys aren't put away in five minutes, we're not going swimming."

He panics and begins cleaning up furiously ... then he gets distracted. Again. Five minutes go by and progress has been made — but ALL the toys aren't put away. You realize he's only 6. You know he didn't intend to disobey and that he was very much looking forward to the pool. But you said what you said and to go back on it would be a sign of weakness and lessen the impact of future ultimatums.

What to do?

As parents, we realize our fallibility. We know there are times when we'll have to apologize, change our minds and adjust the rules.

But what about God? What does He do when He issues an ultimatum? He can't violate His own character. He can't change the rules.

God said: ... *the wages of sin is death* ... (Romans 6:23).

And then: *The LORD looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God. All have turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one* (Psalm 14:2-3).

So that's it then, right?

Notice what Exodus 11:5 says: *Every firstborn son in Egypt will die, from the firstborn son of Pharaoh, who sits on the throne, to the firstborn son of the slave girl, who is at her hand mill, and all the firstborn of the cattle as well.* It doesn't say every firstborn son of Egypt. It says every firstborn son in Egypt. The Israelites were as guilty of sin as the Egyptians, and equally under the curse of death.

And yet, two verses later we read: *But among the Israelites not a dog will bark at any man or animal. Then you will know that the LORD makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel* (Exodus 11:7).

GOD'S JUSTICE

The sentence of universal condemnation proceeded from the righteousness of God; the [distinction] which He put between the Egyptians and Israel was the outflow of His grace. But how can justice and mercy be reconciled? How can justice exact its full due without excluding mercy? How can mercy be manifested except at the expense of justice? ... A reprieve was out of the question. Justice must be satisfied; sin must be paid its wages.

— Arthur W. Pink, *Gleanings in Exodus*. Moody Press, Chicago, IL, 1981, p. 81.

GOD'S GRACE

The answer, in Egypt, was a lamb without blemish. The lamb was put to death and that death was accepted as a substitute for the death of the sinners — but only those sinners who accepted the substitute and demonstrated their acceptance by putting the blood of the lamb on their doorways. God's justice was satisfied by a death in every

house — either the death of a lamb or the death of a son. God's grace was demonstrated by providing a substitute.

The Passover was a picture, or a type, of Jesus Christ. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 5:7, calls Christ our Passover Lamb. When John the Baptist saw the Lord, he said: ... *"Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"* (John 1:29).

OUR RESPONSE

In Egypt, if an Israelite had followed the instructions and found a spotless lamb; if he had kept the lamb for 14 days and then put it to death; if he had done all that and no more, his oldest son would still have died.

We are in a similar situation. Our Lamb has died — the death of Jesus Christ on the cross is an historical fact. His offer of salvation is extended to every one of us. But if we stop there, we will die in our sins. After all, ... *the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men* (Titus 2:11), but that doesn't mean all are saved.

What is missing?

Look up Exodus 12:22-23 and write down in your own words what was required:

And for us ... look up Romans 4:5 and write down in your own words what is required:

We've been noticing a lot about faith in these lessons. Notice that Exodus 12:22-23 has nothing to say about the amount of blood to be spread on the doorway. What application can we take from that?

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Read Exodus 11-12.
2. Look up the listed passages and answer the questions.

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____



MOSES' SONG

Read Exodus 15:1-21.

You can tell by the way I'm standing that I didn't want to be in the photograph. But my dad and his buddy Joe insisted. The occasion was a week-long fishing trip in Canada. We flew in a pontoon plane to a remote lodge. I was 12, and this was my first trip.

On the day the photograph was taken, my dad and Joe had each caught near their limit of northern pike and walleye, all of them impressively large. I, on the other hand, hadn't caught a thing. I'd lost about \$20 of my dad's lures on tree branches, logs, rocks — if it wasn't a fish, I found it. By early afternoon, I gave up and just sat in the boat trailing my hands in the water and feeling lousy.

When we finally returned to the lodge, the owner wanted to take a picture of dad and Joe's haul. I stood off to the side. My dad noticed, of course, and insisted I join them. I replied that I hadn't caught any of the fish, but he said that didn't matter. I was in the boat, so I was part of the group. I shuffled over and reluctantly held up the center of the stringer of fish. But I knew I was taking credit for something I didn't deserve. Even now, almost 40 years later, when I see that photograph, the first thought that comes to my mind is, "But I didn't catch any of those fish."

There wasn't anything noble about the way I felt that day. In fact, I was being sulky. I wonder what my attitude would have been if I had caught all the fish. Would I have wanted my dad and Joe in the photo? Would I have wanted all the credit?



Let's take a look at Moses.

After all, he was the one God chose to free the Israelites from Egypt. He's the one who performed miracles and confronted Pharaoh. He's the one who led his people to freedom after 400 years of subjection. He's the one who held up his hands to divide the sea. He could very easily have felt pretty proud of himself.

But on the far shore of the Red Sea, when he could have stepped forward to revel in his big moment — to take the group snapshot with himself out front — what did Moses do instead?

He sang a song, the first song in the Bible and maybe in recorded history. Moses gave all the credit to God. And he certainly wasn't being sulky. It was a song of rejoicing.

Moses points out the strength of God over:

- The armies of Egypt
- Nature
- The gods of other nations
- Kings, armies and all who oppose Israel
- The future

The name of the Lord appears 12 times in the short song, and pronouns referring to Him occur an additional 33 times — that's 45 times in 21 verses!

Miriam was Moses' sister whom we first met back in Exodus 2. She was guarding her younger brother in his basket in the river and making suggestions about a suitable nurse to Pharaoh's daughter. Now she leads the women of Israel in a refrain to her brother's song, also giving credit to

God. Miriam had her shortcomings, as we all do, but she is the first woman in the Bible who was called a prophetess, meaning that God directly communicated with her (Numbers 12:2).

Throughout the history of Israel, when God reminded the people of His power and His protection over them, He would remind them of their escape from Egypt.

Nehemiah 9:9-11 — *You saw the suffering of our forefathers in Egypt; You heard their cry at the Red Sea. You sent miraculous signs and wonders against Pharaoh, against all his officials and all the people of his land, for You knew how arrogantly the Egyptians treated them. You made a name for Yourself, which remains to this day. You divided the sea before them, so that they passed through it on dry ground, but You hurled their pursuers into the depths, like a stone into mighty waters.*

Psalm 106:7-9 — *When our fathers were in Egypt, they gave no thought to Your miracles; they did not remember Your many kindnesses, and they rebelled by the sea, the Red Sea. Yet He saved them for His name's sake, to make His mighty power known. He rebuked the Red Sea, and it dried up; He led them through the depths as through a desert.*

Micah 7:15 — *"As in the days when you came out of Egypt, I will show them My wonders."*

Nahum 1:3-4 — *The LORD is slow to anger and great in power; the LORD will not leave the guilty unpunished. His way is in the whirlwind and the storm, and clouds are the dust of His feet. He rebukes the sea and dries it up; He makes all the rivers run dry ...*

Acts 7:36 — *He led them out of Egypt and did wonders and miraculous signs in Egypt, at the Red Sea and for forty years in the desert.*

These Scriptures leave no doubt about where the credit belongs. Even foreigners knew who was responsible. Look up the following verses and write down who is speaking and what they say about the escape from Egypt.

Exodus 18:10-11

Joshua 2:10-11

Joshua 9:7-9

What application can be drawn from this lesson? Have you ever noticed that when things are rough, we normally blame other people, circumstances or even God? We ask the Lord for wisdom and strength to get us through. And then, when things go well for a while, we begin to think that maybe we've got this whole life thing figured out after all. We need to give credit where credit is due. After all, whenever you do the right thing ... *it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose (Philippians 2:13).*

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Read Exodus 15:1-21.**
2. **Look up the listed passages and fill in the blanks.**

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____

LESSON 34: Bible Survey

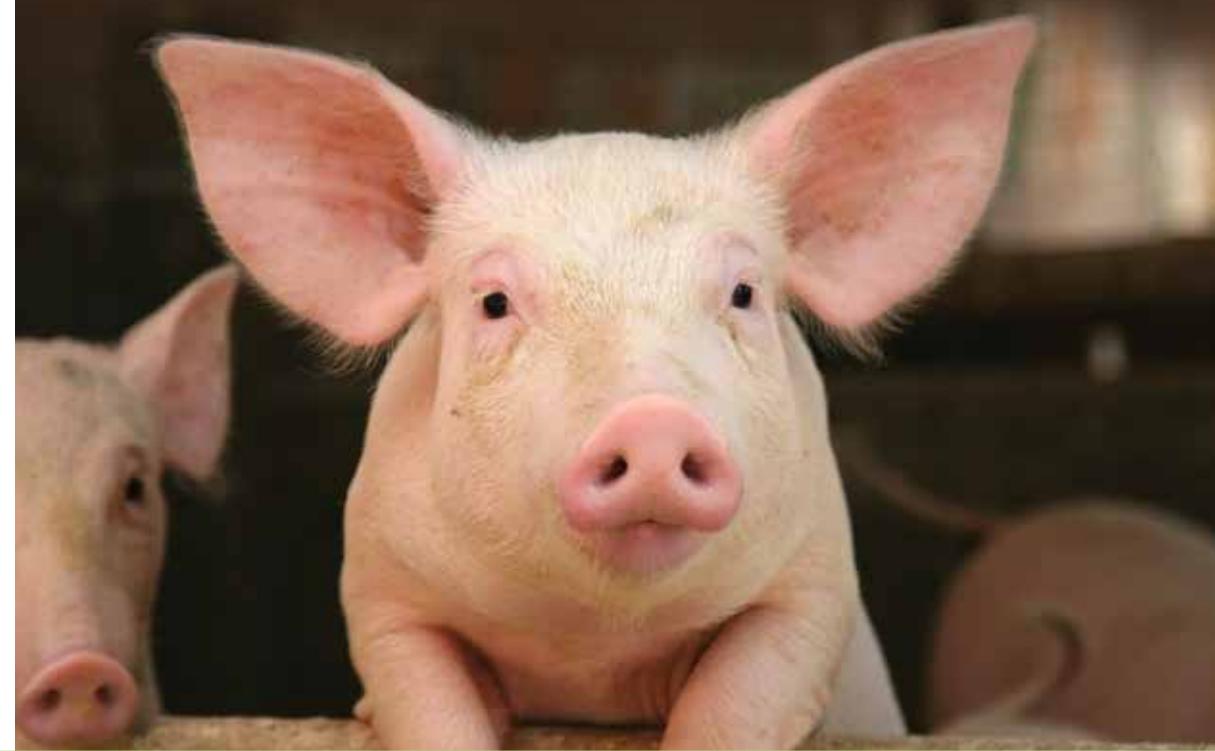
FROM EGYPT TO SINAI

Read Exodus 13:17-14:31, 15:22-17:15.

If you ever have to take a long trip with kids in the car, you might want to try this method of entertaining them. At the start of the journey, give them a list of things to watch for and promise them a treat if they complete the list — a banana split or \$10 to spend in a gift shop. The list can include things like:

- Somebody riding a bicycle
- A yellow barn
- A fire truck
- A football field
- A herd of at least 30 cows
- A man wearing a cowboy hat
- A tunnel (not a good idea if you're driving through Kansas)
- Somebody in a boat
- A live pig

Maybe Moses should have made a list like this for the Israelites, because it was at the very start of their journey from Egypt that they began asking, "Are we there yet?" (Is this the reason they're referred to as the children of Israel?)



As you read through the section for this lesson, answer the following questions:

When the Israelites left Egypt, God sent them _____ (13:18).

He made them aware of His presence by going ahead of them with
_____ (13:21).

In spite of this, when Pharaoh's army pursued, the Israelites said _____
_____ (14:11-12).

In spite of the Israelites' lack of faith, God _____ (14:21-22).

When the people saw what happened to the Egyptian army, they _____
_____ (14:31).

But just a little while later, in the Desert of Shur, the Israelites _____
_____ (15:22-23).

Instead of depending on God, they _____ (15:24).

God provided for them again and they went on their way until they arrived in
_____ (16:1).

It was less than two months since they'd escaped from Egypt, but still they
_____ (16:2-3).

God provided manna for them to eat, but told them through Moses
_____ (16:19).

How did some of them respond? _____ (16:20).

What other instructions did they have? _____ (16:23).

How did some of them respond? _____ (16:27).

Did the Israelites learn their lesson from all this? They traveled to _____
where they discovered there _____ (17:1).

How did they respond? _____ (17:2).



God wanted the Israelite people to trust Him, and He kept showing them His power and protection. But they kept grumbling and showing a lack of faith. How did God respond every single time?

He's not providing us manna or parting seas for us today, but He does provide all we need spiritually. Read Ephesians 3:18-20 and write down what it says in your own words.

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION: SECTION COMPLETED

- 1. Read Exodus 13:17-14:31,
15:22-17:15.**
- 2. Fill in the blanks.**
- 3. Read Ephesians 3:18-20 and
write down what it says in your
own words.**

Signature _____

Date _____

AARON

Read Exodus 28 and 29.

"I was there!"

On March 2, 1962, just 4,124 spectators showed up to watch a game between the Philadelphia Warriors and the New York Knicks. The match was played at the Hersheypark Arena in Hershey, Pennsylvania. It was late in the season, and the game had no bearing on the standings. The players themselves later admitted they were unenthusiastic about the event. But that game is the most famous game in NBA history. Warrior center Wilt Chamberlain scored 100 points in Philadelphia's 169-147 victory.

For the rest of his life, Chamberlain was greeted by people who said they were at the game. It wasn't long before the number of people he met who said they were there was larger than the actual attendance. Many of them said they saw the game at New York's Madison Square Garden. However dubious their claim, Chamberlain would just say, "Thank you, my man." When asked why he didn't call them on their lies, he just said that it was important to the people to pretend they were there, so he was happy to go along with them.



Aaron, Moses' brother, was there! (No, not at the basketball game.) He was there when Moses talked with Pharaoh and called down the plagues. He was there when the Israelites crossed the Red Sea and the Egyptian army was destroyed. He was there when God sent manna from heaven and water from a rock. He was there. He knew what God could do.

And not only was he there, he was appointed by God for a special position. He was Moses' spokesman in Egypt; he was a leader among the Israelites and he was about to be consecrated as high priest.

What was Aaron's response to all this? *When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, "Come, make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him."* Aaron answered them, *"Take off the gold earrings that your wives, your sons and your daughters are wearing, and bring them to me."* So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron. He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool ... (Exodus 32:1-4).

And then comes one of the most amazing statements in the Bible. After Moses saw the calf and confronted Aaron about it, Aaron replied, "Do not be angry, my lord, ... You know how prone these people are to evil. ... So I told them, 'Whoever has any gold jewelry, take it off.' Then they gave me the gold, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf!" (Exodus 32:22, 24).

Read that last sentence again. You'll probably find yourself laughing and crying.

Aaron is compelling proof that humans are desperately in need of a Redeemer. Left to our own devices, we will fail every time. It's a good thing for Aaron, and for each of us, that God is a God of grace. Moses wrote later that ... *the LORD was angry enough with Aaron to destroy him* ... (Deuteronomy 9:20).

But He didn't. Instead, He went ahead with His plan to make Aaron the high priest. This man who failed miserably, this man who should have known better, was not only forgiven, but made a symbol of the coming High Priest, Jesus Christ.

All high priests were to come from Aaron's line, and all priests were to be from Aaron's tribe, the Levites (Numbers 18:6-7). Prior to this time, priestly functions were performed by the father in a family or the head of a tribe.

The high priest had three main functions:

1. Maintain fellowship between God and Israel.
2. Bring people's gifts and sacrifices before God.
3. Convey God's gifts and blessings to the people.

Although priests were as sinful as other men, they were consecrated for their position by a ceremony of washing, dressing and sacrificing. They wore robes, fulfilled obligations and observed rites that made them symbolically holy.

1. In the holy place, priests burned incense on the altar, cleaned and trimmed the lamps and placed showbread on the table every Sabbath.
2. In the courtyard, they kept a fire burning on the altar of burnt offering, removed the ashes, offered sacrifices and blessed the people. They also had special duties on feast days.
3. They made sure people were ceremonially clean, and they acted as judges in special circumstances.
4. They instructed the people in the law and other matters.

The sins of the Israelites, including Aaron, showed the need for a high priest as a mediator to re-establish fellowship between humanity and God. But the mediation of men could do no more than temporarily cover sins. The entire system was designed to point to a greater Mediator — one who could, once for all, bridge the gap between fallen men and a Holy God.

Read Hebrews 9:1-14.

In what ways was the Levitical (from the tribe of Levi) priesthood a picture of Jesus Christ as our High Priest?

In what ways is the priesthood of Jesus Christ superior to the Levitical priesthood?

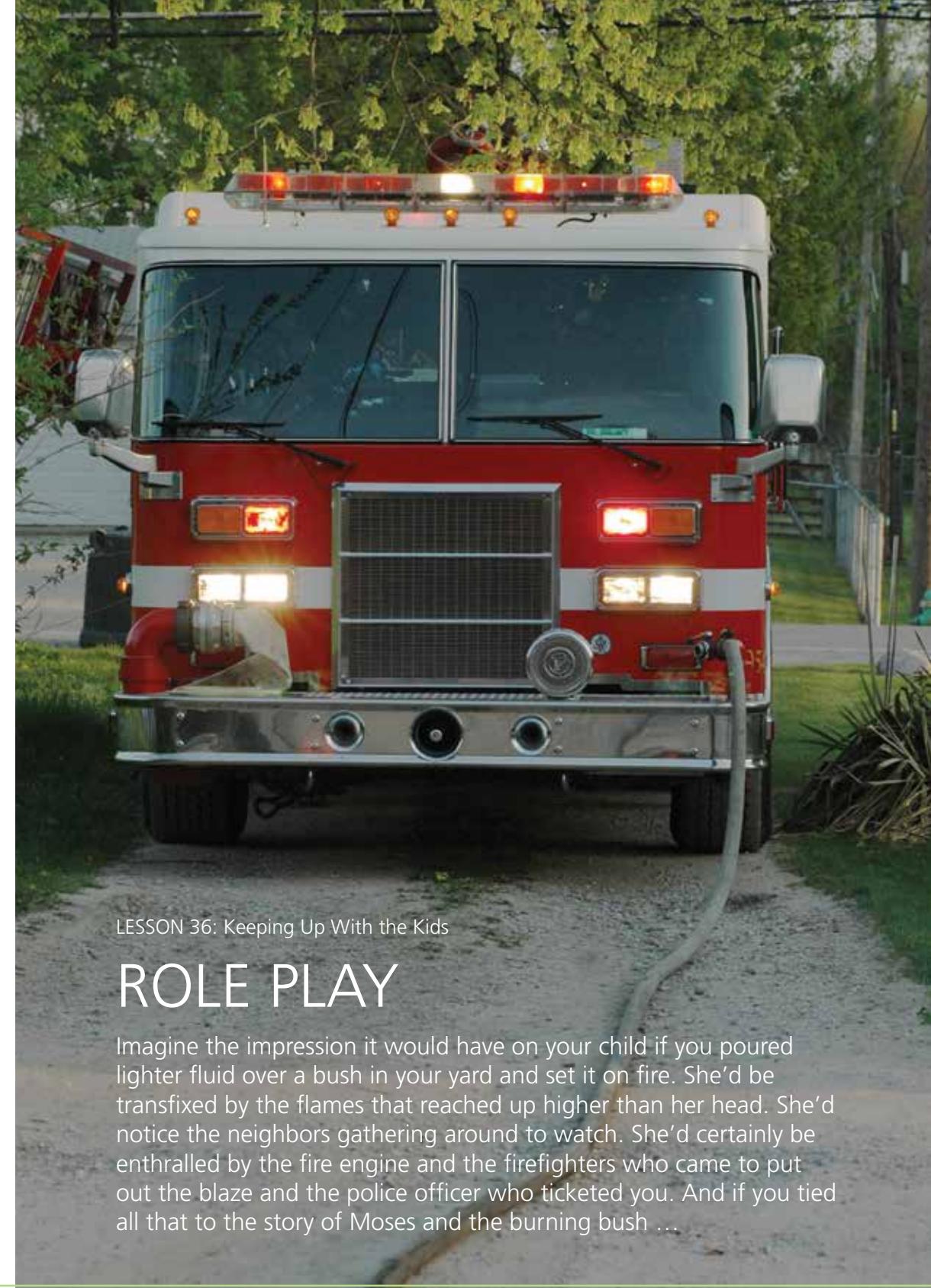
TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Read Exodus 28 and 29.**
2. **Read Hebrews 9:1-14.**
3. **Answer the questions.**

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____



LESSON 36: Keeping Up With the Kids

ROLE PLAY

Imagine the impression it would have on your child if you poured lighter fluid over a bush in your yard and set it on fire. She'd be transfixed by the flames that reached up higher than her head. She'd notice the neighbors gathering around to watch. She'd certainly be enthralled by the fire engine and the firefighters who came to put out the blaze and the police officer who ticketed you. And if you tied all that to the story of Moses and the burning bush ...

OK, that might be going a bit far. We are NOT recommending that you set anything on fire. But acting out the biographies in your child's handbooks can be an effective way of teaching the truths in the lessons.

If you are working (as you should be) with your child in her Sparks *HangGlider* handbook, you are about to discover several sections on Moses. Your child might find it easier to remember what she hears if you role-play the account as you go. You can play the role of Jochebed, Moses' mother and, in a different costume, Pharaoh's daughter. Your daughter can be Miriam. If you have a younger child, they can play the role of Moses as a baby. (If you don't have a Moses candidate in your family, use a doll.) Dress up in sheets, use a laundry basket, come up with any other props you can think of. Make the props available to your daughter later on so she can reenact the account.

Make sure your child understands that the things she's learning about Moses really happened. They aren't a fairy tale or storybook — they're history. But that shouldn't prevent you from having an enjoyable time of learning, especially if your child is a kinesthetic learner. (You do remember what that means, don't you? If not, review Lesson 28.)

RED JEWEL 3

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	

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Memorize and recite the books of the New Testament.

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____

LESSON 37: Bible Survey

THE LAW

Read Exodus 19 and 20.

When we think of the law of Moses, we tend to think of the Ten Commandments of Exodus 20. But that's only a very small piece of the whole. There are more than 600 commands dictating proper behavior for ceremonies, morality and relationships. Some of them might seem rather strange. You may find yourself wondering "Why did God make that a law?" or, "Why did anyone need to be told that?"

1. *Do not eat anything you find already dead. You may give it to an alien living in any of your towns, and he may eat it, or you may sell it to a foreigner ... (Deuteronomy 14:21).*
2. *When you lay siege to a city for a long time, fighting against it to capture it, do not destroy its trees by putting an ax to them, because you can eat their fruit. Do not cut them down. Are the trees of the field people, that you should besiege them? However, you may cut down trees that you know are not fruit trees and use them to build siege works until the city at war with you falls (Deuteronomy 20:19-20).*
3. *When you build a new house, make a parapet around your roof so that you may not bring the guilt of bloodshed on your house if someone falls from the roof (Deuteronomy 22:8).*
4. *Do not plow with an ox and a donkey yoked together (Deuteronomy 22:10).*
5. *Make tassels on the four corners of the cloak you wear (Deuteronomy 22:12).*
6. *Designate a place outside the camp where you can go to relieve yourself. As part of your equipment have something to dig with, and when you relieve yourself, dig a hole and cover up your excrement (Deuteronomy 23:12-13).*
7. *If you enter your neighbor's vineyard, you may eat all the grapes you want, but do not put any in your basket (Deuteronomy 23:24).*
8. *If a man has recently married, he must not be sent to war or have any other duty laid on him. For one year he is to be free to stay at home and bring happiness to the wife he has married (Deuteronomy 24:5).*

How many of you have obeyed numbers 3, 5 and 8?

Why did God give the law to Israel? Did He really expect them to obey every single command — all 600+ of them? Just look at some of them: *If you come across a bird's nest beside the road, either in a tree or on the ground, and the mother is sitting on the young or on the eggs, do not take the mother with the young. You may take the young, but be sure to let the mother go, so that it may go well with you and you may have a long life (Deuteronomy 22:6-7)*. It follows that if you remove a mother bird from a nest, things will not go well and you will die young. What in the world?

God was making a point, and He wasn't being subtle.

When He created Adam and Eve, He created them in a state of total dependence on Him. They decided to go their own way and, as a result, humanity became separated from God. Since that time (although God knew it would happen before He even created Adam), God has been unfolding His plan to bring humanity back into fellowship with Him. There is only one way to accomplish that — through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

But we are slow learners, so God has been bringing us along gradually, showing us step by step that we need Him and can do nothing on our own. Remember what we studied in Lesson 30? After the fall, God allowed humans to be governed by their own consciences. That led to chaos and proved (or should have proved) that humans make poor choices when left on their own. Then God instituted human government. It became very evident very quickly that, even in formal groups, man made poor choices. So God revealed the next part of His

plan — He chose a particular group of people through whom He would eventually send the Redeemer. He promised them His blessings in every area of life, and we just saw in Lesson 34 how well the Israelites got the point.

So now it was time for the next step — the law. God started with the Ten Commandments, given to Moses on Mount Sinai, but He revealed many other laws for every area of life as time went by. Any person who simply obeyed all the laws would be righteous and saved. It was (and is) as simple as that.

We know, and God knows, that won't happen. There isn't a day when we don't sin in some fashion. And when we do, well — *For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it (James 2:10).*

We can't keep it, and God knew we couldn't keep it. So why did He give it?

Before we answer that question, let's consider God's grace for a moment. He has every right to demand our complete obedience — after all, He created us. He has the authority to strike us dead the moment we sin. He gave the Israelites the Ten Commandments and the moral laws and the social laws, and they broke them. Jesus Christ hadn't yet died for their sins, and, in fact, they didn't even fully understand who the Redeemer would be or what He would do for them. But God also provided ceremonial laws — a way for believers to demonstrate their faith in what God would do in the future. By sacrificing an animal, sins of the Israelites were covered until Christ could pay the ultimate sacrifice. So while the law condemned them, God also made provision to save them.



And now back to why God gave the law.

Paul has a lot to say about the law in Galatians. In Galatians 3:24, he writes: *... the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.*

The Greek word translated "put in charge" is *paidagogos*, from which we get our word *pedagogue* (educator). Paul was referring to a common practice among the upper classes. A trusted slave would be trained as an overseer of the boys in the family. He would see that they got to school, tutor them in their studies and make sure they behaved. In many cases, boys wouldn't be allowed out of the house without their *paidagogos*.

In the same way that a trusted slave would ensure the education of a son, teaching him and pointing out areas which he needed to understand, the law educates us and shows us what we need to understand. And what is that?

Write down what the law teaches us. Read Romans 3:19-24 if you need help with this.

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Read Exodus 19-20.**
2. **Answer the question.**

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____



LESSON 38: The Big Picture

THE LAW

Read Colossians 2:6-3:17.

We saw in the last lesson that the purpose of the law is to teach that all of us are sinners and guilty before God. (Did you come up with that answer?)

But what then? What should be our approach to the law once we've learned the lesson? We know we are sinners. We know we need Jesus Christ and we've placed our faith in Him. What should our response be to the law now?

After all, it still takes up a huge chunk of our Bibles, and we can't read for very long without seeing it mentioned at least once.

Should we try to obey all of it?

Should we try to obey some of it?

Do we need to obey any of it at all?

Let's take a look at a couple of passages.

Is the law good? We know that the law is good if one uses it properly (1 Timothy 1:8).

Was the law given for Christians to obey? We also know that law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers — and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine (1 Timothy 1:9-10). This gets back to what we've seen about the purpose of the law — to bring us to the place where we turn to Jesus Christ.

If the law can't make us righteous, what will? For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering ... (Romans 8:3). This verse shows the great contrast between Christ's power and the law's weakness.

It was impossible for the law to 1) give freedom from condemnation, 2) justify, or 3) impart life by means of the flesh. The law itself is perfect, but it couldn't achieve its end because the flesh is weak. But let's read on: ... And so He condemned sin in sinful man, in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit (Romans 8:3-4).

Amazing! The law can't make us righteous, but we can gain the righteousness that the law demands by living according to the Holy Spirit.

Can it really be that simple? We just live according to the Spirit and we are righteous?

What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord ... that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ — the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. (Philippians 3:8-9)

Sure, our salvation is by faith and not by works. And the righteousness that allows us into heaven is Christ's righteousness and not our own. But still, once we are saved, isn't obeying the law a good idea?

This is exactly the issue the Galatians were dealing with. Paul heard that they were drifting back toward attempting to obey the law. He wrote them a letter and wasn't gentle in his tone.

You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort? Have you suffered so much for nothing — if it really was for nothing? Does God give you His Spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the law, or because you believe what you heard? (Galatians 3:1-5)

There you have it. The law has served its purpose in your life once you've realized your need for Jesus Christ. To go back to it would be foolish.



It is because of Him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God — that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord." (1 Corinthians 1:30-31)

God doesn't give us the power to live righteously. Instead, He does it in us and for us when we walk after the Spirit.

Some say freedom from the law is a license to sin, but those who say that don't understand grace.

Law taught us that we need grace. Grace teaches us to live righteously. *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age (Titus 2:11-12).*

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Read Colossians 2:6-3:17.**
2. **Answer the question.**

How does grace teach us to live righteously? If you need help with this, check out Colossians 1:10-14; Colossians 3:3-5 (paying close attention to what the "therefore" is there for); Ephesians 2:4-10.

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

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LESSON 39: The Big Picture

THE TABERNACLE AND IT SIGNIFICANCE

Read Exodus 25 through 27.

You've been granted a great honor — the president is coming to your office for a visit. After the first flurry of excitement dies down, you begin wondering how you should prepare. Do you offer him a doughnut and a bottle of water? Are you allowed to shake his hand?

Hold on. You're getting ahead of yourself. There are a few other small matters to take care of first.

Three days before the visit, you'll have to give Secret Service agents a tour of the building. They'll want to cover the windows with a protective shield, inspect the fire extinguishers and electrical circuits. They'll need to make sure the elevators and other heavy equipment are working properly. The fire marshal will need to inspect the building. They'll map out the building and demand access to any service rooms or empty offices. They'll look above the ceilings and on the roof.

Two days before the visit, you'll need to have the carpets cleaned and the walls repainted. Your landscapers should weed the gardens, pick up any trash and trim the trees.

On the day of the visit, the tenants in the building who aren't involved with the president will have to stay in their offices. If a bathroom visit is necessary, they must be escorted. All elevators not used by the president's party are to be shut down and left open and dark. Armed security personnel will guard all

building exits and local police officers will patrol the neighborhood.

Beginning two hours before the president arrives, everyone entering the building and all vehicles entering the property will be searched. If any maintenance or other staff is required to be on site, they must undergo a background check and stay out of sight unless needed.

The president will enter the building in an enclosed area to block any view by spectators.

And you should probably serve something more impressive than doughnuts and water.

And that's just for the president. Although for his term of office he's the most powerful man on the earth, he's just a man, subject (theoretically) to all the same laws as the rest of the citizens.

What if you heard that God Himself was coming — not just for a visit, but to live with you?

That's what the Israelites found out, and God told them exactly how He wanted them to get ready. The tabernacle and the items in it weren't designed randomly. God had a specific purpose for every detail ... *a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: "See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain"* (Hebrews 8:5).

The tabernacle is called by five different names in the Old Testament, each with its own shade of meaning.

1. Sanctuary — a place that is set aside, sacred
2. Tabernacle — a dwelling place, where God dwelled
3. Tent — a physical description of what it looked like
4. Tent of Meeting — where Israelites met God
5. Tent of the Testimony — where the law tablets (testimony) were kept

Israel knew that God wasn't confined to the tabernacle, nor did they think it was the only place they could meet Him. But it was the place where He was worshiped and where they went to commune with Him. Israel was surrounded by nations that worshiped false gods, and the tabernacle provided an exclusive sanctuary away from the idolatry. The materials for the tabernacle were assembled by willing donations from the Israelites. Where did they get the gold and silver? See Exodus 3:22.

Let's take a quick look at the items in the tabernacle.

Altar — The Israelites brought animals to be sacrificed by the priests on the altar. It was located near the door to show the need for blood atonement (canceling of sin) before men can approach God (Leviticus 17:11). It was a picture of the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ.

Laver — After performing the blood sacrifices, the priests washed themselves at the laver. They had to be physically and spiritually clean before entering the presence of God (Leviticus 11:44). The laver pictured the washing of the Word of God through sanctification (making holy).

Golden Candlestick — The lamp was located in the holy place, divided by a heavy curtain from the courtyard and from the Holy of Holies (the innermost place). It provided light for the priests in an otherwise dark area. The oil in the lamp was a picture of the Holy Spirit, and was a picture of Jesus Christ who is the Light of the World.

Table of Showbread — The table was also located in the holy place. The priest placed 12 loaves (for the 12 tribes) of bread on the table as a thank offering for God's blessing (Leviticus 24:7-8). The bread was a picture of Jesus Christ, who is the Bread of Life.

Altar of Incense — This altar, also in the holy place, was a picture of prayer. A priest would burn incense as an offering to God (Leviticus 16:12-13) for intercession (an appeal made for someone else). Blood from the burnt offering would be put on the horns at the corners of the altar to picture Christ's atoning blood.

Veil — A colorful veil separated the priests from God's presence. Only the high priest was ever allowed past the veil into the Holy of Holies, and even then only once a year. The veil hid the glory of God from sinful men and was a picture of the ministry of Jesus Christ. His glory was hidden during His time on earth.

The Ark of the Covenant — The ark stood alone in the Holy of Holies. On top were two cherubim (figures of angels). Above it dwelt the shekinah glory, the visible proof that God was present. There were three items inside the ark:

1. A bowl of manna, showing that God cares for His people
2. Aaron's rod which budded, a picture of Christ's resurrection as the first fruits from the dead
3. The tablets of law, which demonstrated Christ's fulfillment of the law

The lid of the ark was the mercy seat, God's throne. Once a year, the high priest would sprinkle blood on it, to atone for sin and bring God's grace.

There are depths upon depths to God's plan of salvation for humanity, and this can certainly be seen in a study of the tabernacle. This lesson barely scratches the surface. For more information, a great source is *The Tabernacle: Shadows of the Messiah*, by David M. Levy, published by The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry.

Let's dig a bit deeper into just one aspect of the tabernacle, the veil. It figures prominently in the New Testament account of Christ's death.

Read Matthew 27:50-51; Hebrews 6:19-20; Hebrews 10:16-22.

What happened to the temple veil on the day of Christ's crucifixion?

What changed in regards to humanity's relationship with God at that moment?

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Read Exodus 25 through 27.
2. Read Matthew 27:50-51; Hebrews 6:19-20; Hebrews 10:16-22.
3. Answer the questions.

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____

THE FEASTS

Read Leviticus 23.

A Proclamation.

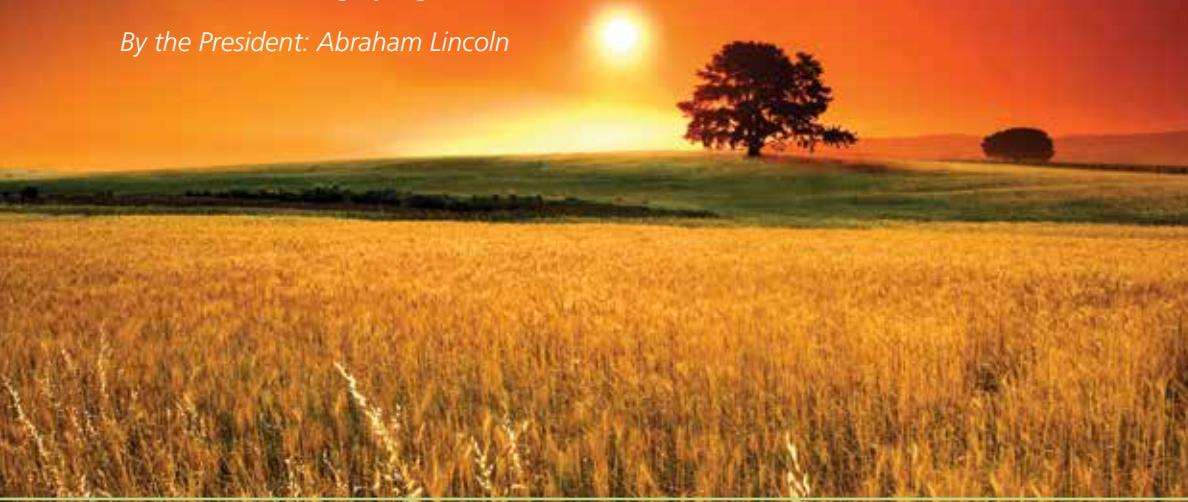
The year that is drawing towards its close, has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God ...

I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens. And I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquillity and Union.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this Third day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the Independence of the United States the Eighty-eighth.

By the President: Abraham Lincoln



Thanksgiving is the most similar celebration we have to the festivals of Israel. We gather together, remember that we owe our blessings to God (or at least we're supposed to remember that) and eat a lot of food.

God gave Israel a series of feasts, or festivals, to observe at various times throughout the year. Five of the seven feasts lasted one day each, pointing to acts of God that happened once for all time. The other two feasts, lasting a week each, celebrate the results of God's acts.

The Passover — The first Passover took place in Egypt (see Lesson 32). To remind the people of their deliverance from slavery and sin (idolatry), God instituted a feast to be held in the evening on the 14th day of the first month of the Hebrew calendar. It involved the sacrifice and eating of a lamb (along with unleavened bread and bitter herbs) and the observation of the other requirements of that first Passover.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread — This feast began the day after Passover and continued for seven days. All men had to travel to Jerusalem for the festival. The Israelites made animal sacrifices and grain and burnt offerings each day. Necessary work was allowed, but no work for profit could be done. The Feast of Unleavened Bread is a picture of the believer's life and communion with God. Leaven, throughout Scripture, is a symbol for sin; eating only unleavened bread is a picture of the believer's holiness.

The Feast of Firstfruits — This feast, which took place during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, was an acknowledgement that the harvest, and the land it came from, was from God.

The grain that was offered had to be the first that was harvested, and nobody could use anything from the harvest until the offering had been made.

The Feast of Weeks — This feast took place seven weeks after the Feast of Firstfruits (week, depending on context, can mean a series of seven periods of time, including days, weeks or years). The feast was also called Pentecost, which means "50." All men had to go to Jerusalem (which explains the crowds at Pentecost in Acts 2). No work was to be done and offerings were made, including loaves of leavened bread (the every-day food of the Israelites). It marked the end of the wheat harvest and was a feast of thanksgiving to God for His provision (Deuteronomy 16:10-11).

The Feast of Trumpets — On the first day of the seventh month (the beginning of the civil year), trumpets were blown, sacrifices were made and the people held a service of worship. This was the first of three feasts held within a three-week period and served as a reminder to the people of the important days to come.

The Day of Atonement — This festival, which took place on the tenth day of the seventh month, was the most important date in the Israelites' calendar. It is the day when the high priest entered the Holy of Holies to atone for the sins of the nation. The people were to fast and do no work. To underscore the seriousness of the day, the Lord promised punishment to anyone who disobeyed.

The Feast of Tabernacles — This feast is also called the Feast of Booths, or Tents. It is in remembrance of the period after the escape from Egypt,

when the people lived in tents. Tents weren't a picture of hardship, but of God's deliverance and care. The festival began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month and lasted for seven days. As with the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of Weeks, all men had to travel to Jerusalem. On the first day, booths were constructed in yards, streets or on rooftops. The next six days were devoted to hospitality and social gatherings (Deuteronomy 16:14-15). An eighth day, at the end of the week, was added as a Sabbath.

The Sabbath is also included with the list of feasts in Leviticus 23. It was given to Israel for two reasons: First, it pointed back to God's rest at the end of His creation, when He took delight in His work (Exodus 20:10-11). Second, it pointed back to their redemption from Egypt (Deuteronomy 5:15). It was also God's promise to the nation that He would give them rest in the Promised Land and, eventually, eternity.



In the next lesson, we'll study how the feasts were prophetic — pointing to the major events in God's working with Israel. This is important for us to know because God's timeline for Israel determines the timeline for our salvation and ultimate glorification. But there are practical applications for us here too. Read 1 Corinthians 5:6-8. What is this passage saying and how does it apply to your life?

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Read Leviticus 23.**
2. **Read 1 Corinthians 5:6-8 and answer the questions.**

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____



LESSON 41: The Big Picture

THE FEASTS AS PROPHECY

Read Zechariah 12-14.

In 1970, for the purpose of scientific investigation, the Russians began to dig. They wanted to go as deep into the earth as they could. By 1989, the Kola Superdeep Borehole had reached a depth of 7.26 miles (11.68 km). The decision was made to stop digging because the equipment wouldn't work if the temperature increased any more than the 356°F (180°C) that had already been reached at the bottom of the hole.

Seven miles (11.26 km) seems like a long distance, but let's put it in perspective. The diameter of the earth is 7,926.41 miles (12,756 km). The hole was a little bit less than a thousandth of the way through the planet. To help you understand, think of a football field. If the diameter of the earth was the length of a football field, the Kola Borehole would be less than four inches (10 cm) deep.

That ratio is dwarfed, however, by the ratio of God's Word compared to how far we've dug into it. Daily study of the Bible will result in daily discoveries of something new, even in familiar passages. We'll never come close to completing the "dig."



GOD'S FEASTS

We saw in the previous lesson how God set apart the feast days for Israel. They were His days (Leviticus 23:2), when the people came together to worship Him in joy. There are two words used in Scripture for the feasts. One means "appointed seasons" and the other means "to dance" or "to be joyful." God wanted the people to rejoice in Him as they called to mind what He'd done for them.

HARVEST FESTIVALS

Most of the feasts were celebrating a harvest. Passover took place during the barley harvest. The Feasts of Firstfruits and Weeks were held during the wheat harvest. The Feast of Tabernacles took place when the harvest of fruit and oil were completed. The Israelites were to enjoy the results of their labor while remembering that God had supplied

them and that it was His land they were farming.

HISTORICAL REMINDERS

Several feasts took place on the anniversaries of great historical events, serving as reminders of what God had done for Israel in the past and encouraging them to look for God's blessing in the future. Passover reminded them of their delivery from Egypt. Unleavened Bread called to mind their separation from the sins of Egypt. Tabernacles reminded them of God's provision in the desert after their escape from Egypt.

PROPHECY

The Israelites weren't initially told that the feasts had prophetic significance. They should have figured it out, though, when Christ was on earth fulfilling the first three feasts in the annual cycle and when the Holy Spirit's descent fulfilled

the fourth. There's direct evidence that the feasts are prophetic. Colossians 2:16-17 says: *Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.* There is an amazing harmony in the timing of the fulfillment of the prophecies. Notice this as you read through the following list.

WHAT THE FEASTS FORETOLD

Passover — The death of Jesus Christ. (See Lesson 32.) The moment when He died on the cross may have been the very moment the high priest was in the temple killing that year's Passover lamb.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread

The sinless perfection of the believer in Jesus Christ. Remember your study on 1 Corinthians 5:6-8 in the previous lesson? Leaven represents sin. The number seven, the number of days for which this feast lasted, is the number of perfection. (Notice how often the number seven and its multiples come into play in the timing and length of the feasts.)

The Feast of Firstfruits — The resurrection of Jesus Christ. He is called the firstfruits in 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23: *But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when He comes, those who belong to Him.* Christ's resurrection took place on the same morning as the offering of the first part of the harvest.

The Feast of Weeks (Pentecost)

The coming of the Holy Spirit. When the day of Pentecost came, they were

all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting (Acts 2:1-2). Weeks is the first feast where leavened bread was used. Israel was set apart from the other nations and given laws that showed their unique status as God's people. But they had killed their Messiah and were about to be set aside for a time. The gospel was about to be offered to both Jews and Gentiles, and as a type of this event, the law allowed bread with leaven.

The Feast of Trumpets — Israel's return to God. It is important to remember that all of these feasts and their prophecies chiefly concern Israel. Many people see the Feast of Trumpets as a prophecy of the rapture of the Church. That's true, but only because the rapture has to occur before Israel resumes its special place as God's chosen people. When they hear the trumpet, the people will return to the land given to them by God (Isaiah 27:13; Matthew 24:31).

Note — It was shortly after Pentecost that the apostle Paul received the revelation that Jew and Gentile alike could turn to Christ for salvation apart from the law. Israel's status as the object of God's exclusive attention was set aside for a time (a time that continues to this day). It is fascinating to note that in Leviticus 23, between God's revelation of the requirements for the Feast of Weeks and His revelation of the requirements for the Feast of Trumpets, we see this verse: *When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Leave them for the poor and the alien. I am the LORD your God (Leviticus 23:22).* Who

are the aliens who are provided for in this verse? Gentiles. Until this time, they were aliens and strangers, but for the period between the fulfillment of these two prophecies, they are receiving God's blessings directly.

The Day of Atonement — Israel's restoration. This festival takes place just 10 days after the Feast of Trumpets. It was the day the high priest entered the Holy of Holies to offer a sacrifice, an obvious picture of Christ's death on the cross. The return of Christ as the High Priest to the people of Israel has not yet taken place. When Christ returns to earth for His second coming (not to be confused with the rapture), He will destroy the nations who are attacking

Israel and deliver His people once and for all. Read Zechariah 12:10-13:9 for a full picture of that coming day.

The Feast of Tabernacles — The millennium, when Israel finally gains the land promised to Abraham so long ago. Christ will reign over a restored earth and will finally give to Israel all the blessings He intended them to have. All other nations will prosper in direct proportion to their treatment of Israel (Zechariah 14:16-21). This feast, along with Passover, will continue to be observed. Passover will be a remembrance of Israel's redemption; Tabernacles will be a celebration of their final rest in God.

Write three things you learned in this lesson.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Read Zechariah 12-14.**
2. **Write three things you learned in this lesson.**

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____

LESSON 42: Keeping Up With the Kids

THE TWO NATURES

My dad used to explain it like this ...

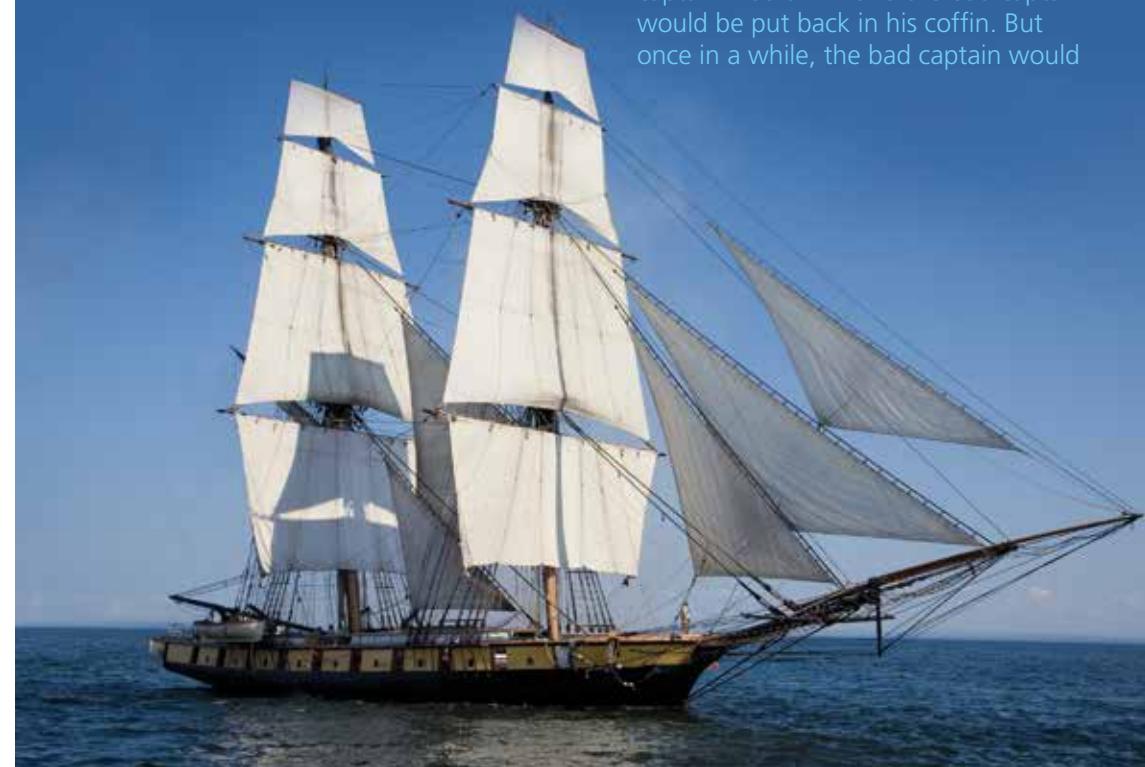
There was once a dangerous pirate ship. Its captain was a hard, mean man. He and his crew would sail the seas, killing and stealing and destroying everything they saw. They never did anything good, and everyone was afraid of them.

One night, when all the pirates were asleep, a man climbed over the side. Before the pirate knew what had happened, this man had taken over the ship. He was a good man, unlike the old captain. The bad captain was put to death for his crimes. The good captain had him placed in a coffin and stuck down in the hold of the ship.

The crew of the ship didn't really care whom they served, so they had no

difficulty working for the good captain. He cleaned up the ship and went about doing good and repairing the damages done by the pirates under the bad captain.

There was just one problem. The bad captain's body was still on the ship. Every once in a while, that bad captain would climb out of his coffin as if he was still alive and fight with the good captain. Most of the time, the good captain would win and the bad captain would be put back in his coffin. But once in a while, the bad captain would



take over again. He would lock the good captain down in the brig and set off on his old, bad ways. But that never lasted long. The good captain was too strong to be kept locked up for long. He would soon escape and put the bad captain back where he belonged.

That simple illustration helped me, as a kid, to understand the old and new natures and how they warred within me. I could see that the bad captain was sin and the new captain was the Holy Spirit in me. I could understand why I sometimes did things that I knew were wrong and that I didn't want to do. I was taught that the crew was my mouth, my eyes and ears, my hands and feet. They would do whatever the "captain" told them to do.

We even had a saying in our family relating to that illustration. If one of us was starting to let our old natures gain control, another member of the family would say, "Your coffin lid is flipping." We'd know immediately what they

meant, and would often be able to put the old nature back where it belonged without further difficulty — but not always.

Illustrations are great ways to get points across to kids. (If your kids are young and impressionable, you might want to tone down the pirate ship illustration a bit, but some variation of it will probably be effective.)

Look for occurrences in the everyday life of your family that you can use to illustrate the truths you are teaching your kids. Does a story on the news help teach a lesson on sin and its consequences? Does your care for your son or daughter help impress upon them the role of a shepherd? If you make your illustrations relevant, learning can be a lot of fun for the whole family.

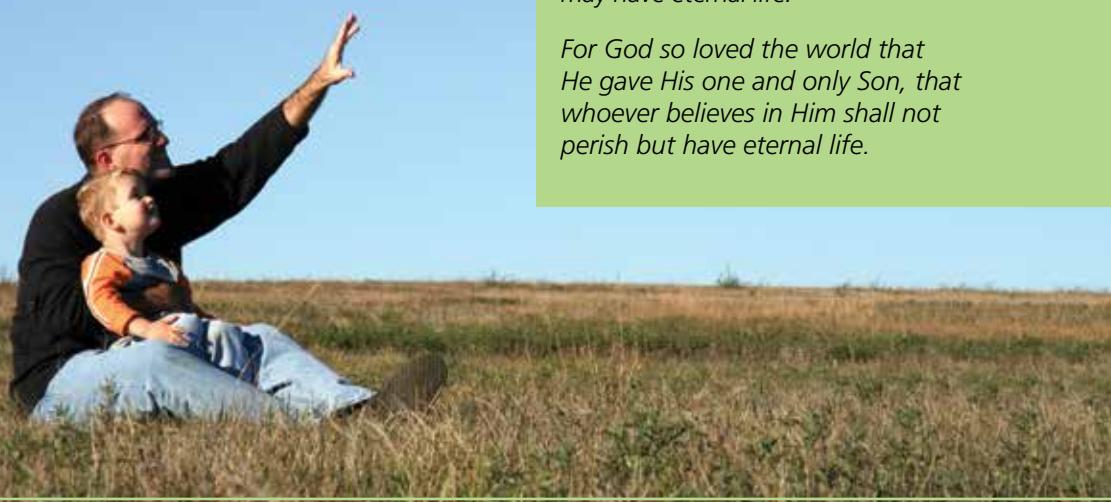
GREEN JEWEL 3

John 3:14-16

Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up.

That everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life.

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.



What lesson are you currently trying to teach your Sparks-aged son or daughter?

Develop an illustration that can help them understand the lesson in exciting, clear fashion.

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Memorize and recite the verses.
 2. Develop an illustration to teach your children a lesson.

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date



LESSON 43: Bible Survey

THE SPIES

Read Numbers 13:1-14:24.

Take just one small area of the body, for example, the space between the big toe and the second toe on the right foot.

When I was about 12, I was playing with some friends in the yard of an old house. As I ran through the grass, I stepped on a board that had a long, rusty nail sticking up out of it. I landed right on that nail, and it poked all the way through my shoe and out the top — right between the big toe and second toe on my right foot. My skin was a bit scratched, but not broken.

Shortly after I bought my first house, I was walking barefoot across my lawn when I discovered an underground yellow jacket wasp nest the hard way. A wasp stung me between the big toe and second toe on my right foot. I made it back indoors quickly — using only my left foot!

Not long ago, I was woken late at night by a noise downstairs. I went to

investigate. I don't recall what caused the noise, but I distinctly recall what happened when I tried to get past my dog as she lay in the hallway. She stood up as I stepped and her hind leg jammed into the space between the big toe and second toe on my right foot.

We are called to live spiritually, but we live in a physical world. At no point will we be able to spend more than a couple of minutes without some reminder of that fact. We'll be hot or cold; we'll be tired; something will start aching; our stomachs will rumble; we'll need to find a bathroom; we'll stub our toe on a dog. And suddenly, we'll be wrapped up in our physical surroundings and have lost track of our spiritual life.

God put us here on this earth, in these bodies. He doesn't expect us to enter some trance-like state in which we forget our surroundings. But He does want us to respond and interpret our physical lives in the light of our spiritual lives. He wants us to focus on Him when we make all our decisions — spiritual or physical.

Like Caleb and Joshua did.

Caleb and Joshua were chosen as two of the 12 spies (one from each tribe) sent out by Israel to report on the land God had told them to possess.

In Deuteronomy 1:21: Moses makes a clear statement: *See, the LORD your God has given you the land. Go up and take possession of it as the LORD, the God of your fathers, told you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.*

The people immediately replied, ... *"Let us send men ahead to spy out the land for us and bring back a report about the route we are to take and the towns we will come to"* (Deuteronomy 1:22).

That sounds sensible, doesn't it? You're about to enter a foreign land — it makes sense to know if the inhabitants are hostile and, if so, whether they're stronger than you. But in light of the Israelite's eventual response to the spies' report, it seems more likely that the people were looking for reasons *not* to enter. They took their focus off God and concentrated on the physical.

And so Caleb and Joshua entered the land with the other spies. They spent 40 days traveling the length of Canaan, looking around. They gathered pomegranates, figs and a bunch of grapes so large it had to be carried on a staff by two men.

He wants us to focus on Him when we make all our decisions — spiritual or physical.

When the spies returned and made their report, the difference in focus becomes very clear.

They began with a general report: ... *"We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw descendants of Anak there. The Amalekites live in the Negev; the Hittites, Jebusites and Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live near the sea and along the Jordan"* (Numbers 13:27-29).

Caleb had his focus on the spiritual. He trusted God's promises and spoke out. ... *Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it"* (Numbers 13:30).

But the men who had gone up with him said, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are." And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, "The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them." (Numbers 13:31-33)

The Israelites saw dangers ahead and wanted to send spies.

Joshua and Caleb saw God's promise.

The other 10 spies saw powerful armies and fortified cities.

Joshua and Caleb saw God's promise.

The other spies saw giants. (The descendants of Anak were a race of giants who were considered bullies.)

Joshua and Caleb saw God's promise.

Sadly, the Israelites, in fear, chose to agree with the 10 spies. They even called for the death of Caleb and Joshua! As a result, God punished them with 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. Nobody who was an adult on the day of the spies' report entered the Promised Land, except Joshua and Caleb — because they lived spiritually in a physical world.

There's a final chapter to this history. Read Joshua 15:13-15 and write down in your own words what happened in that passage.

What application can you make from this account?

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Read Numbers 13:1-14:24.**
2. **Read Joshua 15:13-15 and answer the questions.**

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____

LESSON 44: Bible Survey

WANDERING IN THE WILDERNESS

Read Numbers 21:1-9.

I enjoy birds. Several years ago, I determined to find a prothonotary warbler, a small, brilliantly-golden-yellow bird found primarily in swamps in the southern United States. I was on vacation in Arkansas and headed for a nearby wildlife preserve to look for it.

I don't particularly enjoy snakes. It so happens that the prothonotary warbler shares its habitat with the cottonmouth, one of the more aggressive poisonous snakes in North America.

The path through the particular swamp I entered runs along the top of a levee with ankle-high grass on top and thick brush on both sides — perfect for obscuring snakes. I debated with myself whether I wanted to continue, but my desire to see the bird was stronger than my fear (but not by much). I adopted a cautious method of walking. I'd look down carefully all around for a cottonmouth, then take two or three steps forward. I'd then stand still and look around for the bird. I repeated this for about 300 yards (274.3 m) and saw neither bird nor snake.

And then suddenly, there it was! Right in front of me, not more than six inches



(15.2 cm) away from my foot, was a three-foot (0.9 m) cottonmouth lying in the grass. How could I have missed it? I was being so careful. My heart dropped down to the vicinity of my knees. I didn't breath. I stood there frozen to the spot, afraid to even blink an eye.

It seemed like a long time, but I don't suppose more than a second or two went by before I noticed that somebody had blown the snake's head off with a shotgun. It was harmless.

For the record, I kept on, more careful than ever. I didn't see another snake, and I did get a distant but satisfying look at the warbler. And I was very happy when I got back to my car. I learned a little bit that day how frightening it must have been for the Israelites in the wilderness.

When the Israelites were wandering about in the wilderness they established a pattern of disobedience and lack of trust in God. It didn't seem to matter how often God miraculously provided for them, or how often He rescued them from powerful enemies. As soon as anything happened that was unpleasant to any degree, they grumbled and complained and whined and ... the list goes on.

We studied earlier about this same thing on the journey between Egypt and Canaan. In Numbers 21 we read of yet another example: ... *The people grew impatient on the way; they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the desert? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!"* (Numbers 21:4-5).

God determined that it was time to send a message — a message of punishment, but ultimately a message of salvation.

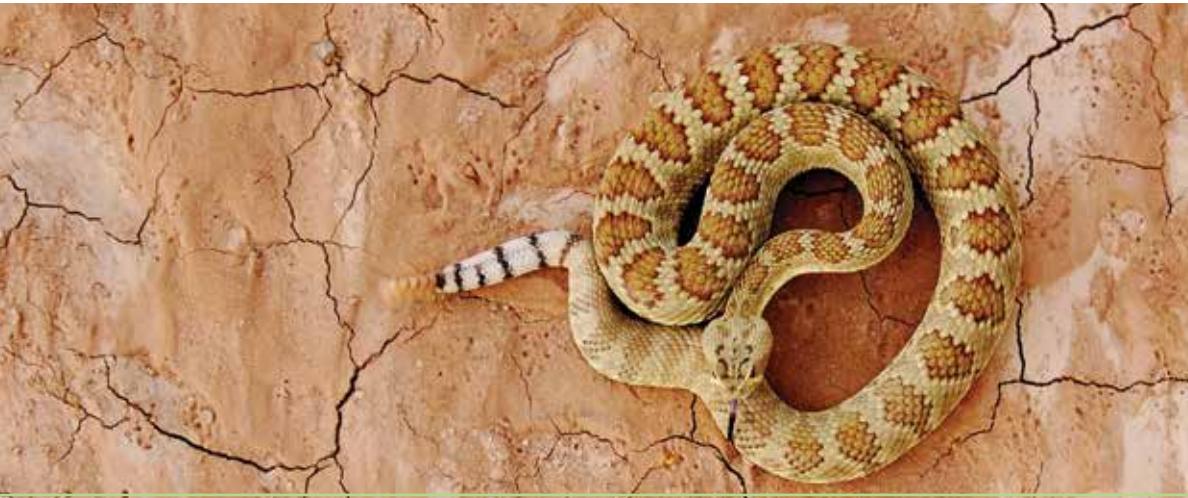
Then the LORD sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, "We sinned when we spoke against the LORD and against

you. Pray that the LORD will take the snakes away from us." So Moses prayed for the people. The LORD said to Moses, "Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live." So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, he lived. (Numbers 21:6-9)

Pause for a moment and think of the scene. What must it have been like for the Israelites? They were camping on the desert, with nowhere to flee. Poisonous snakes were slithering in and out of tents and around rocks. Unable to escape, people were getting bitten, writhing in pain and dying. And over all the knowledge that they'd brought it on themselves — again. They knew why it happened. When they went to Moses for deliverance the first thing they said was that they'd sinned.

God is a God of grace and mercy. He sent salvation.

Now you get to write the rest of this lesson. Use Bible commentaries or other resources (paper or online), and your own wisdom to answer these questions. Ask a pastor for help if you need to.



Moses made and set up a bronze serpent to save people from the bite of the poisonous serpents. But it wasn't the bronze serpent itself that saved them. What was it?

Read John 3:14-16. Who is the Son of Man of whom the bronze serpent was the antitype (foreshadowing, symbol)?

What does it mean that He had to be lifted up? (See John 12:32-33.)

Why did He have to be lifted up?

In what way was He like the bronze serpent? (Hint: Your answer will probably contain the word *likeness*.)

(Need another hint? See Romans 8:3.)

How is salvation in Numbers 21 similar to salvation in John 3?

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION: SECTION COMPLETED

1. **Read Numbers 21:1-9.**
2. **Answer the questions.**

Signature _____

Date _____

BALAAM

Read Numbers 22-24.

A cowboy was riding his horse across the prairie one day when he happened upon an old friend sitting on the bank of a creek with his bare feet in the water. "Hey Jake," he said. "I haven't seen you in a long time. How are you?"

Jake sighed. "My feet are mighty sore, that's for sure."

The cowboy said, "Don't tell me you walked all the way out here. Where's your horse?"

"I traded him for a bear claw necklace," Jake said. "I promised my sweetheart I'd bring her a present when I returned."

"A horse for a necklace!" the cowboy exclaimed. "That seems like an awful high price."

"You don't know the half of it," Jake said. "Take a look."

He handed the cowboy a box. Inside was a length of string and a piece of paper. On the paper was written this:

Bear Claw Necklace — Instructions

1. Locate one medium to large grizzly bear.
2. Subdue.
3. Remove claws.
4. Hang claws on enclosed string.

The cowboy looked at Jake. "This is all you got for your horse?"

"That's what I asked the guy I traded with," said Jake. "And he said, 'Surely you didn't expect to find a bear in that little box.'"



We don't always get what we expect when we make a purchase. That was certainly true of Balak, king of Moab. He saw the Israelites headed his way and panicked. He sent a note to Balaam, a famous magician who lived about 400 miles (673 km) away.

Dear Balaam,

How's the family? The weather here is great, and I wish you could be here to enjoy it. In fact, there's another reason I wish you were here.

... "A people has come out of Egypt; they cover the face of the land and have settled next to me. Now come and put a curse on these people, because they are too powerful for me. Perhaps then I will be able to defeat them and drive them out of the country. For I know that those you bless are blessed, and those you curse are cursed." (Numbers 22:5-6)

Please come quickly.

Sincerely, Balak

Balaam evidently made a living as a sorcerer. We aren't told why God chose a man so obviously out of His will to be His messenger, but He did. Balaam knew *about* the God of Israel, and believed He was powerful, so he asked Balak's messengers to wait overnight. God soon made His will known — He told Balaam He didn't want him traveling to Moab.

Balak didn't give up. He sent another team of messengers — real big shots this time — along with a promise of great rewards. We can't be sure about what happened next. Evidently, God told Balaam He didn't want him to go to Moab, but He didn't actually prevent him from going. Balaam had free will and he used it. He ... *loved the wages of wickedness* (2 Peter 2:15), and so he went.

To express His displeasure, God sent an angel to block Balaam's way. Balaam couldn't see the angel, but his donkey could — and it stopped in its tracks! After Balaam beat the animal three times, the donkey rebuked him. Perhaps the oddest aspect of this account is Balaam's reaction when his donkey talked to him — he engaged it in conversation. (How would you react if your dog started complaining about the food you were feeding him? Probably not by explaining why you chose that particular brand.) God allowed Balaam to continue, but with strict instructions on what he was to do.

Three times, Balak asked Balaam to curse Israel. Four times he didn't get what he'd paid for.

From the first hill, Balaam pronounced that Israel was chosen by God as a special nation and would be blessed, not cursed.

From the second hill, Balaam states that Israel's strength comes from God and that their enemies will be destroyed.

From the third hill, Balaam prophesies about the future kingdom of Israel under a great king. Many theologians see this as a prophecy of Jesus Christ. Balaam goes on to state the fates of those nations who stand with Israel

(blessings) and those who stand against Israel (curses).

Balak was fed up with this magician. He'd paid good money to see his enemies destroyed, and all he got in return was a foretelling of his own destruction. He sent Balaam away. Before the prophet went, he had more to say — a nation-by-nation account of Israel's victories.

We've been studying a lot of passages dealing with the Israelites' sin and disobedience. It might seem like God would give up on them and choose another nation that would obey Him better. But God's plans don't depend on people — Balaam himself realized this when he said: *God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should change His mind. Does He speak and then not act? Does He promise and not fulfill? I have received a command to bless; He has blessed, and I cannot change it* (Numbers 23:19-20).

The Bible makes it clear that Balaam wasn't the hero in this event. He wanted to earn his money, but he couldn't go against God's plan. Balaam gets a few mentions in other portions of Scripture. Look up the following verses and write down in your own words what they say.

Numbers 31:8

Joshua 24:9-10

Jude 1:11

Revelation 2:14

Can you think of any way to apply what you've learned in this lesson to your current situation?

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Read Numbers 22-24.**
2. **Look up the listed passages and write down what they say.**
3. **Write out your own application.**

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____

LESSON 46: Bible Survey

REHAB

Read Joshua 2.

My golf game has never been good. A friend once told me my problem — I stood too close to the ball after I hit it.

But my game was never as bad as the time I played a course in the mountains of western Pennsylvania. Several of the fairways ran along the spines of ridges. If I had hit the ball straight, I would have been OK. But I rarely hit it straight, which meant that I had to walk down a steep hill to find it. More often than not, my second shot would go up over the ridge and down the other side. I think I climbed the equivalent of three mountains before the round was over.

In a way, life is like my golf game that day. As long as we're focused straight ahead on the Lord, we'll be fine. But as soon as we head off in any other direction, things begin to go downhill.

Focusing on the Lord is faith. It's trusting Him for everything. It's allowing Him to live in us and through us and not attempting to accomplish anything on our own.



It's what Rahab did.

On the surface, she doesn't seem like a likely candidate to be mentioned in Hebrews 11, often called the Bible's "hall of faith."

- She was a Gentile — They were ... separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world (Ephesians 2:12).
 - She was a prostitute — Some commentaries portray her as an innkeeper, but the Bible tells it like it is.
 - She broke the law — The king of Jericho was looking for the Israeli spies, but Rahab hid them.
 - She lied — Rahab didn't just hide the spies, she lied and said they'd left.

And yet there she is, right along with Noah and Abraham and Joseph and Moses and David. And not only that — she is one of five women (along with Ruth and Bathsheba) to be listed in the genealogy of Jesus Christ.

The people of Jericho had heard stories about this nation of Israel camped near their city. They were afraid. But Rahab took it a step further — she heard and believed. She had faith. God isn't looking for our accomplishments — He's looking for our faith. Do we believe Him?

Rahab's accomplishments weren't all that impressive. She was a sinful woman who protected some men to save her own life, then lied about it and begged for protection.

And it wasn't the strength of her faith that saved her either. It was, and always is, the object of faith that is important. She believed God could save her, and He did.

The scarlet cord Rahab hung from her window is seen by many Bible students as a picture of the blood of Jesus Christ. Because of it, the destruction that struck everyone else in the city passed her by. (Sound familiar? Remember the Passover?)

Rahab could have told the spies to leave immediately. She could have said to them, "I'm sorry, but the king is the law around here. I'll have to turn you over to the authorities." She could have betrayed them. But she kept her focus on God and she was saved.

Take this phrase from 2 Timothy 1:12 —
I know whom I have believed — and write a paragraph on faith with the following outline, using Rahab as an example.

- I. I **KNOW** whom I have believed
(result of faith).
 - II. I know **WHOM** I have believed
(object of faith).
 - III. I know whom I have **BELIEVED**
(method of faith).

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION: **SECTION COMPLETED**

1. Read Joshua 2.
 2. Write a short lesson on 2 Timothy 1:12 using Rahab as an example.

Signature _____

Date

SEVEN REASONS FOR MEMORIZING SCRIPTURE

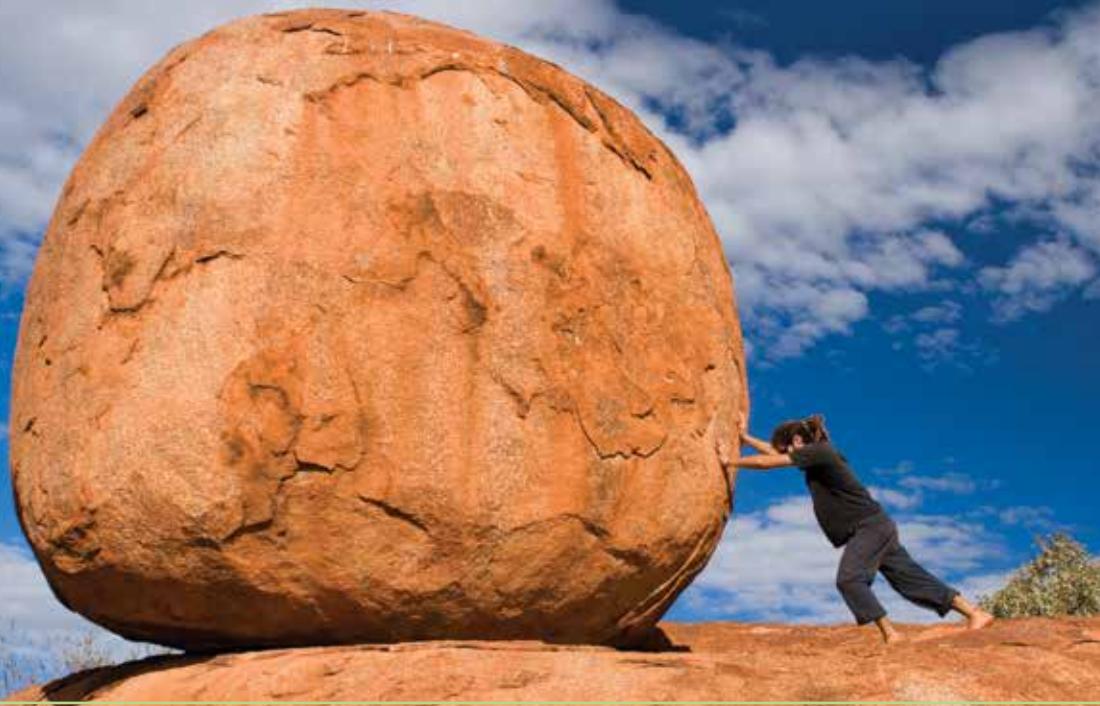
Sisyphus, in Greek mythology, was a king noted for his trickery and deceit. Legend has it that, as punishment, Sisyphus was condemned to spend eternity rolling a huge rock up a hill. Repeatedly, he would get the rock almost to the top, only to see it roll back down to the bottom. He would have to climb back down and repeat his effort — forever.

Sisyphus is fiction, of course, but he is also an apt analogy for some of the tasks we face in life — washing dishes and washing clothes, mowing the lawn, vacuuming. Sometimes it seems like we

are forced to do work that has no point, no end and no satisfaction.

Does Bible memory ever seem like a pointless, endless task to you? It can be difficult, and there are frequently moments when we despair of ever mastering a particular passage. But stick with it — there are very few things you can do in life that will be more rewarding.

Art Rorheim, the co-founder of Awana, is and always has been an ardent proponent of Bible memorization. He came up with “Seven Reasons for Memorizing Scripture” that are useful for any and all of us:



1. It is food for the soul. ... *Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God (Matthew 4:4).*
2. It helps us to know and love God. ... *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” (Matthew 22:37).*
3. It protects our hearts and minds from sins. *I have hidden Your word in my heart that I might not sin against You (Psalm 119:11).*
4. It helps us pray with confidence. *If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you (John 15:7).*
5. It is filled with God’s promises to believers. ... *“Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5).*
6. It helps us witness to nonbelievers. ... *Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have ... (1 Peter 3:15).*
7. It helps us to love and encourage others. ... *Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. (Hebrews 10:24).*

Write these reasons on a couple of note cards. Place one in your Bible and one in this book as reminders of the value of Scripture memory. (These cards will make handy bookmarks too.) Then talk through the reasons with your child and help create a similar card for his or her Sparks handbook. Your child could decorate the card with stickers and

RED JEWEL 4

John 3:14-16

Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up.

That everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life.

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.

Joshua 1:9

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.

Joshua 24:24

And the people said to Joshua, “We will serve the LORD our God and obey Him.”

markers. (You’ll want to tape or paper-clip it into the book.)

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. **Memorize and recite the verses.**
2. **Memorize and recite the seven reasons to memorize.**
3. **Create note card reminders for yourself and with your child.**

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____

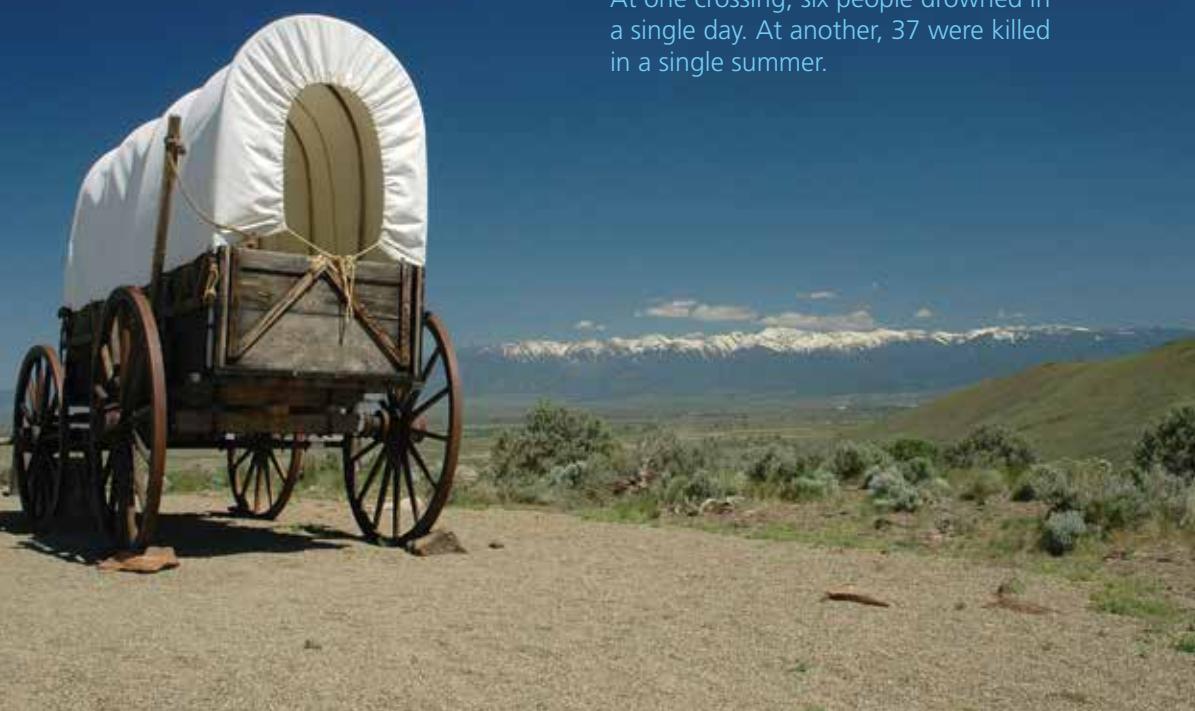
CROSSING THE JORDAN

Read Joshua 3-4.

Traveling across the United States by covered wagon was difficult, often terminally so, but about 500,000 people determined to give it a try. They had to deal with storms, heat, accidents and disease. But the most difficult challenge may have been crossing rivers.

The Kansas, the Platte, the Columbia, the Green — all ran between the pioneers and their destination. There were no bridges. At a few spots, there were ferries — but the owners charged exorbitant rates that many settlers couldn't afford. The ferries weren't always a help anyway — they were often sloppily built and capsized in mid-stream.

If the members of a wagon train decided to make their own crossing, their options weren't very attractive.



They could look for a ford where the river was shallow enough to wade. But currents were strong, bottoms were muddy and the water was freezing. Some tried to float wagons across the channel by caulking the holes and buoying the sides with barrels. At best, this would result in soaked luggage. Often, it resulted in the wagon, with all the goods and sometimes family members, being swept downstream to destruction. Others built rafts, with mixed success.

At one crossing, six people drowned in a single day. At another, 37 were killed in a single summer.

That history lesson should give you a perspective on what Joshua faced on the banks of the Jordan River. On the other shore was the land God had promised to Israel, still filled with enemies that had to be subdued. Behind him was a crowd of millions. (We know 600,000 men of fighting age left Egypt — see Exodus 12:37. Add women and children and 40 years and you can imagine how large a group there was.) Somehow he had to get that crowd across that river.

The Jordan River isn't much, as rivers go. It's rarely wider than 100 feet (30.5 m) and, in places, as shallow as three feet (0.9 m). That doesn't seem like much of a barrier — but that's during the dry season. For a short period each year, when the snow melts on Mount Hermon, it becomes an entirely different river — in places a mile (1.6 km) wide and as much as 20 feet (6 m) deeper than normal. And the Israelites arrived when it was at its peak (Joshua 3:15).

So if during most of the year the river is a narrow, fordable stream, why did Joshua (and God) arrange it so the Israelites had to cross during the flood?

1. ... *The LORD said to Joshua, "Today I will begin to exalt you in the eyes of all Israel, so they may know that I am with you as I was with Moses"* (Joshua 3:7).
2. *This is how you will know that the living God is among you ...* (Joshua 3:10).

As soon as the priests carrying the ark of the covenant stepped into the water, the river stopped flowing. The water piled up in a heap. The entire nation was able to cross the river by walking on the dry bottom.

Some people have tried to explain this occurrence away. They say the water was stopped by an earthquake. (This has actually happened on the Jordan River. On at least three occasions in the past, part of the bank has fallen into the channel and the river has stopped flowing until the water found another way over or around the blockage.) God could have used an earthquake or other natural event. But that is very unlikely during the flood season. And it doesn't make it less of a miracle. Remember, the water stopped flowing the exact moment the priests stepped in the river and started flowing again the moment the priests exited the riverbed.

Joshua knew it was a miracle. He knew where the credit belonged. God told him to have the Israelites create two monuments of stones — 12 stones in each, one for each tribe. One monument was built in the center of the river and was soon underwater. The other monument was built perhaps as much as five miles (8 km) away.

If I told you I drove past your house last night, you'd have no way of knowing if I was really there. But if I drive by again tonight and stop and stack stones in your driveway, you'll have evidence of my presence. In the same way, the monuments that Joshua had built were a testimony that God had been with the Israelites.

The first time Israel had approached the Promised Land, the people had believed the negative reports of the spies and been afraid. This time they trusted God and continued on. God showed them what happened when they demonstrated faith in Him. The stone monuments were a memorial to God's power.



Joshua explained the monuments in this way: ... *In the future, when your children ask you, "What do these stones mean?" tell them that the flow of the Jordan was cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever* (Joshua 4:6-7).

Let's make this more personal. The moment we trust Jesus Christ as Savior, we receive the Holy Spirit. *And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession — to the praise of His glory* (Ephesians 1:13-14). The Holy Spirit is our monument, the evidence of

God's presence in our lives. We access His power by faith, the same way the Israelites accessed the power of God.

What is the Jordan River in your life? What crisis or temptation are you facing that seems impossible to handle? Are you prepared to step forward in faith like the priests of Israel stepped into the swollen flood?

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Read Joshua 3 and 4.

SECTION COMPLETED.

Signature _____

Date _____

LESSON 49: Bible Survey

JERICHO

Read Joshua 6 and 7.

During the 1930s, the people of Belgium began to get nervous about their neighbors to the east, and with good reason. The German army had its sights set on the conquest of Europe. To protect a vulnerable section of the border, the Belgian army built Fort Eben-Emael. It was a huge complex, 800 by 650 yards (731 by 594 meters), with underground tunnels that stretched for miles. The fort had its own kitchen, hospital, hairdressers and barracks and could hold more than 1,200 troops. Built on a ridge and bordered by a river and canal, the fortress also had a wealth of man-made defenses — moats, artillery and anti-aircraft weapons. It was considered impregnable by military authorities worldwide.

Early in the morning of May 10, 1940, 78 German soldiers landed on the roof of the fortress in gliders and attacked the structure with a new type of explosive. Less than 20 minutes later, the defenses had been completely overwhelmed and 24 hours later, the final Belgian soldier had surrendered.



The German attack was creative and unexpected, but it wasn't supernatural.

The Canaanites built the fortress of Jericho to protect the eastern border of their nation. It was necessary for the Israelites to capture it before moving further into the land because they couldn't afford to leave a strong force to their rear.

The inhabitants of Jericho knew of the Israelites. Rahab told the spies that everyone was afraid because God was on their side. But reputation alone wouldn't knock down the walls.

Reputation couldn't, but faith could. God gave Joshua a plan to destroy the city and it was creative, it was unexpected ... and in this case it was also supernatural.

Imagine what it must have been like for the Canaanite defenders of Jericho. They were holed up in the city expecting an attack from an army that had defeated every nation in its path. The Canaanites had supplies to withstand a long siege (archaeologists have found full grain bins and brick ovens containing unbaked bread) and were ready for anything. *Almost* anything.

Day one — The soldiers of Jericho line the walls in anticipation of an assault. They see the Israelite army approach, strangely quiet, led by men blowing on trumpets followed by other men carrying a box. This strange army begins to circle the city. The defenders watch, confused, as the long string of troops marches all the way around the walls and then leaves. Maybe the Canaanites felt pride. "Our walls are too strong for them. They couldn't find a way in."

Day two — Same thing. Trumpeters, the box, the army. They march around the city and leave. The defenders probably begin thinking this is a bit spooky.

Day three — Again. No attack, just this odd procession. These guys are weird. Perhaps the Canaanites begin to taunt the Israelites. "Go march somewhere else. You're making us dizzy."

Day four, five and six — Will it never end?

Day seven — "Wait, they're not leaving! They're going around again!" Once, twice, three times ... four, five, six, seven.

Suddenly the army, the army that had remained silent up until now, shouted. And at that moment, the walls of the fortress collapsed. In a matter of minutes, the defeat of the Canaanites was complete. Every person in the city (except Rahab and her family) was killed. All (or almost all) their possessions were destroyed. It wasn't done with a new weapon — it was done by faith (Hebrews 11:30).

This was one time when Israel got it right. They did what God instructed and everything went as God said it would. When the army marched around Jericho, they carried the ark and were led by priests, indicating that God was in control.

There was one man in the Israelite army who chose his own path.

How did Joshua discover that God was angry with Israel?

What had Achan done that made God angry?

When Achan confessed, how did he describe his sin?

In what way was Achan's sin similar to what we read in Genesis 3:6?

How does it relate to 1 John 2:16?

What application can you take from these passages? (Contrast Joshua's actions before Jericho with Achan's sin.)

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION: SECTION COMPLETED

- 1. Read Joshua 6 and 7.**
- 2. Answer the questions.**

Signature _____

Date _____

CONQUERING CANAAN

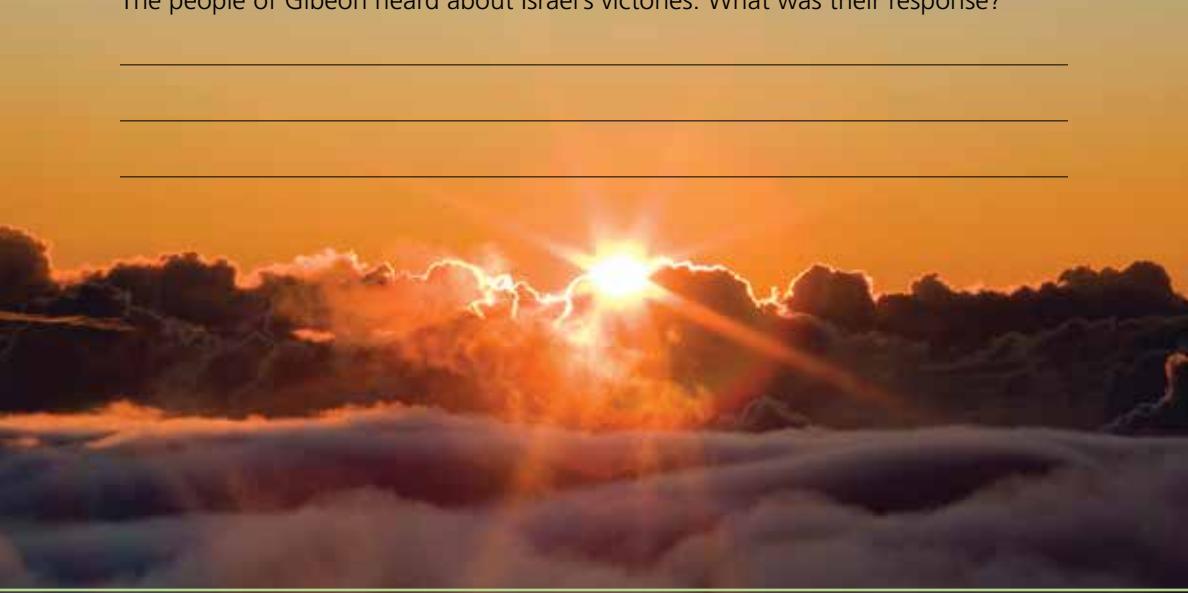
Read Joshua 8-11.

After Achan was dealt with, what did God promise Joshua about Ai?

The name of the city Ai means “the heap.” What strategy did Joshua use to cause the city to live up to its name?

At Jericho, the city was defeated by a miracle. At Ai, Joshua used strategy. But even so, he didn’t take the credit to himself. According to Joshua 8:30 and 34, what did Joshua do after the battle?

The people of Gibeon heard about Israel’s victories. What was their response?



According to Joshua 9:14, why did Israel make a treaty with Gibeon?

When the Israelites found out about Gibeon’s deception, they still kept their part of the deal. Why?

The people of Gibeon didn’t entirely escape from the consequences of their deception. What was Joshua’s edict concerning them?

The king of Jerusalem heard the same reports about Israel’s victories that the Gibeons did, but he responded in a different way. What did he do?

Joshua led the army of Israel on a long night march and confronted the assembly of their enemies. Joshua prayed for assistance and God provided it. The Bible says that the sun stopped and gave Israel time to defeat its enemies. Many theologians, writing on Joshua, say that the text of this passage allows for a different interpretation than a casual reading might present. Israel marched and attacked at night. Joshua 10:11 says that more of the enemy were killed by hailstones than by the Israelites. It could be that the sun appeared to stand still because the storm made the land dark much longer than would normally be the case. The sun didn’t stop, but the darkness continued. This doesn’t mean that God didn’t perform a miracle. He did. But a miracle of a timely and targeted hailstorm wouldn’t violate the laws of physics that God created (although He could have — and maybe did). We mention this because it’s interesting and to point out that it’s important, in serious Bible study, to dig into the meaning of the original language and make sure we know what the author was saying.

Whatever the miracle, what was the result?

Joshua 10:42 explains Israel's success. How were they able to defeat so many enemies without a setback?

The king of Hazor saw what was happening and learned his lesson. He surrendered to Israel and made peace with them, right? Wrong. What did he do?

How did it work out for him?

Joshua 11:15 and 23 make reference to something God had told Moses. What was this, and where in the Bible can it be found? (You can probably find the passage simply by paging back through your Bible, but if that doesn't work, you can use any other resources you need.)

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION: SECTION COMPLETED

1. Read Joshua 8-11.

Signature _____

2. Answer the questions.

Date _____



LESSON 51: The Big Picture

DEATH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

We hear on the news that several children are killed in an attack at a school. We are shocked and rightly so.

We see on TV that another terrorist's bomb has gone off in the Middle East and killed a busload full of people, including women and children. We are sad and rightly so.

We see photographs of the Holocaust with lines of women and children waiting to file into the gas chambers. We are overwhelmed and rightly so.

Death, particularly the death of a child, is a repeated reminder of the fallen nature of the world.

But current events aren't the only place we can find this reminder.

Already in this book we've studied several accounts of mass deaths.

When Noah and his family were on the ark, every person left outside died — including women and children.

When God freed the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, every firstborn son not protected by the blood of a lamb died.

When the Israelites conquered Jericho, *They ... destroyed with the sword every living thing in it — men and women, young and old ... (Joshua 6:21)*

And when Achan was caught with the forbidden loot from the city, not only was he stoned and burned, but so were his sons and daughters.

This list could be much longer.

What is this? Why did God instruct His people to be so merciless? Why did the innocent children have to die? Why does the God of love seem so cruel?

Our confusion results from our lifeboat mentality — women and children first. It's a noble attitude from a cultural point of view, but it's not what the Bible has to say. The Holy Spirit makes it very clear that all of us — men, women, young, old — are equally deserving of death.

... "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." (*Romans 3:10-12*)

Everyone is a sinner, and the punishment for sin is death (*Romans 6:23*).

Wait ... we know all this, but doesn't the Bible say that God wants all people to live?

It does (*2 Peter 3:9*). But He's also given us free will and allows us to determine our own fate. We can accept the gift of life He freely offers or we can reject it.

The thing we must always keep in mind is that, yes, God is a God of love. But He's also a God of justice and the price for sin MUST be paid. If a person isn't willing to accept the death of Christ as payment, he must offer his own payment in the form of his own death.

What about children? If you think children don't have free will or that they don't sin, you either haven't been around many children or you weren't paying attention. *Even from birth the wicked go astray; from the womb they are wayward and speak lies (Psalm 58:3)*. Children sin long before they grow up to be adult sinners. All sin results in death.

2 Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Many theologians believe that God saves anyone who dies before he or she is old enough to fully understand what's at stake. This belief is called the "age of accountability." That phrase isn't in the Bible, nor can we open our Bibles to a verse that clearly states it. But we are told this about God: ... *He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion" (Romans 9:15)*. It would be consistent with God's character to save those who are incapable of making a decision on their own for any reason. (Look back at

Lesson 14 on Job for a study on God's sovereignty.)

Back to the Old Testament. It seems that God instructed the Israelites to be particularly brutal to their enemies over and above what was necessary. Again, we need to understand the context. Humans had rejected God repeatedly, individually and en masse, just as God knew they would. As part of His unfolding plan, God picked a particular nation, Israel, to be His chosen method of saving the world through the death of His Son, Jesus Christ. Nothing could be allowed to interfere with God's plan. Whenever Israel disobeyed God and befriended pagan nations, they soon abandoned the worship of God and began worshiping idols. God would have to punish them and remind them of their own best interests — obeying Him.

With a few exceptions (the flood, Babel), God has pretty much allowed the natural consequences of sin to operate, and that has always resulted in the physical and spiritual death of sinners. But when pagan nations directly opposed Israel, and thus God's plan for humanity's redemption, the consequences on that people were sudden and severe.

Now for the good news. God's plan is complete. Christ has died to pay for sins and rose again to bring life to all who believe. Sin still reigns on this earth, and death is still the result, but God is no longer instructing us to kill those who oppose us. On the contrary, we are to show our enemies the same love Christ showed us when we were His enemies — the willingness to die for their sakes.

Don't be swayed by the argument that a loving God would never allow war or murder or the death of a child. All

of those things are the result of sin, not God. And don't let yourself think that God is sitting by and not doing anything about it. He sent His only Son whom He loved with a love that has no equal to suffer humiliation and pain and to die in our place. Anybody — ANYBODY — who trusts in Jesus Christ will live joyfully and abundantly forever. Never forget; *The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance* (*2 Peter 3:9*).

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Memorize and recite *2 Peter 3:9*.

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____



DIVIDING THE LAND

Read Joshua 23.

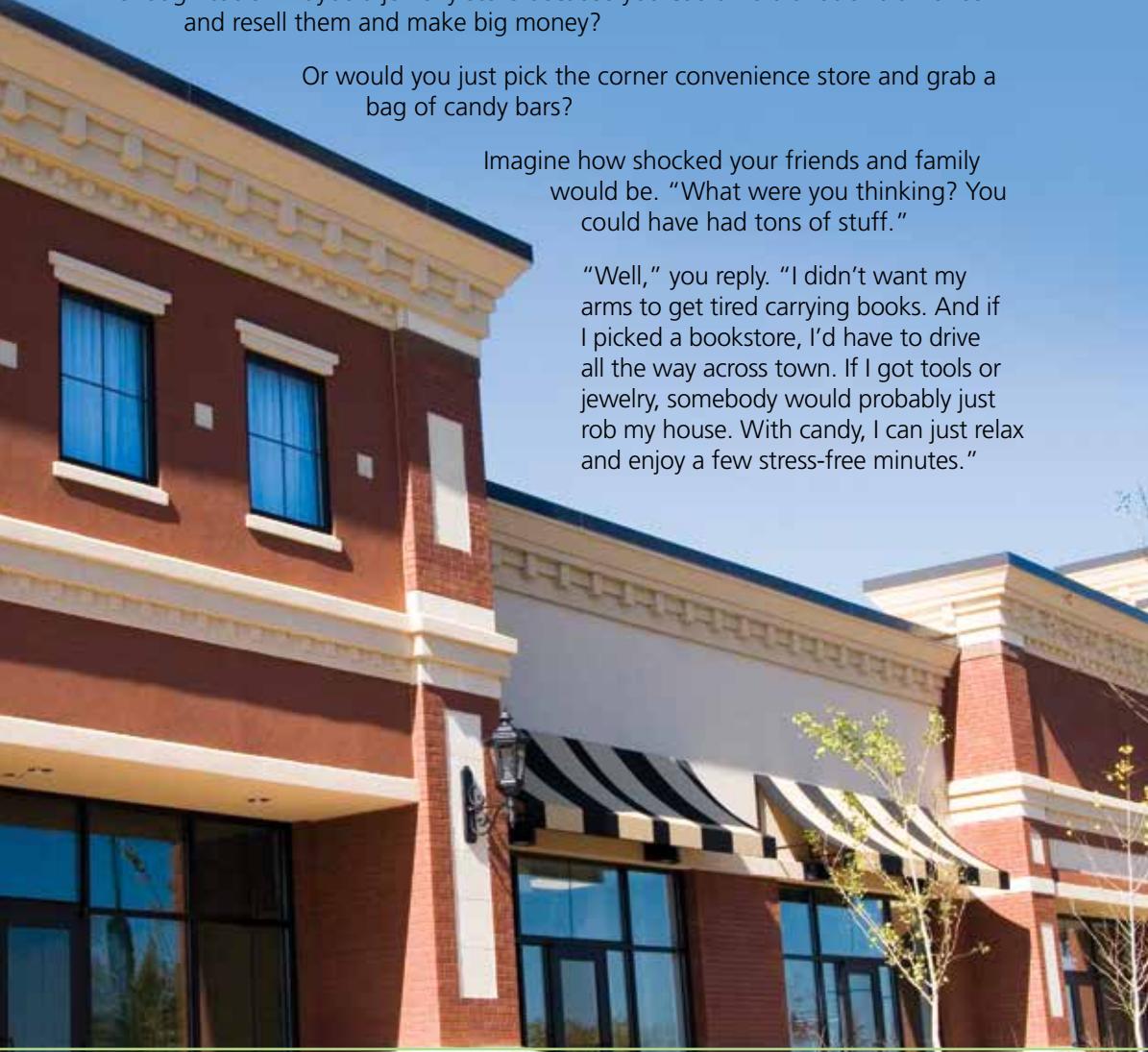
Congratulations! You've been entered into a drawing and you've won first prize! You can choose any store in town and, at the allotted time, grab as much merchandise as you can hold in five minutes. Any store, any amount of stuff — if you can pick it up within five minutes, it's yours!

What would you do with a prize like that? Would you choose a bookstore because you love to read? Would you select a hardware store because you can't have enough tools? Maybe a jewelry store because you could hold a lot of diamonds and resell them and make big money?

Or would you just pick the corner convenience store and grab a bag of candy bars?

Imagine how shocked your friends and family would be. "What were you thinking? You could have had tons of stuff."

"Well," you reply. "I didn't want my arms to get tired carrying books. And if I picked a bookstore, I'd have to drive all the way across town. If I got tools or jewelry, somebody would probably just rob my house. With candy, I can just relax and enjoy a few stress-free minutes."



That's a little bit like the situation Israel was in. God had promised the people that they would inherit the land. He promised that He would help them drive out the inhabitants and watch over them. It was a no-lose situation.

Israel did enter the land, and they did fight some battles and gain a lot of ground. But they didn't take full advantage of God's promises.

- Instead of taking their full portion of the land, the people of the tribe of Ephraim allowed the locals (the Canaanites) to stick around and work for them (Joshua 16:10). It must have seemed easier that way, but they paid a price for it in the end.
- The people of the tribe of Manasseh made the same mistake (Joshua 17:12-13). They didn't drive Canaanites out either. When the Manassites got strong enough, they made the Canaanites work for them, but that's not at all the same thing.
- The Ephramites had another problem. They didn't think their land was large enough. They went to Joshua to complain. He didn't pay much attention. He just told them to go cut down some trees and make more land for themselves. But, they said, the people of that land had iron chariots (Joshua 17:14-18).
- Finally, Joshua had to give several tribes a kick in the pants, so to speak. He asked them how long they were planning on waiting until they took what God had given them (Joshua 18:3).

Before you laugh too loudly, realize that we do the exact same thing.

Paul said to the believers in the town of Ephesus: *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ (Ephesians 1:3).*

But how many of those spiritual blessings have we taken advantage of? Look up the following verses, write down the blessing that is available to us and then add a sentence assessing how much of that blessing you've grabbed.

Romans 15:13

2 Corinthians 12:9

Ephesians 1:17

Ephesians 1:19

Philippians 1:29

Philippians 4:7

Titus 2:13

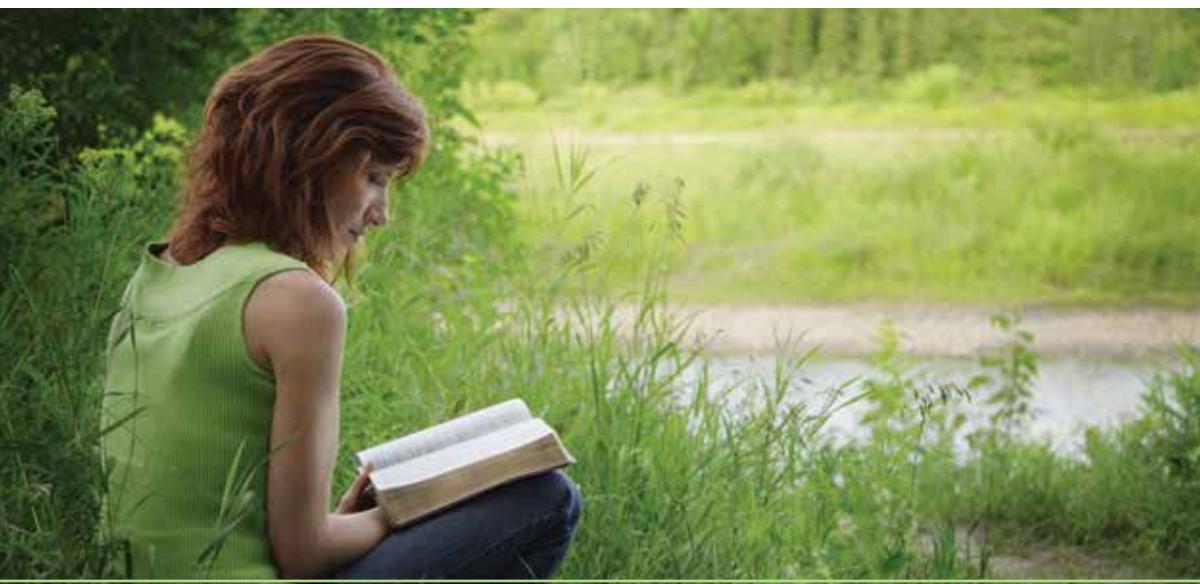
TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Read Joshua 23.
2. Look up the listed verses and write down the blessings they mention.
3. Write down how well you're doing at receiving that blessing.

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____



LESSON 53: The Big Picture

THE LAND

In 1956, your grandfather was 21 years old. His father, your great grandfather, gave him a brand new Chevy Corvette, just off the lot. Your grandfather loved that car and took great care of it. When his son, your father, turned 21, your grandfather gave him the car.

Your father also took great pride in that car and to this day it is still in pristine condition. For your entire childhood and youth, your father would always take you for a ride in the car on your birthday. And at the end of the ride, your father would, without fail, promise you that on your 21st birthday, the car would be yours. There were no strings attached — it was a clear promise.

Your 21st birthday arrives and you wait expectantly for your father to turn the keys over to you. But when you see him at breakfast, he says nothing. *Fine, you think, he's going to give it to me at supper. But supper comes and goes and still no mention of the car.* Finally, you can't take it any longer. "Dad," you say. "It's my 21st birthday. Did you forget something?"

"Oh, yeah," your dad replies, and hands you an envelope. You open it up, expecting to find the title to the car. But instead you find a \$30 gift card to the local hardware store.

"But Dad," you cry, "you promised me the Corvette. You can't break your promise."

You dad says, "I didn't break my promise. I gave a painting of a Thunderbird to your cousin."

If that really happened, what would you be thinking? A painting isn't a car, a Thunderbird isn't a Corvette, and you certainly aren't your cousin. Your father can't keep a promise to you by giving something entirely different to somebody else. It makes no sense.

But that's exactly what many people think God has done. They think God has already fulfilled the physical promises He made to Abraham to give Israel the land forever (Genesis 15:18) by giving the Church a spiritual kingdom. God's promises to Abraham were unconditional, as we studied back in Lesson 17. Israel will inherit the land God intended His people to have — and it won't be the gerrymandered slice of land the nation of Israel currently possesses.

Let's take a closer look at that land. After each city or place description below is a Bible passage. Look up the verses and write down what historical event happened at that location.

Nablus today — A city with a population of about 130,000 people, located in the West Bank, about 40 miles (64.4 km) north of Jerusalem. It is the capital of the surrounding area, but Israel controls the borders. The inhabitants are mostly Muslim, and there are several Palestinian refugee camps in the vicinity. Industries in the city include the making of soap and *kanafeh*, a sweet pastry used in desserts.

NABLUS (SHECHEM) IN THE BIBLE

Genesis 12:6-7

Genesis 33:18-20

Genesis 37:13, 18-28

Hebron today — Also located in the West Bank, about 16 miles (25.7 km) south of Jerusalem. The population of about 160,000 is predominantly Muslim with a tiny community of Jews and three "Christians" who are caretakers of a Russian Orthodox church. The area produces grapes, figs and dairy products and is known for pottery and glassblowing. It's also known for recurring attacks by Muslims against the Jews and by Jews against Muslims.



HEBRON IN THE BIBLE

Genesis 23:19

Joshua 10:36-37

2 Samuel 2:3-4 (to jump ahead a bit)

Jerusalem today — The city is the capital of the country of Israel. It is located in the Judean Mountains, which include the Mount of Olives to the east. The population of 700,000+ is about 65 percent Jewish and 35 percent Muslim. Many Christians, Jews and Muslims travel to Jerusalem to see locations associated with their faiths, and the city's economy depends largely on tourism. The Palestinians wish to make East Jerusalem the capital of their independent state. Disagreement over the sovereignty of that portion of the city (which includes many of the sites considered most holy by the Jews) creates much tension.

JERUSALEM IN THE BIBLE

Joshua 10

1 Kings 2:11 (to jump ahead in the story)

2 Chronicles 3:1

The Bible is rooted in time and place — the events you've been studying aren't fictional stories but real history. The places where Abraham and Moses and Joshua lived and fought and failed and trusted God are still around. We don't know exactly where all of them are on today's map, but we can be sure God does. More of God's plan is yet to be unfolded, and the land of Israel will play a prominent part in the future.

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Look up the references listed in the lesson and write down what happened in each.

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____



LESSON 54: Bible Survey

DO-IT-YOURSELF BIBLE STUDY

Write your own lesson. We're sure that somewhere during the course of this study you had one of the two following thoughts:

- Why isn't there a lesson on ...?
- Hmm. I wish there was another lesson on ...

What topic from Genesis to Joshua would you like to know more about?

Now research the topic/passage in any resource you can find — commentaries, Bible dictionaries, word studies. Use your church library or talk with your pastor to get ideas. You can do research on the Internet, but make sure the source is reputable.

Fill out the following points: (You can use a separate piece of paper if you wish.)

Topic: _____

Scripture passage(s): _____

Main point/idea: _____

Supporting Point 1: _____

Supporting Point 2: _____

Supporting Point 3: _____

Conclusion: _____

Application: _____

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:	SECTION COMPLETED
----------------------------------	--------------------------

1. **Pick a topic or passage of Scripture that you want to investigate further.**
2. **Research your topic.**
3. **Complete the outline.**

Signature _____

Date _____

RULING WITH GRACE

At an outdoor market in a major U.S. city, where booths are set up to sell food and crafts, the following rules are prominently posted.

- Persons shall not harass, annoy or interrupt patrons.
- Clothing must be zippered, buttoned or fastened to avoid indecent exposure.
- Personal hygiene shall conform to the generally accepted standards of the community, and shall not be so offensive as to disturb others.
- Persons shall not engage in fighting or using abusive language.
- Persons shall not deface or mutilate any market property.
- No weapons are allowed in the market.
- Littering within the building or on the grounds is forbidden.

It's easy to understand why these rules exist. The surprising thing is that people have to be told that these rules exist. But we live in a society in which many people are ignorant of the standards of polite society. They haven't been trained how to behave properly.



Proverbs 22:6 teaches an important principle: *Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.* Keep in mind that this is a principle, not a promise — and that even when a child is properly trained you can be sure that child won't be perfect.

The word *train* in Proverbs 22:6 means "to drill, to mold, to narrow behavior to conform to rules." Parents are to establish rules and then see to it that their children obey those rules.

Obedience is not natural. We're all sinners by nature and eager to have our own way. Paul, in Ephesians 6:1-3, instructs children to obey. They are to listen carefully and conform to what their parents are saying.

And while a little bit of fear of consequences isn't a bad thing for children to have, their motivation should be respect for their parents and — even more importantly — respect

GREEN JEWEL 4

Ephesians 6:1

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

for the Lord. The Lord says to obey your parents, and because He says it, it is right.

The phrase "in the Lord" is used for earthly relationships under the authority of the Lord. God makes the rules, and He has established parents as the authorities over children.

There are consequences that kick in when children disobey parents. The most obvious is punishment. But there are natural consequences too. A child that disobeys a rule not to run into traffic won't enjoy a long life on earth. A child that refuses to eat the good food his parents serve will suffer bad health.

But none of this gives parents the right to establish just any rules. The making of the rules should be just as much "in the Lord" as the obedience. Rules need to be firm, consistent and fair.

- Don't make rules your children can't keep. — "Your clothes must be as neat and spotless at the end of the day as when you put them on in the morning."
- Don't make rules you can't enforce. — "Put your toys away or I'll sell you to gypsies."
- Make sure your punishments fit the crimes. — "You spilled your milk; you're grounded for six months."

Ephesians 6:4 says: *Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.*

Exasperate conveys the idea of an irritation which would produce despondency. A child who is forced to attempt to obey rules he can't keep will soon quit trying. A child whose rules aren't consistently enforced will not know where her boundaries are and will act out in an attempt to find them. A child whose punishments don't fit his crimes will be discouraged and eventually rebel. In other words, don't find fault with your children to the point where they feel they can do nothing right and become depressed.

The Lord disciplines us. He brings us along at a steady pace, working in us to sanctify us for His service. He loves us and deals with us in grace. He understands that we are imperfect sinners and deals with us as such. If He didn't deal with us as sinners, He wouldn't be able to deal with us at all, because sinners are what we are.

As parents, we should treat our children the same way the Lord treats us — with love and grace. We should gently disciple them to grow while understanding their imperfections.

All of us, whether children or parents, should behave as under God's authority and make bringing Him glory our motivation.

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

1. Memorize and recite the verse.

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____

LESSON 56: The Big Picture

CHOICES

Read Joshua 24.

Adam and Eve had a choice — they chose what looked good and ended up dying.

Noah had a choice — he chose God and was saved from the flood.

Abraham had a choice — he chose God and ended up as the father of a great nation.

Lot had a choice — he chose what looked good and ended up losing his home and his wife and fleeing for his life.

Job had a choice — he chose God and ended up with wealth and blessings.

Achan had a choice — he chose riches and died.

Joshua had a choice — he chose God.



As you read Joshua 24, notice how many pronouns refer to God. Joshua is making a point. Nothing that happened to Israel throughout their history had anything to do with them. God did the work. All they were required to do was choose — their own way or God's way. When they did things God's way, things went well. When they chose their own way, things didn't.

You have a choice.

This — *For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things (Philippians 3:18-19).*

Or this — *But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await 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).*

Again, God (in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ) has done and is doing all the work. All we have to do is choose.

Was there a lesson in this book that got you thinking about a situation in your life? A choice you have to make regarding whom you serve?

Ultimately, every person will be responsible for his or her own choices.

As a parent or Awana clubs leader (or as a parent and an Awana clubs leader!), the choices we make influence the children in our lives. If they see a

pattern of bad choices, they will learn that what we say doesn't really matter. If they see humility and reliance on God, they will, at least, consider that option when they make their own choices.

Ultimately, every person will be responsible for his or her own choices. But the Lord makes it very clear that our behavior has an impact (see Romans 14:1-15:7 for more details).

Pick one of the points from Romans 14:1-15:7 and write in your own words how your behavior can influence your children.

But as for me and my household, we will serve

(Joshua 24:15b).

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION:

- 1. Read Joshua 24.**
- 2. Write how your behavior can influence children based on Romans 14:1-15:7.**

SECTION COMPLETED

Signature _____

Date _____

LESSON 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.

LESSON 3

1 Corinthians 15:4
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
... "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved ..."

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LESSON 11

John 20:31
...These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God ...

Psalm 118:1
Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good ...

1 John 4:19
We love because He first loved us.

LESSON 20

2 Corinthians 5:19
That God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And He has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

Awana at Home • Sparks Beginnings

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LESSON 36

Matthew	Titus
Mark	Philemon
Luke	Hebrews
John	James
Acts	1 Peter
Romans	2 Peter
1 Corinthians	1 John
2 Corinthians	2 John
Galatians	3 John
Ephesians	Jude
Philippians	Revelation
Colossians	
1 Thessalonians	
2 Thessalonians	
1 Timothy	
2 Timothy	

LESSON 47

John 3:14-16
Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up. That everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life.

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.

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LESSON 8

Genesis 3:6
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. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

1 John 2:16
For everything in the world — the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does — comes not from the Father but from the world.

LESSON 28

Colossians 1:3
We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you.

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LESSON 9						
Romans 5:19 <i>For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.</i>						
LESSON 4	LESSON 2					
Ephesians 1:3-6 <i>Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will — to the praise of His glorious grace, which He has freely given us in the One He loves.</i>	1 John 4:14 <i>And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world.</i>					
NIV®	NIV®	NIV®				
LESSON 30	LESSON 23	LESSON 19				
2 Timothy 2:15 <i>Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.</i>	John 17:17 <i>Sanctify them by the truth; Your word is truth.</i>	Genesis 1:1 <i>In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.</i>				
NIV®	NIV®	NIV®				
LESSON 55	LESSON 47 (CONTINUED)	LESSON 42				
Ephesians 6:1 <i>Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.</i>	Joshua 1:9 <i>Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.</i>	John 3:14-16 <i>Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up.</i>				
NIV®	NIV®	NIV®				
LESSON 1	LESSON 3					
John 3:16 <i>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.</i>	1 Corinthians 15:4 <i>And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.</i>					
KJV	KJV					
LESSON 8						
Genesis 3:6 <i>And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.</i>						
1 John 2:16 <i>For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.</i>						
KJV						
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LESSON 11	LESSON 20	LESSON 28				
John 20:31 <i>But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God ...</i>	2 Corinthians 5:19 <i>To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.</i>	Colossians 1:3 <i>We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you.</i>				
KJV	KJV	KJV				
LESSON 36	LESSON 47	LESSON 51				
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	John 3:14-16 <i>And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.</i>				
KJV	KJV	KJV				
LESSON 42						
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.						
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LESSON 9	LESSON 4	LESSON 2	LESSON 1	LESSON 3	LESSON 8
Romans 5:19 <i>For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.</i>	Ephesians 1:3-6 <i>Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved.</i>	1 John 4:14 <i>And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.</i>	John 3:16 <i>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.</i>	1 Corinthians 15:4 <i>And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.</i>	Genesis 3:6 <i>So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.</i>
KJV	KJV	KJV	NKJV™	NKJV™	NKJV™
LESSON 30	LESSON 23	LESSON 19	LESSON 11	LESSON 20	LESSON 28
2 Timothy 2:15 <i>Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.</i>	John 17:17 <i>Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth.</i>	Genesis 1:1 <i>In the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth.</i>	John 20:31 <i>But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God ...</i>	2 Corinthians 5:19 <i>That is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.</i>	Colossians 1:3 <i>We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you.</i>
KJV	KJV	KJV	NKJV™	NKJV™	NKJV™
LESSON 55	LESSON 47 (CONTINUED)	LESSON 42	LESSON 36	LESSON 47	LESSON 51
Ephesians 6:1 <i>Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.</i>	Joshua 1:9 <i>Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.</i>	John 3:14-16 <i>And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.</i>	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	John 3:14-16 <i>And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.</i>
KJV	KJV	KJV	NKJV™	NKJV™	NKJV™
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LESSON 9

Romans 5:19
For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

LESSON 4

Ephesians 1:3-6
Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.

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LESSON 30

2 Timothy 2:15
Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

LESSON 23

John 17:17
Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

1 Peter 1:25
But the word of the LORD endures forever. Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.

John 14:6
Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

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LESSON 55

Ephesians 6:1
Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

LESSON 47 (CONTINUED)

Joshua 1:9
Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.

Joshua 24:24
And the people said to Joshua, "The Lord our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey!"

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LESSON 2

1 John 4:14
And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world.

Psalm 147:5
Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite.

1 Corinthians 15:3
For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.

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