

UNIT 1

LESSON 1

WHERE DID THE BIBLE COME FROM?

Content Objectives

- The Bible includes 66 books written over many centuries.
- Scripture is the true and authoritative Word of God.
- God worked through various writers and circumstances to inspire Scripture.

Learning Objectives

Students should be able to ...

- Navigate the Bible by book, chapter, and verse
- Discuss the concept of biblical inspiration
- Recognize the literary divisions of the Bible and sort books into appropriate divisions

Vocabulary

- **Bible** – The collection of 66 books inspired by God
- **Epistle** – A written letter or message
- **Gospel** – The “good news” of Jesus; one of four New Testament books that record the work of Jesus
- **Holy Spirit / Holy Ghost** – A Person of the divine Trinity, existing as one unified God with the Father and the Son
- **Inspire** – To guide or influence
- **Prophecy** – In Scripture, a message from God, sometimes about the future
- **Prophet** – In Scripture, someone who shares a message from God
- **Revelation** – A revealing of truth
- **Scripture** – Religious writing; the words in the Bible
- **Scroll** – A roll of paper or some other writing surface; an ancient book format
- **Testament** – A record or promise; a name for the two main divisions of the Bible

GETTING STARTED

Teacher: Consider working through this lesson's exercises alongside your students. Students should be able to complete most exercises independently, but only after they can navigate Scripture by book, chapter, and verse.



LESSON 1

WHERE DID THE BIBLE COME FROM?

UNIT 1

The Greatest Book

The Bible is the most important book ever written. Whether you believe a single word in it, the Bible has made an enormous impact around the globe. You'll find this text in every country and in every major language, with more copies printed than any other book in history.

You might hear different names for this text:

NAME	ORIGIN
<i>The Bible</i>	From the Greek word <i>biblia</i> , meaning "books"
<i>Scripture</i>	From the Latin word <i>scriptura</i> , meaning "writing"
<i>The Word of God</i>	From the belief that God told writers to record His truth

Many Writers, One Author

Scripture was first recorded on tablets or **scrolls** by many people—likely several dozen different writers or scribes.

- Use your Bible's **Table of Contents** to find and complete each of the following book titles. We've given you a few letters as hints.

Some books
clearly name
their authors ...

...like Paul's letter to the

R O M A N S

Some books are
named after a
possible writer ...

...like the Book of

J O S H U A

scroll

A roll of paper or some other writing surface; an ancient book format

VOCABULARY

This study will highlight key terms that may be unfamiliar to you.

- If the term's meaning isn't clear from the text, you may see a yellow definition box nearby on the page.
- You can also find definitions at the end of each lesson (see SM p. 15) and in the book's glossary (SM p. 309).

Remember that people use terms in different ways. Sometimes the Bible itself uses the same word to mean different things. It takes time and patience to understand the full *sense* of a word. So you may wish to check other definitions in your Bible's glossary or in a Bible dictionary.

Some books have *unknown* writers ...

...like the Book of

J O B

or the letter to the

H E B R E W S

The Bible is still a single unit, with all the books fitting together to tell one story over many centuries. If we study this harmony, we can learn about the one Author who shared His Word with us.

God's Own Word

► Find the following verses in your Bible and complete the summaries.

- **2 Timothy 3:16-17** – According to these verses, all Scripture is *inspired*—that is, “breathed out” by God. Scripture also helps prepare us to do every kind of good work.
- **2 Peter 1:21** – These *prophecies* did not come just from men—but from those guided by the Holy Spirit/Ghost.

► But how did God guide these writers? Read the following verses and match each sentence to its best ending.

D	Exodus 34:27 – Speaking to Moses, God . . .	A. Copied events from other books.
C	1 Corinthians 2:13 – Paul could speak because the Spirit . . .	B. Listened to what eyewitnesses said about Jesus.
B	Luke 1:1-4 – Luke wrote a book after he . . .	C. Taught him spiritual truth.
A	2 Chronicles 20:34 – Some historical writers . . .	D. Told him exactly what to write down.

God worked through all these writings and methods to give us His own true Word. Today, we have many resources to help us study and understand Scripture—including books like this one!

GOD-BREATHED

In this verse, the writer describes how God gave us Scripture. God didn’t take existing human writings and breathe power into them. The Bible is special because its truth comes *from* God *through* people.

- How would you define the term *inspiration*?
- What have you heard about the Bible and inspiration?

inspire

To guide or influence

prophecy

In Scripture, a message from God, sometimes about the future

VERSE REFERENCES

The Bible is very big, but references can help you find a specific passage. Look at **2 Timothy 3 : 16**, which includes three pieces of information.

- **The Book** – This is the name of the book that includes the text. The Bible is a library of 66 books, and if you memorize their ordering, you can find any passage in a matter of seconds. Some books, like this one, have a number showing that it’s the first, second, or third in a series.

- **The Chapter** – This is a large section of text within the book. The original books did not include numbered chapters, but scholars added these divisions to organize passages.
- **The Verse** – These divisions are often just a few lines. Bible references may point to just one verse—or a range of verses, like “16–17.”



THE DIVINE AND THE HUMAN

The books of Scripture all have voices unique to their human writers, even as God worked through each person.

For example, the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—tell the same big story in four different ways. But each Gospel was inspired by God. It's like four artists sketching from four perspectives, including different angles and details, but each producing a picture that shows the same recognizable person—in this case, Jesus.

- Sometimes the human writers struggled with their limitations. They had questions that God didn't answer right away (see Psalm 22:1; 2 Cor. 12:1–10).
- But sometimes the Spirit helped people understand and write things they never could have imagined.

Ultimately, it's a mystery how God could work through a human mind to record the words He wanted us to read.

Listening to God

We have two ways to send a message: through our words and through our actions. God spoke to humanity in these two ways as well.

► Read **Hebrews 1:1–2** and complete the following summaries.

- **Verse 1** – Long ago, God spoke in many ways by the prophets.
- **Verse 2** – Now, God has spoken to us by His Son.

We can find God's *words* summarized in the Bible—and His *actions* summarized in the life of Jesus, His Son.

THE WORD OF GOD

In Scripture, the phrase “Word of God” refers to any way God communicated His truth:

- God gave messages through His prophets (Heb. 1:1).
- And Scripture itself is the written Word.
- And Jesus—God Himself in human form—is the living Word (see John 1:1; Rev. 12:13).

HOW IT ALL ADDS UP

► For the following pages, read about each section of the Bible, and then use your Bible's **Table of Contents** to write the missing book titles.

The Old Testament Divisions

The Old Testament includes Scripture inspired by God before the coming of Jesus. Almost all the text is in Hebrew, the language spoken by the people of Israel.

testament

A record or promise; a name for the two main divisions of the Bible

The Law

Moses wrote these first five books, which describe the beginnings of the world and the founders of Israel.

1. **Genesis**
2. *Exodus*
3. *Leviticus*
4. *Numbers*
5. **Deuteronomy**

History

These books cover a thousand years of Israel's history, including its victories, defeats, leaders, and prophets.

6. **Joshua**
7. *Judges*
8. *Ruth*
9. *1 Samuel*
10. *2 Samuel*
11. *1 Kings*
12. *2 Kings*
13. *1 Chronicles*
14. *2 Chronicles*
15. *Ezra*
16. *Nehemiah*
17. **Esther**

PRONOUNCING BOOK TITLES

Teacher: Consider reading through the titles together, pronouncing each one aloud. Note especially difficult or unfamiliar names:

- **Leviticus** (leh-VIH-tih-kus)
- **Deuteronomy** (doo-ter-ON-o-mee)
- **Numbered Books** (e.g., First Samuel)
- **Job** (with a long /ō/ sound)
- **Ecclesiastes** (ee-KLEE-zee-AS-teez)
- **Nahum** (NAY-huhm)
- **Habbakuk** (huh-BAA-kuhk)
- **Thessalonians** (thess-ah-LOH-nee-ans)
- **Philemon** (fye-LEE-mahn)

The Old Testament Divisions (cont.)

Poetry / Wisdom Literature

These books feature songs, poems, wise sayings, and other helpful teachings. Much of this text was written around the time of King David and King Solomon (except perhaps for the Book of Job).

- 18. Job
- 19. Psalms
- 20. Proverbs
- 21. Ecclesiastes
- 22. Song of Solomon / Song of Songs

The Major Prophets

These are the five largest books from Israel's prophets. Each book is named after its writer—except for Lamentations, which was also written by Jeremiah. These four prophesied during the age of Israel's kings.

- 23. Isaiah
- 24. Jeremiah
- 25. Lamentations
- 26. Ezekiel
- 27. Daniel

The Minor Prophets

These twelve prophets are called "minor" not because they're less important, but because they wrote much shorter books. They too prophesied during the time of Israel's kings.

- 28. Hosea
- 29. Joel
- 30. Amos
- 31. Obadiah
- 32. Jonah
- 33. Micah
- 34. Nahum
- 35. Habakkuk
- 36. Zephaniah
- 37. Haggai
- 38. Zechariah
- 39. Malachi

BOOKS OF THE HEBREW BIBLE

This order is most common in English Bibles today, but people throughout history have organized the books differently.

For example, Jews today organize the Hebrew Bible (what Christians call the Old Testament) into three main divisions:

- **Torah** – The Instruction, or Law, which includes the first five books
- **Nevi'im** – The Prophets, which include some historical books and the prophetic works
- **Ketuvim** – The Writings, which include some historical and poetic books

The New Testament Divisions

The New Testament records the life and teachings of Jesus, along with the start of the Christian church. Unlike the Old Testament, these books are written in Greek, the language used for trade and education in the Roman empire.

The Gospels

These four books record the story of Jesus' life, His death, and His rise from the dead.

40. Matthew

41. Mark

42. Luke

43. John

History

This single book explains how the church began. Some scholars will also include the Gospels in the same category.

44. Acts

gospel

The "good news" of Jesus; one of four New Testament books that record the work of Jesus

epistle

A written letter or message

Paul's Epistles

To better explain the work of Jesus, the teacher Paul wrote letters to Christians all over the Roman empire.

45. Romans

46. 1 Corinthians

47. 2 Corinthians

48. Galatians

49. Ephesians

50. Philippians

51. Colossians

52. 1 Thessalonians

53. 2 Thessalonians

54. 1 Timothy

55. 2 Timothy

56. Titus

57. Philemon

MEMORIZING BOOK ORDER

Teacher: To look up passages in a print Bible, students should at least be able to recall the general division of each book. This knowledge will save time even with digital Bibles.

- For the first few weeks of class, you may wish to recite the book titles together each day.

- Consider asking students to record the individual book titles onto index cards, shuffle them, and then order or sort them by division.
- An optional test is included in this study's assessments (p. [431]).

The New Testament Divisions (cont.)

THE WRITER OF HEBREWS

The Book of Hebrews does not mention its own writer by name, so we can't be sure who wrote it. Some scholars believe that the writer was Paul—and so include Hebrews within Paul's letters.

General Epistles

Other church leaders—including Peter, James, and John—also wrote letters to their fellow believers.

58. Hebrews

59. James

60. 1 Peter

61. 2 Peter

62. 1 John

63. 2 John

64. 3 John

65. Jude

Prophecy

This final book explores the past, present, and future, including God's plan to defeat evil and care for His people.

66. Revelation

revelation

A revealing of truth

BIBLE DRILLS

Teacher: As students become more confident with verse references, you may wish to help them practice finding passages quickly.

- Ask students to begin the drill sitting down and holding their physical Bibles closed.
- Say a Bible reference aloud and ask students to repeat the reference together.
- On your signal, students can open their Bibles and search for the reference.
- Once students have placed a finger on the verse reference, they can note their success by raising a hand or standing up.
- Ask the first student who stands to read the verse. This student can sit out the next round.
- Note any students having trouble. Follow up with help, as needed.

Consider looking up the following together:

- 1 Chronicles 16:8
- Colossians 3:14
- Genesis 1:4
- Habakkuk 2:2
- Isaiah 43:10
- John 1:1
- 1 John 4:19
- Matthew 24:35
- Proverbs 3:13

These drills can help even students who plan to use digital copies of Scripture for the rest of this study.

THINK ABOUT IT

- ▷ Why do you think God recorded His truth as a written text—instead of just spoken stories, pictures, or some other form?

Answers will vary.

- ▷ Write two or three of your biggest questions about the Bible. What would you like answered this year?

THE VALUE OF THE WORD

- How did you answer this first question? What’s the value of the written word compared to other formats and media?
- What are some big questions people have about the Bible? What things do people hope to learn from the Bible? How can we research these questions and topics?

VOCABULARY

- **Bible** – The collection of 66 books inspired by God
- **Epistle** – A written letter or message
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LESSON 2 • GENESIS

IN THE BEGINNING

Content Objectives

- The Book of Genesis describes the creation of the world.
- Moses wrote Genesis in part to teach the Israelites about their origins.
- All of Creation—including people—can reflect a part of God’s glory.

Learning Objectives

Students should be able to ...

- Explain the early themes of Genesis
- Recall the broad structure of the Creation week
- Discuss the implications of viewing nature as God’s own creation

Vocabulary

- **Earth** – In Scripture, the ground or land beneath us; the physical domain
- **Genesis** – From a Greek term meaning “beginning” or “origin”; the first book of the Bible
- **Glory** – The wonder or honor tied to someone
- **Heaven** – In Scripture, the sky above us; a spiritual realm beyond our own
- **The Image of God** – The part of humanity that reflects God
- **Pentateuch** – From a Greek term meaning “five scrolls;” the first five books of the Bible
- **Pharaoh** – A ruler of ancient Egypt

LESSON 2 • GENESIS

IN THE BEGINNING

The Five Scrolls

Pentateuch

From Greek, “five scrolls”

The Book of **Genesis** is the first book in the Bible—and the first in the section called the **Pentateuch**. Most of the text in these books was written by Moses, a man who led Israel during their earliest years as a nation.

- ▷ You won’t see Moses mentioned in Genesis, but we can find him in the second book of the Bible. Read the following passages and complete the statements.

Pharaoh

A ruler of ancient Egypt

- **Exodus 2:10** – Moses grew up in the care of **Pharaoh**’s daughter, even though he was born an Israelite. Through this unusual childhood, God prepared Moses to write and to lead.

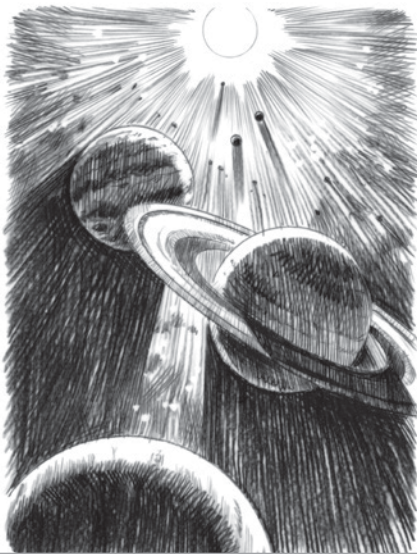
- **Exodus 3:1** – God first spoke to Moses on **Horeb / Sinai**, which people called the “mountain of God.” Here Moses would record many of the laws that formed the nation of Israel.

glory

The wonder or honor tied to someone

The Source of Light

The first verse of Scripture offers a simple but important truth about God: He made everything we see.



- ▷ Read **Genesis 1:1** and complete the summary.

In the beginning,
God created the
heaven/s and the
earth.

- ▷ But *how*? Read **Genesis 1:3** and explain what God did to create the first part of our universe.

God spoke, and light came into being.

- ▷ And *why* did God create the world? We find a clue from David the songwriter in **Psalms 19:1**. What do the heavens show us?

The glory of God

ORIGIN STORIES

- What’s the difference between a list of facts and a *story*?
- Why do people care about origin stories? What does it matter how our families, countries, or movements start?

WHO WAS MOSES?

Moses was born an Israelite at a time when the young nation had no land to call home. The Israelites lived as prisoners in Egypt, forced to work for Pharaoh. God worked through Moses to lead Israel out of Egypt, across the desert, and to the land of Canaan.

We know about Moses today through the first five books of the Bible—and through the nation he helped organize. The people of Israel started as a loose collection of tribes with a common ancestor, but Moses helped them become a unified people under laws, rituals, and teachings from God Himself. Israel didn’t always follow these rules—and neither did Moses—but God didn’t give up on them.

HEAVEN AND EARTH IN SCRIPTURE

- When we say *Earth* (with a capital *E*) today, we usually refer to the planet Earth—our home, the globe that orbits the sun. But in Scripture, the word *earth* (lowercase *e*) generally just means the ground underneath us—as opposed to the sky or sea.
- The word *heaven* can mean different things, too. In most cases, Scripture uses *heaven* or *firmament* to refer to the sky. But *heaven* might also mean a higher spiritual realm, above our reality, where God sits on His throne and where believers live on after death.

The Song of Creation

The universe did not appear all at once. God built it up piece by piece.

- Read the following verses in **Genesis 1**, and then write each part of Creation under the correct day.

day land

animals birds fish

light plants sky

moon stars sun

CREATING TRUTH

God speaks only truth—He never lies (see Num. 23:19; Heb. 6:18). So at the beginning of time, God needed to merely talk about the universe for it to become reality.

- He said, “Let there be light,” and suddenly light was (Gen. 1:3).
- He told the earth to send out all kinds of plants and living creatures, and the earth actually did so (vv. 11, 24)

It’s a mystery how God can speak something into being. Scripture doesn’t tell us exactly how the fabric of reality formed—or what occurred on a subatomic level. But Genesis does show us a God whose very word is power.

GOD FORMS THE WORLD

Day 1 - Verses 3-5

God created light
and divided the day
from the night.

Day 2 - Verses 6-8

God separated the waters below from
the sky above.

Day 3 - Verses 9-13

Dry land rose from
the sea, and plants
grew from the earth.

GOD FILLS THE WORLD

Day 4 - Verses 14-19

To offer light and mark the seasons,
God made the sun,
moon, and
stars.

Day 5 - Verses 20-23

The sea filled up with many
fish, and the
sky filled with birds.

Day 6 - Verses 24-25

The earth filled with all kinds of
animals.

- Finally, how did God finish His Creation? Write all of **Genesis 1:27** below.

Text will vary by translation.

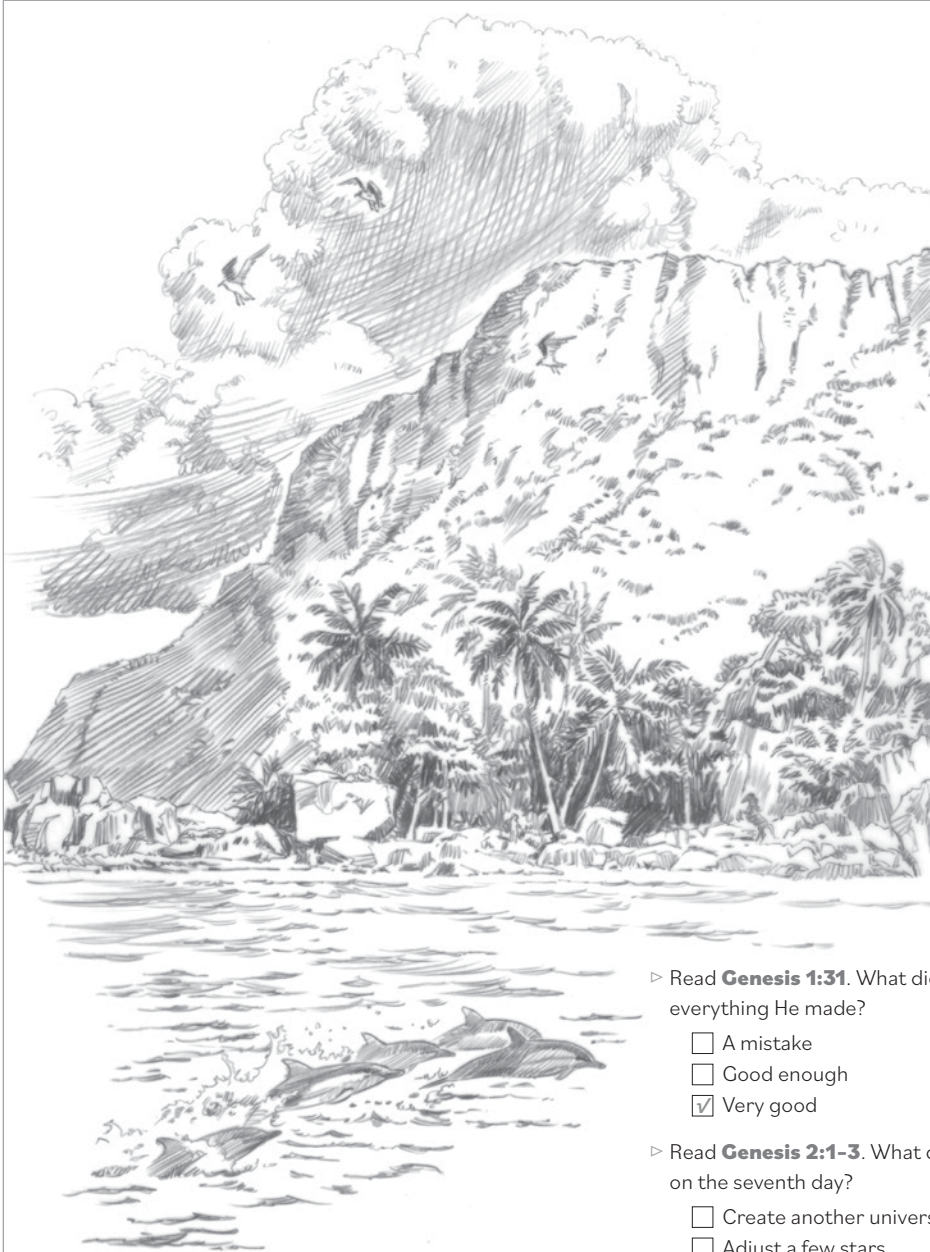
the image of God

The part of humanity
that reflects God

THE IMAGE OF GOD

God created all of humanity, both men and women, in His own image. This means that some part of us—something we can *be* or *do*—reflects God.

- This image makes us special. Unlike animals, humans can talk with God, follow Him, and share His love with others. God made us to have a relationship with Him.
- This image also explains why God condemns murder (see Gen. 9:6) and even hateful words (see James 3:8-10; Matt. 5:21-22). When we attack people, we attack the image of our Creator.



COMPETING EXPLANATIONS

Scripture presents God as the Creator of our world. By a power only He understands, God brought the universe into being (see Heb. 11:3).

But some people believe that the universe emerged on its own, without the help of any greater power or intelligence. *Atheists*—that is, people who do not believe that God exists—look for purely natural explanations.

- How does our belief or disbelief change the way we look at the world?
- Will Christians and atheists sometimes have different goals or outlooks? How so?

▷ Read **Genesis 1:31**. What did God call everything He made?

- ☐ A mistake
- ☐ Good enough
- ☒ Very good

▷ Read **Genesis 2:1-3**. What did God do on the seventh day?

- ☐ Create another universe
- ☐ Adjust a few stars
- ☒ Rest from His work

THE VALUE OF REST

- God is all-powerful, and He doesn't get tired. So why do you think He rested? And why did He tell us about it?
- If God did this as an example (see Exo. 20:9-11), what is the point of pausing, resting, or reflecting—even when we're not exhausted? What do we gain from calm and silence?

A Book of Beginnings

Genesis is a book of firsts. Israelites studied this to learn how their nation came to be—along with the start of many other things.

▷ Read the verses below and match each statement to the best ending.

D	Genesis 3:6 – People first disobeyed God by eating ...	A. Jubal.
F	Genesis 3:20-21 – The first husband and wife were ...	B. Enoch.
E	Genesis 4:1-2 – The first two children were ...	C. Tubal-cain.
B	Genesis 4:17 – The first city was named after ...	D. a certain fruit.
A	Genesis 4:21 – The first musician was ...	E. Cain and Abel.
C	Genesis 4:22 – The first metalworker was ...	F. Adam and Eve.

RESPECTING THE CREATOR

- How can nature help us understand God better?
- On the other hand, how is this kind of general knowledge limited? If people just looked at nature, what would they *not* know about God?
- Is it important to believe that God created us? How does this belief change the way we view ourselves?
- How did you answer this final question? What are some ways we can honor God as the Creator?

THINK ABOUT IT

- ▷ Think about God's role as our Creator. What are two ways we can show respect for our Creator and His work?

Answers will vary.

VOCABULARY

- **Earth** – In Scripture, the ground or land beneath us; the physical domain
- **Genesis** – From a Greek term meaning “beginning” or “origin”; the first book of the Bible
- **Glory** – The wonder or honor tied to someone
- **Heaven** – In Scripture, the sky above us; a spiritual realm beyond our own
- **The Image of God** – The part of humanity that reflects God
- **Pentateuch** – From a Greek term meaning “five scrolls;” the first five books of the Bible
- **Pharaoh** – A ruler of ancient Egypt

LESSON 3 • GENESIS

HOW IT FELL APART

Content Objectives

- Because of the first sin, the world now endures suffering, death, and separation from God.
- During Noah's time, God judged humanity with a great flood.
- God encouraged Noah's descendants to multiply and spread out over the world.

Learning Objectives

Students should be able to ...

- Recall key points in biblical narratives of the Fall, the flood, and the tower of Babel
- Define *sin* broadly as a decision to turn from God or break His law
- Explain how God's promise to the serpent foreshadows the work of Christ
- Discuss the value of God's promises and laws to our relationship with Him

Vocabulary

- **Ark** – A container; a ship with cargo
- **Christ / Messiah** – A person chosen for an important role
- **Covenant** – A set of agreements or promises between at least two people
- **Curse** – To punish, disapprove, or wish harm
- **The Fall** – The results of humanity's first sin
- **Serpent** – An old term for a snake or reptile
- **Sin** – To turn away from God; to defy, betray, or disobey Him
- **Subdue** – To control or use

A PERFECT WORLD

Read **Genesis 1:28–31** again.

- What would a perfect world look like? How would it differ from the one we see today?
- What parts of our world can we blame on evil?
- God made Adam and Eve caretakers of His world. Do we still have that responsibility today? If so, how can we best protect and nurture our natural environment?

LESSON 3 • GENESIS**HOW IT FELL APART****A Perfect Life**

When God formed the first man and woman, He gave them the greatest treasures in His Creation:

- His own image (Gen. 1:27)
- The breath of life (Gen. 2:7)
- A garden in Eden (Gen. 2:8)
- And of course, *each other* to love as husband and wife (Gen. 2:22–24)

Adam and Eve could enjoy all this without worrying about bad weather, sickness, death, or any of the troubles we face today. They walked naked and innocent through a land designed for their good.

As God spent time with Adam and Eve in the garden, He told them to fill the earth and to **subdue** it (Gen. 1:28). The entire world lay outside Eden for humanity to explore, to nurture, to shape, and to enjoy.

subdue

To control or use

- ▷ There was just one rule. Read **Genesis 2:16–17**. What did God say would happen if Adam and Eve ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?

They would die that same day.

- ▷ Read **Genesis 3:1–6** and answer the following:

- Why do you think Eve believed the **serpent**?

Answers will vary. Eve may have doubted God's warning, and the fruit seemed good to eat.

- Why do you think Adam **sinned**, too?

Answers will vary. He may simply have cared more about his relationship to Eve than his relationship to God.

SERPENT OF OLD

For Christians, the serpent in the garden represents Satan—a spiritual enemy of God and the champion of lies and evil (see Rev. 12:9).

serpent

An old term for a snake or reptile

sin

To turn away from God; to defy, betray, or disobey Him

DEFINING SIN

How would you explain the concept of *sin* to someone who's never heard of it?

- Is it possible to define *sin* without talking about God?
- Is sin a choice, or can people sin on accident?

JUST ONE RULE

If you could create just one rule for society, what would it be? Would this rule be clear, fair, or enforceable?

God planted a garden for Adam and Eve, then gave them a simple rule that—if they followed it—would keep them from facing all the confusion and suffering that comes from evil. Adam and Eve could have remained close to God and enjoyed all the wonders of His Creation, but they chose instead to satisfy a moment's curiosity.

The Fall

- What happened after Adam and Eve disobeyed God? Note the following verses in **Genesis 3** and match each sentence to its best ending.

A	Verses 7-10 – When Adam and Eve understood good and evil, they ...	A. became afraid of God and made themselves clothing.
F	Verses 12-13 – When questioned by God, Adam and Eve chose to ...	B. crawl and become an enemy of humanity.
B	Verses 14-15 – For the serpent's part in this sin, God curse d him to ...	C. face pain in childbirth and problems in marriage.
C	Verse 16 – From now on, women would have to ...	D. return to dust.
E	Verses 17-18 – From now on, men would have to ...	E. work hard to grow food.
D	Verse 19 – From now on, all people would die and ...	F. blame others for what they did.

curse

To punish, disapprove, or wish harm

We call this event **the Fall** because Adam and Eve lost their close relationship with God. The world now had to face the consequences of sin—including spiritual death.

But God did not give up on His Creation. From the very beginning, God knew that people would sin, so He already had a plan to save us. The plan would take thousands of years, but God Himself would see it through.

- God hinted at His plan in **Genesis 3:15**. What did God say?
- The serpent would be an enemy of the woman, and their descendants would be enemies, too.
 - The woman's descendant would bruise the serpent on the head, and the serpent would bruise that descendant on the heel.

This sounds like the first prophecy about Jesus. Many centuries after Adam and Eve, Jesus would be "bruised"—but then rise again to defeat evil.

- Read the following passages and answer each question.
- **Romans 5:8** – How did Jesus **Christ** pay for our sins?
He died for us.
 - **Romans 10:9** – If we trust that Jesus rose again from the dead, what will God do?
He will save us.

Christ / Messiah

A person chosen for an important role

THE FIRST PROPHECY

If Adam and Eve heard this promise, they likely didn't understand everything it meant. But here God seems to describe someone who would one day be harmed by evil—but utterly crush it in return. This matches the work of Jesus.

THE MESSIAH

The words *Messiah* and *Christ* mean the same thing: "anointed one."

In ancient times, people might anoint or pour oil and perfume over the head of someone picked for a special purpose—like ruling a country or going on a mission.

In the Bible, we read about God anointing people for special jobs, as well. These people were messiahs, or chosen ones. The most important Messiah appeared when God chose Himself—Jesus—to come to Earth, die for our sins, and rise again.

THE FALL AND CHRISTIANS

God lets people face the consequences of their sin. God offers us forgiveness today, but we still have to live in a world where people mistreat each other, suffer, and die. This will remain true until Jesus returns.

But for now, we Christians can look past the Fall. Jesus offers us a new life. Work and family can still give us trouble, but we can labor with purpose—to shine God's love and truth to the rest of the world. In many ways, Christians try to live as if they're still in the garden, walking close with God.

GOD'S COVENANTS

We read about many covenants in the Bible—between God and someone else, between two regular humans, or even between whole nations. God used this form of promise to inspire faith—He asks people to trust Him, and He then fulfills His promise.

Scripture includes many promises, both old and new, and as we learn about them, we'll see more ways that God works around us. God shows us His work in order to build our faith.

The Flood

► Read the following verses from **Genesis 6** and mark the best ending to each sentence.

Verses 5–6 – Long after Adam and Eve, humanity's sins grew and grew. As God saw this evil, He...

- ☐ celebrated it. ☒ felt sorry for making people. ☐ left our world alone.

Verse 7 – God decided to destroy everything...

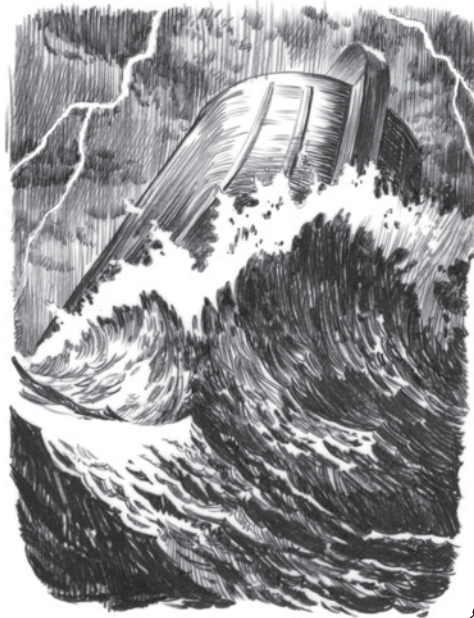
- ☐ in the heavens. ☐ under the sea. ☒ on the land.

Verses 8–9 – But Noah was a good man, one who...

- ☒ walked with God. ☐ had a long beard. ☐ had a large family.

God saved Noah and his family from the flood. He did this by forming a **covenant**—an agreement with clear promises and clear responsibilities.

► Read the following passages and mark each statement as *God's* promise or *Noah's* responsibility.



Genesis 6:13, 17

- ☒ God ☐ Noah would destroy everyone on land with a flood.

Genesis 6:14–18

- ☐ God ☒ Noah would build an **ark**.

Genesis 6:19

- ☐ God ☒ Noah would gather at least two of every animal.

Genesis 8:21–22

- ☒ God ☐ Noah would never curse the ground again.

Genesis 9:1–6

- ☐ God ☒ Noah would have descendants to fill the world.

Genesis 9:12–15

- ☒ God ☐ Noah would offer the rainbow as a sign.

THE RAINBOW

We often see rainbows after a rainstorm—when the sun breaks through the clouds at just the right angle, and the light refracts through water droplets in the air.

God told Noah to look at this sign and remember a very specific promise—that God would never destroy the world with a flood again.

To us, then, rainbows are a sign of mercy and kindness. People do terrible, sinful things, but God does not always punish them right away. When we see rainbows, we should remember to show patience like God does. He loved us, and we should share that love with others.

The Tower of Babel

► Read **Genesis 11:1-9** and then answer the following:

- In the years after Noah, when everyone spoke the same language, what did people decide to build (v. 4)?

A city with a tower that reached the sky

- To challenge the people to spread out over the world, what did God do (v. 7)?

He confused their language so they couldn't understand each other.

- What do you think was so bad about people staying in this city?

Answers will vary. The people weren't following God's instructions to spread out and multiply. They may have demonstrated sinful pride.



THINK ABOUT IT

► Why do you think God set rules for humanity? Why didn't He let us make up whatever morals we wanted?

Answers will vary.

THE POINT OF RULES

How did you answer this question?

- Does God have any right or authority to give people rules? Why or why not?
- Think of a human institution with rules—like a school or government. Why do people keep needing to make up new rules?
- Is it possible to follow all the stated rules of a school and *still* be a mean person? So if rules can't force us to be good, how do we become good people?

EXPLORING BABEL'S RUIN

Teacher: As time allows, ask students to present the narrative of **Genesis 11:1-9** in a different format. Depending on the project, students could work individually or in groups. Consider asking students to include essential details (and embellishments) in a ...

- Skit, live or on video
- News article or video
- Fictionalized story about someone in Babel
- Wordless comic

VOCABULARY

- **Ark** – A container; a ship with cargo
- **Christ / Messiah** – A person chosen for an important role
- **Covenant** – A set of agreements or promises between at least two people
- **Curse** – To punish, disapprove, or wish harm
- **The Fall** – The results of humanity’s first sin
- **Serpent** – An old term for a snake or reptile
- **Sin** – To turn away from God; to defy, betray, or disobey Him
- **Subdue** – To control or use

LESSON 4 • GENESIS

ABRAHAM & SARAH

Content Objectives

- God promised that the descendants of Abraham and Sarah would form a great nation in a land of their own.
- God counts faith in Him as righteousness.
- Abraham demonstrated faith in God by offering up his only son, Isaac.

Learning Objectives

Students should be able to ...

- Locate major regions visited by Abraham
- List at least two promises God made Abraham or Sarah
- Recall key points in the biblical account of the sacrifice of Isaac
- Define faith and discuss its relationship to obedience and righteousness

Vocabulary

- **Altar** – A table on which to make sacrifices
- **Angel** – A messenger from God; often a heavenly being
- **Bless** – To give help or approval
- **Conceive** – To become pregnant with; to form
- **Faith** – Trust; a belief in something not seen or proven
- **Famine** – A disaster that leaves too little food
- **Righteous** – Just or noble; declared good by God
- **Sacrifice** – To give up; in Scripture, to kill, burn, or set apart as an offering

LESSON 4 • GENESIS

ABRAHAM & SARAH

How do nations or cultures start? Some start with a place, an idea, or a family. In the case of Israel, God decided to build a nation with two unlikely people.

Abraham and Sarah lived over 2,000 years before the birth of Jesus. After leaving their home in Ur, they lived as nomads, traveling with all the flocks and workers in their household.

Abraham and Sarah did not have Scripture as we know it today, but they heard from God directly. Their story (Gen. 12–25) includes many ups and downs, victories and failures, but Scripture memorializes this couple as we all hope to be—people of faith and examples of God’s care.

Out of Ur

Many years after the events of Babel, a man named Abram lived in a Chaldean city called Ur. The Chaldeans spread across what is today Iraq, and they built cities with impressive libraries, tombs, and temples. People there worshiped many different gods, but Abram came to know the true Creator—the living God who had spoken with Adam, Eve, and Noah.

- We first read about Abram in Genesis 11–12 as he begins a journey out of Ur. Read the following verses to complete the map below.

- **Genesis 11:31** – Abram’s father took the family northwest from **Ur** to settle near a city called **H**__, somewhere between the **Tigris** and **Euphrates** rivers. **Label this dot on the map.**
- **Genesis 12:1, 4–5** – God called Abram to travel to a new land, so he and his wife Sarai traveled to **C**__, which lies between the **Jordan River** and the **Mediterranean Sea**. **Label this area.**
- **Genesis 12:10** – During a *famine*, Abram spent some time in **E**__, which stretched along the **Nile River**. **Label this area.**
- **Genesis 13:1** – Abram and Sarai eventually returned to **Canaan**. **Draw a line along the general route they took in Genesis 11–13.**

famine

A disaster that leaves too little food



A QUICK INTRODUCTION TO BIBLE GEOGRAPHY

Scripture records events that take place in what we now call the Middle East, with references to the broader Mediterranean, Africa, Asia, and Europe.

Teacher: As time allows, ask students to find the Middle East on a map of modern states. Discuss:

- The site of ancient Ur is in Iraq, toward the Persian Gulf in the southeast. What other modern territories did Abraham cross?
- Why wouldn’t Abraham and Sarah travel in a straight line west from Ur to Canaan?
- Using an estimate from an online map, how long would it take to drive from Ur to Canaan? Assuming decent roads and no major delays, about how long would it take to *walk* this far?
- What other biblical locations have you heard of? Does your Bible include any maps?



God's Promises

Why did Abram and Sarai travel hundreds of miles to an unknown land? Because they chose to follow God, who made them the start of a special, chosen nation. God renamed them *Abraham* ("the father of many") and *Sarah* ("noblewoman"), and He promised great things for their children.

▷ Read the following passages, and then match each one to its best summary.

A.
Genesis
12:2

B.
Genesis
12:3

C.
Genesis
12:6-7

D.
Genesis
13:16

E.
Genesis
18:10

A	Abram's descendants would be a great nation. His legacy would be a great blessing.
C	God would give them the land of Canaan.
B	God would bless their friends and curse their enemies. Through this nation, God would bless all peoples.
E	God would give Abraham and Sarah a son, despite their old age.
D	God would help them multiply to a number beyond counting.

bless

To give help
or approval

faith

Trust; a belief in
something not
seen or proven

conceive

To become
pregnant with;
to form

Taking God at His Word

▷ Read **Hebrews 11:8-11**. How did Abraham and Sarah follow God?

- By faith, Abraham traveled to the land that God promised.
- By faith, Sarah had a son in her old age—after she could no longer naturally **conceive**.

God's promises seemed impossible, but Abraham and Sarah believed them anyway. At first, Abraham laughed when God promised him a son (Gen. 17:17), and Sarah did the same (18:12), but in the end, they both trusted God to do what He said He'd do.

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

These promises outline the rest of Scripture. God built up the nation of Israel, sustained them in Canaan, and then brought the Messiah through them into the world.

God did not offer empty, vague blessings about children or land. Here God starts to reveal how He Himself would arrive as a human—and teach us how to become part of His family.

THE NATURE OF FAITH

Consider reading part of **Hebrews 11** together:

- **Verses 1-2** – Scripture defines *faith* as a belief in something we haven't proven yet. It's a kind of knowledge distinct from facts. Facts are proven information—we trust *something* like evidence or our senses. But with faith, we trust *someone*. Faith is therefore good or bad depending on where we place our faith.
- **Verse 3** – No one can prove that God created the world, so we must accept this truth in faith.
- **Verses 6-12** – Every good relationship builds up from trust, so we must trust God to follow Him. Noah, Abraham, and Sarah all obeyed in faith, which is why God called them righteous. Thanks to the people in Hebrews 11, we can learn how God proves Himself trustworthy.

BY FAITH ALONE

Read **Ephesians 2:8-9**. Paul writes again and again that our righteousness—that is, our “right-ness” with God—depends on our faith in Him. We can’t earn our way into His family. We have to trust what He’s done for us through Jesus.

Abraham and Sarah didn’t know God’s full plan for the Messiah. Again, they didn’t have the Bible. Still, God worked through their faith.

▷ God rewards that kind of faith. Write **Genesis 15:6** below.

Text will vary by translation.

righteous

Just or noble; declared good by God

After the fall of Adam and Eve, no regular human could be good enough for God. Everyone sins, and no one could ever deserve God’s love. But God offered His love anyway—people just needed faith to accept it. And when people trust what God says, God calls them righteous.

▷ God counted Abraham’s faith as righteousness, and the same can be true for us today. Read **Romans 3:22-24**. If we want the righteousness of God, in whom should we place our faith?

Jesus Christ

▷ If God calls people righteous because of their faith—and not because of their good works—why should we do anything good at all?

Answers will vary. Christians will do good out of love for God and other people. Part of true faith is obeying God.

Proving Abraham’s Faith

▷ God tested Abraham’s faith many times, and we find the greatest test in **Genesis 22:1-18**. Read the passage and mark each statement below as true or false.

God told Abraham to go to a mountain and sacrifice his only son, Isaac.	☒ True	☐ False
God demanded this sacrifice because He was angry with Abraham.	☐ True	☒ False
Abraham refused to go to Moriah.	☐ True	☒ False
At first, Isaac did not know that his father planned to sacrifice him.	☒ True	☐ False
Abraham told Isaac that God would provide a lamb for the offering.	☒ True	☐ False
An angel let Abraham murder his son on the altar .	☐ True	☒ False
God provided a ram to die, instead.	☒ True	☐ False
After this, God was displeased with Abraham.	☐ True	☒ False

sacrifice

To give up; in Scripture, to kill, burn, or set apart as an offering

angel

A messenger from God; often a heavenly being

altar

A table on which to make sacrifices

MORALITY AND HUMAN SACRIFICE

In God’s laws for Israel, He condemned murder in general (Exo. 20:13) as well as human sacrifices specifically (Lev. 20:2). So at first glance, this narrative feels like a contradiction. Couldn’t God test Abraham’s faith another way? It helps to remember that God doesn’t need sacrifice (see Micah 6:6-8). These rituals—whether they involve fruit, animals, or anything

else—symbolized part of a person’s relationship with God. Sacrifices could serve as offerings of thanks, of commitment—even of guilt or sorrow. But after Jesus made Himself the perfect sacrifice, God expects us now to *be* the symbol instead of reenacting it on an altar. Paul wrote that Christians are living sacrifices (Rom. 12:1). We are here to shine love and truth.



THINK ABOUT IT

- ▷ Do you believe God ever planned to let Abraham kill Isaac?

☐ Yes. ☐ No.

- ▷ Why or why not? What verses in Genesis 22 support your answer?

Answers will vary. Verses may

include 22:5, 8, 11, 13–14.

Isaac did not die on that altar, but he was still sacrificed. His descendants would serve as an example of God's loyalty and care. Through this one nation, God has blessed all peoples.

- ▷ Name something that is very important to you. How can you use this gift to honor God and do good?

Answers will vary.

VOCABULARY

- **Altar** – A table on which to make sacrifices
- **Angel** – A messenger from God; often a heavenly being
- **Bless** – To give help or approval
- **Conceive** – To become pregnant with; to form
- **Faith** – Trust; a belief in something not seen or proven
- **Famine** – A disaster that leaves too little food
- **Righteous** – Just or noble; declared good by God
- **Sacrifice** – To give up; in Scripture, to kill, burn, or set apart as an offering

THE REAL SACRIFICE

- How did you respond to these questions? What verses suggest that Isaac wasn't going to die?
- What do you think Isaac thought of all this? Why didn't he run?
- What gift did you consider for the last question? What can we offer back to God—not by destroying it, but by *using* it?

AN IMPOSSIBLE PICTURE

Abraham waited many years before God finally gave him a son. By offering to give Isaac back, Abraham trusted God to fulfill the promise of a nation anyway.

God's command was an impossible riddle, one He solved by showing that an offering could live *after* the moment of sacrifice.

Read **Hebrews 11:17–19**. Here the writer suggests that Abraham trusted that God could raise the dead—even though God hadn't even told him this.

In many ways, Isaac pictured Jesus. They were both sons led up a mountain to die, despite their innocence. They both faced death willingly, even carrying the tools of sacrifice themselves.

LESSON 5 • GENESIS

THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL

Content Objectives

- The name *Israel*, which God gave to Jacob, also refers to Abraham's descendants.
- Joseph demonstrated patience and forgiveness during his time in Egypt.
- God providentially worked through Joseph's life to save His people.

Learning Objectives

Students should be able to ...

- Recognize several figures among Abraham's early descendants
- Recall key events from the life of Joseph, including his responses to misfortune
- Explain how we can contextualize immoral practices like polygamy and slavery
- Discuss ways that the concept of providence might apply to biblical narratives or modern situations

Vocabulary

- **Concubine** – A female partner who may bear children but lacks the full privileges of a wife
- **Polygamy** – Marrying more than one spouse at a time
- **Providence** – God's work through events, ultimately for the good of His children
- **Slave** – A forced, unpaid laborer; often a captive

LESSON 5 • GENESIS

THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Do you know how the nation of Israel got its name? What does it mean?

In this lesson, we will read about how God protected Abraham's family as they grew into a nation.

Israel's Family Tree

► Just as God promised, Abraham's family multiplied. Read the following passages to complete the names on the family tree:

- **Genesis 16:1-2** – Before the birth of Isaac, Abraham and Sarah tried to have a son through a **concubine** named **H**_____.
- **Genesis 25:1** – Years later, after the death of Sarah, Abraham married **K**_____.
- **Genesis 24:62-67** – Isaac married a woman from Nahor named **R**_____.
- **Genesis 25:21-26** – Later, God told her that two nations were in her womb. She gave birth to twin boys: first **E**_____, and then **J**_____.
- **Genesis 35:23-26** – Isaac's younger son had twelve sons by four women. List the sons from each mother.

concubine

A female partner who may bear children but lacks the full privileges of a wife

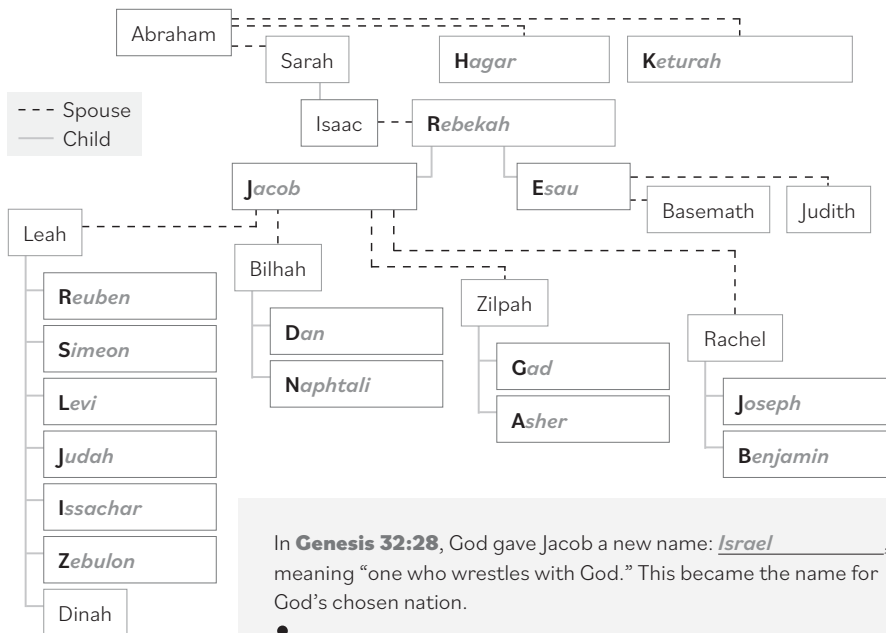
polygamy

Marrying more than one spouse at a time

ANCIENT POLYGAMY

We read about many men in the Bible who had more than one wife—including men who had faith in God. But polygamy was not what God wanted for marriage. In the garden, God put a husband and a wife together to become “one flesh” (Gen. 2:21–24)—wholly devoted to each other. Jesus taught that people should honor this unique bond for life (Matt. 19:3–6).

Many people view marriage in sinful or unhelpful ways. Because of the Fall, conflict will naturally arise between men and women (Gen. 3:16–19). But if we follow Christ, we can honor God's commands and build our own marriages on mutual love, service, and respect.



JACOB'S JOURNEY

God planned to make Jacob the heir to all the promises of the Abrahamic covenant. But Jacob was a trickster who angered Esau so much that Jacob had to flee from his home (Gen. 27). During Jacob's exile, God still blessed him. Jacob got married, had children, and collected enough flocks to consider himself wealthy. On the way back to Canaan, Jacob wrestled and fought with a mysterious figure who may have been God Himself. This encounter left Jacob with a new name. Read **Genesis 32:24–31**.

JOSEPH'S COAT

Teacher: If your class uses several versions of the Bible, ask different students to read

Genesis 37:3.

The Hebrew phrase at the end of this verse is *ketonet passim*—"a tunic of various colors." This might refer to a coat with different hues, or possibly an elaborate robe with many intricate pieces. Regardless, in a time when people wove fabric and stitched clothing by hand, this was an incredible gift.

**slave**

A forced, unpaid laborer; often a captive

SLAVERY IN SCRIPTURE

Like polygamy, slavery was an awful reality in ancient times, and the practice appears in many forms throughout Scripture. When we read about "slaves" or "servants," the writer may mean one of three things:

- **Chattel Slavery** – In this case, people are bought and sold like property. They remain captives with few, if any, rights.
- **National Servitude** – Here, an entire people group is forced to work or pay tribute to another.
- **Indentured Labor** – People might sell years of their own labor to pay off a debt, but they still have rights and protections under the law. They bind themselves temporarily to a master or household.

The Life of Joseph

As you might imagine, Jacob's family life was messy. But God can work in messed-up families, and He did great things through one of Jacob's sons.

- Read the following passages and mark the best ending for each sentence.

Genesis 37:3 – Joseph received a special coat because Jacob ...

- ☐ made a coat for all his children.
☐ sent him on a special mission.
☒ loved him more than the other sons.

Genesis 37:18–20 – Joseph's older brothers envied and hated him—so much that one day they decided to ...

- ☐ wait for Joseph to move away. ☒ kill him and say an animal ate him. ☐ ask their father to treat them fairly.

Genesis 37:26–28 – But at the last minute, the brothers instead ...

- ☐ forced him to work as a **slave** in their own fields. ☒ sold him to slave traders and told Jacob that he died. ☐ lifted Joseph out of the pit and sent him back to Jacob.

Genesis 39:1–3 – Joseph was held captive in Egypt, but thankfully ...

- ☐ he had a plan to escape back to Canaan. ☐ being a slave to Potiphar wasn't very difficult. ☒ the Lord helped him succeed in anything he did.

Genesis 39:19–20 – After Joseph was falsely accused of a crime ...

- ☒ Potiphar put him in prison. ☐ Potiphar's wife apologized. ☐ he proved his innocence.

Genesis 41:14–16 – Joseph got out of prison by helping Pharaoh ...

- ☐ conquer the land of Canaan. ☐ sleep better at night. ☒ understand a dream from God.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?

Teacher: If students complete the above exercise independently, consider reviewing the answers together, then ask students what makes the wrong answers wrong—or why someone hearing the story for the first time might be tempted to believe these false statements.

STUDENT MANUAL • PAGE 33

Genesis 41:38-41 – Pharaoh’s dream warned of a coming famine, so he ...

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| ☒ put Joseph in charge of Egypt to save up food. | ☐ put Joseph in prison for bringing bad news. | ☐ refused to believe anything that Joseph said. |
|--|--|--|

Genesis 41:50-52 – Joseph married an Egyptian woman, Asenath, and they had two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. The two names show that ...

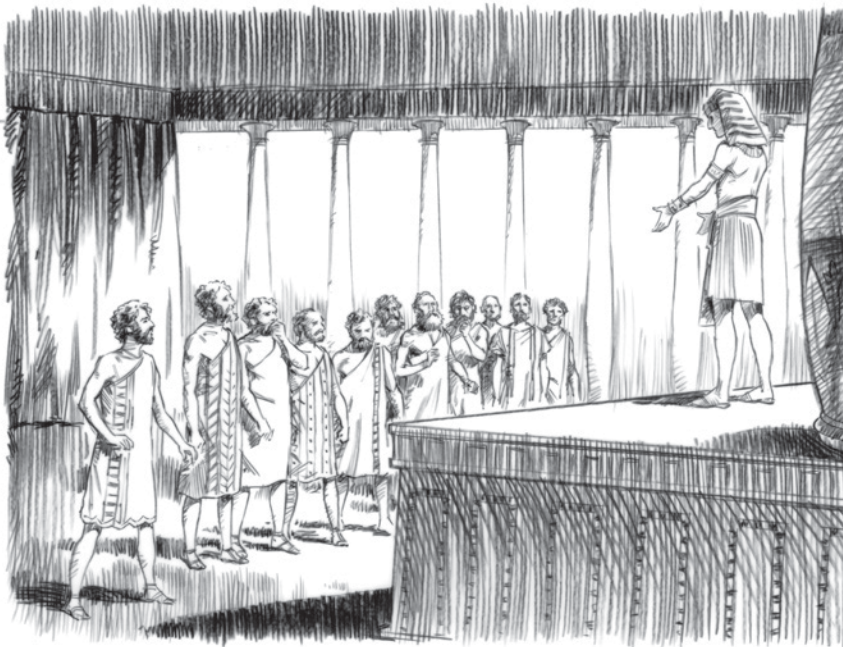
- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| ☐ Joseph hoped to get revenge. | ☒ Joseph stayed thankful to God. | ☐ Joseph had an unhappy marriage. |
|---|--|--|

Genesis 42:1-2 – During the seven-year famine, Jacob sent his sons ...

- | | | |
|---|--|------------------------------------|
| ☐ to Ur to buy flocks. | ☒ to Egypt for food. | ☐ a letter. |
|---|--|------------------------------------|

Genesis 45:3-5 – Joseph met his brothers in Egypt, but after so many years, they did not recognize him. Joseph tested them to see if they had ever changed their ways, and then he finally ...

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☒ revealed his identity and comforted them. | ☐ put them all in prison, except his favorite, Benjamin. | ☐ sent them back to Canaan without any food. |
|---|---|---|



JOSEPH'S SONS

Read Genesis 41:50-52.

How would you summarize Joseph’s attitude toward God during this time?

Later, when Jacob and Joseph reunited, Jacob blessed Joseph’s sons and counted them among his own, alongside their uncles (Gen. 48:1-5).

DREAMS AND JOSEPH

Dreams played an important part of Joseph’s life. In a time without Scripture, God spoke to people in different ways:

- As a young man in Canaan, Joseph dreamed that his brothers’ sheaves of grain bowed down to his own (Gen. 37:6-8). In a similar dream, the sun, moon, and eleven stars bowed down (v. 9). If this dream came from God, it seemed to point to the moment Joseph’s brothers bowed down to him in Egypt.
- With God’s help, Joseph interpreted the dreams of two other prisoners (Gen. 40:1-23).
- And in a critical moment, God gave Joseph the meaning of Pharaoh’s dream (Gen. 41:1-37). The king dreamed of seven large cows and seven starving ones—which pointed to seven years of abundance and seven years of famine. Joseph interpreted this as a warning to prepare Egypt.

GOD MEANT IT FOR GOOD

- How did you answer these questions? How could someone like Joseph do what he did?
- Do you think Joseph forgave his brothers *before* he saw them again in Egypt? Why or why not?
- Can you think of a bad situation in your life that God turned toward good?
- Some bad things seem to have no explanation. If we can't understand the bad situation, what can we still do?

A LIFE IN FIVE ACTS

Teacher: Consider dividing the class into five groups and ask each to read and summarize the following events for the other students:

- **Genesis 37** – Joseph in Canaan
- **Genesis 39** – Joseph and Potiphar
- **Genesis 40** – Joseph in prison
- **Genesis 41** – Joseph and Pharaoh
- **Genesis 45:1–46:7** – Jacob's family reunited

Given the length of Genesis 42–44, you may wish to summarize these chapters for the class yourself.

STUDENT MANUAL • PAGE 34

Joseph forgave his brothers for the terrible thing they did to him. More than that, he brought them to Egypt to live out the famine. With them came their families, their flocks, and their elderly father Jacob, who was overjoyed to hear that Joseph, the son he lost 30 years ago, still lived (Gen. 46:29–30).

THINK ABOUT IT

- ▷ Joseph's brothers hurt him deeply. They robbed him of many years with his family. But now, as Pharaoh's second-in-command, he could do anything that he wanted. How do you think most people would act with Joseph's power?

Answers will vary.

- ▷ Read **Genesis 50:18–21**. In your own words, summarize what Joseph thought about his time as a slave in Egypt.

- ▷ How could someone think this way? What would a person have to believe?

VOCABULARY

- **Concubine** – A female partner who may bear children but lacks the full privileges of a wife
- **Polygamy** – Marrying more than one spouse at a time
- **Providence** – God's work through events, ultimately for the good of His children
- **Slave** – A forced, unpaid laborer; often a captive

GOD'S PROVIDENCE

In Joseph's life we find a great example of God's **providence**. Many bad things happened to Joseph, but God worked through all of them to do good—to strengthen Joseph and put him in just the right place to save entire nations from starvation.

God did not cause Joseph's brothers to sell him into slavery. They chose to sin. But they did not

surprise God, and He already knew how to turn this bad situation into a good one.

With care and patience, we can see God's providence in the rest of Israel's history. They often did wrong, and they often suffered, but God never stopped working toward their good.

God makes a similar promise for believers today. **Read Romans 8:28.**

UNIT 1 • REVIEW ACTIVITIES

Books of the Bible

Copy and administer the optional Books of the Bible Test (p. [431]).

- If used as practice, review the answers together.
- If graded, consider offering the test twice over 2–3 weeks. Grade each student's highest score.

Days of Creation

Before this review game, write the following items on slips of paper and then put them into a bowl.

sea creatures	light	sun
birds	man	stars
dry land	moon	land animals
plants	the sky	woman

On the board, draw and number seven large circles to represent the days described in Genesis 1–2.

Divide the class into two teams. Alternating between teams, ask individual students to come forward, select an item at random from the bowl, then write the item within the appropriate circle.

After a student writes the item in a circle, ask the team to vote on whether the student chose the correct day. If the student is correct, award two points, and if the team majority is correct, award an extra point—for a maximum of three points.

Ten Questions

Play a guessing game with the following names. To figure out each name, students could prompt you or a classmate with up to ten yes-or-no questions, including a single guess. Some names will be much easier to guess than others.

Abraham	Gad	Manasseh
Adam	Hagar	Noah
Benjamin	Isaac	Potiphar
Cain	Jacob	Rachel
Ephraim	Judah	Rebekah
Esau	Joseph	Reuben
Eve	Leah	Sarah

Covenants

Ask the class—together or in small groups—to list as many of God's promises or covenants that they can find in Lessons 1–5. As time allows, let students search the Book of Genesis for even more.

As students share their findings, list the major covenants on the board, including ...

- God's promises to Adam, Eve, and the serpent
- God's covenant with Noah
- God's covenant with Abraham, including related promises to Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, and Jacob
- The dreams God revealed to Joseph

Scripture Memory Relay

Choose a memory verse from Lessons 1–5 and organize a relay race with two teams. The following assumes that all students memorized from the same Bible translation:

- During the race, each team sends students up to the board, one at a time, to write the next word of the verse and then return to the group.
- If a student writes the wrong word, the next student in line can erase it, write the correct one, and then return to the group.
- Students cannot write or correct more than one word during a turn.
- The first team to complete the verse wins.

Vocabulary

Divide the class into two teams. For each round, begin reading the definition of a random vocabulary word, but stop when the first student raises a hand.

- If that student can say the term that matches the definition, award that team two points. Students who guess correctly should sit out for one round.
- If the student is wrong, give the other team a chance to discuss and guess the term for a point.

LESSON 6 • EXODUS

OUT OF EGYPT

Content Objectives

- God sent Moses to lead the people of Israel out of slavery in Egypt.
- With ten plagues, God judged Egypt and demonstrated His power over nature and false gods.
- The Passover serves as a reminder of how God rescued Israel.

Learning Objectives

Students should be able to ...

- Recall key events leading up to Israel's exodus from Egypt
- Explain the significance of the ten plagues as both signs and judgment
- Discuss the purpose of miracles within biblical narratives
- Describe several symbols in the Passover feast

Vocabulary

- **Boil** – A swollen, often painful sore on the skin
- **Exodus** – A departure or exit, often by a large group
- **Firstborn** – The first child born to a husband and wife; in some cultures, given special rights and responsibilities
- **Locust** – A destructive, swarming grasshopper
- **Leaven** – Yeast or fermented dough, often used to help fresh dough rise
- **Miracle** – An event that reveals the supernatural; a clear act of God
- **Plague** – A disaster, often involving widespread death or disease
- **Sojourn** – A temporary stay, often by refugees

LESSON 6 • EXODUS

UNIT 2

OUT OF EGYPT

The Sojourn

► The Book of **Exodus** picks up the story of Israel several centuries after the end of Genesis. To summarize this period, read **Exodus 1:6-14** and complete the statements below.

- Over the years, the Israelites multiplied / increased until they filled the land of Egypt (v. 7).
- Then a new Pharaoh arose who did not know Joseph (v. 8). The Egyptians began to fear the Israelites because of their numbers.
- The Egyptians put slave-masters / taskmasters over the Israelites and forced them to build cities for Pharaoh (v. 11).
- The enslaved Israelites continued to multiply, even though the Egyptians made their work as difficult as possible (v. 12).

NAMES FOR GOD

If we couldn't call God *God*, what name would do Him justice?

In this lesson, we'll see how God reintroduces Himself to His people.

sojourn

A temporary stay, often by refugees

exodus

A departure or exit, often by a large group



NAMES FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

In your Bible, depending on the verse or your translation, you'll find different names for Abraham's descendants:

- **Hebrews** – Perhaps derived from the ancient word *Ibriy* (iv-ree), meaning “the one from beyond.” Abraham's descendants generally used the name while living as nomads.
- **Israelites** – Referred to people in the nation that formed in the generations after Jacob, or “Israel.” The people were often called the “children of Israel”—as in, the descendants of Jacob.
- **Jews** – A term possibly related to territory occupied by the tribe of Judah. This name became more common when the people were scattered outside of Israel and perhaps lost their tribal connections.

THE TIME OF THE EXODUS

Historians disagree about when the Exodus took place, but Christian and Jewish scholars generally place it in the 1400–1200s B.C. The exact date depends on how we match up events in Scripture with evidence from broader history.

- Exodus refers to storage cities that may have been built in honor of Rameses II (see 1:11). Also known as Rameses “the Great,” this Pharaoh ruled over the last great era of imperial Egypt before its long decline.
- Archaeological evidence of Israelites in Canaan dates back to at least 1200 B.C., though the people may have arrived much sooner.

But these troubles did not surprise God. As He had with Joseph, God planned to turn this situation toward good.

- Go back to **Genesis 15:13–14**. God said that Abraham’s descendants would be enslaved in another land for 400 years. How did God promise to end this enslavement (v. 14)?

Their oppressors would be judged, and the Israelites would leave the land with great wealth.

Calling Moses

- Read the following passages and mark the best ending for each sentence.

Exodus 1:15–17 – To control Israel’s numbers, Pharaoh ordered the Hebrew midwives to murder any new baby boys. The midwives chose to ...

- ☐ obey his command to the letter. ☐ murder some boys to keep the peace. ☒ disobey him out of respect for God.

Exodus 2:1–3 – When a Levite woman gave birth to a boy, she hid him for several months and eventually ...

- ☐ disguised him as a baby girl. ☐ turned him over to Egyptian officials. ☒ put him in a basket on the Nile.

Exodus 2:4–10 – This boy was eventually adopted and named Moses by ...

- ☐ Hebrew farmers. ☒ Pharaoh’s daughter. ☐ a boatman.

Exodus 2:11–15 – As an adult, Moses fled Egypt because he ...

- ☒ faced punishment for killing an Egyptian. ☐ wanted to see God’s promised land for himself. ☐ was threatened by two Hebrew workers.

Exodus 2:16–22 – Moses settled in the land of Midian and married ...

- ☒ Zipporah. ☐ Reuel. ☐ Gershom.

Exodus 2:23–24 – After many years, when the people of Israel cried out in suffering, God began to ...

- ☐ start over with a new nation. ☐ leave Israel in Egypt forever. ☒ fulfill His promises to Abraham.

MOSES’ FAMILY

Moses was born to a Levite couple—Amram and Jochebed. Moses had at least one sister named Miriam, who served as a prophetess for Israel. They also had a younger brother, Aaron, who led in worship and sacrifices.

Moses was about 40 years old when he left Egypt. In Midian, he married Zipporah, the

daughter of a priest named Reuel (a.k.a. Jethro; see Exo. 18:2–4). Moses and Zipporah had at least two sons together.

At one point, Miriam and Aaron criticized Moses for the woman he married—maybe because she wasn’t an Israelite or because she had darker skin (see Num. 12)—but God firmly corrected them.

Exodus 3:1-4 – One day, as Moses tended a flock near Mt. Horeb, God spoke out from a ...

- ☐ fiery sunset.
- ☒ bush that burned but was not consumed.
- ☐ cave shining with a bright light.

Exodus 3:5-8 – After introducing Himself to Moses, God said that He planned to ...

- ☒ rescue the Israelites and bring them to a good land.
- ☐ begin a new nation from Moses and his wife, Zipporah.
- ☐ destroy all the Egyptians and raze their monuments to the ground.



THE MOUNTAIN OF GOD

Scripture includes two names for this mountain: *Horeb* and the later, more common *Sinai*. It was from this mountain that God gave His laws to Israel—all while surrounding the mountain in fire and smoke (Exo. 19:18). This mountain is one of the most important places in Israel's history, though the exact location is debated. We'll discuss this more in the next lesson.

Exodus 3:10-11 – When God told Moses to confront Pharaoh, Moses responded by asking, basically ...

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| ☐ "Who are you —to tell a former prince of Egypt what he should do?" | ☐ "Who is Pharaoh —to say no to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?" | ☒ "Who am I —to go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" |
|--|--|--|

Exodus 3:12-14 – God promised to be with Moses, and when asked for His name, He called Himself ...

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| ☒ "I AM." | ☐ "the First God." | ☐ "the All-Seer." |
|---|---|--|

Exodus 4:1-5 – When Moses said that the Israelites wouldn't believe him, God promised to reveal several **miracles** through him, including ...

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ striking Pharaoh with lightning. | ☐ granting Moses extra strength. | ☒ turning a staff into a serpent. |
|---|---|---|

Exodus 4:10-15 – When Moses continued to protest, saying that he spoke poorly, God promised to ...

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| ☐ banish all his fears whenever he got close to Pharaoh. | ☒ stay with him, plus send his brother Aaron as a speaker. | ☐ help him speak ten times faster than normal. |
|---|--|---|

miracle

An event that reveals the supernatural; a clear act of God

THE "I AM"

Jews and Christians consider this the most holy name for God. In Hebrew, it's pronounced something like *Yahweh*, though ancient scribes would not even spell out the entire word, out of a desire not to say it flippantly or disrespectfully. Even today, when rabbis read Scripture out loud and reach this term, they say *Adonai* ("Lord") instead.

MIRACLES IN SCRIPTURE

When God created the universe, He established the various laws of space and time. In modern science, we study these forces, and they have proven highly predictable—at least the ones we understand so far.

- But would God ever break these rules?
- Why would He do so?

In Scripture, it seems that God occasionally intervened through supernatural means to prove that He was present and working. God accomplished miracles at special times through special people—often prophets like Moses or Elijah who had a specific message for Israel. God used miracles to prove His power and direct attention to His Word.

LOCUSTS

People used to think that locusts and grasshoppers were entirely separate species, but we now know that some species of grasshoppers can undergo a chemical change that makes them act abnormally.

When grasshoppers get crowded enough in one area, they become agitated, and their bodies release higher levels of serotonin across their nervous system. They begin to swarm frantically and look for a new home, all while eating much, much more food. These swarms can devastate large tracts of farmland, even today.

**boil**

A swollen, often painful sore on the skin

locust

A destructive, swarming grasshopper

firstborn

The first child born to a husband and wife; in some cultures, given special rights and responsibilities

The Ten Plagues

Pharaoh scoffed at Moses' demand, and he scoffed at Israel's God. Egypt depended on Hebrew slaves, and Pharaoh would not simply let all this free labor leave. So God the Creator proved Himself to Pharaoh. He brought His power down onto the Egyptians in a way anyone could understand—through ten horrific plagues.

► Read the passages in **Exodus** below and finish summarizing each plague.

1

7:20 – The water in the Nile changed into blood.

2

8:6 – Frogs rose up and covered the land.

3

8:17 – Dust turned to gnats / lice and went everywhere.

4

8:24 – Swarms of flies ruined the land.

5

9:3 – All cattle / livestock / herd animals became sick.

6

9:10 – Boils broke out on both people and animals.

7

9:18, 23 – Hail fell, along with thunder and fire.

8

10:12 – Locusts came to eat any crops left.

9

10:21-22 – Darkness covered Egypt for three days.

10

11:4-6 – The firstborn children in Egypt would die if their households did not listen to God.

These plagues demonstrated God's power over nature. The Egyptians worshiped many gods—all supposedly powerful beings who controlled the Nile, the crops, the sky, or the sun. But none of these gods showed up to challenge the I AM.

PLAGUES AND THE GODS

Remember that in Scripture, miracles aren't just for show—they exist to communicate a message. God chose to punish Egypt for holding His children captive, and He did so while systematically proving the uselessness of their gods. Each miracle seems designed to insult an Egyptian deity.

- The Nile was worshiped as the source of all life, but God rendered it undrinkable.
- Egyptian religion included many animal symbols. Frogs represented fertility, while flies were associated with military persistence.
- Some animals were tied to specific deities—like cows to the goddess Hathor.
- The highest Egyptian deity, Ra, was the god of the sun. Pharaohs claimed to descend from him, and they relied on him for their authority.

The Passover

After each of the plagues, Pharaoh and the Egyptians refused to let the Israelites go. With disaster after disaster, God continued to judge the slavemasters while protecting His people. Finally, before the tenth and final plague, God gave Israel some special instructions.

► Read the verses in **Exodus 12** and match each sentence to its best ending.

A	Verses 5-6 – If able, each household was to kill ...	A. a male lamb without blemish or defect.
B	Verse 7 – They should spread its blood ...	B. around the door of their house.
D	Verse 8 – They should roast and eat it along with ...	C. their clothes, shoes, and walking sticks.
C	Verse 11 – Meanwhile, they needed to keep ready ...	D. bitter herbs and bread without <i>leaven</i> .

leaven

Yeast or fermented dough, often used to help fresh dough rise

► Read **Exodus 12:12-14**. How did the feast of “the Passover” get its name?

God passed through the Egyptians and judged them, but He passed over anyone who followed His instructions.

With Egypt devastated by destruction and death, Pharaoh finally let his slaves go. Moses and the Israelites simply walked away, taking all kinds of gold and treasure that the Egyptians heaped on them (Exo. 12:33-36). In this way, God fulfilled His promise to Abraham.

THINK ABOUT IT

► After many years in slavery, the people of Israel did not have much hope or trust in God. Read **Exodus 6:5-8** and **7:4-5**, then summarize why God sent the ten plagues.

Answers will vary. To show the Israelites His presence and the Egyptians His power

SO THAT THEY KNOW HIM

- How did you respond to this prompt? Why did God bring His people out of Egypt loudly and suddenly—instead of quietly and gradually?
- At special times throughout Scripture, God worked through miracles and wonders—things we don’t necessarily see today. Now that Christ has completed His sacrifice and given us a complete Scripture, do you think God still does miracles? How so? What wonders can we see right now?

THE PASSOVER LAMB

Teacher: Consider asking students to write a brief report about the passover feast. Students could address one of the following:

- What are the essential elements of the feast (Exo. 12:1-16), and what might they represent?
- How do Jews celebrate the *Seder* (Passover meal) today?
- In what ways can the Passover lamb represent Christ? Note John 1:29; 1 Peter 1:17-19; and Revelation 5:11-13.

OUT OF CONTROL

We do not control history, but God does. Read **Exodus 4:21** and **Proverbs 21:1**.

Pharaoh, through his own pride and sin, resisted God. But God somehow *kept* Pharaoh stubborn and unyielding so that the Israelites and Egyptians would see God's power. God punished evil and protected the innocent, and He made sure that Pharaoh saw justice done.

Whenever we see trouble and chaos around us, we can at least pray for a glimpse of God's hand at work. We can trust that He will turn evil toward good—and turn confusion toward clarity.

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- If you live during a time of great disaster, chaos, or uncertainty, what can you ask God to do for you? What can you pray?

Answers will vary.

VOCABULARY

- **Boil** – A swollen, often painful sore on the skin
- **Exodus** – A departure or exit, often by a large group
- **Firstborn** – The first child born to a husband and wife; in some cultures, given special rights and responsibilities
- **Locust** – A destructive, swarming grasshopper
- **Leaven** – Yeast or fermented dough, often used to help fresh dough rise
- **Miracle** – An event that reveals the supernatural; a clear act of God
- **Plague** – A disaster, often involving widespread death or disease
- **Sojourn** – A temporary stay, often by refugees

LESSON 7 • EXODUS

INTO THE WILDERNESS

Content Objectives

- God guided the young nation of Israel with miracles, laws, and rituals.
- The Ten Commandments are an important summary of God’s moral law.
- The wilderness Tabernacle represented God’s presence to the people.

Learning Objectives

Students should be able to ...

- Locate key places on Israel’s journey into the wilderness of Sinai
- Recite each of the Ten Commandments with minimal prompting
- Define and explain terms critical to understanding the Ten Commandments
- Recognize and explain the significance of key items related to the Tabernacle

Vocabulary

- **Anoint** – To pour oil over; to show that a person is chosen for a role
- **Atone** – To make something wrong right again; “to cover”
- **Fast** – To stop eating for a time, often to pray
- **Profane** – To make common; to show disrespect by tearing down

PARTING THE SEA

Teacher: As time allows, read **Exodus 14** with your students.

- What was God's stated purpose for this miracle?
- In what way did God expect Israel to trust Him?
- How did Moses show faith during this crisis?

LESSON 7 • EXODUS

INTO THE WILDERNESS

Crossing the Red Sea

Pharaoh let the Israelites go, but he quickly changed his mind. He rode out with an army of **chariots**, and before long, he trapped the Israelites against the shores of the sea east of Egypt.

- Read **Exodus 14:15-16, 21-22**. What did God tell Moses to do?

Lift his staff over the sea to divide it.

- Note **verses 26-29**. What did God do to the Egyptian army?

The sea came back over the Egyptians before they could flee.

chariot

A two-wheeled vehicle pulled by horses; used in ancient warfare

With this final judgment against Egypt, God led the Israelites toward a mountain where He would offer laws to direct this young nation.

- Read the following verses and label the places on the map to the right.

• **Exodus 12:37**

The people walked southeast from **R** to Succoth. From there, God guided them with pillars of cloud and fire (Exo. 13:21-22).

• **Exodus 14:2**

God told them to camp at **P**, close to where He parted the sea.

• **Exodus 19:1-2**

After three months, the Israelites reached a mountain in the wilderness of **S**.



THE LOCATION OF MOUNT SINAI

Biblical scholars disagree over the exact location of the mountain where Israel received God's commands. Two options appear as yellow triangles in your Student Manual.

For many years, people pointed to **Jebel Musa** ("the mountain of Moses"), which is about 60 miles from the southern tip of the Sinai Peninsula.

A more recent suggestion is **Jebel Sin Bishar**, about 100 miles northwest and closer to the Gulf of Suez. Archaeologists believe that this site stands near a route between Midian and Egypt (see Exo. 3:1; 4:27) and was a more plausible stopping point for Israel on their way into the wilderness of Sinai.

THE MODERN RED SEA

Teacher: As time allows, display a modern map of the Middle East and the Arabian Peninsula. Note that the Israelites did not cross what we call the Red Sea today—but likely one of its ancient fingers stretching northward from the Gulf of Suez.



The Ten Commandments

The people that camped around Mount Sinai could hardly call themselves a nation yet. They had only recently escaped slavery. Many could trace their ancestry back to Jacob, but some simply followed the Hebrews out of Egypt. Many trusted God, but others knew little about Him besides what they saw during the plagues.

But God decided to organize this people with a set of moral commands, practices, and teachings called **the Law**. There are many rules in the Old Testament, but most build on the first ten commands that God gave Moses on Mount Sinai.

► Read **Exodus 20:1-17**, then summarize each of the Ten Commandments in one sentence.

idol / image

A statue representing a god

Sabbath

A day of rest

holy

Free of corruption; set apart for a purpose

adultery

Unfaithfulness in marriage; infidelity

covet

To want something that rightfully belongs to another

1	<i>You will have no other gods before Me / God.</i>	v. 3
2	<i>You will not make idols / images or worship them.</i>	vv. 4-6
3	<i>You will not misuse / take God's name in vain.</i>	v. 7
4	<i>Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy. Rest on this day.</i>	vv. 8-11
5	<i>Honor your father and mother.</i>	v. 12
6	<i>You will not murder / kill.</i>	v. 13
7	<i>You will not commit adultery / infidelity.</i>	v. 14
8	<i>You will not steal.</i>	v. 15
9	<i>You will not lie / bear false witness.</i>	v. 16
10	<i>You will not covet what your neighbor has.</i>	v. 17

TEN COMMANDS

Teacher: Consider reading **Exodus 19:18-20:20** together. As time allows, note any new vocabulary.

IDOLATRY

Idol worship was rampant all around the Israelites, and they often fell into this sin (see Exo. 32).

What forms can idolatry take today?

FALSE WITNESS

Many summarize the ninth command as “do not lie,” but here God refers specifically to slander someone in a public setting, like a court. It’s an injury to a reputation.

Still, God does not lie (Heb. 6:18), and to follow Him, we must remain devoted to the truth, as well.

FOLLOWING THE TEN COMMANDMENTS TODAY

God originally gave these commands to Israel in the wilderness. He set rules in part to guide and organize this people into a nation, but at the same time, the laws point toward higher principles about God Himself.

Christians today do not follow the entire Old Testament Law, partly because many of its

ritualistic functions have been fulfilled by Jesus. However, God’s moral law has remained unchanged, and today we need wisdom to follow these principles well.

- What do these commands imply about God?
- How do we apply them today? How might some differ in the New Testament?

GOD'S PRESENCE

Throughout Israel's journey, the tabernacle served as a signpost of what God wanted the people to do. Read **Exodus 40:34–38**.

God's presence was both a guide and a comfort. At any time, people could look toward the center of the camp and know that God stood by.

PRIESTS IN ISRAEL

Moses and Aaron were born in the Israelite tribe that descended from Levi. God chose this group to serve as His priests for Israel.

Under Old Testament law, priests had to be adult Levite men who followed strict rules of ritualistic cleanliness.

Each week, while the priests served at the Tabernacle, they prepared special bread to sit on this table as an offering and picture of God's fellowship (Lev. 24:5–9). Afterward, the bread went to the priests as thanks for their work.

A Place To Worship

God wanted to unite the Israelites spiritually, so He gave them clear ways to worship Him. He also told Moses how to build a tent, or **tabernacle**, where all Israel could come close to God.

The Israelites would move often over the next few decades, but the Tabernacle represented God's unchanging presence. The people would always camp around the tent, and this central worship area would remain the heart of their nation. Of course, no tent could *contain* God, but it was here that He revealed Himself and reminded Israel that He walked alongside them.

► What did God's Tabernacle look like? Read the following passages in **Exodus** to complete the description below. Note that the passages are not in order.

- A.** Inside the tent, **priests** put fresh **bread / shewbread** (25:30) on a table representing God's fellowship with the people.
- B.** Nearby was a **lampstand / candlestick** made of pure gold (25:31). Seven branches held seven candles, which illuminated the Tabernacle and reminded Israel of God's presence.
- C.** Also inside was a square altar for burning **incense** (30:1–3). The high priest kindled this fragrance once at dawn and once at dusk.
- D.** Within the Tabernacle hung a **veil / vail / curtain** of deep colors (26:31). This separated two rooms in the tent—a Holy Place and a *Most Holy Place*. Priests could enter the tent often so long as they washed and prepared themselves. But only once a year did the high priest enter the "Holy of Holies" to ask forgiveness for the entire nation.
- E.** Inside the Most Holy Place was a wooden **ark** (25:10–11) overlaid in gold and covered by a "mercy seat" with two angel statues. This vessel became known as **the Ark of the Covenant**. From here, God spoke to the priests.
- F.** Outside the main tent was a large **court / courtyard** (27:9–12) surrounded by curtains.
- G.** Just inside the courtyard entrance was a square **altar** (27:1–2) overlaid with bronze. Priests offered sacrifices here for the people.
- H.** Between the tent and altar was a bronze **basin / laver** (30:18–19) where the priests would ritually wash themselves.

tabernacle

A tent; in Scripture, a portable structure where God met with Israel

priest

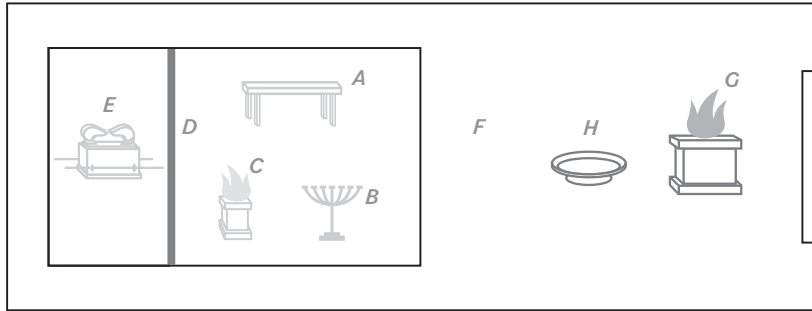
A person chosen for religious duties

MODERN SYMBOLS

If you read through Exodus 25–30, you'll see that God gave highly specific instructions on how to build this tabernacle—and then highly skilled artisans made all this happen. This work was itself an act of worship, and these symbols helped teach Israel about God.

People put a lot of effort into symbols within worship buildings today. What kinds of symbols do you see at your church, and what do they mean?

▷ Label the Tabernacle diagram using letters from the previous page (A-H).



THINK ABOUT IT

▷ God knew the Israelites would break His laws over and over again. It would be practically impossible for someone to keep even the Ten Commandments perfectly for a lifetime. So why do you think God gave them?

Answers will vary.

VOCABULARY

- **Adultery** – Unfaithfulness in marriage; infidelity
- **The Ark of the Covenant** – A vessel containing important religious artifacts from Israel; a symbol of God’s promises
- **Chariot** – A two-wheeled vehicle pulled by horses; used in ancient warfare
- **Covet** – To want something that rightfully belongs to another
- **False witness** – To injure a person’s reputation with a lie, specifically in court
- **Holy** – Free of corruption; set apart for a purpose
- **Honor** – To show special respect; to value highly
- **Idol / Image** – A statue representing a god
- **The Law** – The moral commands, practices, and teachings God gave Israel in the Old Testament
- **Priest** – A person chosen for religious duties
- **Sabbath** – A day of rest
- **Tabernacle** – A tent; in Scripture, a portable structure where God met with Israel

BUILDING THE TABERNACLE

Teacher: Consider asking students to draw or even build a scale model of the tabernacle.

- Ask students to get measurements and a layout from **Exodus 25–30**. You may need to explain the *cubit* as the rough distance between someone’s elbow and the tip of the fingers (~18 in.).
- Encourage students to check other artists’ interpretations for the design of specific pieces of furniture.

WHY THEN THE LAW?

In the Old Testament, God instituted sacrifices and restitutions because He knew that people would fail and sin. So what is the point of laws we won’t keep perfectly? What do they teach us?

Read **Galatians 3:19–22**. The law taught people what sin is—along with their need for Jesus. We follow God’s moral law today, not because it will save us, but because we love God and want to be more like His Son.

VOCABULARY QUIZ

Teacher: Given the number of new terms in this lesson, consider playing a quick game to review vocabulary from the past few weeks.

- Divide the class into two teams.
- For each round, read a definition at random, stopping when a student raises a hand.
- If the student can say the term that matches the definition, award that team a point.
- For some extra tension, ask the student to risk that one point for a chance at two more. Give the student a chance to summarize the definition of a second term chosen by you.
- Ask the student to sit out the next round.

LESSON 8 • LEVITICUS

CLOSER TO GOD

Content Objectives

- In the Book of Leviticus, God instituted a priesthood, at least five offerings, and a variety of festivals to help Israel worship Him and commemorate His work.
- God demanded holiness from His people, especially from their leaders.

Learning Objectives

Students should be able to ...

- Describe several functions and requirements for priests in Old Testament Israel
- Recognize most types of sacrifices in Leviticus with minimal prompting
- Recall the general purpose of several holy days described in Leviticus
- Discuss the value of holiness and remembrance to Christians today

Vocabulary

- **Anoint** – To pour oil over; to show that a person is chosen for a role
- **Atone** – To make something wrong right again; “to cover”
- **Fast** – To stop eating for a time, often to pray
- **Profane** – To make common; to show disrespect by tearing down

LESSON 8 • LEVITICUS

CLOSER TO GOD — — —

A Holy People

God didn't choose Israel because they were special. Rather, they became special by *being chosen*. God set them apart for a special purpose. He wanted to nurture and shape them into a very different nation than the ones nearby.

- That's the calling of holiness. Note the following verses and summarize the command that God gave over and over again.

Leviticus 11:44 19:2 20:26 21:8

You will be holy,
for I am holy.

As noted in the last lesson, God helped Israel practice holiness by appointing a group of priests. These men, each from the tribe of Levi, organized Israel's sacrifices and celebrations. It's from them that the Book of Leviticus gets its name, which means "pertaining to the Levites."

- Read the following passages in **Leviticus** and answer each question.

- Who was **anointed** to be the first priests of Israel (**8:1-7**)?

Aaron and his sons

- The priests kept the Tabernacle a sacred space. For example, what could they *not* do while serving there (**10:8-11**)?

Drink wine or alcohol / strong drink

- The priests also had to keep clean—ritualistically *and* literally. What could the high priest not approach or touch (**21:11**)?

Dead bodies

- What could the priests' animal sacrifices not have (**22:17-20**)?

A blemish / defect

- Why did God tell priests to follow these strict rituals (**22:31-33**)?

Answers may vary. God expected priests not to profane His name. These practices showed respect for God's holiness and work.

anoint

To pour oil over; to show that a person is chosen for a role

profane

To make common; to show disrespect by tearing down

WHAT IS HOLINESS?

- How would you describe holiness?
- What examples or types of holiness can you think of?

Many think of holiness as a state without sin. But that's only the negative part. Holiness is also focus and dedication—a commitment to serve God. Holiness cannot simply be *against* something—it must be *for* something.

In the New Testament, Peter repeats this principle (1 Pet. 1:14-16). We pursue holiness because we want to be more like God.

LITERAL PURITY

For ritual and practical reasons, God offered rules like ...

- A quarantine process for diseases (e.g., Lev. 13:1-13)
- A ban on consuming raw blood (17:13-14) or certain kinds of animals (Ch. 11)

These rules likely had a mixture of hygienic and ritualistic functions.

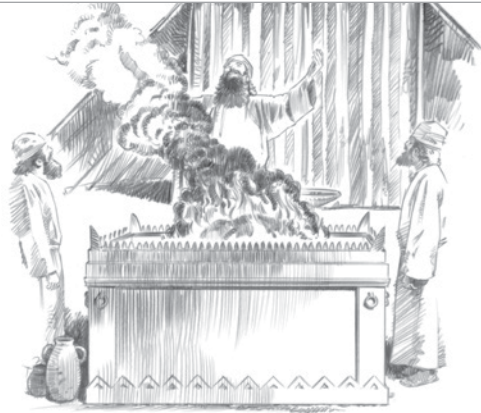
GREATER RESPONSIBILITY

Levite men were born into their role as priests, and the position of high priest passed down from father to son. But priests could not take their job for granted. As religious leaders, they had much stricter standards for holiness—along with severe consequences for violating them.

We see this in Leviticus 10, where Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, disobeyed God and offered an unapproved sacrifice. God then killed them

right there at the Tabernacle (vv. 1-3). Many years later, God did something similar to two priests who kept using their position to mistreat worshipers (see 1 Sam. 2:12-17; 4:4-11).

This might seem extreme to us today, but God did not want leaders mocking Him or abusing His people. God communicated each rule clearly, and each rule had a purpose, so priests followed each rule to show their sincerity.



Giving Back to God

Gifts are a great way to show people love and gratitude, but have you ever struggled over *what* to give? Thankfully, God told Israel exactly what He wanted. With the rules recorded in Leviticus, the priests knew exactly what He'd accept.

► In **Leviticus**, God described five kinds of offerings and sacrifices, each with a particular purpose. Read the following passages and complete the table.

SPLIT IT UP

Teacher: Consider breaking students into groups to tackle these exercises (SM pp. 46–47). Groups may benefit from delegating passages and sharing their results with each other. You may wish to review the offering table (SM p. 46) as a class, since the answers may prove more difficult.

atone

To make something wrong right again; "to cover"

NEEDS VS. REQUIRES

Remember, God is the Creator of the universe—all-powerful and completely self-sufficient. He doesn't *need* us to give Him anything.

- So why does He let us make offerings?
- Why does He ask for our service?

There's value in showing appreciation solely out of love. At Christmas, your sister probably doesn't need that goofy shirt with the dog on it, but you want her to know you care. Likewise, the sacrifices in Israel went beyond worship to rituals of unity, gratitude, remembrance, and shared resolve.

NAME	GIFT	PURPOSE
1:3 Burnt Offering	1:3–5, 10, 14 <i>A bull, ram, goat, dove, or pigeon with no defects</i>	1:4, 9 For atonement; to please God
2:1 <i>Grain / Meat Offering</i>	2:1–4, 11 Grain, flour, unleavened bread	2:1–3, 14–16 To thank God for a harvest; to support the priests
3:1 Peace Offering	3:1, 7, 12 Male or female cattle, sheep, or goats	3:5; 7:11–12 <i>To please God; to show thanks</i>
4:1–3 <i>Sin Offering</i>	4:3, 23, 32; 5:7, 11 <i>A young bull, goat, lamb, dove, pigeon, or fine flour</i>	4:2–3; 5:1–6 To atone for laws broken by accident; to restore ritualistic cleanliness
5:16 <i>Guilt / Trespass Offering</i>	6:4–6 <i>A ram, plus a gift to restore what was lost, including a fifth extra</i>	5:14–16; 6:1–7 <i>To make up for a mistake that harmed another</i>

SACRIFICES, OLD AND NEW

In the Old Testament, sacrifices represented something in the heart of people. The offerings communicated faith, love, and obedience. The act itself did not matter as much as the relationship between the person and God (see 1 Sam. 15:22; Hosea 6:6).

And in the New Testament, God Himself atoned for our sins through the sacrifice of Jesus. Christ died so we could once again have a right relationship with Him (see Heb. 9–10).

Celebrating God's Work

God loves holidays! He gave Israel many "holy days," each to celebrate some part of the people's relationship with God. During these events, no work was allowed unless absolutely necessary, and the people would worship God by feasting, singing, dancing, and relaxing.

► Read the following passages in **Leviticus** and complete each description.

VERSES	HOLY DAY	PRACTICE
23:3	Sabbath Day	Do no <u>work</u> every seventh day.
23:5-8	Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread	Eat <u>unleavened bread</u> for seven days. Meet together on the first and seventh day, all to remember Israel's rescue from Egypt.
23:9-14	The Feast of Firstfruits	Sacrifice a first portion of harvested grain, along with an animal and drink offering, to show thanks for the harvest.
23:15-22	The Feast of Weeks	Offer two loaves of <u>bread</u> baked with leaven, along with animal and drink offerings.
23:23-25	The Feast of Trumpets	Mark the day with a blast of <u>trumpets</u> and spend ten days in careful reflection before the Day of Atonement.
23:26-32	The Day of Atonement	Do no <u>work</u> , but instead <u>fast</u> and pray while the high priest enters the Most Holy Place to ask forgiveness for the nation's sin.
23:39-43	The Feast of Tabernacles	Stay in <u>booths / shelters</u> or tents for seven days while resting and celebrating.
25:1-7	Sabbath Year	Every seventh year, let the <u>land</u> itself rest. Do not plant seeds, prune vineyards, or harvest crops.
25:8-17, 39-43	Year of Jubilee	Every fiftieth year, proclaim freedom from all debts and bondage; return property to original families; and let the land rest.

FASTING AS FOCUS

Like holiness, fasting has a negative *and* a positive component. In ancient times, food preparation was a significant part of a daily schedule. So when people fasted, they could free up a lot of time and energy to talk with God.

Jesus emphasized this spiritual side by telling His followers that, when they fasted, they shouldn't let anyone around them know (Matt. 6:16-18). We fast because we want to focus—not because we want to suffer or to show others how spiritual we are.

fast

To stop eating for a time, often to pray

A FEAST OF TENTS

John mentions this feast in his gospel (Ch. 7). At one point in Jesus' ministry, He spent several days of this feast preaching to those who celebrated in Jerusalem.

RESTING THE LAND

God instituted this rest primarily for His people, but modern agricultural scientists know farmland will yield less and less when it cannot rest and recharge nutrients.

LAND, LABOR, AND DEBT

God did not want generations of His people stuck in poverty. So He prohibited loans that would ruin people—that would prevent them from working or taking care of their families. God said that every Sabbath Year, the Israelites must forgive each other's debts (Deut. 15:1-8). And every Year of Jubilee, the Israelites needed to give each other the right to buy or return to their ancestral lands. Every generation would have the chance to prosper in the land that God gave them.

THE MOST HOLY

Holiness is perhaps God’s highest or defining attribute. He is utterly without sin or evil of any kind, and He is *before*, *above*, and *beyond* anything else in the universe. There is only one unique God.

While we live here in this sinful world, we cannot be perfectly holy like God. But He calls us to walk in that direction (Heb. 12:14). As Christians, we can see the beginning of a process that God will one day complete in heaven (Phil. 1:6; 1 Thess. 3:12–13).

MODERN CELEBRATIONS

- How did you answer this last question?
- Can we honor God only through religious holidays, or can we thank Him during secular holidays, too?
- What would make a holiday or celebration irredeemable—that is, something a Christian shouldn’t participate in at all?

THINK ABOUT IT

- ▷ Read **1 Peter 1:14–16**. What Old Testament command does Peter repeat?

Text will vary by translation. Be holy, for I am holy.

- ▷ Peter writes about believers today as if they were priests (see 1 Pet. 2:4–9). If that’s true, and we no longer need to make animal or grain sacrifices, what instead do we offer God? Note **Hebrews 13:15–16**.

Text will vary by translation. Praise, doing good, sharing

- ▷ Consider modern holidays. In what ways can we honor and celebrate God’s work in our own culture?

Answers will vary.

VOCABULARY

- **Anoint** – To pour oil over; to show that a person is chosen for a role
- **Atone** – To make something wrong right again; “to cover”
- **Fast** – To stop eating for a time, often to pray
- **Profane** – To make common; to show disrespect by tearing down

LESSON 9 • NUMBERS

COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS

Content Objectives

- As Israel traveled through the wilderness, God met their needs.
- Faced with the challenges of Canaan, the Israelites initially turned back toward the wilderness, and God forced them to wander for 40 years.
- We can acknowledge and address troubles without complaining.

Learning Objectives

Students should be able to ...

- Recall examples of God's care for Israelites in the wilderness
- Explain how key figures responded to the spies' report near Kadesh
- Discuss appropriate responses to trouble, fear, and uncertainty

Vocabulary

- **Leprosy** – An ancient term for a variety of diseases visible on the skin
- **Manna** – A sweet, bread-like food that God gave Israelites; from a Hebrew phrase meaning, “What is it?”
- **Tribe** – A group of people who share common ancestors or traditions; in Israel, the descendants of one of Jacob's sons
- **Quail** – A ground-dwelling bird about half the size of a chicken

LESSON 9 • NUMBERS

COUNT YOUR
BLESSINGS

FOCUS OF FAITH

- When you feel insecure, how do you reassure yourself? What do you depend on?
- We realize our dependencies when we lose them. What would shake you if it disappeared?

During both good and bad times, we should remember God's blessings and practice gratitude. This helps us better endure the ups and downs of life.

A Great Multitude

God promised that Abraham's descendants would grow into a great nation. By the time Israel started walking through the wilderness, God had fulfilled His promise.

- ▷ Read **Numbers 1:1-3**. What did God tell Moses to do?

Count the people of Israel, particularly men of fighting age (over 20)

- ▷ Note **verses 45-46**. What was the total? 603,550

This number doesn't include men from the **tribe** of Levi, nor does it include women, children, and the many families and clans that joined Israel along the way. But based on the count, scholars estimate the total number of people at around two million.

tribe

A group of people who share common ancestors or traditions; in Israel, the descendants of one of Jacob's sons

What Is *That*?

How do you care for a group that big? God offered spiritual guidance through His laws, but He did not forget people's physical needs, either.

- ▷ Turn back to **Exodus 15:22-25**. When the Israelites couldn't find drinkable water at Marah, how did God provide for them?

He told Moses to throw a log into the waters, and they became drinkable.

- ▷ And note **Exodus 16:1-4**. When the people worried about food, what did God send from the sky each morning?

Bread



THE MANNA TEST

God gave Israel manna to sustain them in the wilderness, but He also used it to test their commitment to His commands. The people didn't yet have fields to plant or harvest, so manna gave them the chance to obey or disobey God's rules about the Sabbath. Unfortunately, many people ignored what Moses said and, as a result, dealt with insufficient or rotting food (see Exo. 16:19-30).

This bread covered the ground each morning, six days a week (Exo. 16:5). The people called it **manna**, which basically means “What is this?” (vv. 15, 31).

► Read **Exodus 16:31**. What did it taste like?

Wafers made with honey

quail

A ground-dwelling bird about half the size of a chicken

And for those who wanted meat, God brought **quail** around the camp in the evening. For their entire journey through the wilderness, Israel had all the food and water they needed. God showed them, day after day, that they could trust Him.

Complain, Complain ...

People can get tired of walking through the wilderness, day after day. Living in tents, eating the same food, seeing nothing but hot, dry desert—the Israelites often focused on their problems more than on God’s help.

► Read the following passages in **Numbers**. Match each complaint to the way God judged those who refused to follow Him.

leprosy

An ancient term for a variety of diseases visible on the skin

11:1-3 – Some kept complaining about their troubles, so God ...

A

11:4-6, 31-34 – Some wanted far more meat than they could eat, so God ...

E

12:1-3, 10-16 – Miriam and Aaron criticized Moses’ marriage and promoted themselves, so God ...

C

14:1-4, 20-23 – The people were too scared to enter Canaan, and many wanted to go back to Egypt, so God ...

B

16:1-4, 32-35 – Korah and his clan wanted to become priests and replace Moses, so God ...

F

21:4-9 – The people complained about manna again, so God ...

D

A. burned part of the camp.

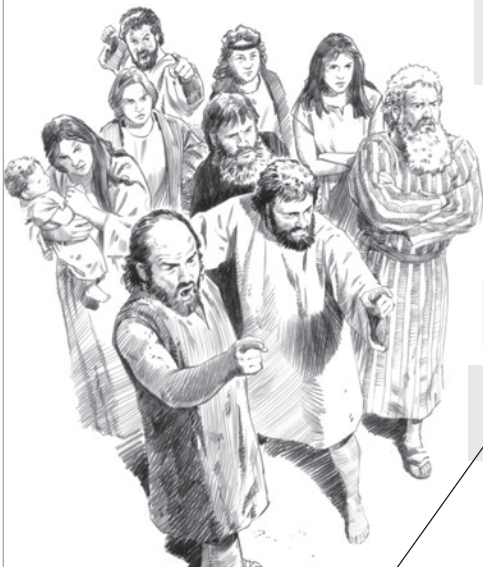
B. said that this generation wouldn’t see the promised land.

C. gave Miriam **leprosy** for seven days.

D. sent fiery serpents—but told Moses to lift up a bronze serpent that people could see to be healed.

E. sent a plague that sickened people who ate.

F. opened the ground to swallow them.



CONTAGIOUS COMPLAINTS

Moses was not immune to Israel’s attitude. Read **Exodus 17:1-6** and **Numbers 20:1-13**.

God didn’t punish people simply for expressing their needs. But when Moses disobeyed God, God corrected him.

LEPROSY

The leprosy described in Scripture was likely a variety of diseases that Israelites couldn’t distinguish from each other. Some conditions may have been treatable, but others weren’t.

What people call *leprosy* today—also known as *Hansen’s Disease*—isn’t necessarily what we read about in the Bible.

THE BRONZE SERPENT

This bronze image became a powerful symbol to Israel. A picture of judgment could become a picture of mercy. Jesus compared His own death with this symbol (John 3:14).

The Israelites kept Moses’ serpent and later even worshiped it as an idol—until it was destroyed by King Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:4).

Turning Back at Kadesh

During this struggle, the Israelites made an important decision. They reached the edge of Canaan near a place called Kadesh, but something stopped them.

- ▷ Look back at **Numbers 13** and fill in the blanks below.
 - God told Moses to send 12 men to spy / search / explore the land (**vv. 1-2**).
 - After 40 days, they returned with a massive cluster of grapes, along with pomegranates and figs (**vv. 23-26**).
 - The spies said the land flowed with milk and honey, but the people in Canaan were powerful (**vv. 27-28**).
 - Despite Caleb's protest, most of the spies gave a bad / evil report to Israel, saying that they could never take the land (**vv. 30-32**).
- ▷ The Israelites were scared, but four people tried to change their mind—Moses, Aaron, and two of the spies, Caleb and Joshua. Read **Numbers 14:5-9** and summarize their main argument.

Answers will vary. God was with Israel, and the peoples of Canaan would have no protection against Him. There was no need to fear.

But the people didn't listen, and they would have killed the four men if God's glory hadn't suddenly appeared above the Tabernacle.

- ▷ Read the verses in **Numbers 14** and mark the best ending to each sentence.

Verses 11-12 – God said that He could destroy the Israelites and instead ...

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| ☐ bless the Egyptians. | ☐ forget His promise to Abraham. | ☒ build a new nation from Moses. |
|---|---|--|

Verse 19 – But Moses argued that other nations would mock God for this. Moses begged God to instead forgive the people ...

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| ☒ out of His own love and mercy. | ☐ who actually deserved it. | ☐ who would never, ever sin again. |
|--|--|---|

Verses 33-34 – God did what Moses asked, but said that Israel would ...

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☒ spend 40 years in the wilderness. | ☐ never be forgiven again. | ☐ suffer through ten more plagues. |
|---|---|---|

BEARING HIS NAME

Read **Numbers 6:22-27**.

This is the blessing that God offered Israel through Moses and Aaron. Israel carried God's name, and this was both a blessing and a responsibility. So when the Israelites rebelled, God took it personally. He had forever tied His own reputation to the fate of this nation. Note Moses' argument in **Numbers 14:13-19**.

BALAAM'S DONKEY

During this time, even as Israel continued wandering, God did not abandon them. He didn't let them be destroyed by their enemies, even clever ones like the prophet Balaam, who famously had a conversation with a donkey (Num. 22).

WILDERNESS RECAP

Near the end of Numbers, we find a review of all the major locations visited by the Israelites between the Exodus and the conquest of Canaan (33:1-49). This record is a testament to God's care and the tenacity of those few who kept trusting in Him.

THINK ABOUT IT

- ▷ God did not judge the people of Israel simply for mentioning problems. So what do you think was the sin behind their complaints?

Answers will vary. God did not tolerate threats and rebellion. He expected Israel to trust Him, obey Him, and uphold their part of the covenant.

- ▷ Read **Colossians 3:12–14**. When we face troubles and challenges, what can we do instead of complaining?

Answers will vary. We can show forgiveness, patience, and love.

- ▷ Spend a moment thinking about something difficult in your life right now. Despite this trial, what is a concrete way that you can show faith in God?

Answers will vary.

VOCABULARY

- **Leprosy** – An ancient term for a variety of diseases visible on the skin
- **Manna** – A sweet, bread-like food that God gave Israelites; from a Hebrew phrase meaning, “What is it?”
- **Tribes** – A group of people who share common ancestors or traditions; in Israel, the descendants of one of Jacob’s sons
- **Quail** – A ground-dwelling bird about half the size of a chicken

CORROSIVE COMPLAINTS

- What are some common complaints among people your age?
- If you’ve ever been around someone who complained too much, how did it affect you? What does complaining do to the morale of a group?
- On the other hand, when we face hardship, should we just smile and pretend everything’s OK? How can we talk about our troubles in a helpful way?

ALTERNATIVES TO COMPLAINING

Teacher: Consider breaking students into groups to discuss positive alternatives to thoughtless complaining.

- When we face hardship, what’s a better response?
- How do we acknowledge or address our troubles in a more productive way?
- Even if we can’t do anything to *solve* problems, how can we *respond* well?

As time allows, consider sharing with your students something difficult you’ve faced—something with no clear solution, but required faith nonetheless.

LESSON 10 • DEUTERONOMY

REPEATING THE LAW

Content Objectives

- Before the Israelites entered Canaan, Moses reviewed the Law.
- Moses told the Israelites to teach their children the ways of God. He also warned them about idolatry and false prophets.
- To follow God, we must commit ourselves to both love and truth.

Learning Objectives

Students should be able to ...

- Explain key themes from Moses' farewell address to Israel
- Describe the difference between false and true prophets
- Discuss the implications of the two "greatest" commands—that is, to love God and to love others as ourselves

Vocabulary

- **Deuteronomy** – From a Greek term meaning “second law;” the fifth book of the Pentateuch
- **Heart** – In Scripture, our inner being; the core of our emotions
- **Soul** – Our spiritual self

LESSON 10 • DEUTERONOMY

REPEATING THE LAW

Once More

After 40 years, the wandering ended. A new generation of Israelites arrived at the border of Canaan. God had promised them the land, and they were finally ready to receive it. Unlike the previous generation, they trusted God to bring them to a new home.

But for the first time since Egypt, Moses would not lead the people. He had dishonored God at Kadesh (Num. 20:1–13), so God selected new leaders for this chapter in Israel’s history. Moses could look out over the promised land, but he would die before reaching it.

As Moses said farewell to the people, he reviewed and explained God’s Law. That’s how we got the name **Deuteronomy**, which comes from a later Greek term—*deuteronomion*, or “second law.”



- Through Moses’ speech, God prepared Israel for their time in Canaan. Read the following passages in **Deuteronomy** and fill in the blanks.

- **4:5–8** – Moses taught statutes / decrees and judgments / rules / laws as God had taught him (v. 5). This teaching would show the other nations that no god was like “the Lord our God” (v. 7).
- **4:25–31** – Moses knew that Israel would carve images / idols in the future (v. 25), and so God would judge and scatter them among other nations. But the people would eventually return / turn to God and obey His voice (v. 30), and God would never forget His covenant with them.
- **9:1–5** – God planned to destroy the power of the Canaanites, drive them out of the land, and give it to Israel. This wasn’t because of Israel’s righteousness, but rather the wickedness of those other nations (v. 4).

FOR THOSE TO COME

- What do you know about your family history?
- Have you heard of anyone in a prior generation who sacrificed so that their children or grandchildren would have a better life?

Moses spent over 40 years struggling through the desert so that his people—the same people who sometimes hated him—could reach a new home. Unfortunately, he did not get to live in that home himself.

MOSES’ DISOBEDIENCE

Teacher: If you didn’t in the last lesson, consider reading **Numbers 20:1–13** together.

When Moses struck the rock in anger, he revealed a lack of trust in God. God still proved Himself faithful and holy, but only *despite* Moses.

JUDGING CANAAN

Read **Deuteronomy 9:1–5** again. If the Old Testament were written by Israelites just to praise Israelites, this passage would not make sense. To settle in Canaan, Israel had to destroy the Canaanite strongholds and drive out any resistance. The Canaanites had already attacked Israel even while the people traveled through the wilderness (Num. 21:1–3). But

despite all this, God did not want the Israelites to think that they had earned their new home through their own righteousness.

Instead, God worked through these events to judge Canaan’s wickedness. In the same way, when Israel later turned to idolatry, God allowed other nations to conquer them (see Hab. 1:5–6, 12).

SINGLE-MINDEDNESS

Have you ever met someone who held two contradictory beliefs—like someone who wants to be an astronaut but also believes that the Earth is flat?

God presents Himself as a single, unified God. He doesn't tell the truth one minute and then lie the next.

And in the same way, God wants His children to be single-minded—to throw their entire being into following Him. That doesn't mean we claim to know everything or refuse to learn. But we try not to serve two different masters at the same time.

heart

In Scripture,
our inner being;
the core of
our emotions

soul

Our spiritual
self

God's Law for God's People

▷ What did God tell Israel to do with His Law? Read **Deuteronomy 6:1-12** and complete the summaries below.

Verse 3 – To continue living well in the land, you should ...

obey / observe / do God's laws

Verses 4-5 – Since God is one, you should ...

love Him with all your heart, soul, and strength / might

Verse 6 – These words should be ...

on your heart

Verse 7 – And you should ...

teach them to your children and speak of them throughout the day

Verses 8-9 – You should also put them on ...

your hand, your forehead, the door / gate of your house

Verses 10-12 – When you settle in the promised land, do not ...

forget the God who brought you out of slavery in Egypt

God's Representatives

The Israelites knew they'd have to say goodbye to Moses soon, and they might have worried about how God would lead them in the future.

▷ Read **Deuteronomy 18:15-22** and mark the best answers.

• **Verses 15-18** – God will raise up a ____ to represent Him to the people.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| ☐ builder | ☐ farmer | ☐ king |
| ☐ merchant | ☐ musician | ☒ prophet |
| ☐ shepherd | ☐ warrior | ☐ writer |

MEMORY AND FOCUS

God's laws were not simply rules—they were *teaching*. When people followed these commands, they learned more about what God did or didn't want for them.

- What do you think is the principle *behind* these specific commands? If we don't literally write God's law on our hands or foreheads, how do we follow the spirit of this law?
- If God wants us to remember His work and focus on Him, how can we do that today—at home, at church, or wherever we go?

WHO WE REPRESENT

- Do you act differently when you're away from home?
- How does your environment shape the way you behave? When is that good or bad?
- When we view ourselves as representatives—of our family, of our school, of God—how does that affect our actions?



• **Verse 19** – God Himself will judge anyone who does not ____ this person.

- | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| ☐ attack | ☐ bow to | ☐ debate |
| ☐ give money to | ☒ listen to | ☐ question |

• **Verse 20** – And if a prophet misrepresents God, that person will ____.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ be replaced | ☐ be banished | ☐ be called a liar |
| ☒ die | ☐ get another chance | ☐ be sent to Sinai |

• **Verses 21–22** – You can identify a false prophet if the person’s words ____.

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| ☐ always glorify God | ☐ are unpopular | ☐ come true |
| ☒ do not come true | ☐ usually aren’t true | ☐ sound unpleasant |

God sent many prophets to speak to Israel, and many of their words are recorded in Scripture. These prophets reminded Israel about God’s Law, and sometimes they prophesied about future events. But one day, a greater Prophet appeared.

► Read Jesus’ prayer to the Father in **John 17:8**. What did Jesus give others?

The words the Father gave Him

JESUS THE PROPHET

Read **Hebrews 1:1–2** again, along with **John 12:49–50**. As God Himself, Jesus was the Father’s greatest spokesman. He revealed God’s Word by His words, by His miracles, and especially by His death and return to life.

TESTING THE SPIRITS

False prophets are not just an Old Testament problem:

- They’re mentioned often in the New Testament (e.g., 1 John 4:1), and they appear everywhere today.
- Just because someone claims to speak for God doesn’t mean they actually do (Matt. 7:21–23).
- Anyone who wants to teach about God will be judged strictly (James 3:1).

True prophets will not contradict God Himself, and they won’t try to promote themselves by telling us what we want to hear. Real prophets point to truth and to the God of truth.

SAY EVERYTHING; REMEMBER WHAT YOU LIKE

Many modern false prophets will simply talk a lot and hope their followers only remember what they like—or what came true. Mathematics professor and skeptic John Allen Paulos once called this the “Jeanne Dixon effect”—after a celebrity psychic who seemed to predict U.S. president John F. Kennedy’s death, but also prophesied many other events that never happened.

Today, many people have short memories and only listen to leaders in bite-sized clips. As a result, it’s easy for old lies to get buried and for a few correct predictions to emerge as “proof” of someone’s ability.

THE DEATH OF MOSES

Teacher: As time allows, read **Deuteronomy 34** together and note the following:

- Mount Pisgah stands at the northeast corner of the Dead Sea, just outside Canaan.
- Moses knew that his death was near, and God allowed him to make all necessary preparations before that moment.
- God had already chosen Joshua to lead the Israelites into Canaan (Deut. 1:38; 31:1–8).

THE GREATEST COMMANDS

- Did you find the verse in Deuteronomy?
- How did you summarize these commands?
- How did you answer the last question? How can God's moral law fit into just two commands?
- Does any moral principle from God contradict love or truth?

STUDENT MANUAL • PAGE 56

- As the Book of Deuteronomy ends, so does Moses' duty as lawgiver (Deut. 34:1–8). After bidding the people farewell, he climbed Mount Pisgah for one last view. God showed him the promised land—north over plains and valleys, then west beyond the river down to the Mediterranean. In that place, under the care of his God, Moses died.

THINK ABOUT IT

- ▷ In **Matthew 22:36–40**, an expert in the Law asked Jesus to choose the greatest of all God's commands. Jesus responded by reciting a verse you read earlier in this lesson. Write this verse's reference and text below.

Deuteronomy 6 ____ :**5** ____

Text will vary by translation.

- Summarize the *second* greatest command.

Text will vary by translation. We should love others as much as we love ourselves.

- ▷ How can these two commands contain everything God wants us to do?

Answers will vary.

VOCABULARY

- **Deuteronomy** – From a Greek term meaning “second law;” the fifth book of the Pentateuch
- **Heart** – In Scripture, our inner being; the core of our emotions
- **Soul** – Our spiritual self

UNIT 2 • REVIEW ACTIVITIES

The Ten Commandments

Before this review game, write the numbers 1–10 on the board, with room to write a summary of each command from Exodus 20:3–17.

Divide the class into two teams. Alternating between teams, ask individual students to come forward, choose any available number, and write the missing command—or a close summary.

After the student sits back down, ask the student's team to vote on whether the student wrote the correct command next to the correct number. If the student is correct, award two points, and if the team majority is correct, award an extra point—for a maximum of three points.

A Short Biography

Ask students to write a one-page overview of one of the following figures from Scripture.

Joseph	Moses	Aaron	Miriam
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This biographical sketch should include . . .

- Key events in the person's life
- A note on how God worked through this person
- Three Scripture references relevant to the above

The Meaning of Sacrifice

Break students into groups and assign each group a sacrifice listed in Leviticus 1–5 (see SM p. 46). Ask the groups to compose answers to the following:

- What were the instructions or requirements for this sacrifice?
- What was the overall purpose of this sacrifice?

Ask the groups to select a representative to briefly present their findings to the rest of the class.

Holy Days and Feasts

Choose a holy day practice at random (see SM p. 47), read it to the class, and ask volunteers to name the holy day or feast associated with it.

Tabernacle Layout

Draw a simple, unlabeled diagram of the Tabernacle (see SM p. 44) on the board. Ask volunteers to draw the following items in the appropriate locations:

The Tabernacle Veil	The Bronze Basin / Laver
The Golden Table	The Ark of the Covenant
The Bronze Altar	The Golden Lampstand / Candlestick
The Altar of Incense	

As students complete the diagram, review the functions of each item.

Thirty-Second Lessons

Before this activity, write the following on small pieces of paper and put them in a bowl. You'll also need a timer or stopwatch.

The Burning Bush	The Passover
False Prophets	Priests
Holiness	The Sabbath
Manna	The Tabernacle
Miracles	The Ten Plagues

Ask volunteers to pick one of the above at random and then—after 10–15 seconds to prepare— spend exactly 30 seconds explaining the item to the class as if they had never heard of it before. Afterward, ask the volunteers or other students what they might have included or omitted from the “lesson” if they had more time to prepare.