

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness."

2 Timothy 3:16

YEAR 1 BOOK 2

Junior 2 Year 1 Book 2

YEAR 1 BOOK 2

JUNIOR 2

Teacher's Guide

The Pentateuch

G.A. of the True Jesus Church

U.S.A



THEME:

The Pentateuch

General Assembly of the True Jesus Church

[HTTP://WWW.TJC.ORG](http://www.tjc.org)
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JUNIOR 2

Teacher's Guide

"Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers. For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth that is in you, just as you walk in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."

3 John 2-4



THEME:

The Pentateuch

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True Jesus Church
314 S. Brookhurst St., Suit #104
Anaheim, CA
92804-2472
U.S.A.
(714) 533-8808
(714) 533-8878 (Fax)

THEMES

The Pentateuch

Unit 1: The Beginning of Faith

The book of Genesis covers many “beginnings,” from the creation of light, to the first animals, to early human history. More importantly for us is the beginning of faith in God. We come to learn about Israel and God’s chosen people as well as their place in His master plan of salvation. Although the first book of the Bible was penned thousands of years ago, its stories and characters offer us many life lessons and help strengthen our faith, no matter what time period we live in. From these lessons, we will learn the value of having God’s words rooted within us and how the Bible can aid us as we journey through this world

Unit 2: Freed from Sin

When the Israelites were released from bondage, they were probably both relieved and glad that they were no longer slaves. Though they could live freely, they did not really understand the significance of their freedom. Their focus was on the physical, not having to work under the orders of the Egyptians, slaving from morning to night. But as they journeyed through the desert, they learned that freedom from God is spiritual freedom. As they traveled, they learned more and more about God and His plans for them. They received God’s commands as well as instructions for building the tabernacle. In these lessons, we learn along with the Israelites what it means to be truly free: the freedom to obey God and do His will.

Unit 3: Holiness

In the book of Leviticus, there are many laws and regulations, from how to prepare a burnt offering to specific rules about personal hygiene. The purpose of all these laws was not to burden the people of Israel but rather to allow them to understand that they needed to serve in complete holiness, as they were set apart as a holy nation. Today, we do not need to observe these laws because Jesus Christ sacrificed His life for us and is our everlasting high priest. But by understanding the spiritual significance behind these laws, it can remind us that we too are a holy people and should act accordingly.

Unit 4: Learning from Our Mistakes

The Israelites made many mistakes in the wilderness. They murmured against their leader, complained about their food and fueled many fights. During their years of wandering in the desert, many lost their lives because of their rebellious ways. When the new generation was poised to take on the promised land one more time, Moses hoped that they would learn from their parents’ mistakes. Similarly, the stories of the Bible serve as reminders for us. When we are caught up in this world, it is often difficult to stand firm in our faith and take a good long look at everything around us before making a godly and wise decision. In the last book of the Pentateuch, Moses spends much of the time repeating the laws, hoping to help them learn from the past and continue to walk on the pathway to the heavenly kingdom.

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WELCOME TO THE J2 CURRICULUM

This Teacher's Guide has been designed to help the teachers plan the class and become more effective in the teaching ministry.

Because of the impact of God's word, it is our prayer that we see our students understand and apply the Bible to their lives. Our ultimate goal of this curriculum is to see lives transformed. Here you'll find the materials you will need to teach the unchanging truth of God's word.

This Curriculum Includes:

LESSON TITLE

Getting Your Spiritual Life in Shape

LISTED SCRIPTURES

Eph 6:13 – 18; Ex 33:17 – 23;
34:28 – 33; Num 12:6 – 8

LESSON AIM

- 1) To examine the important elements of spiritual growth
- 2) To discover how to win the battle between the spirit and the flesh
- 3) To implement a plan to get the students' spiritual lives in shape by using specific goals

MEMORY VERSE

"That you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world" (Phil 2:15) (NKJV)

BIBLE READING FOR THE WEEK

Eph 1-2

All of these sabbath lessons are built on:

1. (Not listed in the Student Workbook) **BIBLE BACKGROUND**
Extra resource related to the lesson for the students and teachers to know.
2. **WARM UP**
Something to capture their focus to get them started.
3. **BIBLE STUDY**
Lead your students in discovering the timeless truth of God's word through inductive Bible study.
(Student Worksheet is only in outline form)
4. **CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING**
Find out if the students comprehend the information that is being presented. Teachers can check for understanding in different ways. One way is to ask them questions related to what they've just learned.
5. **LIFE APPLICATION**
Help each student apply God's word to his/her life as the Holy Spirit leads him/her. Encourage students to come up with a plan of action to practice what they've learned. How are they going to implement their plans? When are they going to apply it?
6. **REFLECTION AND PRAYER**
Ask them to share with you what sticks in their mind after the lesson, before the concluding prayer.



A Reminder!

Unit goals and teacher devotional are listed before each unit. Bible reading for the week and the memory verse are listed in each lesson. Be sure to read through each lesson before you plan and teach your class.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR TEENS



It is important to teach teens in order to equip them with a strong foundation of good, solid faith. This generation that we are working with is searching for answers to truth. Although they may have many ups and downs in their lives or lack spiritual depth, they do want to know who makes a real difference in the real world.

Teens live in a time when believing in God is considered ridiculous. They also live in a world that is in constant violation of God's laws. Some of the results of this are health epidemics, environmental devastation and domestic violence. Therefore, they are faced with important decisions each and every day. What they decide can ultimately affect their values, faith, education, choice in friends, occupation, marriage, and church-life. In addition to

these complexities, teens may be struggling with peer pressure, fashion expectations, substance abuse issues, family/relationship problems as well as issues of identity and self-concept. In other words, they are rocked with change, whether spiritual, emotional, social or physical.

Teens need something or someone to rely on, anything that they can look up to as their standard. Our job, then, is to lead our teens to see a powerful God in this ever-changing world. Surprisingly, teens want to be "spiritual," despite all the hype around them. Therefore, they need to hear personal testimonies, Bible truths, how God's love has touched the lives of other people and what kind of hopes we all have despite living in an often senseless world. The question we need to answer as we teach is, "How can we affirm their faith in a God who loves and cares for them like no other?"

TEENS' DESIRES (I)

1. Love and Acceptance

Teens have a great need for acceptance by their peers, and they care about what others think of them. They are worried about how others perceive them physically (attractiveness: too tall, too short, too fat, too thin, the notion of sex) and mentally (intelligence: being too smart or dumb). They also look to peers, teachers, sports figures and media personalities as role models. Therefore, the way teachers express their faith and belief will be a positive witness for them.

2. Relationship with God/Finding Faith

At this age, teens will no longer come to church simply because their parents tell them to. They should be beginning to develop their own relationships with Jesus Christ. Although their reasoning skills will cause them to question what part God and the Bible play in their lives, it is important for teachers to continue to challenge them to make time for prayer and devotional life outside of the classroom and church so that they will be able to establish their own faith. Their spiritual goal is to find mean-

ing and purpose in their lives through Jesus Christ.

3. Personal Experiences With God

Up till this point in their lives, teens probably have yet to have many personal experiences with God. Their devotional life has likely consisted of attending church services, going to classes and praying before going to bed. While this regularity is good, it is not enough. Now is the time to encourage them to pray consistently so that they may realize the roles God is playing in their lives. Share with them personal testimonies that will touch their hearts. Soon, they will begin to see God as a personal friend, comforter and advisor.



TEENS' DESIRES (2)



4. Purpose in Life/True Fulfillment

Teens want to know who they are. At this crucial age, they are beginning to ask themselves, "What is my purpose in life?" and "What does it all mean?" A teenager needs to see himself as a separate and a worthwhile person in order to attain a successful transition into adulthood. Their drive for independence is strong and they feel a need to prove themselves as capable individuals. Some parents may have a difficult time letting go and end up being over-controlling because they find this "growing up" threatening. As a result, the teenager may end up rebelling. As teachers, we need to show support and encouragement, and provide helpful advice. We also need to affirm their talents and abilities to let them know their self-worth. Teenagers do respect parents and

adults who show consistency and structure. As they make their own decisions and learn from their mistakes, it will allow them to find their own identities and seek out what it is they believe in. When they are able to do so, they can also become faithful to their beliefs and values.

5. Purity and Holiness

Perhaps because of their young age and their lack of experience in the real world, teens often feel they can overcome anything if they try hard enough. "I can handle it," they might think. "It may have happened to them, but it won't happen to me!" In one sense, it is great to have confidence. However, when they are faced with real temptations, they may also be unprepared to deal with the issues with a clear head. While we don't need to bombard them with stories of people who have failed to remain pure and holy, we do need to let them understand the reality and difficulties. Challenge them to think about what is important to them and encourage them to stand firm in what they believe.

HOW DO I EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATE WITH MY STUDENTS?

1. Greet every student at every class session

A friendly and sincere greeting communicates undivided attention. "How's it going?" expresses genuine concern. "It's great to see you" can transform anyone's day. Your greeting may take only 30-40 seconds, but your students will deeply feel that you really care.

2. Send an occasional card/email or pick up the phone to find out how someone is doing

Saying, "I was wondering how you were doing," will make a big difference in someone's life. An investment of four or five minutes and the price of a postage stamp can literally make a teenager's day come alive.



3. Open your home for fellowship or special events

Our greatest memories result from serving the Lord together through fellowship and special services or events. Every fellowship or meeting will provide a new opportunity to "reach out and touch someone."

4. Pray with them

Teens need to know that their teachers are constantly praying for them. Even though they may be very busy with their daily chores, always remind them that praying together at a certain time is the only way to draw wisdom and strength from God.

In this 21st century, 99% of the youth communicate via email every day! With the help of the internet, many people have found a great way to keep in touch with those they normally wouldn't be able to talk to and with those who live far away.

As an RE teacher, using email to reach out to our students is a wonderful way to **build relationships**. Since



you know your students already, send out an email that goes a little deeper than greetings and

praise. Perhaps you could ask your students a thought-provoking question about what goes on in the world, about what he or she believes in, about relationships within their families, or maybe begin with a gentle question about their relationship with God.

The truth is, your students love to find email in their boxes even though you and your students don't really talk frequently. At the very least, consider sending your students an occasional encouraging email or e-card to let them know that they are in

your thoughts or to wish them well on a test or sporting event. You can even make your student's day with a quick note of praise or a written pat on the back.

In order to reach out to your students effectively through email, keep your message brief—two or three short paragraphs is sufficient. And believe it or not, sometimes only a sentence is required. Living in this fast-paced society, not many of us want to scroll through a book-length email. Also, it is very vital to respond to messages within a day or two. Your students look to you for support and guidance. You will easily lose their confidence in you if a week goes by with no feedback.

Last but not least, try to use a gentle tone in your email. Let them know that you are always there, especially when you notice that one of your students is sick or simply feeling low spiritually. Quote Scripture sparingly and use liberal doses of humor. Teens do not respond well to teachers who always condemn. **Be there, and be an example.**

Email is a great door to communicating with your students. May God help us strengthen the faith of our students and nurture understanding with God's word.

HOW CAN I GET THEM MOTIVATED & TO STAY INTERESTED?

You can involve...

1. a game or debate
2. a video clip
3. brainstorming sessions
4. a poster
5. interesting questions and news stories
6. a touching testimony or hymn
7. quiet time for them to reflect
8. arts and crafts



When you deliver your lesson, it can be through...

1. lecture style
2. an in-depth Bible study
3. a skit
4. a meaningful and relevant video

Teachers can check for understanding by...

1. asking the students to share what they have learned
2. asking questions about the Bible study
3. asking the students to come up with a good moral for the lesson
4. asking which one of the characters they would have wanted to be had they been a part of the scene
5. asking the students to apply the Bible study and to make relevant connections to their own lives

MEMORY VERSE CONTEST

Do you know that working on **memory verses** together in class can provide excellent teachable moments about the word of God? Most people think that J2 class students already know many of the verses in the Bible. However, that's not necessarily true. Therefore, we as RE teachers should emphasize this part of the lesson more than others. Why? Because memorizing the Scriptures can help students **resist temptations** and **build a stronger faith**.

Make sure that it's something that involves the **both** of you. Think about challenging your students to memorize the memory verse with you each week. Maybe you could suggest that both you and the students recite all 13 verses by the end of the quarter. This is a great way to motivate your students. Perhaps you could challenge your students to a contest. Make it a real challenge and see who can memorize the

most verses by a certain time. If everyone wins, take your students out for ice cream or even out to lunch.

Since you need to recite the memory verse from week to week, you can spend more time talking about it with your students. Let the word of God impact them in their daily lives and be a part of their lives too. After a period of time, you will definitely see the lives of your students flourish just as God intended. The key point is that if your students see that you are serious about memorizing Scripture yourself, they will see that it is a **vital way of growing more like Jesus Christ**. May God strengthen our hands as we continue to serve Him.

BIBLE READING FOR THIS QUARTER

1. Genesis 1-10
2. Genesis 11-20
3. Genesis 21-30
4. Genesis 31-40
5. Exodus 1-12
6. Exodus 13-20
7. Exodus 21-30
8. Exodus 30-40
9. Leviticus 11-15, 21-23
10. Numbers 1-2, 9-14
11. Numbers 20-22, 24, 27-30, 35
12. Deuteronomy 4-6, 28, 29, 31

MEMORY VERSES FOR DECEMBER, JANUARY AND FEBRUARY

1. "For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law until all is fulfilled." (Mt 5:18)
2. "O Lord, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all." (Ps 104:24)
3. "Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." (Heb 12:1b-2a)
4. "For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." (Rom 15:4)
5. "You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men." (1 Cor 7:23)
6. "But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him." (1 Jn 2:5)
7. "And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." (Ex 19:6a)
8. "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God." (Rom 12:1b)
9. "Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am the Lord your God." (Lev 20:7)
10. "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; And He knows those who trust in Him." (Nah 1:7)
11. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (Php 4:13)
12. "That you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days." (Deut 30:20a)

Goals

Genesis is often thought of as the book of the beginning of the world. In these lessons, the students will learn how it is also a book that contains the beginnings of our faith. From learning about ancient civilizations to remembering the lives of our forefathers, they will come to know that everything under the sun was created for a greater purpose of salvation. Some of the questions that will be answered are: How did ancient Egypt play a role in shaping our faith? How does the ark symbolize the true church? How is God revealed throughout the entire book of Genesis? It is hoped that the answers to these questions will spark the students' interest in learning more about the word of God and allow them to realize that history can offer them many lessons in faith and life. More importantly, the students are encouraged to meditate daily on the Bible and receive strength in God's precious word.

unit
1**Teacher Devotional**

We often encourage our students to learn from the examples of the characters in the Bible. Though we may not be famous, there is a lot we can share with our students when it comes to our faith, too. When did we come to know God? Was there a turning point in our faith? Was there any special experience that really demonstrated God's love in our life? These encouragements can greatly bolster the faith of our students because they know for a fact that these are real stories with a real person they can picture. Take a moment and think about a personal story you can share with them the next time you teach your students.

What is Faith?

*"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."
(Hebrew 11:1)*

Lesson 1

Overview
of the Pentateuch**Listed Scriptures**

Mt 24:35; Jn 5:39; Mt 22:31-32; Ex 20-23; Lev 17-26; Deut 5:12-26

Lesson Aim

- 1) To understand the importance of studying the OT and to identify the main teachings of the Pentateuch
- 2) To be encouraged to study the Bible and gain insight into how to live their lives

Memory Verse

"For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law until all is fulfilled." (Mt 5:18)

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

Genesis 1-10

B I B L E B A C K G R O U N D



The Bible contains a total of 66 books, 1,189 chapters and 31,173 verses. To many scholars, it is just that—another ancient book, broken down into sections and studied for its historical value and accuracy. However, careful examination of the Bible shows that it is more than just a collection of great writings.

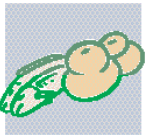
When we look at the Bible in its entirety, we realize that the ultimate author is God Himself. There are no contradictions in any of the words, even though the various books were inspired by God's spirit over a span of a thousand years and written by more than 35 authors. Although many people have attempted to dissect the Bible and offer numerous interpretations of what its passages mean, we know that we can only rely upon the Holy Spirit to unravel the mysteries contained within (Isa 29:11; Eph 3:5; 1 Cor 2:10-15).



What are some things you must do every day in order to live? Make a list of some of those things starting with the most crucial (i.e. eating, brushing your teeth, sleeping etc). What about reading and studying the Bible? Do you feel that it has a place ANYWHERE on your list? If not, why not? Today we will look at the importance of studying and understanding the Bible and briefly go over the first five books of the Old Testament.

B I B L E S T U D Y

Part 1 Overview of the Old Testament



Review the following information with your students. You can go through this quickly since the emphasis of this lesson is the next section on the Pentateuch. But be sure to discuss why it is important to study the Old Testament before continuing to Part 2.

A . Background and Setting

The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew. But when some of the exiles returned to Israel, other languages, such as Aramaic, were also brought back. This is evidenced by a small portion of the Bible written in Aramaic (i.e. Ezek 4:8-6:18; 7:12-26; Dan 2:4-7:28; Jer 12:11). Later on, Hebrew became a language reserved mostly for official ceremonies and Aramaic was adopted as the common spoken word. By the time of Jesus Christ's birth, the entire Old Testament had been translated into Aramaic. The earliest portion of the Bible, written by Moses, dates back to 1420 BC. The last scroll, Malachi, was completed around 400 BC. There were more than 35 authors in the Old Testament and each one differed in their social background and upbringing. They included prophets, priests, scribes, kings, shepherds and farmers. They also brought with them various writing styles and experiences. Despite their differences, there is consistency and structure in the Old Testament because God inspired all of the authors. The 39 scrolls in the Old Testament can be subdivided into the following groups of writings:

- a. Pentateuch (Genesis to Deuteronomy)
- b. Historical Books (Joshua to Esther)
- c. Books of Wisdom (Job to Song of Songs)
- d. Books of the Prophets (Isaiah to Malachi)



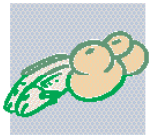
B . Importance of Studying the Old Testament

The Bible is divided into two major sections, the Old and New Testaments. A testament is a covenant set up between God and man. The sole reason for God to establish these covenants is to save mankind, because we have all sinned and fallen short of His glory (Heb 6:13ff). The central theme of the entire Bible can be summarized as the salvation of Jesus Christ. Briefly, the Old Testament records the promise and preparation of salvation, while the New Testament is the fulfillment and completion of salvation. In other words, the Old Testament serves as a foundation for the New Testament. Although many people find New Testament teachings to be more interesting and life-applicable, the Old Testament also contains important truths and practical applications.

- a. The Old Testament is also the word of God and according to the Lord Jesus, "Heaven and earth will pass away but My words will by no means pass away" (Mt 24:35).
- b. The Old Testament is the foundation of our religion and faith because it declares that there is only one true God.
- c. The Old Testament details the origin of sin and the condemnation it brought upon mankind. It is important for us to understand why we need to be reconciled with God through Jesus Christ.
- d. The detailed records of genealogy and history help us understand the lineage Jesus Christ came from. The biographies of many of the biblical heroes we encounter along the way are also inspiring.
- e. Although many of the promises and prophecies (i.e. the birth and death of Jesus Christ) have been fulfilled, many others are yet to come. Therefore, it is important for us to continue to study the Old Testament.
- f. The Old Testament examines moral issues, such as sin and suffering, and shows how they demonstrate God's sovereign rule over morality.
- g. Jesus Christ and His disciples quoted from the Old Testament over 600 times (i.e. Jn 5:39; Mt 22:31-32), thereby emphasizing its importance.
- h. The psalms and poems, as inspired by the Holy Spirit, are timeless works of art.

Teaching Tips

You may wish to present this part of the lesson in the form of a game (i.e. Jeopardy!) since much of this information serves as a review. You can do this by simply creating several categories and rewording some of the information given here (i.e. The Bible was originally written in this language; the Pentateuch refers to these five books, etc). Assign point values to each question/answer and see which team can accumulate the most points. You can also add other information related to the Old Testament not given here.



Part 2

Overview of the Pentateuch

A. The Pentateuch

Most Bible scholars agree that Moses wrote the first five books (the Pentateuch) of the Old Testament. Since these books contain revelations regarding God's laws, they are also known as the Mosaic Laws or the Books of Laws. The table below summarizes the books of the Pentateuch.

Book	Author	Date	Theme	Purpose	Key Concept	Key Verses
Gen	Moses	1420 BC	Beginning of all creation and the beginning of Israel	Points out Israel's place in God's master plan of salvation	Fall from Grace	1:1, 12:1-3
Ex	Moses	1420 BC	Israel receives deliverance	Announces Israel's transformation into God's holy nation	Salvation	19:6
Lev	Moses	1420 BC	Israel must serve in holiness	Declares the standards for a holy nation	Service	11:45
Num	Moses	1400 BC	The failures of the Israelites	Chronicles the Israelites' failures in entering Canaan	Sacred Journey	33:1
Deut	Moses	1400 BC	Decrees to Israel	Pronounces the commands of God that the Israelites must abide by prior to entering Canaan	Hope	10:12

B. Teachings Found in the Pentateuch

The Pentateuch is not just a detailed recording of the history of the Israelites or the commands of God. It also contains many important truths. It is, in fact, a glimpse into the very foundation of our faith. Below is a quick summary of some of the teachings.

a. God's Creation

The Bible begins with the awesome account of God's handiwork and how He created the world in six days and rested on the seventh. This message reminds us to reflect constantly on God as the origin and creator of all things.

Teaching Tips

The table found on the previous page is included in the students' worksheets. However, it contains some blanks they need to fill in. You can ask the students to work in pairs and fill in only part of the table (assign which sections they need to fill in, i.e. work only on the Genesis section). After five minutes, ask them to share their information with the rest of the class so that everyone participates in completing the table. Also take time out to look up the key verses given in the table and share their importance with the class.

b. God's Chosen Ones

God hand-picked the descendants of Abraham and Jacob out of all the nations to be His special chosen ones. Through them, all people will be blessed (Gen 12:1-3). By being baptized into Jesus Christ today, we become Abraham's spiritual offspring and become entitled to receive God's promised blessings.

c. God's Covenants with Man

Through the mercy of God, He established covenants with Noah, Abraham and the people of Israel (Gen 9:9, 15:18, 17:4; Ex 24:7). These covenants are important to us because in the New Testament, we also have a covenant with God through Jesus Christ.

d. God's Laws

The Laws make up the core of the Pentateuch. There are the Ten Commandments as well as many other decrees. Although obedience to the Laws cannot save us because we could not possibly obey them to the letter, they do point out that the Lord is God and that He alone is the God of righteousness and holiness and is the source of all blessings (Ex 20-23; Lev 17-26; Deut 5:12-26).

e. God's Deliverance

The exodus marked a very important period in the history of the Israelites. This one great miracle gave the people hope that whenever they encountered strong

oppression, God would always deliver them. More importantly, Jesus Christ's birth fulfilled the prophecy of salvation by the Messiah, the ultimate deliverance for all mankind.

f. The Sin of Man

The Pentateuch recorded, often with great detail, the wicked nature of mankind. In fact, if we were to compare the events that occurred during Old Testament times with what we observe in today's society, we will discover that we have not changed for the better, that we are prone to sinning in the vilest ways. Surrounded by sin, we have no other choice but to turn to God for mercy and salvation. Only God can help us, and only He can wash away all the filth within us.

C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



1 Why is the Bible divided into two sections called the Old and New Testaments? What is the significance of the word "testament" and why is it important to our faith?

2 List some reasons why it is important to study the Old Testament.

3 How is the Old Testament subdivided? Which books belong to each subdivision?

4 We are saved because Jesus Christ died and resurrected. By doing so, He broke down all the barriers from the past. Why is it important, then, to learn about the history of the Israelites?

5 We know that we cannot be saved through obedience to the Law because we cannot follow it perfectly. Then what is the relevance of all the laws found in the Pentateuch to our lives today?

6 What do you think about when you read about all the sins of our ancestors?

7 Which of the five books are you most familiar with? Explain your reasons.



The Bible and Me

So far, we have briefly touched on the importance of studying the Old Testament and learned some of the teachings found in the Pentateuch. Although we may know a lot about the Bible, that is not enough. Share the following story with the students.

The prince of Grenada, an heir to the Spanish crown, was sentenced to life in solitary confinement in Madrid's ancient prison. Everyone knew that anyone who went in would never come out alive. The prince was given one book to read the entire time – the Bible. Obviously, with only one book to read, he read it over and over hundreds of times. After thirty-three years of imprisonment, he died. When they came in to clean out his cell, they found some notes he had written by using nails to mark on the soft stone of the prison walls. It contained things of this sort: Psalm 118:8 is the middle verse of the Bible; Ezra 7:21 contains all the letters of the alphabet except the letter j; the ninth verse of the eighth chapter of Esther is the longest verse in the Bible; no word or name of more than six syllables can be found in the Bible. Isn't it kind of strange that an individual who spent thirty-three years studying the greatest book of all time could only become an expert at Bible trivia? As far as we know, he never made any religious commitment to Jesus Christ.

After reading this story, we need to ask ourselves what kind of faith we have. Like the prince, we may know a lot about the Bible, but what do we do with the teachings we receive every week from church? What do we do with teachings gained from studying the Bible at home? Do we just become an expert in the teachings? What kind of attitude should we have towards the words of God?

1. We must respect the Bible and its teachings. We shouldn't add to or subtract from it, or misinterpret it in any way.
2. We should believe the Bible in its entirety, without doubting any part of it.
3. We should study the Bible with humility.
4. When we encounter problems we cannot solve on our own, we can turn to the Bible for guidance.
5. We should practice the teachings we have learned and try our best to apply them to our lives.
6. We need to introduce and share the Bible with our friends and family so that they can also rely on God.

Questions to think about:

- 1.** *How important is it to you to study the Bible and understand its teachings? Think of your answer based on the following scenario: Many of you are old enough to drive. None of you would consider driving at night without the use of your headlights because it is too dark outside. If you didn't have the lights on, you would likely get into an accident. But how many of you go out daily without the words of God rooted inside of you? This world is equally dark and there are many temptations around us. The words of God are like the headlights on the car. They can illuminate the path before us and steer us clear of many "accidents." So, is studying the Bible as important to you as turning on the headlights? If not, how can you make it so that it is?*
- 2.** *How can we effectively apply the teachings we have learned from the Bible in our lives? Give a concrete example.*
- 3.** *What is a good method of introducing the Bible to our friends and family? Share your experiences.*
- 4.** *In the section that discusses the teachings found in the first five books, are any of those teachings especially meaningful to you? Explain your answer.*
- 5.** *The Bible is profitable for four things according to 2 Timothy 3:16-17:1.*
 - 1.** Teaching- The Bible is our source of information about God, the human race, heaven, hell, angels, demons and the future.
 - 2.** Rebuking- The Bible teaches us when our behavior is not in accordance to the Bible.
 - 3.** Correcting- The Bible teaches us how to get back on track when our thinking and choices are wrong.
 - 4.** Training in righteousness- The Bible trains us how to be godly and holy in our mind and in our deeds.



- 1.** *What kind of attitude do you have towards the Bible? Do you respect it as God's word? Do you look forward to reading it? Do you study it to understand more of what God wants of you?*
- 2.** *What will you do, starting today, to improve the amount and quality of time you spend studying the word of God?*

Early Human History

Listed Scriptures

Gen 1:1-3:24, 6:1-8:19, 10:10, 11:9; Rom 5:12

Lesson Aim

To acknowledge that God is the source of all things and that He has a plan for everyone

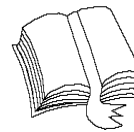
Memory Verse

"O Lord, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all." (Ps 104:24)

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

Genesis 11-20

B I B L E B A C K G R O U N D



Genesis comes from the Greek term meaning origin or beginning. This is obviously an appropriate choice for the name of the first book of the Bible. Genesis covers the creation of the world to the death of Joseph, spanning some 2500 years. As mentioned in the first lesson, Moses was the author of the book, which was written about 1400 BC. Genesis can be studied in two major sections. Chapters 1-11 provide records of the first several thousand years of early human history. After the creation, we read about how man sinned against God and gradually worsened overtime, with violence and wickedness everywhere. After the flood, the descendants of Noah tried to build a tower to reach the heavens but God foiled their attempt by confusing their language and scattering them all over the earth. From Chapter 12 onwards, the book becomes more focused on God's chosen people. The main characters are Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. Today's lesson will focus on the first section of Genesis.



What do you think is the greatest invention of mankind? Although things like electricity or the airplane seem like amazing creations, they are in fact not really creations. This is because everything that is made by the hands of man comes from something else that is already in existence. We are so busy with our lives today that we don't stop enough to remember that God is really the source of all things. Let's take a look at Genesis and remind ourselves of God's great power and how, from the first day of creation, He set everything that we now enjoy into motion.

B I B L E S T U D Y



Part 1
The Creation


A . The First Seven Days (Gen 1:1-2:7)

As recorded in Chapter 1, the earth was formless and empty, with darkness covering "the deep." In six days, God created the world.

Day 1: light (so that there was day and night)

Day 2: waters were separated (so that there was water and the sky)

Day 3: land, oceans and vegetation

Day 4: sun, moon and stars as signs to mark the seasons, years and days

Day 5: creatures to fill the sea and air (fish and birds)

Day 6: animals to fill the land, man and woman to care for God's creation

Day 7: rest

After God completed the creation in six days, He rested on the seventh, thus establishing the holy Sabbath. The Bible records that Sabbath was created for man. Therefore, everyone should keep this holy day. It is not just for a certain denomination or church, because God established this day at the very beginning of life.


B . The Garden of Eden (Gen 2:8-3:24)

After God created Adam and Eve, He placed them within the Garden of Eden. This was the world's first landmark since creation. But it wasn't just any old place. The word Eden means "joy" or "delight." It was a paradise, a place that included all things needed to sustain life, including the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. We can only guess this garden's approximate location based on the names of the rivers mentioned in Genesis 2:10-14 (it would have likely been somewhere in present day Iraq). The climate was also very pleasant since there was no need for clothing (Gen 2:25).

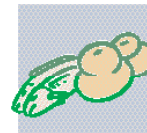
*Pishon River (untraceable, perhaps due to the flood)

*Gihon River (untraceable, perhaps due to the flood)

*Tigris River (located in present day Iraq)

*Euphrates River (located in present day Iraq)

Although Adam and Eve had all the freedom in the world within the garden (they could even eat from the tree of life and live forever!), they were forbidden to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Even though they knew the consequence was death, they chose to defy God and were condemned. Afterward, they were cut off from the tree of life (3:22-24) and cast out of the Garden of Eden. Since they were cut off from God, they became spiritually dead; physical death followed later. After they were driven out from paradise, they gave birth to Cain and Abel but sin continued to grow in the heart of mankind. Cain murdered his brother, and violence and crime increased over time. Consequently, death came to all people because all had sinned and fallen short of God's glory (Rom 5:12). Although death to all men seemed like the end, it was also the beginning of God's plan of salvation.



Part 2
Early Human History


A . The Flood (Gen 6:1-8:19)

Although Cain's offspring accomplished many worldly feats, they engaged in much bloodshed and violence. By the time of Noah, the people were corrupt and their hearts were full of evil thoughts. After God flooded the earth because of man's

great wickedness, only Noah and his family were saved. Although eight people seems like a small number relative to the population of the entire world, it serves to remind us that, just like in the end times, only the righteous will be saved. We cannot count on God being gracious and saving kind people, helpful people or people who commit only minor sins. Rather, we must believe that Jesus Christ is our Savior, we must be baptized, have the Holy Spirit and lead a life worthy of God's calling.

When the waters receded, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat (Gen 8:4). It is located just north of the Garden of Eden, likely somewhere in the present day mountain ranges of Armenia. It is recorded in the Bible that Noah's descendants traveled southward down the mountains and made their homes in the plains of Babylon (Gen 10). Later on, they moved eastward along the Tigris River and settled in a plain in Shinar (Gen 11:2). Once there, they built a tower in Babel. Up until this point, there was one common language among the people. But because of the pride of man, they tried to use their own efforts to build a tower to reach the heavens. God was probably disappointed all over again at the continual sinful nature of mankind and decided to confuse their language, scattering them all over the earth and spawning the beginnings of different ancient civilizations.

Teaching Tips

Since much of this information is historical, it would be helpful to bring in some visual aids (i.e. photos of ancient cities) to put everything into perspective. A showing of a Greek translation of the Bible may also peak the interest of the students in their endeavor to learn more about the truth.

B . The Descendants of Noah

In the days of Abraham, the people lived a nomadic lifestyle. However, there was a simple system of government. Since it was a patriarchal society, the elders usually took on the roles of the chiefs who looked after the political, economical, military and religious aspects of life. Generally, they lived in tents sewn out of animal skin, ate roasted meat and drank the milk of the livestock. The number of cattle, lamb and camels they owned were their only real possessions. The grassy plain were, in effect, their kingdom. Because of their nomadic lifestyle, the Israelites were all excellent herdsman.

C . Ancient Civilizations

Although many ancient societies were mentioned in Genesis, two civilizations stand out in particular because of their effect on the history of the Israelites: the Babylonians and the Egyptians. The city of Babylon was founded (its exact date unknown) on the River Euphrates. Its location would have been roughly 50 miles south of modern-day Baghdad. It is first mentioned in the Bible in Genesis 10:10 and 11:9 (Babel), but not much is really known about it at that point. Some people believe that Nimrod, a descendant of Ham, was the founder to this ancient civilization (Gen 10:8-9). Some also considered it to be the very first society governed by a system of law and tribal leaders. As mentioned earlier, Abraham was born into this society, and it was he who brought the concept of the one true God to Canaan. Babylon had a huge effect on the history of the Israelites in a number of ways. Their gods (i.e. Baal and Nebo) turned many of God's people to worship idols. In addition, it came into prominence after Israel split into two, when Judah became Babylon's vassal state and was eventually destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar.

Egypt was one of the earliest civilizations. The people in that society were known to have devised the first system of national structure and governing body of politics and religion (i.e. the succession of the pharaohs and their many gods were already well in place when the Israelites were enslaved). In the Old Testament, the Egyptians lived south of Canaan and their territory extended from both sides of the Nile River up to and including the Sinai Peninsula. The Wadi of Egypt (a watercourse that is dry except during the rainy season) lies between Canaan and the peninsula. While very few cities existed on the Sinai Peninsula, the Wadi was a popular trading route when the land was dry (where Joseph was sold as a slave). Egypt had an important cultural and political influence over Israel. It first came into play in the history of the Israelites when Joseph was sold to Egypt and eventually rose to power as the prime minister of the land. Later, it became the training ground for developing the faith of Moses and God's people. Interestingly, an Ethiopian eunuch is mentioned in the New Testament (Acts 8) and the faith of God's people came full circle when he accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior and was baptized.

As we study these early civilizations, we may find it interesting to learn about their ways of life and how they influenced modern societies. But it is more than just a history class. From these brief chapters alone, we learn a lot about God's plan of salvation. After the fall of man, we can see that all people and cultures are all somehow used by God to spread the Word. God did not just confuse the language of people and scatter them to various parts of the world for no apparent reason. He

had a specific purpose in mind. Similarly, the Babylonians and Egyptians were not just enemies of the Israelites. They helped God's people recognize His power and sovereignty each time they engaged in battle. God's plan also included other civilizations. For example, the Greeks flourished in the time of the New Testament. Many famous philosophers and authors were of Greek origin. But more importantly, they were well known for their advanced developments in the written and spoken word (i.e. writing, speaking, grammar). As a result, they were able to help spread the gospel because they could preserve the integrity of the truth with the least amount of distortion. That is why many scholars turn to the oldest Greek manuscripts of the Bible for the most accurate interpretations. Today, we also play a role in God's plan of salvation. The True Jesus Church often seems to be a "Chinese" church to many truth-seekers. While our members are mostly of Chinese heritage, God chose us in the new era for His reasons. For one, our widespread population all over the world has helped to spread the truth to all corners of the world. Therefore, we are all connected and used by God in different ways, but serve one purpose: to glorify God and preach His living word.

C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



1 Is there any way the creation, in its present order, could have been "done" differently (i.e. the creation of day 3 things before day 2)?

2 List two things you learned about the Garden of Eden that you did not know before.

3 Why do you think God chose to confuse the language of the people when they were building the tower of Babel? How was this a good solution?

4 How did the Babylonian Empire influence and affect the history of the Israelites?

5 List three ways the Egyptians played a role in shaping the faith of the Israelites.

6 What role do the various civilizations, past and present, play in God's plan of salvation?

The Tree of Life



Adam and Eve could eat freely from all the trees (except for one), including the Tree of Life. Of course, they may not have known what it meant to live forever as a result of eating from that tree.

In fact, they probably didn't really understand what death was because there wasn't such a concept at that point. They were, after all, the first people. It was only after they sinned against God that there was physical death and God had to cast them out of the Garden so that they would not try to live forever by eating from the Tree of Life. In many ways, we are like Adam and Eve. We often don't recognize all the blessings and goodness that are surrounding us. Rather, we try hard to make things better for ourselves and forget about how much love and careful planning God has put into each and every one of us. But unlike Adam and Eve, we don't want to wait to lose everything before we recognize its great value. We may not have a physical Tree of Life in our backyard to give us eternal life and abundant blessings day in and day out. But we have God and He is our Tree of Life. When we recognize this great treasure we have within us, how should we respond?

1. We should be thankful and praise God for everything He has provided for us.
2. We should look forward to the heavenly kingdom and view this world as only a temporary place.
3. We should cultivate ourselves by studying the word of God and praying constantly for guidance and strength so that we are not tempted by the world.
4. We should be bold and spread the gospel so that others may also eat from the Tree of Life.
5. We should plan for our lives, but should do so around the will of God so that we do not risk falling away.

Questions to think about:

- 1.** *What can you do, in a practical way, to repay the love and grace of God now?*
- 2.** *Many of you are thinking about university. What is your plan when you start college? God has, from the day you were born, prepared things for you and included you in His plan. How will God play a role in your life when you attend school away from home?*

3. How can we plan our lives and know that we are obeying the will of God?
4. Does it make you more of a Christian if you stand up for what you believe in and less of one if you don't? Explain your answer.
5. Has your faith ever been challenged? What happened and how did it turn out?
6. Can you think of a good answer to someone who might challenge your faith in the future? What would you say that wouldn't offend him and yet would make your point about your love for God?

Encourage your students as you close with these thoughts: We can be confident that the Bible is true, that it is the word of God and that it does not contradict itself. However, we shouldn't base our confidence in God's word on our own ability to explain every challenge someone might bring up. It's perfectly valid to say, "I'm not sure what the answer is, but I'll do some research and get back to you." Don't give up faith in the truth of the Bible because someone raises a question that you can't answer right away.

REFLECTION & PRAYER



1. When we survey the world and its majestic splendor from the day of creation, we may feel like a tiny speck of dust in the grand scheme of life. But God has created each of us for a specific purpose in mind. Think about the role you feel God wants and needs you to play in His plan.
2. Remember that each of us is special in the eyes of God even though each of us is only one person out of the world's six billion people. It is recorded in the Bible that God has counted each strand of hair that is on our heads. There is nothing we cannot tell Him and nothing He cannot do for us. We only need to let His spirit guide us.

Lesson 3

Forefathers of Faith

Listed Scriptures

Gen 12, 15, 25, 26, 28, 37; Pro 16:7

Lesson Aim

To examine our faith more closely and evaluate our relationship with Jesus Christ

Memory Verse

"Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." (Heb 12:1b-2a)

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

Genesis 21-30

B I B L E B A C K G R O U N D



The previous lesson on the Book of Genesis covered up until the story of the Tower of Babel (Gen 11) and how God confused the language of the people so that they scattered all over the earth. Today's focus will be on the chosen people (Gen 12 and onwards), starting with Abraham and his immediate descendants. These stories are undoubtedly very familiar to the students, so rather than summarizing their lives from beginning to end, specific aspects of their lives will be studied, with the emphasis on what we can learn from their triumphs and mistakes. They are also mentioned as fathers of faith in Hebrews 11:17-22.

Abraham (born Abram) was born near the lower portion of the Euphrates River, by the city of Ur. Abraham journeyed much of his life. God guided him as he traveled from Ur to Haran (with his father) and along the mountain ranges of Lebanon until he reached Canaan, near the Jordan River. The land through which Abraham traveled was great for farming and for this reason, it was also known as the Fertile Crescent. Basically, it included:

*both sides of the Tigris River

*both sides of the Euphrates River (the area sandwiched between the two rivers is known as the plains of Mesopotamia, a center for nations such as Babylon and Asshur)

*the mountain ranges of Lebanon

*the western side of the Jordan River (the land of Canaan).

W A R M U P



Have you ever stopped to think about what your life of faith has been like? If someone were to put together a book about you, what kind of stories would you have? Would there be more peaks than valleys or vice versa? When we examine what our faith has been like over the years, we learn a lot about ourselves and our relationship with God. Today, we will take a look at the highs and lows of our forefathers' faiths and see how we can apply the teachings to our lives.

B I B L E S T U D Y



The Life of Abraham

A . Abraham (Gen 12-25)

Abraham was a descendant of Shem and was born at Ur of the Chaldeans (also descendants of Shem). This was obviously not a God-fearing nation and so any faith Abraham had in God was likely passed on through his own family. Abraham's father, Terah, had actually begun a journey to Canaan with his family (Gen 11:31), but stopped midway and settled at Haran. It is unsure as to why Terah did not continue the trip but Abraham completed this journey of faith when he was called by God at the age of seventy-five. Let's examine his journey of faith.

He acted on his faith:

When Abram was 75 years old, he listened to God's calling and left his homeland, tribe and father's house to go to the land of Canaan. Although God had promised him three important things (his descendants would become a great

nation, Canaan would be an inheritance for his children, all nations would be blessed through him), they weren't promises he could experience during his lifetime. It took a lot of courage and trust to pack up and go to a foreign land, but he was blessed by God throughout his life because of his faith.

He lied to get out of trouble:

Abram and his family had to leave Canaan and travel to Egypt because of a famine in the land. When he was in Egypt, he lied and said that Sarai was his sister so that the Egyptians would not kill him for his wife. But his problems were compounded even more because of his lie (she was taken to Pharaoh later on). Although God had made him many promises, he lost sight of that during times of need. In fact, he used this exact deceit later on when facing King Abimelech (Gen 20).

He tried to fulfill the will of God using his own ways:

When he was 86 years old, Abram listened to his wife, Sarah, and allowed her maidservant, Hagar, to bear him a son, Ishmael. Although it was common practice during that time for a wife to give her maidservant to her husband to produce heirs (if she were barren), Abram should have known better. God had promised him a son (Gen 15), but he lost trust in God's word and tried to fulfill the will of God through his own means. Because of his lack of faith, his family would suffer later on (Ishmael and Hagar were sent away by Sarah).

He put God above all else:

By the time Isaac was born, Abraham was 100 years old and his faith had also matured. When Isaac had grown up a bit, Abraham obeyed God by going up to Mount Moriah to offer his one and only son. But this time, his faith taught him that God would keep His promise of giving him a son. Although he didn't know how it would happen if Isaac really were to die, he trusted that God would do it according to His will.

Everyone says that Abraham was the father of faith. Most of us would hardly dare to compare ourselves with him, but our faith is like his in many ways. When we first believe or come to have a real relationship with God, we are full of zeal and bursting to obey God. Similarly, Abraham trusted God completely in the beginning and took off for a foreign land. But along the way, he met with difficulties and his faith was tried. Luckily, God helped him so that he wouldn't fall completely off the path. At the end of his life, he was able to triumph and, by being able to sacrifice his own son, he demonstrated the pinnacle of his faith in God. Today, as we examine our faith, we will see many peaks and valleys too. The important lesson is to learn

as Abraham did and be able to reach the goal of the heavenly kingdom in the end. Now let's take a look at his children and grandchildren. How did their faith measure up?

B . Isaac (Gen 25-27)

Having Abraham for a father must have taught Isaac a thing or two. Although not much is known about his faith in his early years, we are certain that he came to know God at a young age. Let's see how his faith compared to that of his father.

He was submissive to his father:

Isaac demonstrated the beginnings of his faith through obedience to Abraham. Isaac was the one that carried the wood up to Mount Moriah. He did not resist when his father bound and placed him on the altar (Gen 22). Later on, he did not object when his father arranged his marriage for him. These acts of submission were a great source of blessing for Isaac later on in life.

He prayed to God:

It is recorded in Genesis 25:21 that Isaac prayed for his wife because she was barren. This is the first time that we see Isaac personally commune with God. Because God heard his prayer and gave him two sons, Esau and Jacob, we can be certain his prayer was sincere and effective.

He lied to get out of trouble:

Interestingly, Isaac used the same trick his father did years ago by lying to King Abimelech (a different king with the same name) and saying that his wife was his sister (Gen 26:1-11). Although he knew to pray to God when he couldn't do anything about his wife's barrenness,

Teaching Tips

As you study each character, draw on the board (or have each student draw on a piece of paper) what the faith of each person was like by using a line (i.e. the peaks, valleys or plateaus). If you are doing all four lines on the board, ask the students for their input as to how far up (peak) or down (valley) the line should go during each step of their life. If students are drawing their own, do a quick comparison at the end. By drawing, the lines show vividly that each character is just like us, with many ups and downs in faith as we go through life. But more importantly, when all four lines have been drawn, point out that none of them stayed low at the end. That is the goal of our faith today, to be able to reach the heavenly kingdom.

he did not know to turn to God in this situation.

He was patient:

As he resided in Gerar, he became more and more wealthy. The Philistines envied him and quarreled with his servants over the wells they had dug, claiming the water belonged to them (Gen 26:12-33). Twice, Isaac just left, choosing to remain at peace with his neighbors, rather than start fights. As a result, God blessed him even more and even turned his enemies into his friends (Prov 16:7). Patience is one of the characteristics of the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

C . Jacob (Gen 27-36)

Jacob was a legendary individual who endured many hardships as a result of his own mistakes. In fact, his struggles began even before he was born (Gen 25:22). Although it seemed he had made many errors in judgment early on in his life, he was still blessed by God in the end. Let's examine the reasons behind that.

He was deceitful:

After he was born, he longed for his older brother's birthright. In addition to tricking Esau into giving up his inheritance, he also deceived his father into blessing him. Because of his brother's great anger, he fled for his life and ended up at his uncle's. Because of his deceit, he suffered many hardships later on in life and was not able to see his mother again.

God appeared to him:

Jacob had made two huge mistakes in his young life already, and God did not want to see him sink deeper into that hole. By appearing to him in a dream (Gen 28:10ff), he was strengthened so that he could endure some of his most difficult years at Laban's house.

He was patient:

Jacob had a taste of his own medicine when his uncle tricked him into marrying Leah instead of Rachel. Yet, because he wanted to marry Rachel, he agreed to work for another seven years in return. Even as Laban blatantly cheated him out of his pay, he continued to do his work and was blessed by God in the end. These long 20 years spent at his uncle's were trying and frustrating times, but they helped to build his character and faith. Jacob was even able to make up with his brother later on. Although suffering for any amount of time seems difficult, the trials we go through can ultimately help us draw closer to God.

D. Joseph (Gen 37-50)

Joseph did not always lead a glamorous life. Because he did not get along with his brothers, he was sold as a slave to Egypt at a young age. Then, he was wrongly accused and thrown into jail after he refused to sleep with his master's wife. But throughout his trials and tribulations, he continued to trust in God and was able to prosper in everything that he did. In the end, he became the prime minister of Egypt and his high position allowed him to keep his family alive during the famine. Let's see what his faith was like.

He was proud and immature:

When Joseph was still a child, God revealed two dreams to him, both pointing to how he would be in a position of command over his brothers (Gen 37:1-11). It is possible that he meant no harm in telling his brothers about it but because of his pride and immaturity, it caused his brothers to become jealous of him.

He didn't fight or argue:

After being sold as slave to Potiphar's house, he was soon framed by his master's wife and thrown into jail. But he didn't fight back. Rather, he accepted whatever was dealt to him and continued to trust in God's guidance. Later on, he found mercy in the eyes of the prison warden and was given the opportunity to interpret the Pharaoh's dreams.

He was forgiving:

When Joseph's brothers came to buy grain, instead of using his power and influence to punish them, he forgave them. He also showed great filial piety by bringing his father to live with him. In contrast to his father Jacob, much of what Joseph had to endure was not by his own doing. He could very well have given up on God since God did not seem to be in his life each time he was wrongfully accused. However, his experiences teach us that God is in control of our lives. What doesn't make sense to us now will make sense in the future. We just need to believe that God knows what is best for us; any suffering we are going through is a way to refine us.

C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



1

Why do you think people tend to lie to get out of trouble?

2

Why is it that sometimes we turn to God immediately for help (i.e. Isaac prayed for Rebekah) and sometimes we choose to try out our own ways first? What determines how we respond to a situation?

3

Isaac didn't seem to have a problem obeying his father even though what he had to do didn't make sense to him. How difficult is it for you to submit to your parents? Explain your reasons.

4

Who of the four people we looked at today had the "best" faith? Explain your answer.

5

Share one thing you have learned from each of the characters. How can you apply them in your daily life?

L I F E A P P L I C A T I O N



Our Line of Faith

If the Devil were to write his own beatitudes, they might go something like this:

Blessed are those Christians who are too tired, too busy, too distracted to spend time with their fellow Christians in church—they are my best candidates to backslide.

Blessed are those Christians who wait to be asked and expect to be thanked—I can use them to slow things down.

Blessed are those Christians who are touchy, with a bit of luck they may stop going to church and get others to quit—they are my missionaries.

Blessed are those Christians who get on everyone's nerves—they are my most effective stumbling blocks.

Blessed are those Christians who are troublemakers—they are my best wrecking crew.

Blessed are those Christians who have no time to pray—they are easy prey for me.

Blessed are those Christians who are complainers—they are my best discouragers.

Blessed are you when you read this and think it is about other people and not yourself—I've got you. Author-Unknown

Sometimes we think we are pretty good Christians because we go to church, read the Bible or pray to God. But think back to what we just read. Many of us may fall into one or more of those traits described. It is only when we closely examine our faith do we realize how weak we truly are. Just as we drew lines for each of the four characters we studied today, we can each draw a line that represents our faith. Are there more peaks than valleys? Are there long stretches of plateaus? Take a moment to highlight some of the more important times of your faith, memories that stand out (both good and bad). Chart your line and be ready to explain the peaks, valleys and/or plateaus you have included.

Questions to think about:

- 1. The more Joseph suffered, the closer he drew to God. Look at your own line of faith. At what times or under what circumstances do you find yourself closer or closest to God? Explain your reasons.*
- 2. What is happening in your life when you see the plateaus in your line? Are these things affecting your relationship with God?*
- 3. What is your goal for your faith in this upcoming year? What do you want your line to look like in the near future?*
- 4. My faith or someone else's faith?
When I went away to college, I had been a Christian for several years. I had done almost everything the church had taught me. I had attended church up to 2-3 times a week, read my Bible daily, shared the gospel with non-Christians and tithed. But when the influences of church were removed, I was faced with who I really was. I realized that I acknowledge Christ as my Savior, but didn't put Him in my life. I was not a disciple who followed Christ in everything. Jesus Christ said, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me" (Luke 9:23). The Scriptures were clear about the relationship between a disciple and his Master. The Master has full reign, and the servant's responsibility is to follow and fulfill every request of the Master. I knew I had to make a decision. I had to decide whether I was going my own way or Christ's way. Intuitively, I knew that either I would become a real disciple now or I would remain a mediocre Christian for the rest of my life. I spent many days pondering whether I really wanted to be a disciple...*

- a. What does it mean to be a true disciple?

- b. What about the things this person has done in the past – tithing, reading the Bible, praying to God. Do these things not count towards being a true disciple?
- c. Do you feel you are a true disciple? Explain your answer.

R E F L E C T I O N & P R A Y E R



If we were to look at our faith closely, we will see that there are many ups and downs, turns and curves. It is almost as if we were steering a car through a mountainous road. In examining our faith, our goal is to learn from the "valleys" we dip into and be encouraged by the "peaks" we reach. But more importantly, we want to ensure that our faith does not get so off track that our car veers off the road. How confident do you feel about your recent driving skills? Are you on the right path? Ask God to help you as you trek through the often-bumpy road of life.

God, Jesus Christ and the Church

Listed Scriptures

Jn 4:24; Ps 33:6-9; Heb 11:3; Ps 10:14; Isa 66:2; Phil 4:6-7; Jn 8:12, 19:34-36; Gal 3:27; Heb 7:2-3; Ez 43:2; Isa 51:3; Jer 31:12; Eph 5:25-32; 1 Pet 3:20-21

Lesson Aim

To have a more in-depth understanding of God, Jesus Christ and the church through the book of Genesis

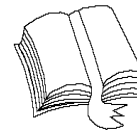
Memory Verse

“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” (Rom 15:4)

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

Genesis 31-40

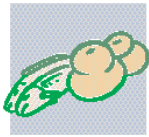
B I B L E B A C K G R O U N D



Although Genesis is about the beginning, it also contains many prefigurations concerning the coming of Jesus Christ as well as the establishment of the church. When Genesis is studied carefully, it can give us a more complete picture of God, Jesus Christ and the church. This makes sense since God already had His plan of salvation laid out from the beginning of time. As human beings, we do not know exactly what the future will be like. But when it concerns the heavenly kingdom, God has given us all we need to know in the Bible. We can begin that study from the very first book.



How important is God to you on a scale of one to ten (with ten being the most important)? How important is the church to you on the same scale? Do the numbers surprise you? Although many of us might place God higher, the church, in fact, should be just as important. Genesis gives us a good picture of our relationship with God and His church. Let's take a look and see whether our perspective changes.



Part 1
The God of Genesis

A . The Creator

It was God who created all creatures and human beings. That is why He is known as the Lord of the heavens and the earth. When we really think about the first several chapters of Genesis, we can only feel amazed at how wonderfully God has prepared everything. Many people have tried to use their own theories to explain how the world came into existence, but all of them are just theories, without real proof. Even if scientists could explain everything down to the first atom, we would have to draw the line somewhere and admit that something greater than any of us must have created the first particle. That being is God Himself. Therefore, all people should praise and worship Him (Jn 4:24).

B . The Almighty

The Lord is an omniscient God who knows all and sees all. He is also able to create something out of nothing. It is difficult for us to understand how He can be everywhere and know everything all at once, but this is only because we have limited knowledge and wisdom. There are many mysteries and things of God that we cannot explain using our own understanding. That is why God is the Almighty and nothing in the world can compare to Him (Gen 18:14, 21:2-5; Ps 33:6-9; Heb 11:3).

C . The Everlasting

Nothing in this world will last forever. Only God is the eternal King, the one who was, is and will be. It is also God who can give everlasting life (1 Tim 1:17; 6:12). When we believe in Jesus Christ, we can obtain eternal life (Jn 3:16, 17:3). Of course, we must have faith because God is invisible and immortal.

D . The God Who Watches Over Us

Throughout the book of Genesis, we see how God watched over His chosen people when they needed Him the most. He guided Abraham as he encountered difficult people on his journeys. He even looked after Hagar, the maidservant who bore Abraham a son (Gen 16:6-13). God also cared for Jacob and Joseph in their times of need (see previous lesson). Today, He continues to watch over those who are troubled and grief-stricken. God will answer all who call on Him in their distress (Ps 10:14, 138:6, 146:9; Isa 66:2).

E . The God Who Listens to Our Prayers

God heard Abraham's prayer and sent angels to deliver Lot's family (Gen 19:21). He answered the old servant's prayer, granting him success in bringing Rebekah back to marry Isaac (Gen 24). He listened to Isaac's pleading and gave him sons. Prayer is an important and vital part of our faith today. It may sound like a cliché to some when we tell them prayer is the best way to solve a problem. But we must believe and remember that we can present our requests to God, through prayer and supplication. God will hear us and answer us (Phil 4:6-7; Ps 37:5).

Part 2
*Prefigurations
of Jesus Christ*



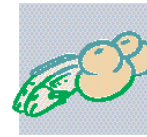
Although it may not be obvious to us, the book of Genesis contains many prefigurations of Jesus Christ. To prefigure means to foreshadow, to tell us something in advance using different objects or characters.

- a. God created light, which is symbolic of Jesus Christ (Jn 8:12, 1:5).

- b. God created Eve out of Adam’s rib. This prefigures that Jesus Christ’s side would be pierced and blood would be shed to establish the church (Gen 2:21-23; Jn 19:34-36).
- c. God clothed Adam and Eve with garments of skin. Likewise, Jesus Christ, who is the Lamb of God, died and shed His blood so that we could put on the robe of righteousness. For us, this means we put on Jesus Christ and become justified (Gen 3:21; Gal 3:27).
- d. Melchizedek, the king of Salem (which means peace), brought out bread and wine to serve Abraham. Although not much is known about him, he is seen as representing the Lord Jesus as the King of Peace. Just as he gave bread and wine to Abraham, we can also receive grace and truth from God (Gen 14:18-20; Heb 7:2-3).
- e. Isaac’s life has many parallels to that of our Lord Jesus. Although Abraham had many sons, Isaac was the only promised one. He carried the wood for his father and submitted to being sacrificed on the altar. Yet later his life was spared and he was able to marry Rebekah. This prefigures how Jesus Christ, the Son of God, would carry the cross and would be willing to be crucified. Later, He resurrected and in the end time, He will return to marry His bride, the true church.
- f. The heavenly ladder in Jacob’s dream symbolizes Jesus Christ, through whom believers can gain entrance into heaven (Jn 1:51; 14:6; Heb 10:19-20; Act 4:12).
- g. Joseph was the favorite son of Jacob. He suffered a lot in the early part of his life. First, he was betrayed by his own brothers and then sold to Egypt. Later, he was wrongfully sent to prison. But in the end, he was exalted to a high position. His life foreshadowed how Jesus Christ was rejected, betrayed and killed by His own people. Just like Joseph, our Lord Jesus was innocent but was cruelly punished. Ultimately, Jesus Christ was exalted and is sitting on the right hand of God.

Teaching Tips

For this lesson, you may wish to divide the students into three groups. Then assign each group to study God, Jesus Christ and the church by giving them some guidelines to follow (i.e. give the group studying God the five headings/characteristics found in their notes and ask them to come up with Bible references that support the description). Then after the research and discussion within their own groups, they can share their findings with the rest of the class.



Part 3

The Church in Genesis

The book of Genesis also contains prefigurations about the church.

A. The Garden of Eden

The garden is located in the East, indicating that the true church of the end time would be established in the east. The goal of the True Jesus Church today is to spread the gospel and help bring everyone back to God (Ez 43:2; Isa 51:3, 58:11; Jer 31:12).

B. Eve

While Adam was in a deep sleep, God took a rib out of Adam to create Eve. She was the bone of his bones and the flesh of his flesh. Accordingly, the church is redeemed by the death of Jesus Christ and will become one with the Lord (Eph 5:25-32).

C. The Ark

The ark saved the lives of Noah’s family. It symbolizes the true church as God’s house of salvation (Mt 24:37-39; 1 Pet 3:20-21; 2 Pet 2:5).

C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



1 Describe three characteristics of God.

2 What are five prefigurations found in the book of Genesis regarding Jesus Christ?

3 What are three prefigurations found in the book of Genesis pertaining to the church?

4 The church is often described as the bride of Jesus Christ (during His second coming). What should the bride be doing in preparation for the groom’s arrival?



The Church and Me

When we think about our faith, we will almost always focus on God. But, as we have learned in this lesson, the church is also equally important to our salvation. It is through the church that the salvation of Jesus Christ becomes fully revealed (Eph 3:10-11, 14-21). Let's examine the special relationship between our faith and the church.

1. The church is the body of Jesus Christ, the assembly of the redeemed (Eph 1:22-23, 4:12, 5:23; Col 1:24; Acts 20:28). As members of the true church we belong to the same body and should act as one.
2. The church speaks the word of God (1 Tim 3:15; Eph 2:20).
3. The church has the spirit of Jesus Christ (Rom 8:9; 1 Cor 12:13).
4. The church manifests the power of Jesus Christ (Mk 16:17-20; Heb 2:3-4; Acts 14:3).
5. The church expresses the nature of Christ (Eph 4:11-16; Jn 8:31, 15:8, 13:35).
6. The mission of the church is to proclaim the gospel (Mt 28:19-20; Acts 1:8).

Questions to think about:

1. *Although Abraham had many sons, Isaac was the only chosen one. Similarly, there are many churches and denominations today, but only one true church. How important is it to you to belong to the True Jesus Church? Do you think it is a prerequisite into the heavenly kingdom or will any church do, as long as we have faith?*
2. *Since the members are "the church," have you been doing what the church is supposed to be doing as described above? Do you speak the word of God or manifest the nature of Jesus Christ?*
3. *Many of us try very hard to keep our bodies in good shape. Do you treat the church as if it were the body of Christ? What have you been doing or not doing?*
4. *Which section(s) of the "church body" do you feel you are a part of?*

5. *Do you often pray for the growth of the church? What does church growth involve and how vital is it to our faith?*
6. *What can you do starting today to help in the growth of the church?*
7. *We know that our service often goes unrecognized, and we know that it is not always easy to display a Christ-like attitude. This is the tension with which we live. Other Christians share it. Read the following poem and answer the questions that follow.*

Lord, you know my fervor
when I am on the pulpit;
Lord, you know how I glow
when I speak at a Bible study;
Lord, you know my enthusiasm
as I lead weekly fellowships;
But I wonder how I would feel
if you asked me,
to clean the bathroom stalls,
week after week,
year after year,
where nobody saw
and nobody knew.

Would I still be full of fervor?
Would I glow and be filled with genuine enthusiasm?
I wonder...

- a. *Do you ever wonder about how you feel when you serve God, even when no one is looking? Think about it now, and jot some reflections down.*
- b. *Are there ways you are serving now where no body sees and nobody knows? Where and how?*
- c. *If you feel you would grow as a Christian from such service, and would like to plan to begin, jot down your ideas here and date their implementation.*

8. *Serving begins with each of us, as Christians in a community follow Christ by helping each other. However, we don't stop there. We help those outside the community as well, and soon, those people who were once "outside" become a part of the Christian community.*

An old Jewish story tells of a rabbi who asked the Lord to show him heaven and hell.

"I will show you hell," said the Lord as He opened the door to a room. Inside was a large, round table with a delicious stew in the center. The people in the room were equipped with long-handled spoons, but they were starving. They were able to dip into the stew quite easily, but because the spoon handles were longer than their arms, they were unable to get the nourishing food to their mouths.

"Now I will show you heaven," said the Lord. This time the rabbi saw a room identical to the first, except that the people were well-nourished, laughing and talking. They had the same long-handled spoons, but somehow had overcome this handicap.

To the puzzled rabbi, the Lord explained, "The solution is simple, but it requires a certain skill—they have learned to feed each other."

Now, list the ways you could serve others in your home, neighborhood, church and nation.

R E F L E C T I O N & P R A Y E R



Because we worship in a physical building with other members, it is sometimes difficult to separate worldly things from God's thing. But today's lesson has taught us the church is God's redeemed, the bride waiting for Jesus Christ's return. Let us remember to respect the church and to do our part in keeping her sanctified and holy.

Goals

The main theme in the book of Exodus is freedom from bondage and obtaining salvation in God. In these lessons, the students will learn how the Israelites are freed from slavery and begin an extraordinary journey of faith. It is in this long journey that the people of God come to an important realization, that being truly free means the freedom to obey God and do His will. In this world today, freedom is believed to be the power to do as one pleases. Our students will undoubtedly struggle with what society preaches and what they know to be the truth. As is often the case, they know what is godly but to carry it out is a different story. How can they recognize or understand that doing what God wants and not what everyone else is doing is considered freedom? Through these lessons, the students will learn that their bodies are spiritual dwelling places for God and their attitudes and actions do speak volumes for what they stand up for. Ultimately, they will realize that freedom in God is release from the bondage of the sins of the world and the power to obey His will.

unit 2

Teacher Devotional

Obedience to God is not always an easy thing to do. How many times have we tried to bend God's truth just a little to meet our needs and desires and then fool ourselves into thinking that we have obeyed Him? When God tells us that we need to change the way we are living, we balk and convince ourselves that what we are doing isn't so bad. In reality, we are looking for short cuts and loopholes while living as Christians. God's truth is like a lighthouse. It's there to guide us when things look stormy. But it cannot change to meet our needs and wants. Rather, like the vessels, we have to change our direction to conform our lives to what God wants. God is always there for us, but when He tells us to alter our course, we really have no choice but to obey.

Jesus Christ Never Changes

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." (Heb 13:8)

Lesson 5

Exodus: Truly Free

Listed Scriptures

Ex 1:12

Lesson Aim

To understand what it means to be truly free

Memory Verse

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

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

Exodus 1-12

B I B L E B A C K G R O U N D



The book of Exodus picks up where Genesis ends. It chronicles the journey of the Israelites as they were freed from slavery (in Greek, exodus means to exit or depart). It is recorded that six hundred thousand men left Egypt (Ex 12:37), but this number excludes all women and children. In fact, some scholars estimate that close to 3 million people went on the journey into the wilderness. Exodus consists of forty chapters, which can be subdivided into 3 parts. The first section (Chapters 1-12) tells of the lives of God's people in Egypt, followed by the actual journey out of Egypt (Chapters 13-18). Then it ends with the teachings on Mount Sinai, where God's laws are given and the ark of the Testimony built (Chapters 19-40). The central theme of Exodus is God's salvation. Spiritually speaking, this book can be said to foreshadow how God delivers all people today from the bondage of sin.



Did you know that slavery still exists today? In some African countries, parents sell their children, often for less than \$20. They believe their children will have a better life working for a wealthier person, when in fact they are no more than slaves, cooking and cleaning from early dawn until late at night. The only way to freedom is to buy it, usually at a hefty price. As a result, many of these children, some as young as 6, stay enslaved for the rest of their lives. If they ever had the opportunity to become free, they would no doubt treasure it. Thousands of years ago, the Israelites were also enslaved and oppressed by the Egyptians. After 400 years, they were finally able to leave and go into a land of their own. What led up to their exodus, and how did they react upon experiencing this freedom? In this lesson, we will take a look at what life was like. We will also look at the circumstances under which they were allowed to leave Egypt. In the following lesson, we will examine their reaction to their newfound freedom.

B I B L E S T U D Y



Part 1
Life in Egypt


A . Ancient Egypt

With an estimated population of over two million people, we might wonder how the Israelites could have been enslaved and forced into hard labor. Why didn't they just rebel against the Egyptians? With that many people, it would not have been too difficult to win their freedom. But the Israelites knew very little about battle at that period in their history (they were nomads who looked after livestock), and they governed themselves within their own clans. In contrast, the Egyptians were powerful, with a vast and impressive military and a good governing system. From that perspective, it was not hard to see why the Israelites were overpowered. What was life in ancient Egypt like? From the many archaeological finds, we have learned that it was an advanced civilization, with a lengthy string of dynasties that ruled.

Ancient Egypt actually belonged to the descendants of Ham (son of Noah). At the height of its power, its territory extended to the Sinai Peninsula and the upper Nile. The Nile River is probably its most famous landmark. It is the longest river in the world with a length of 4,132 miles. However, the riverbanks often experienced drought and lack of rain. The source of the Nile is located near the Tropic of Cancer, which experiences annual rainy seasons between the months of June and August. During this time, the rainwater washes down tremendous amounts of black fertile soil, which overflows both sides of the riverbanks, making them into rich farmlands that extend for several miles inland. Agriculture was therefore an important source of wealth for the Egyptians. In fact, many of them were farmers and undoubtedly, the Israelites worked many long hours in the fields.


B . Idol-Worshippers

The Egyptians were also polytheistic. The average person usually worshiped the gods of nature (i.e. the Nile River, the sun, the moon). For the pharaohs and other royalty, they worshiped specially designated deities. The Egyptians held that souls did not die after death and that they would resurrect to meet their gods. As a result, it was common practice to embalm corpses into mummies and bury them with abundant supplies of food and other necessities. Life among these idol worshippers for 400 years must have affected the Israelites. For example, it did not take much for them to turn against Moses in the wilderness and create a golden calf as their god. Later on, when they conquered the land of Canaan, they were also quick to adopt the idols of the Canaanites.


C . Cities of Interest

Here are some of the ancient and current cities of interest:

Ancient major Egyptian cities:

Memphis: located near Cairo, was Egypt's ancient capital

Thebes: center of Upper Egypt, Egypt's near ancient capital

On: Egyptian capital in the time of Joseph (Gen 41:45; Num 13:22), Joseph's father-in-law lived here

No: Egyptian capital during the last days of the nation of Israel (Jer 46:25; Ez 30:14)

Current major Egyptian cities:

Cairo: present-day capital, located to the south of the Nile delta

Alexandria: located in the northeast, by the Mediterranean Sea

Ishmael Harbor: near the Suez Canal's opening to the Red Sea

Part 2 Moses

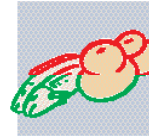


God had once prophesied to Abraham that his descendants would be strangers in a foreign land; they would be mistreated and enslaved. But God also reminded Abraham that He would deliver them and they would come out with great possessions (Gen 15:13-14). None of the 70 members of Jacob's family expected any oppression since Joseph was around. But by the time the Israelites grew to over 2 million people, the situation was very different. Even if they had somehow known about God's promise to Abraham, growing up as second-class citizens for over 400 years probably dampened any hope of freedom. Generation after generation, they worked hard but earned nothing. How would God save them? Although it was difficult for the Israelites to see it, God had already handpicked someone to deliver them. From the moment he was born, Moses led a life of adventure. But more importantly, his life was guided by God. Moses probably didn't realize that until he was much older. How did God prepare Moses every step of the way? As you study the events of his life, think about your own life. Is God guiding you daily? Do you feel God working in you to accomplish His will? Have you recently made any excuses about doing God's work?

- a. Moses was born during a time of great danger. Pharaoh wanted all the Hebrew male infants to be killed. Yet Moses' mother had courage and hid him for three months before putting him into a basket and sending him along a river. Although the situation seemed impossible, it was God's will that Moses was picked up by the princess and saved (Ex 2:1-10).
- b. Although it may have seemed unfair to the many Israelites who were suffering and laboring, God planned for Moses to receive a good education so that he would be better equipped to do God's work later on.
- c. God set His plan in motion when Moses killed an Egyptian out of rage and had to flee for his life. While in the wilderness, Moses was humbled and became a good leader (Ex 2:16-25; Num 12:3). To Moses, it may have seemed unfair to trade a life of luxury at the age of forty for the simple life as a shepherd, but it was God's opportunity to train him.
- d. At about 80 years of age, Moses was called by God to save His people. He refused at first, making many excuses as to why he was not up for the job, but eventually, God showed him the way and gave him courage (Ex 3-4).
- e. Moses returned to the palace to see Pharaoh and demanded that he set the Israelites free. When the king refused, Moses obeyed God's com-

mands and was able to be used as an instrument in performing God's miracles (Ex 5-6).

Part 3 The Ten Plagues



When we think about the ten plagues, we often see it as just that, plagues. In fact, they were ten amazing miracles performed by God. Nothing like that had been seen before and never again would it be duplicated. Other than to display His mighty power, the ten plagues also highlighted the stubbornness and selfishness of Pharaoh. Many of the early plagues did not really affect him since he lived in the palace. But when his firstborn was struck down by God, he was left with no other choice but to let the Israelites leave. Are we like Pharaoh? Does God have to knock at our door many times before we hear His calling? As we review the ten plagues, think about how we compare to the Egyptians.

<u>Miracle</u>	<u>Verses</u>	<u>Duration</u>
Plague of Blood	7:14-25	7 days
Plague of Frogs	8:1-15	2 days
Plague of Gnats	8:16-19	1 day
Plague of Flies	8:20-32	2 days
Plague on Livestock	9:1-7	2 days
Plague of Boils	9:8-12	1 day
Plague of Hail	9:13-35	1 day
Plague of Locusts	10:12-20	1 day
Plague of Darkness	10:21-29	3 days
Plague on the Firstborn	12:1-36	1 day

C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



- 1 List two things you learned about ancient Egypt.
- 2 Describe how God was involved in Moses' life, guiding and nurturing him. Do you feel that God is an integral part of your life? Why or why not?
- 3 Which of the ten plagues do you feel was hardest to survive? Explain your reasons.

4

Sometimes God works within us, yet we don't realize it. In hindsight, was there any event that occurred where you feel God guided you, only you didn't know it at the time? Share your thoughts with the rest of the class.

L I F E A P P L I C A T I O N



Truly Free

The Israelites had not tasted freedom for over four hundred years. It must have been exhilarating to finally be able to do as they pleased.

We may never really understand what they felt because we have grown up in a land of freedom. No one can force us to do anything we don't want to do. But sometimes having too much freedom can also be a burden. There are many things that society says is permissible to do when, in fact, we know they are not. Actually, we allow many things in life to have a lot more control over us than they really should. It could be as simple as logging on to the internet daily, no matter what else is going on in our lives. Or it could be giving in to peer pressure. Think about it in terms of what you crave. The world craves things like what to eat, drink, watch, listen to and do. The world craves fun, video games, sports, competition, movies, etc. Take a look at some of these statistics (not in the students' worksheets). The average teen (12-17 years of age):

- * Watches 23 hours of TV per week. By the time a child finishes high school he will have spent 18,000 hours watching TV and only 12,000 on school.
- * Has listened to 10,500 hours of music by the time he is out of 12th grade,
- * Has seen 18,000 murders on television by the time he reaches high school graduation.
- * Has seen an estimated 14,000 sexual references and innuendoes per year on television.

These are just some of the things that are filling the minds and hearts of teens all over America and around the world. When we let these things creep into our lives and slowly take over us, we are very much like slaves, slaves to the rituals of watching television, listening to music or logging on to the computer. These things are like junk food. Junk food gives us the illusion of being full, but after a while, we feel hungry or empty inside. In the end, these things will destroy, or at the very least distract us from, our relationship with God because we will no longer have time for Him. God said that we should be seeking for righteousness. This means we should be longing for every part of our life to be right with God.

We need to get rid of the trash that has been filling our lives. How do we get the trash out? We need to repent and ask God to forgive us. Reflect on the following questions and see whether you are a slave to anything in your life. If you find that you are, kneel down and pray to God. Ask Him to forgive you. Ask Him to give you the power and strength to resist the things of the world, to draw close to Him again, to be truly free.

1. Besides the daily necessities such as brushing your teeth or eating three square meals, is there anything else that you absolutely must do, or else you would feel funny, like your day was incomplete? If you were suddenly no longer allowed to do that task, how would you react or feel?
2. Besides the daily necessities, is there anything that you are spending more than 5 hours a week doing? What would happen if you were required to cut down the hours?
3. What are the top five priorities in your day? Are all these things beneficial to you and your faith?
4. If you have found that you are a slave to many things in this world, is there something you can do about it? Is there a difference between being free in the world and free with God? What does it mean to be truly free?

R E F L E C T I O N & P R A Y E R



Today, our lives are so crowded with activities that we often don't think about how much we have become slaves to them. Sometimes we are slaves to the television, or to the computer. Other times, we are slaves to our friends. What is your idea of a "free" life? What do you feel God intended life to be like for you? End with the following poem:

*Submit to pressure from peers and you move down to their level.
 Speak up for your own beliefs and you invite them up to your level.
 If you move with the crowd, you'll get no further than the crowd.
 When 40 million people believe in a dumb idea, it's still a dumb idea.
 Simply swimming with the tide leaves you nowhere.
 So if you believe in something that's good, honest and bright—stand up for it.
 Your peers will get smart and drift your way.*

Journey to Mount Sinai

Listed Scriptures

Ex 16, 17, 18, 19:1-2

Lesson Aim

To express why we obey God and His commands

Memory Verse

"But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him." (1 Jn 2:5)

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

Exodus 13-20

B I B L E B A C K G R O U N D

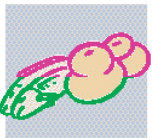


Because there were no roads and directions in the wilderness, God led the people in a pillar of cloud by day and by night He lighted their path in a pillar of fire (Ex 13:21-22). In addition to being able to find their way, the Israelites were aware of God's presence among them, a helpful reminder for 2 million people traveling in an unknown place. Mount Sinai is also known as Mount Horeb. It is located to the south of the Sinai Peninsula and has three peaks. The highest peak, at 2,200 meters, is where Moses received the Ten Commandments (Ex 19:20). It is also the location that Elijah fled to after his victory over the false prophets (1 Kg 19:8). Basically, Mount Sinai is surrounded by a great expanse of wilderness. That is why it was able to accommodate over 2 million Israelites as they camped there for about ten months to receive God's commands and laws.



What do you do when you want to show gratitude to someone? Usually you would say thank you or give a gift. The Israelites had a funny way to show God their thanks. They complained about almost everything. Why? Because they forgot about the blessings and grace, and only focused on the trials they were facing. Trials in life are inevitable. But we must remember that, if for no other purpose, they can bring us closer to God and strengthen our faith. Instead of spending time wondering why we encounter trials, remember the good things God has given us. Then ask Him to give us courage to face our problems and come out even stronger than before. Let's take a look at how the Israelites reacted to their trials.

B I B L E S T U D Y



Part 1

Journey to Mount Sinai**A . The Journey**

After the Israelites were set free, they began their journey. Although they panicked when Pharaoh changed his mind and decided to pursue them with his chariots and army, God was there to deliver them. Some scholars have argued that the Israelites actually crossed the Red Sea at a more northern tip, perhaps at a shallow opening. Thus they were able to cross when the waters dried up. But it is clearly recorded that God sent a mighty wind to blow back the waters and as a result, the Israelites were able to cross on dry ground (Ex 14:21). After the Egyptian army was wiped out, Miriam, Moses' sister, led the people in songs and dance to celebrate the Lord's deliverance. Now that the Israelites were greatly bolstered in their faith, they were ready to move into a land of their own. This is the path the Israelites took in their journey until they reached Mount Sinai, where they received the Ten Commandments as well as the laws of God.

Rameses/ Succoth/ Etham/ Pi Hahiroth/ Red Sea/ Marah/ Elim/ Wilderness of Sin/ Rephidim/ Wilderness of Sinai (this is where the

Israelites encamped for about 10 months; the entire book of Leviticus takes place at Mount Sinai; they don't set out again toward Canaan until Numbers 10:10)

**B . Trials Along the Way**

Although it would have been much faster to directly cut across the desert from Egypt to Canaan, God had a different plan (Ex 13:17-18). Why did He make them travel around the desert and move toward the south to Mount Sinai instead of heading right for Canaan? For one thing, the Philistines lived right next door to Canaan. Meeting them head on so early in their journey would likely have changed the Israelites' minds about leaving Egypt since they had no combat experience. Secondly, God needed to reveal His commands and laws to His people. By traveling to Mount Sinai, it gave the Israelites time to know God and also toughened their spirit. And the Israelites certainly needed it. The road to Mount Sinai was paved with many trials of their faith and they responded mostly with complaints. But each time, God provided a way to strengthen them. What can we learn from the examples of the Israelites when we encounter our own trials today?

- a. For three days they traveled in the Wilderness of Shur without finding water. When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water because it was bitter. So they grumbled against Moses. Then Moses cried out to the Lord and He showed him a piece of wood. Moses threw it into the water, and the water became sweet (Ex 15:22-27).
- b. When they came to the Wilderness of Sin, the Israelites grumbled again because they were hungry. God answered them by raining manna from heaven. For forty years, they ate bread in the form of manna in the mornings and in the evenings God sent quail so they had meat to eat (Ex 16:1-36).
- c. After they camped at Rephidim they couldn't find any water. So they quarreled with Moses. God instructed Moses to strike the rock and water came out (Ex 17:1-7).
- d. The Amalekites came and attacked the Israelites at Rephidim. The Bible doesn't record whether the people complained, but it is likely that they did. Trial after trial, they were probably second-guessing themselves as to whether they should have stayed in Egypt. But God already had the solution. While Joshua and some men fought the Amalekites, Moses, Aaron and Hur went to the top of the hill with the staff of God. Because of Moses' prayer, Joshua overcame the Amalekite army (Ex 17:8-16).
- e. After their victory over the Amalekites, Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, visited him and offered him some sound advice on administering

to the people. It seemed as if Moses' job thus far was to listen to the complaints of the people and then find ways to deal with them. Jethro suggested that he appoint those who were capable, God-fearing and trustworthy as officials over the people (Ex 18:13-27). That way, Moses could concentrate on what was really important.

Teaching Tips

Have a map ready so that the students can easily follow the names and the route that the Israelites took. The students can also be given the relevant verses to look up and share with the class what each of the complaints were.

Part 2 Camped at Mount Sinai



In the third month after the Israelites left Egypt, to the very day, they came to the desert of Sinai and camped in front of the mountain (Ex 19:1). God called on Moses to tell the people that they were to become His treasured possession, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Ex 19:4-6). While the people waited at the foot of Mount Sinai, Moses listened to God's instructions on many things. Here are the important highlights.

A .The Ten Commandments

Before this, the people did not really know God and who He was. Now that they had been established as His holy nation, they needed to learn about Him and about what was required of them. The Ten Commandments and the other various laws showed the people how to lead holy lives in a practical sense and also let them understand the nature of God. God Himself wrote the laws on two tablets of stone. In fact, He had to write them twice after Moses broke the first set when the Israelites made a golden calf and worshiped it (Ex 31:18, 34:1). The Ten Commandments can be found in Exodus 20:1-17.

B .The Tabernacle

Before the time of Solomon, there was no temple. Instead, there was a tabernacle, sometimes referred to as the Tent of Meeting. It was a tent where God temporarily

dwelled among His people in order to relay His messages and to strengthen their faith. God gave Moses the exact instructions to build the tabernacle, including the dimensions and the materials to be used. The tabernacle was surrounded by an outer courtyard that contained two important items: an altar for sacrifice (Ex 27:1-8) and a bronze laver (Ex 30:17-21) where the priests washed before entering the actual tabernacle or tent. The tabernacle itself measured 15 by 45 feet and was divided into two main sections: the outer room (also known as the Holy Place) and the inner room (also known as the Holy of Holies or the Most Holy Place, Ex 26:33). The outer room contained an altar where the incense was burned (Ex 30:1-10). It also had a table for showbread (Ex 25:23-30) and a lamp stand (Ex 25:31-40). The Most Holy Place contained only one item, but it is probably the most crucial item in the entire tabernacle: the ark of the testimony. Only the high priest entered this Holy of Holies once a year (the Day of Atonement) to atone for the sins of himself and all the Israelites. When the tabernacle was finally completed, a cloud covered it and the glory of God filled the tent (Ex 40:34). While the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness, the tabernacle was carried with them wherever they went (there is a more in-depth study of the spiritual meaning of the tabernacle as well as the items found in it in the next lesson).

C .The Ark of the Testimony

One of the most important items housed in the tabernacle was the ark of the Testimony. Because this has never been found, no one really knows what it looks like. But based on the detailed descriptions given by God to Moses as to how to construct it, we can make a fairly good guess as to what it might have looked like (Ex 25:10-22). The ark of the testimony was placed in the most inner room because it was where God would "meet" with His people, from above the mercy seat between the two cherubim. When the Israelites left Mount Sinai, they carried the ark before them as a way to remind them that God was always with them.

D .The Priesthood

It was also in the wilderness that the priesthood was instituted. Priests had to come from the tribe of Levi. Aaron, Moses' brother, was made the first high priest (Ex 28:1). A high priest had many responsibilities, being in charge of the priests as well as all the Levites.

C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



- 1 List the reasons why God made the Israelites travel a longer route in the wilderness instead of guiding them directly across the desert into Canaan.

- 2 In what ways did the Israelites grumble against Moses and God as they traveled?
- 3 What are the Ten Commandments?
- 4 What purpose did the tabernacle serve?
- 5 What was the Most Holy Place and only who could enter it?
- 6 Why was the ark of the Testimony so important? Can you describe what it looks like? Why do you think God wanted the mercy seat to be made out of pure gold (Ex 25:17)?

L I F E A P P L I C A T I O N



Jesus Christ and Me

When the Israelites were in the wilderness, they received many commands and laws from God that they had not known before. It must have been quite overwhelming to suddenly have all these rules and regulations. The Bible doesn't record the exact reactions of the people when they learned of all these laws but for the most part, they probably accepted them. Today, we obey the commands and laws God has set before us. But have you thought seriously about why you do it? Is it out of fear? Is it out of love? Or is it out of pressure? Think about the following questions and then look inside of yourself and tell God why you want to obey Him.

Questions to think about:

1. Why do we still need to obey the Ten Commandments but not the other laws regarding everyday life?

2. Why do you come to church on the Sabbath?
3. What is most important to you about prayer?
4. When you find yourself reading the Bible, what do you hope to gain from it?
5. Why do you love God and why do you want to obey Him? Think about the following questions. Your answers will tell you a lot about whether you really love God. They will also show why you obey Him.
 - a. God wants us to, "Honor our fathers and mothers in the Lord." The world says, "Well, what's wrong with telling them that I can have my own ways?"
You say, _____
 - b. God wants us to, "Keep the Sabbath by coming to church and worshipping." The world says, "Well, what's wrong with skipping an occasional Sabbath service and having a good time with our friends?"
You say, _____
 - c. God does not want us to cheat on tests and "bear false witness." The world says, "What's wrong with cheating on some tests? It's not like I killed someone. Besides, I know the answers anyway."
You say, _____
 - d. God does not want us to lie and "bear false witness." "Each one of you must put off falsehood...." (Eph 4:25).
The world says, "Well, if you don't tell a white lie here and there, you are not going to get anywhere and you are not going to succeed in life."
You say, _____
 - e. God wants us to take care of and treasure our bodies since the body is the "temple of God."
The world says, "It's okay to get drunk and have sex. Everyone is doing it. What are you afraid of? Grow up now!"
You say, _____
 - f. God wants us to get rid of lustful thoughts and "not even have a hint of sexual immorality."

The world says, "How can you guard your eyes and hearts? There are plenty of pretty guys and girls out there. What's wrong with flirting with one another? Besides, it is not like you are going to have sex."

You say, _____

g. God does not want us to gossip and slander other people.
The world says, "How can you not gossip? That's part of life. How else are you going to know the latest news?"

You say, _____

h. God does not want us to use "His name in vain."
The world says, " 'Oh, my God!' is just an expression. Of course you don't mean it!"

You say, _____

i. God does not want us to hate our friends, family and enemies, because hating is like killing.

The world says, "What's wrong with a bit of hatred. Why be a goody-goody all the time?"

You say, _____

j. God wants us to read the Bible and pray to Him every day.
The world says, "That's for the nerds. Go and watch a movie and have a good time with your friends. Why be stuck in the house and read the Bible?"

You say, _____

REFLECTION & PRAYER



Love is a hard word to define. But when we love people, we try hard to show it. We might buy them cards, give them hugs, or cook them special meals. How does God feel your love for Him? What are you doing to let Him know? Think about some concrete things you have done recently to show your love for the Almighty Lord. When you send your love to God, is it short-lived or is it on a regular basis, despite the trials you are facing? In other words, do you love God as unconditionally as He loves you?

Lesson 7

Salvation in the Book of Exodus

Listed Scriptures

Ex 12:5-13, 12:15-20, 25:10-30:21; Jn 1:29; 1 Cor 5:6-8

Lesson Aim

1. To identify the teachings concerning salvation found in the book of Exodus
2. To build our own spiritual tabernacle

Memory Verse

"And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." (Ex 19:6a)

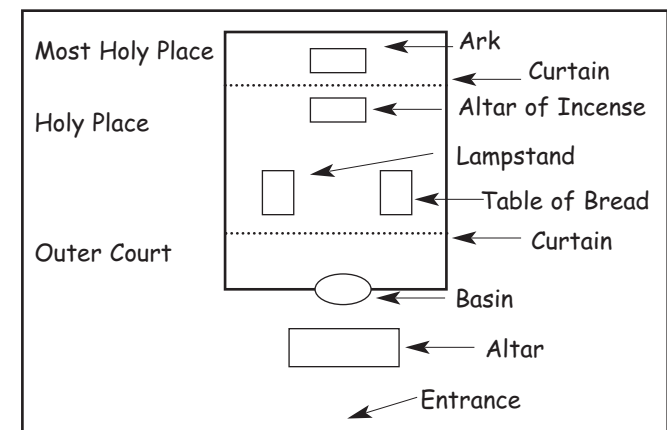
Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

Exodus 21-30

B I B L E B A C K G R O U N D



The tabernacle can be represented as follows:



Many materials were used in putting it together. They included gold, silver and bronze; blue, purple and scarlet yarn; fine linen; goat hair and ram skin dyed red; acacia wood; clear pressed olive oil and fragrant incense.



What do you think of when you think of the word “salvation”? More often than not, we will remember Jesus Christ, how He came into this world to suffer, die and resurrect, just so we can obtain eternal life. We might think about the New Testament and the gospel books since they talk about our Lord Jesus’ life. Actually, the book of Exodus contains several important teachings concerning our understanding of salvation, too. Let’s take a closer look at what they are.



Salvation in the Book of Exodus



A. Moses, the Savior of the Israelites

The life of Moses has many striking parallels to that of our Lord Jesus. By examining the similarities between these two lives, we are reminded of God’s plan of salvation for all people.

- a. Moses was born during a time when the Israelites were severely oppressed. Pharaoh wanted every infant boy to be killed but amazingly, Moses was spared and was eventually adopted by Pharaoh’s daughter. Similarly, Jesus Christ was born in a time when things were very corrupt. Although King Herod tried to kill Him, Jesus Christ escaped and fled to safety (Mt 2).
- b. Although he could have had all the luxuries the world could have afforded him, Moses chose not to indulge himself. Instead, he chose to suffer along with his people and went through forty years of vigorous training. Later on, God called him for a special mission. Likewise, Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He could have had anything He wanted, yet for our sake, He went through many trials and much persecution in order to save our souls.
- c. Moses needed to perform many miracles and wonders to convince the people to trust in God. The Lord Jesus also performed many wondrous signs, proving He was God, the truth in the flesh (Acts 7:36, 2:22; Mt 11:2-5).

- d. After Moses prayed on behalf of the people, God rained down manna for forty years to sustain the lives of the Israelites in the wilderness. Our Lord Jesus is the ultimate bread of life. He is God, who came down from heaven, and He gives eternal life for those who believe in Him (Jn 6:33-35). Moses also looked for water to quench the thirst of the people. Our Lord Jesus gives us the water of life, which becomes “a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life” (Jn 4:14, 7:37-39).
- e. Like a savior, Moses delivered the Israelites out of hardship in Egypt and brought them to a land of their own. Our Lord Jesus is the Savior of mankind. He rescues us from sin and brings us into eternal life in heaven (Acts 7:35-36, 4:12; Mt 1:21; 1 Tim 4:10).



B. The Passover

The Passover was instituted just before the tenth plague. God instructed the Israelites to slaughter lambs on the 14th of the first month at twilight. Then they took some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of their houses. On that same night, God passed through Egypt and struck down every firstborn. However, He did not enter the houses with blood on the doorframes. At midnight, there was loud wailing throughout the land because every Egyptian family awoke to find someone dead. It was only after this final plague that Pharaoh asked the Israelites to leave his country. Because God passed over the houses of the Israelites and delivered them from slavery, the Israelites commemorated their salvation by celebrating this day each year. Today, devout Jews still observe the Passover. Although we do not celebrate this day, there are some important teachings that we can learn from this feast.

a. The Passover Lamb

The animals used for the Passover sacrifice were year-old males (from sheep or goats), without defect. Salvation came upon the Israelites when the blood was shed and put on the doorframes. The sacrificial lamb prefigures Jesus Christ, who was crucified on the day of Passover to deliver the people of the world (Ex 12:5-13; 1 Cor 5:7; Jn 1:29). He was without sin but was willing to pour out His blood for us and remove our sins. We don’t celebrate Passover because Jesus Christ was the last sacrificial lamb, the final offering. Instead of continuing to commemorate God’s salvation of the Israelites once a year, we remember our Lord’s death and resurrection.

b. The Passover Feast

During the feast, the people ate meat roasted over a fire, along with bitter herbs and bread made without yeast. Each of these items represents

something in our salvation today. The roasting of the lamb represents the body of Jesus Christ and how He suffered greatly for us. The bitter herbs reminded the Israelites of their past sufferings in Egypt. Likewise, we should remember how much the Lord Jesus suffered for our sake and be determined to obey Him. The unleavened bread was made without yeast because yeast represents sin. God specifically told the Israelites to remove all yeast from their homes on the first day of the feast (Ex 12:15-20). The bread is symbolic of how the body of Jesus Christ is sinless and holy. Since we are a part of His body, we should also remain pure and refrain from committing sins (1 Cor 5:6-8).

Teaching Tips

Provide a copy of the graphical representation of the tabernacle as shown in the Bible Background Section so that it is easier for the students to follow along in the next section. Alternatively, the students can draw each part of the tabernacle as they are studied.

C. The Tabernacle

In Lesson 6, there was a brief summary on the tabernacle. We learned that it was a dwelling place for God to meet His people. The tabernacle prefigures the establishment of the true Church because the true Church has God's abidance (Heb 8:2; Rev 21:3). Placed within the tabernacle were six important items, along with the dividing curtain. Each of them reminds us of our relationship with Jesus Christ. Let's take a look at what they are.

a. Altar of Burnt Offering (Ex 27:1-8)

This was placed in the outer courtyard and was designated for sacrificing animals and the sprinkling of blood. Only after the animals were slaughtered could they be offered to God. Spiritually, it symbolizes the cross where Jesus Christ sacrificed Himself and shed His precious blood for us. After a believer is baptized in the blood of the Lord Jesus, his body becomes sanctified and is permitted to enter the gate of salvation (Heb 13:10-13).

b. The Bronze Laver (Ex 30:18-21)

After presenting the sacrifice, the priests needed to clean their hands and feet at this washbasin to wash away any dirt and filth. Spiritually, the act of cleansing symbolizes how a believer needs to constantly clean himself through the spirit and the truth so that he may become sanctified and be able to see God (Acts 1:5; Jn 3:5; Eph 5:26).

c. The Showbread (Ex 25:23-30)

The table for the showbread was located in the inner courtyard. Twelve loaves (12 represents perfection) of bread were to be set on this table before God, to be eaten by the priests (Lev 24:5-9). This bread symbolizes how Jesus Christ offered His life, serving as spiritual food for believers today.

d. The Gold Lampstand (Ex 25:31-37)

The lampstand was also kept in the inner courtyard. It had seven stands which were kept burning with olive oil (Lev 24:2). Spiritually, it symbolizes how believers should shine their light before men (Mt 5:16). The lampstand was hammered out of a single piece of pure gold. This symbolizes that the believers should be as one body.

e. Altar of Incense (Ex 30:1-8)

The altar was placed in the inner courtyard. It was here that incense was burned to God. Symbolically, it represents the prayer of the saints (Rev 5:8, 8:3-4).

f. The Ark of the Testimony (Ex 25:10-16)

The ark was the only item placed in the Most Holy Place. It was sacred, for it was above the mercy seat that God came to meet His people. Three important objects were placed in it. First were the two tablets that contained the Ten Commandments. Second was the jar of manna. Third was the budded staff belonging to Aaron. Each of these objects holds spiritual significance for us today. Just as the tablets were stored in the ark, we should also store God's truth and laws within our hearts. The jar of manna represents the spiritual food we need in order to sustain ourselves. The budding of the staff is evidence of God's choosing. Today, only those spiritually reborn will belong to God.

g. The Curtain (Ex 26:31-33)

A curtain divided the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. No one could enter the Holy of Holies except the high priest to atone for the sins of the people once a year. Spiritually, this curtain represents the body of our Lord Jesus (Heb 10:19-20). When Jesus Christ breathed His last breath, the curtain was torn in half from top to bottom. Jesus Christ's body was broken for us and because of His sacrifice, we no longer need priests to pray for us on our behalf. Believers can freely enter to worship God (Mt 27:50-51).

C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



1

List some of the parallels between the life of Moses and that of Jesus Christ.

2

What is the significance of the Passover lamb for us today?

3

What were the six items found in the tabernacle?

4

What spiritual meaning does the Ark of the Testimony have for believers today?

5

What significance does the tearing of the curtain that divided the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place have for us?

L I F E A P P L I C A T I O N



A Spiritual Tabernacle

Many people have tried to locate the ark over the years, but without much luck. Some say God does not want anyone to find it, so it will remain buried with the sands of time. Although the physical tabernacle may no longer exist, what is more important to us is the spiritual tabernacle God wants us to build. Today, each of us makes up this spiritual tabernacle. In essence, our bodies are sacred dwelling places for God. When we walk into a majestic cathedral, we show respect by quieting down and remaining as orderly as possible. Our attitudes as we enter the cathedral demonstrate how we view the building, as a place where people go to worship and to commune with God. Each of our bodies is the spiritual tabernacle of God; do we treat our bodies with respect and care? Take a look at the following questions and examine whether you see your body as a dwelling place for Jesus Christ.

Questions to think about:

1. What do you do on a regular basis to keep your body clean and holy? Look at the picture of "your body" in the worksheet. Next to each of the labeled body parts (i.e. the eyes, the ears, the feet), write down two ways you can keep it holy. For example, how can you keep your eyes holy? What are some things you should be seeing or not seeing to keep them pure and unblemished? What about your feet? Are there certain places you should refrain from going that might tarnish your feet? What can you do with your feet that will help them remain on the path to the heavenly kingdom?

Brainstorm as many ideas as you can for each body part and be ready to share your answers.

Head: "If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth." (Colossians 3:1-2)

Eyes: "But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell." (Matthew 5:28-29)

Ears: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath." (James 1:19)

Mouth: "But now you must also put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds." (Colossians 3:8-9)

Hearts: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." (Colossians 3:16)

Hands: "And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men." (Colossians 3:23)

Feet: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

2. Is your body clean of filth and dirt? Is there anything that might be polluting it in a way that prevents Jesus Christ from living there?
3. When you wake up every day, what do you do to invite God into your spiritual tabernacle?
4. How do you know that God is living within you?

R E F L E C T I O N & P R A Y E R



The Israelites took many months to build the tabernacle. They put a lot of effort and time into making it just as God specified. Today, we want to build up our own spiritual tabernacle. But unlike the Israelites, it will take more than just a few months. It is something we need to work on constantly. How can you remain pure and holy so that God will live inside of you?

Goals

Although there are only two lessons based on the book of Leviticus, they are extremely important because they focus on being holy. By examining in detail the sacrificial offerings and the annual feasts celebrated by the Israelites, the students catch a glimpse of the spiritual meaning behind each of those regulations. All the laws served the purpose of helping God's people remain a holy nation, that their way of living would be different than others around them. Our students are living in a world that is much like that of the Israelites' time, tainted and impure. What society says is permissible to do is usually a sin in the eyes of God. To remain pure is a difficult task. Hopefully, these lessons will encourage and empower the students to stand firm in their faith.

unit
3**Teacher Devotional**

Have you ever thought about the value of a gem? What makes it valuable? A diamond is certainly pretty to look at. The rarity and subsequent demand for it determines how expensive it can become. But if we really think about it, a diamond is nothing more than a piece of rock. The world places a lot of value on wealth, prestige and fame, but just like the diamond, how valuable are these things, really? In God's kingdom, these worldly things are worthless because Jesus Christ has taught us that service, love and sacrifice are what matters. Let's remember what is truly important and store our treasure in the heavenly kingdom.

Treasures in Heaven

*"...lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal."
(Mt 6:20)*

Lesson 8

Sacrificial Offerings
in Leviticus**Listed Scriptures**

Ex 39:1-30; Lev 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

Lesson Aim

To understand the various sacrificial offerings found in the Old Testament and how they apply to our spiritual lives today

Memory Verse

"Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God." (Rom 12:1b)

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

Exodus 30-40

B I B L E B A C K G R O U N D



Leviticus details the laws and regulations concerning services in the tabernacle. Many people skip over this book because they find the decrees too numerous and irrelevant to their lives today. However, hidden within these seemingly dry and mundane regulations are many deep spiritual truths. When we understand the significance of each sacrifice or priestly function, it can help us draw closer to God. In Greek, the word Leviticus means "relating to the Levites," since much of the book deals with the special duties of the Levites (the sons of Aaron). The central theme is holiness (the word holiness appears 87 times in the scroll). It can be divided into two main sections. Chapters 1-10 talk about how to draw near to God through purity of worship. Chapters 11-27 discuss how to achieve a holy faith through a godly life. This lesson will focus on the first section.



How often do you say “I’m sorry” in a given day? Do you say it for just about anything? Do you mean it or do you say it out of habit? God takes repentance and forgiveness very seriously. Let’s examine what is involved in asking for forgiveness in the Old Testament and how it applies to our lives today.

B I B L E S T U D Y

Part 1 Sacrificial Offerings



Ever since man fell from grace, he no longer enjoyed the right to commune with God since sin separates us from God. To restore the intimate relationship between God and man requires the remission of sin through sacrifice. This is because under God’s law of righteousness, the only way for sins to be cleansed and forgiven is through death and the shedding of blood (Heb 9:22). Before the time of Jesus Christ, various sacrifices were needed in order to restore the relationship between the Israelites and God. In addition, it was the priests’ duty to perform these sacrifices on behalf of the people. In essence, they were the mediators between God and man. Today, we do not need to observe these laws because Jesus Christ sacrificed His life for us (Heb 9:12-14, 23). We can also commune with God freely without mediators because Jesus Christ is our everlasting high priest (Heb 7:21-25). So what relevance do these sacrifices have to our lives? By understanding the spiritual significance behind them, it can remind us that we are a holy people and that we should act accordingly. In the Old Testament, there were five types of sacrifices: burnt offering, grain offering, peace offering, sin offering and guilt offering.



A . Burnt Offering (Lev 1, 6:8-13)

This sacrifice was performed for the atonement of sins in general. A bull, ram or male bird could be offered but it must be without defect. The sacrifice was placed

placed on the altar at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting and was slaughtered before the Lord. The person offering this sacrifice would place his hand on the head of the animal while the priest killed it to show that his sins had been symbolically transferred to the animal. The priests then sprinkled the blood against the altar on all sides. Afterwards, the animal was skinned and cut into pieces. Its inner parts and legs were washed with water. Then everything was burned on the altar except the skin, which was the priests’ portion (Lev 1:9, 7:8). This offering has the following spiritual significance to our faith today:

- a. To use an animal without defect points to our Lord Jesus as faultless and without sin. We should also pursue perfection so that we may find favor with God (2 Cor 5:21; 1 Pet 1:19; Mt 5:48; Phil 2:15).
- b. The sprinkling of blood around the altar represents Jesus Christ’s shedding of blood on the cross to save us. We should learn from His willingness to sacrifice (1 Jn 2:2, 3:16; Ps 107:1-3; Rom 9:2-3).
- c. The skinning of the burnt offering reminds us that the Lord Jesus did not seek His own glory and did not place emphasis on His outward appearance. Similarly, we should not place emphasis on outer appearance or the vanity of the world (Jn 7:24; Jas 2:1-7).
- d. Cutting the sacrifice into pieces means that we need to deny ourselves and take away our self-centeredness (Mt 6:1-5, 26:39; 1 Sam 15:24, 25, 30).
- e. The washing of the inner parts and the limbs refers to the cleansing of our hearts, exercising self-control and walking in the holy path (Jer 17:9; Mk 7:20-23; Prov 4:26-27).
- f. Complete burning of the offering is equivalent to our complete sacrifice, without holding anything back (Rom 14:7-8).



B . Grain Offering (Lev 2, 6:14-18, 7:12-13)

This offering was made of fine flour from wheat, although cakes or roasted grain could also be given (Lev 2:1-2, 4, 14). It was offered together with the burnt offering, with oil, salt and incense added on top. Only a handful of this grain was burned on the altar. The rest belonged to the priests (Lev 2:3). This offering symbolizes the perfect virtue of Jesus Christ, who willingly died for us and now acts as our spiritual bread.

- a. The pouring of the oil is in reference to the Holy Spirit. Believers also need the downpouring of the Holy Spirit to become sanctified (Lk 4:18; Heb 9:14; Rom 15:16; 2 Thess 2:13).
- b. Adding incense to the offering represents the fragrant aroma of our Lord Jesus. Similarly, believers should also give off a sweet spiritual scent.
- c. The mixing of the salt reminds us that we need to demonstrate the

characteristics of salt, which can preserve and season (Mk 9:50; Mt 5:13, 11:29).

- d. The absence of yeast signifies that Jesus Christ was sinless and without blame. We also need to rid ourselves of any malice, hypocrisy and sin (1 Cor 5:6-8; Eph 4:31).

C . Peace Offering (Lev 3, 7:21, 28-34)

There were three types of peace offerings: to show gratitude to God, to fulfill a vow that was made or as a freewill offering. It also accompanied the burnt offering (Lev 3:5). Any animal without defect from the herd could be used (Lev 3:1, 6, 12). Similar to the burnt offering, the animal was slaughtered and its blood sprinkled against the sides of the altar. But afterwards, all the fat, the kidneys and the appendage to the liver were removed and only these were burned. The breast and right thigh of the animal were given to the priests as a contribution. If it was a thanksgiving offering, the family ate the remainder of the sacrifice in the outer court on the same day. If it was to fulfill a vow or a freewill offering, then it could be eaten the first and second days (Lev 3:9-11, 7:13-34). This offering reminds us that we should constantly remember the grace of God and give thanks to Him (2 Cor 6:1; Ps 116:12-13; Gen 28:20-22; Ecc 5:4-6).

- a. Burning the fatty portions of the sacrifice is symbolic of repaying the grace of God with the best of the sacrifice. We should also offer our best to God as we humbly serve Him (1 Pet 5:5-6; Lk 17:9-10).
- b. This was the only offering where the person presenting it could eat the sacrifice. This tells us such offerings please God and by partaking of it, it can bring about peace, joy and blessings to the family (Heb 13:15-16; 2 Cor 9:7-8).

D . Sin Offering (Lev 4:1-5:13, 6:24-30)

This was done for the atonement of unintentional sins. The sinful parties presented offerings based on their status and wealth. A young bull without defect was used if the priest or the entire congregation had sinned. For a ruler, a male goat without defect was used. When a commoner sinned, he had to offer a female goat or lamb. In cases of extreme poverty, birds or fine flour could be substituted. The animals used were slaughtered in the same manner as the burnt offering. However, afterwards, the priest would dip his finger into the blood and sprinkle seven times in front of the curtain, before the Lord (sins of the priest or entire congregation). Then

he would smear some of the blood on the horns of the altar and would pour the rest of it at the base of the altar. Only the fatty portions (like the peace offering) of the sacrifice were burned on the altar. The remainder of the bull was then burned outside the camp if the sin offering was for the priests or congregation (Lev 4:11, 20). If it was for the rulers and commoners, then the remainder of the sacrifice was eaten in the court by the priests who offered it on their behalf (Lev 6:26). Some spiritual implications of this offering:

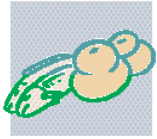
- a. For this offering, the higher a person's status, the higher the value of the animal used for the sacrifice. It implies that people with greater responsibility are held more accountable than others (Lk 12:47-48). We should always remember our role and importance as members of the church.
- b. Sprinkling and smearing of blood implies that it is by the Lord Jesus' blood that we are able to come before Him and confess our sins. By the blood of Jesus Christ, we can humbly pray and confess our sins to God and ask Him for forgiveness (Heb 10:20; Rev 8:3-4; Heb 4:15-16; Ps 51:17).
- c. The burning of the fatty portions refers to the dedication of our talents and abilities to God. The burning of the rest of the animal outside the camp represents the complete removal of our sinful nature (i.e. pride, self-righteousness, passion, lust, Rom 8:6; Jas 1:21; Deut 23:9-14).

Teaching Tips

It may be helpful to teach this part of the lesson by creating five groups of students so that they can each study one of the offerings. Then after each group has been given the chance to read the references, they can summarize for the rest of the class the purpose of the offering and how the sacrifice was carried out. You can use the notes above to ensure they have covered the important details and also talk about the spiritual significance after each group has presented. If there are not enough students, consider creating a large table to fill in the information as you go along to make it easier to differentiate among the five offerings. A table is provided in the students' worksheets with the appropriate headings.

E . Guilt Offering (Lev 5:14-6:7, 7:1-7)

The guilt offering was for the atonement of unintentional sins that required restitution (i.e. touching unclean things, lying, swearing falsely, stealing). A bull without defect was used and the method of carrying out this offering was identical to that of the sin offering. As well, the person injured by the sin had to be compensated plus another one-fifth of the value as determined by the priest. If the sin were against God, then the one-fifth would be given to the priest.



Part 2 Priestly Duties

The priestly regulations were extremely detailed. Here we will examine several aspects and the spiritual significance they have to our lives.

A . Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the priests included the care of the tabernacle and everything within it. They also instructed, taught, judged and blessed God's people (Num 18:4-7; Mal 2:6-7; Num 6:23-27, 16:46-48). Before taking on any sacred duties, the priests first had to set themselves apart to be holy. They had to wash themselves with water to cleanse away all sins (Lev 8:6, 16:24). Then after putting on holy garments, they were anointed with oil for consecration (Lev 8:7-12). Only then would they be ready to present the offerings to God, whether for themselves or on behalf of the Israelites. Today, all people called by God are considered priests. We should also take special care of our duties as God's followers and set ourselves apart as holy and pleasing to our Lord Jesus.

B . Special Garments (Ex 39:1-20; Lev 8:7-9)

The clothing that the priests wore was special and each piece held important meaning.

- a. The tunic was an undergarment made of finely twisted linen. It is symbolic of Jesus Christ's inner holy purity.
- b. The outer garment consisted entirely of blue cloth. Pomegranates of blue, purple and scarlet yarn were added to the hem of the robe. Bells made of pure gold were also fastened around the hem. These signify that the wearer is spiritual, belongs to heaven and bears much good fruit.
- c. The ephod was the centerpiece of the clothing. It was worn over the outer robe, like a vest. It was woven out of gold, blue, purple and scarlet thread and fine linen thread. Two shoulder straps mounted with onyx stones engraved with the names of the sons (the tribes) of Israel held the ephod together. A breastpiece was fitted to the ephod. On it, 12 gemstones were mounted, each engraved with the name of one of the 12 tribes of Israel. The ephod is symbolic of how valuable we are in the eyes of God.

- d. The sash or waistband was woven out of blue, purple and scarlet thread and fine linen thread. By tying it around the waist, it symbolizes of servitude and humility. As God's followers, we should always remember that Jesus Christ came into the world to serve others and that we need to imitate Him.
- e. The turban was the headdress. It was affixed with a gold plate with the inscription "Holiness to the Lord." This reminds us to set ourselves apart to be holy.

C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



- 1 What were the five major sacrificial offerings? List one spiritual application to our lives from each.



- 2 What was the importance of using unblemished animals as sacrifices?



- 3 How do you think these specific rules and regulations about the sacrifices affected the people's state of mind when preparing for them? Do you think they made them take everything more seriously or would they have just thought they were cumbersome?



- 4 Describe the special garments the priests wore and their spiritual significance to our lives.

L I F E A P P L I C A T I O N



Restoring Our Relationship With God

Despite all the stiff regulations concerning the offerings, we can see that behind all of it is a God who is forgiving and merciful. He gives us opportunities to repent and when we do, He is ready and willing to accept what we have to offer. Unfortunately, we don't always grab hold of those opportunities. Sometimes, we may think that we are right and don't even ask for forgiveness. Other times, we think we have sinned beyond help and don't bother to pray to God. But God has shown us that we can approach Him and ask Him to help us, no matter what the circumstance. Reflect on the following questions:

1. Today we do not need to bring any animal offerings to God when we ask for forgiveness of our sins. However, we do need to show God our sincerity. How should we approach God when we want to ask for forgiveness?
2. Read Matthew 18:21-35. Jesus Christ clearly talks about true forgiveness. What do you think it involves?
3. Is it difficult for you to forgive others who have wronged you? Think about how Jesus Christ is forgiving and merciful towards you. Does that change the way you feel about forgiving others?
4. Is there someone you need to forgive or ask for forgiveness from?
5. Read the following testimony.

My dad and I had a really tough time getting along as I grew up. I felt like he was constantly putting me down in front of my brothers and sisters. I felt like I had no self-esteem. He would say things that made me feel so useless. I grew up hating him. Though I somehow knew all of this hatred wasn't right, I didn't have any idea as to how to get rid of it. After I gave my life to the Lord when I was sixteen, He began to deal with me concerning my anger towards my dad. God told me through the prayers that I need to take a step and truly forgive my dad. I didn't understand why I would cry so much in my prayers. I do love him in some ways but now I know that God really wanted me to forgive.
-Chris

The Bible says in Ephesians 4:26-27, "In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry. And do not give the devil a foothold." God says, "Do not even let ONE DAY go by while you are still mad. If you do, you give the devil a foothold in your life."

Ephesians 4:31-32 tells us how to deal with anger: "Get rid of every form of bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." How can it be really done, to truly forgive?

a. Memorize scriptures

Study scriptures like:

"For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you." (Mt 6:14)

"And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins." (Mk 11:25)

Write each forgiveness scripture down on an index card and take the cards with you everywhere. Meditate on them until you are saying them in your head.

b. Take a step to truly forgive

You must forgive even if the person who hurt you never admits he did anything wrong. Once you make the decision to forgive, you will feel that God can help you to win this battle.

Even after you've taken this step, you will have a natural tendency to get angry again. Pull out the scripture cards and start memorizing them again. Remember, God alone has the awesome power to heal a broken heart. "If anyone says, 'I love God,' yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command; Whoever loves God must also love his brother." (1 John 4:20-21)

REFLECTION & PRAYER



In the Old Testament, offering sacrifices was the way to restore the relationship between man and God. The rituals reminded the people that they needed to return to God and ask for forgiveness. Today, we must go through Jesus Christ to be reconciled with God because He became the perfect sacrifice for our sins. Does today's lesson remind you to restore your relationship with God? How can you ask Jesus Christ to help you?

A Sanctified Life

Listed Scriptures

Lev 11:27; 2 Cor 6:14-18; Jer 15:16; Rev 12:15; Jn 17:17; Eph 4:29; Heb 11:24-26; Col 2:12; Jas 5:7; Mk 16:15; Rom 8:23

Lesson Aim

1. To understand the laws of cleanliness and the seven annual feasts found in Leviticus
2. To be determined to lead a sanctified life

Memory Verse

“Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am the Lord your God.”
(Lev 20:7)

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

Leviticus 11-15, 21-23

B I B L E B A C K G R O U N D

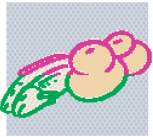


The second half of Leviticus (Chapters 11-27) can be divided into three sections. The first segment discusses in great length the different laws concerning personal cleanliness (i.e. foods that can or cannot be eaten, personal hygiene, infectious diseases). The second section covers general moral laws and the seven annual feasts the people had to observe. These rules reminded the Israelites that they were a people set apart to be holy and therefore, they needed to demonstrate that in their lives. The third section supplements other regulations and also reveals the blessings and retribution as consequences of obedience or disobedience to God's commands. In this lesson, the more prominent laws and feasts will be highlighted.



Most of us need to take a bath or shower once a day. Perhaps some of us have gone a day or two without cleaning ourselves for one reason or another, but after a while, we feel dirty. Thank goodness for water and the bathtub. But this is only a physical cleanliness. What about the things that can make us filthy inside? How often do we feel “dirty” from within? Probably not enough to even think about cleaning ourselves once a day like we take showers. God wants us to lead holy and sanctified lives. How can we be sure that we are just as clean inside as we are out? Today’s lesson will take a look at some of the Old Testament laws concerning cleanliness and we will see how they apply to us.

B I B L E S T U D Y



Part 1

Law of Cleanliness (Lev 11-15, 21-22)**A. Clean and Unclean Food (Lev 11)**

As outlined by the laws, there were certain foods that were considered unclean by God and were not to be eaten. For example, all land animals could be eaten if they chewed the cud and had split hoofs that were completely divided. But the Israelites were forbidden to eat any animal that did not meet these strict requirements (i.e. a camel which chewed on the cud but did not have split hoofs was considered unclean). For sea animals, as long as they had fins and scales, it was permissible to eat them. Birds that consumed carcasses or were characterized by violence (i.e. eagle, raven) were to be detested and avoided. In addition, flying insects that walked on all fours were considered unclean except for those that walked with joint legs for hopping (i.e. locusts). Why was God so specific when it came to what the people could eat or not eat? By abiding by these regulations, it reminded the Israelites that they were a people set apart by God, holy and pure. As well, each of the laws held special meaning.

- a. To have split hoofs represents how we need to be set apart as holy and pleasing to God (2 Cor 6:14-18; Jn 17:19).

- b. To regurgitate the food means we need to constantly reflect on the words of God and obey them (Jer 15:16; Ps 1:1-2, 119:97; Lk 1:29).
- c. Fins provide the animal with the ability to swim against currents and with direction. As Christians living in this world, we are surrounded by many temptations. But with the power of the Holy Spirit (much like the fins), we can conquer these temptations (Rev 12:15; Heb 2:1; Eph 4:14; 1 Jn 2:16).
- d. Scales on fish form an outer layer of protection. Likewise, believers need to rely on God. God’s words, like scales, can shield us from Satan and his temptations (Jn 17:17; Gen 39:6).
- e. Carcasses represent death and sin. Believers should leave their sinful lives behind and pursue spiritual and sanctified lives (Eph 4:29-32; 1 Thess 4:3-5).
- f. Flying insects that are land-bound stand for a person’s emphasis on worldly matters and his pursuit of this present life. Therefore, these animals were considered unclean (Mt 6:24). In contrast, insects that could hop and leap represent the desire to reject the world and look toward heaven, thus they were considered clean (Heb 11:24-26; Col 3:1).

**B. Personal Hygiene (Lev 12-15)**

Interestingly, God gave many laws regarding personal hygiene (i.e. what to do after a woman gave birth or had her regular monthly period; how to clean oneself after having sexual intercourse). The person was considered unclean for a period of time (from one to several days depending on what the situation was) and then after that time was up, he or she usually had to make a sacrificial offering to God to make himself or herself clean again. In particular, there were very strict laws concerning leprosy, as it was a dreaded and incurable disease at the time. Leprosy was a general term for many types of infectious skin diseases. These were characterized by swellings, rashes or bright spots on the skin. If a person was thought to be inflicted with leprosy, he was brought to the priest and examined. If anything appeared to be more than skin deep, the person was declared unclean. After that, his life would be forever changed. He had to wear torn clothes, leave his hair unkempt, cover the lower part of his face and live outside the camp. If at any point the disease was healed, the person had to be examined once again by the priest outside the camp. Once deemed clean, he would make a sacrificial offering to God. Leprosy was highlighted in great detail because it has symbolic relevance to a Christian’s life.

- a. Leprosy symbolizes sin because it spreads rapidly and cannot be healed other than through the power of God. Once a person was identi-

fied to have the disease, he was quarantined and everything he had come into contact with was burned. Likewise, we must rid ourselves of sin.

- b. The priest symbolizes the Lord Jesus because only He is qualified to condemn us of sin and also to purify us to make us clean again.
- c. Once a person was healed, he had to make an offering that required two birds. One was to be killed and the other released (Lev 14:1-7). This symbolizes the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

C . Rules for Priests (Lev 21-22)

Priests were held to very high standards when it came to ceremonial cleanliness. This was because they were holy and set apart by God to be used as His vessels. Below are just some of the regulations they needed to follow:

- a. could not touch a corpse unless it was a close relative (21:1-2)
- b. could not shave their heads, the edges of their beards or cut themselves (21:5)
- c. could not marry a prostitute, a widow or a divorcee; if his daughter were to become a prostitute, she would have to be burned in fire (21:7, 9)
- d. any priest with a defect or deformation was forbidden to offer food to God, although he could eat of the food (21:16-22)

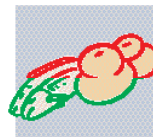
Part 2 **Moral Laws** (Lev 17-20)



This section instructs the Israelites to live godly and moral lives. These laws are important to us because we live in a society today that doesn't always recognize some of these regulations. Below is a quick summary:

- a. forbidden to eat blood since it contains life (Lev 17:1-15)
- b. must not practice incest, homosexuality or any sexual relations with animals (Lev 18; God needed to remind the people of this because they were going to enter the land of Canaan and these were common practices for the Canaanites)
- c. need to live in harmony with others around us, show compassion to the poor and not to pervert justice (Lev 19:15-18, 35)
- d. anyone who sacrifices his children must be put to death (Lev 20:2-3)

Part 3 **The Seven Annual Feasts and Other Celebrations** (Lev 12-27)



The Israelites observed seven annual religious feasts: the Passover, the Feast of the Unleavened Bread, the Feast of the First Fruits, the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), the Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah), the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) and the Feast of the Tabernacles (or Booths/Tents). The people would observe these feasts by assembling themselves to listen to the teachings of God and demonstrate their love for Him through spirited worship. Although we are no longer required to keep these feasts, they do have great implications to our spiritual lives. The Passover and Unleavened Bread have already been discussed in previous lessons. We will take a look at the remaining five as well as some other celebrations of importance.

A . The Feast of First Fruits (Lev 23:9-14)

This event took place on the 16th of the first month, the day after Sabbath. This date falls somewhere in March or April today. By presenting their first harvests, the Israelites remembered to thank God for His grace. Believers today should also give their best to God and bear good fruit as an offering pleasing to Him (Col 2:12).

B . The Feast of Weeks (Lev 23:15-22)

This celebration began on the sixth day of third month, the day after Sabbath, and it was to last for 50 days. In the New Testament, it was called Pentecost and today, it is celebrated in either May or June (since calendar year fluctuates from year to year). It was such a long feast because its purpose was to give thanks to God for sending autumn and spring rain to provide for a bountiful harvest. We know that rain represents the downpouring of the Holy Spirit. The autumn and spring rains correspond to the two periods of the downpouring of the Holy Spirit in establishing the church (early and latter rain; Jas 5:7).

C . The Feast of Trumpets (Lev 23:23-25, Num 29:1-6)

This took place on the first day of the seventh month (September or October today). For this feast, the people assembled for the sacred gathering where trumpets were

blown. This reminded them that God was calling them into a land of their own. Today, as God's followers, we have the commission to preach the gospel to other people so that they may enter the heavenly kingdom (Mk 16:15; Acts 26:18; Rev 14:6-7).

D . The Day of Atonement (Lev 23:26-32; Num 29:7-11; Lev 16)

This was a solemn day in the calendar year for the Israelites. It took place on the 10th of the seventh month (September or October today). On this day, the high priest entered the Most Holy Place and made atonement for his sins and also that of the people so that everyone would be sanctified before the Lord. Jesus Christ is our high priest and our atoning sacrifice today (Heb 9:11-14). Because of Him, we are freed from the bondage of sin. As the Israelites were cleansed from their sins, we should live a godly life as we wait for Jesus Christ's return (Rom 8:23; Eph 4:30; 2 Pet 3:11-13).

E . The Feast of Tabernacles (Lev 23:33-44; Num 29:12-40)

Between the 15th and 22nd of the seventh month (September or October today), the people had to live in booths made of tree branches. This reminded the Israelites of the time they wandered in the wilderness and lived in tents, their temporary homes until they reached the promised land. We should also remember that we are only travelers passing through the world. Our hope lies in the heavenly kingdom (2 Cor 5:1; Rev 21:3-5).

F . Other Celebrations

In addition to the annual feasts, there were other regular celebrations (Lev 25). There was the Sabbath Year, celebrated once every seven years and the Year of Jubilee, observed once every fifty years. In particular, during the Year of Jubilee, people sounded off trumpets to announce their freedom from bondage because during this time, the Israelites were required to set slaves and/or people in debt free. Properties were also restored to the poor. As a result, there was great joy and thanksgiving throughout the land. These celebrations taught the people that everything belonged to God and not to any one person.

Note: Chapters 24-27 contain some other regulations regarding the tabernacle

and tithing. There are also some thoughts on the consequences of obedience or disobedience to God. The students can be encouraged to read up on them during their free time but they will not be covered in this lesson.

Teaching Tips

There is a lot of information contained within this lesson. After reading through the content, feel free to choose specific sections to share with your students, depending on what you think they may already know or find interesting. You can also assign other sections as homework, giving the students an opportunity to study the Bible on their own.

C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



- 1 Take a look at Leviticus 11-15 closely and list five kinds of animals that could not be eaten because they were considered unclean.
- 2 What are the spiritual significance of split hoofs and regurgitated food?
- 3 How is leprosy like sin?
- 4 List four things priests were forbidden to do.
- 5 Read about some of the moral laws found in Leviticus 17-20. Do you think most of them are common sense regulations? What was the purpose of spelling them out so clearly?
- 6 What were the seven annual feasts? List the purpose for each celebration.
- 7 What were the Israelites required to do during the Year of Jubilee?
- 8 Imagine yourself as an Israelite at that time. How do you think you would have felt having to abide by so many laws each day? It seems as if almost everything had a rule. Would you have felt restricted or do you feel you would have been closer to God as a result?

A Sanctified Life



Dear Diary,

I was shocked today when I was returning from shopping for E2 year-end prizes at Sonshine. A car bumped into me from behind as I was turning from Culver to Harvard. It was a red light, so I had stopped and was about to go when I heard a loud thump from behind. The first thing that came to my mind was, "Did that just happen?" And the second was to hurry and shout hallelujah! The third was, "Oh, I'm okay." But what about the car? So I pulled over after turning, and so did the guys who bumped into me. Thank God, when they came out to check with me, they were very calm and sorry. The first thing they said was, "Are you okay?" I said I was fine, but what about my car? I turned and looked, expecting a large dent into the trunk, but to my surprise, there wasn't. I searched for the damages, and I finally saw that the paint from the rear bumper, driver's side, was scratched off. I gently touched it and some paint fell off. I turned and looked at the damages on the other car. The front bumper on the passenger's side was completely caved in and the headlight was probably damaged.

During this little accident, another incident from earlier today came to mind. Earlier today I went to Movatto, a small shop that sells cute stuff in University Center, to shop for E2 prizes, and as I was browsing through the greeting cards for fun, I accidentally broke part of a very fragile greeting card. I felt bad and wanted to pay for it, but instead, I somehow put it back, pretending nothing had happened, and walked out of the store without doing anything about it. Immediately after I left the store, I felt a little funny, but I somehow suppressed that feeling and thought that I should just go on with my life. About 2.5 hours later, the little accident on my car occurred. I knew it was no coincidence. I immediately repented for being so slow to God's warning and for quenching the fire of the Spirit.

Although the two guys who bumped into my car were very sorry, in my heart I felt that I couldn't blame them for it. It was completely the consequence of my disobedience to God. However, for some reason, God was very nice to me in that the guys who bumped into me were very nice and willing to pay for my paint and help me out. I truly thank God that as I was talking to them, I felt tranquility in my heart; I felt God moving me to speak very kindly to them.

Instead of yelling and calling them names or acting very upset, I found myself asking them if they went to UCI, and if they lived in the apartments nearby, etc. I believe that they were relieved that they bumped into someone who was able to speak such nice words.

Later I decided to go back to Movatto to pay for the damages I had caused, because I was afraid of anything else happening to me. (It was clear to me that the accident was no accident at all.) So I went into the store and found the exact card I had torn. Then I grabbed a few rolls of wrapping paper for the E2 year-end prizes and went to the lady at the cash register (I know her very well since I shop in her store quite often). As she was ringing up my purchases, she asked me if I had a friend who was getting married (the card I had broken was a wedding card). I ashamedly admitted that I had broken the card and felt bad about it, and so I wanted to pay for it. She was really nice and understanding, so she gave me a 10% discount for the card. I paid, and then I told her that the wrapping paper was actually for prizes for kids at church. (She is a Christian and knows that I teach kids at church, because I had been shopping around for journals in her store earlier this month.) So she said, "You should have told me it's for church. I give 10% discounts for Sunday School." That was very sweet of her.

God does work in miraculous ways. I really thank God for this lesson He taught me. I'm just a little (or maybe more than a little) upset at how I reacted so slowly to the warnings. This incident reminded me of these verses we studied during the last Sabbath afternoon Bible Study (the E2 class also read these verses in Hebrews 12:5-6): "My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline, and do not resent His rebuke, because the Lord disciplines those He loves, as a father the son He delights in" (Prov 3:11-12).

These words remind me that God truly loves me. This incident strengthened my faith in God and I know that He watches my every move, testing me and refining me as gold, molding me as clay. During these trials, I should remember to not put out the Spirit's fire (1 Thess 5:19). The Holy Spirit is always guiding me to do the right thing, but I am the one who needs to make the right decisions and to carry out the right actions.

Winnie Chen, September, 2003

All the laws that are found in the book of Leviticus were meant to help the people of God lead sanctified lives. We tend to think of being sanctified as something so holy that it is almost unattainable. But as the testimony above shows, we become

sanctified a little bit at a time. The more we try to draw closer to God, the more holy and pure we become. And even though what she did seems insignificant, it is one way she is standing up for her faith and what she believes in. Our character is shown through our actions, both big and small. And although it is not easy to remain pure in this world, the sister in the testimony also reminds us that God is always watching and guiding us. It is up to us to heed His warnings and teachings.

Being honest about everything is something quite difficult to do in this world. We are all told that little white lies are okay and damaging a greeting card is no big deal. But our decision at that moment to pay or walk out the door is crucial. Below are some other things that society says is okay for us to do. Think about whether they are okay for Christians to be a part of. Be ready to support your answers and more importantly, reflect on whether your answers will lead you to a more sanctified life. If you have been faced with something similar before, share your experience with the rest of the class to encourage everyone to remain pure and holy.

1. *Listening to Christian rap and/or rock music*
2. *Watching all the latest movies*
3. *Going dancing in clubs and/or favorite hangout places*
4. *Cursing someone who cuts you off on the road*
5. *Keeping extra change given to you by accident*
6. *Kissing or being similarly intimate with your boy or girlfriend*
5. *Others*

R E F L E C T I O N & P R A Y E R



The Israelites had to follow many rules and regulations. Although they may seem cumbersome to us, they served at least one purpose and that was to remind the people how important they were in God's kingdom. Today, we know that Jesus Christ has chosen us to be a part of that special group. What truly sets you apart from the rest of the world? If Jesus Christ were to know you by one distinguishing feature, what would it be?

Goals

When the Israelites left Egypt, they were probably not expecting the events that unfolded before them. Instead of entering a promised land, they were doomed to wander in the wilderness for 38 years. Yet the time spent in the desert did not necessarily help them learn from their rebellious ways. The key in learning from our mistakes is to take the time to reflect. Through these lessons, the students are encouraged to think about their relationship with God and how they can draw closer to Him. Is there something they need to change or a goal they need to set? If there is a barrier that is getting in the way of their faith, they need to seriously reflect on what is really important to them at this stage in their lives. With help from the Holy Spirit and guidance in these lessons, the students will hopefully take a step nearer to the heavenly kingdom.

Teacher Devotional

When Jesus Christ came to save us, He knew that it would cost Him His life. In the Garden of Gethsemane, He prayed to God to take away His pain because He knew the difficult path He had to take. But in the end, Jesus Christ laid down His life for us because He was completely committed to saving us from sin. What about our commitment to the Lord? Does it only involve service once a week and prayer once a day? When we came to know Jesus Christ and declared that He is God, we made a commitment to Him, to give Him our life. What sacrifices have we made for Him? How do our lives shine for God? Let's renew our covenant and commitment to our Lord Jesus today and be determined to live for Him in totality.

Take Up Your Cross

"Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.'"
(Mt 16:24)

**Wandering
in the Desert****Listed Scriptures**

Lev 11-27; 2 Cor 6:14-18; Jer 15:16; Rev 12:15; Jn 17:17; Eph 4:29; Heb 11:24-26; Col 2:12; Jas 5:7; Mk 16:15; Rom 8:23

Lesson Aim

1. To know the events that led up to the forty years of wandering in the desert
2. To trust that God knows our future and allow Him to guide us

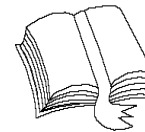
Memory Verse

"The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; And He knows those who trust in Him." (Nah 1:7)

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

Numbers 1-2, 9-14

B I B L E B A C K G R O U N D



The book of Numbers is an account of Israel's wanderings in the desert. Although the original Hebrew title "in the desert" seems to fit this book better, the title "numbers" is derived from the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament) because there are two censuses recorded in Numbers 1 and 26. The book covers a period of about 38 years, from when the Israelites left Sinai until they reached the entrance to Canaan. Actually, the distance between Egypt and Canaan was not all that great. But because of the Israelites' lack of faith, they were condemned to wander. With the exception of Joshua and Caleb, the rest of the soldiers who began the journey nearly all died off in the desert. Numbers contains 36 chapters and it can be divided into three segments. Chapters 1-14 cover the journey from Sinai to Kadesh; Chapters 15-20 continue with the journey from Kadesh to the 38 years of wandering; Chapters 21-36 cover the journey from Kadesh to the Moabite plains, where the people make preparations to cross the Jordan River.

W A R M U P



What is one bad habit you wish you could change about yourself? It could be that you find yourself raising your voice at your parents when you know you should show respect. It could be that you procrastinate constantly and never get things done on time. Some habits have become such a regular part of our lives that we don't even see them as things that need to be changed. Or it may be that we know it but just can't seem to shake it. Some bad habits may also be crippling us, slowly turning us into people we don't really want to be. The Israelites probably wished they could stop complaining so often. It certainly made their lives a lot more miserable than they needed to be. Let's take a look at the events that led up to their decades of wandering in the wilderness.

B I B L E S T U D Y



Part 1
Preparations for Canaan



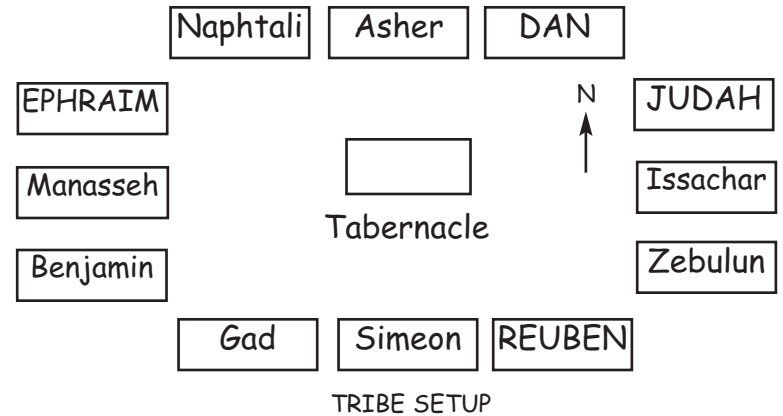
A . The First Census (Num 1)

Moses followed God's command and took a census of the entire Israelite community. Every man who was twenty and older and able to serve in the army was counted. Excluding the Levites, the number came to be 603,550.

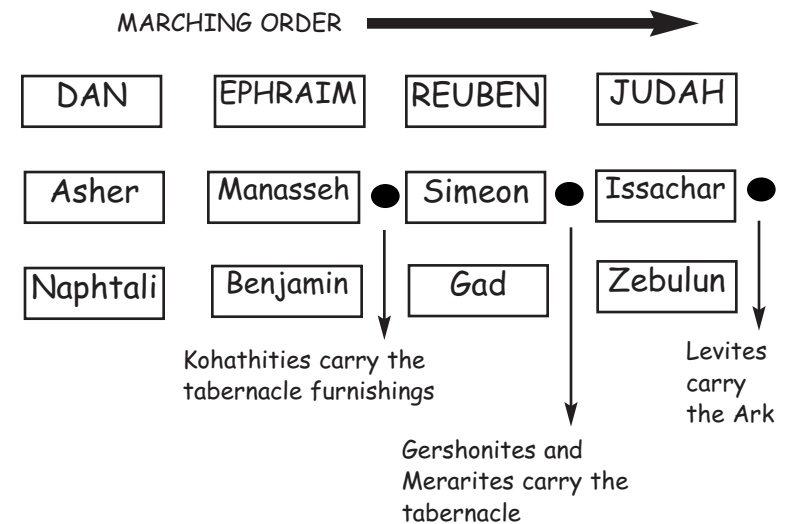


B . Tribal Camps (Num 2)

After the census was taken, it was time to organize the people. The 603,550 only listed the men. With women and children unaccounted for, there were likely over two million people. Clearly, some form of organization was necessary so that they could successfully march to Canaan as one. The tabernacle served as the focus and center of the camp. Three tribes were situated on each side of the tabernacle (north, east, south and west) and each division of three tribes had a tribal leader, highlighted in CAPS (see chart on next page).



When the camp had to move from one place to another, there was a specific marching order. The six tribes on the east and south would move first, followed by the Levites with the tabernacle in the middle. Then the six tribes on the west and north would follow, respectively (see chart below). The Levites served around the tabernacle as they were counted separately according to the offspring of Kohath, Gershon and Merari (Num 4:4-15, 21-26, 29-32).



C . The Silver Trumpets (Num 9-10)

As the people prepared to set out, offerings were made for the dedication of the tabernacle. Israel also celebrated the Passover for the second time since it

had been a year since they had first left Egypt. In order to organize and mobilize such a large group of people, God instructed Moses to make two silver trumpets. They were to be used to call the community together and signal the camps to set out. When both trumpets were sounded, all the Israelites were to assemble at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. Upon further trumpet blasts, each tribe was to set out according to its marching order. The trumpets were also used before battles and for announcing feasts and festivals. The priests were the trumpet blowers. After all the necessary preparations were made and the trumpets sounded, the Israelites set out for Canaan with the pillar of cloud and fire guiding them.

Teaching Tips

Copies of the charts are already in the students' workbooks. However, the names of each of the tribes have not been filled in. Be sure to ask them to write in the name of each tribe as the tribes are discussed. By giving them an opportunity to fill in the charts, they will have a better impression of the setup and marching order.

Part 2 Incidents at Kadesh



Getting ready to conquer their own land should have been an exciting time for the Israelites. But rather than focusing on what was ahead, they only saw their misfortunes, the lack of food and the desert that surrounded them. Less than three days into their journey, the people began to complain about almost everything. Eventually, it cost them their chance to enter into Canaan and they were doomed to wander in the wilderness for forty years.

A. The Israelites Demand Meat (Num 11)

As the Israelites journeyed, they began to grumble over their misery in the wilderness. They could not yet see the Promised Land and focused their attention on the good things they had had in Egypt. More and more, they craved meat and vegetables since they were tired of eating manna every day. God did end up sending them countless quails but as the people ate the meat, God struck them with a severe plague and many were left dead (Num 11:33-34).

B. Miriam and Aaron Criticize Moses (Num 12)

While in Hazeroth, Miriam and Aaron found excuses to criticize Moses. God's anger burned against them and Miriam came down with leprosy. She was confined outside the camp for seven days and because of their criticism, the entire journey was delayed.

C. The Unfavorable Report of the Ten Spies (Num 13-14)

When the Israelites neared Canaan, they sent out 12 people (one leader from each tribe) to spy on the land. They had to give reports on the cities, the land and the fruits it bore as well as the forest. After forty days, the spies returned. Although they all admitted the land was flowing with milk and honey as the Lord had promised, ten of them decided that the people already living in Canaan were too powerful to overcome. Only Caleb and Joshua were courageous enough to insist on attacking the land because they believed that God would guide them. But the ten prevailed, and when the Israelites heard their words, they all began to murmur against Moses, wishing to return to Egypt. God was furious with them and condemned them to wander in the wilderness for a little over 38 years (the other two years included when they first left Egypt and camped at Sinai for over a year and when the next generation got ready to enter Canaan after 38 years of wandering). In addition, the ten spies were struck down by a plague sent by God because of the great damage they did (Num 14:33-38). They did not just give a simple report of their findings, but rather, they caused the people to lose faith in God completely. After God forbade anyone twenty or older who had complained to enter Canaan, the Israelites tried to take possession of the land through their own means, but they failed miserably (Num 14:39-45).

C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



1

How were the 12 tribes situated around the tabernacle? What was their marching order?

2

What purposes did the sounding of the silver trumpets serve?

3

Why did God strike the Israelites with such harsh punishment for wanting to eat meat? Was it wrong to want to eat meat?

4 Miriam and Aaron were Moses' siblings. Yet they allowed jealousy to come into their hearts. How does jealousy creep into our hearts?

5 The Israelites thought they could conquer the land on their own. Why do we trust in our own abilities more than that of God? Do you find that, in most situations, God is the first or the last you turn to?

L I F E A P P L I C A T I O N



We know that God is always our guide. While wandering in the desert, that was the one thing the Israelites forgot, that no matter what they were facing, God was there to help them. Because they did not remember to turn to Him, they were unable to receive the comfort, strength and guidance they could have had. Below are two stories to encourage the students to always trust in God no matter what they are facing, or even when they don't know what lies ahead of them.

The Guide

When skiing in Colorado one day, a man noticed some people on the slope wearing red vests. Moving closer, he could read these words on the vests: BLIND SKIER. He couldn't believe it. He had difficulty skiing with 20/20 vision! How could people without sight manage to ski?

He watched the skiers for a while and discovered their secret. Each skier had a guide who skied beside, behind, or in front of him, always in a position where the two could easily communicate. The guide used two basic forms of communication. First, he tapped his ski poles together to assure the blind person that he was there. Second, he spoke simple, specific directions: "Go right. Turn left. Slow. Stop. Skier on your right." The skier's responsibility was to trust the guide to give good instructions, and to immediately and completely obey those instructions.

Think about this:

What do you think you will be doing five years from now? Do you think you will still be in school or will you be working? What about ten years from now? Will you own a home, be married or will you be traveling and broadening your horizons? Although we all have our plans, the reality is that we can't see even five

seconds into the future. We cannot see the struggles that are to come. Other people may run into us, or we into them, like errant skiers on a crowded slope. But God has given us the Holy Spirit to be our guide through life—to walk before and behind us, and to dwell in us. Our role is to listen and obey.

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. And He delights in his way."
(Psalm 37:23)

Finding the Path

E. Stanley Jones tells the story of a missionary who became lost in an African jungle. Looking around, he saw nothing but bushes and a few clearings. He stumbled about until he finally came across a native hut. He asked one of the natives if he could lead him out of the jungle and back to the mission station. The native agreed to help him.

"Thank you!" exclaimed the missionary. "Which way do I go?"

The native replied, "Walk." And so they did, hacking their way through the unmarked jungle for more than an hour.

Pausing to rest, the missionary looked around and had the same overwhelming sense that he was lost. All he saw were bushes, and a few clearings.

"Are you quite sure this is the way?" he asked. "I don't see any path."

The native looked at him and replied, "Bwana, in this place there is no path. I am the path."

Think about this:

We all wish we could know what our future holds, the path that we will be treading on. The Israelites would have complained less if they had just focused on what God had promised them. But instead, they were bothered by the immediate things that surrounded them. The missionary would certainly have been less stressed if he had known that eventually he would find his way out, but he too was blindsided by the bushes that stood before him. Today, we have so much happening around us that we can hardly see beyond the next week, let alone the next year. We have school obligations, tests to study for, friends to see and church activities to think about. With so many things to do, it can be overwhelming. What colleges will we attend? Will we have good jobs? These are all questions we worry about. Although there are no immediate answers, we do know

one thing: God promised to guide us. When we have no clues, we must remember that God is omniscient—all wise. When we run out of time, we must remember that God is omnipresent—all time is in His hand. When we are weak, we must remember that God is omnipotent—all power belongs to Him.

REFLECTION & PRAYER



People often say that hindsight is 20/20, meaning that things are obviously much clearer when we can review our experiences. We can know the mistakes we made and learn to choose more wisely in the future. But foresight can also be 20/20. Although we don't know what will occur, we can obtain the peace of knowing that God will take care of everything for us. That kind of peace can only come through prayer. In this already hectic world, it seems ironic that the answer to many of our worries comes in such a simple form. Yet, God's world wasn't meant to be complicated. Let us remember to take a moment out and commune with God, allowing His goodness to rule in our hearts. Then we may be able to see the things around us just that little bit clearer.

Lesson 11

The New Generation

Listed Scriptures

Num 20, 21, 22, 24:10, 33:16, 31:8, 27-30, 35

Lesson Aim

1. To learn about the events that occurred after the 38 years of wandering
2. To resolve not to be stubborn and to take time to think about our actions and words

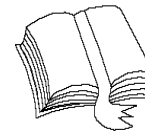
Memory Verse

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (Phil 4:13)

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

Numbers 20-22, 24, 27-30, 35

BIBLE BACKGROUND



The Bible doesn't record in detail what occurred during the thirty-something years of wandering. Right after the Israelites tried to enter the land on their own and failed miserably (Num 14), no major event is noted until the new generation had grown up and was ready to enter Canaan (Num 20). Between Numbers 15-19, Moses repeats some of the laws regarding worship as well as the regulations concerning the priests (Num 15, 18, 19). The people also continued to rebel, most notably, the rebellion of Korah who was a descendant of Levi. Along with 250 other leaders, they rose up against Moses and Aaron. God was so angry at their continued disobedience that He opened up the earth and it swallowed them alive with all their households and possessions. 14, 700 other grumblers also died from a plague sent by God (Num 16:2-3, 32-34, 41-49). In order to put an end to their constant complaints and prove to the people that Moses and Aaron were God's chosen vessels, God told Moses to get twelve staffs from the tribes of Israel. Then they were placed before the ark. The next morning, only Aaron's rod had sprouted and budded, producing almonds. Later the staff was placed in the ark as a reminder of God's provision and guidance (Heb 9:4).



The Bible doesn't say what happened to the Israelites during their many years of wandering. Do you think they still continued to complain or did the older generation realize their mistakes and humbly accepted their fate? While we may never know the answer, we do know that the young children had grown up and were ready to complete what their parents could not. How did they fare? Let's take a look.

B I B L E S T U D Y

Part 1
*Continued
Rebellion*



After being condemned to wander for almost 40 years from the time they left Egypt, those who had complained time and again had died off in the desert. Moses, Aaron, Joshua and Caleb were just some of the few who still remained, and they had another opportunity to make things right with the new generation. Like the first spy mission, they were camped at Kadesh once again, ready for another chance at Canaan. But instead of trusting in God, the people repeated many of their parents' mistakes.

 **A . Striking the Rock**

When the story picks up almost 38 years after their wandering, the first thing that is recorded was the Israelites' complaint that there was no water to drink (Num 20:2-3). This was not exactly a good start to their renewed attempt at conquering Canaan. Even though Moses was well advanced in years, he still pleaded with God on behalf of the people. After being told to speak to the rock so that water would pour out, Moses gathered the people together. But in a moment of anger, he struck the rock twice. As a result of his disobedience, Moses was not allowed to enter Canaan (Num 20:12).

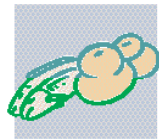
 **B . The Bronze Serpent**

After defeating King Arad, the people continued to journey around Edom, heading closer to the entrance to Canaan (Num 21:1-4). But along the way, they began to

complain once again about their predicament. God sent poisonous snakes and after being bitten, many Israelites died. When they realized their sin, they pleaded with Moses to speak to God once more. God relented and instructed Moses to make a bronze serpent and put it up on a pole. Whenever anyone was bitten and looked at the bronze serpent, he lived (Num 21:5-9).

Teaching Tips

Have a map ready so that the students can follow the journey the Israelites make. You may wish to have a copy available to each student so that they can highlight the names or chart the journey of the Israelites.



Part 2
God Gives Success

 **A . Israel Defeats Kings Sihon and Og**

As the people continued their journey toward Canaan, they had to pass through many existing and established territories. Each time, Moses first sent out messengers to ask the king for safe passage, but each king refused, afraid the Israelites might plunder the land once they gained access. Moreover, King Sihon of the Amorites and King Og of Bashan gathered their armies and fought against Israel after their refusal to let them pass. But both lost in turn because God was with the Israelites (Num 21:1-3, 33-35). After taking possession of their lands, the people set out once more and camped at the plains of Moab, just directly across from Jericho, divided only by the Jordan River.

 **B . Balaam the Sorcerer**

When King Balak of Moab heard of all that Israel had done, he was afraid (Num 22:2-3). He was so anxious that he sent messengers to summon Balaam, a well-known sorcerer to call down curses on Israel (Num 22:5-6; Deut 23:4; Josh 13:22). Although Balaam likely believed in all sorts of gods in his line of work, God still used him to accomplish His will. God appeared to him and told him not to go with the messengers because the people of Israel were blessed. Balaam did as he was told but when the messengers returned a second time with more money, his greed changed his mind. Knowing full well that Balaam's heart was not with God,

allowed him to go. Although God repeatedly tried to stop him along the way, Balaam was persistent in getting to Balak, ignoring even a talking donkey (Num 22:22-35). But once there, God turned whatever curses Balak had expected into blessings instead. On a side note, Balaam did not turn to God after experiencing both His wrath and display of power. Perhaps in an effort to gain back the money he had lost, he later seduced the men of Israel with the women of Moab in acts of immorality and idolatry (Num 24:10, 33:16). This kindled God's anger; 24,000 Israelites were struck by a plague and died as a result of their sins (Num 25:1-9). Ultimately, Balaam died by the hands of Israel (Num 31:8). Only God can give blessings or curses, success or defeat.



Part 3 Final Preparations



A. The Second Census

After a long, 40-year journey filled with complaints and problems, the Israelites finally arrived on the east side of the Jordan River. According to God's command, a second census was taken. Compared to the one taken 38 years ago, the population had decreased slightly to 601,730. The inheritance of the land they were about to conquer was to be apportioned according to the size of each tribe (i.e. the number of people). In fact, three of the tribes came to ask Moses for their inheritance on the east side of the Jordan since they had already taken those lands (Num 32:1-1-5, 16-33).



B. Joshua

Knowing that he was not going to enter the land of Canaan, Moses asked God to appoint a successor to lead the people. God chose Joshua, son of Nun, a man who was filled with God's spirit (Num 27:1-5). However, even after Joshua was picked, Moses did not forget the people. He remained concerned and repeatedly reminded them to remember God's laws and commands (Num 28-30).



C. The Cities of Refuge (Num 35)

Just before their entry into Canaan, God instructed the Israelites to set up six cities of refuge, three on each side of the Jordan. If someone killed another by mistake, he could flee to one of these places to seek refuge from avengers until a trial could be arranged. These six cities were set up within the 48 given to the Levites (Num 35:6-7), since they acted as judges when disputes arose. If the accused was found to be innocent (i.e. accidental killing), he could live in the city of refuge until the death of the high priest (Num 35:25). Then he could return home a free man. But if he were to leave the city of refuge on his own before that time, he could be killed and no one would be guilty of his death. Today, there is no city of refuge for us to flee to when we are guilty of sin. But we know that God is our refuge and He will protect us when we choose to turn to Him for help and ask for forgiveness.

C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



- 1 After serving God for most of his life, it seems unfair that Moses lost out on the inheritance because of one small incident. After all, didn't he have the right to be a little angry? He was yelled at, murmured against and threatened over and over by his own people. If you had been Moses, what would you have done?
- 2 The younger generation probably didn't want to repeat their parents' mistakes. Is there something you see in your parents that you want to make sure you don't repeat as a parent in the future? Is there something that you want to pass down to your children?
- 3 Why was Joshua chosen as the successor to Moses? What kind of qualities did he have that made him a good choice?
- 4 Describe the purpose of the cities of refuge.
- 5 From the moment the Israelites left Egypt until they arrived at Canaan, God punished them many times for their sins. But if we were to look closely, He also blessed them and protected them. How do you see God in your life, one who punishes constantly or one who blesses?



Take Two

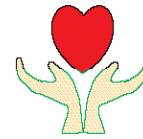
Steve was a Christian senior in high school who knew that drinking was wrong, but he'd go to parties with his friends to hang out anyway. Nothing serious, just for fun. But within a month he was pulled into trying one glass of beer...then another, then another.

His testimony for the Lord and all of his good intentions were shot. He wanted to get out of this rut, but he realized that would mean he'd have to quit going to parties, something that would likely cost him his friends. After nearly getting into a car accident, he finally came to his senses. First, he sincerely asked God for forgiveness, then he informed his friends he was going to quit partying and start going back to his youth group at church. Steve finally turned around and was committed to change.

Steve had the sense to stop in his tracks before things really got out of hand. He took the opportunity to turn his life around. He didn't want to wait for a second chance because sometimes, we don't get second chances in life. But even if we did, would we realize the need to take hold of that moment and change? If you could go back in time and change something you regretted doing, what would it be? Why did you choose this incident? Would your life have been affected for the better or worse? Although it may not seem like it, God gives us many second chance. But in order to grab hold of those opportunities, we must see the need for changes. That may mean not being so stubborn all the time or not insisting that our way is the best way. It could mean being more open-minded and accepting of others' opinions. It also means we need to admit we are wrong and ask for forgiveness. How do we do that?

First, we need to humbly ask for God's forgiveness. 1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." All of us know how good it feels to be forgiven. However, it is the next step that is more challenging – we need to repent. This is not the same as asking for forgiveness. And it doesn't mean that you go and cry in your prayer for two hours. Repent means to change your mind about something, to slam on the brakes and turn around. It means that you are sick of the choices you've been making and truly want to get away from the circumstances that cause you to keep falling into the same rut.

Think back to that incident once more. It's not possible to alter the past. So what can you do today to turn that experience into something positive for the future?



Sometimes, we resolve to change things in our lives. But it is not always as easy as it seems. More often than not, we revert back to our old ways. We convince ourselves that it's useless, or we give in to our weaknesses. If there is something that really needs to be addressed in your life, write it down on a piece of paper and place it somewhere visible. It can serve as a healthy reminder of your commitment to change. But more importantly, don't forget to pray for the strength from the Holy Spirit to guide you. With God, all things are possible!

Deuteronomy: Repeating the Law

Listed Scriptures

Deut 4, 5, 6, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33

Lesson Aim

To renew our covenant with God and pledge allegiance to Him through concrete actions

Memory Verse

“That you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days.”
(Deut 30:20a)

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

Deuteronomy 4-6, 28, 29, 31

B I B L E B A C K G R O U N D



Deuteronomy means “repetition of the law.” In this final book of the Pentateuch, Moses delivered a number of speeches, mostly to reaffirm Israel’s covenant with God. Assembled on the plains of Moab, which bordered Canaan, Moses went over God’s laws and decrees once again as well as all the things the people had experienced during the past 40 years in the desert. By repeating God’s commandments, Moses stressed how the obedient would be blessed and the disobedient cursed. He knew he was not permitted into the promised land and wanted the Israelites to fear, love and submit to God so that they could be established as a holy nation. He did not want them to repeat the sad mistakes of the generation before. The speeches Moses gave can be divided into two major segments. The first part (Deut 1-11) is reflections of the past. The second section (Deut 12-30) discusses future expectations and the promises in Canaan. The epilogue (Deut 31-34) concludes with the death of Moses. In this lesson, we will not focus on the laws too much since they were dealt with in previous lessons. Rather, we will highlight some of the unique aspects of the book of Deuteronomy.

Section	Subdivision	Highlights of Each Chapter	Chapter(s)
Looking Back Deut 1-11	Historical Reflections	Mt. Horeb to Kadesh	1
	Reminiscing God's Grace	Wandering in Kadesh	2
	Ch. 1 to 3	Kadesh to the Plains of Moab	3
Looking Forward Deut 12-34	Review of the Laws	Distinguishing Between the True God & False Gods	4
	Ch. 4 to 11	The Spirit of the Ten Commandments	5
	Keeping of the Laws	Keeping God's Decrees & Commands	6-11
	Ch. 12-26	Religious Regulations	12-16
	Curses and Blessings	Political Regulations	17-20
Looking Forward Deut 12-34	Ch. 27-30	Social & Familial Regulations	21-26
	Final Counsel	Obedience & Disobedience	27-28
	Ch. 31-34	Renewal of Covenants	29-30
		Dying Words	31-33
		The Death of Moses	34

W A R M U P



If you knew you were going to leave this world soon, what would be the top three things you would do? Do any of these things have to do with God and salvation? When Moses knew he was about to die, the only thing on his mind was God. He wanted the people around him to understand, love, fear and submit to the Lord and he spent a great deal of time telling them about God's commands.



Part 1
Reiteration of the Laws

In this section, Moses repeated the covenant and commandments that God had established with His people on Mount Sinai. One reason why Moses did this was that he knew he was not going to enter Canaan and wanted the Israelites to remember God and His power. Also, these people were those who had grown up in the desert and had not known or experienced God first hand. Moses hoped to strengthen and build up the faith of the people. Below are some important truths he reminded the Israelites of.

- a. Moses wanted the Israelites to be able to distinguish between the True God and other false gods (Deut 4:15-40). This was vital because there were many idols in Canaan and Moses worried that the people might turn to false gods once they conquered the land.
- b. Moses repeated the Ten Commandments (Deut 5). Again this was to remind the younger generation of God's commandments and the spirit behind them. Moses also stressed the greatest commandment of all. "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might" (Deut 6:5). And more importantly, he urged the Israelites to bring up their children in the ways of God (Deut 6:7-9).



Part 2
Renewal and Covenant

By renewing the covenant given at Mount Sinai, Moses reminded the people that it bound them to the Lord as their God. In addition, without exception, His laws and decrees were their way of life. The covenant in brief:

- a. They were to never worship idols or depart from God once they entered Canaan (Deut 29:25-27). Disobedience would result in God's curses and exile to a foreign land (Deut 29:14-21, 28).
- b. If the people sinned but repented and turned back to God, He would show them mercy and restore their fortunes (Deut 30:1-5).
- c. The Lord wished to circumcise Israel's heart so that the people would become fully devoted to God (Deut 30:6) and so that they may be saved

be saved (Rom 12:26-27).

- d. God will judge Israel's enemies (Deut 30:7; Is 14:1-2; Joel 3:1-8).
- e. The Lord will make Israel prosperous when the people obey Him and keep His commands (Deut 30:9-10).

Part 3 Final Preparations



As a part of the covenant between God and His people, it was clear that the Israelites had to keep their side of the agreement. It was not a one-way street. If they did not obey God, they would be severely punished, but if they chose to trust and follow Him, they would be abundantly blessed.

A. Blessed if Obedient to the Lord (Deut 28:1-14)

- * God will set you high above all the nations on earth. (v. 1)
- * You will be blessed in the city and blessed in the country. (v. 3)
- * The fruit of your womb and the crops of your land and the young of your livestock will all be blessed. (v. 4)
- * You will be blessed in your comings and goings. (v. 6)
- * Your enemies will be defeated and they will flee from you. (v. 7)
- * The Lord will bless everything you put your hand to. (v. 8)
- * The Lord will establish you as His holy people. (v. 9)
- * The Lord will open the heavens, the storehouse of His bounty. (v. 12)
- * The Lord will send rain on your land in season. (v. 12)
- * The Lord will make you the head, not the tail. You will always be at the top, never at the bottom. (v. 13)

B. Cursed if Disobedient to the Lord (Deut 28:15-68)

- * You will be cursed in the city and cursed in the country. (v. 16)
- * The fruit of your womb will be cursed. (v. 18)
- * You will be cursed in your comings and goings. (v. 19)
- * The Lord will plague you with diseases. (vv. 21, 27-35, 59)
- * The Lord will strike you with scorching heat and drought, with blight and mildew. (vv. 22, 38-40)

- * The Lord will cause you to be defeated before your enemies. (vv. 21, 27-35, 59)
- * You will serve enemies in hunger and thirst, in nakedness and poverty. (v. 48)
- * Your families will be broken up and you will eat the flesh of your own children. (vv. 53-57)



Part 4 Moses' Final Encouragements

A. Final Address

In his final speech, Moses gave the people heartfelt advice. He wanted his successor, Joshua, as well as the elders and leaders of the community to remember God's laws and remain faithful to His people (Deut 31).

B. The Song of Moses

Although Moses had led a long and triumphant life, he did not sing to praise himself. Rather, near his death, he only wanted to praise the name of God. The song extolled God's faithfulness and justice as well as how He controls life and death. Through it all, He is compassionate to His people (Deut 32).

C. Moses Blesses the Tribes

Moses took time to bless each tribe and prophesied what the future held for them (Deut 33).

D. The Death of Moses

After he finished his words, he climbed Mount Nebo to get a glimpse of the land he was never going to enter. Then he died at the age of 120. It is recorded in Deuteronomy 34:6 that no one, to this day, knows where Moses' grave lies because God was the one to bury him. It is also possible that God did not want the people to idolize Moses after his death and did not disclose the whereabouts

of the burial site. Although Moses was not able to enter the earthly promised land, it was far better to be a part of the heavenly homeland (Mt 17:3).

C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



1 List two reasons why Moses took the time to repeat many of the laws and commands of God just before his death.

2 What does it mean to keep the spirit of the law?

3 If you had to write down your own list of personal blessings (blessings you feel you have received from God in your lifetime so far), what would it include?

4 What do you think was going through Moses' mind as he stood high on Mount Nebo and looked over the land of Canaan, knowing he was about to die and not be able to step foot in it?

5 What made Moses a great leader? List five of his qualities.

L I F E A P P L I C A T I O N



Renewing Our Covenant

In the book of Deuteronomy, the people renewed their covenant with God, or at least Moses did it on their behalf. It didn't mean that the first time wasn't binding. It was a way for the Israelites to remember their pledge to God. As we have seen, they often found ways to forget to honor their part of the covenant. When we got baptized, we also made a covenant with God. We know without a doubt that God always keeps His promises to bless us and take care of us. But like the Israelites of the past, we need to keep our side of the agreement too. What have we been doing for God, to act as His holy people? Take a moment and reflect on your covenant with God. Have you been keeping His laws and commands? Read the following case and answer the following questions:

Chris became a Christian at a SSC last year. He still remembers the feeling of that unbelievable summer night when he received the Holy Spirit. After he returned from the SSC, Chris continued to feel close to God for a while. He never missed youth study group on Friday nights, and he even began to talk to his friends at school about their need for a relationship with God.

But then it started. The battles with peer pressure, lust and other worldly things began to rage—just as they had before Chris became a Christian. In fact, the intensity of the battles seemed to be even greater than before. Then there were the demands of athletics, academics and other activities that seemed to totally dominate Chris' time and energy. God and church gradually became less and less important. Chris' victory in God quickly became a momentary retreat from the war. He realized that he had to start reading the Bible and praying again. Then, one night, he opened the Bible and he read this verse, "Therefore, I urge you brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God — this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will." Immediately, he knew he had to repent and ask God to fill him with the power of the Holy Spirit.

We will never live transformed lives until we have transformed minds. Spiritual renewal is losing your old perspective of life and gaining God' perspective so that you may think and act like Him. How do we experience intimacy with God and learn to see as He sees? Read Romans 12:2.

1. What do you think Paul means when he talks about the "pattern of this world"?
2. According to Paul, what is the key to transformation?
3. What does "the renewing of your mind" mean to you?
4. Think of one area in your life where you tend to continue to sin. What excuses do you make to rationalize that wrong behavior? What is the lie behind that justification?
5. Use this opportunity to renew your personal covenant with God. God has made many promises to you. Make a promise to do one thing for Him today.



It would be hard to cross a river without getting wet. There would also be a chance of drowning. But if the river were paved with large stones that rose above the waters, it would make the attempt a little easier. Step by step, what was once a difficult journey is now possible. Like a fast moving river, the path to the heavenly kingdom is not an easy one to tread. It is paved with many obstacles, curves and steep hills. But God is like the large stones. As we walk, we can see God's hand reaching out to help us along the way. And if we grab hold onto His hand, we will slowly but surely make it to the end of the road. But in order to see His guiding hand, we need to take time to reflect on our relationship with the Lord. What do your reflections tell you about where you stand with God?

Lesson 13

Review

Lesson Aim

- 1) To identify the main teachings found in the Pentateuch
- 2) To understand the spiritual significance behind the laws, offerings and feasts found in the Pentateuch
- 3) To be determined to lead a sanctified life and to demonstrate our faith through our speech and actions

R E V I E W

The book of Genesis covers many "beginnings," from the creation of light, to the first animals, to early human history. Most important is the beginning of faith in God. We come to learn about Israel and God's chosen people as well as their place in His master plan of salvation.

The main theme in the book of Exodus is freedom from bondage and obtaining salvation in God. In this book, we learn how the Israelites are freed from slavery and begin an extraordinary journey of faith. It is in this long journey that the people of God come to an important realization, that being truly free means the freedom to obey God and do His will.

In the books of Leviticus and Numbers, there are many laws and regulations, from how to prepare a burnt offering to specific rules about personal hygiene. The purpose of all these laws was not to burden the people of Israel, but to allow them to understand that they needed to serve in complete holiness, as they were set apart as a holy nation.

In the last book of the Pentateuch, Moses spends much of the time repeating the laws, hoping to ingrain them in the hearts of all of God's people, to help them learn from the past and continue to walk on the pathway to the heavenly kingdom.

1. What are the five books of the Pentateuch? Write down briefly what each book is about.

Genesis—Beginning of all creation and the beginning of Israel; Points out Israel’s place in God’s master plan of salvation

Exodus—Israel receives deliverance; Announces Israel’s transformation into God’s holy nation

Leviticus—Israel must serve in holiness; Declares the standards for a holy nation

Numbers—The failures of the Israelites; Chronicles the Israelites’ failures in entering Canaan

Deuteronomy—Decrees to Israel; Pronounces the commands of God that the Israelites must abide by prior to entering Canaan

2. Pick one of the following characters of the Bible and highlight three aspects of this person’s faith: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph (three or more answers are provided below). Write down one thing you learned from this character that you can apply in your life (students’ own answers).

Abraham:

✓ He acted on his faith:

When Abram was 75 years old, he listened to God’s calling and left his homeland, tribe and father’s house to go to the land of Canaan. Although God had promised him three important things (his descendants would become a great nation, Canaan would be an inheritance for his children, all nations would be blessed through him), they weren’t promises he could experience during his lifetime. It took a lot of courage and trust to pack up and go to a foreign land, but he was blessed by God throughout his life because of his faith.

✓ He lied to get out of trouble:

Abram and his family had to leave Canaan and travel to Egypt because of a famine in the land, but when he was in Egypt, he lied and said that Sarai was his sister so that the Egyptians would not kill him for his wife. But his problems were compounded even more because of his lie (she was taken to the Pharaoh later on). Although God had made him many promises, he lost sight of that during times of need. In fact, he used this exact deceit later on when facing King Abimelech (Gen 20).

✓ He tried to fulfill the will of God using his own ways:

When he was 86 years old, Abram listened to his wife, Sarai, and allowed her maidservant, Hagar, to bear him a son, Ishmael. Although it was common practice

during that time for a wife to give her maidservant to her husband to produce heirs (if she were barren), Abram should have known better. In addition, God had promised him a son (Gen 15), but he lost trust in God’s word and tried to fulfill the will of God through his own means. Because of his lack of faith, his family would suffer later on (Ishmael and Hagar were sent away by Sarah).

✓ He put God above all else:

By the time Isaac was born, Abraham was 100 years old and his faith had also matured. When Isaac had grown up a bit, Abraham obeyed God by going up to Mount Moriah to offer his one and only son. But this time, his faith taught him that God would keep His promise of giving him a son. Although he didn’t know how it would happen if Isaac really were to die, he trusted that God would act according to His will.

Isaac

✓ He was submissive to his father:

Isaac demonstrated the beginnings of his faith through obedience to Abraham. Isaac was the one who carried the wood up to Mount Moriah. He did not resist when his father bound and placed him on the altar (Gen 22). Later on, he did not object when his father arranged his marriage for him. These acts of submission were a great source of blessing for Isaac later on in life.

✓ He prayed to God:

It is recorded in Genesis 25:21 that Isaac prayed for his wife because she was barren. This is the first time that we see Isaac personally commune with God. Because God heard his prayer and gave him two sons, Esau and Jacob, we can be certain his prayer was sincere and effective.

✓ He lied to get out of trouble:

Interestingly, Isaac used the same trick his father did years ago by lying to King Abimelech (a different king with the same name) and saying that his wife was his sister (Gen 26:1-11). Although he knew to pray to God when he couldn’t do anything about his wife’s barrenness, he did not know to turn to God in this situation.

✓ He was patient:

As he resided in Gerar, he became more and more wealthy. The Philistines envied him and quarreled with his servants over the wells they had dug, claiming the water belonged to them (Gen 26:12-33). Twice, Isaac just left, choosing to remain at peace with his neighbors rather than start fights. As a result, God blessed him even more and even turned his enemies into his friends (Prov 16:7). Patience is one of the characteristics of the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Jacob

✓ He was deceitful:

After he was born, he longed for his older brother’s birthright. In addition to tricking Esau into giving up his inheritance, he also deceived his father into blessing

him. Because of his brother's great anger, he fled for his life and ended up at his uncle's. Because of his deceit, he suffered many hardships later on in life and was not able to see his mother again.

✓ God appeared to him:

Jacob had already made two huge mistakes in his young life, and God did not want to see him sink deeper into that hole. By appearing to him in a dream (Gen 28:10), God strengthened him so that he could endure some of his most difficult years at Laban's house.

✓ He was patient:

Jacob had a taste of his own medicine when his uncle tricked him into marrying Leah instead of Rachel. Yet, because he wanted to marry Rachel, he agreed to work for another seven years in return. Even as Laban blatantly cheated him out of his pay, he continued to do his work and was blessed by God in the end. These long 20 years spent at his uncle's were trying and frustrating times, but they helped to build his character and faith. Jacob was even able to make up with his brother later on. Although suffering for any amount of time seems difficult, the trials we go through can ultimately help us draw closer to God.

Joseph

✓ He was proud and immature:

When Joseph was still a child, God revealed two dreams to him, both pointing to how he would be in positions of command over his brothers (Gen 37:1-11). It is possible that he meant no harm in telling his brothers about them but because of his pride and immaturity, his brothers became jealous of him.

✓ He didn't fight or argue:

After being sold as a slave to Potiphar's house, he was soon framed by his master's wife and thrown into jail. But he didn't fight back. Rather, he accepted whatever was dealt to him and continued to trust in God's guidance. Later on, he found mercy in the eyes of the prison warden and was given the opportunity to interpret the Pharaoh's dreams.

✓ He was forgiving:

When Joseph's brothers came to buy grain, instead of using his power and influence to punish them, he forgave them. He also showed great filial piety by bringing his father to live with him. In contrast to his father Jacob, much of what Joseph had to endure was not by his own doing. He could very well have given up on God since God did not seem to be in his life each time he was wrongfully accused. However, his experiences teach us that God is in control of our lives. What doesn't make sense to us now will make sense in the future. We just need to believe that God knows what is best for us; any suffering we are going through is a way to refine us.

3. Write about three prefigurations of Jesus Christ found in the book of Genesis (more than three are provided).

- a. God created light, which is symbolic of Jesus Christ (Jn 8:12, 1:5).
- b. God created Eve out of Adam's rib. This prefigures that Jesus Christ's side would be pierced and blood would be shed to establish the church (Gen 2:21-23; Jn 19:34-36).
- c. God clothed Adam and Eve with garments of skin. Likewise, Jesus Christ, who is the Lamb of God, died and shed His blood so that we could put on the robe of righteousness. For us, this means we put on Jesus Christ and become justified (Gen 3:21; Gal 3:27).
- d. Melchizedek, the king of Salem (which means peace), brought out bread and wine to serve Abraham. Although not much is known about him, he is seen as representing the Lord Jesus as the King of Peace. Just as he gave bread and wine to Abraham, we can also receive grace and truth from God (Gen 14:18-20; Heb 7:2-3).
- e. Isaac's life has many parallels to that of our Lord Jesus. Although Abraham had many sons, Isaac was the only promised one. He carried the wood for his father and submitted to being sacrificed on the altar. Yet later his life was spared and he was able to marry Rebekah. This prefigures how Jesus Christ, the Son of God, would carry the cross and would be willing to be crucified. Later, He resurrected and in the end time, He will return to marry His bride, the true church.
- f. The heavenly ladder in Jacob's dream symbolizes Jesus Christ, through whom believers can gain entrance into heaven (Jn 1:51, 14:6; Heb 10:19-20; Acts 4:12).
- g. Joseph was the favorite son of Jacob. He suffered a lot in the early part of his life. First he was betrayed by his own brothers and then sold to Egypt. Later, he was wrongfully sent to prison. But in the end, he was exalted to a high position. His life foreshadowed how Jesus Christ was rejected, betrayed and killed by His own people. Just like Joseph, our Lord Jesus was innocent but was cruelly punished. Ultimately, Jesus Christ was exalted and is sitting at the right hand of God.

4. List two reasons why God made the Israelites travel a longer route into the wilderness instead of guiding them directly across the desert into Canaan.

Although it would have been much faster to directly cut across the desert from Egypt to Canaan, God had a different plan (Ex 13:17-18). Why did He make them travel around the desert and move toward the south to Mount Sinai instead of heading right for Canaan? For one thing, the Philistines lived right next door to Canaan.

Meeting them head on so early in their journey would likely have changed the Israelites' minds about leaving Egypt since they had no combat experience. Secondly, God needed to reveal His commands and laws to His people. By traveling to Mount Sinai, it gave the Israelites time to know God and also toughened their spirit.

5. What were the six items found in the tabernacle? Write about the spiritual significance of three of those items (six answers provided).

a. The Altar of Burnt Offering (Ex 27:1-8)

This was placed in the outer courtyard and was designated for sacrificing animals and the sprinkling of blood. Only after the animals were slaughtered could they be offered to God. Spiritually, it symbolizes the cross where Jesus Christ sacrificed Himself and shed His precious blood for us. After a believer is baptized in the blood of the Lord Jesus, his body becomes sanctified and is permitted to enter the gate of salvation (Heb 13:10-13).

b. The Bronze Laver (Ex 30:18-21)

After presenting the sacrifice, the priests needed to clean their hands and feet at this washbasin to wash away any dirt and filth. Spiritually, this act of cleansing symbolizes how a believer needs to constantly clean himself through the spirit and the truth so that he may become sanctified and be able to see God (Acts 1:5; Jn 3:5; Eph 5:26).

c. The Showbread (Ex 25:23-30)

The table for the showbread was located in the inner courtyard. Twelve loaves (12 represents perfection) of bread were to be set on this table before God, to be eaten by the priests (Lev 24:5-9). This bread symbolizes how Jesus Christ offered His life, serving as spiritual food for believers today.

d. The Gold Lampstand (Ex 25:31-37)

The lampstand was also kept in the inner courtyard and had seven stands which were kept burning with olive oil (Lev 24:2). Spiritually, it symbolizes how believers should shine their light before men (Mt 5:16). The lampstand was hammered out of a single piece of pure gold. This symbolizes that the believers should be as one body.

e. The Altar of Incense (Ex 30:1-8)

The altar was placed in the inner courtyard. It was here that incense was burned to God. Symbolically, it represents the prayer of the saints (Rev 5:8, 8:3-4).

f. The Ark of the Testimony (Ex 25:10-16)

The ark was the only item placed in the Most Holy Place. It was sacred, for it was above the mercy seat that God came to meet His people. Three important objects were placed in it. First were the two tablets that contained the Ten

Commandments. Second was the jar of manna. Third was the budded staff belonging to Aaron. Each of these objects holds spiritual significance for us today. Just as the tablets were stored in the ark, we should also store God's truth and laws within our hearts. The jar of manna represents the spiritual food we need in order to sustain ourselves. The budding of the staff is evidence of God's choosing. Today, only those spiritually reborn will belong to God.

6. What were the five major sacrificial offerings? List one spiritual application to our lives from each (more than one answer is provided).

Burnt Offering

- a.** To use an animal without defect points to our Lord Jesus as faultless and without sin. We should also pursue perfection so that we may find favor with God (2 Cor 5:21; 1 Pet 1:19; Mt 5:48; Phil 2:15).
- b.** The sprinkling of blood around the altar represents Jesus Christ's shedding of blood on the cross to save us. We should learn from His willingness to sacrifice (1 Jn 2:2, 3:16; Ps 107:1-3; Rom 9:2-3).
- c.** The skinning of the burnt offering reminds us that the Lord Jesus did not seek His own glory and did not place emphasis on His outward appearance. We, too, should not place emphasis on outer appearance or the vanity of the world (Jn 7:24; Jas 2:1-7).
- d.** Cutting the sacrifice into pieces means that we need to deny ourselves and take away our self-centeredness (Mt 6:1-5, 26:39; 1 Sam 15:24, 25, 30).
- e.** The washing of the inner parts and the limbs refers to the cleansing of our hearts, exercising self-control and walking on the holy path (Jer 17:9; Mk 7:20-23; Prov 4:26-27).
- f.** Complete burning of the offering is equivalent to our complete sacrifice, without holding anything back (Rom 14:7-8).

Grain Offering

- a.** The pouring of the oil is in reference to the Holy Spirit. Believers also need the downpouring of the Holy Spirit to become sanctified (Lk 4:18; Heb 9:14; Rom 15:16; 2 Thess 2:13).
- b.** Adding incense to the offering represents the fragrant aroma from our Lord Jesus. Similarly, believers should also give off a sweet spiritual scent.
- c.** The mixing of the salt reminds us that we need to demonstrate the characteristics of salt, which can preserve and season (Mk 9:50; Mt 5:13, 11:29).
- d.** The absence of yeast signifies that Jesus Christ was sinless and without blame. We also need to rid ourselves of any malice, hypocrisy and sin (1

Cor 5:6-8; Eph 4:31).

Peace Offering

- a. Burning the fatty portions of the sacrifice is symbolic of repaying the grace of God with the best of the sacrifice. We should also offer our best to God as we humbly serve Him (1 Pet 5:5-6; Lk 17:9-10).
- b. This was the only offering where the person presenting it could eat the sacrifice. This tells us such offerings please God and by partaking of it, it can bring about peace, joy and blessings to the family (Heb 13:15-16; 2 Cor 9:7-8).

Sin Offering

- a. For this offering, the higher a person's status, the higher the value of the animal used for the sacrifice. It implies that people with greater responsibility are held more accountable than others (Lk 12:47-48). We should always remember our role and importance as members of the church.
- b. Sprinkling and smearing of blood implies that it is by the Lord Jesus' blood that we are able to come before Him and confess our sins. By the blood of Jesus Christ, we can humbly pray and confess our sins to God and ask Him for forgiveness (Heb 10:20; Rev 8:3-4; Heb 4:15-16; Ps 51:17).
- c. The burning of the fatty portions refers to the dedication of our talents and abilities to God. The burning of the rest of the animal outside the camp represents the complete removal of our sinful nature (i.e. pride, self-righteousness, passion, lust, Rom 8:6; Jas 1:21; Deut 23:9-14).

Guilt Offering

See Sin Offering

7. What are the spiritual significance of split hoofs and regurgitated food?

- a. To have split hooves represents how we need to be set apart as holy and pleasing to God (2 Cor 6:14-18; Jn 17:19).
- b. To regurgitate the food means we need to constantly reflect on the words of God and obey them (Jer 15:16; Ps 1:1-2, 119:97; Lk 1:29).

8. What were the seven annual feasts celebrated by the Israelites? Briefly list the purpose of each celebration.

The Passover

During the feast, the people ate meat roasted over a fire, along with bitter herbs and bread made without yeast. Each of these items represents something in our salvation today. The roasting of the lamb represents the body of Jesus Christ and how He suffered greatly for us. The bitter herbs reminded the Israelites of their past sufferings in Egypt. Likewise, we should remember how much the Lord Jesus

suffered for our sake and be determined to obey Him.

The Unleavened Bread

The unleavened bread was made without yeast because yeast represents sin. God specifically told the Israelites to remove all yeast from their homes on the first day of the feast (Ex 12:15-20). The bread is symbolic of how the body of Jesus Christ is sinless and holy. Since we are a part of His body, we should also remain pure and refrain from committing sins (1 Cor 5:6-8).

The Feast of First Fruits

This event took place on the 16th of the first month, the day after Sabbath. This date falls somewhere in March or April today. By presenting their first harvests, the Israelites remembered to thank God for His grace. Believers today should also give their best to God and bear good fruit as an offering pleasing to Him (Col 2:12).

The Feast of Weeks

This celebration began on the sixth day of third month, the day after Sabbath, and it was to last for 50 days. In the New Testament, it was called Pentecost and today, it is celebrated in either May or June (since calendar year fluctuates from year to year). It was such a long feast because its purpose was to give thanks to God for sending autumn and spring rain to provide for a bountiful harvest. We know that rain represents the downpouring of the Holy Spirit. The autumn and spring rains correspond to the two periods of the downpouring of the Holy Spirit in establishing the church (early and latter rain; Jas 5:7).

The Feast of Trumpets

This took place on the first day of the seventh month (September or October today). For this feast, the people assembled for the sacred gathering where trumpets were blown. This reminded them that God was calling them into a land of their own. Today, as God's followers, we have the commission to preach the gospel to other people so that they may enter the heavenly kingdom (Mk 16:15; Acts 26:18; Rev 14:6-7).

The Day of Atonement

This was a solemn day in the calendar year for the Israelites. It took place on the 10th of the seventh month (September or October today). On this day, the high priest entered the Most Holy Place and made atonement for his sins and also that of the people so that everyone would be sanctified before the Lord. Jesus Christ is our high priest and our atoning sacrifice today (Heb 9:11-14). Because of Him, we are freed from the bondage of sin. As the Israelites were cleansed from their sins, we should live a godly life as we wait for Jesus Christ's return (Rom 8:23; Eph 4:30; 2 Pet 3:11-13).

The Feast of Tabernacles

Between the 15th and 22nd of the seventh month (September or October today),

the people had to live in booths made of tree branches. This reminded the Israelites of the time they wandered in the wilderness and lived in tents, their temporary homes until they reached the promised land. We should also remember that we are only travelers passing through the world. Our hope lies in the heavenly kingdom (2 Cor 5:1; Rev 21:3-5).

9. Why was Joshua chosen as Moses' successor? What kind of qualities did he have that made him a good choice?

God chose Joshua (Num 27:18) because he was a man who was filled with God's spirit. From the spies' reports, we learn that he was courageous, someone who spoke the truth and did not just go with the crowd. He trusted God with all his heart. We learn from his farewell speech (Josh 24:15) that he was devoted to serving God his entire life.

10. Moses spent a lot of time repeating the laws and commands of God before his death. Why? What does it mean to keep the spirit of the law?

By repeating God's commandments, Moses stressed how the obedient would be blessed and the disobedient cursed. One reason why Moses did this was that he knew he was not going to enter Canaan and wanted the Israelites to remember God and His power. Also, these people were those who had grown up in the desert and had not known or experienced God first hand. Moses hoped to strengthen the people and build up their faith. Moses wanted the Israelites to fear, love and submit to God so that they could be established as a holy nation.

GOING FAR BEYOND
THE CALL OF DUTY,
DOING MORE THAN
OTHER EXPECTS...IS
WHAT EXCELLENCE IS
ALL ABOUT. IT COMES
FROM STRIVING,
MAINTAINING THE
HIGHEST
STANDARDS...GOING THE
EXTRA MILE.
EXCELLENCE MEANS
DOING YOUR VERY
BEST. IN EVERYTHING.
IN EVERYTHING WAY.

*"Whatever your task,
work heartily as serving
the Lord and not men."*

(Col 3:23)

*"Be an example...of good deeds of
every kind. Let everything you do
reflect your love of the truth."*

(Titus 2:7)