

FROM MANKIND'S BIRTH TO THE EXODUS

JUNIOR 1 YEAR 2 BOOK 1



Teacher's Guide and Student Handouts

Overview of Genesis and Exodus

Passages: Genesis, Exodus

Memory Verse

“Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine.” (Exodus 19:5)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Works [Behavior]
1. The themes in Genesis are beginnings, sin, and salvation. 2. The themes in Exodus are slavery, redemption, and God’s holy nation.	1. God is an almighty God, full of love and justice. 2. God is holy, and desires for His people to be holy.	Remember God’s love in our daily lives by acting out His will, devoting our time and thoughts to Him, and interceding for others.

Overview

Events and Spiritual Teachings

- A. The Book of Genesis: Beginnings
- B. The Book of Genesis: Sin and Salvation
- C. The Book of Exodus: Slavery and Redemption
 - 1. Slavery
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- D. The Book of Exodus: God’s Holy Nation
 - 1. God’s Special Treasure
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Life Application: How Does God Love Me?

Memory Verse

Conclusion: The Books of Genesis and Exodus teach us the basic premise behind our need for salvation, and how to receive it. It also shows the roots of God’s plan for salvation, established even before the creation of the world.

Events and Spiritual Teachings

A. The Book of Genesis: Beginnings

In this lesson, we will be exploring three major themes found in Genesis: “beginnings,” “sin,” and “the promise of salvation.” The Hebrew name for the book, *Beresheet*, means “in the beginning,” while the Greek word *genesis* means “origin” or “source.” While the book is obviously the beginning of the Bible, there are actually many different “beginnings” or “sources” written in this book. It teaches us the beginnings of:

- Creation
- Man
- Marriage
- Civilization
- Sin
- Salvation
- Prophecy
- The Israelite Nation

As you can see, there are many “beginnings” recorded, but the Book of Genesis is most famously known for its creation story. There are hundreds of different stories about the creation of the world, and about how people came to be. These stories form the basic foundation of any ancient religion because the question of how the world came to be is a fundamental one that people always tend to ask. But the Bible tells us plainly and explicitly how creation came to be: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” With this simple statement, God’s existence, power, and sovereignty are clearly demonstrated. We will never know how exactly God created the universe, but the Bible tells us three ways by which the world was created.

- He created all things through His Spirit (Gen 1:2; Job 26:13)
- He created all things by His words (Ps 33:6, 9)
- He created all things from nothing (Heb 11:3)

What does the universe teach us about God?

As much as we’d like to have all the answers about how the world came to be, the purpose of creation is not for us to focus on the things that are created, but to know the Creator (Rom 1:20). God wants us to look at the world around us and learn about God Himself. Looking at creation, we can see that God is:

- The maker of the heavens and the earth
- An almighty God, for whom nothing is impossible
- An eternal God, with all things under His control
- A God who cares and provides for us by preparing a beautiful world, teeming with living things and food for us to enjoy
- A creative God, who filled the world with beauty, wisdom, artistry, and grandeur

B. The Book of Genesis: Sin and Salvation

The “beginning” that is most important for us to learn about is the beginning of sin, and the beginning of the plan for salvation that God set in motion as a result. When God created mankind, He gave him character, will, and the freedom to choose. By giving Adam and Eve the one commandment not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, He wanted to establish an order where He is the Creator and His creation would obey Him in recognition of His sovereignty. But God does not demand obedience. He gave Adam the freedom of choice. If he chose to obey, God would bless him, but if he disobeyed, there

would be consequences. Sadly, Adam and Eve did disobey, so they suffered several consequences for their sin against God:

- They lost their intimate relationship with God.
- They were cast out of the garden.
- They lost the trusting relationship between husband and wife.
- Adam was condemned to toil the earth for survival, and Eve, to suffer pain in childbirth.
- They were condemned to a physical and spiritual death because sin was now in the world.

With sin now in the world, we were condemned to death. But because of God’s love for us, long before the creation of the world, He set up a plan to destroy death and restore mankind to be His children once again. The entire Bible revolves around this salvation plan, but the events that take place in the Book of Genesis actually point towards God’s master plan of sending His Son to die on the cross, defeat sin, and establish the true church for the salvation of mankind. Let’s look at some of these events that point to God’s plans.

Foreshadowing	Fulfillment
God created light and separated it from darkness.	The Lord Jesus declared that He is the light of the world, who shines into our darkened hearts to transform us, so that we can be partakers of God’s divine nature (2 Cor 6:9; 2 Pet 1:4).
“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.” (Gen 3:15)	The “Seed” of the woman refers to the Lord Jesus. The serpent refers to the ancient serpent, Satan (Rev 12:9). Satan tried to bruise the heel of Jesus by having Him nailed to the cross. But God used the death of Jesus to destroy Satan and save mankind from sin and death.
The coverings of fig leaves they had made were insufficient, so God made garments of skin for Adam and Eve, meaning an animal was sacrificed (Gen 3:7, 21).	This prefigures how the Lord Jesus is the Lamb of God who was sacrificed for mankind’s sin. Mankind cannot save themselves by their own actions, but must rely on the Lord’s sacrifice, mercy, and grace (Tit 3:5).
The garden of Eden was planted in the east, with four rivers that watered the garden. It contained gold and precious stones, and all creatures lived in harmony (Gen 2:8–14).	Eden represents the true church established by God Himself. It arose from the east, in China, in 1917. The presence of the Holy Spirit waters the hearts of its members, and the complete gospel of salvation offers peace, joy, and harmony.
Noah built an ark according to the exact dimensions and instructions from God. As a result, those who entered the ark were saved during the flood (Gen 6:13–7:23).	The ark represents the true church of the end times. Just as there was only one ark, only one church will lead the way to salvation. And as Noah followed God’s instructions, the true church must be built upon the teachings of the prophets, apostles, and the Lord Jesus, so that all who enter can be saved.

In summary, while the Book of Genesis both raises and answers many questions about the beginning of creation, its purpose is to make us aware of sin, of why we need salvation, of God’s plan for saving us, and of why God is the only one powerful enough to save us from death.

C. The Book of Exodus: Slavery and Redemption

Let's now move on to an overview of Exodus. The Greek word *exodus* signifies "going out." This book is a continuation of Genesis, and covers 145 years of Israelite history, beginning with their freedom from Egypt. The main themes in this book are: "slavery"; "redemption"; and "God's holy nation."

1. Slavery

Over the span of 400 years, Jacob's descendants grew to over 2,000,000 people. Their vast numbers made Egypt's new Pharaoh fear them. What if they allied with enemy nations, or attempted to overthrow the Egyptians? So, to address these fears, he enslaved them. Under this cruel and merciless taskmaster, the Israelites lived a life of misery, oppression, and hopelessness, with no end to the suffering in sight. Today, mankind is born into slavery much the same way, except it is slavery to sin and death. Where Pharaoh was the Israelites' cruel taskmaster, today it is Satan who stalks the world as a hungry lion, filling our lives with hardship, suffering, and misery while attempting to destroy our chance to receive life.

2. Redemption

Amidst their suffering, the people cried out to God for deliverance. Let's read God's response in Exodus 3:7–10. He said that He had *seen* their suffering, had *heard* their cry, and *knew* their sorrows. The Book of Exodus goes into great detail about God's faithfulness in keeping the promises that He made to Abraham. His love for them is clearly evident in the many wonders that He performed. He saved them from many things, such as from:

- Slavery
- The hand of Pharaoh and the Egyptians
- The ten plagues
- The Red Sea
- Hunger and thirst in the wilderness
- Their enemies

These are only a few of the things that the Lord saved the Israelites from. Over and over again, throughout the entire Bible, God demonstrated His faithfulness, love, and almighty power in saving His chosen people. And this redemption is now not just for the Israelites, but for all of us. He has saved us from what we could never overcome: He has redeemed us from death.

D. The Book of Exodus: God's Holy Nation

God didn't just bring the Israelites out of Egypt to deliver them from slavery. Let's read Exodus 19:5. This is a key verse in the Book of Exodus. The Lord declared to the nation, "Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine."

1. God's special treasure

The Israelites were not necessarily unique in God's act of freeing them from slavery. Amos records that the Lord delivered the Ethiopians, the Philistines, and the Syrians from slavery as well (Amos 9:7). God cares for all the nations of the earth, because He is their Creator and sustainer (Ps 24:1; Acts 14:15–17). But of all the nations in the world, God chose only Israel to be His "special treasure."

A treasure is something of great worth or value to someone. It may be something very precious,

very rare, or perhaps something which gives you happiness. It is something that you spend the extra time to take good care of. Israel was God's special treasure, and He went to great lengths to take care of them. Deuteronomy 32:10 says that Israel was the apple of God's eye, whom He embraced and instructed. Let's read Isaiah 43:1–4. What were the many ways God treasured His people? *(Allow students to answer. He: redeemed them; called them by name; promised to be with them; protected them; honored; loved; and exalted them above all other peoples.)*

2. A kingdom of priests

Israel was not only to enjoy God's love and protection. God gave them a special mission, too: they were to be a kingdom of priests. What does it mean to be a kingdom of priests? First, let's look at the first high priests in the Bible. Let's read Numbers 18:4–5. At Mount Sinai, Aaron and his sons were set apart and consecrated as priests. Together with the Levites, they were responsible for serving and attending to the needs and duties of the tabernacle of the Lord. The priesthood was an honor that they did not earn, but a special status that God gave to them as a gift. But what exactly were their duties?

- a. They taught the Lord's statutes and commands to the people, so that they would know what was right and wrong (Lev 10:11).
- b. They made judgments for the people of God.
- c. They acted as mediators between God and men, offering sacrifices for the sins of the people and blessing them.

Today, any who are baptized have become priests of God. As His priests, we need to live out His truth and spread the gospel. We also need to teach others about what is right in God's eyes and encourage our brethren so that they do not spiritually decline. We are the mediators between God and those around us and are here to bring blessings to the world and do good for others (Num 6:22–27). Through our service as priests, we are a gift to the church, and to the world.

3. A holy nation

God brought the people of Israel out of Egypt so that He could be their God, and they, His people. They were to be a chosen nation, holy to the Lord and separate from the other nations. He repeatedly told them to "be holy, for I am holy" (Lev 11:44–45). In order to be holy, however, they had to obey God's word and keep His commandments. God gave them instructions for every area of life: food, family, work, worship, and more.

The immense number of laws were not meant to be a bondage to the people but were supposed to be a bridge through which they could have a relationship with God and be a part of His divine nature. Today, in order to follow His laws, we need to simply follow the fundamental rule that God be the king in our lives, thoughts, actions, and speech. If we strive to achieve this, then we can be God's people, and He will give us His blessings and His protection.

In conclusion, the Book of Exodus gives us a greater understanding of God's holy nature. It teaches us that as long as we are slaves to sin, we will never receive our inheritance. So, in order to receive salvation, we must no longer be slaves to sin, but learn to be holy as God is holy. This means that we must act out our duty as His priests and help to bring together His holy nation so that we can one day enter the promised land that is eternal life.

Check for Understanding

- 1. What are the three main themes in the Book of Genesis?** Beginnings, sin, and the promise of salvation.
- 2. What are the three main themes in the Book of Exodus?** Slavery, redemption, and God's holy nation.
- 3. What do the events in Genesis point us towards?** They point towards God's master plan of sending His Son to die on the cross, defeat sin, and establish the true church for the salvation of mankind.
- 4. What three special statuses did the Israelites have as God's chosen?** They were God's special treasure, a kingdom of priests, and God's holy nation.
- 5. Overall, what does the Book of Exodus teach us?** It gives us a greater understanding of God's holy nature. It also teaches us that as long as we are slaves to sin, we will never receive our inheritance. So, in order to receive salvation, we must no longer be slaves to sin, but learn to be holy as God is holy.

Life Application

How Does God Love Me?

It can be easy to forget that God loves us in many ways, especially because we cannot see Him or because we may sometimes feel restricted by the words of the Bible. One way to overcome this feeling is by thinking of the ways that God has expressed His love for us.

1. He laid down His life for us (Jn 3:16; 1 Jn 3:16)

The greatest manifestation of God's love is, undoubtedly, His death for us. He did not simply die for us. He gave up His glory and splendor in heaven, reduced Himself to become a man, and laid down His life by suffering the worst possible death anyone could experience. Isaiah 53:12 says that the Lord Jesus "poured out His soul unto death, and He was numbered with the transgressors[.]" This death is the plan of salvation that God had been faithfully and diligently working out since before the beginning of creation, all to save each and every single one of us.

God may not ask us to give up our lives, but He may ask us to give up a little of our time each day for Him. Which part of your day would you give up for God? How would you devote it to Him?

2. He chose us (1 Jn 3:1)

In Deuteronomy 7:7–8, Moses reminded the Israelites that to be chosen by God is to be loved by Him. When the people asked God, "In what way have You loved us?", the Lord answered that His love was manifested in His choosing of them (Mal 1:2–5). Esau was the firstborn and rightful heir, but God had chosen Jacob to be the one through whom Israel and the Messiah would be born. What does this mean for us? It means that it is not we who chose God, but God who chose us (Jn 15:16). And if we ever begin to doubt God's love, we should remember what the Bible says: "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!" (1 Jn 3:1).

We should give thanks to God for His salvation every day. How can we express our thanks to God in our daily lives?

3. He thinks of us (Ps 139:17–18)

When the Israelites traveled through the wilderness, they lacked nothing. Their clothes and their sandals never wore down (Deut 29:5). God provided water when they were thirsty, and manna when they were hungry. He used mighty miracles to free them from slavery, but He also performed

numerous small miracles in taking care of their everyday needs. These miracles may have been less noticeable, but they were miracles nonetheless, possible only because of God's power and love. Let's read Psalm 139:17–18.

Just as our earthly parents are concerned about the well-being and future of their children, God also thinks of us day and night (Ps 40:5). But while our earthly parents are limited in power, God's thoughts towards us are innumerable and constant. He knows the number of hairs on our head, knows the words on our tongues before we even utter them, and knew who we were even before we were born. These thoughts are only possible for our heavenly Father. As such, He reminds us not to worry about what we shall eat or wear, but only to think about Him and His words. He wants us to trust that He will take care of us.

What are your first thoughts when you wake up in the morning? What is your last thought when you go to sleep at night? How often do you think of God during the day? Do you think of God, or something else entirely? What kind of thoughts would God think when He thinks of you?

4. He intercedes for us (Lk 22:31–32; Heb 7:25)

Part of the high priest's attire was a breastplate on which were arranged twelve gemstones in four rows, each gem representing one of the tribes of Israel. This meant that the high priest was to carry the Israelites in his heart and intercede for them when he approached the Lord. It was his duty to pray for the sins and weaknesses of the people, and to intercede for them. In the same way, the Lord Jesus is constantly interceding for us as our High Priest. Because of His intercessions, we are able to approach the Lord without fear and have hope in our home in heaven.

Have you ever interceded for someone? Share a time when you experienced the power of intercession, either as the interceder or the interceded.

Memory Verse

"Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine." (Exodus 19:5)

Meaning

The Israelites were special not because of anything that they did, but because God chose them out of all the nations on the earth to be His own holy nation and His kingdom of priests. But such a special relationship runs two ways – in exchange, the Israelites had to obey His voice and keep His commands. If they did, God would bless them and care for them. We enjoy this same promise today. But as with the Israelites, for the Lord to be our God, we must learn to walk in His ways.

Conclusion

The Books of Genesis and Exodus teach us the basic premise behind our need for salvation, and how to receive it. From the moment Adam sinned, to the Israelites' freedom from Egypt and their establishment as His holy nation, until today—where we have become the new kingdom of priests—all of these events show God's plan for our salvation, established even before the creation of the world.

Lesson 1 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. What made the Israelites different from other nations?
They were the only nation that God chose to be His special treasure.

2. “And I will put _____ between you and the woman, and between your _____ and her _____; He shall _____ your _____, and you shall _____ His _____.” (Genesis 3:15)
enmity, seed, Seed, bruise, head, bruise, heel.

3. What are the overall themes for the Books of Genesis and Exodus?
 - *Genesis: Beginnings, sin, and salvation*
 - *Exodus: Slavery, redemption, and God’s holy nation*

4. What does the Book of Exodus teach us about God, our inheritance, and salvation?
It teaches us about God’s holy nature; as long as we are slaves to sin, we will never receive our inheritance. So, to receive salvation, we must no longer be slaves to sin, but learn to be holy as God is holy.

5. Explain three duties that we have as God’s priests.
We need to live out God’s truth and spread His gospel; teach others about what is right in God’s eyes and encourage our brethren so that they do not spiritually decline; and act as mediators between God and men.

6. How often do you think of God each day? In a favorite notebook or journal, spend a few minutes each day writing a brief, one-or-two sentence note to God. This can be a note of thanksgiving, prayer, request, or Bible study. Find a distinctive time to do it, such as before breakfast, after dinner, or before bed. At the end of the week, bring your notebook to church and share some of your thoughts with your classmates during the next lesson.
Personal answers.

The Creation

Passages: Gen 1–2

Memory Verse

“Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.” (Genesis 1:31a)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Works [Behavior]
1. God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh. 2. The creation of man was different from the rest of creation.	God is good, and His creation is good.	Always give thanks for what God has created.

Overview

Events and Spiritual Teachings

- A. God Is Our Creator
- B. The Days of Creation
- C. The Creation of Man
- D. The Day of Rest

Life Application

- 1. Giving Thanks to God for His Creation
- 2. Living as the Image of God

Memory Verse

Conclusion: Everything that God created was made in preparation for us. We have been made in His image, so we are precious in the eyes of God. Let us always remember this special status and give thanks to our Creator in heaven.

Events and Spiritual Teachings

A. God Is Our Creator

By looking at God's creation, we are able to understand that God is our Creator. When we are able to fully appreciate the extent of His creation, including ourselves, we will experience awe and respect. Here are some amazing facts about the world that God has created.

1. There are 1 trillion trees on earth, which is more than the number of stars in the Milky Way galaxy.
2. 85 percent of plant life is found in the ocean.
3. For every human, there are 200 million insects.
4. Tarantulas can survive two and a half years without food.
5. There are over 60,000 miles of blood vessels in the average person.

There are so many wonders in nature. As we learn about God's creation, we can appreciate the amount of thought and love that He put into the world around us. In the Book of Job, God asks Job a series of questions: "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding, who determined its measurements? [...] Or who shut in the sea with doors, when it burst forth and issued from the womb?" (Job 38:4–5, 8). The entire chapter reveals God's great acts of creation. God measured the amount of water in the oceans and the seas. He carved out the valleys and made the highest mountains. He placed each animal in its specific habitat. God created the natural world with His authority and sovereignty.

As human beings, our understanding of God's creation is very limited. There are many areas of the ocean that we have yet to explore, and even today, scientists are discovering new species of plants and animals. However, what is most amazing is not what God has just created, but that He created all of these things for us to enjoy. We are God's most precious creation, so while studying the days of creation recorded in the Bible, we can remember and reflect on how important we are in the eyes of God.

B. The Days of Creation

Before Creation (Gen 1:1)

Before the days of creation, "God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen 1:1). The earth was without form and void. This means that there was no order, no life, and no light. However, "the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters" (Gen 1:2). The word "hovering" in Hebrew also has the meaning of a bird incubating her egg (cf. Deut 32:11). In the same way, God was waiting and preparing to create our world.

Day 1 – Light (Gen 1:3–5)

"Let there be light." By saying these few words, God created light. He divided the light from the darkness, and named the light "day," and the darkness "night." Without a sun, we do not know how long these days were at first, but together, they became the foundation of our days: morning and evening. "So the evening and the morning were the first day" (v. 5). Each of the rest of the days of creation would also be defined by this "morning" and "evening."

Day 2 – Firmament (Gen 1:6–8)

Again, God commanded with His words, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters" (v. 6). A firmament simply means a space or expanse. However, it is

different from the sky that we imagine; in the original language, it is thought of as something solid that separates the waters below from the waters above.

Day 3 – Land, Seas, and Vegetation (Gen 1:9–13)

On the third day, God continued with the command: “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear” (v. 9). He then named the dry land “earth” and the waters that were gathered together, “seas.” After creating dry land and the seas, God saw that what He had created was good. Then He proceeded to create vegetation through His words, saying, “Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind” (v. 11). God saw the vegetation that He had created was good.

Day 4 – Sun, Moon, and Stars (Gen 1:14–19)

“Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night” (v. 14). On the fourth day, God made the “greater light,” known as the sun, the “lesser light,” known as the moon, and the stars. The sun would shine light during the day and the moon and stars would light the night. Apart from lighting the sky, the sun, moon, and stars are also a way for us to tell the seasons and time. After creating them, God saw that what He had made was good.

Interestingly, for the first three days of creation, God spoke parts of creation into existence. However, for the fourth day, the Bible mentions that God, in addition to speaking, also “made” things (Gen 1:16). This was the first time that this verb was used during the process of creation. Though we are unsure of why this verb did not appear until now, this word could signal a different phase in creation, which we will look into more closely later.

Day 5 – Fish and Birds (Gen 1:20–23)

“Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth [...]. So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves” (vv. 20–21). On the fifth day, God created the fish to fill the sea and birds to fill the skies. Again, we can see that apart from using His words, God also “created” these different animals. Each was created according to their kind. To be created “according to their kind” means that many different species were created, and each had an order to them. After creating these different animals, God also blessed them and commanded them to be fruitful and multiply (v. 22).

Day 6 – Land Animals and Mankind (Gen 1:24–31)

On the sixth day, God created all the land animals and man. “Then God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind’; and it was so” (v. 24). Similar to the fifth day, God used His words and “made” the land animals according to each kind. Today, we can see that there are different species of animals, just as the Bible mentions.

C. The Creation of Man

In addition to the land animals, God also created man on the sixth day. “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness [...].’ So God created man in His own image” (Gen 1:26–27). However, the process of creating mankind was much more complex. “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being” (Gen 2:7). Thus, God created the first man, named Adam. This is significantly different from the rest of the days of creation. From the action of molding or “forming,” we can see that God put greater effort into creating man. The breath of life is also important because humans were the only beings to receive

this breath from God. It is also interesting to note that man was the last thing to be created. In this way, we can see that the previous days of creation were all in preparation for the creation of man. This is the special status that mankind has in God’s eyes.

Apart from being created through the hands of God, God created man differently because we were created in His image. So, what does it mean to be created in the image of God?

- Ephesians 4:24 tells us that the image of God is righteousness and holiness. Like God, we have a sense of right and wrong, a conscience. This is different from the rest of God’s creation, which cannot discern from right and wrong.
- Colossians 1:15 tells us that Jesus Christ is the image of our invisible God. As we look at Jesus Christ, we are able to see what it means to be the image of God. Jesus Christ was a man with feelings and emotions. He lived in this world and experienced the same difficulties that we experience; the only difference is that He was blameless and perfect in every way. When we follow in the example of Jesus Christ, then we are also living out the image of God.

After Adam was created, God saw that there was no “helper comparable to him” (Gen 2:20). As a result, God caused Adam to fall into a deep sleep. He then took one of his ribs and made it into a woman. When God brought the woman to Adam, Adam saw her and knew that she was a part of him. Through the creation of woman, God also established marriage.

At the end of these six days, God saw that all that He had created was very good. If we look at the days of creation as a whole, we can view the days as pairs.

Pair 1	Day 1: Light	Day 4: Sun, moon, and stars
Pair 2	Day 2: Firmament	Day 5: Fish and birds
Pair 3	Day 3: Land, seas, vegetation	Day 6: Land animals and man

The first pair, days one and four, are related to light and how light shines on to the earth. The second pair is related to the creation of the sky and seas and the inhabitants of those regions. The third and last pair is related to land, including vegetation for land animals and man to reside on and consume. From these pairs we can see that the sequence of creation had an order, and that God did not just create randomly. There was a purpose to each creation.

Did you know?

The second day of creation was the only day when God didn’t call His creation “good” – the day He made water, which resulted in the great flood.

D. The Day of Rest

After creating the world for six days, God ended His work on the seventh day and rested (Gen 2:2). Not only did He rest from His work on the seventh day, but He also blessed and sanctified the seventh day. This was the creation of the Sabbath day, which we still enjoy today. When He gave Moses the Ten Commandments, God reminded Moses that we should remember the Sabbath day because God rested after six days of creation (Ex 20:8–11).

Check for Understanding

1. List the days of creation in order.

- Day 1 – Light (Genesis 1:3–5)
- Day 2 – Firmament (Genesis 1:6–8)
- Day 3 – Land, seas, and vegetation (Genesis 1:9–13)
- Day 4 – Sun, moon, and stars (Genesis 1:14–19)
- Day 5 – Fish and birds (Genesis 1:20–23)
- Day 6 – Land animals and man (Genesis 1:24–31)

2. How are the days of creation paired? Days 1 & 4; Days 2 & 5; Days 3 & 6

3. How was the process of creating man different from the rest of creation? Man was molded from the dust of the earth and then God breathed life into his nostrils. No other creation was made in this way.

4. What does it mean for man to be created in the image of God? We are created in the image of God’s holiness and righteousness. We have a conscience and are able to live out the image of God when we follow Jesus’ example.

5. After six days of creation, what did God do on the seventh day? After six days of creation, God rested and then blessed and sanctified the seventh day.

6. According to Exodus 20:11, what is the reason we keep the Sabbath? According to Exodus 20:11, we keep the Sabbath as a way to remember the creation of God and to praise Him for His creation.

Life Application

1. Giving Thanks to God for His Creation

(Teachers: The first Life Application activity has been added to the Student Handout.)

Though we know that God has created everything around us, we often forget to praise and thank Him for it. Through thinking about these different parts of God’s creation, we can gain an appreciation of how much we have been given. It is not only our belongings but also the environment that we live in that has been wonderfully planned by God. How can we remember to appreciate God’s creation?

For each day of creation, discuss the following:

- Imagine if you lived in a world without....
- What do you think life would be like?
- How does having this impact your life?

Imagine if you lived in a world without...	What do you think life would be like?	How does having this impact your life?
(1) Light		
(2) Firmament		
(3) Land, seas, and vegetation		
(4) Sun, moon, and stars		

(5) Fish and birds		
(6) Land animals and man		

2. Living as the Image of God

From God’s creation process, we know that man was made in the image of God, which means we reflect God’s love, holiness, and righteousness. However, what does that look like in our daily life? Let us take some time to think about what it means to live in the image of God.

Scenario 1

Shawn has always been pretty bad at math, and his math grade has suffered as a result. Though he spends hours doing his homework, the formulas just won’t stick in his brain. One day, a close friend messages him, telling him that he has found the answer key to an upcoming math test and wants to share it with him. This offer is very tempting to Shawn because a good result on this test would really bump up his overall grade in the class. At the same time, he knows that looking at the answer key is wrong and against the teachings of God.

Discussion Questions

- a. What should Shawn do?
- b. How should Shawn live as the image of God in this situation?

Scenario 2

Jenny was the new kid at school, and she desperately wanted to fit in. She was so relieved when Brianna, her lab partner in biology class, was willing to introduce her to her group of friends. Brianna and her friends were very welcoming to Jenny. However, after hanging out with them for some time, Jenny realized that they swore constantly. In the beginning, she was alarmed by how often they swore, but as the weeks and months passed by, Jenny began to swear just like them. She would justify this to herself, saying, “What’s the big deal? They are just words anyways.”

Discussion Questions

- a. What should Jenny do?
- b. How should Jenny live as the image of God in this situation?

Scenario 3

Sarah thought Mrs. Nelson was the worst teacher ever. During class, she would often humiliate students who didn’t know the answer and was often rude to students who asked questions. She showed favoritism to students who “sucked up” to her. On her tests, she would have questions on topics she never covered in class, and some of the questions were so ambiguous because they were worded so badly. Sarah didn’t know anyone in her class who actually liked Mrs. Nelson. One day, her classmates were whispering during lunch time saying that they were going to vandalize Mrs. Nelson’s car as a prank after school. Hearing this, Sarah knew this was wrong, but at the same time she thought in her heart, “Well, Mrs. Nelson had this coming. A harmless prank won’t hurt anyone.”

Discussion Questions

- a. What should Sarah do?
- b. How should Sarah live as the image of God in this situation?

Memory Verse

“Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.” (Genesis 1:31a)

Meaning

1. God views His creation as something good. In the same way, we should also value what God has created.
2. God made everything with a purpose and intention. Nothing was created in vain.

Conclusion

By studying the days of creation and the creation of mankind, we can understand the importance of being thankful for all that God has prepared for us. God has complete authority and sovereignty, and He demonstrated this during the six days of creation. Not only did He create this beautiful world that we live in today, but He also established the Sabbath, a day for us to rest and give thanks for His creation. Most importantly, though, everything that He created was made in preparation for the last being that He created: man. We have been made in His image, so we are precious in the eyes of God. Let us always remember this special status and give thanks to our Creator in heaven.

Lesson 2 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. “[A]nd that you put on the _____ man which was _____ according to _____, in true _____ and _____.” (Ephesians 4:24)
new, created, God, righteousness, holiness.
2. In what ways are we made in God’s image?
In His holiness and righteousness. Also, when we follow the example of Jesus Christ, we are living out the image of God.
3. What pairs can we see in God’s creation? What do these teach us about His creation?
Day 1 (Light) & 4 (Sun, moon, and stars); Day 2 (Firmament) & 5 (Fish and birds); Day 3 (Land, seas, vegetation) & 6 (Land animals and mankind). These pairs teach us that God did not just create randomly. There was a purpose to each creation.
4. Share a time when you struggled to reflect God’s image. How can you improve in the future?
Personal answers.
5. What parts of God’s creation are you most thankful for? Write a letter to Him by finishing the sentences below:
Personal answers.

Dear God, thank You so much for _____.
I appreciate this creation of Yours, because _____

Sincerely, _____.

Adam and Eve: The Rebellion of Mankind

Passages: Gen 1:26–31; 2:5–25; 3:1–24

Memory Verse

“For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.” (1 Corinthians 15:21–22)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Works [Behavior]
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Adam and Eve’s rebellion was born out of a desire to be like God.2. Sin separates us from God.3. As punishment, the Lord cast man out of the garden. But even as He did so, He had already prepared a solution for our salvation in Jesus Christ.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. God is just.2. God is all-knowing.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Humility is an important aspect of obedience to God’s commands.2. Learn how to mend our relationship with God.

Overview

Events and Spiritual Teachings

- A. Man’s Purpose
- B. The Rebellion of Man
- C. The Consequences of Rebellion

Life Application

1. Learning to Obey God’s Commands
2. Mending Our Broken Relationship with God

Memory Verse

Conclusion: We should learn from Adam and Eve and do our best to overcome the desires within us in order to avoid disobeying God, as well as accept God’s chastisement when we go astray. Then, we can instead be more like the Lord Jesus and can obtain life.

Events and Spiritual Teachings

Introduction

Imagine that you get to spend one hour in a room with the smartest people in the world, such as Albert Einstein, Leonardo da Vinci, Galileo, or Isaac Newton. What would you want to learn from them? What would you ask them? (*Write their questions on one side of the board.*)

Now, imagine that you have the chance to spend one hour with God, where He'll answer anything that you ask. What would you want to know? What would you ask Him? (*Write their questions on the other side of the board and connect any common questions between the two sides. You may want to share your questions as well.*)

Sometimes we want to ask God questions that are for our curiosity, such as what happened to the dinosaurs, or ask questions about events in history. Sometimes our questions are more personal, such as why we suffer or struggle. But the most valuable questions, the questions that we should be asking God, are the ones that can propel our faith forward. For example, have you ever thought to ask God what your purpose is for Him?

A. Man's Purpose

To look at what God originally intended for man to do, we need to go back to the beginning and study Genesis. There were three purposes that God wanted man to fulfill.

1. Our first purpose

"Then God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.' " (Gen 1:28)

In this passage, the Lord commanded man to be fruitful and multiply, and to have dominion over the earth. But what exactly do these instructions mean? The Lord wants us to grow as a family and as a nation. But there is a greater depth to this command: to grow as a family or a nation means taking on greater responsibilities, both as individuals and as a group.

Physically, we are responsible for taking care of our family, and ensuring everyone is healthy, whole, and happy. Spiritually, we need to help each other grow in faith, and also reach out and bring others into God's fold. To grow as part of God's nation, we have the responsibility of hearing and walking within God's word (Isa 2:2–3), while also bringing others to salvation. Moreover, the Lord commanded us to have "dominion" over the earth. He has given the earth to our charge, but this means that we also have the responsibility of taking care of God's creation.

2. Our second purpose

"Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it." (Gen 2:15)

From this verse, it is clear that even in paradise, God intended for man to perform some work. Earlier in the chapter, the Bible also notes that "the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to till the ground" (Gen 2:5). The garden of Eden was a space where God would dwell with man and walk with him (Gen 3:8). This made it a sacred space

where man could not only work to tend it, but also dwell with God. Today, this sacred space is in our hearts, and in the church. Therefore, our second purpose is to tend to the spiritual gardens in our hearts and in the church. We have the responsibility of carefully tending to both of these so that God's presence may dwell within us and among the members.

3. Our third purpose

"And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, 'Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.' " (Gen 2:16–17)

The last purpose that we were given was to obey the Lord's commands and keep them completely. God could have given Adam and Eve a hundred commands, or a single command. Either way, their purpose was the same: to wholeheartedly follow them. Because they didn't, the life they knew changed completely with the entry of sin into the world. Today, God has given us a fighting chance to dwell side by side with the Lord just as Adam and Eve once did. To seize that chance, we need to learn to follow God's commands as best we can in our daily lives.

B. The Rebellion of Man

To rebel against God means seeking to go beyond what God has already given us. What was it that Adam and Eve were seeking? How exactly did they want to go beyond what God had given them? We're probably familiar with the story, but let's read in detail what happened in Genesis 3:1–19.

First, let's list the main sequence of events that occurred.

The serpent...

1. **Questioned** God's command by quoting Him inaccurately (v. 1).
2. **Deceived** Eve by twisting God's words and deliberately misinterpreting the consequences (vv. 2–4).

Adam and Eve...

3. Were **tempted** to be equal with God (v. 5).
4. **Submitted** to the lust of the eyes ("pleasant to the eyes"), lust of the flesh ("saw that the tree was good for food"), and the pride of life ("a tree desirable to make one wise") (v. 6; cf. 1 Jn 2:16).
5. Felt **shame** and **fear** for the first time in their lives, because of their realization and their disobedience (vv. 7–10).

The Lord...

6. **Confronted** their guilt and wrongdoing (vv. 11–13).
7. **Chastised** and **punished** the serpent, Adam, and Eve for their sin (vv. 14–19).

From this sequence of events, we can see that it began with a simple question from the serpent. The question may have been simple, but it led man to sin by tempting them to become equal with God. They wanted to become like Him. Let's read James 1:13–15. How does the sequence parallel the progression that James lists in these verses?

1. Tempted by desire: Adam and Eve were tempted to be equal with God.
2. Desire gives birth to sin: Adam and Eve submitted to their temptation and broke God's command.
3. Sin brings forth death: Adam and Eve were cast out of the garden of Eden and no longer walked with God. Sin became a barrier, blocking mankind from life.

From these verses, and from examining Adam and Eve's downfall, it's clear that sin is always born out of some sort of desire. In Adam and Eve's case, they desired to be equal to God. We need to learn to control and overcome our worldly desires so that we don't succumb to sin. This means learning to be satisfied with what God has already given us.

C. The Consequences of Rebellion

As a result of their disobedience, God gave different punishments to the serpent, Adam, and Eve. However, in all three, we can see that their disobedience affected not only themselves, but all of creation, including the earth itself. Let's first read the serpent's punishment in Genesis 3:14–15. Of the three, the serpent received the harshest punishment. He was the only one to be cursed directly by God, and his pronouncement was death: the serpent would bruise the heel of the woman's descendant, which is only a temporary injury. On the other hand, her descendant would bruise his head. Ultimately, the serpent would suffer defeat.

Let's continue reading the Lord's punishment for Eve, recorded in verse 16. Because of her disobedience, the joy of childbirth would now be marred by pain. And on top of this, the Lord pronounced that "[her] desire shall be for [her] husband, and he shall rule over [her]." The word *desire* here is also used later in Genesis 4:7, when the Lord warns Cain that sin *desires* to rule over him. Eve would no longer live harmoniously with Adam but would now try to control her husband. Their marriage would now be tarnished by a battle of wills.

Now let's move on to Adam. Let's read Genesis 3:17–19. Tending the garden of Eden might have been pleasant work to do, but now the earth would bring forth "thorns and thistles." Adam would now have to labor and toil over the earth. The Lord also announced the coming death that He already warned them of, if they were to eat the fruit: "For dust you are, and to dust you shall return." Mankind would now experience death.

Separation from God through Sin

While in the garden, Adam and Eve were able to walk with God every day, side by side. Upon being driven out of the garden, the most tragic loss they experienced was that they were no longer able to dwell side by side with their Creator in peace and unity. But why exactly is this the case? One of God's characteristics is His holiness. Because He is holy, He cannot abide sin. He is also just and will punish sinners. This means that we cannot be with God if we also have sin. Therefore, the worst consequence of their rebellion was separation from God, not just for themselves, but for all of mankind.

Our Basic Belief: Salvation through Jesus Christ

You may have noticed that the Lord made the first mention of Jesus Christ in the serpent's punishment. Let's read Genesis 3:15. The "Seed" of the woman is referring to Jesus Christ. From this, we can see that even before He cast them out of the garden, the Lord had already prepared a solution for mankind! The Lord added that the serpent would "bruise His heel," foreshadowing Satan's repeated attempts to defeat Christ during His life on earth. On the other hand, the Lord would bruise the serpent's head, which is a much more serious injury. This foreshadowed Satan's ultimate defeat in Jesus Christ's resurrection. This also means that Satan has already been defeated! We are simply waiting for the announcement in Jesus' second coming.

Let's read 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." Adam's disobedience made us all sinners, but the Lord's obedience would free us all of sin. 1 Corinthians 15:21–22 also says, "For since by man came

death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.” Adam may have rebelled against the Lord and disobeyed Him, but Jesus Christ overcame the death that Adam brought because He “humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross” (Phil 2:8). This is the very reason we are all here today, in this classroom: so that instead of dying, we can receive eternal life in Christ, who has already defeated Satan.

Check for Understanding

- 1. What are the three purposes of man?** To be fruitful and multiply, and have dominion over the earth; to tend and keep the garden; and to obey God’s commands.
- 2. The Lord commanded man to be fruitful and multiply. What exactly do these instructions mean?** Physically, we are responsible for taking care of our family, and ensuring everyone is healthy, whole, and happy. Spiritually, we need to help each other grow in faith, and also reach out and bring others into God’s fold.
- 3. How does mankind’s second purpose apply to us today?** We must tend to the spiritual gardens in our hearts and in the church, so that God’s presence may dwell within us, and among the members.
- 4. What is the first step of temptation?** When you are drawn and enticed by desire.
- 5. What particular desire tempted Adam and Eve to eat the fruit?** The desire to be like God; they were tempted by the pride of life.
- 6. Although He was casting them out of the garden, how did the Lord have mercy on man?** He had already prepared a plan and a solution for us, a better one than Adam: salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ. God even mentioned this coming solution in the punishment of the serpent.

Life Application

1. Learning to Obey God’s Commands

As we learned from today’s lesson, desires give birth to sin, which leads to death. Therefore, it is important for us to avoid following the ways of the world, and instead, obediently follow God’s word, which leads us to life. What do you think is a key “ingredient” to learning to keep God’s commands, especially the ones that are more difficult for us to keep? (*Allow students to brainstorm.*) There are several factors, but a very important prerequisite to obeying God is humility.

When we find one of God’s commands difficult to follow, it is often because we have our own thoughts or desires that we want to follow instead. This is a result of a lack of humility. Our decisions are no longer about what God wants, but what we want. We have forgotten what God has given us and are instead caught up with our own selfish cravings.

One way to maintain our humility and counter our selfishness is by reminding ourselves of the “positives” behind God’s commands. Many of His commands seem quite strict or even negative to us. However, God’s intent behind all of His commands is for our own good! They are in place so that we can complete the work that He has given us and so that we can receive His blessings. Let’s list some commands that we struggle to obey and look for the “positives” about them. Why did God give us this command? Why should we obey it? In what way does this command benefit or help me?

(Teachers: A blank table has been added to the Student Handout. Help them to fill it in as a class; examples have been added to help you get started. If you know of any particular problems that your students struggle with, then you may want to look up relevant verses ahead of time.)

Command that I struggle	The “positive” in keeping this command
-------------------------	--

to obey	
<i>Listening to my parents and honoring them.</i>	<i>God has promised to bless me if I honor my parents (Eph 6:1–3).</i>
<i>Keeping the Sabbath from Friday night to Saturday.</i>	<i>This gives me time to put aside the things of the world and place my complete focus on God and His blessings. It allows me to distance myself from my problems and clear my mind for a day.</i>
<i>Fasting prayer.</i>	<i>This helps me overcome temptations (Mt 26:41) and strengthen myself spiritually.</i>
<i>Marriage within the Lord.</i>	<i>This will help me preserve my faith and relationship with God, and will give me not only a physical partner, but also a spiritual partner so that we can both support each other’s faith and help each other to avoid sin (2 Cor 6:14; Eccl 4:10).</i>
<i>Living in peace with others.</i>	<i>This helps me to avoid making rash decisions or mistakes against man and God (Ps 37:8), while being mad at others just wastes my energy! Living in peace will also help me see God (Heb 12:14).</i>

2. Mending Our Broken Relationship with God

Adam and Eve broke their relationship with God because they became convinced that their way was better than His way. However, their mistakes didn’t stop there. God gave them a chance to come forward. He is all-knowing and omnipresent, but the Bible records that God called out saying, “Where are you?” (Gen 3:9), and later, “Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?” (Gen 3:11).

Despite this chance to repent, Adam’s first reaction was to hide, and his first words were words of excuse. Then, when confronted with his sin, Adam passed the blame, saying, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.” It was not simply Eve’s fault that he sinned; he was also blaming God for giving Eve to be with him! Adam didn’t realize that hiding our sins or passing the blame doesn’t fix our relationship with God. Let’s compare Adam and Eve’s actions to the actions that we ought to take in order to mend things between us and God.

	How did Adam and Eve act?	How should we act instead?
1.	They didn’t obey God’s commandment.	Obey God’s commands.
Questions to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have I ever disobeyed God because I thought His commands were “wrong,” “too strict,” or maybe “old-fashioned”? • Have I ever decided that following God’s will is too troublesome? • Do I tend to prioritize academics or hobbies over my church duties? • How can I remind myself to make decisions based on God’s will instead of my own desires? 		
2.	They tried to hide from Him.	Come to God in prayer with respect for His omnipotence and omniscience.
Questions to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have I ever tried to hide my sins from friends, family, or even from God? • Have I ever avoided prayers because I knew that I had done something wrong? • When I make a bad decision, is it always my first instinct to cover it up somehow? 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What should my first reaction be when I realize that I have committed a sin against God? 	
3.	They tried to defend their actions.	Confess our sins with humility and accept that we made a mistake.
<p>Questions to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do I immediately argue, get defensive, or become angry when someone asks if I made a mistake? • Do I constantly make up excuses when I am in the wrong? • What should my prayer be like when I have made a mistake against God? 		
4.	Adam blamed Eve, and ultimately blamed God as well for placing Eve in his life.	Repent by seeking to change our ways, rather than passing blame.
<p>Questions to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do I make the same mistakes over and over again without fixing the root cause? • What is the content of my prayers? Am I always asking for blessings? Or do I spend time apologizing for things that I have done against God's will? • What does it mean to truly repent? • Consider any sins that you have committed recently. How can you change your lifestyle to avoid repeating the same mistake? 		

When we are scolded or chastised for something we have done, it is normally our instinctive reaction to try to pass the blame to someone or something else. "It wasn't my fault!" we might protest, or "It was because of this!" But when we receive chastisement from God, we should actually be giving thanks! Why do you think this is? Let's read Hebrews 12:7–10.

This passage is teaching us that just like a parent who tells off their child, the Lord only chastises His own children. He disciplines those He loves. It isn't because He hates us or wants us to suffer, but because He wants us to share in His holiness and receive His blessings. When we realize this, it is easier for us to accept that we have done wrong, and to seek to mend our relationship with God. Let's read a testimony about a brother who was gently chastised by the Lord (his name has been changed to preserve his anonymity).

Testimony

Will was a good son and a good student, and he did quite well academically. He was elected as the head of his school's Maths Olympiad team and received great grades in all of his classes. In addition to this, Will had always thought he was close to God. He attended church every week and served in any way that he could. Will felt like nothing could go wrong, and that life was great! However, because he was so used to doing well at school and in church, his faith became a "habit," and he spiritually went on autopilot.

As a result, Will paid less attention to what he was doing at church, and spent less and less time praying and preparing for his duties. He also began to feel a certain joylessness each Sabbath. That was when the wake-up call began. Despite Will's best efforts, he did poorly on a test that was on his best subject. At first, he thought this was just a coincidence. He thought that he must have misread a question or simply hadn't been on top of his game that day. But then a couple weeks later, his teacher told him that he would be replaced as the head of his school's Maths Olympiad team.

Will was crushed. He went home and felt a fear in his heart he hadn't felt before. So, he knelt down to pray to God. As he was praying, he began to reflect on himself, and his conscience was pricked. Will realized that he had been so proud of his own "success" that he had been irresponsible with what God had entrusted to him at church. He felt ashamed, and bitterly repented to God.

That day, Will made the determination that he would return to the basics in his faith. He would start with his heart by focusing on prayer, and on doing everything for God with a heart of servitude. Will realized that even though his studies were important, he shouldn't let them overtake God as a priority. God's discipline through the events that took place humbled him and made him realize what was most important in his life. Soon enough, Will found that once he changed his mindset, he was able to go to church with a heart of praise and joy.

– Anonymous

In this testimony, we can see a few key points that led to his return to God. He first had fear in his heart, then his first act was to kneel down to pray. And as he prayed, his conscience was pricked. These are indicators of someone who wants to mend their relationship with God. Have you ever felt these before? Based on Will's experience, what should our attitude be when God chastises us? What can you do to demonstrate true repentance for something you've done wrong recently?

Memory Verse

"For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive." (1 Corinthians 15:21–22)

Meaning

In this verse, Paul compares two sons of God: Adam, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Adam's disobedience to God's command brought death into the world, meaning all of us are born into sin. We had no chance of escaping it on our own, so God offered a solution for our sakes. Generations later, Adam's descendant Jesus Christ overcame death on our behalf. His resurrection paved the way to our own resurrection – through Him, we can overcome death.

Conclusion

Adam and Eve's rebellion against the Lord was born out of a desire to be equal to Him. We should learn from their actions and do our best to overcome the desires within us in order to avoid disobeying God, as well as accept God's chastisement when we go astray. Then, we can instead be more like the Lord Jesus, who was humble and obedient to God's commands. In doing so, we can obtain life.

Lesson 3 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. What does the memory verse teach us about Adam's sin and God's solution?
Adam's disobedience brought death into the world, but God offered us salvation through Jesus Christ's obedience.
2. "Then, when _____ has _____, it gives _____ to _____; and _____, when it is full-grown, brings forth _____." (James 1:15)
desire, conceived, birth, sin, sin, death
3. Pick one of the three purposes of mankind and explain it in as much detail as you can, including how we should be enacting this purpose today.
See Spiritual Teachings, Section A: Man's Purpose.
4. What were Adam and Eve's reactions when God asked them about what they had done? Compare their actions to what we ought to do when confronted by sin.
They first tried to hide. Then Eve blamed the serpent, while Adam blamed not only Eve, but also God for placing Eve in his life. When confronted by sin, we should instead see and accept that we have done wrong, then confess our wrongdoing to God and seek to repent by changing our ways.
5. What commandments do you often resist? Why do you think this is? What personal desire of yours is conflicting with this particular command?
Personal answers.

Cain and Abel: Two Different Offerings

Passages: Gen 4:1–15; Lev 27:26; Num 18:17; Deut 28:11; Gen 3:21; Heb 11:4; Prov 21:27; Jer 17:10; 1 Jn 3:12; Jude 11, Eph 4:26; Rom 6:11–13; 12:1

Memory Verse

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.” (Psalm 51:10)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Works [Behavior]
1. By faith, Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice to God than Cain. 2. Despite the consequences of his actions, Cain did not learn, but was upset at both God and Abel.	1. God is omniscient. 2. God is just.	1. Be filled with God’s word and Spirit to resist sin. 2. Examine our heart to see if we are submissive to God’s teachings. 3. Develop a heart of truth.

Overview

Events and Spiritual Teachings

- A. Two Different Offerings
- B. Cain’s Offering
- C. Cain’s Anger
- D. Cain’s Sin
- E. Cain’s Punishment

Life Application

- 1. Don’t Become a Victim of Sin
- 2. Diligently Guard Our Hearts
- 3. A Heart of Truth

Memory Verse

Conclusion: We need to recognize our true attitude in front of God. If our attitude is incorrect, we should humble ourselves, repent and change it.

Events and Spiritual Teachings

Introduction

Today, we are going to be studying the character of Cain, Adam and Eve’s firstborn. Let’s start by comparing Cain and Abel, based on Genesis 4:1–15. What actions or characteristics does the Bible describe for each of them?

(Teachers: Have the students read the passage together and take turns writing down one characteristic or action of either brother on the board. Below is what the chart should look like when they finish.)

Cain	Abel
He was born first. He worked the soil. He was the tiller of the ground, a farmer. He brought some of the fruit of the ground as an offering to the LORD.	He was born second. He kept the flocks. He was a shepherd. He brought fat portions and the firstborn of his flock.

A. Two Different Offerings

Burnt Offering

Let’s take a closer look at the offerings that they each gave to God. First, Abel’s was not the first animal sacrifice that was made in the Bible. When Adam and Eve were cast from the garden of Eden, God sacrificed animals to clothe them in garments of skin (Gen 3:21). So, what is the significance of Abel’s offering, “the firstborn of his flock and of their fat”?

Let’s read Leviticus 27:26: “But the firstborn of the animals, which should be the LORD’s firstborn, no man shall dedicate; whether it is an ox or sheep, it is the LORD’S.” Let’s now turn to Numbers 18:17. “But the firstborn of a cow, the firstborn of a sheep, or the firstborn of a goat you shall not redeem; they are holy. You shall sprinkle their blood on the altar, and burn their fat as an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to the LORD.” Based on these two passages, we can conclude that the firstborn is the Lord’s. It is also holy, and when the fat is burned as an offering, it is “a sweet aroma to the LORD” (cf. Lev 17:6; 3:1–5).

Grain Offering

Cain was a “tiller of the ground,” and the Bible described his offering as “the fruit of the ground.” Let’s read Deuteronomy 28:11. “And the LORD will grant you plenty of goods, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your ground, in the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers to give you.” Cain’s offering, like Abel’s, was from the fruit of his labor. But unlike his brother, Cain worked the land, so his offering was more like the grain offering described in Leviticus 2:1. The two offerings were indeed quite different, but the key difference lay not in the physical offerings, but in the brothers’ hearts.

Blessings

At times, we may feel like God is not paying attention to the “offerings” that we are giving to Him. As in the case of Cain, we first need to ensure that our heart is first in the right place when serving God. In Abel’s case, the Bible says that the Lord “respected Abel.” Abel did the right thing, but this did not necessarily result in physical benefits or blessings. However, his offering was remembered by God. In the

same way, it may seem pointless, at times, to do the right thing, but it is important to remember that even if we do not receive a physical reward for our deeds, God will remember (Mt 25:37–40).

B. Cain's Offering

"[...] And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering. [...]"
(Gen 4:4–5)

We do not know what prompted the brothers to sacrifice to God, or if God told them what to offer. But they both brought to the Lord acceptable offerings. Both were the fruits of their labor, so why do you think Cain's displeased God? After all, he made an offering, didn't he? Was meat better than vegetables? Does God prefer animal sacrifices?

The reason can be found in the description of the two brothers' offerings. Cain's was simply "the fruit of the ground," whereas Abel's offering was "the firstborn of his flock and of their fat" (Gen 4:3–5). Let's read Hebrews 11:4. "By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." Simply put, Abel gave the best and the richest of the flock he had and offered it to God with faith. Cain did not. God later asked Cain that if he did well, wouldn't he be accepted? (Gen 4:7).

These verses teach us the whole picture. It was not simply a matter of a burnt offering compared to the fruit of the land. The Lord didn't look only at the physical offering, but also at the heart of the one who offered. He saw the attitude and the hearts of the one who offered. God saw something in Cain's deeds or thoughts that were not right in His perspective. Cain's token offering reflected his incorrect thoughts, so the Lord did not respect it.

From the teachings of the Bible, it is clear that God is ultimately more concerned with the intention in our hearts when we offer to Him. Let's turn to Jeremiah 17:9–10. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings." Others can only see our physical actions, but God can see our hearts, just as He saw Cain's heart that offered without faith.

C. Cain's Anger

Cain may have lacked faith in his offering, but he had a chance to correct his error. God said to him, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it" (Gen 4:6–7). Cain had not yet done anything, but there was anger in his heart.

Paul wrote, " 'Be angry, and do not sin': do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil" (Eph 4:26–27). Anger can produce evil thoughts and lead us to sin. God's warning to Cain teaches us about the power of anger! Anger lures us into doing what is contrary to God's teaching and is powerful enough to lead us astray.

Cain's Second Chance

God gave Cain a second chance to do what was right. Even though Cain did not offer the correct or most pleasing offering, God did not reject him. In fact, God cared about Cain, going so far as to give him both warning and instruction. God never stated that He would always reject Cain's offering. Instead, God gave him another chance to improve. Unfortunately, Cain chose not to heed God's word.

D. Cain's Sin

Anger, when handled poorly, can be incredibly destructive. It can turn into hatred, and a person who “hates his brother is a murderer, and [...] no murderer has eternal life abiding in him” (1 Jn 3:15). It was this very same anger that drove Cain to murder his brother, with complete disregard for God's loving care and instruction (Gen 4:8). He allowed himself to be fully controlled by anger and hatred.

Anger normally begins as silent indignation. Even if we don't act upon this anger, when we harbor resentment in our hearts, we cannot accomplish God's purpose. In the worst-case scenario, as John wrote, we become a murderer, and no eternal life is in us. Cain allowed his resentment to grow in his heart, and as a result, the thought of murdering his brother consumed him entirely and drove him to sin. We should never follow the desires of sin but cut it off in our hearts and instead become instruments of righteousness. We must learn to present our bodies as a living sacrifice, so that we will not succumb to sin (Rom 6:11–13; 12:1).

Cain's Third Chance

Cain had committed a most dreadful act, but still, God gave him a third chance. The Lord, who is omniscient and knows all, asked Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” (Gen 4:9). Cain's reply, “I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?”, is the greatest evidence of his utter lack of remorse. He was completely controlled by the resentment in his heart and the power of sin, so much so that the thought of murdering his brother didn't bother him at all. In summary, Cain:

1. Allowed anger to rule his life
2. Allowed his hatred to drive him to murder
3. Lied to God
4. Showed no respect towards God's omniscience
5. Showed contempt towards God
6. Challenged God's authority
7. Showed no remorse or regret for murdering his brother

The deeper he fell into sin, the less Cain respected God. He was completely controlled by his evil desires. Let's read 1 John 3:12. “[N]ot as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous.” Jude 11 also says, “Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.”

E. Cain's Punishment

We have now come to understand more about Cain. In the end, what was the punishment for his actions? Let's read Genesis 4:11–16. Cain was cursed and driven from the land to become a restless wanderer. The ground would no longer yield crops for him, and Cain had to leave the presence of the Lord. However, despite his punishment, Cain still showed no remorse.

Let's look at Cain's response to God's judgment and take note of his words (Gen 4:13–14). His reply to God indicates that his heart was not sorry for what he did. In fact, he thought God was being unfair because he would now be “hidden from [God's] face.” His words reflect his unrepentant heart. It is clear that Cain did not learn the lesson that God was trying to teach him. In the end, God was still good to Cain by marking him for his protection. God showed mercy, but Cain's punishment did not change.

Cain's life serves as a warning to us all. He let his worldly desires lead him to sin, and as a result, Cain became a vagabond both physically and spiritually. He was never able to find peace and rest in God's presence. We need to learn to resist sin and fear God, so that we will never be driven from His presence.

Check for Understanding

- 1. According to Mosaic Law, what is important about the firstborn?** It is the Lord's; it is holy; and when the fat is burned as an offering, it is "a sweet aroma to the LORD" (Lev 27:26; Num 18:17).
- 2. What was the key difference between Cain and Abel's offerings?** Their hearts were different. Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice because of his faith (Heb 11:4). Cain, on the other hand, simply gave a token offering, which was a reflection of his incorrect thoughts.
- 3. What is so dangerous about having anger in our hearts?** Anger can produce evil thoughts and lead us to sin. It lures us into doing what is contrary to God's teaching and is powerful enough to lead us astray.
- 4. List some of the reasons Cain fell into sin.** Cain: allowed anger to rule his life; allowed his hatred to drive him to murder; lied to God; showed no respect towards God's omniscience; showed contempt towards God; challenged God's authority; and showed no remorse or regret for murdering Abel.
- 5. What does Cain's response to God's punishment tell you about his heart?** His heart was not sorry for what he did. He felt that God was being unfair by giving him the punishment and that he would be staying away from God, hidden from God's face. His words reflected his unrepentant heart.

Life Application

1. Don't Become a Victim of Sin

It is important to be fully aware of how powerless we are against sin. The Lord warned Cain that "sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it" (Gen 4:7). Sin is something we are born into and something that we constantly have to battle every day of our lives. It lurks around every corner because Satan is always waiting for an opportunity to make us fall (1 Pet 5:8). But if we are so powerless against sin, how do we rule over it? We can learn a few strategies from the story of Cain:

- Resist sin from the very moment you recognize it (Jas 4:7).
- Don't let any impure thoughts grow within you. They will overtake you (Jas 1:14–15).
- Refuse to give Satan even the slightest foothold in your heart (Rom 13:14; Col 3:5).
- Resist temptation with the help of God's instructions (Eph 5:17; Prov 3:5–6).
- Rely on God's strength through the Holy Spirit (Eph 6:10).

As humans, we are weak and prone to giving up. We cannot overcome sin on our own. But the Holy Spirit can give us the power and strength to rule over sin. In the garden of Gethsemane, the moment the Lord Jesus felt the most afraid, He turned to prayer (Lk 22:41–44). As a result, He was strengthened and, ultimately, able to endure the suffering of the cross. We need to fight our spiritual battles with the power of the Holy Spirit and God's word (Deut 20:4; 1 Pet 1:22). Then, as the Bible says, "Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him" (Jas 1:12).

2. Diligently Guard Our Hearts

We learned today that the key difference between Cain and Abel's offerings lay in their hearts. The Bible often teaches us the importance of controlling what lies within our hearts. If we let our hearts remain full of wickedness (Jer 17:9), we will be driven from God's presence the same way Cain was. On the other hand, the more our hearts pursue God, the less concerned we become with worldly desires. "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it" (Prov 4:23 NIV). The New

International Version translation of Proverbs 4:23 warns us to “guard [our] heart.” What does this mean?

Diligently guarding our hearts is a process of learning how to submit to God’s will. Just as soldiers need to condition their bodies to fight, we need to train ourselves to control what goes in and out of our hearts. If we do not change our hearts to follow God, our desires can lead us into sin. With the help of God’s instructions, we can change and purify our hearts with faith (Acts 15:9). Let’s look at a few verses to see how God wants us to change our hearts.

- a. Psalm 9:1 – A heart of praise
- b. Jeremiah 29:13 – A heart that seeks the Lord
- c. Matthew 5:6 – A heart that hungers and thirsts for righteousness
- d. Matthew 11:29 – A heart that is gentle and humble
- e. Psalm 90:12 – A heart of wisdom
- f. John 4:23–24 – A heart of truth

In the process of change, we may make mistakes. During those times, the Lord may discipline us, but this punishment is never out of anger. God wants us to restore our relationship with Him, so if He disciplines us, it is out of righteousness and love (Heb 12:5–6). To reconcile our relationship with God, we must avoid Cain’s example and, instead, guard our hearts so that we abide by God’s instructions.

Discussion

- How do you normally react when your parents tell you that you have done something wrong? Do you usually correct the mistake or deny it?
- Do you have any personal shortcomings which you find difficult to change in your heart, such as anger or jealousy?
- Are there any areas in your servitude that you need to improve according to God’s teachings?

3. A Heart of Truth

Let’s read Matthew 15:8. “These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.” Sometimes, there is a gap between our actions and our hearts. Our lips say one thing, but our inner attitude is completely different. Let’s look at a few scenarios and examine the gaps between the characters’ actions and their hearts.

Scenario 1:

Your school is holding a rummage sale to raise money for the homeless, and all the students have been asked to donate items from home that they’d be willing to sell at the event. You remember visiting a homeless shelter with the church youths last quarter. You saw how sad their situation was and wondered how you could help them. Well, this would be the perfect chance — especially since you have plenty of great stuff stored away in the garage and backyard, most of which your parents have been threatening to give away or throw out since you don’t use them anymore.

When the sign-up sheet finally gets to you, you’re surprised that only a few people have signed up, but you feel good knowing that you have some pretty cool stuff to donate. Some friends come by and ask if you are going to donate anything. “Yup,” you reply confidently as you jot down: Bicycle, tennis racket, baseball mitt, skateboard, baseball bat, clothes, books, backpack, sports duffle bag. At home, you start gathering the items, but you hesitate. You had forgotten how much you actually liked this duffle bag,

and now that it's getting warmer, you could start riding your bicycle again. And honestly, all of your sports equipment is still pretty useful. Maybe you won't donate all of these, after all...

- **How is Matthew 15:8 reflected in this scenario?** *(We might say we will do something to feel or look good, but then later, our hearts are no longer in it, and we aren't willing to carry it out.)*
- **What kind of heart do you need in this situation?** *(A heart of righteousness and truth.)*
- **What should you do to correct this attitude?** *(Try to match our willing heart with action and deed and keep the commitment we made by remembering the reasons we wanted to do it in the first place. If we are struggling, we should ask God to help us make the right choice. Ultimately, we should avoid saying or doing things simply for the sake of looking good in front of others.)*

Scenario 2:

The youth choir has been practicing hymns to present for an evangelical service. You love to sing, but during practice your mind wanders, and you think about all sorts of other things. Choir practice is after the whole Sabbath day of services and R.E. classes, so it's hard to stay focused when you're tired and restless. Many times, you goof around with the other youths. Sometimes you start playing around and start talking or hitting each other for fun. You often don't pay attention to the choir conductor until he motions to your section to start singing. The conductor wants everyone to think about the words of the hymns as they are singing, but to be honest, most of the time you don't pay attention to what the hymn is saying.

- **How is Matthew 15:8 reflected in this scenario?** *(Even though we are singing to encourage and inspire the listeners, if the content of the hymns that we sing are not important to us, in reality, our heart is not in it. Our behavior ultimately reveals that we do not think the content is important, and that we do not even understand or believe in what we are singing.)*
- **What kind of heart do you need in this situation?** *(A heart of praise, that seeks the Lord.)*
- **What should you do to correct this attitude?** *(Try to pay attention and understand the message that you are singing. If you don't really understand the message, ask God to help you. Try not to rehearse simply to "put on a good show." Practice sincerely with the goal of sharing that message with the listeners, and with the goal of making that hymn a pleasing offering to God.)*

Memory Verse

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." (Psalm 51:10)

Context

David wrote this psalm after he took another man's wife.

Meaning

We need a clean heart "created" in us because we are born as sinners, and our natural tendency is to please our flesh. Therefore, we need to ask God to create a new heart in us, one that is clean, with a new spirit of righteousness. This verse is also a form of repentance. God wants a contrite heart in us. We need to pray with repentance and tell God how sorry we are for our sins. And when we pray with sincerely and humility, God will forgive and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Conclusion

Cain and Abel's offerings each reflected their different hearts towards God. We need to examine our true attitude towards God. If our attitude is correct, then God will be pleased with our offering. But if our attitude is incorrect, we should humble ourselves, repent, and change our hearts. Otherwise, if we do not change our hearts, we will fall into sin, and we will be driven from God's presence.

Lesson 4 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. Why do we need a clean heart “created” in us?
Because we are born as sinners, and our natural tendency is to please our flesh.
2. “The sacrifice of the _____ is an _____; how much more when he brings it with _____!” (Proverbs 21:27)
wicked, abomination, wicked intent
3. God told Cain to rule over sin and its desire. What does this mean to us?
We must make sure that sin has no dominion and control over our thoughts, actions, and words.
4. What can we learn from Abel’s offering and Cain’s offering?
Abel gave the best and the richest of the flock he had, and he offered it by faith; we should do likewise. Cain was evil and wicked. He had the wrong attitude before God. He did not resist sin but, instead, allowed sin to completely take control of his life. We need to have the right attitude in front of God and constantly ask God to empower us with the Holy Spirit to walk in the truth and in the newest of life.
5. In what areas do you need to learn to be submissive to God’s calling?
Personal answers.

Noah: A Righteous Man in a Wicked Generation

Passages: Gen 6–9

Memory Verse

“By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.” (Hebrews 11:7)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Works [Behavior]
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Noah was righteous because He was obedient to God’s instructions.2. Understand the importance of preparing ourselves for Jesus’ second coming.	God is faithful.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Be watchful and prepared for Jesus’ second coming.2. Show our faith by having a heart of obedience.

Overview

Events and Spiritual Teachings

- A. Introduction: Noah’s Generation
- B. Preparations Before the Flood
- C. The Flood
- D. God’s Covenant with Noah
- E. The Flood and Jesus’ Second Coming

Life Application

1. Preparing Ourselves for Jesus’ Second Coming
2. Having a Heart of Obedience

Memory Verse

Conclusion: Let us make sure that we are as aware and prepared as Noah was, so that we can be ready to receive the salvation that God has planned for us.

Events and Spiritual Teachings

A. Introduction: Noah's Generation

The story of Noah and the flood is well known all over the world. Though his story may be one that we are familiar with, we can take a deeper look at Noah's obedience and faithfulness to God's commands.

Genesis chapters 4 and 5 record two genealogies. First, we have the descendants of Cain whom God cursed, though the Bible still describes them as having many different talents and being quite prosperous. Second, we have the descendants of Seth. Not much is mentioned about their talents or accomplishments; instead, the Bible simply records how many years they lived and the names of their sons and daughters. This is the line that Noah had descended from.

These two genealogies could also represent the "daughters of men" (Cain's descendants) and the "sons of God" (Seth's descendants) as recorded in Genesis 6:1–2. Descendants from each line began to intermarry with each other, and the people became corrupt and wicked. Though the Bible does not tell us exactly what evil deeds the people committed, we do know that when God saw their wickedness, He was grieved that He had made mankind. He had made man in His image, but mankind had become corrupt.

In contrast to the others of his generation, Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Noah was different because he was righteous, blameless, and walked with God. Noah's righteousness is mentioned not only in Genesis, but also in the Book of Ezekiel and 2 Peter (Ezek 14:14, 20; 2 Pet 2:5). So, what does it mean to be righteous? It simply means to follow God's commandments (Lk 1:6). Because he was unlike the wicked generation around him and instead followed God's will, the Lord chose to save Noah and his family from the coming flood.

B. Preparations Before the Flood

Let's read Genesis 6:13–22.

God gave Noah very specific instructions regarding the measurements of the ark, the animals that had to be brought on the ark, and the food preparations. Throughout the process, the Bible never mentions Noah saying a word or questioning God's directions. This demonstrates his complete belief in God, while his subsequent preparations show his faith. It is clear why the Lord chose to save him.

Though the flood was a major disaster that was going to destroy all of mankind, the Bible does not record Noah as having any fear or doubts. Rather, after hearing all of these instructions, Noah did "according to all that God commanded him" (Gen 6:22). At first glance, this may seem very simple, but let's take a moment to put ourselves in Noah's shoes.

Apart from physically building the huge ark, you would also have to gather and prepare all different types of food for the animals. This was an arduous and time-consuming task. Have you ever thought about the process Noah and his family had to go through in order to build the ark, prepare it for all of the animals, and supply it with food? Let's take a few moments and try to think about the steps he'd have to take, starting from square one. *(Allow students to brainstorm. Guide them into thinking of the details, such as: planning; buying and/or cutting the wood; measuring and shaping the planks; finding supplies for and mixing all of the pitch; planting or foraging for "all food that is eaten," while still feeding themselves daily; etc.)*

Though we do not know how much time Noah was given to prepare, these preparations could not have happened overnight. They would have taken months, or even years, to prepare. Noah also did not know when the flood was going to come. A less faithful family may have given up on the difficult task halfway in or seen the cloudless sky and stopped bothering. But Noah believed that it would happen according to God's words, so he obediently prepared according to His instructions. In stark contrast, the rest of the people of his time were still eating, drinking, and marrying one another without belief in the flood that was coming (1 Pet 3:19–20; Mt 24:38–39).

Let's continue reading Genesis 7:1–6. When Noah was 600 years old, God appeared to Noah again. And once again, the Bible records that Noah was righteous before God and did according to all that God commanded him (vv. 1, 5). Once Noah, his family, and all the animals entered the ark, God shut them in, protecting them from the waters (Gen 7:16).

C. The Flood

The Bible records: "In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights" (Gen 7:11–12). Such a massive amount of water flooded the earth so that even the mountains were covered by water, and God "destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground: both man and cattle, creeping thing and bird of the air. They were destroyed from the earth. Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark remained alive" (Gen 7:23).

This amount of destruction can be difficult to imagine, but our closest comparison is probably a tsunami, which is able to completely destroy cities and landscapes. The flood even destroyed all the birds of the air, which means that the amount of rain that came down from the sky was enough to wipe away all the birds flying in the air.

Let's now read Genesis 8:1–12.

It was not until his 601st year that Noah removed the covering of the ark to see that the ground was dry. This means that Noah and his family were in the ark for over one year (Gen 7:11; 8:14). This is a long time to be stuck inside, especially with all the animals! Interestingly, even though Noah saw that the ground was dry, he did not leave the ark until God told him that he could leave. From this, we can again see Noah's complete obedience to God's instructions and his willingness to wait for God's timing.

D. God's Covenant with Noah

Let us read Genesis 8:14–22. In the second month after Noah saw that the ground was dry, God told him that he could leave the ark. The first thing that Noah did after exiting was build an altar. He took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered it to the Lord. Noah understood that it was God's protection that had allowed him and his family to be saved. Without God, they would have been destroyed with the rest of the world. It was really the mercy of God that protected them throughout the whole year in the ark.

When God received this offering, He was very pleased and said in His heart, "I will never again curse the ground for man's sake [...]; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done (Gen 8:21). God also blessed Noah and established a covenant with him (Gen 9:9). "Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth" (Gen 9:11). As a sign of this covenant between God and Noah, He set "[His] rainbow in the cloud" (Gen 9:13).

If the flood is a symbol of God's justice, then the rainbow is a symbol of God's mercy and His faithfulness to His covenant. This dual nature of God can be seen throughout history in the Bible. God punishes iniquity and evil, but at the same time, He has mercy and compassion for His faithful people. Today, we also experience the justice and mercy of God. We experience His justice when He punishes us for the sins we commit. We experience His mercy and compassion when we repent to Him and experience His forgiveness. So, whenever we see a rainbow, we can remind ourselves not only of the covenant between God and Noah, but also of the severe justice and compassionate mercy that are both in God's nature.

E. The Flood and Jesus' Second Coming

Let's read Matthew 24:37–39.

But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

The people in Noah's time were "eating, drinking, [and] marrying," meaning that they were living their day-to-day lives with the assumption that there would be a tomorrow. They lived each day ignorant of the fact that these were their last days. As a result, they were caught by the flood and destroyed.

Today, we do not know when the Lord will come again, but Jesus Christ has promised that He will, just as the flood eventually did arrive in Noah's time. The parallel between these two events is a warning. It reminds us of how important it is to separate ourselves from the world by following God's instructions and preparing ourselves for His coming, just as Noah did. Though God allows us to eat, drink, and marry, that is not the purpose or end goal of our lives. Rather, we need to make sure that we constantly grow in the knowledge of the Lord so that we are prepared to meet Him when He comes again.

Check for Understanding

1. **How was Noah righteous before God?** He followed the commandments of God.
2. **How was Noah faithful to what God commanded?** He did not question God's instructions but completed all the tasks that God had instructed him to do.
3. **What was the first thing Noah did after exiting the ark?** He built an altar to the Lord.
4. **What covenant did God make with Noah? What is the symbol of this covenant?** God promised never to destroy the earth by a flood, and the symbol of this covenant is a rainbow.
5. **How is second coming of Jesus Christ similar to the flood?** The second coming of Jesus Christ is similar to the flood because we do not know when it will come. Jesus Christ has given us instructions on how to prepare for His coming, just as God gave instructions to Noah.

Life Application

1. Preparing Ourselves for Jesus' Second Coming

We mentioned earlier how preparing for the second coming of Jesus Christ parallels Noah's preparations for the coming flood. This means that we must have the same mentality as Noah did. We need to prepare ourselves just as Noah did and ask ourselves if we are ready to face judgment when Jesus Christ comes again.

a. Am I watchful and prepared for when He comes?

We do not know when He will be coming, but we need to make sure that we are watchful and prepared for when Jesus Christ comes. In the parable of the ten virgins, five of the ten virgins wisely prepared extra oil for the night. We need to have this mentality of preparing this extra portion and not be satisfied with what we have right now. The best way to be watchful and to prepare ourselves for His coming is to seek to grow in our faith always. We should not “coast,” but constantly strive to improve our spiritual lives.

b. Am I a faithful and diligent servant of God?

The parable of the ten virgins not only teaches us to prepare enough oil, but also to shine our light for the world to see. Ask ourselves: Can others tell that we are Christians through our behavior? Do we speak edifying words? Do we keep the Sabbath holy? Do we serve God according to the best of our abilities? God has given us many blessings, and it is important that we are not lazy, but use what God has given us to us. Whatever our age or situation, there are many things that we can do for God, such as preaching the gospel to our friends, helping our parents at home, or picking up trash at church. We should not just sit and do nothing while we wait for Jesus. God wants us to work diligently and do all that we can for Him until He comes!

c. Do I show compassion and love to those around me?

Paul wrote, “And [...] though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing” (1 Cor 13:2–3). Simply doing holy work is not enough. We must put our faith into action by showing love and compassion. Our actions do not have to be big or heroic, but can be simple acts of kindness, such as offering someone a cup of water. When we practice acts of love and compassion towards those around us, we are preparing for when Jesus comes again to judge the nations (Mt 25:34–37). As Jesus taught, “Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me” (Mt 25:40).

We can reflect upon these three questions each day as a way to evaluate ourselves to see if we are truly prepared to meet Jesus Christ when He comes again. We do not know the time or the hour of His coming, so we must be watchful and prepare ourselves by consistently living a life that is pleasing to God, serving Him diligently, and showing compassion to those around us.

2. Having a Heart of Obedience

One admirable quality about Noah is his heart of obedience. He was unwavering in following God’s instructions despite the long period of time and the amount of effort involved. From his example, we can see that faith and obedience are interconnected. Noah needed to have great faith in God in order to take on and persist in the arduous task of building the ark. Also, Noah was willing to follow all that God told him to do, even though it may have been odd in the eyes of the people around him. Following God’s instructions and commandments completely and without question is not an easy task, but in the Bible, there are many other characters who also had the faith to obey.

a. Isaac – Obedience to parents (Gen 22)

Isaac was obedient to his father Abraham even when he was being offered on the altar, showing how much Isaac trusted Abraham, and how close their relationship was. Isaac is an example to us in how we must be obedient to our parents. Though it can be difficult to obey when we don’t agree, or when what they say doesn’t make sense, it is our duty as their children to obey and

respect them. Of course, this obedience only applies to things that are right in the eyes of God. If our parents tell us to do things that are against the God's commands, then we need to make sure we do the right thing in the eyes of God. The Bible also promises us a long life if we are willing to obey our parents. If we believe and have faith in this promise of God, then we have even more of a reason to obey our parents.

Discussion

- In what situation is it difficult for you to obey your parents?
- What have been the consequences of disobeying? Please give an example.
- What are the benefits of obeying your parents? Please give an example.

b. Naaman – Obedience to God's workers (2 Kgs 5)

When Naaman, the commander of the Syrian army, was instructed by Elisha to wash in the Jordan seven times to heal his leprosy, he was furious. He expected Elisha to come out and heal him on the spot! But when his servants eventually convinced him to follow Elisha's instructions, he was healed. If he had allowed his anger to control him and walked away, he would not have received the blessing of God's healing. Today, when we feel like we know better than our instructors, it can be difficult to obey. However, it is important for us to respect and obey God's workers because that is when we are able to see God's blessings in our life. Also, when we obey the workers of God, we obey God Himself (Eph 6:5–8).

Discussion

- Who are the workers of God that you have to obey today? (*Example answers: R.E. teachers, pastors, ministers, R.E. coordinators, church council members*)
- In which situations would you have to obey them? (*Example answers: Following the rules that the church sets, such as wearing proper attire, walking in the hallways, etc.*)
- What keeps you from obeying them?

c. Shadrach, Meshach, Abed-nego – Obedience to God's commandments (Daniel 3)

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego were placed in a difficult position when they had to choose between obeying the king or obeying God. Choosing to obey God and refusing to worship King Nebuchadnezzar's golden image meant that they would be thrown into the fiery furnace. However, worshipping the golden image and keeping their lives meant directly disobeying God's commandment. In the end, they chose to fear God and keep His commandment not to worship idols. Though they were still punished and thrown into the fiery furnace, God was there to protect them and save them. Today, we may also encounter a similar struggle. We have to decide whether we want to follow God's commandments or what the world is telling us. In those times, we need to remember that we have nothing to fear if we are on God's side.

Discussion

- Are the Ten Commandments like ten suggestions to you?
- For yourself, which commandment is the most difficult to keep? Why?
- What blessing(s) did you experience when you followed the commandments of God?

It is important to work towards a heart of obedience through growing our faith and trust in God. Without faith, it is impossible to please God, and it is also because of our faith in God that we can obey His commandments. Our obedience is important to God because it is more pleasing to Him than any

physical offering we can make. So, let us continue to practice obedience in our daily life by obeying our parents, God's workers, and of course, God Himself!

Memory Verse

"By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith." (Hebrews 11:7)

Meaning

1. Noah feared God, meaning he had a deep reverence and respect for God. He took the warning that God gave him seriously even though he could see no immediate danger. This illustrates the faith that Noah had in God.
2. Though his actions were to save himself and his family, his actions also condemned the world, or the people of his time. This is because the people could see him construct the ark and prepare for the coming of the flood, but no one apart from his family believed that the flood was coming.
3. The verse begins and ends with "faith," which illustrates how important Noah's faith was in saving himself and his family. It was also by his faith that he was called righteous before God. His faith and trust in God distinguished him from the rest of the people of his generation.

Conclusion

Noah was righteous because he was faithful and obedient to the commandments of God. His faithfulness and obedience allowed him to be used by God. He also sets an example for how we can prepare ourselves for Jesus' second coming today. Let us make sure that we are as aware and prepared as Noah was, so that we can be ready to receive the salvation that God has planned for us.

Lesson 5 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. The memory verse mentions Noah's faith twice. What does this teach us?
It teaches us how important his faith was in saving himself and his family. It was also by his faith that he was called righteous before God, and his faith distinguished him from the rest of his generation.
2. "For as in the days _____ the _____, they [...] did not know until the flood came and took them all _____, so also will the _____ of the _____ of _____ be." (Matthew 24:38–39)
before, flood, away, coming, Son, Man
3. Why does the Bible call Noah "righteous"? What does it mean to be righteous?
Unlike the wicked generation around him, Noah instead followed God's commandments.
4. What was remarkable about Noah's diligence in building the ark and preparing for the flood?
The work was arduous and time-consuming; while a less faithful family may have stopped or given up, Noah believed the flood would happen and persisted in following God's instructions.
5. What can we learn from the parallel between Noah's time and Jesus' second coming?
That just as the flood came, Jesus will come again. The parallel between these events is a warning, reminding us how important it is for us to separate ourselves from the world and prepare ourselves as Noah did.
6. What two lessons does the parable of the ten virgins teach us about Jesus' second coming?
We need to be watchful and prepare ourselves for His coming by seeking to grow in our faith. Also, we must not sit idly by and do nothing, but shine our light for the world to see.
7. Of God's commands, which do you struggle to obey the most? Why do you think this is?
Personal answers.

Abraham: The Father of Faith

Passages: Gen 12; 15; 17; 18; 22

Memory Verse

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” (Hebrews 11:6)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Works [Behavior]
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Abraham’s journey of faith was affected by and reflected in various events in his life.2. Because of his perfected faith, Abraham was obedient to God.3. Our spiritual circumcision is carried out in our obedience to God’s will.	God is faithful, and His promises are true.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Reflect on the events in our lives.2. Learn how future events can shape our faith as Abraham’s had for him.

Overview

Events and Spiritual Teachings

- A. Abraham: An Overview
- B. The Shaping of Abraham’s Faith
- C. A Perfected Faith: The Father of Faith
- D. Abraham’s Spiritual Descendants

Life Application: Our Journey of Faith

Memory Verse

Conclusion: Abraham came to have complete faith in God because of God’s reassurance and faithfulness to His promises. In times of doubt, let us remember to be like Abraham and continue to hold on to what has been promised to us, for God will always remain faithful.

Events and Spiritual Teachings

Introduction

We often refer to Abraham as the “father of faith” because of his exemplary life of faith. Yet, even Abraham had a visible journey of ups and downs in his spiritual life of faith. Before we go into more detail about why he is called the father of faith, let’s try to recall the different parts of Abraham’s life.

A. Abraham: An Overview

Activity: Charting Abraham’s Faith

(Teachers, this activity will serve both as a review and overview of the major events that occurred in Abraham’s life. You may choose how much detail to include or omit depending on your students’ knowledge. See Figure 01: Abraham’s Journey to a Mature Faith for an example of the resulting chart by the end of this activity. While listing events, feel free to pick and choose if time is short or if your students have less comprehensive knowledge, focusing on those that are covered in Section B.)

- Make a list of events that occurred in Abraham’s life. List as many as you can, referencing the Bible if needed. *(Teachers: Write them down on the board as students name them. For reference, below is a list of the relevant events included in Figure 01, in chronological order. As mentioned, focus on the events covered in Section B if your students are less familiar with the Bible, or if time is limited.)*

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Departs from Ur (Gen 11:31) | 9. Believes in God’s promise (15:6) |
| 2. Stays in Haran (11:31) | 10. Ishmael is born (16:2) |
| 3. Heads for Canaan (12:4) | 11. God establishes the covenant of circumcision (17:10) |
| 4. Goes down to Egypt (12:10) | 12. Prays for Sodom and Gomorrah (18:22) |
| 5. Goes up from Egypt & dwells in Canaan (13:1) | 13. Deceives Abimelech (20:2) |
| 6. Separates from Lot (13:14) | 14. Isaac is born (21:5) |
| 7. Rescues Lot (14:16) | 15. Is tested by God at Moriah (22:1) |
| 8. Becomes afraid after defeating 5 kings (15:1) | |

- Now that we have a list of events, number them in chronological order with the help of the teacher.
- Draw a chart in your notebook and try to plot Abraham’s faith levels based on the listed events (the y-axis will be his level of faith; the x-axis will be his age). If you’re unsure of his level of faith at that point, ask yourself: for this event, what do Abraham’s actions show about his level of trust in God?
- Once you have finished, compare your results with the rest of the class and with the teacher and then discuss the similarities or differences.

B. The Shaping of Abraham’s Faith

We can see that Abraham’s journey of faith was not one continuous climb upwards. Like us, he experienced ups and downs in his spiritual life. For example, one of his highest points happened when God first called him, while one of his lowest points came when he failed to demonstrate his complete trust in God’s promise of descendants. Let’s examine a few major events that served to shape Abraham’s faith.

1. Abraham’s calling

When Abraham, originally called Abram, dwelt in Ur, the Lord called him to depart from there to the land of Canaan. Let’s turn to Genesis 12:1–3. What did God promise to Abraham? *(God will show Abraham a land that he will receive; He will make Abraham a great nation; through Abraham, God will bless all the families of the earth.)* Let’s now read verse 4. From this simple

act of obedience, we can see Abraham's initial faith in the Lord. He was willing to leave the familiar and the comfortable to travel to the unknown. He uprooted his entire family and lifestyle, placing his trust not in what he could see, but in God's promises to him.

2. Deception in Egypt

Let's read Genesis 12:10–13. When we charted Abraham's faith, this event was likely at a lower point on the axis. His doubt in God's power and protection made him rely on deceit, but this only led to a worse situation.

3. Abraham's belief in God's promises

Let's read Genesis 15:1. What can we infer from God's assurance to Abraham to "not be afraid"? Abraham had just defeated five kings to rescue his nephew Lot, but from God's words, we can see that Abraham was afraid. Let's continue reading verses 2–6. Although he was afraid and had no sons yet, the Bible records that Abraham believed God's promise. He hadn't seen any evidence with his own eyes, but God's assurance was all that he needed. Because of his belief, God "accounted it to him for righteousness."

4. The birth of Ishmael

Let's read Genesis 16:1–4. We can see that Abraham's wife Sarah, known then as Sarai, was still barren after dwelling in the land of Canaan for ten years. Sarah decided that she could no longer wait for God's promise and used a tradition of the time to have a son: she gave her maidservant Hagar to Abraham so that Hagar could become a surrogate mother, but this only caused friction between her, Hagar, and Abraham. Abraham did not ask God what to do, but agreed to Sarah's suggestion, revealing his lack of trust in God's promise of descendants. After this incident, God was silent and did not appear to Abraham for thirteen years.

Despite the weaknesses of man, God clearly remained faithful and was still willing to renew His covenant with Abraham and encourage him. God reaffirmed His promises to Abraham many times, and each time, they never changed. What was the result of this long process in Abraham's life of faith?

C. A Perfected Faith: The Father of Faith

One of the last major events in Abraham's life shows us why he is called the father of faith. First, let's read Hebrews 11:8. "By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going." Through this verse, the Bible teaches us that living a life of faith means going out, "not knowing where [we are] going." Abraham had to be entirely obedient to God to be able to uproot himself from a familiar home. From the beginning of his record in Genesis, he already knew how to put faith into action.

From this point, he then experienced all sorts of different events, but we know from our previous overview of his life that some of these events were evidence of a faith that hadn't yet been perfected. It wasn't until years later that God deemed him ready for the ultimate test. Let's now continue with Hebrews 11:17–19.

By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.

Following God's instructions to leave your home is one thing. Willingly sacrificing your only child, knowing that God has promised a nation through this child, is an entirely different issue. But Abraham nonetheless followed God's instructions. According to the passage, Abraham had no idea how God would follow through with this promise if Isaac were to die. But even without knowing how, he fully trusted that God is faithful to His promises. This is the result of a perfected faith.

After reviewing what we've learned so far, what do you think it means to have a perfected faith? (*Allow students to write down and then share their answers.*) To have a perfected faith means to trust God wholeheartedly and act in complete obedience to God. When our faith has been perfected, we understand that God is always faithful to His promises. So even when we are facing temptations or trials, we will always rely on God and be completely obedient to Him, just as Abraham was.

D. Abraham's Spiritual Descendants

Abraham's name is mentioned several times throughout the Bible, in both the Old and New Testaments. The Jewish people's faith and identity were both rooted in their ability to claim Abraham as their forefather. But claiming Abraham as their forefather was not simply a matter of genealogy – it was also tied to the act of circumcision. Without circumcision, they could not call themselves Israelites. So, what does circumcision have to do with us today, and in what way is it still important? To understand circumcision, its relation to Abraham's descendants, and its connection to our own spiritual identity, we need to first review the covenant of circumcision recorded in Genesis.

1. The Covenant of Circumcision

Let's read Genesis 17:9–14, 23. This was the first time God commanded His people to undergo circumcision, and from this point, it became a highly important factor in separating God's people from other nations. The Mosaic law stated that in order to become part of Israel, foreigners could only be accepted if they underwent circumcision, and descendants of Israel were not recognized without circumcision. It became such an important part of the Israelite identity that in the New Testament, the leaders of the apostolic church had to hold a special council to decide whether new believers had to undergo circumcision. It was – and still is today – inseparable from the Jewish identity and their confidence in the Abrahamic covenant.

2. The Continuation of the Covenant: Spiritual Circumcision

The covenant from Abraham is still important to us today. Why is this the case? Paul wrote that "if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal 3:29). We become spiritual descendants of Abraham the moment we believe and are baptized.

Abraham serves as the template by which we ourselves can also be saved: through his faith, he was justified, and his faith was visible in his active belief in God's power and promise. In Abraham's lifetime, he demonstrated this "active belief" by carrying out God's command of circumcision, believing in God's promise of a son, and willingly sacrificing Isaac. Today, we carry out this "active belief" by receiving baptism and, like Abraham, by acting in obedience to God's will and command. And just as Abraham received the blessings of God's covenant, we also will receive God's promise as long as we give Him our faith.

Jesus Christ once chided His opposition by saying, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham" (Jn 8:39). To be Abraham's descendants, it is important that we follow his faith in action. In the Old Testament, exhibiting faith in action meant receiving circumcision and following God's commands as Abraham had. In the New Testament covenant, demonstrating faith in action means

believing in Jesus Christ, receiving baptism in both water and Spirit, and following God's will for our lives. While we do not need to undergo circumcision today, we still need to follow the spirit of it: like circumcision, our faith and actions must serve as signs that separate us, God's people, from the world around us.

To conclude this portion of the lesson, let's read Genesis 25:7–8. "This is the sum of the years of Abraham's life which he lived: one hundred and seventy-five years. Then Abraham breathed his last and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people." The phrase "full of years" doesn't refer simply to his physical age. Abraham was a man of faith to his last breath. He had a long life that was full of blessings, one that was far more fulfilling than what we can imagine for ourselves today. His model of faith was not simply the faith that he lived in each moment, but the faith that he upheld until the end of his life's journey.

Check for Understanding

- 1. What did Abraham do when God called him? Why was his response significant?** Placing his trust not in what he could see, but in what God promised him, he uprooted his entire family and lifestyle. He was willing to leave the familiar and the comfortable to travel to the unknown.
- 2. What does it mean to live a life of faith according to Hebrews 11:8?** To live a life of faith means to go out, "not knowing where [we are] going."
- 3. What does it mean to have a perfected faith, according to Abraham's example?** To have a perfected faith means to trust God wholeheartedly and act in complete obedience to God.
- 4. What was the importance of the covenant of circumcision in the Old Testament?** Under Mosaic law, foreigners could only be accepted if they underwent circumcision, and descendants of Israel were not recognized without circumcision. It was – and still is today – inseparable from the Jewish identity and their confidence in the Abrahamic covenant.
- 5. How do we become Abraham's descendants, and why is it so important that we do?** We become spiritual descendants of Abraham the moment we believe and are baptized. Abraham served as the template by which we ourselves can also be saved: through his faith, he was justified, and his faith was visible in his active belief in God's power and promise.

Life Application

Our Journey of Faith

During our study of the events in Abraham's life, what is one thing that you noticed about the strength of his faith throughout his lifetime? Clearly, Abraham's faith was not one continuous climb upwards, as he experienced numerous ups and downs in his life. However, Abraham is now called the father of faith because all these events guided and shaped his faith to the point where he was willing to sacrifice his son Isaac, firmly believing that God would fulfill His promise of making a great nation through him.

We also have and will continue to experience events that shape our faith, and our response to these events will show how close we are to God. Let's take a moment to examine our own lives and reflect on the different stages of our faith. Of course, we have not lived lives nearly as long as Abraham's, but there are likely at least one or two events that either shaped or clearly reflected your faith at the time.

(Teachers: The following page has been added to the Student Handout.)

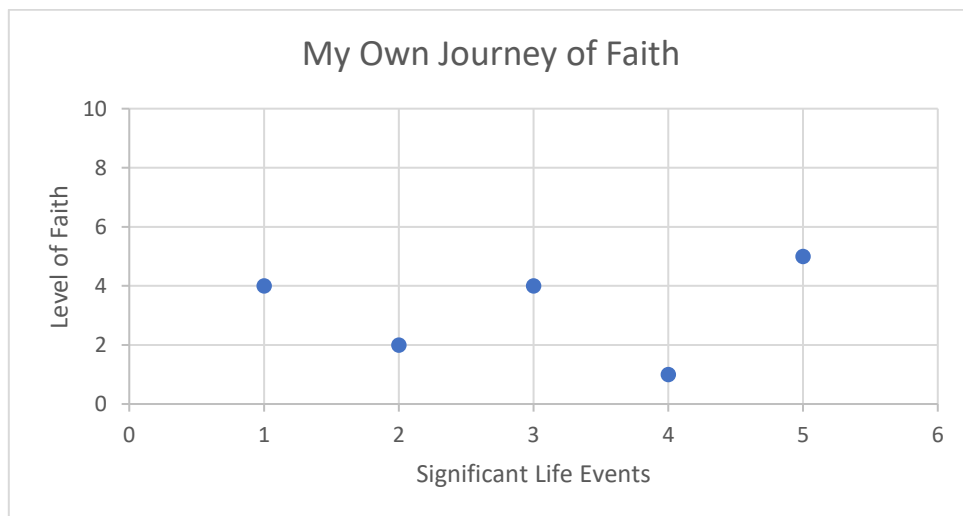
Activity: My Own Journey of Faith

1. Take a moment and recall significant events in your life. These could be anything from:
 - *The birth of a sibling*
 - *A major incident, such as an accident or a change in a parent’s job*
 - *An issue at school*
 - *Moving to a different location*
 - *The passing of a family member*
2. Write down the events that you can recall, in chronological order, as best you can. Even if it may seem like a small or commonplace event, as long as it was significant to you, write it down.
3. Mark each event with a number, then make a chart like the one that we made for Abraham. Use the x-axis to record your life events and use the y-axis to gauge your level of faith from 1 to 10, with 10 being very faithful.
4. Plot points for where you think your faith was for each event. Things to consider while evaluating your faith during each event or time period:
 - *Did you feel worried or anxious?*
 - *Did you forget to consider God when reacting or making decisions?*
 - *Did you spend any extra time in prayer?*
 - *Did you feel unsure of what God wanted you to do, but did your best to ask for His will anyway?*
 - *Did you follow God’s will even though you felt scared or anxious about doing so?*
 - *Did you fully commit to following what you thought God wanted you to do?*
 - *Did you have a peaceful heart, knowing that God is in control?*

Here is an example of what your chart might look like:

Significant events in my life (in chronological order)

1. Mom got very sick, hospitalized
2. Conflict at school
3. Received the Holy Spirit at SSC
4. Moved to a different state
5. Found a new spiritual friend at church



Discussion

- After writing down your events and considering your level of faith for each, do you think you rely on God enough in your life?
- If you encountered the same situation(s) today, would you react any differently?
- How do you think you can change your responses in the future?

It isn't easy to train ourselves to respond differently to situations. To help us start, let's read a few verses. What has God promised in each?

- Isaiah 43:2 – *God has promised us His presence.*
- Philippians 4:6–7 – *God has promised us His peace.*
- Ephesians 3:16 – *God has promised us His strength.*

Different events in our life not only reflect our current level of faith, but also shape our faith for the future. If we ever experience anxiety, worry, or doubt, remember that God is with us, even when we go out, not knowing where we are going. He has promised His presence, His peace, and His strength, no matter where we are. Abraham had the faith to step out on a journey that changed his life, and the lives of generations after him. Do you also have the faith to step out of your comfort zone, and let God guide your life, step by step?

Memory Verse

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” (Hebrews 11:6)

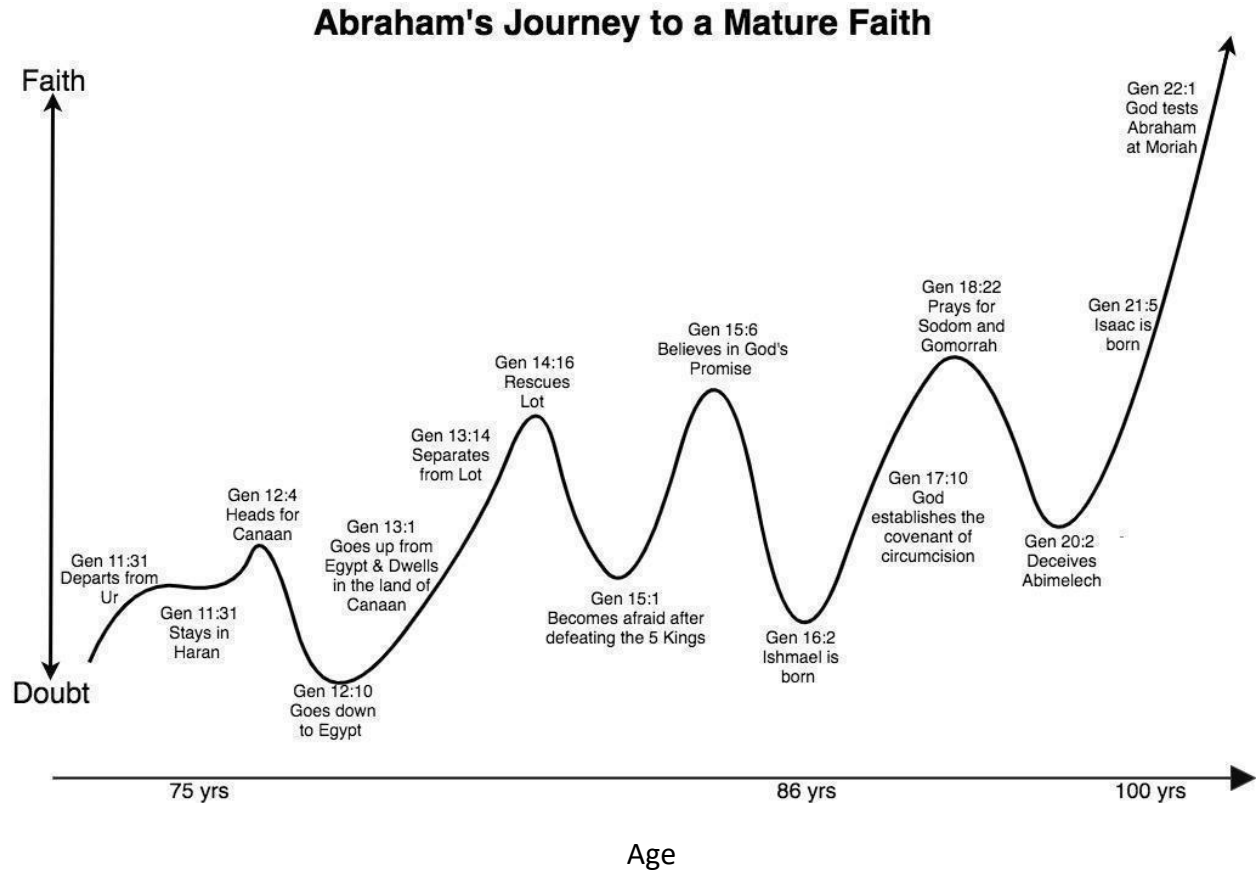
Meaning

1. It is impossible to please God without faith. If we do not have faith in God, then we cannot trust in God. If we do not trust in God, then we would have many doubts and find it difficult to obey God.
2. We must believe in God and trust that only He can truly help us. To have faith means to know who God is: our Creator and Father in heaven. To live out our faith means to obey what God has commanded us to do.
3. God will fulfill His promises to those who diligently seek after Him with faith.

Conclusion

God's constant faithfulness and Abraham's willingness to let God guide him eventually resulted in his title of the father of faith. We need to learn to have the same faith in order to become Abraham's spiritual descendants and to receive the same inheritance promised by God. To do so, we need to shape our faith and grow closer to God through our life events. When we rely on God's guidance and bravely leave the familiar through faith in His promises, He will reward us.

Figure 01: Abraham's Journey to a Mature Faith



Lesson 6 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. What do we require in order to please God, and why?
It is impossible to please God without faith, and if we do not have faith in God, then we cannot trust in Him.
2. “By _____ Abraham _____ when he was _____ to go out to the place which he would receive as an _____. And he went out, not _____ where he was going.” (Hebrews 11:8)
faith, obeyed, called, inheritance, knowing
3. Name at least two major events in Abraham’s life and explain how they reflected his level of faith.
See Events and Spiritual Teachings, Section B.
4. What does it mean to have a perfected faith?
To have a perfected faith means to trust God wholeheartedly and act in complete obedience to God.
5. Although we do not undergo circumcision today, why is it still an important concept for us to learn?
We still need to follow the spirit of it: like circumcision, our faith and actions must serve as signs that separate us, God’s people, from the world around us.
6. When was the last time you experienced a lot of worry, anxiety, or doubt? How do you think God would want you to respond to this situation in faith?
Personal answers.

Isaac: The Child of Promise

Passages: Gen 24; 26; 28:3–4

Memory Verse

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” (Galatians 3:28–29)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Works [Behavior]
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Isaac, a fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham, served as a bridge to pass on that promise.2. Isaac was a prefiguration of the Christ to come.	God is faithful, and His promises are true.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Trust in God’s promises and commit to obeying His word.2. Understand the importance of being children of promise, and of how this should affect our lives.

Overview

Events and Spiritual Teachings

- A. The Miracle of Isaac’s Birth
- B. Isaac: A Life Defined by Obedience
- C. Isaac: A Life of Faith

Life Application

- 1. Living as a Child of Promise
- 2. Trusting in God’s Promises

Memory Verse

Conclusion: When compared to his father Abraham and to his son Jacob, Isaac might seem a less important figure. However, we can see that Isaac served important roles as both a bridge and a symbol of promise.

Events and Spiritual Teachings

Introduction

What do you know about Isaac?

Activity: Quick Write

1. Give each student a piece of paper and set a timer for three minutes. Ask the students to write down everything they know about Isaac without opening their Bibles or textbooks. (Note: If you have a large class, you may choose to divide your students into teams.)
2. When the three minutes are up, select one student and ask them to share their list. If anyone else has the same thing, then the duplicate item must be crossed off. If no one else has the same item, then do not cross it off.
3. Do this for all the students, until all have shared. The student with the most items left on their list is the winner.

A. The Miracle of Isaac’s Birth

Today, we’ll be studying Isaac. But before we read about him, we need to backtrack a bit to before he was born. Isaac’s birth was not your typical event! First, let’s read about God’s promise to Abraham regarding Isaac, recorded in Genesis 15:1–6. God had previously appeared to Abraham twice, promising to make him into a great nation, and that his descendants would inherit the land of Canaan. In this passage, however, Abraham pointed out that he had no son. God’s response was clear: despite their old age, Abraham would receive a son by his wife, Sarah.

Years later, Abraham thought that maybe this son would be Ishmael, born by Sarah’s maidservant, Hagar. But God once again insisted otherwise, despite the seemingly impossible circumstances (Gen 17:18–19). Of course, just as God promised, despite both of them being far beyond childbearing years, Sarah eventually bore a son to Abraham.

Understanding God’s Sovereignty

It is clear that human logic does not apply to the Lord! He is an amazing God, and nothing is impossible for Him. His sovereignty and power are both incomparable. However, this event is important not just because of Isaac’s miraculous birth, but because he also represents all those children who have been born into the promise of God. Let’s read Romans 9:7–9. Here, Paul uses the example of Abraham to describe two different children: children of the flesh, and the children of the promise. Ishmael and Isaac were both Abraham’s sons, but in the eyes of God, only Isaac was the child of promise. So, what are the differences between these two types of children? Paul explains in Galatians 4:23–26.

Children of the Flesh	Children of the Promise
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Born according to the flesh (Gal 4:23) • Born into bondage (Gal 4:24–25) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Born through the promise (Gal 4:23) • Born free (Gal 4:26)

Paul wrote in Galatians 4:28 that the believers, like Isaac, are children of the promise, meaning God has specially chosen us to receive His promises. This special status, however, is not because of anything that we have done, or because of the Jews’ genealogy as Abraham’s descendants. Rather, this selection is part of God’s sovereignty and choosing.

B. Isaac: A Life Defined by Obedience

Let's now take a look at Isaac himself. If we look at the events of his life, we can see that his obedience to his parents later translated into his obedience towards God. Let's first examine how he was obedient.

1. Isaac's obedience to his parents

Isaac proved his trust and obedience towards his father when the Lord commanded Abraham to sacrifice him. The Bible makes no mention of any protests on Isaac's part. If we put ourselves in his shoes, it would be difficult to imagine that we would be silent as our parent ties us up and places us on an altar! But Isaac was obedient to his father, even in the face of death.

We can also see Isaac's obedience in his marriage. Let's read Genesis 24:62–67. The Bible does not record that Isaac was aware that Abraham had sent a servant to find a wife for him, but Isaac was willing to accept Rebekah once he heard the servant's explanation of events. We can see from this second example that Isaac really trusted in his father, as he was willing to submit to him even well into adulthood. Later, this trust was rooted in God Himself.

2. Isaac's obedience to God

Although Isaac was born into the promise given to Abraham, God still required Isaac's obedience. Let's read Genesis 26:2–5. Despite the famine, God commanded Isaac to stay in Gerar, when he might have gone to Egypt to provide for his family. Isaac obeyed, and, as a result, God blessed him greatly by allowing him to reap a hundredfold of what he had planted, an impossibility during a time of famine (Gen 26:12–14). Yet even though Isaac had received such an abundance of physical blessings, he did not let this get in the way of his relationship with God. Let's continue by reading verses 23–25. What three actions did Isaac take upon arriving in Beersheba? He:

- a. Built an altar
- b. Pitched his tent
- c. Dug a well

These three actions represent three different aspects of Isaac's life. The altar, used for worship, represents his relationship with God. Tents were needed for his family to dwell in, so pitching a tent represents his family life. Lastly, the well was required to water his flock, and represents his work and career life. Isaac had his priorities in the correct order; he placed his relationship with God first, even above his own family. In exchange for his faith, God blessed and watched over all the different aspects of his life.

A Prefiguration of Christ

If we closely examine Isaac's birth and early life, we can actually see many similarities between him and the Lord Jesus. Let's take a look at how they parallel each other.

Isaac		Jesus Christ
Genesis 18:14	The promised child	Isaiah 7:14
Genesis 21:1–2	Miraculously conceived	Matthew 1:18
Genesis 22:12	Sacrificed by their father, who loved them	1 John 4:9–10
Genesis 22:2	Sacrificed on Mount Moriah	John 19:17
Genesis 22:6	Carried wood on their back for their own sacrifice	John 19:17

Genesis 22:9	Was bound	John 18:12
Genesis 22:9	Submissive to their sacrifice	Philippians 2:8
Genesis 22:16–18	All nations blessed through their sacrifice.	Galatians 3:14, 16

Though Isaac seemed less significant compared to Abraham, or even to his two sons, Jacob and Esau, he held great symbolic importance. He not only came to represent the future children of promise (Gal 4:28), but his actions also foreshadowed the fulfillment of God’s promise of salvation in Jesus Christ.

C. Isaac: A Life of Faith

Let’s now take a look at Isaac’s actions during his adult life, and how they reflected his faith in God.

1. Faith in God’s provision

When the Lord commanded Isaac to remain in Gerar, He blessed Isaac with such abundant wealth that the Philistines envied him. Abimelech finally told Isaac, “Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we” (Gen 26:16). While seeking out a new place, however, the locals quarreled with him over the wells that his herdsmen dug up. Let’s read Genesis 26:16–22. Each time, instead of arguing over the wells that were rightfully his, he simply packed up, moved on, and found another place.

Abimelech later approached Isaac once again, but this time, on a mission of peace. He told Isaac, “We have certainly seen that the LORD is with you” (Gen 26:28). It is truly amazing that a group of people who normally worshipped pagan gods both saw and admitted the existence of the one true God! Their realization was due to Isaac’s faith and his willingness to follow God’s commands.

2. Faith in God’s promise

One of Isaac’s most important actions occurred towards the end of his life. Isaac’s eyesight had deteriorated, so he was unable to recognize when his younger son Jacob took his elder son Esau’s blessing. Let’s read Genesis 28:3–4. These were Isaac’s last words recorded in the Bible. Hebrews 11:20 says, “By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.” From this verse, we can see that giving the blessing to his son was, itself, an act of faith. The person giving the blessing must believe that it will come to pass. This small action that Isaac took showed his belief and submission to God’s will.

Despite Jacob’s deception, Isaac fulfilled his duty in passing on God’s blessings. He successfully passed on God’s promise to the next generation, a seemingly small but vital action in the Israelites’ history. His obedience to both his father and to God allowed Abraham’s lineage to successfully continue, which eventually led to the birth of the nation of Israel. This lineage would continue to the birth of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, whose death on the cross has allowed all those who believe in Him to be God’s promised children!

When compared to his father Abraham or to his son Jacob, it seems that Isaac lived a very peaceful life with relatively few problems. However, we can view Isaac as a bridge. He was the receiver of God’s promise from his father, and he would be the one to pass down this blessing to his son, Jacob. It is through Isaac that the promise of God was passed on to the next generation.

In the New Testament, Isaac has come to symbolize those who were born according to the promise of God. Like Isaac, we are also the children of promise, able to experience true freedom found in Christ (Gal 4:31). In exchange for being chosen for this promise, we need to learn from Isaac and continue doing good works for the Lord. We must remember that it is only through His grace that we have received His blessings, so we must continue to pursue after Him (Eph 2:8).

Check for Understanding

- 1. Why was Isaac's birth a miracle?** He was born when both Abraham and Sarah were well past childbearing age.
- 2. In what way did Isaac demonstrate his faith when blessing Jacob?** Giving the blessing to his son was, itself, an act of faith. The person giving it must believe it will come to pass.
- 3. When Isaac arrived in Beersheba, what three things did he do, and in what order?** He first built an altar to God, then set up his tent, and lastly, dug a well.
- 4. What does each action taken in Beersheba represent, and what does Isaac's order of operations teach us about our own lives?** The altar represents his relationship with God. The tent, his family life, and the well, his work and career. Like Isaac, we should place our relationship with God first, above our family and careers. In exchange for our faith, God has promised His blessings and His care.
- 5. How did Isaac respond to the locals when they claimed his wells for themselves?** Each time, instead of arguing over the wells that were rightfully his, he simply packed up, moved on, and found another place.

Life Application

1. Living as a Child of Promise

"Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise." (Gal 4:28)

How should the knowledge that we are children of promise change how we live our life? Isaac not only trusted in God's sovereignty and faithfulness, but also actively sought after Him. He allowed the Lord to lead him in all the different aspects of his life, and he understood that as long as he obeyed God, then God would take care of him. Let's look at a few scenarios to understand how we should live our life as a child of promise.

Scenario 1

Lillian had a big argument with her older sister Lisa, and they were no longer speaking to one another. Two weeks had passed since their argument, but both continued to give the other the cold shoulder. It was like a game of who could ignore the other person more! Lillian didn't like how things were, but she also didn't want to be the one to apologize, since she didn't do anything wrong!

Discussion

- As a child of promise, what should Lillian do? Use a Bible verse to support your answer.
- *Example answer: In the Lord's Prayer, we always ask God to forgive our debts as we forgive our debtors (Lk 11:4). As a child of His promise, God wants us to forgive those who have wronged us. If we are able to do so, then God has promised to forgive our own wrongdoings!*

Scenario 2

Nicholas was constantly glued to his phone. It was instinctual for him to pick it up and check for messages every few minutes. He ate meals with his phone and always had it close at hand when he was

out. It was the last thing he looked at before sleeping, and the first thing he reached for when he woke. Nicholas didn't feel like it was a problem, though, because all his friends were exactly the same way.

Discussion

- As a child of promise, what should Nicholas do? Use a Bible verse to support your answer.
- *Example answer: We need to evaluate our priorities as a child of God! We should constantly think about whether our actions will please Him or not. As His precious child, we have the freedom to choose what we do; however, not all things are beneficial or edifying (1 Cor 10:23). Nor do all things glorify His name.*

Scenario 3

Eric's parents have a strict rule that all homework must be done before going out to play. One day, his friends tell him that they will be playing a new video game after school. They are all excited because this is the latest game in a popular series that they have been anticipating. Other people at school have already begun raving about how good it is! Eric is already on his way to his friend's house when he suddenly remembers that he has an unfinished English paper, due the next day.

Discussion

- As a child of promise, what should Eric do? Use a Bible verse to support your answer.
- *Example answer: God trains us through the decisions that we make in our life. Even the smallest choices that we make reflect our character and train us for the big choices that we will later encounter. If we can be faithful in the small things, then God will trust us with greater things later on (Lk 16:10).*

2. Trusting in God's Promises

Aside from living as a child of promise by following God's will, it is also important to learn to trust in His promises. It is one thing to know what God's promises are. It is another to show our trust in them through our words and actions. Let's go over a few promises in the Bible and consider how our trust in these promises should affect our lives.

a. He provides for our needs

"Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." (Mt 6:31-33)

These days, many people become anxious or depressed because of the overwhelming burdens of life. We may face burdens such as family finances, our studies, or our future. But God has promised that He will provide for all of our needs. As long as we do our best, God will take care of us so that we can live without worry or anxiety. On the other hand, if we are constantly anxious about our life, then that means we do not yet fully trust God. Can you think of any recent events that you have felt anxious about?

b. He never tempts us beyond what we can bear

"No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it." (1 Cor 10:13)

Sometimes, we may be faced with situations that are so overwhelming that we don't know what

to do. We may even begin to question if God is truly with us. But if we are facing tribulations, we must learn to rely on God rather than on human knowledge or logic. Especially in the case of temptation, remember that God has always given us a way out of it. Have there been any recent tribulations or temptations in your life that you didn't know how to face?

c. He blesses those who tithe

"Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this," says the LORD of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it." (Mal 3:10)

This is a unique promise, because God actively challenges us to test Him. When we earn money, whether from an allowance or a part-time job, it is normal to want to save it all for ourselves. But God has challenged us to offer tithe to Him, and in exchange, He will bless us so abundantly that "there will not be room enough to receive it"! Have you or someone you know ever given tithe to the Lord and received God's blessings in exchange?

d. He is always by our side

"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." (Josh 1:9)

When we are scared, distressed, or worried, it is easy to feel as if no one understands our problems, making us feel lonely and miserable. But God has promised us: He is right there by our side. Have you ever felt like no one was there to help you? In those times, we must remember that God is here, and He understands. Most importantly, He has the power to help and protect us, so we should never feel discouraged or afraid. Have you ever felt like you were totally alone in the world? Did you kneel down to pray, or did you forget about God?

e. He gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask

"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Lk 11:9, 13)

Those who don't have the Holy Spirit may sometimes feel like prayer is an act of futility. But in truth, God is just waiting for you to ask from the depths of your heart. He also wants you to continue to have faith and hope in His promise. Have you felt like God is not listening to your prayers, only to realize later that He really was?

f. He gives salvation to those who believe in Him

"[If] you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom 10:9–10)

This is the most important promise of all because it concerns life after death. Our salvation is the ultimate hope that we should hold on to every day of our lives. As a demonstration of this hope, we should always fix our hearts on God's kingdom, and always do our best to follow His commands. When you go home after church, do you immediately forget about God, or is He always on your mind at home or at school? Do you try to make decisions that God would want

you to make, or do you forget about His teachings?

g. He blesses those who honor their parents

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother,’ which is the first commandment with promise: ‘that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.’” (Eph 6:1–3)

The relationship between parent and child is the most important relationship in God’s eyes. Just as we honor the God who created us, we are also to honor our parents. If we do, God has promised us a fruitful long life, filled with provision, guidance, and deliverance. Do you love and value your parents? Do you mock them for their age and different upbringing? Or do you bring them joy by respecting their counsel in God’s word? If your parents are not believers, do you pray with all your heart for their salvation? Even if your parents have hurt you in the past, God wants us to love them by praying for them and forgiving them. If we struggle with this, then we can ask God to help us in our prayers.

Memory Verse

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” (Galatians 3:28–29)

Optional Memory Verse Activity:

- Write out the verse on the board and have the students read it aloud together.
- Ask them to draw out the verse using only pictures and symbols. There should be no words on their drawings. They can work independently or in pairs. If they are struggling, try underlining all the key words in the verse first. They can then illustrate each key word.
- Erase the verse on the whiteboard. Have the students recite the verse by only looking at what they have drawn.

Meaning

1. What are the three pairs that we see in the verse? How are all these different identities able to be one? In this verse, Paul is explaining a very important concept: that no matter who we are, or where we come from, when we are baptized, our identities have become unified as one. We now belong to Christ, so we are all equally precious children in His eyes.
2. Because we belong to Christ, we have become the children of promise just like Isaac. We have become heirs of God’s promised salvation and inheritance in heaven.

Conclusion

Isaac might seem a less important figure, especially when compared to his father Abraham and to his son Jacob. But we can see that Isaac served as both a bridge and a symbol of promise. As a bridge, he passed on God’s promise to his own son through faith. And as a symbol of promise, he showed that he, like us, is a child of the promise of God, able to receive an inheritance in heaven. As children of promise, we must imitate Isaac by placing God first in our lives and being obedient to His word.

Lesson 7 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. What unifies all the different pairs in the memory verse?
Once they are baptized, all are unified as one in Christ and equally precious children in His eyes.
2. "So he _____ an _____ there and _____ on the name of the LORD, and he _____ his _____ there; and there Isaac's servants _____ a _____."
(Genesis 26:25)
built, altar, called, pitched, tent, dug, well
3. How did Isaac prefigure Christ? Write down at least three ways, with verse references if possible.
 - *Promised child (Gen 18:14; Isa 7:14)*
 - *Miraculously conceived (Gen 21:1–2; Mt 1:18)*
 - *Sacrificed by their father, who loved them (Gen 22:12; 1 Jn 4:9–10)*
 - *Sacrificed on Mount Moriah (Gen 22:2; Jn 19:17)*
 - *Carried wood on their back for their own sacrifice (Gen 22:6; Jn 19:17)*
 - *Was bound (Gen 22:9; Jn 18:12)*
 - *Submissive to their sacrifice (Gen 22:9; Phil 2:8)*
 - *All nations blessed through their sacrifice (Gen 22:16–18; Gal 3:14, 16)*
4. Describe two events in which Isaac showed his faith towards God.
 - *When the Lord commanded Isaac to remain in Gerar, Isaac obeyed despite the famine.*
 - *Instead of quarrelling with the locals over the wells, Isaac moved on and found another place, trusting in God's provision.*
 - *He did not get angry at Jacob, but obediently passed on God's blessing.*
 - *His blessing of Jacob was, itself, an act of faith.*
5. How should the knowledge that we are children of promise change how we live our life?
Like Isaac, we need to trust in God's sovereignty and faithfulness, and actively seek after Him. We should allow the Lord to lead us in all the different aspects of our life and trust that He will bless us and take care of us.
6. Take a moment to reflect on yourself. In what area of your life can you make better choices as a child of promise? Write down how you can be a better child of promise this week.
Personal answers.

Jacob: Two Significant Encounters

Passages: Gen 28:10–15; Gen 32:24–32

Memory Verse

“And He said, ‘Let Me go, for the day breaks.’ But he said, ‘I will not let You go unless You bless me!’ ”
(Genesis 32:26)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Works [Behavior]
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. God came to Jacob in times of distress, establishing a covenant and giving him strength.2. God changed Jacob’s name to Israel, which means prince of God.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. God provides.2. God comforts.3. God guides.4. God is omnipresent.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Know God’s presence.2. Respond in faith by building our altar.3. Persist in our prayers until we receive God’s blessing.

Overview

Events and Spiritual Teachings

- A. Jacob’s Dream at Bethel
- B. Jacob Wrestles with God

Life Application

1. Know God’s Presence
2. Respond in Faith by Building Our Altar
3. “I will not let You go until You bless me!”

Memory Verse

Conclusion: We need to learn from Jacob’s active faith and do our best to return God’s care with our actions. To do so, we must persevere with our prayers and consistently rely on God in times of distress.

Events and Spiritual Teachings

A. Jacob's Dream at Bethel

Jacob had to travel from Beersheba in the southern part of Canaan to Haran, which was in northern Mesopotamia, east of the Euphrates River. It was over 400 miles away. It would have taken him perhaps three or four days of constant travel to reach Luz, where he stopped to rest. While he rested, he dreamed of a stairway that reached heaven. Let's examine this event in detail.

Do you remember why Jacob was traveling to Haran? After tricking his father and taking Esau's birthright, Esau threatened to kill him, so Jacob's mother sent him to his uncle. He was likely homeless, scared, and alone. And after traveling for so many days, it is only natural that he would need to rest. When he fell asleep in Luz with only a rock for a pillow, he had a dream. Let's read about this dream in Genesis 28:13–15.

And behold, the LORD stood above it and said: "I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you."

There is a beautiful teaching in this dream. In it, God introduced Himself as "the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac." He wanted Jacob to know that He had a very intimate relationship with both Jacob's father and his grandfather, and that He wanted a close relationship and covenant with Jacob as well. There are several promises and words of comfort that God gave to Jacob during this dream. What were they? Let's examine each verse one by one.

- Verse 13: God reminded Jacob that he was the God of Abraham his grandfather and Isaac his father. He promised to give Jacob the land that he was lying on, not only for Jacob, but for his descendants as well.
- Verse 14: God promised that his descendants would be as numerous as the dust of the earth, and that all families would be blessed through him and his offspring. God also said that his family would spread out to many parts of the world, indicating how abundantly blessed he would be.
- Verse 15: The most comforting words that Jacob heard was when God promised to be with him at all times, never leaving him. Nothing could be more powerful than knowing God would always be present.

The Significance of God's Promise

Jacob's dream signifies the establishment of the eternal covenant between God and Jacob and his descendants. The words "behold, the Lord stood above it" means that through the covenant, Jacob and his descendants would be God's people, and the Lord would be their God. The descending and ascending angels indicated God's constant presence. They are His ministering spirits, sent by God to guide, protect, and to keep (Ex 23:20).

Jacob's Reaction

Let's read Genesis 28:16–17. "Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, 'Surely, the LORD is in this place and I did not know it.' And he was afraid and said, 'How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!' " Why do you think Jacob was afraid? Why did he not know the Lord was present? (*Allow students to answer.*) Most likely due to the worries of life, Jacob was

unaware of the Lord's presence. He was not close to God, and though he was likely comforted to learn that God was with him, he was probably also afraid because he had not realized that God was already there.

Jacob had run because of his brother's wrath, and he likely knew that what he had done was not pleasing to God. This dream made him realize that he may have been able to run away from people, but he could not run from God. God meant every word, so He would always be present in his life. What did Jacob say and do in response to this understanding? Let's continue reading verses 18–22.

- Verse 18: Jacob took the stone that he had rested his head on and set it up as a pillar for God.
- Verse 19: He changed the name of the place from Luz to Bethel, which means the "House of God."
- Verses 20–21: Jacob made a vow to worship God because of God's care, provision, and protection.
- Verse 22: Jacob proclaimed that the pillar he had set up would be God's house, and he would give a tenth of all he earned to God.

This dream was clearly a turning point in Jacob's life. We can see this in the vow that he made, as well as in the new name that he gave the place. Setting up the pillar and pouring oil on it was an expression of worship. He was thanking God for His blessings and guidance, and the action represented Jacob's new trust and faith in God and His promises. But what is the significance of his vow? The vow that Jacob made can be broken down into three parts:

1. A plea for God's providence

"If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on..."

2. Personal commitment to God

"...so that I come back to my father's house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God."

3. His own promise towards God

"And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."

At this point of his life, Jacob was filled with fear, hopelessness, and uncertainty regarding his journey and his future. In a time of deep distress, God not only gave him a dream, but also established a covenant to comfort, lead, and guide him. In response, Jacob appealed for God's providence as a sign of his trust, personally committed himself to God as a sign of his faith, and offered a lifelong tithe as a sign of his thanksgiving. He established a new and more intimate relationship with God.

B. Jacob Wrestles with God

Jacob's second significant encounter with God happened much later. After twenty years, Jacob left Padan Aram to go back home to Canaan. However, Jacob and Esau had not parted on good terms. He was afraid to meet his brother. To add to his fears, Esau was accompanied by 400 men (Gen 32:6). Therefore, out of fear, Jacob split up his entire household into two camps as a strategy to evade an attack and prevent the annihilation of his household. After he sent them over the brook of Jabbok, he stayed behind by himself. It was then that a Man showed up and wrestled with Jacob until daybreak. Let's read Genesis 32:24–32 to see the details.

Although God could easily have prevailed against Jacob, He did not. Instead, they wrestled until morning, at which point the Man touched the socket of Jacob's hip, causing it to be out of joint.

However, despite the pain, Jacob held on and refused to let Him go until He blessed Jacob. Because of his determination, Jacob received a new name. Let's examine this passage in closer detail.

1. The significance of a name change

In the Bible, a person's name was a reflection of their character. Jacob's name has several meanings: "heel catcher," "grabber," or "deceiver." For his entire life, he had lived up to this name, first by catching his brother's heel during their birth, then by grabbing hold of Esau's birthright by asking him to trade it for a bowl of stew. Later, Jacob was deceived into laboring twenty years for his uncle Laban, during which Jacob managed to outwit Laban and grow more prosperous than his uncle. But after Jacob struggled through the night, refusing to let go of God, He gave Jacob a new name: Israel. This name means "prince of God," or, "he who struggles with God." He changed Jacob's very identity, and as a result, the nation of Israel was named after him. Jacob was no longer a "heel catcher" or one who is deceived, but someone restored and renewed.

2. Jacob refused to let Him go

Why was Jacob so determined to receive God's blessing? He was full of fear and distress, and he dreaded Esau's retribution upon him and his family. Let's read 1 John 5:14–15. "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him." Jacob's struggle with God showed his perseverance and determination in seeking God's blessing, and God answered his persistence with a reward: his faith was renewed, and he was blessed.

3. Limping to rely on God

It is never God's will that we run from our problems. With the limp that God gave him, Jacob could not use his own strength to face Esau and his 400 men, or to even run from them. But despite the limp, he was not afraid. With his limp, Jacob no longer stood by his own power, but by God's. He could no longer run, but relying on God's strength made him stronger.

4. The meaning of wrestling

Jacob's persistence teaches us about our attitude in prayer. When we persistently seek God through prayer, His help and strength will come. He will deliver us just as He delivered Jacob from Esau. When we are worried, fearful, or uncertain, we only need to cry out to God, and He will give us strength. All we need is the same persistence that Jacob had when wrestling with God through the night.

5. Peniel

Jacob called the place Peniel, "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." (Gen 32:30–31). His life was blessed with God's mercy after the encounter. He was ready to face the upcoming challenges ahead of him with God's help. His body may have been weakened, but he was spiritually transformed.

After such a transformative event, Jacob was no longer in distress or overwhelmed by fear. He stood before his families to face Esau, willing to sacrifice himself to face whatever consequence he needed to. This was indeed a big transformation and a change in his attitude. Let's read Genesis 33:3: "Then he crossed over before them and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his

brother.” Jacob clearly showed his respect and humility upon his arrival. He bowed not once, but seven times, indicating his transformation and desire to reconcile with his brother. Through the new strength he had received, he could face Esau with courage from God.

Life Application

1. Know God’s Presence

Like Jacob, we may at times try to hide or run from our problems and do whatever we can to protect ourselves. In the process, we may become afraid or lonely because we feel as though no one can help us. But it is during those times when God reveals Himself to us, allowing us to understand that we are never truly alone. Jacob’s first experience with God was very powerful, and he woke up knowing God would never leave him. Have you experienced the presence of God? Have you experienced His faithfulness? Let’s read how the Bible describes God’s faithfulness.

- “And He said, ‘My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.’ ” (Ex 33:14)
- “For He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’ ” (Heb 13:5)
- “You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy [...]” (Ps 16:11)
- “Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.” (Ps 23:4)

These verses help us to understand the presence of God. If we abide in Him, He will abide with us, and He will always be with us. When was the last time you felt the presence of God as Jacob did?

2. Respond in Faith by Building Our Altar

We may have had brief brushes with God in our journey of faith. They may have been through powerful prayers, moving sermons, or miracles. Whatever the method, all are various experiences that God gives us in times of need. But many of those times, we simply leave it as that: just an experience. It may live inside of us for days, maybe weeks, at best, but Jacob was stirred enough to take lasting action.

Jacob did not just accept God’s reassurances and then go on his way. Instead of just accepting it as an experience, he responded with both action and a personal vow to turn his life into a living testimony of God’s care. He allowed this encounter to deepen his personal relationship with the Lord. But what is the meaning of building an altar for us today?

Our altar to God is a place of worship, thanksgiving, offering, and intercession. Perhaps it is a certain time of day in your own room, or perhaps it is your family altar, when you gather to read the Bible and pray together. It can even be a room in your heart and mind, a place where you pour out your worries and fears to God, no matter where you are. But regardless, it is a place where we go to build up our relationship with God.

Discussion: Do you have a personal altar that you have built? How often do you go there? Do you give tithe to God on a consistent basis with a cheerful heart? How did God pour out His blessings to you after giving tithe?

3. “I will not let You go until You bless me!”

Change is never easy, but if we are willing to submit ourselves to God, then we have to learn why we must wrestle with God in prayer. Prayer can be a real battle of wills. Would you be willing to wrestle with God in prayer with persistence, like Jacob? Jacob did not quit until God blessed him. Will you also persist in your prayers until God blesses you? Do you truly believe that He will touch, change, and bless

you through your prayers? At times, it seems as if He isn't listening at all. In those times, how do we eventually receive God's blessing, as Jacob did?

Receiving God's Blessings

a. Admit we have a need

In Genesis 32:9–12, Jacob said to God, "Save me, I pray! For I am afraid." He was afraid of facing Esau. That was the starting point for Jacob. Nothing happens in our lives until we reach the realization: "I cannot solve this on my own. I cannot face my struggles on my own. Dear God, I need Your help!" Jacob admitted that he had a need, and God blesses those who realize their need for him.

b. Ask for deliverance

Jacob asked for deliverance by asking God to save him. When we face overwhelming trials, we finally realize that we need God's deliverance. We need to cry out to God and ask for help. Do I trust God to take care of the situation? Do I trust God to deliver me from the danger? Do I ask God for direction and try to do the right thing, even if I can't see the big picture yet?

c. Focus on God

In our prayers, God wants you to think about Him and focus on Him. Psalm 105:4 says, "Seek the LORD and His strength; seek His face evermore!" Jacob was so worried and fearful about his brother, and that was the moment God came to him and initiated the match. The physical conflict drew Jacob out of his fear and forced him to focus on God. God is the source of everything we need. That's why we go to Him and focus on Him despite the struggles that we face. When we do that, our anxieties will fade away in comparison to God's power and glory.

d. Go deep into our prayers

Most people miss God's providence because they give up too soon. They don't make it till daybreak because they give up on the struggle early on. They may think something like, "Forget it! It isn't worth it! I pray and pray, but God never answers my prayers!" But Jacob refused to let go until God blessed him and struggled with him until daybreak. The longer we pray, the deeper our prayers become. When you wrestle with God in your prayers and allow Him to work deep within you, He will change you. Don't avoid the fear, conflict, or pain, but pray with it all and direct your anxieties to God. Like Jacob, we must never give up or stop praying.

e. Continue to trust in God

The muscle that God shrank in Jacob is one of the strongest muscles in the human body. God reduced the point of his greatest physical strength, and in doing so, told him that he would no longer rely on himself anymore, but on God. Jacob's struggles may have seemed to be with his father-in-law and his brother, but his biggest struggle was actually with God. He had been running all his life, but instead of running away, he needed to learn to trust and rely on God. Likewise, we also need to trust that God will mold and change us according to His will.

Questions to reflect upon:

- God desires for us to wrestle with Him in prayer, just as Jacob did. When was the last time you spent all night praying? At times, we may feel discouraged. This week, try planning one day where you can pray for a longer time than usual. Pray for yourself, for your family, and for your

unsaved friends whose hearts are unreceptive to the gospel.

- Make a list of things you need to pray for. Pray for the strength you need to overcome whatever sin you repeatedly struggle with, such as lust, pride, fear, greed, doubt, gossip, or bitterness. Ask God to renew your mind and spirit. Ask Him to help you get rid of sinful habits that interfere with your prayers.

Check for Understanding

1. **Name one promise that God told Jacob in his dream.** God promised Jacob the land that he was lying on to him and his descendants. He promised that his descendants would be as numerous as the dust of the earth. He also promised that all families would be blessed through him and his offspring, and they would spread out to many parts of the world.
2. **What words of comfort did God offer to Jacob in his dream?** God promised to always be with him.
3. **What was the result of the wrestling with God until the breaking of the day?** God rewarded Jacob's persistence and blessed him by changing his name to Israel.
4. **What can we learn from Jacob's limp?** It meant that Jacob had to rely on God, rather than on himself.

Memory Verse

"And He said, 'Let Me go, for the day breaks.' But he said, 'I will not let You go unless You bless me!' "
(Genesis 32:26)

Meaning

This verse teaches us what our attitude should be when we pray. Praying persistently is never a one-time event. We need to pray at all times and pray without ceasing (1 Thess 5:17). When we focus our entire being on God, we will not grow weary in prayers.

Conclusion

The Lord approached Jacob in times of distress, reassuring him and offering comfort. Jacob responded each time and deepened his relationship with God, at first offering what he could in return, then accepting God's sovereignty and refusing to let go until God blessed him. We need to learn from Jacob's active faith, and do our best to return God's care with our actions. To do so, we must persevere with our prayers and consistently rely on God in times of distress.

Lesson 8 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. What does the memory verse teach us about our attitude when we pray?
Our attitude when we pray should be persistent and determined. We need to focus our entire being on God, and we will not grow weary in our prayer.
2. "So Jacob called the name of the place _____. 'For I have _____ God face to face, and my life is _____.'" (Genesis 32:30)
Peniel, seen, preserved
3. How did Jacob respond after his dream? Why is this significant?
Jacob built an altar, and then he made a promise to God. This is significant because Jacob was not merely letting the dream remain an experience; he was actively deepening his relationship with God.
4. What can we learn about the limp that the Lord gave to Jacob?
It is never God's will that we run from our problems. With the limp that God gave him, Jacob could not use his own strength anymore. He no longer stood by his own power, but God's.
5. Have you built an altar for God in your life? Explain. If not, how can you build one up now?
Personal answers.
6. How can you change your faith to an active one like Jacob's?
Personal answers.

Joseph: Faith in a Foreign Land

Passages: Gen 37–50

Memory Verse

“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” (2 Corinthians 4:17)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Works [Behavior]
Joseph’s entire life was in God’s hands, and his constant faith allowed him to glorify God before many nations.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. God controls the course of history.2. God is faithful.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. We must strive to keep our faith in a foreign land.2. Remain faithful to God and remember that everything is under His control, no matter what ups or downs we experience.

Overview

Events and Spiritual Teachings

- A. Faith in Adversity
- B. God’s Faithfulness to Joseph
- C. Faithfulness that Is Clearly Seen

Life Application

1. Faith in a Foreign Land
2. Maintaining Our Faith in God

Memory Verse

Conclusion: Like Joseph, we must learn to hold on to our faith in a foreign land and shine the light of Christ on the world around us through the ups and downs we experience, until the day God brings us to our home in heaven.

Events and Spiritual Teachings

Introduction

How does the world define a “successful life”? (*Allow students to brainstorm.*) The world today often focuses on getting ahead of others by spending more and more time on academic studies, by practicing in a chosen field, or by spending days and nights in the workplace. When faced with adversity, we are supposed to overcome problems with our wits, knowledge, and intelligence. But we know that the Bible teaches us otherwise.

Joseph is a classic example of a “from rags to riches” success story. Sold into slavery by his brothers and thrown into prison for a wrong he did not commit, Joseph rose amazingly high later in life. But what was the key to his success? Even from a young age, Joseph was someone with a strong sense of right and wrong. This quality stemmed from his strong relationship with God from a young age. But the key characteristic that lasted for Joseph’s entire life was his faith.

A. Faith in Adversity

Joseph’s character changed very little throughout his life. His direct honesty in speaking his dreams and his faithful obedience to his father, despite his brothers’ envy, show us an honest boy who was without any secrets. This didn’t change even after being sold into slavery. Joseph’s most important characteristic, however, was his faithfulness. Joseph’s faith can be clearly seen in his obedience.

As a young boy, Joseph obediently followed his father’s commands even though he was likely aware of his brothers’ jealousy. Later, Potiphar trusted Joseph to the extent that he did not even know what he owned, beyond the food that was placed in front of him (Gen 39:5–6). Although sold by his brothers, Joseph fulfilled his responsibilities, remained faithful in his duties, and refused to sin with his master’s wife. Let’s take a closer look at Joseph’s faithful character.

1. Joseph and his brothers (Gen 37:12–35)

Joseph’s first test of faith was in the face of his brothers’ envy. Jealousy was a common source of conflict in the Book of Genesis, and Joseph’s generation was no exception. His brothers saw that Jacob loved Joseph more than them, and Joseph’s frank retelling of his dreams only increased their antagonism towards him (Gen 37:4, 8). They even allowed their envy to lead them to consider the murder of their own brother. We can see the stark contrast in attitudes between them and Joseph.

Let’s read Genesis 37:12–15. Despite their antagonism, Joseph faithfully and obediently went to his brothers to see if they were well. He did not avoid his responsibilities, though he may have had reason to be afraid of being with his brothers.

2. Joseph and Potiphar’s wife (Gen 39:7–23)

Even in a foreign land, Joseph adhered strictly to the commands of his Father in heaven. It did not matter that he was far away from the sight of his own family, or far from anyone who knew or understood his belief in the true God. He adamantly refused to sin with Potiphar’s wife. Let’s read Genesis 39:7–10.

We can see from Joseph’s response that he was resolute in refusing to sin against God, even though Potiphar’s wife pestered him daily. The test did not lie in the possibility of succumbing to the temptation of lying with her, but in the suffering that he had to endure from such a persistent woman. If she had been any other person, he could have easily dealt with the

problem. But because she was his master's wife, the situation was complicated and difficult for him to handle, due to the uncertainty of what may happen if he told his master. In the end, his master's wife's false accusation brought about the most unjust turn of events for Joseph.

It must have been a difficult pill for Joseph to swallow, to be thrown into prison after he had spent such a long time refusing to sin. Potiphar had not even given Joseph a chance to speak. Perhaps even if Potiphar had given Joseph a chance to explain, the truth of his wife's behavior would have been too shameful to expose. Placing him in prison would have been an easy way of sweeping the whole problem under the carpet.

3. Joseph imprisoned (Gen 39:20–23)

Despite his unjust circumstances, Joseph did not become angry with God, nor did he lash out in his behavior or speech. Let's read verses 21–23. We continue to see Joseph's good nature, shown in his care towards his fellow prisoners, and in his diligence towards all that the keeper of the prison had placed under him. Let's now read Genesis 40:5–8.

Because of his good nature, Joseph saw that the butler and the baker were sad, so he sought to find out why. Joseph's incredible faith was once again evident when they told him that they had dreams that needed to be interpreted. He knew that interpretations belonged to God, so he did not hesitate to help the two. He had no idea this event would trigger events that would lead to an audience with the Pharaoh years later! His kindness was heartfelt, and his confidence that he could help was based entirely on his faith in God.

4. Joseph before Pharaoh (Gen 41:14–41)

The butler did not remember Joseph, even though the dream came true exactly as Joseph had spoken a mere three days later. However, when we recall God's power, we know that all events were unfolding according to His timing and will.

It was another two years before Joseph saw an opportunity for his release. It may have seemed entirely unfair for the cupbearer to have forgotten him for that long, but what would have happened if Joseph had been released before Pharaoh's dream occurred? God's timing was such that the Lord would be glorified, and Joseph would be esteemed before the most powerful man in Egypt. Pharaoh's dream, which no one could interpret, provided a platform for Joseph to shine. Let's read Genesis 41:15–16.

This moment before Pharaoh was a shining ray of hope for Joseph. Human reasoning dictates that he should seize the opportunity to elevate himself in Pharaoh's eyes and aim for his release. Any normal person would have done so. But Joseph refused to take any credit for the interpretation. He gave all the glory to God (vv. 16, 25). Even while offering a solution, Joseph did not even hint that it should be himself in that position; he simply gave the best response that he could and attributed all the credit to the Lord (vv. 33–36, 38). Even after years of slavery and imprisonment, Joseph remained humble and showed a faithful heart to God.

B. God's Faithfulness to Joseph

God was faithful to Joseph – He took care of him during adversity and granted him success. It is important to note that even in times of success, Joseph also did not forget God. Many people forget God entirely when their lives are blessed and free of trials. Swept away by their own success, they forget that God is the source of everything they have and lose sight of their faith. Joseph is a good example of

someone who never forgot God, whether in dire situations or in blessed circumstances. And his faith did not go unanswered.

1. Bought by Potiphar (Gen 39:1–6)

Because the Lord was with Joseph, he became a successful man, and his master could see that the Lord was with him. Joseph was made the overseer of his house, and God blessed Potiphar because of Joseph. The extent of Potiphar's trust was clear from the fact that he did not even know what he possessed except for the bread he ate. At this early stage of Joseph's new life, God had already given him favor and glorified Himself through Joseph.

2. Second in command over Egypt (Gen 41:37–57)

Although separated from his family, Joseph was now at the pinnacle of his life due to his incredibly high status on the world stage. Egypt was a superpower, and Joseph was effectively running the nation. Egypt and other nations beyond bowed to him because he was able to save them. From a worldly perspective, his position was beyond anyone's wildest imaginations. After his years-long, unjustified imprisonment, it was now clear that God had not forgotten Joseph, but remained faithful to him, giving him a position that didn't just free Joseph from his unjust punishment. Ultimately, Joseph's freedom gave glory to God and played a crucial part in God's plan to save Joseph's family.

3. Joseph's brothers come to Egypt (Gen 42:1–5)

At this stage of Joseph's life, we can begin to see how amazingly scripted it is. The famine forced Jacob's sons to travel to a foreign country that had been saved by the hands of Joseph. And that same man was now also saving other nations, including that of his own brothers. Joseph's dream from years ago was now made entirely clear.

Joseph's reaction shows the depth of his love, despite their treatment of him and the many years they had been apart. From the moment he had been sold, Joseph had no idea whether he would see his family again, not knowing the plans that God had in store for him. For years, he must have wondered whether they were doing well, or whether his beloved father was still alive (Gen 43:27). But because Joseph remained faithful, eventually, God not only reunited him with his family again, but also let him spend another seventeen years with his father before Jacob's death (Gen 47:28).

C. Faithfulness that Is Clearly Seen

We can see that Joseph was faithful, but what exactly about his actions convey such faith? There are two characteristics that we can clearly see when examining his life: his diligent servitude, and his trust in God's absolute sovereignty.

1. Joseph served God wholeheartedly

While serving Potiphar, Joseph served with diligence and obedience. Despite his unjust situation, he was industrious and trustworthy, and as a result of his diligence, "The blessing of the LORD was on all that [Potiphar] had in the house and in the field" (Gen 39:5). In prison, he still did not exhibit any self-pity, but served the keeper of the prison with diligence. Once again, because of his faithfulness, "whatever he did, the LORD made it prosper" (Gen 39:23).

This dedicated servitude continued even when he was placed in charge of the country. Out of his faithfulness, Egypt prospered and was saved from the famine. Still, Joseph did not attribute

any of this to himself, but told his brothers that “God sent me before you” (Gen 45:7).

2. Joseph trusted in God’s sovereignty

God revealed to Joseph early on in his life that his family would bow down to him. His circumstances after being sold may have made this seem very unlikely. But Joseph continued to trust in God even in prison (Gen 40:7–8), and he clearly gave glory to God even before Pharaoh (Gen 41:16, 25). In the end, God used all circumstances – including the sins of those around him – to bring about his deliverance, both of Joseph himself, and of his family.

While Joseph had an understanding of God in his early life, in the twenty years it took for his dreams to come to light, Joseph grew to have a clearer understanding of God’s sovereignty. Joseph did not act for the sake of any reward, but told the butler and the baker, “Do not interpretations belong to God?” (Gen 40:8). Later, he again said to Pharaoh that the interpretations of his dreams were not in himself, but that “God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace” (Gen 41:16). Later, this understanding is reflected in his names for his children (Gen 41:51–52), and his reassurance towards his brothers that they “meant evil against [Joseph], but God meant it for good” (Gen 50:20).

Even after he was reunited with his family, Joseph maintained his faith in God until his very death (Gen 50:24). His very life glorified God because he kept his faith until the very end. Overall, Joseph trusted God through hardships, suffering, and many disappointments. There were so many twists and turns in his life, but God is faithful, and we see that God’s plan brought unimaginable blessings. He prepared Joseph for His purpose, and He is likewise preparing us for His glory.

Check for Understanding

1. **What was Joseph’s most important characteristic, and how can we see this in his actions?** Joseph’s faithfulness is his most important characteristic, which can be seen clearly in his obedience towards his father, his faithfulness to his duties under Potiphar, and his refusal to sin with Potiphar’s wife.
2. **How did Joseph act before Pharaoh?** He refused to take any credit for the interpretation. He gave all the glory to God. Even while offering a solution, he did not even hint that it should be himself in that position.
3. **How can we see God’s faithfulness to Joseph?** He took care of Joseph during adversity and granted him success. He blessed Potiphar while Joseph served his household, granted him a position beyond anyone’s wildest imaginations, and allowed him to reunite with his family.
4. **Through what two key characteristics can Joseph’s faith be clearly seen?** His diligent servitude, and his trust in God’s absolute sovereignty.

Life Application

1. Faith in a Foreign Land

One of the more remarkable facets of Joseph’s faith was his ability to hold on to God even when surrounded by a nation of pagan worshippers. No one in Egypt understood or shared his faith. But Joseph continued to abide by the qualities taught to him by his father – dedication, care, and the refusal to sin in the eyes of God. Trials and adversity very often reveal a person’s true character. Joseph, when faced with adversity, did not fail to hold on to his faith and give glory to God. How can we do this in our own lives? Consider the following scenarios and brainstorm ways to maintain the integrity of your faith.

Scenario 1:

Like your classmates, you thought Lucy was a little bit weird. She always wore drab clothes, barely spoke, and ate strange foods for lunch. The differences were small, but the rest of the class soon isolated her. Eventually, you learn that Lucy is being bullied through social media by some of your classmates. One day, your teacher places you in a group with her for a project. It's the first time you've really had to interact with her, and as a child of God, you know that He wants you to love your neighbors. You want to follow His command, but if you are too friendly, then perhaps your other classmates will also start bullying you. How should you act towards her?

- *Possible answers: These types of circumstances are ways for God to test our faith, just as Joseph was tested. Will you respond by reaching out to her, or by ignoring her? (Jas 4:17). God has reminded us to love our neighbor as ourselves. When we live out this love, we react differently to those in need. In this case, it may be a great moment to share God's love with her by treating her kindly, perhaps even building up a friendship and eventually introducing her to Christ. With the knowledge of God comes the understanding that she may not feel accepted by her classmates, but God will look at her heart and accept her.*

Scenario 2:

Your sibling has been unable to find a job, and money has been tight for your family the past year or so despite the work that your parents do. You've continuously prayed about it together, but still no opportunities have appeared. After several months of waiting, she is finally able to find a job, one that offers even higher pay if she can work on weekends. When she discusses it with your parents, you can see that she is seriously considering taking up the offer – it has been a long time since your family has been able to live comfortably, and you know that they are worried about the many bills they have to pay. But you also remember from your RE classes that Sabbath is a day of rest and a blessing when we keep it wholeheartedly. When we put Him first, God will bless us and take care of all our needs. What kind of suggestion can you offer to your sister?

- *Possible answers: God often uses adversity to test our faith, and to see whether we will continue following Him or not. As difficult as it is, He wants us to "[trust] in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding" (Prov 3:5). Even if we are younger, we can support our family spiritually by reminding them that we need to put God first, and that we shouldn't rely on human wisdom. Instead, when we wait on the Lord, we will be renewed and lifted up like eagles.*

2. Maintaining Our Faith in God

Do you recall what Joseph asked his family to do with his bones? Joseph understood that their stay in Egypt was only temporary. He looked towards God's promises, even those that would be fulfilled long after his death, and he had complete faith that they would one day come to pass, including their inheritance of the promised land. Let's read Hebrews 11:13–16.

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

Like Joseph, we need to keep faith in God's promise that one day, we will inherit the heavenly kingdom. As long as we remember this promise, it is easier for us to recall that our home on this earth is only

temporary. But how should this knowledge affect our words or deeds? We learned today how Joseph was able to maintain his faith despite the many ups and downs that he went through in his life. This is because of his faith in God and His promises. He knew that no matter what happened to him, God never broke His promises. Let's now reflect on our own lives.

Activity: Charting Our Ups and Downs

(Teachers: Prepare some colored pencils or markers, as well as some blank paper if your students do not have their own notebooks. You can prepare a blank chart ahead of time for the students with "time" or "event" as the x-axis and "faith" as the y-axis. Or you may let the students set up their own charts, or simply list out the events of their lives. The activity is flexible depending on your class time and needs.)

First, draw a timeline of your life, starting from the earliest point you can remember until today. Then recall the major events in your life, from as early as you can remember. Examples may be meeting someone important to you, failing or passing an important exam or test, moving houses, or being baptized. Note each major event on your timeline and whether it is an "up" or a "down" in your life, either by position or color. Then, using a different colored pencil or pen, as best as you can, chart the level of your faith throughout each event. Did you pray consistently and rely on God no matter what? Or did your faith go up and down? Once you have finished your charts, discuss the following questions either as a group or with a partner.

- How has God worked in your life so far? Can you see that everything is under His control, and that it has all occurred for a reason?
- How do you feel about where your life is right now? Are you facing tribulations, or do you feel blessed?
- Have you had a lot of ups and downs in your faith? How do you think you can better maintain a constant level of faith?

Memory Verse

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (2 Corinthians 4:17)

Meaning

Paul talks of suffering persecution for the sake of the gospel as "light affliction." This is in comparison to the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" that we shall receive in the future. As followers and servants of Christ, we will no doubt encounter sufferings to one extent or another, but we should not focus on the temporary things around us, be it physical suffering or prosperity. Instead, we should look to the things that are not seen, that is, the eternal reward of the promises of God.

Conclusion

Because of Joseph's remarkable faith, God was able to use him as the perfect candidate to demonstrate His control over all things, His faithfulness, and His power, even to those who did not worship Him. Like Joseph, we must learn to hold on to our faith in a foreign land until the day God brings us to our home in heaven.

Lesson 9 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. What does the memory verse teach us about our attitude towards suffering?
We should not focus on the temporary things around us, be it physical suffering or prosperity. Instead, we should look to the things that are not seen, that is, the eternal reward of God's promises.
2. "But as for you, you meant _____ against me; but _____ meant it for _____, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to _____ many people alive." (Genesis 50:20)
evil, God, good, save
3. What was unique about Joseph's attitude before Pharaoh?
It would have been normal to curry favor with Pharaoh to obtain freedom. Instead, Joseph attributed all glory to God and did not take any credit for himself.
4. In what way was Joseph's faith clearly seen?
From examining his life, we can see his diligent servitude and his trust in God's absolute sovereignty.
5. In a time of great success, did you forget God? How can you prevent this in the future?
Personal answers.
6. Considering what we studied about Joseph's faithfulness, how do you think you can show your own faithfulness to God while experiencing either adversity or success? Think of a memorable situation that you have experienced in the past, then write down how you can react better in the future as a child of faith.
Personal answers.

God Prepares Moses

Passages: Ex 1–4

Memory Verse

“A man’s heart plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps.” (Proverbs 16:9)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Work [Behavior]
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. God prepared Moses from his birth, arranging his family, upbringing, and education, to shape Moses into His worker.2. Moses had shortcomings, but God used them for Moses’ benefit and training.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. God keeps His promises and is faithful.2. God is a deliverer. His deliverance always arrives at the right time.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Consider the ways God has trained us and prepared us in our own lives.2. Consider how we can further train and apply ourselves in order to shape ourselves as God’s worker.

Overview

Events and Spiritual Teachings

- A. God’s Plan for Moses in Egypt (Ex 2:1–10)
- B. God’s Plan for Moses in the Wilderness (Ex 2:11–25)
- C. God Calls Moses (Ex 3:1–4:20)

Life Application: How Is God Preparing Me?

Memory Verse

Conclusion: God prepared Moses from his birth, arranging his family, upbringing, and education, to shape Moses into His worker. Despite his mistakes, God remained with Moses and used such trials for Moses’ benefit and training.

Events and Spiritual Teachings

Introduction

No prophet has spoken face to face with God like Moses did. He is one of the most prominent figures in biblical history and highly esteemed among the Israelites. And with good reason: Moses is known not only for delivering God's people out of Egypt, but also for receiving the Old Testament laws and guiding the people through the wilderness to the promised land. Today, we'll be examining how exactly God prepared Moses to be His humble and faithful servant.

A. God's Plan for Moses in Egypt (Ex 2:1–10)

Let's begin by briefly reviewing the story of Moses' birth.

1. **Why did Pharaoh want to kill all the Hebrew boys?**

Pharaoh wanted to kill the Hebrew boys because the Israelites had grown numerous. He was afraid that the Israelites may turn against Egypt (Ex 1:9–10, 15–16).

2. **How did Moses' mother preserve his life?**

By hiding him for three months and then placing him in a basket into the Nile River (Ex 2:1–3).

3. **How did Moses become the son of Pharaoh's daughter?**

Pharaoh's daughter found him in a basket and had compassion on him. She decided to raise Moses as her own son (Ex 2:5–10).

The Faith of Moses' Parents

When we look back now, it is clear that God was already preparing the path for Moses' birth and growth. Despite the harsh trials they were forced to endure, his parents, Amram and Jochebed (Ex 6:20), are counted among the faithful in the Book of Hebrews: "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents [...] and they were not afraid of the king's command" (Heb 11:23). By faith, Moses' mother devised and enacted a plan, and by faith, left the ultimate result to the sovereign God. She demonstrated what it means to truly place everything in God's hands and to trust that His authority and power is greater than any earthly king's.

God answers our faith. God gave Jochebed a reward that was far beyond any possible hope. After placing Moses' life in God's hands, not only could she continue raising her son, but she even received wages for doing so (Ex 2:9–10). Though the Bible doesn't tell us much about the time that he spent in the care of his mother, we can speculate that Moses' mother taught him of their people and of how God had preserved his life. She answered God's faithfulness by ensuring that Moses knew God before he went to the palace.

Moses Grows in the Palace

Let's read Exodus 2:10. "And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. So she called his name Moses, saying, 'Because I drew him out of the water.'" In accordance with God's plan, Moses was named and educated in Egypt to become God's instrument. Acts 7:22 states that Moses was "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." Egypt was one of the most advanced civilizations of the time, and God had given Moses the privilege of growing up as royalty within the Egyptian palace. As a result, he experienced the best education that one could possibly receive, an opportunity that would never have been available to him if he had been a slave.

Although Moses experienced the pleasure and privilege of living in the palaces of Egypt, he never forgot who he was or where he came from. Let's read Exodus 2:11–14. Upon seeing an Egyptian beating his fellow Israelite, Moses took justice into his own hands and killed the Egyptian. Despite his status,

position, and lifestyle, he clearly believed that God’s purpose for him was to deliver His people. We know that he wasn’t incorrect in this assumption, but what was wrong with Moses’ actions?

1. He carried out his own plan, not God’s

Moses made the mistake of believing that it was his personal authority and power that would free the Israelites. His actions show his self-will – murdering the Egyptian was not submission to God’s will, but an act of self-righteous judgment. The act was centered on himself, not on God or God’s people.

2. He didn’t wait on God’s timing

Moses acted on an impulse, without waiting to see the big picture. He decided that it was necessary to act now, not realizing that it would actually be another forty years before God was ready to free His people.

Moses’ actions demonstrate his strong self-will and a failure to wait for God. Let’s read Exodus 2:15. Moses’ decision was not according to the plan or timing of God, so he was forced to flee.

In the same way, today we may have the right intentions, but the wrong timing may make our actions detrimental to others and to ourselves. This is why in all that we do, we need to make sure that we inquire of the Lord, not only to ask if we should do something, but also to ask if it is the right time for us to act. However, as much as we are prone to making mistakes, God never does. He wants us to follow His perfect plan, but even if we do not, God can still use our shortcomings to shape us into His perfect workers. Moses was driven by his flesh, but God used Moses’ impatience to bring him into the next phase of his life and training.

B. God’s Plan for Moses in the Wilderness (Ex 2:11–25)

A Well in the Wilderness

During the first phase of his life, Moses was taught about God, as well as given a royal education. But he was still not ready to be God’s servant – he took matters into his own hands and failed to inquire of God. He believed himself a deliverer (Acts 7:24–25), assuming others would see him as one, too. But now, after his mistake, he was forced to face the uncomfortable truth of his powerlessness. Let’s read Exodus 2:15. Disillusioned, uncertain, and at a loss, he fled into the wilderness and stopped at a well. And God was ready to renew and train him in the wilderness.

What does the wilderness make you think of? What kind of associations do you make with one? (*Allow students to brainstorm answers together.*) The Hebrew word for “wilderness” — “*midbār*” — can be defined as either “pasture,” “desert,” or “uninhabited land.”¹ A “wilderness” is a place where few people dwell and where there is no civilization or comforts of technology. There are very few modern conveniences that exist in the wilderness, and to live there, you must work hard with others and learn to adapt to nature’s course. It is a place of isolation.

After visualizing a wilderness, what do you now think of when you think of a “well”? (*Allow students to once again come up with answers.*) In any sort of wilderness, wells serve as a vital lifeline. You cannot settle in an area unless a well is found or dug up. It was at this kind of place that Moses stopped to take

¹*Blue Letter Bible*, s.v. “midbar,” accessed July 23, 2021, <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=H4057&t=NKJV>

stock of his life, his assumptions, and his hasty decision in killing the Egyptian. He now saw how lacking he was and, as a result, was forced to turn to a lifeline in the wilderness: the sovereign Lord.

Training in the Wilderness

Let's read Exodus 2:21–22. Although very little is said about his time there, we know from his resulting character, and from his time leading the Israelites, that these forty years in the wilderness transformed Moses into a very different person.

1. Lowliness and humility

Forty years in the wilderness stripped away his identity as a prince and revealed his true character beneath. In Egypt, Moses had status, wealth, and power because he was a mighty prince. However, God took it all away and made him a lowly shepherd. As a shepherd, his status as a prince and much of his education was worthless. His authority did nothing to help him tend to his father-in-law's flock. He no longer considered himself a "prince," but was "content" to live with his father-in-law as a "stranger in a foreign land" (Ex 2:22). He was willing to live an insignificant life.

2. Patience and endurance

Earlier, we imagined what a wilderness must look like. Can you imagine living in one for forty years? God brought the Israelites into the wilderness to "humble" and to "test" them (Deut 8:2), so we can infer that it is not easy to survive there. Moses had to learn how to endure affliction. The work of a shepherd trained him in understanding how to care for others. He had to be patient in tending to the needs of the sheep, and he had to lead them to drink water and graze in the field. He had to have the courage to defend them against wild predators. Where before others provided for him, now he had to work to provide for himself and his family. More than that, having no control over nature, he had to rely on the land for sustenance, and in turn, rely on God's power.

Moses had grown up believing he would deliver the Israelites, but as a result of his actions, he spent forty years in the wilderness living a relatively inconsequential life. He now understood that he was not capable of freeing them. Though Moses did not know it at this time, his job as a shepherd trained him in building up virtues that were necessary for him to learn not only as God's servant, but also as a chosen leader for God's people. It was eighty long years before God decided that Moses was ready to become an instrument for His purpose. Only when he accepted himself as "nobody" did God call him to become one of the most important leaders in Israelite history.

C. God Calls Moses (Ex 3:1–4:20)

The Burning Bush

The burning bush was God's first appearance in the Book of Exodus and the first time He showed Himself to Moses. Let's read Exodus 3:1–6. What is the significance of God's statement in verse 6? It had been generations since Jacob's death, and yet remarkably, the very same God whom they worshipped approached Moses here and now. More importantly, He remembered His covenant with them. His announcement was not simply of His identity, but also of His divinity and His faithfulness.

Let's read Exodus 2:23–25; 3:7–10. Notice how God called Moses by his name twice (v. 4)! God knew Moses, and he was important to Him. Moses might have thought he was an unimportant shepherd, but God had not forgotten him, and Moses remained a vital part of God's plan. After years of silence, God was ready to commission Moses to lead His people out of Egypt. For decades, the Israelites had

experienced so many hardships, but their cries had not gone unnoticed by God. He had seen, heard, looked, and acknowledged them. And now, it was finally time for Him to deliver them out of slavery.

Moses’ Reluctant Response

Though Moses had previously been impatient and impulsive when making decisions, his time in Midian shaped him into an exceedingly humble man (Num 12:3). So humble, in fact, that he vigorously denied the strength or ability to return to Egypt and do as God commanded. Let’s take a look at Moses’ many worries and concerns and see how God patiently responded to all of them.

Moses’ Concern	God’s Response
<p><i>“Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?”</i> (Ex 3:11)</p>	<p><i>“I will certainly be with you. And this shall be a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.”</i> (Ex 3:12)</p>
<p><i>“Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?”</i> (Ex 3:13)</p>	<p><i>“I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, ‘Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, “I AM has sent me to you.” ’</i> (Ex 3:14)</p>
<p><i>“But suppose they will not believe me or listen to my voice; suppose they say, ‘The LORD has not appeared to you.’ ”</i> (Ex 4:1)</p>	<p>God gave Moses three miracles that he could perform to prove that God was with him. First, God made Moses’ rod turn into a snake (Ex 4:2–5). Second, God allowed Moses to turn his hand from healthy to leprous to healthy again (Ex 4:6–7). Lastly, God told Moses that he could take water from the river and God would turn the water into blood on dry land (Ex 4:9).</p>
<p><i>“O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.”</i> (Ex 4:10)</p>	<p><i>“Who has made man’s mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the LORD? Now therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say.”</i> (Ex 4:11–12)</p>
<p><i>“O my Lord, please send by the hand of whomever else You may send.”</i> (Ex 4:13)</p>	<p>Upon hearing this, God became angry and said: <i>“Is not Aaron the Levite your brother? I know that he can speak well. And look, he is also coming out to meet you. When he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. Now you shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth. And I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do.”</i> (Ex 4:14–15)</p>

Let’s look at Moses’ three main concerns.

1. Who am I? (Ex 3:11)

Moses was concerned that he had been away from Egypt for forty years and was no longer a prince of Egypt but a fugitive. He considered himself as being of no status. In response, God reassured Moses by telling him that He will be with him (Ex 3:14). Moses was not going to be alone; God was

going to be working with him.

2. They will not believe me (Ex 4:10)

Moses was concerned that the Egyptians and even his own people, the Israelites, would not believe him. If we recall, in his last conversation with the Hebrews, they accused him of murdering an Egyptian and spoke to him as an outsider. Moses was afraid that if he went and spoke before them, they would not believe him. In response, God showed Moses three miracles that he could use to convince people that Moses was sent by God. This way his words were not just words, as he had evidence to prove that God was working with him.

3. I am not eloquent (Ex 4:10)

Moses considered himself ineloquent and inadequate despite the education that he received as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. But God responded, "Who has made man's mouth? [...] Now therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say" (Ex 4:11–12). God's power is enough to overcome any of man's inadequacies. However, Moses protested yet again, so to help Moses overcome his lack of confidence, God sent Aaron who would be Moses companion and mouthpiece to speak on his behalf (Ex 4:14).

Altogether, Moses questioned God's choosing of him five times. But God was exceedingly patient with Moses and addressed each concern and worry that he had. He had been preparing Moses for this role since his birth, and it was God who called him to this task – but only after He knew Moses was ready for it. Though Moses felt unable to take it on, after forty years in Egypt and forty years in Midian, Moses had been trained into a humble and faithful servant that could be used by God. It was only then that it was time for Moses to take up the role, and for God to fulfill the promise that He had made to His people. In the same way, God is still looking for faithful and humble followers who are willing to be used by God for His purpose and glory.

Check for Understanding

- 1. What was the purpose of Moses' forty years in Egypt?** It was the first part of God's training for him.
- 2. What was wrong with Moses' act of killing the Egyptian?** He carried out his own plan, not God's, and he didn't wait on God's timing.
- 3. What key characteristics did Moses learn while living in the wilderness?** Lowliness, humility, patience, and care.
- 4. Why was Moses reluctant to follow God's calling?** He had fled Egypt in order to escape Pharaoh's wrath, and at the time, his fellow Israelites had spoken to him as an outsider. He also considered himself ineloquent despite his education in the palace. Furthermore, his time in Midian had made him exceedingly humble, and he believed someone else would be better equipped for the task.
- 5. How did God reassure Moses' worries?** God responded to Moses' questions with patience and gave him the assistance he needed to return to Egypt. Not only did God allow Moses to perform three miracles to prove that God was with him, but He also said Aaron would help Moses with this task.

Life Application

How Is God Preparing Me?

From Moses' birth and calling, we can see how God had prepared Moses to fill the role of the one who would lead the Israelites out of Egypt. His accomplishments may feel entirely out of our reach, but God has given each of us an equally valuable role in His kingdom. He has specially chosen each of us to serve and has prepared our lives accordingly so that we are given the chance to become His good and faithful

servants. What do you think God is preparing you for? What kind of skills, abilities, or hobbies do you have that could be used for the benefit of the church? Let's take a moment and consider what God is preparing us to do, as well as the ways He is preparing us.

Activity

(Teachers: A chart has been added to the end of this document and to the Student Handout. Please give copies to students. Some questions may require guidance or discussion for students to generate ideas. If there is no time to complete it during class, you can assign the remaining questions as homework.)

Through all these different areas in our lives, God is preparing and training us. God did not use Moses right away to lead the people out of Egypt; Moses was already eighty years old when he came before Pharaoh to do God's work (Ex 7:7). This was because Moses had to be trained in all these different areas until he was a vessel that God was willing to use to complete this great task. God took the time to prepare Moses, so that he could fulfill God's calling. In the same way, God is preparing us and giving us opportunities to serve and to be used by Him. Though we may not know what that purpose is exactly right now, we can continue to prepare and train ourselves through our families, our trials, our education, and our service to Him today.

Memory Verse

"A man's heart plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps." (Proverbs 16:9)

Meaning

It is easy for us to assert our own will and desire over God's will. While there is nothing wrong with seeking out specific careers or futures for ourselves, it is important to remember that God's will is infinitely more perfect than our own. He is not only our Creator, but also our sovereign Lord who knows our past, present, and future. Like Moses' parents, as long as we fully trust in Him, He will repay our faith with faith and bless us in ways beyond our own hope or imagination.

Conclusion

God prepared Moses from his birth, arranging his family, upbringing, and education to shape Moses into His worker. Despite his mistakes, God remained with Moses and used such trials for Moses' benefit and training. In much the same way, God has placed us where we are in accordance with His perfect will. When we accept the opportunities that He has given us and allow Him to shape us into His workers, He will remain faithful to us.

Lesson 10 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. What does the memory verse teach us about God's will in our lives?
God's will is infinitely more perfect than our own. He is not only our Creator, but also our sovereign Lord who knows our past, present, and future.

2. "So God heard their groaning, and God _____ His _____ with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God _____ upon the children of Israel, and God _____ them." (Exodus 2:24–25)
remembered, covenant, looked, acknowledged

3. Why was it wrong of Moses to kill the Egyptian?
His actions demonstrate his strong self-will and a failure to wait for God. Moses' decision was not according to the plan or timing of God.

4. In what ways did his time in the wilderness transform Moses into a different person?
His job as a shepherd trained him in building up virtues that were necessary for him to learn not only as God's servant, but also as a chosen leader for God's people. After forty years in Egypt and forty years in Midian, Moses had been trained into a humble and faithful servant that could be used by God.

5. How did God respond to Moses' fears and worries during his calling?
But God was exceedingly patient with Moses and addressed each concern and worry that he had. He had been preparing Moses for this role since his birth, and it was God who called him to this task – but only after He knew Moses was ready for it.

6. Is there anything in your current life that you think God is using to train you for His work?
Personal answers.

Life Application Activity: How Is God Preparing Me?

Moses	Me (Today)	Me (Future)
FAMILY		Consider your current skills, interests, abilities, and responsibilities. What holy work do you hope to help with in the future? After considering something specific, list ways that you can prepare yourself to serve in this holy work in the following areas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills: What skills are necessary for you to learn? • Spiritual virtues: What spiritual virtues are required for you to do this holy work well? • Knowledge of God and His word: Aside from general understanding of God’s word, in what areas of biblical knowledge are you lacking, which may be necessary or relevant to this spiritual work?
Moses was born to the tribe of Levi, and his parents played an important part in preserving his life. God has placed us in our families for a reason. They may pass the faith on to us, as Moses’ mother did.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kind of faith do your parents have? • What teachings have you learned from your parents, either directly or indirectly? • What responsibilities do you have to fulfill at home? How do you think these would shape you in preparing to be God’s worker? 	
TRIALS AND FAILURES		
Moses’ life was full of ups and downs. He fled from Egypt as an exile and was transformed from prince, to shepherd, to leader of God’s people. But his failures are just important for us to take note of as his victories. He made rash decisions at times, and did not wait for God’s timing, especially during his life in Egypt. Today, our own failures and trials are also a part of God’s training for us.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kind of shortcomings, failures, or trials have you personally experienced? • Can you think of any benefit from experiencing these? • Read James 1:2–4. What is the Bible’s teaching regarding trials and tribulations? Why do you think it is so important to have patience? Think of at least one scenario in your life where additional patience may have helped you to resolve the situation. 	
EDUCATION		
Moses received the best education as a prince in Egypt. Worldly knowledge is necessary and beneficial to us because we need it to function in society. At the same time, it can greatly benefit the kingdom of God.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a moment and write down two to three subjects that you are interested in learning at school or on your own. • How can these subjects benefit the kingdom of God? (For example, if you are interested in pursuing art, this skill 	

	<p>could be useful in making textbooks for the next generation of students.)</p>	
TRAINING		
<p>While in the wilderness, Moses received additional training that could not be experienced or taught in the palace. He learned how to live away from the comforts of the palace, and the benefits of physically laboring for his sheep. He had to exercise patience, wisdom, and experience to take care of the defenseless sheep. This same training benefited him when guiding God’s children to the promised land.</p> <p>It is clear from his life that God was aware of Moses’ failures, but still cared for him very deeply. Through His power and wisdom, He guided Moses through the trials in his life and used them to shape him into an effective worker.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We may not be in the wilderness physically, but we are all being trained by God daily – whether you’re willing to be trained or not – to be His precious vessel. Write down two to three things you know for sure God is training you for now. • Why do you think these things are important in shaping you to become His faithful worker? • Of the fruit of the Spirit, which do you think you need the most of in order to become more like Him? Why? • Keeping in mind the strengths that you have, how can you help the church? Write down at least two things that you don’t normally do, and set a time for yourself to carry them out. 	

The Ten Plagues

Passages: Ex 7–12

Memory Verse

“You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men.” (1 Corinthians 7:23)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Works [Behavior]
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. God punishes those who have hard hearts that resist His will.2. God wants to free His people from bondage.	God is a God of redemption and salvation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Learn to soften our hearts to God’s will.2. Free ourselves from sin, so that we can receive the wages of holiness, which is eternal life.

Overview

Events and Spiritual Teachings

- A. The Egyptian Pharaoh
- B. The Ten Plagues
- C. The Passover

Life Application

1. Checking the Condition of Our Hearts
2. Freedom from Sin

Memory Verse

Conclusion: Just as the Israelites obeyed God’s commands for the Passover, we also need to soften our hearts to God’s will, so that we can free ourselves from sin and, as a result, receive the reward of eternal life.

Events and Spiritual Teachings

Introduction

The Israelites' journey from bondage in Egypt to their inheritance of the promised land is a historical picture of our journey to salvation (1 Cor 10:1–4; Heb 11:8–16, 24–29, 39–40). Their slavery in Egypt represents our bondage to sin, while their exodus from Egypt represents our own freedom from sin and death. Their journey is a model for our own freedom and salvation in Christ.

A. The Egyptian Pharaoh

The pharaoh was equivalent to divinity in the Egyptians' eyes. His sacred position was directly connected to their worship of their many gods. The ancient Egyptians are known for their extremely polytheistic practices. They worshipped hundreds of different gods, each with different but limited purposes, as opposed to the one Creator and sustainer of all things. In other words, the pharaoh and the beliefs of his people were in direct opposition of the one true God and His children. Their religion was at complete odds with the Lord. Because of this, God declared, "against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord" (Ex 12:12).

God used the ten plagues not only to free His people, but also to establish His divinity and show the Egyptians who the true Creator is. By the end of the plagues, the Egyptians truly feared His mighty power. They realized how powerless their gods were, and how the Lord is the one true God. Numbers 33:4 says, "For the Egyptians were burying all their firstborn, whom the LORD had killed among them. Also on their gods the LORD had executed judgments."

B. The Ten Plagues

Let's study the ten plagues in more detail and see Pharaoh's reaction to each of them. How many of the plagues do you remember? (*Allow students to answer.*) In order, they are: water turned to blood, frogs, lice, flies, livestock diseased, boils, hail, locusts, darkness, and the death of the firstborn. You may notice that with each passing affliction, the Lord showed His mighty hand with greater and greater power. After the first two plagues, the magicians could no longer duplicate the miracles and admitted to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." On top of this, Goshen's protection not only distinguished the Israelites from the Egyptians, but also showed God's power. Let's look at each plague in closer detail.

1. Water Turned to Blood (Ex 7:14–25)

The first plague affected a vital source of life for the Egyptians: the Nile River. The Egyptians also worshipped a great number of river deities. This plague was not only a direct attack on the Egyptians' way of life, but also on their beliefs. Pharaoh's magicians were able to duplicate the miracle, but they were unable to reverse the change that God had wrought.

2. Frogs (Ex 8:1–15)

Like the Nile, frogs were religiously significant to the Egyptians. Considered sacred creatures, they symbolized life and fertility. The Lord once again attacked the Egyptian's faith. Again, the magicians could only duplicate the problem. But they didn't need more frogs, they needed less! So, Pharaoh pleaded with Moses to take away the frogs. In response, Moses permitted the Pharaoh to dictate when the frogs should return to the river. This made it clear that it was not coincidence, but God's power. The moment Pharaoh saw that his people were free of the plague, however, "he hardened his heart" and refused to let the Israelites go (v. 15).

3. Lice (Ex 8:16–19)

The plagues moved from the water to the land with the third plague. This was the first plague that God enacted unannounced to Pharaoh, with no chance to repent or relent. This is also the first miracle the Egyptian magicians failed to duplicate, causing them to tell Pharaoh plainly, “This is the finger of God” (v. 19). Despite their words, Pharaoh once again hardened his heart.

4. Flies (Ex 8:20–32)

While the Egyptians may have tried to blame nature for the previous plagues, God’s power would be undeniable with this plague upon the sight of swarms of flies affecting the entire land except for Goshen, where God’s people dwelled (vv. 22–23). In response to this plague, Pharaoh attempted to compromise for the first time (v. 25). To him, allowing the Israelites to follow their religious practices was a show of leniency. But Moses correctly replied that this was not enough, so Pharaoh once again tried to compromise, urging them to “not go very far away” (v. 28). This was both an unacceptable compromise and a lie. The moment the plague was removed, Pharaoh again hardened his heart.

5. Livestock Diseased (Ex 9:1–7)

The fifth plague was the first to directly affect the Egyptians’ livelihood. Moses informed Pharaoh that this plague would happen at the appointed time the next day and only affect the Egyptians’ animals. With this, the Egyptians were unable to produce goods for trade, meat for food, or offer sacrifices to their gods. It was a crippling blow to their economy, livelihood, and religious lifestyle.

6. Boils (Ex 9:8–12)

The first plague to directly affect the Egyptians themselves, this was the second time a plague was enacted by God without warning. The Lord ordered Moses to “scatter [ashes] towards the heavens in the sight of Pharaoh” to ensure Pharaoh’s understanding that the plague was not random chance, but an act of God.

7. Hail (Ex 9:13–35)

This plague was the first where not only did God give the Egyptians a chance to save themselves (vv. 20–21), but Pharaoh was also driven to a surprising admission. He called Moses and Aaron and said, “I have sinned this time. The LORD is righteous, and my people and I are wicked” (v. 27). However, his contrition lasted only as long as the plague. The moment the hail was stopped, he once again refused to let them go.

8. Locusts (Ex 10:1–20)

By the eighth plague, the Lord demanded of Pharaoh, “How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me?” (v. 3). For the first time, Pharaoh’s servants also spoke up and urged him to let the Israelites go with the words, “Do you not yet know that Egypt is destroyed?” (v. 7). Pharaoh’s stubborn pride blinded him to the suffering of his own people. In response, Pharaoh asked Moses and Aaron, “Who are the ones that are going?” His question showed that he wasn’t planning on freeing the Israelites. From the very beginning, Moses had demanded the release of the entire population, yet Pharaoh here only relented in letting the men go free, tying the Israelites to slavery just as surely as if he had not let any go free at all. In response, God released a plague of locusts on the land.

9. Darkness (Ex 10:21–29)

This was the third time a plague was enacted unannounced by the Lord, following a pattern of two announced and one unannounced for the first nine plagues. Darkness may seem like a less serious problem than the previous plagues, but the sun represented one of the Egyptians’ most important, most worshipped gods. Three days of darkness would have been an ultimate challenge to the Egyptian religion, one that would likely have terrified them all (v. 23). God showed how powerless their false gods were, and how helpless their Pharaoh truly was, as a supposed representative of their gods.

Despite this, Pharaoh refused to release them, and this time, he threatened Moses with death the next time he approached. Moses’ answer was simple. “You have spoken well. I will never see your face again.” The clash between the two representatives had reached its climax.

10. Death of the Firstborn (Ex 11:1–12:36)

With this last plague, God told Moses that the end was in sight. After holding on so tightly to the Israelites, Pharaoh would “drive” the Israelites out of Egypt altogether (11:1)! Before leaving Pharaoh’s presence for the last time, Moses gave his final, and most ominous, warning. Pharaoh did not heed him, so the Israelites began preparing for their very first Passover.

As a result of this plague, Pharaoh was so desperate to be rid of them that he sent the Israelites away that very same night, while the rest of the Egyptians “urged the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste” (12:33). On top of this, as God predicted to Moses, the Israelites did not leave empty-handed (3:21). Miraculously, despite all the destruction that they experienced, “the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they granted them what they requested” (12:35–36; cf. 11:2–3). Newly freed slaves do not normally leave with their masters’ treasures, and yet this is exactly what happened for the Israelites!

C. The Passover

Before the final plague, Moses prepared God’s people for their departure from Egypt. Their preparations became the institution of Passover, which the Jews continue to observe even today, albeit with slightly different traditions. Let’s read Exodus 12:5–13.

When Moses first returned to Egypt, both he and the Israelites questioned God when Pharaoh treated them even more harshly (Ex 5:17–23). But the ten plagues solidified their faith. By the end, none questioned His instructions; they all did exactly as the Lord commanded. They obediently requested articles of silver and gold from their neighbors, despite the high possibility of refusal or retribution, and followed His instructions in preparing for their first Passover meal (Ex 12:28, 35).

Redemption Through Christ, the Passover Lamb¹

For hundreds of years, the Passover served as a reminder of how God delivered the Israelites from Egypt. However, it also is an amazing foreshadowing of Jesus Christ, hundreds of years before His birth! Do you remember the different elements of the Passover and what they represent or foreshadow?

Lamb without blemish	Because God is holy, the sacrifice had to be without blemish (Lev 22:21–22). Peter wrote that we were redeemed not “with corruptible things, like
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¹ See *E2 Year 1 Book 3 Lesson 8: The Passover* for additional details.

	silver or gold, [...] but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Pet 1:18–19). It is impossible for us to become truly holy. So, to make up for our inadequacies, our sacrifice, the Lord Jesus, had to be holy and without blemish.
Unleavened bread	Paul wrote, “Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (1 Cor 5:8). Removing leaven from our lives is an ongoing process that requires us to live new lives in truth.
Bitter herbs	The bitter herbs reminded the Israelites of the bitterness of the slavery that they had to endure while in Egypt. We should always remember that the world we live in today is not our true home – we are merely pilgrims and sojourners, seeking to enter our heavenly home (Heb 11:13).
The lamb is slain	Just as the Israelites sacrificed a lamb “without blemish” to spare their lives during the tenth plague, Jesus gave Himself up as our Passover Lamb, sacrificed to redeem us from sin and death (1 Cor 5:7).
Blood is shed	During the tenth plague, the Lord promised to “pass over” any house with the blood of the sacrificed lamb (Ex 12:7, 13). In the same way, Jesus purchased our lives with His blood (Acts 20:28; Eph 1:7) and delivered us from death (Rom 6:11).

The Israelites were preserved from the tenth plague and freed from slavery because they humbly followed God’s commands. In the same way, we also need to follow God’s instructions and obey His commands in the Bible in order to receive salvation.

Check for Understanding

1. **Aside from Pharaoh and his people, what was God declaring judgment upon through the ten plagues, and why?** He was declaring judgment upon their gods; Pharaoh and the beliefs of his people were in direct opposition of the one true God and His children.
2. **Name four of the plagues and share one new teaching that you learned for each.** See *Spiritual Teachings, Section B*.
3. **Name the different elements of Passover and what they represent or foreshadow.** See *Spiritual Teachings, Section C*.

Life Application

1. Checking the Condition of Our Hearts

The ten plagues were the result of a battle between a righteous God and the stubborn heart of Pharaoh. The more stubborn Pharaoh became, the progressively worse the plagues became, and the more his people suffered. It is easy for us to look back and wonder why Pharaoh was so stubborn, but how many times have we refused to apologize or back down in an argument? How many times have we refused to listen to God’s words, or decided to make our own choices rather than follow His will?

a. What kind of heart do I have?

“I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh.” (Ezek 11:19 NIV)

What does it really mean to “harden our hearts” like Pharaoh did, or to have a “heart of stone”? On the other hand, what do you think it means to have a “heart of flesh”? Let’s take a moment to think of some characteristics that we might see in each type of heart. *(Teachers: Allow students to brainstorm, either as a class, in groups, or individually, and add to the following chart. Examples added below.)*

A heart of stone is a heart that is:	A heart of flesh is a heart that is
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proudful - Deaf to God’s will - <i>Resistant to God’s word (Zech 7:12–14)</i> - <i>Callous or uncaring towards other people</i> - <i>Carnal (Rom 7:25)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Humble - Willing to change for God - <i>Responsive to God’s word</i> - <i>Receptive to God’s blessings</i> - <i>Seeking to draw close to God</i>

Overall, to harden our hearts means to regard ourselves so highly that we stubbornly rebel against God, while to have a heart of flesh means to be willing to mold ourselves to His will rather than our own. Based on our chart, do you think you have hardened your heart towards God? Or have you learned to have a “heart of flesh,” one that sees God’s blessings and is willing to follow His will? If you think that you are in danger of having a heart of stone, then realizing it is an important first step! After that comes the determination to soften our hearts towards God.

b. Softening our hearts towards God

To soften our hearts towards God requires that we change the way we think about ourselves. Take a moment and reflect on the skills that you have. Are you particularly good with music? Academics? Reading? Write them down. For each, write down a short prayer thanking God for what He has given you. For example, if you are particularly good at sports, your prayer might be: “Thank You, God, for giving me quick reflexes and a healthy body.” If you are good at reading, then maybe you can thank God for giving you the time, money, and opportunity to read so many books!

Remember that all of the things that we are good at are a result of God’s blessings, whether it be through giving us our physical or mental abilities, giving us the time to practice our favorite skills, or giving us families who encourage our hobbies. When we remember that these are blessings given by God, it becomes easier for us to humbly soften our hearts towards His will.

c. The Lord will judge His people

“For we know Him who said, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. And again, ‘The LORD will judge His people.’ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” (Heb 10:30–31)

We should not only focus on the Israelites’ miraculous freedom from slavery, but also remember the fearful and stunning punishment that the Lord gave to the Egyptians. Pharaoh had so many chances to surrender and listen to God’s voice, but he instead hardened his heart each time. As a result, while Goshen had an invisible shield of protection around it, the Egyptians suffered deeply.

When we ignore the truth for too long, our hearts become too hard to break through. If this happens, Paul warns that God may give us up, or simply give us over to our sins (Rom 1:24, 26,

28). To avoid being “given up,” we must learn to soften our hearts to God’s will, or else face His judgment as the Egyptians did. As the Bible says, “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Heb 10:31).

2. Freedom from Sin

“Therefore, my friends, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. Through him everyone who believes is set free from every sin, a justification you were not able to obtain under the law of Moses” (Acts 13:38–39 NIV).

As the plagues became more severe, Pharaoh attempted to compromise with Moses multiple times. Let’s read Exodus 8:28 and 10:8–11. One of Satan’s tactics is keeping an avenue open towards sin in our lives. But the Bible teaches us to cut off our hand if it causes us to sin (Mt 5:30) – in other words, we need to remove sin entirely from our lives. If we simply venture a short distance away from it, then it is that much easier for us to return. We also should strive to bring our whole families with us into salvation (Ex 10:10). Anyone who remains in Egypt is not only a path for us to return to a life of sin, but also someone who may not receive salvation. To leave Egypt entirely requires that we do not compromise. Only then can we free ourselves entirely from the bondage of sin.

So what does it mean to be freed from the bondage of sin? To be in “bondage” means to be bound in servitude. This means that we must serve and obey someone or something that controls us. Most servants still receive some sort of payment or wage. But as slaves to sin, the only payment we will receive is death. It is truly a bitter bondage, made even worse because there had been no way for us to escape. No matter how we struggled, we were doomed to experience eternal death. But Jesus Christ freed us from this by experiencing death on our behalf! Because of His sacrifice as our Passover Lamb, we are now free from the bondage of sin!

It is important to remember that being free from sin does not mean we can do anything that we like. Paul wrote that being free from sin, we are now instead “slaves of righteousness” (Rom 6:18). This may sound unappealing, but while the payment we receive as slaves to sin is death (Rom 6:21), as slaves to righteousness, “the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life” (Rom 6:22 NIV)!

It is always easy to tell ourselves, “I can stop at any time!”, or, “It’s OK; I worked hard, so I deserve a break.” But in truth, there are many things in our lives that we have become “slaves” to, such as social media, video games, or even reading books all night! Think about your own life and share with the class what you think you are a “slave” to. Be honest! Then, as a class, try coming up with different (practical!) solutions that will help each other set such activities aside (examples may be: installing an app to help regulate your phone or computer usage; putting a bigger clock on your table; setting an alarm to help remind you when to stop; putting your phone or book in a different room while doing homework; etc.).

Memory Verse

“You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men.” (1 Corinthians 7:23)

Meaning

While the Israelites’ physical freedom was paid for with the lives lost during the ten plagues, our spiritual freedom was bought by the agony, suffering, and death experienced by the Son of God. Because of this, Paul wrote that we were “bought at a price,” so instead of becoming “slaves of men,”

we must glorify God with our lives. Jesus Christ purchased us with His blood (Acts 20:28), so we must not allow ourselves to become enslaved to other people, or to the sinful trends of the world around us.

Conclusion

The ten plagues helped the Egyptians and Israelites alike to see and understand God's power. As a result, the Israelites' obedience in the establishment of the Passover led to their freedom from Egypt. In the same way, we need to soften our hearts to God's will so that we can free ourselves from sin and, as a result, receive the reward of eternal life.

Lesson 11 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. In what way were we “bought at a price”?
Our spiritual freedom was bought by the agony, suffering, and death experienced by the Son of God. Jesus Christ purchased us with His blood (Acts 20:28).
2. “For we know Him who said, ‘ _____ is Mine, I will _____,’ says the Lord. And again, ‘The LORD will _____ His people.’ It is a _____ thing to fall into the _____ of the _____ God.” (Hebrews 10:30–31)
Vengeance, repay, judge, fearful, hands, living
3. Why was the Egyptians’ religion in direct opposition to God?
They worshipped hundreds of different gods, each with different but limited purposes, as opposed to the one Creator and sustainer of all things.
4. What was different about the Israelites’ attitude to God before and after the ten plagues?
Before, they questioned God when Pharaoh treated them more harshly. After, they were completely obedient to His instructions regarding their preparations to leave Egypt.
5. What danger do we face when we ignore the truth and harden our hearts for too long?
Our hearts become too hard to break through. If this happens, Paul warns that God may give us up, or simply give us over to our sins (Rom 1:24, 26, 28).
6. How do we soften our hearts towards God?
By changing the way we think about ourselves; remember that all of the things that we are good at are a result of God’s blessings. When we remember this, it is easier to humble ourselves before Him.
7. What sin(s) are you still a “slave” to? How can you free yourself from them?
Personal answers.

Crossing the Red Sea

Passages: Ex 13:1–2, 11–13; 14; 16:4–5, 11–31

Memory Verse

“But He answered and said, ‘It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.” ’ ” (Matthew 4:4)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Works [Behavior]
1. The Israelites’ journey out of Egypt and into the wilderness teaches us about our own spiritual life. 2. God provided manna for the Israelites until the day they ate the fruits of the promised land.	1. God is mighty in power, merciful, and faithful to His promises. 2. The Lord Jesus is the bread of life.	1. Learn to live a life of thanksgiving and praise. 2. Devote time each day to ‘collecting manna’ and nourishing our spirit with God’s words.

Overview

Events and Spiritual Teachings

- A. Consecration of the Firstborn
- B. Crossing the Red Sea
- C. Manna
- D. Instructions for Collecting Manna

Life Application

- 1. A Life as God’s Firstborn
- 2. Crossing the Red Sea
- 3. Gathering Manna Every Day

Memory Verse

Conclusion: The Israelites’ journey out of Egypt and into the wilderness reflects our own journey of faith towards the heavenly kingdom. Although we were once captives of Satan and sin, now we are free, so we must learn to nourish our spiritual lives with God’s word and Spirit.

Events and Spiritual Teachings

A. Consecration of the Firstborn

The Israelites’ exit from Egypt was marked by two events: the establishment of Passover in preparation of the final plague, and the crossing of the Red Sea. But aside from these, there was one other significant instruction from the Lord: the consecration of their firstborn.

The Importance of the Firstborn

In biblical times, the firstborn was the son who inherited the most from their father. Let’s read Deuteronomy 21:17. “But he shall acknowledge the son of the unloved wife as the firstborn by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his.” Unlike their siblings, the inheritance they received was double the portion! Now that we understand the importance of the firstborn, let’s review the Lord’s command in Exodus 13:1–2. Every firstborn belonged to God and was to be set apart. But there were other “firstborns” who belonged to God.

Old Testament Firstborn	<p>Israel, the Lord’s firstborn</p> <p>Before Moses encountered Pharaoh, the Lord had already hinted at the terrible plague that was to come. He told Moses, “Then you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the LORD: “Israel is My son, My firstborn. So I say to you, let My son go that he may serve Me. But if you refuse to let him go, indeed I will kill your son, your firstborn” ’ ” (Ex 4:22–23). Naming Israel as His “firstborn” meant that they were God’s favored children who would receive an inheritance from Him.</p>
New Testament Firstborn	<p>Jesus Christ, the firstborn over all creation</p> <p>Let’s read Colossians 1:15. “[Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.” In this passage, Paul is not referring to Jesus’ physical status, but to His rank and privilege as firstborn. He is the ruler and creator over all things, and no one can surpass Him. He is also the “firstborn from the dead” (Col 1:18), because He is the first who was resurrected.</p>
Firstborn of Today	<p>God’s new firstborn</p> <p>Let’s read Romans 8:28–29. “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to <i>His</i> purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined <i>to be</i> conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” Jesus Christ, the firstborn over all creation, has called us to be God’s firstborn nation as well! This means that when we are baptized in water and Spirit, we will receive all the same privileges a firstborn child receives.</p> <p>What are these privileges that we have received? God has promised us His protection and His care while we are on this world. But the most important privilege that we have received is God’s deliverance. Jesus Christ delivered us from Satan (Eph 2:1–3), from sin (Rom 7:14–15, 24), and from death (Rom 6:23). In doing so, He has delivered us into God’s kingdom (Col 1:13), of which the Holy Spirit is our guarantee (Eph 1:13–14). With this in mind, we should not look lightly on our status, but always treasure what God has given to us and strive to conform to Christ’s image so that we can receive our inheritance.</p>

Whenever they consecrated their firstborn, generations of Israelites would remember how God spared their own sons from death and freed them from slavery in Egypt. God’s command to redeem their firstborn teaches us of our own consecration and redemption. We have also become His firstborn,

spared by His mercy, unlike the Egyptians. As a result, we owe Him our lives, and we can now look forward to the time Jesus Christ returns and redeems us once and for all.

B. Crossing the Red Sea

Let’s now read Exodus 14. Can you imagine the sight of the sea rising high above your head as walls on either side of you? This miraculous path that the Lord made led the Israelites out of slavery and into freedom. This crossing is more than just a physical journey, however. It also foreshadows the spiritual journey that we take when we are baptized. Let’s read 1 Corinthians 10:1–2. Let’s compare the Israelites’ lives before and after the crossing.

Before the Crossing	After the Crossing
Location	
<i>Egypt</i>	<i>The promised land</i>
Although Egypt was once a place of refuge for Jacob’s family, it was not their true homeland that God had promised to Abraham.	The Israelites did not belong in Egypt. Their true homeland was the “land flowing with milk and honey,” an abundant land the Lord promised to Abraham and his descendants.
What this means for us: We live in a world that is under the rule of Satan. In other words, it is not our homeland. Our true home is with God in the heavenly kingdom, which we have received through the gospel of salvation.	
Standing	
<i>Slaves to Pharaoh</i>	<i>Children of God</i>
For 400 long years, their fathers were slaves, and their children would be slaves as well. They had no status, no rights, no dignity, and no hope.	God freed the Israelites and chose them to be His own holy nation, His special treasure with a status unique to them alone.
What this means for us: We were once slaves to sin, but through the blood of Jesus, we have become sons and heirs of God (Gal 4:7). Like the Israelites, God has promised to take care of us. He will cherish, teach, and provide for us.	
Power	
<i>Powerless, oppressed</i>	<i>Victorious, strong</i>
Egypt was a superpower at the time. With a powerful Pharaoh and strong armies, the Israelites were no match for them, so they were unable to free themselves from Egypt’s tight grip.	With the Lord on their side, the Israelites had nothing to fear. As long as they walked in God’s ways, He would give them victory, so that even their enemies would tremble and fear them.
What this means for us: The Holy Spirit gives us the power to overcome our weaknesses, resist worldly temptations, and live a life of holiness. With the Lord on our side, we can defeat whatever trials Satan throws our way. We will no longer be under the bondage of sin, but will achieve victory in Christ.	
Future	
<i>Hopeless</i>	<i>A hope and a future</i>
The slaves had no hope. After a wearisome life full of hardship, only death awaited them.	God gave them the hope of the promised land and the freedom to enter into it.
What this means for us:	

Through the gospel of salvation, our souls which were formerly dead in sin have been resurrected and made alive in Christ. Now, God has given us a hope for eternal life, an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that will never fade away (1 Pet 1:4). He has given us life after death.	
Wages	
<i>No rewards or payment</i>	<i>Rewarded for their labor</i>
As slaves, the Israelites worked endlessly with no reward or pay. In the end, all the work they did belonged to Pharaoh (Ex 1:8–14). They earned nothing for themselves and received no payment for their work.	When the Israelites left, the Lord gave them favor in the Egyptians' sight and instructed His people to ask the Egyptians for their valuables. They plundered their own masters as they left, a rather unlikely event for ex-slaves!
What this means for us: The Lord will richly reward us for all that we do for Him (Mt 10:40–42). While on this earth, we should not focus on material wealth, but store up rewards for ourselves in heaven, which we will receive when we finally see our Lord Jesus.	

In the New Testament, the Lord Jesus has also freed us from slavery and led us through the Red Sea. He has washed away our sins and saved us from death at the hands of Satan. Now, after being baptized in water and Spirit, we have become children of God (Zech 13:1).

C. Manna

When the Lord led the Israelites into the wilderness, He led them on a detour, taking them to Mount Sinai instead of straight to Canaan. As a result, they now faced a real and immediate problem: how do they feed an estimated two million people in a desert? God, of course, was undeterred by this problem. He had a graceful and miraculous solution for them: manna. Let’s review the characteristics of manna and what we can learn from them. First, let’s read Exodus 16:4–5, 11–31.

1. **Bread from heaven (v. 4)**

One of the first descriptions of manna describes it as “bread from heaven” (Ps 78:23–25). The Lord added that it would “fill” the Israelites, and He continued giving them manna to eat until the day they finally entered Canaan and ate the fruit of the land (Josh 5:12). Our “bread from heaven” today is the Lord Jesus (Jn 6:35, 51), who gave us eternal life. Manna also represents God’s word. Just as He gave the Israelites manna to nourish them every day, God’s word satisfies all of our needs.

2. **White like coriander seed (v. 31)**

The Bible says that manna was “a small round substance, as fine as frost on the ground” (Ex 16:14), like “white coriander seed.” Coriander seeds are quite small and rather insignificant. In the same way, the word of God is not regarded very highly, and many despise it. Manna’s color and shape also reflects how God’s word is pure and perfect.

3. **Sweet like honey (v. 31)**

The Lord did not give the Israelites bland or dry food to eat in the wilderness. He gave them something that tasted of “wafers made of honey” (Ex 16:31), and “pastry prepared with oil” (Num 11:8). A psalmist described God’s word as being “sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb” (Ps 19:10), and another wrote, “How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!” (Ps 119:103).

The Bible also notes that the Israelites were able to prepare manna in many ways, evidence of

its versatility. In much the same way, the Bible can be applied to every situation in life. It gives us guidance, joy, encouragement, and warning.

D. Instructions for Collecting Manna

God specifically instructed the Israelites to collect their portion of manna every morning, except for the Sabbath day, which they collected the day before. He also ordered them to collect only enough for their needs. If they disobeyed and collected more to keep for the next day, it “bred worms and stank” (Ex 16:20). Let’s go over God’s instructions and see what they can teach us.

1. Gather every morning (Ex 16:21)

By the time we go to bed at night, our minds are cluttered and full of the day’s happenings. On the other hand, when we wake up in the morning, we haven’t yet encountered life’s many distractions. We wake up to a clean slate. This makes it the best time to focus on God. Jesus set an example by often going out to pray early in the morning (Mk 1:35).

Why did God command the Israelites to gather every day, and not just once a week? God understands that it is human nature to be lazy. He wants us to live a disciplined life. He doesn’t want us to read many chapters of the Bible in one day, and forget His words for the rest of the week. He wants us to develop a pattern of life where we can devote time to Him daily.

2. Gather according to their needs (Ex 16:18)

Those who gathered more had none leftover, and those who gathered less didn’t lack any. This is all because of God’s perfect provision. He gives us exactly what we need. With a world bent on materialism, it is easy to forget that God’s grace should be sufficient for us. Instead of focusing on getting “more stuff,” we should learn to live a life of contentment and thanksgiving.

In commanding the Israelites to gather only what they needed for the day and not to store any up for the future, the Lord was also teaching them to trust in His provision. It is easy for us to become lost in a sea of anxiety and worry when we consider our future. How will we eat in the future? How will we pay for our loans? Find a place to stay? Instead of being anxious, we must remember and trust that God will provide for our needs (Mt 6:25–27).

3. Gather for everyone in their tent (Ex 16:16)

The Bible isn’t just for edifying and nourishing our own spiritual lives. It is important to share God’s word with others as well. We should use it to help our family members and apply God’s word to stir up good works in the church. God wants us to build up unity, peace, and harmony within our family and the church. This can only be achieved through God’s word.

4. Do not gather on the seventh day (Ex 16:23)

The Lord had to teach the Israelites the concept of the Sabbath day. For one day of the week, they were to set aside their daily tasks and observe a day of rest. Today, with so many things to do at home, at school, and with our friends, we may often be tempted to simply skip a day at church. But as one of the Ten Commandments, observing the Sabbath day is necessary for our spiritual life and a vital part of our relationship with God.

On the sixth day, the Israelites gathered twice as much as they were normally permitted (Ex 16:22). It did not seem to be an act of disbelief, nor did Moses rebuke them for their action. We do not know for certain if this was the Israelites’ action, or if God had doubled the amount they received. We also do not

actually know if this action was explicitly commanded by God, but we do know that when the congregation leaders told Moses about how much had been gathered, God simply replied, "[Lay] up for yourselves all that remains, to be kept until morning" (Ex 16:23), and "See! For the LORD has given you the Sabbath; therefore He gives you on the sixth day bread for two days" (Ex 16:29).

Check for Understanding

- 1. What is the significance of the firstborn?** A firstborn son inherited the most from their father and had greater responsibilities in carrying on their family and business.
- 2. What did the Israelites' crossing through the Red Sea foreshadow?** It foreshadowed the spiritual journey that we take when we are baptized.
- 3. What are three characteristics of manna as described in the Bible? Briefly explain what we can learn from each.**
 - a. Bread from heaven: God's word satisfies all of our physical and spiritual needs.
 - b. White like coriander seed: Although despised by many, just as manna is white and round, God's word is pure and perfect.
 - c. Sweet like honey: God's words are nourishing and sweet, and they can be applied to every situation in life.
- 4. What can we learn from God's command that they gather manna every morning?** In the morning, our minds are freshest, making it the best time to focus on God. He also wants us to live a disciplined life and develop a pattern of life where we can devote time to Him each day.

Life Application

1. A Life as God's Firstborn

Scenario

Ruth often compared herself to her best friend Nancy, who she thought was pretty, smart, and charismatic. She even tried to imitate her friend, but all she could see in herself were her many flaws. She wondered, often, why God didn't make her more like her friend. During an RE class activity, the teacher asked the class to anonymously write down godly traits that they admired in each classmate. Ruth was a bit apprehensive about what her classmates would say about her. When the teacher gave her a card with their comments, she was amazed at their positive encouragement. She realized that she had been so busy looking at her own flaws, comparing herself with her best friend, and desiring to be someone else, that she missed the traits that God wanted her to pursue. Now, she realized that she didn't need to be anyone else. She just needed to be more like God.

Discussion

- Read Romans 8:29. What do you think it means to "be conformed to the image of His Son"?
- What kind of blessings do you think we can expect as God's firstborn?
- Share with the class the most important blessing that you think you have received as God's firstborn.

2. Crossing the Red Sea

Scenario

After finding the True Jesus Church and attending for a year, Alexa's parents decided to be baptized, but they told Alexa that she could decide for herself. After some thought, Alexa is unsure. Her many RE lessons have taught her about all the different rules and regulations that church members need to abide by, and she isn't so sure that she wants to give up her Saturdays so easily. When she mentions this in RE class, her classmate, Stephen, points out that if she truly wants to be free of sin and enter the heavenly

kingdom, then she needs to be baptized right away. Otherwise, who is to say the second coming won't happen the very next day, and she won't be ready? Besides, being baptized means she can receive eternal life in heaven, making it a joyful event, not restrictive like she is imagining.

Discussion

- What does receiving baptism and salvation mean to you? (Ex: *Deliverance from Satan (Eph 2:1–3); deliverance from sin (Rom 7:14–15, 24); deliverance from death (Rom 6:23); deliverance into God's kingdom (Col 1:13).*)
- If you were to talk to someone like Alexa, what would you say to them to encourage them?

3. Gathering Manna Every Day

Scenario

Peter knows that as a Christian, he should read the Bible. He is reminded of that every week during RE class, and he hears it from his parents at home. But every time he picks it up, Peter finds that he has zero connection with what the Bible is saying. It's simply so boring to read, and he gets nothing out of it. He can think of so many better ways to use his time, such as playing games or going online, instead of reading the Bible.

Discussion

- What are some of the difficulties or obstacles that you face in gathering manna daily?
- Brainstorm some ideas on how you can maintain daily Bible reading.
- Share a time when you experienced God's words in your life. For example, how did God's word help, comfort, or guide you?
- What are some ways you can share or help others with the word of God?

Memory Verse

"But He answered and said, 'It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." ' " (Matthew 4:4)

Context

After fasting in the wilderness for forty days and nights, the Lord Jesus was hungry and weak. It was then that Satan challenged Him to change stones into loaves of bread to prove that He was the Son of God.

Meaning

We need to eat to sustain our physical lives. But more important is our spiritual hunger and thirst. Jesus is the bread of life who came from heaven, who offers to fill this inner hunger and thirst as nothing else can. He is able to do so because of the grace and truth that He offers. It may seem that our desires and longings can be satisfied with the things of the world, such as friends, pleasures, or entertainment. But in the end, they only leave us empty, dissatisfied, and disillusioned. Only by obeying God's commands and following His will are we able to experience true joy, peace, and eventually, eternal life.

Conclusion

The Israelites' journey out of Egypt and into the wilderness reflects our own journey of faith towards the heavenly kingdom. Before, we were captives of Satan and sin. But through baptism, we have become sons and heirs of Christ. And just as the Israelites were sustained by manna in the wilderness, we too must sustain and nourish our spiritual lives with God's word and Spirit, so that we are able to travel through the wilderness into the promised land.

Lesson 12 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. What is the memory verse teaching us about our spiritual hunger and thirst?
It can only be satisfied by the bread of life, Jesus Himself. Only by obeying God's commands and following His will are we able to experience true joy, peace, and eventually, eternal life.
2. "For whom He foreknew, He also _____ to be _____ to the _____ of His _____, that He might be the _____ among many _____." (Romans 8:29)
predestined, conformed, image, Son, firstborn, brethren
3. What privileges do we receive when we become God's firstborn through baptism?
Deliverance from Satan, from sin, and from death into God's heavenly kingdom, of which the Holy Spirit is our guarantee.
4. What did the Red Sea crossing prefigure? Provide a supporting Bible verse.
Our own spiritual journey through baptism. 1 Corinthians 10:1-2.
5. In your own words, explain two teachings that we can learn from manna.
See Spiritual Teachings, Sections C & D.
6. What prevents you from "gathering manna" every day? How can you overcome this obstacle?
Personal answers.

Junior 1 Year 2 Book 1 Review

Memory Verses

Instructions: Fill in the blanks correctly using the provided words.

bless	obey	spirit	live
death	keep	word	eternal
glory	directs	treasure	warned
fear	steps	way	good
please	slaves	faith	affliction
men	clean	saw	seek
go	made	righteousness	resurrection
renew	bought	God	Christ
breaks	promise	one	heirs

Galatians 3:28–29	Genesis 1:31a	Hebrews 11:6	Hebrews 11:7
Proverbs 16:9	Psalms 51:10	1 Corinthians 15:21–22	Exodus 19:5
Genesis 32:26	1 Corinthians 7:23	2 Corinthians 4:17	Matthew 4:4

1. “Now therefore, if you will indeed _____ My voice and _____ My covenant, then you shall be a special _____ to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine.” (_____)
2. “Then God _____ everything that He had _____, and indeed it was very _____.” (_____)
3. “For since by man came _____, by Man also came the _____ of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in _____ all shall be made alive.” (_____)
4. “Create in me a _____ heart, O God, and _____ a steadfast _____ within me.” (_____)
5. “By faith Noah, being divinely _____ of things not yet seen, moved with godly _____, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he

condemned the world and became heir of the _____ which is according to faith." (_____)

6. "But without _____ it is impossible to _____ Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently _____ Him." (_____)

7. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all _____ in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and _____ according to the _____." (_____)

8. "And He said, 'Let Me _____, for the day _____.' But he said, 'I will not let You go unless You _____ me!'" (_____)

9. "For our light _____, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and _____ weight of _____." (_____)

10. "A man's heart plans his _____, but the LORD _____ his _____." (_____)

11. "You were _____ at a price; do not become _____ of _____." (_____)

12. "But He answered and said, 'It is written, "Man shall not _____ by bread alone, but by every _____ that proceeds from the mouth of _____.'" (_____)

Multiple Choice

1. ____ : The Bible records that the world was created _____.
 - a. Through God's Spirit
 - b. Through God's words
 - c. From nothing
 - d. All of the above

2. ____ : How long was Noah and his family in the ark?
 - a. Forty days and forty nights
 - b. Over half a year
 - c. Over a year
 - d. Over two years

3. ____ : What is the symbol of God's mercy and His faithfulness to the covenant He made with Noah?
 - a. Dove
 - b. Rainbow
 - c. Olive branch
 - d. Ark

4. ____ : Which is not one of the promises God made to Abraham in Haran?
 - a. God will give him a son by his wife.
 - b. God will show him a land that he will receive.
 - c. God will make him a great nation.
 - d. God will bless all the families of the earth through him.

5. ____ : What did Cain offer to the Lord?
 - a. The firstborn of his flock and of their flock
 - b. The fruit of the ground
 - c. The fruit of the ground and the firstborn of his flock and of their fat
 - d. None of the above

6. ____ : Which adversity did Joseph face on his way to becoming second in command in Egypt?
 - a. His brothers took his colorful tunic, threw him in a pit, then sold him to traders.
 - b. His master's wife persistently asked him to lie with her.
 - c. He was falsely accused and then thrown into prison.
 - d. All of the above

7. ____ : Which was not one of Moses' concerns when God asked him to go to Pharaoh?
 - a. He was someone of no importance.
 - b. No one would believe him.
 - c. He was too young and inexperienced.
 - d. He was not eloquent.

Redemption Through Christ, the Passover Lamb

Instructions: For each Passover element, explain what it represents or foreshadows.

Lamb without blemish	
Unleavened bread	
Bitter herbs	
The lamb is slain	
Blood is shed	

The Ten Plagues

Instructions: Complete the table by writing the ten plagues in the order they happened, as well as a detailed description of what happened during the plague and Pharaoh's response to the plague.

Plague	Description	Pharaoh's Response
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

Short Answer

-
1. **(Lesson 2) How was the process of creating man different from the rest of creation? What does it mean for man to be created in the image of God, and why is this significant?**

2. **(Lesson 3) What are the original purposes that God wanted man to fulfill? What does this mean for us today?**

3. **(Lesson 4) What can we learn from Abel's offering, Cain's offering, and the events that followed?**

4. **(Lesson 6) How do we become Abraham's descendants today, and why is spiritual circumcision important to us?**

5. **(Lesson 7) When Isaac arrived in Beersheba, which three things did he do first? What does each action represent, and what does the order teach us about our own lives?**

6. **(Lesson 8) What can we learn from the limp that the Lord gave to Jacob?**

7. **(Lesson 12) What are three characteristics of manna as described in the Bible? What can we learn from each of these characteristics?**

Junior 1 Year 2 Book 1 Review Answer Key

Memory Verses

1. "Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine." (*Exodus 19:5*)
2. "Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good." (*Genesis 1:31a*)
3. "For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive." (*1 Corinthians 15:21-22*)
4. "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." (*Psalms 51:10*)
5. "By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith." (*Hebrews 11:7*)
6. "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." (*Hebrews 11:6*)
7. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (*Galatians 3:28-29*)
8. "And He said, 'Let Me go, for the day breaks.' But he said, 'I will not let You go unless You bless me!'" (*Genesis 32:26*)
9. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (*2 Corinthians 4:17*)
10. "A man's heart plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps." (*Proverbs 16:9*)
11. "You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men." (*1 Corinthians 7:23*)
12. "But He answered and said, 'It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'" (*Matthew 4:4*)

Multiple Choice

1. ____ : The Bible records that the world was created _____.
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 - c. Over a year**
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- b. God will show him a land that he will receive.
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7. ____ : Which was not one of Moses’ concerns when God asked him to go to Pharaoh?
- a. He was someone of no importance.
 - b. No one would believe him.
 - c. He was too young and inexperienced.**
 - d. He was not eloquent.

Redemption Through Christ, the Passover Lamb

Lamb without blemish	<i>Because God is holy, the sacrifice had to be without blemish. It is impossible for us to become truly holy. So, to make up for our inadequacies, our sacrifice, the Lord Jesus, had to be holy and without blemish.</i>
Unleavened bread	<i>Paul wrote, “Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (1 Cor 5:8). Removing leaven from our lives is an ongoing process that requires us to live new lives in truth.</i>
Bitter herbs	<i>The bitter herbs reminded the Israelites of the bitterness of the slavery that they had to endure while in Egypt. We should always remember that the world we live in today is not our true home – we are merely pilgrims and sojourners, seeking to enter our heavenly home (Heb 11:13).</i>
The lamb is slain	<i>Just as the Israelites sacrificed a lamb “without blemish” to spare their lives during the tenth plague, Jesus gave Himself up as our Passover Lamb, sacrificed to redeem us from sin and death (1 Cor 5:7).</i>
Blood is shed	<i>During the tenth plague, the Lord promised to “pass over” any house with the blood of the sacrificed lamb (Ex 12:7, 13). In the same way, Jesus purchased our lives with His blood (Acts 20:28; Eph 1:7) and delivered us from death (Rom 6:11).</i>

The Ten Plagues

Plague	Description	Pharaoh's Response
1. <i>Water turned to blood</i>	<i>Moses struck the waters of the Nile River and the waters in the river turned to blood.</i>	<i>Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed Moses and Aaron.</i>
2. <i>Frogs</i>	<i>Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt and brought forth frogs that covered the land of Egypt.</i>	<i>Initially, Pharaoh agreed to let the Israelites go if Moses rid Egypt of the frogs, but after Moses did as he asked, he hardened his heart and did not heed them.</i>
3. <i>Lice</i>	<i>Aaron struck the dust of the land in Egypt, turning all the dust in Egypt into lice.</i>	<i>Pharaoh admitted that this was the "finger of God" but still his heart grew hard.</i>
4. <i>Flies</i>	<i>The Lord brought thick swarms of lice into the houses of the Egyptians, but no flies were in the land of Goshen where the Israelites dwelled.</i>	<i>Pharaoh told Moses the Israelites could go worship God in Egypt, but he refused. Then Pharaoh said they could go into the wilderness to worship, but not "very far away," if God would remove the flies. Once the flies completely left, Pharaoh still hardened his heart and let no one leave.</i>
5. <i>Livestock diseased</i>	<i>The Lord sent a severe pestilence on all the livestock in Egypt, causing them to die, but not one of the livestock of the Israelites died.</i>	<i>Pharaoh's heart hardened, and he still refused to let the people go.</i>
6. <i>Boils</i>	<i>Moses scattered towards heaven a handful of ashes from a furnace, which then caused boils to break out on all Egyptian people and animals.</i>	<i>"But the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh; and he did not heed them, just as the LORD had spoken to Moses."</i>
7. <i>Hail</i>	<i>Moses stretched his rod towards heaven and the Lord sent thunder, hail, and fire to the land of Egypt, striking everything in the field. But there was no hail in the land of Goshen.</i>	<i>Pharaoh pleaded with Moses and Aaron, saying, "I have sinned this time. The LORD is righteous, and my people and I are wicked." He asked Moses to "entreat the LORD" to stop the hail, whereupon he would let them go. Once the hail ceased, Pharaoh hardened his heart.</i>
8. <i>Locusts</i>	<i>The Lord brought locusts so severe that "they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened." They consumed all plant life so that nothing green was left in all of Egypt.</i>	<i>As before, Pharaoh said he had sinned against God and asked for forgiveness. After all the locusts were completely gone from Egypt, "the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go."</i>

<p>9. <i>Darkness</i></p>	<p>A thick darkness covered the land of Egypt for three days, and no one could see each other. But there was light in the dwellings of the Israelites.</p>	<p><i>Pharaoh said Moses and the Israelites could go worship the Lord, but they had to leave their livestock behind. But Moses said they also needed to bring their livestock for offerings. Then “the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart.”</i></p>
<p>10. <i>Death of the firstborn</i></p>	<p><i>At midnight, the Lord struck all the firstborn of Egypt, people and animal alike, causing them to die. But the Lord passed over the houses of the Israelites, who had struck the lintel and two doorposts with the blood of the Passover lamb.</i></p>	<p><i>Pharaoh immediately called for Moses and Aaron by night and told them to leave Egypt with all they had. The Egyptians also urged the people to leave, and they gave the Israelites whatever they requested.</i></p>

Short Answer

1. **(Lesson 2) How was the process of creating man different from the rest of creation? What does it mean for man to be created in the image of God, and why is this significant?**
Man was molded from the dust of the earth and then God breathed life into his nostrils. No other creation was made in this way. We have been created in the image of God’s holiness and righteousness. We have a conscience and are able to live out the image of God when we follow Jesus’ example.

2. **(Lesson 3) What are the original purposes that God wanted man to fulfill? What does this mean for us today?**
First, the Lord commanded man to be fruitful and multiply, and to have dominion over the earth. Today, we must take care of our families, as well as of God’s creation. We must also help brothers and sisters in church to grow in faith and bring others to salvation by walking within and reaching out with God’s word. Second, God commanded man to tend the garden of Eden. Today, we must tend the spiritual gardens in our hearts and in the church so that God’s presence may dwell within us and among the members. Third, man was expected to obey God’s commands wholeheartedly. Today, even though sin came into the world through Adam and Eve, God has given us the chance to receive salvation by following His commands completely.

3. **(Lesson 4) What can we learn from Abel’s offering, Cain’s offering, and the events that followed?**
Abel gave the best and the richest of the flock he had, and he offered it by faith; we should do likewise. Cain was evil and wicked. He had the wrong attitude before God. He did not resist sin but, instead, allowed sin to completely take control of his life. We need to have the right attitude in front of God and constantly ask God to empower us with the Holy Spirit to walk in the truth and in the newest of life.

8. **(Lesson 6) How do we become Abraham’s descendants today, and why is spiritual circumcision important to us today?**
We become spiritual descendants of Abraham the moment we believe and are baptized. Though we do not undergo circumcision today, we still need to follow the spirit of it: like circumcision, our faith and actions must serve as signs that separate us, God’s people, from the world around us.

4. **(Lesson 7) When Isaac arrived in Beersheba, which three things did he do first? What does each**

action represent, and what does the order teach us about our own lives?

Isaac first built an altar to God, then he set up his tent, and lastly, he dug a well. The altar represents his relationship with God. The tent, his family life, and the well, his work and career. Like Isaac, we should place our relationship with God first, above our family and careers. In exchange for our faith, God has promised His blessings and His care.

5. (Lesson 8) What can we learn from the limp that the Lord gave to Jacob?

It is never God's will that we run from our problems. With the limp that God gave him, Jacob could not use his own strength to face Esau and his 400 men, or to even run from them. But despite the limp, he was not afraid. With his limp, Jacob no longer stood by his own power, but by God's. He could no longer run but relying on God's strength made him stronger. Today, we may have weaknesses of our own, but we are made stronger by relying on God (2 Cor 12:9).

6. (Lesson 12) What are three characteristics of manna as described in the Bible? What can we learn from each of these characteristics?

The Bible describes manna as "bread from heaven" that is "white like coriander seed" and "sweet like honey." Our "bread from heaven" today is the Lord Jesus, who has given us eternal life. Manna also represents God's word. Just as He gave the Israelites manna to nourish them every day, God's word satisfies all of our needs. Coriander seeds are quite small and rather insignificant. In the same way, the word of God is not regarded very highly, and many despise it. Manna's color and shape also reflects how God's word is pure and perfect. Lastly, God's words are nourishing and sweet, and they can be applied to every situation in life.