

*ESL Workbook*  
*(Teacher's Guide)*

# *Tapestry*

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## Advice to Teachers/Facilitators

### How To Prepare For Class:

Make sure to spend time praying before beginning your preparations. Pray for wisdom in how to conduct the class, sensitivity towards the students, grace and favour. Pray that the students would learn about God.

Read over the materials a day or two before the lesson. Give yourself plenty of time to think about the content. Ask God to reveal truth to you.

Work through all the questions and answers. Select the questions you feel led to use. If you can't answer it, either research it (be careful to use reliable sources) or don't ask it. The answer guide is provided to help you.

Write up a brief lesson plan, including how many minutes each section might take. This will help you move the lesson along.

### How To Use Materials

#### The Student Workbook

The materials are essentially in six parts: the background, the pre-reading question (s), the What do you Think? discussion, the scripture passage, the English exercise questions and the discussion questions.

The illustrations used in lesson questions are designed to show the key events in the story. These can be used as a post reading exercise, where the students can summarize the story in their own words. They can also be used to clarify some parts of a Bible passage. The illustrations can also be used to remind the students of last week's lesson.

Each chapter begins with useful background information about the text: i.e. purpose, author, place in history, etc. This is followed by one or two questions in Before You Read. These are meant to get students thinking about the topic and help them access their prior knowledge.

The passages are all taken from the Bible, and each chapter covers a different literary genre found in the Bible. Our hope is to intrigue students who might otherwise never open a Bible to consider it as literature, and thus be exposed to its power.

The 'What Do You Think' reaction questions were developed by OMF for their method of telling the gospel through Bible stories. They are meant to encourage student interaction with God's Word and get them thinking. ***There are no wrong answers to these questions.*** However, if someone seems way off base, you might ask how they got that answer, or ask for other ideas from the class. There likely won't be time for every student to answer every question, but hopefully you will get some responses.

The Bible passage questions for the Easier Level start with exercise questions (True/False, Matching, Circle the Answer, Fill in the Blanks, etc.). These are designed to help the students comprehend the story through repetition of key ideas and familiarity with the vocabulary. It has been shown that ESL students learn best when they have these kinds of exercise questions to do. The exercise questions can also be useful for intermediate levels.

The discussion questions are divided into sections: Easier, Intermediate and Challenging. These levels are decided by the amount of fluency in English the student may have. The Easier level questions are more fact based and the Challenging level questions are more opinion/discussion in their orientation. The Intermediate questions are a mixture of both. Feel free to mix and match to suit your group.

### The Teacher's Guide Answer Key

The answer keys to the questions are guidelines only. Be careful to give scriptural answers not just your own ideas or things you have been taught. Let Scripture explain Scripture. Sometimes you might have to explain the culture of the times. We have added notes to help but for some things you might need more research. In that case ask the assistance of your pastor or use a well-known and accepted authority such as Matthew Henry's commentary.

## How To Manage The Class

### Organizing Groups

Allow students to join the group they feel most comfortable in. Sometimes a student will choose an easier group. If someone answers all the questions and seems to understand everything, suggest they join a more challenging group or ask them to be your assistant in translating or explaining. If a student is very quiet or looks totally lost suggest an easier group. Don't refer to it as a "lower" group.

### Leading a Group

Make sure everyone knows your name and you know the name of all the students. (Name tags help). Be sure to welcome newcomers to the group. Take a few minutes to greet everyone and ask them how their week is going. Open the lesson with a prayer. Ask God for guidance and wisdom and that the students will understand.

### Participation Issues

Allow the students to speak as much as possible. Guide them gently if they are mistaken. Never make any one feel embarrassed for giving the wrong answer. Acknowledge the part of the answer is correct or say something like: "Yeah, a lot of people would agree with you but actually...".

It's a good idea to have everyone participate even just a little. This can be achieved by having everyone read a section of the story out loud. When people are reading, and mispronounce a word, correct them but don't over-correct. Don't correct more than three times. If they mispronounce a Bible name, tell them the usual way we say that name but remind them that these names are not English.

Don't force someone to answer a question. If no one volunteers to answer, don't answer it yourself. For factual questions ask the students to look at the story to see if they can find the answer there. For opinions, remind them that their opinions should be supported by facts from the story.

### First time visitors

If there are new people joining the group allow them to listen and join in when they feel comfortable. Ask simpler questions of the newcomers to build their confidence in speaking out. Never put a visitor on the spot.

### Managing the outspoken

Some people are very enthusiastic and love to jump in right away with their answers; others may love attention or are very competitive. Whatever the motivation, it can be very destructive to the learning to have one person dominating the discussion. Make sure you control how much any one person contributes- make sure everyone has a chance to speak. Be kind and polite but redirect the question to another person. For example: "That's a great thought, Sam! Let's hear what Peter thinks about that."

Also, sometimes there are volunteers or helpers assisting the group. Be sure to discuss prior to class what their role should be - assisting, not answering the questions or discussing side issues.

### Managing the too quiet

Some people think it's rude to be too forward or are shy by nature. Encourage these people to speak. Ask them easy questions at first and follow it by a "what- do- you- think- about- that" sort of question.

### Managing a larger group

In a larger group, some people don't get heard so it is valuable to break into smaller groups for discussions. This works better at the Intermediate or Advanced Levels. For Basic Levels this can be done if there is an assistant to lead a smaller group.

### Concluding and Following Up

It is very important to conclude the class on a positive note. If people have fun and enjoy being with each other, they will learn a lot and they will want to come back.

Make sure to refer to the lesson completed this week in the next class and ask the students whether it was helpful to them and what did they learn.



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Chapter 1: History  
1.1 Hezekiah's Kingdom is Spared

**History: 1.1 Hezekiah's Kingdom is Spared** **2 Chronicles 32:1-23**

**Timeline**

|         |   |   |
|---------|---|---|
| 1003 BC | David becomes the second king of ancient Israel   | 1,2 Samuel; 1 Chronicles; 1 Kings               |
| 967 BC  | Solomon becomes king over Israel  | 1 Kings 3-11                                    |
| 931 BC  | Rehoboam becomes king over Israel   | 1 Kings 11, 12; 2 Chronicles 11                 |
| 931 BC  | Civil war in Israel, Israel splits apart into a northern kingdom (Israel) and a southern kingdom (Judah)  | 1 Kings, 2 Chronicles                           |
| 739 BC  | The prophet <b>Isaiah</b> begins his ministry, prophecies the life and death of the Messiah, the future exile of the northern kingdom of Israel by Assyria, the fall of Assyria, the future exile of Judah, the fall of Babylon to <b>Cyrus</b> of Persia | Isaiah  |
| 722 BC  | The northern kingdom of Israel is taken away by the Assyrian Empire   | 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles                           |
| 716 BC  | Hezekiah reign in Judah   | 2 Chronicles 29-32; 2 Kings 17-19; Isaiah 36-39 |
| 701 BC  | Sennacherib threatens Jerusalem   | 2 Kings 18; Isaiah 36; 2 Chronicles 32          |

Source: Bible Timeline - [Biblehub.com/timeline/#complete](https://biblehub.com/timeline/#complete). All dates are approximate.

**Background**

**Parallel Passages**

Parallel passages to this story can be found in 2 Kings 18 and 19 and Isaiah 36 and 37 which give a lot more detail about the events:

- 2 Kings 18: 9-16 gives us background leading up to the confrontation at Jerusalem:

2 Kings 18 tells us that Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria (Shalmaneser preceded Sargon, who preceded Sennacherib), conquered the northern kingdom of Israel (aka Samaria) in the 7<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Hoshnea, the last king of that northern kingdom. 2 Kings 18 also tells us that this happened during the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Hezekiah (Hezekiah was the king of the southern kingdom of Judah.)

## Chapter 1: History

### 1.1 Hezekiah's Kingdom is Spared

(History tells us that Shalmaneser's conquest began around 723 B.C. and finished around 721 B.C., but it is thought that it may have been his successor, Sargon, who was the one who finished that conquest.)

2 Kings 18 also tells us that Shalmaneser took king Hoshnea (king of Israel) and most of the people of Israel and carried them back to Assyria to places east of the Euphrates River. It tells us that God allowed this to happen because the people of Israel had violated their covenant with Him.

And 2 Kings 18 tells us that Sennacherib, king of Assyria (Sennacherib was the successor of Sargon, who was the successor of Shalmaneser) attacked the southern kingdom of Judah in the 14<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah. It tells us that Hezekiah gave Sennacherib a large sum of tribute money including all the treasures of the palace, all the silver in the temple, and even the gold that had covered the doors of the temple to persuade Sennacherib to withdraw from Judah.

(However, from today's story in 2 Chronicles 32, we see that Sennacherib took the money from Hezekiah and then continued to attack anyway.)

*Isaiah 36 gives the details of what Sennacherib's commanders said to the people of Jerusalem*

Isaiah 36 tells us that when Sennacherib attacked Judah, he captured all of its fortified cities. The Assyrian army was attacking one of these cities, Lachish, when Sennacherib sent his field commander along with a large army to the walls of Jerusalem to give a message to King Hezekiah.

Isaiah tells us that three of Hezekiah's officials went out to meet the Assyrian commander. The commander told them to tell Hezekiah that no one would come to his rescue. The commander said that Hezekiah's hope that Egypt would help defend him was useless. The commander said that Hezekiah's hope that the God of Israel would defend him was also useless because Hezekiah had offended God by removing the high places (the commander did not realize that it was actually the high places that had offended God). The commander then claimed that it was the God of Israel that told the Assyrians to attack and conquer Judah. The commander then said to tell Hezekiah that Assyria would give 2000 horses to Judah's army to help them fight against Assyria (apparently to even the playing field) - if Hezekiah had enough men left in his army to ride them.

Isaiah tells us that Hezekiah's three officials then asked the commander to speak in Aramaic, rather than Hebrew, so that the people of Jerusalem standing on the walls, wouldn't hear what he was saying. But the commander responded by repeating his message louder in Hebrew so that all the people could hear him.

The commander listed all the gods of all the peoples he had conquered so far and pointed out that none of those gods had saved those people from Sennacherib. He called on the

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### 1.1 Hezekiah's Kingdom is Spared

people of Jerusalem to come out of the city and surrender and he would take them to a land just like theirs where they could live in peace and abundance. But the people of Jerusalem obeyed Hezekiah and would not reply to the commander. The officials tore their clothes and brought the commander's message to Hezekiah.

*2 Kings 19 gives us the details of Hezekiah's reaction to the field commander:*

2 Kings tells us that when the officials gave Hezekiah the Assyrian commander's message, he tore his clothes and went to the temple. He sent the three officials to Isaiah to tell him the situation and to ask God for help. Isaiah told the officials to not be afraid of the commander's words. God said the commander was only the underling of Sennacherib, and that He would cause Sennacherib to return to Assyria and there be killed.

*Isaiah 37 reveals what happened after Sennacherib left Lachish but wrote Hezekiah a threatening letter:*

Isaiah 37 tells us the field commander got word that Sennacherib had moved on from Lachish, so the commander left with his army to rejoin Sennacherib and found him attacking another city in Judah.

But Sennacherib then received a report that Egypt was bringing its army against Sennacherib. (Egypt was then being ruled by the king of Cush, so it was actually the king of Cush who was leading the Egyptian army. Cush was the biblical name for ancient Ethiopia, a region that is now southern Sudan). Because of this Sennacherib had to abandon his immediate plans to attack Jerusalem - but first he sent messengers to Hezekiah to tell him to not think that this diversion was any plan on the part of the God of Israel - and he repeated the threats of his commander's earlier message to the officials.

But Hezekiah went back to the temple and worshipped God. He told God that the other gods that Sennacherib had defeated were only wood and stone, and asked God to defend Jerusalem so that all the kingdoms of the earth might know that He was the only God.

*2 Kings 19: 35-37 and Isaiah 37:36-38 also gives us some details of what happened after Hezekiah prayed:*

Both of these passages says that God then put to death 185,000 men in the Assyrian camp in one night. This caused Sennacherib to withdraw from Judah and return to Nineveh and stay there. One day, when Sennacherib was worshipping in the temple of his god, two of his sons assassinated him with a sword, and a third son, Esarhaddon, became the new king of Assyria.

*Archaeology confirms the story of Lachish:*

In 1845, some 2600 years after the fall of ancient Nineveh (the capital city of ancient Assyria) European archaeologists found the remains of Sennacherib's palace. One reception

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room in the palace had a large carving on a long wall that depicted Sennacherib's conquest of Lachish. The frieze showed that the Assyrians had seven battering rams against the walls and gates of Lachish; it showed the bows, arrows, spears, and other weapons that the Assyrians were using in the battle; and it showed the battle itself, and the captured Judeans being led away into exile in Assyria. The European archaeologists removed the frieze from the palace wall, and it is now in the British Museum in London. A replica of it is in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

- Evidence from Lachish Confirms Bible Story. *Yehudit rose in Israel*. Sept. 10, 2017. <http://yehuditrose.com/evidence-lachish-confirms-bible-story/>. Accessed April 2019

#### Before you read:

1. Did you study history in school? How did you feel about it? Why?
2. Have you ever been in big trouble, and then something happened to get you out of it?

Feel free to share your own experiences and encourage a few students to do the same. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked.

#### 'What Do You Think'

**This** section is for students to speak freely. Not everyone needs to answer all the questions. It is to get them thinking and talking. Steer them back to the story if discussions get sidetracked.

#### Passage Questions

##### True or False

1. Hezekiah was a king who obeyed God.   T
2. King Sennacherib of Assyria invaded Judah.   T
3. Hezekiah did not prepare Jerusalem for the invasion.   F
4. King Sennacherib of Assyria wanted the people of Jerusalem to trust God.   F
5. God said He had planned everything long ago.   T

#### Multiple Choice

1. Hezekiah prepared his city by:
  - a. helping people leave the city
  - b. training soldiers
  - c. asking Egypt for help
  - d. building up the wall

## Chapter 1: History

### 1.1 Hezekiah's Kingdom is Spared

2. Hezekiah said to the people:
  - a. that the Assyrians would not win
  - b. to be brave and confident
  - c. that God would fight on their side
  - d. all of the above
3. King Sennacherib told the people of Jerusalem:
  - a. to listen to King Hezekiah
  - b. not to rely on God
  - c. to change their religion
  - d. to be better prepared next time
4. Hezekiah responded by:
  - a. telling Sennacherib to get lost!
  - b. putting his armor on
  - c. crying all through the night
  - d. asking the Lord for help
5. God told King Sennacherib:
  - a. He would send him back
  - b. He would buy him a hook
  - c. He would let him win
  - d. He would give him a long life

#### Tell the Story

Using the pictures, try to have the group re-tell each story of healing, with volunteers giving only one sentence at a time until the story is complete.

- A. King Sennacherib was king of the Assyrian Empire. He invaded the Kingdom of Judah.
- B. King Sennacherib sent a message to King Hezekiah of Judah. The messengers told the people of Jerusalem that Hezekiah was lying to them because their God would not save them and they would die if they tried to fight against the Assyrians.
- C. Hezekiah asked God for help.
- D. God told the prophet Isaiah that He would drag Sennacherib back to Assyria because of his (Sennacherib's) pride and tremendous hatred for Him.
- E. God sent an angel that killed every soldier and commander in the Assyrian camp.
- F. When Sennacherib returned to Assyria, his sons killed him in the temple of his god.

Fill in the blanks with the following words: deliverance, precarious, dominant, fortified, surrender

1. Palaces and towns were fortified with strong thick walls.
2. Precarious means something is very risky.
3. The people hoped for deliverance from the bad storm.
4. Assyria was the dominant country at that time.
5. The enemy must surrender or flee when they can't win.

## Chapter 1: History

### 1.1 Hezekiah's Kingdom is Spared

#### Discussion

##### *Easier*

1. What does it mean "to do right in the eyes of the Lord"?

It means to follow the Law of Moses in the worship of God. They were to keep all the laws including festivals and the Passover and only worship God at the Temple in Jerusalem.

2. What did Hezekiah do when he heard Sennacherib was attacking Judah's other cities?

He took steps to protect the city of Jerusalem by blocking the water supply outside Jerusalem, by building walls and defenses and by getting military supplies and leaders for the army.

3. What did Hezekiah say to the people of Jerusalem?

He said, "Be brave and confident! There's no reason to be afraid of King Sennacherib and his powerful army. We are much more powerful, <sup>8</sup> because the LORD our God fights on our side. The Assyrians must rely on human power alone."

4. What did Hezekiah do when he received Sennacherib's letter?

He turned to God for help.

5. How did God answer Hezekiah's prayer?

God spoke through Isaiah with a prophecy about Sennacherib. God reassured Hezekiah that he would be safe. The next day the people found the army and its leaders dead.

6. What did God say would happen to Sennacherib?

God told Sennacherib he would send him back where he came from. This happened when all of Sennacherib's army was killed and he went back home where his sons killed him.

##### *Intermediate*

1. In what ways did Hezekiah "do right in the eyes of the Lord."

Hezekiah faithfully obeyed the Lord's instructions by getting rid of the idols and destroying the places of false worship.

2. What kinds of things did Hezekiah do when he heard Sennacherib was attacking nearby cities?

He took steps to protect the city of Jerusalem by blocking the water supply outside Jerusalem, by building walls and defenses and by getting military supplies and leaders for the army.

3. How did Hezekiah encourage the people of Jerusalem?

## Chapter 1: History

### 1.1 Hezekiah's Kingdom is Spared

He said, "Be brave and confident! There's no reason to be afraid of King Sennacherib and his powerful army. We are much more powerful, <sup>8</sup>because the LORD our God fights on our side. The Assyrians must rely on human power alone."

4. Why did Sennacherib write an open letter to the people of Jerusalem and not a private one to King Hezekiah?

He wrote to make the people feel defeated: that Hezekiah was lying, that their god wasn't better than any of the surrounding nations' gods whom he had defeated.

5. What did this letter show about Sennacherib's faith in God? Why is this important to understand?

Sennacherib didn't think God was any different from any other gods. He didn't seem to believe in any. He had no experience with the Living God.

6. What did Hezekiah do when he received this letter? What would you have done in the same situation?

He tore his clothes and sought out the prophet Isaiah. They prayed and asked God for help. We should always ask God for help when we need it.

7. How did God answer Hezekiah's prayer? What form did his answer take? How did He reassure Hezekiah?

God spoke through Isaiah with a prophecy about Sennacherib. God reassured Hezekiah that he would be safe. The next day the people found the Assyrian army and its leaders dead.

8. What did God say would happen to Sennacherib? Why are these prophecies important to understanding who God is?

God told Sennacherib that He was the one who had planned everything. He was the one who allowed Sennacherib to destroy cities. He also knew everything about Sennacherib - his anger with God, his pride and hatred for God. God said he would send him back. These things reveal that God knows everything about everyone and is in control. We can be reassured if we are in God's family that He will give us victory.

9. Summarize some of the significant things you have learned from this story. (answers vary)

### *Challenging*

1. What does it mean "to do right in the eyes of the Lord"? What are some examples of these things that Hezekiah did? What sorts of things would be "right in the eyes of the Lord" today?

It means to follow the Law of Moses in the worship of God. They were to keep all the laws including festivals and the Passover and only worship God at the Temple in

## Chapter 1: History

### 1.1 Hezekiah's Kingdom is Spared

Jerusalem. Hezekiah and the people celebrated Passover, and Hezekiah defiled the places where it was forbidden to worship God.

(answers vary)

2. What was Hezekiah's response when he heard Sennacherib was attacking nearby cities?

He took steps to protect the city of Jerusalem by blocking the water supply outside Jerusalem, by building walls and defenses, and by getting military supplies and leaders for the army.

3. How did Hezekiah encourage the people of Jerusalem? Do you find anything unusual about what he said?

He said, "Be brave and confident! There's no reason to be afraid of King Sennacherib and his powerful army. We are much more powerful, <sup>8</sup> because the LORD our God fights on our side. The Assyrians must rely on human power alone.

It is not typical to say that they were stronger because God was on their side: it shows Hezekiah trusted God.

4. Why did Sennacherib write a letter to the people of Jerusalem and not to King Hezekiah? What was his purpose? What did he say about Hezekiah?

He wrote to make the people feel defeated: that Hezekiah was lying, that their god wasn't better than any of the surrounding nations' gods whom he had defeated.

5. What did this letter show about Sennacherib's faith in God? Why is this important to understand?

Sennacherib didn't think God was any different from any other gods. He didn't seem to believe in any god. He had no experience with the Living God. He would not expect God to do anything. His disrespect for God drew God's rage.

6. What did Hezekiah do when he received this letter? What would you have done in the same situation?

He tore his clothes and sought out the prophet Isaiah. They prayed and asked God for help. We should always ask God for help when we need it.

**2 Kings 19:1-3 gives a more detailed account:**

**As soon as Hezekiah heard the news, he tore off his clothes in sorrow and put on sackcloth. Then he went into the temple of the LORD. <sup>2</sup> He told Prime Minister Eliakim, Assistant Prime Minister Shebna, and the senior priests to dress in sackcloth and tell the prophet Isaiah:<sup>3</sup> "These are difficult and disgraceful times. Our nation is like a woman too weak to give birth, when it's time for her baby to be born. <sup>4</sup> Please pray for those of us who are left alive. The king of Assyria sent his army commander to insult the living God. Perhaps the LORD heard what he said and will do something, if you will pray."**

7. How did God answer Hezekiah's prayer? What form did his answer take? How did He reassure Hezekiah through the prophet Isaiah?



## Chapter 1: History

### 1.1 Hezekiah's Kingdom is Spared

God spoke through Isaiah with a prophecy about Sennacherib. God reassured Hezekiah that he would be safe. The next day the people found the Assyrian army and its leaders dead.

8. What did God say would happen to Sennacherib? Why are these prophecies important to understanding who God is? What does this story reveal about God? How can this reassure us today?

God told Sennacherib that He was the one who had planned everything. He was the one who allowed Sennacherib to destroy cities. He also knew everything about Sennacherib - his anger with God, his pride and hatred for God. God said he would send him back. These things reveal that God knows everything about everyone and is in control. We can be reassured if we are in God's family that He will give us victory.

9. Summarize some of the significant things you have learned from this story. (answers vary)

Chapter 1: History  
1.2 The Gentiles Enter the Church

History: 1.2 The Gentiles Enter the Church

Acts 10, 11

Timeline

|       |  |   |
|-------|--|---|
| 27 AD | Jesus calls Peter, Andrew, James, and John to be his disciples       | Matthew 4; Mark 1; Luke 4                         |
| 29 AD | Peter's confession of Jesus  | Matthew 16; Mark 8; Luke 9                        |
| 30 AD | Jesus' betrayal, trial, crucifixion, and resurrection, and ascension | Matthew 27; Mark 15; Luke 23; John 18, 19; Acts 1 |
| 30 AD | Pentecost, first church forms in Jerusalem                           | Acts 4  |
| 31 AD | Saul persecutes the church   | Acts 8  |
| 31 AD | Philip preaches in Samaria   | Acts 8  |
| 34 AD | Saul's conversion  | Acts 9  |
| 37 AD | Peter Preaches to the Gentiles                                       | Acts 10, 11                                       |
| 42 AD | Barnabas sent to Antioch   | Acts 11   |

Source: Bible Timeline - [Biblehub.com/timeline/#complete](https://biblehub.com/timeline/#complete). All dates are approximate.

Background

Caesarea

Herod the Great had spent a fortune building the city of Caesarea and named it after Augustus Caesar. Caesarea was the capital city of what was then the Roman province of Judea. (The province of Judea comprised the three regions of Samaria, Judea, and Idumea.) The province was ruled by a Roman governor, and that governor's headquarters were in Caesarea. Archaeologists found a stone from a building in Caesarea inscribed with the name of Pontus Pilate. Pontius Pilate was the Roman governor of Judea in the time of Jesus. Pilate was governor from 26 until 36 AD. This story took place after Pilate had been in power.

Joppa

Joppa is known today as Jaffa. It is situated on a natural bay and is one of the most ancient seaport cities in the world. It is about 48 km south of Caesarea and was connected to it by the Via Maris, a main Roman road. It is thought that it was originally a Phoenician seaport, for they were famous for their ships, and traded throughout the Mediterranean and up the Atlantic coast as far as England.

## Chapter 1: History

### 1.2 The Gentiles Enter the Church

Jonah took a ship from Joppa to try to flee to Tarshish (in southern Spain) to try to escape God's call for him to go east to Nineveh to preach to the Assyrians.

Joppa was conquered for Israel during the time of the Maccabees. The wealth of Joppa was great, and Herod the Great used that wealth to help build Caesarea with. It is still a prosperous seaport today.

#### Cornelius the God-fearer

There were five cohorts of Roman troops stationed in Caesarea. Each cohort had 600 men and 6 centurions. A centurion was the commander of 100 soldiers. Cornelius was a centurion and Acts 10 tells us that Cornelius was the "captain of a group of soldiers called "the Italian Unit" so perhaps Cornelius was Italian.

Acts 10 tells us that "Cornelius was a very religious man. He worshipped God, and so did everyone else who lived in his house. He had given a lot of money to the poor and was always praying to God." John MacArthur points out that Cornelius was sovereignly chosen by God, but Cornelius also had a heart that honored God. God didn't violate Cornelius' free will, He just gave him an opportunity. God always gives the light to the one who lives up to the light he has.

There were three levels of Gentiles in the Jewish mind. One was the ordinary Gentile, content with polytheism and immorality. The next was a God-fearer; this was a Gentile who had left those ways. He believed that the God of Israel was the true God and prayed to Him. He chose the Jewish ethic and may have attended a synagogue, but he still identified himself as a Gentile and did not convert to Judaism. The third level of Gentile was a full proselyte, he had become circumcised, fully identified with Judaism and Israel, and was considered to be a Jewish convert. Cornelius was the second level of Gentile, the God-fearer.

#### The Wall of Separation Between Jews and the Gentiles

When God gave the Law to Moses on Mount Sinai, part of that Mosaic Law clearly stated that the Israelites were to follow strict food laws - there were clean and unclean animals and they were not to eat unclean animals. Further, the Israelites were not to marry Gentiles. These laws kept the Israelites from socializing with the Gentiles over a meal, and that helped keep them from intermarriage. God warned the Israelites to not marry Gentiles because the Israelites would then turn from Him and start to worship the Gentile gods. When the Israelites did marry Canaanites and did start to worship Canaanite gods (Baal, Ashtoreth), God brought severe punishment on the Israelites.

Peter would have been raised with the legalism of Jewish traditions. To eat an unclean food was to be defiled, and the Gentiles regularly ate those unclean foods. To an observant Jew, if a person ate something unclean, then that person became unclean as well.

## Chapter 1: History

### 1.2 The Gentiles Enter the Church

Cooking utensils that had been purchased from a *Gentile* had to be purified by fire and water. No observant Jew would eat any food that had been prepared by *Gentile* hands; if a *Gentile* milked a cow, that milk was unclean for a Jew to consume. A strict Jew wouldn't even enter the house of a *Gentile* lest he be defiled.

The fear of defilement was so great that if an observant Jew travelled through a *Gentile* country, he would shake the *Gentile* dust off of his feet before entering the land of Israel lest he defile the land.

However, the apostles had seen Jesus ask for water from an adulterous Samaritan woman then reach out to the woman and bring her and her village to faith (John 4). And they had seen him grant healing to the daughter of a Canaanite woman (Matt. 15). And they had seen Him heal a Roman centurion's servant (Matt. 8). They had heard Jesus' teaching that it wasn't the food that went into your mouth that made you unclean, but the words that came out of your heart (Matt. 15).

Still, as this story shows, Peter was mortified at even the idea of eating unclean food. But God changed Peter. By the time he got to Cornelius' home, he has realized that God was not only telling him that there was no unclean food, He was also telling him there were no "unclean or unfit" people.

#### The End of the Wall of Separation

Many verses in the Bible confirm God's will to bring *Gentiles* into the church. Matthew had quoted Isaiah 9 in his gospel, "Listen Galilee, land of the *Gentiles*! Although your people live in darkness, they will see a bright light. Although they live in the shadow of death, a light will shine on them" (Matt. 4:15, 16). In John 6:37 Jesus said, "Everything and everyone that the Father has given me will come to me, and I won't turn any of them away." In John 10, Jesus said, "I have other sheep that are not in this sheep pen. I must bring them together too, when they hear my voice. Then there will be one flock of sheep and one shepherd."

And many verses in the Bible confirm God's will to remove the barrier on clean and unclean foods. 1 Timothy 4 says of the people in the last days, "<sup>2</sup>They will also be fooled by the false claims of liars whose consciences have lots all feeling. These liars <sup>3</sup>will forbid people to marry or to eat certain foods. But God created these foods to be eaten with thankful hearts by his followers who know the truth. <sup>4</sup>Everything God created is good. And if you give thanks, you may eat anything."

David Guzik. Cornelius, Peter, and the Conversion of the *Gentiles*. *Blue Letter Bible*. 2001.  
[https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik\\_david/StudyGuide\\_Act/Act\\_10.cfm](https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide_Act/Act_10.cfm). Accessed April 2019.

John MacArthur. The Salvation of the *Gentiles*, Part 1. *Grace to You*. March 25, 1973.  
<https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/1734/the-salvation-of-the-gentiles-part-1>. Accessed April 2019.

Joppa. Bible Hub. (n.d.). <https://biblehub.com/topical/j/joppa.htm>. Accessed April 2019.

## Chapter 1: History

### 1.2 The Gentiles Enter the Church

Caesarea Definition and Meaning. *Bible Study Tools*. (n.d)  
<https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/caesarea/>. Accessed April 2019.

#### Before you read:

1. What makes you feel part of a group?
2. What makes you feel excluded from a group?

Feel free to share your own experiences and encourage a few students to do the same. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked.

#### 'What Do You Think'

This section is for students to speak freely. Not everyone needs to answer all the questions. It is to get them thinking and talking. Steer them back to the story if discussions get sidetracked.

#### Passage Questions

##### True or False

1. The church began in Jerusalem.   T
2. Cornelius worshipped God.   T
3. Peter was looking forward to eating Gentile foods.   F
4. Cornelius met with Peter alone.   F
5. The Jewish leaders realized that God was including the Gentiles.   T

#### Match the word with its meaning

| Word                       | Meaning   |
|----------------------------|---|
| 1. <u>  b  </u> Gentile    | a. someone who respects and obeys God                 |
| 2. <u>  d  </u> identity   | b. someone who is not a descendant of Jacob (Israel)  |
| 3. <u>  a  </u> God-fearer | c. a ceremony to show new life as a follower of Jesus |
| 4. <u>  e  </u> dare       | d. the beliefs of a person that help define them      |
| 5. <u>  c  </u> baptize    | e. have enough courage or confidence to do something  |

#### Tell the Story

Using the pictures, try to have the group re-tell each story of healing, with volunteers giving only one sentence at a time until the story is complete.

## Chapter 1: History

### 1.2 The Gentiles Enter the Church

1. Cornelius, the captain of the Roman army in Caesarea had a vision while he was praying. In the vision an angel told him that God had heard his prayers and knew about his gifts to the poor. The angel told him to send some men to Joppa to find a man named Simon Peter.
2. Cornelius sent two of his servants and one of his soldiers to Joppa to find Peter.
3. Peter was praying on a roof top and fell asleep. He had a vision while he was sleeping. In the vision he saw heaven open and a large sheet come down holding all kinds of animals. A voice told him to kill and eat the animals. Because the animals were not clean to eat according to the Mosaic Law, Peter refused to do this. But the voice told him that God was saying these animals could be used for food. This vision repeated itself two more times. Then the sheet was taken back to heaven.
4. Just then the men that Cornelius had sent arrived at Peter's house.
5. Peter went with the men back to Caesarea to see Cornelius.
6. Peter entered the home of Cornelius (which was not permitted under the Mosaic Law) and told them about Jesus. The Holy Spirit took control of everyone who was listening to Peter and they began to speak in tongues. Peter realized that God had granted salvation to these Gentiles.

Ordering: Put the following events of the story in the proper order.

- a.   5   Saul joined Barnabas in teaching the church at Antioch.
- b.   4   Peter went to Caesarea to speak with Cornelius.
- c.   1   While Cornelius was praying, God sent an angel to him.
- d.   2   While Peter was praying, God sent a vision of all kinds of animals.
- e.   3   The men that Cornelius had sent arrived at the house where Peter was staying.

#### Discussion

##### *Easier*

1. Why were so many Jews from so many different places in Jerusalem?  
It was the time of Pentecost, a Jewish holiday. (Most Jews would try to go to Jerusalem to observe a holiday.)
2. Cornelius was frightened by the angel. Does this mean he was not a brave man?  
Cornelius had to be brave since he was an army commander; this just goes to show that seeing an angel can frighten the bravest of men.
3. What are some of the animals that Jews were not allowed to eat?

## Chapter 1: History

### 1.2 The Gentiles Enter the Church

An animal that eats grass but doesn't have a completely split hoof ( so cows, sheep, goats, and deer are OK, but horses, camels and pigs are not), an animal that lives in water but doesn't have fins and scales (so fish are OK, but lobsters and shellfish are not), birds of prey (chickens are OK, but eagles are not), insects (except for locusts, crickets, katydid, grasshoppers which are OK), weasels, rats, lizards, and snakes (Leviticus 11).

**4. What was Peter's vision? Why do you think God gave him that vision?**

Peter saw something like a huge sheet filled with all sorts of animals come down from heaven and heard a voice that told him to kill one and eat. When Peter objected because the animals weren't kosher, the voice said that God said to eat it. This vision happened three times in a row.

God was preparing Peter to accept the *Gentiles* into fellowship. Peter understood that not only was God calling the unclean animals that *Gentiles* ate acceptable, but He was also calling *Gentiles* acceptable.

**5. Who do you think was more surprised in this story, Cornelius or Peter?**

Answers will vary. Cornelius was probably unaware of the gospel. Peter was unaware that God was now including the *Gentiles* as His people.

**6. What did the Jewish believers do when they realized God was calling the *Gentiles* to the church?**

At first, they doubted that God would do this. But when they did realize this, they praised God and were excited and happy that God was giving the *Gentiles* life.

#### *Intermediate*

**1. Cornelius was frightened by the angel; does this mean he was not a brave man? Would you want to see an angel?**

Cornelius had to be brave since he was an army commander; this just goes to show that seeing an angel can frighten the bravest of men.

Answers will vary.

**2. Why was Peter in Joppa, and not Jerusalem?**

Peter was travelling from place to place in Samaria to visit and strengthen groups of believers. (Acts 9 tells us that he was visiting believers in Lydda where he healed a paralyzed man. Joppa was nearby, and when believers heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him to urge him to come to Joppa because one of the believers, a woman named Tabitha had become sick and died. Peter went to Joppa, knelt by her body and prayed, and Tabitha came back to life. Peter then stayed on in Joppa for a while.)

**3. How did God use Peter's hunger to speak to him?**

## Chapter 1: History

### 1.2 The Gentiles Enter the Church

Peter was hungry and so was looking forward to eating (a meal was being prepared in the house at the time). God used this to speak to Peter about eating and about what a person could and could not eat. Perhaps God was helping to reconcile Peter to the Gentile custom of regarding all food as meeting the need of hunger.

**4. What was the significance of "all kinds of animals" being in the sheet?**

The sheet either contained both clean and unclean animals, or all unclean animals. Peter had been raised under the Mosaic Law which stated that it was God's will for the Jews to only eat clean animals. Now God was showing Peter that the end of those laws had come (for the New Covenant displaced the Mosaic Law).

**5. How did God prepare Peter to enter a Gentile's home?**

God did this by showing the vision of the clean and unclean animals - and the accompanying voice that told Peter that God had made these animals fit to eat - three times in a row. And then God had the three messengers from Cornelius arrive at his door just as the visions ended.

Also, Peter had listened to Jesus' teaching that it wasn't what went into your mouth that made you unclean, but the words that came out of your mouth (Matt. 15), and had seen Jesus heal the daughter of a Canaanite woman (Matt. 15), the servant of a Roman centurion (Matt. 8) and bring a Samaritan woman and her village to faith (John 4).

Further, Peter had been moving throughout Samaria to strengthen the Jewish believers there. Some of those believers would have been Samaritan proselytes (Gentiles who converted to Judaism) and the Samaritans were a despised people group to the Jews because they were a mixed people (Jew and Gentile) and they had adulterated Judaism by mixing it with paganism.

**6. What was the peace that Jesus offered?**

Peace with God; this by taking our sins on Himself and bearing our punishment. When we have peace with God, we will have peace with others and with ourselves.

**7. Why do you think the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem at first doubted that Peter should have gone to Cornelius' home? Why do you think they changed their mind in the end?**

They, like Peter, had been ingrained with the Mosaic Law which had told them to keep separate from the Gentiles and to not eat unclean foods. But they too, like Peter, had all experienced Jesus' teachings and work with the Gentiles. They would have known the Scriptures that told of God's plans to bring in the Gentiles. The giving of the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles was God's witness to them that it was indeed His plan for them to take the gospel to the Gentiles.

**8. How did Peter's visit to Cornelius prepare the church for missionary work throughout the Roman Empire?**



## Chapter 1: History

### 1.2 The Gentiles Enter the Church

All the apostles and all the other leaders in the church in Jerusalem now knew for certain that it was God's will to bring the Gentiles to faith. They would have communicated this with all the churches throughout the region (maybe by messengers or word of mouth - people would have been travelling from place to place to visit church leaders, family or Jerusalem, etc.). So the knowledge of Peter's visit readied them to become missionaries to the Gentiles.

And so you see the churches both in Cyprus and in Cyrene (North Africa) sending missionaries to the major city of Antioch (Syria) to plant a church among both the Jews and Gentiles there. The Jerusalem leaders then sent out one of their best men (Barnabas) to pastor the church. Barnabas recruited Saul to help him. Barnabas and Saul took the Gospel to what is now Turkey. Saul took the Gospel into Europe - and the rest is history.

#### *Challenging*

1. Did God violate Cornelius' free will when he sent the angel to him?

No, Cornelius had the choice to say no, he didn't want to meet Peter, he wanted to keep things as they were. Cornelius had been praying at the time that God sent the angel to him; God knew Cornelius' heart and honored Cornelius by making him part of His great movement. Today millions of people all over the globe know who Cornelius was.

2. Cornelius was frightened by the angel; does this mean he was not a brave man? How do you think you would respond if you saw an angel?

Cornelius had to be brave since he was an army commander; this just goes to show that seeing an angel can frighten the bravest of men.  
Answers will vary.

3. Acts 10 tells us that all of Cornelius' servants believed in God, and that the soldier he sent believed in God too. What does that tell you?

This tells us that Cornelius must have shared his faith with his household, and that his household must have respected him enough to consider this faith. It also tells us that God was already working in the hearts of Gentiles to come to faith in Him.

4. How did God prepare Cornelius to hear the gospel?

God had already been at work in Cornelius for Cornelius was a God-fearer - the name that Jews gave to Gentiles who believed in God and served Him yet kept their Gentile identity and did not convert to Judaism.

Acts 10 says that Cornelius was praying at 3:00 in the afternoon. Since this is the hour of Jewish prayer, Cornelius may have adopted that time as a time to pray. Perhaps God was moving in Cornelius during the prayer to ready him for the angel and the message about Peter, just as God had been preparing Peter to meet

## Chapter 1: History

### 1.2 The Gentiles Enter the Church

Cornelius. The angel's appearance and message would have prepared Cornelius to hear and accept Peter and the gospel Peter would bring to his household.

5. **What questions might Cornelius have had in his mind regarding the angel's instructions?**

Answers will vary. Cornelius may have wondered why he had to send for Peter; he may have heard the criticism of Peter and the other apostles from the Jews and wondered about why God would want him to meet these outcasts; he may have wondered why God specifically wanted him to hear the gospel; he may have wondered why he had to send his men to fetch Peter - why hadn't the angel just gone to Peter itself.

6. **What connection did Peter make between food laws and people?**

Somehow Peter realized that when God told him that He had made all foods clean, that God was not only talking about food, but also about people. For when Peter entered Cornelius' home, he said, "God has shown me that he doesn't think anyone is unclean or unfit." According to the Mosaic law, many of the foods that the Gentiles ate (e.g. pork, rabbit, shellfish) were unclean, and the Jews were to keep separate from the Gentiles. (God did this to prevent the Jews from socializing and intermarrying with Gentiles - and then being led astray by Gentile gods.)

7. **Why do you think the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem at first doubted that Peter should have gone to Cornelius' home? Why do you think they changed their mind in the end?**

They, like Peter, had been ingrained with the Mosaic Law which had told them to keep separate from the Gentiles and to not eat unclean foods. But they too, like Peter, had all experienced Jesus' teachings and work with the Gentiles. They would have known the Scriptures that told of God's plans to bring in the Gentiles. The giving of the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles was God's witness to them that it was indeed His plan for them to take the gospel to the Gentiles.

8. **How did this incident pave the way for the spread of the gospel to Europe by Paul?**

All the apostles and all the other leaders in the church in Jerusalem now knew for certain that it was God's will to bring the Gentiles to faith. They would have communicated this with all the churches throughout the region (maybe by messengers or word of mouth - people would have been travelling from place to place to visit church leaders, family or Jerusalem, etc.). So the knowledge of Peter's visit readied them to become missionaries to the Gentiles.

And so you see the churches both in Cyprus and in Cyrene (North Africa) sending missionaries to the major city of Antioch (Syria) to plant a church among both the Jews and Gentiles there. The Jerusalem leaders then sent out one of their best men (Barnabas) to pastor the church. Barnabas

## Chapter 1: History

### 1.2 The Gentiles Enter the Church

recruited Saul to help him. Barnabas and Saul to the *Gospel* to what is now Turkey. Saul took the *Gospel* into Europe - and the rest is history.

Chapter 2: Prophecy  
2.1 Isaiah 53, the Messiah

**Prophecy: 2.1 Isaiah 53, the Messiah**

**Isaiah 53 (NIRV)**

**Timeline**

|              |  |                                     |
|--------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| 739 - 680 BC | Ministry of Isaiah the prophet   | Isaiah                              |
| 687 BC       | Reign of Manasseh over Judah   | 2 Kings 21, 2 Chronicles 33         |
| 63 BC        | Roman general Pompey conquers the Seleucids and takes control of Judah                                     | Between the Testaments              |
| 40? 41? BC   | Roman Emperor Julius Caesar appoints Herod the Great as King of Judea.                                     | Matthew 2                           |
| 6 BC         | Caesar Augustus Taxes the Roman Empire   | Luke 2                              |
| 5 BC         | Birth of Jesus   | Matthew 1,2; Luke 2                 |
| 30 AD        | The Last Supper, Jesus' betrayal and trial , the crucifixion, Jesus' Resurrection, the Ascension           | Matthew; Mark; Luke; John; Acts     |
| AD 66-70     | First Jewish revolt against Roman Rule. Most of Jerusalem destroyed, Temple destroyed                      | Not covered in the New Testament    |
| AD 132-135   | Second Jewish revolt led by Bar-Kokhba; most Jews of Judea killed or exiled, Judea renamed Syria Palestine | After the New Testament was written |

Source: Bible Timeline - [Biblehub.com/timeline/#complete](https://biblehub.com/timeline/#complete). All dates are approximate.

**Background**

**Isaiah 53 in Jewish Teaching**

It was always the case that every Sabbath in every synagogue, someone would be chosen to stand and read out loud a passage from the Law (the Torah) and a corresponding passage from the Prophets (the Haftarah). Then someone would give a brief teaching on the passage. In this way, the entire Tenach (what we call the Old Testament) would be covered over a period of time.

The prophetic passages in these readings would cover the past fulfilled prophecies and the future yet-to-be-fulfilled prophecies. The people in the synagogues were interested in how God's prophetic promises would unfold.

## Chapter 2: Prophecy

### 2.1 Isaiah 53, the Messiah

In all ancient Jewish commentaries written by the rabbis, Isaiah 53 was taught as a Messianic prophecy, and it would be presented as such in the synagogues whenever it was time for this passage to be read.

But that changed when Christianity embraced Isaiah 53 as the first gospel message. When the rabbis came to the disquieting realization that the Messiah of Isaiah 53 bore an uncanny resemblance to Jesus, the reading of this passage was dropped from the synagogue service. It was deemed that its interpretation was too difficult for the average person to understand.

About 1000 years after Jesus, the rabbi known as Rashi - one of the most influential of Jewish commentators - proposed that the suffering servant of Isaiah 53 was actually the nation of Israel. Others proposed that the servant was perhaps one of the good kings of Judah, or Moses, or Job, or even the Persian King, Cyrus the Great. Of course, all of these pretenders have some fatal disqualifying flaws; none of them were without sin (v. 9) and none had resurrected.

According to Jews for Jesus, Isaiah 53 is the passage that they find the most compelling to present during Jewish evangelism. They tell the story of one young Jewish woman whom they challenged to read this passage. She went home and took her father's copy of the Tenach (the Old Testament) and turned to Isaiah 53. To her surprise she saw that her father had circled it, and written beside it, "messianic prophecy - Yeshua is Messiah". Yeshua is the Hebrew word for Jesus.\*

In several synagogues today, Jewish leaders teach that Jesus was the illegitimate son of a Jewish hairdresser who was unfaithful to her husband; Jesus was the product of her affair with a Roman soldier. They teach that Christian theology is based on the Greek myth, Leda and the Swan. In this myth the Greek god Zeus takes the form of a swan and rapes the Greek girl Leda. Leda then lays eggs which hatch into the Greek war-god Castor and Polydeuces.

But Isaiah, moved by God's Spirit, says that someday in the future the Jews will collectively (the "we" in Isaiah 53) sing the lament of Isaiah 53 when they realize who their Messiah is and regret their mistreatment and rejection of Him. Zechariah 12:10 echoes this: "Then I will pour out a spirit of grace and prayer on the family of David and on the people of Jerusalem. They will look on me whom they have pierced and mourn for him as for an only son."

\*Efraim Goldstein. *Who's the Subject of Isaiah 53? You Decide! Jews for Jesus.*

<https://jewsforjesus.org/publications/issues/issues-v13-n06/whos-the-subject-of-isaiah-53-you-decide/>. Accessed March 2019.

## Chapter 2: Prophecy

### 2.1 Isaiah 53, the Messiah

#### Before you read:

1. Is it possible to know the future?
2. If it is possible, how can we know what will happen?

Feel free to share your own experiences and encourage a few students to do the same. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked.

#### 'What Do You Think'

**This** section is for students to speak freely. Not everyone needs to answer all the questions. It is to get them thinking and talking. Steer them back to the story if discussions get sidetracked.

#### Passage Questions

##### Summary of Sections 4 & 5

1. What would happen to the Messiah?  
He would take on the pain that should have been ours. He was pierced, crushed and punished.
2. What would people think about what happened?  
People would think that God was punishing him (for his sins).
3. What would be God's purpose? (Why did it happen?)  
The punishment for sins was paid for by Messiah, so we would be whole and healed..

#### Opposites:

The point of this section is to show that Messianic prophecy has many paradoxes - seemingly conflicting or opposite meanings can both be true. Jesus died, came to life again, and lives forever. He had no physical children, but He gives all believers with faith the power to become children of God (John 1). He was disrespected and rejected even though he was innocent of any sin. This is a key point for people with a Muslim background. It is hard to reconcile a shameful death with God's glory, or the first coming with the second coming. [Jesus' disciples had a difficult time understanding this also.]

Below are verses in sections 3, 8, 9 and 10 from the Isaiah 53 passage. Underline the statements said in these sections on the **right** that **do not seem to fit** or say **opposite** things to the statements on the **left**. Can both statements be true?

Chapter 2: Prophecy  
2.1 Isaiah 53, the Messiah

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>Sec. 3<br/><u>People looked down on him. They didn't accept him.</u><br/>He knew all about pain and suffering.<br/><u>He was like someone people turn their faces away from.</u><br/><u>We looked down on him. We didn't have any respect for him</u></p> <p>Sec. 8<br/>He was arrested and sentenced to death.<br/>Then he was taken away.<br/><u>He was cut off from this life.</u><br/>He was punished for the sins of my people.</p> | <p>Sec. 9<br/>He was given a grave with those who were evil.<br/>But his body was buried in the tomb of a rich man.<br/>He was killed even though <u>he hadn't harmed anyone.</u><br/><u>And he had never lied to anyone.</u></p> <p>Sec. 10.<br/>But he will see all his children after him.<br/><u>In fact, he will continue to live.</u><br/>My plan will be brought about through him.<br/><u>After he has suffered, he will see the light of life.</u><br/>And he will be satisfied.</p> |
|---|---|

### Multiple Choice

Circle the word that matches the definition.

- A short section of a book, a poem, or a speech.
  - prophecy
  - passage
  - shoot
  - experience
- Something that is soft, gentle, and easily damaged.
  - callous
  - dry
  - tender
  - special
- To make someone suffer for a crime or for bad behaviour.
  - heal
  - punish
  - satisfy
  - pierce
- An injury from a cut, a blow. A feeling of sadness caused when something bad happens to you.
  - bury
  - harm
  - wound
  - power
- To go in a direction away from the place where you should be.
  - continue
  - be led
  - face away
  - wander away
- To remove something. To stop something from continuing.

Chapter 2: Prophecy  
2.1 Isaiah 53, the Messiah

- a. crush  
b. notice
- c. suffer  
d. cut off
7. To press something with so much force that it is destroyed.
- a. pierce  
b. arrest
- c. crush  
d. look down on

Discussion

*Easier*

1. There are over 100 prophecies about Jesus' first advent. Jesus fulfilled all of them. Some of these are:
- Micah 5:2-4 said the Messiah would be from the tribe of Judah, and that he would be born in Bethlehem.
  - Hosea 11:1 said he would be called out of Egypt.
  - Zechariah 11:12-13 said he would be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver.
  - Malachi 3:1 said he would be preceded by a messenger.
  - Isaiah 11:1 said he would be called a Nazarene.
  - Zechariah 9:9 said he would come riding on a donkey.
  - Daniel 9:26 said the Messiah would be cut off and have nothing.
  - Psalm 22:1-31 said he would be forsaken and pierced but vindicated.
  - Psalm 16:8-11 said he would be resurrected.

Why do you think there were so many Messianic prophecies?

They gave the people hope throughout the oppression they suffered; one day God would right all wrongs, dry all tears, and bring restoration. They also prepared people to recognize the Messiah when He came, and protected people from being deceived by a false messiah.

2. Match each of the following verses from Isaiah 53 with its corresponding verse in the New Testament.

| Verse from Isaiah 53  | Verse from New Testament  |
|---|---|
| <p>Sec.<br/>7</p> <p>He was led away like a lamb to be killed. Sheep are silent while their wool is being cut off. In the same way, he didn't open his mouth.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">—10—</p> <p>Jesus was nailed to the cross, to pay for our sins. He enabled us to stop sinning and start living right (1 Peter 2:24).</p> |



Chapter 2: Prophecy  
2.1 Isaiah 53, the Messiah

|  |            |  |
|--|------------|--|
| <p>Sec. 9<br/>But his body was buried in the tomb of a rich man.</p>         | <p>—3—</p> | <p>The soldiers mocked Jesus. They put a purple robe on him. They wove branches of thorns into a crown and put it on his head. They laughed at him and said, "Hail, king of the Jews!" (Mark 15:17,18)</p>                                     |
| <p>Sec. 3<br/>We looked down on him. We didn't have any respect for him.</p> | <p>—9—</p> | <p>When Jesus died on the cross, a disciple named Joseph from the town of Arimathea asked to take Jesus' body. Joseph put Jesus' body in his own tomb. Joseph was wealthy and he had a new tomb that was cut into rock. (Matthew 27:57-60)</p> |
| <p>Sec. 10<br/>I made his life an offering to pay for sin.</p>               | <p>—7—</p> | <p>When people accused Jesus of doing wrong, he didn't answer them. The high priest said, "Defend yourself", but Jesus said nothing. (Matthew 26:62, 63)</p>   |

*Intermediate*

- Match each of the following verses from Isaiah 53 with its corresponding verse in the New Testament.

| Verse from Isaiah 53  |             | Verse from New Testament   |
|---|-------------|--|
| <p>7<br/>He was led away like a lamb to be killed. Sheep are silent while their wool is being cut off. In the same way, he didn't open his mouth.</p> | <p>—10—</p> | <p>Christ carried the burden of our sins. He was nailed to the cross, so that we would stop sinning and start living right (1 Peter 2:24).</p>   |
| <p>9<br/>But his body was buried in the tomb of a rich man.</p>   | <p>—3—</p>  | <p>They put a purple robe on him, and on his head they placed a crown that they had made out of thorn branches. They made fun of Jesus and shouted, "Hey, you king of the Jews!" (Mark 15:17,18)</p> |

Chapter 2: Prophecy  
2.1 Isaiah 53, the Messiah

|    |   |     |   |
|----|---|-----|---|
| 3  | We looked down on him.<br>We didn't have any respect for him. | —5— | And with only a word he forced out the evil spirits and healed everyone who was sick (Matthew 8:16).  |
| 10 | I made his life an offering to pay for sin.                   | —7— | The high priest stood up and asked Jesus, "Why don't you say something in your own defense? Don't you hear the charges they are making against you? But Jesus did not answer. (Matthew 26:62, 63) |
| 5  | His wounds have healed us.                                    | —9— | That evening a rich disciple named Joseph from the town of Arimathea went and asked for Jesus' body...Joseph put the body in his own tomb (Matthew 27:57-60)                                      |

2. In section 3 we see that the servant is looked down on and not accepted. In section 8 Isaiah says the servant will be cut off. But in section 10 Isaiah says the servant will continue to live and see all his children.

How were these contradicting prophecies fulfilled?

They were fulfilled by the resurrection. When Jesus was about 30, He was crucified and died with apparently nothing to show for His life. But He rose from the dead and has seen the millions that have come to faith in Him throughout time.

3. What do you think, "His servant grew up like a **tender** young plant. He grew like a root coming up out of dry ground" tells us?

Answers will vary here. Judea was spiritually dry at the time of Jesus' first advent. Dry ground could also be taken as ground that wasn't taken care of, ground that was considered to be of poor quality. Jesus lived in Nazareth which was considered a place of poor quality to come from.

4. Why are we like sheep? Why should we take God's path?

We tend to have herd mentality; we follow the narratives of our day. God is the author of wisdom and knowledge; His path holds the most promise for us.

5. Is there anyone who had not gone their own way (section 6)? How, then, can you know if you are right with God?

1 John 1:8 says that if anyone claims to be without sin, he deceives only himself. We can know that we're right with God if we accept Jesus as our Lord and if we accept that we need Jesus' payment for our sins.

## Chapter 2: Prophecy

### 2.1 Isaiah 53, the Messiah

6. Jesus healed the sick, raised the dead, and fed the hungry. But He didn't free His people from Roman oppression. When Jesus comes the second time, He will free His people (and the world) from oppression.

Why did He speak against the sins of His people the first time He came - but not speak against the oppression of the Romans?

Sin is the root cause of oppression. The Romans weren't the only oppressors, His people were oppressors as well.

When Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, God first judged Egypt by killing all their firstborn. But the Israelites were guilty of sin too. So, they first had to put the blood of a lamb on their doors to escape God's judgment.

So, Jesus first had to first atone for their sins before He could judge their oppressors. (But the blood of the Lamb of God atones for the sins of whosoever would believe in Him.)

7. There are over 100 prophecies about Jesus' first advent. Jesus fulfilled all of them. Some of these are:

- Micah 5:2-4 said the Messiah would be from the tribe of Judah, and that he would be born in Bethlehem.
- Hosea 11:1 said he would be called out of Egypt.
- Zechariah 11:12-13 said he would be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver.
- Malachi 3:1 said he would be preceded by a messenger.
- Isaiah 11:1 said he would be called a Nazarene.
- Zechariah 9:9 said he would come riding on a donkey.
- Daniel 9:26 said the Messiah would be cut off and have nothing.
- Psalm 22:1-31 said he would be forsaken and pierced but vindicated.
- Psalm 16:8-11 said he would be resurrected.

Why do you think there were so many Messianic prophecies?

They gave the people hope throughout the oppression they suffered; one day God would right all wrongs, dry all tears, and bring restoration. They also prepared people to recognize the Messiah when He came, and protected people from being deceived by a false messiah.

8. a) What types of pain did the Messiah suffer?

He wasn't accepted, he wasn't respected, and he was looked down on. He suffered because of others, but we said He deserved the suffering. He was treated badly, even in death he was hung on a cross - the fate of a despised criminal. We also know from the New Testament that He suffered being spoken evil of by the religious leaders, betrayal from Judas Iscariot, the desertion by his closest disciples on the night of His arrest, the pain of the Romans scourging Him, then the pain of the cross - and the ridicule of others while he hung there. And He suffered the loss of relationship with the Father when He was on the cross for He cried out, "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?".

Chapter 2: Prophecy  
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b) Jesus knew He would rise from the dead and see the light of life. Did this lessen the pain which He experienced?

This knowledge would help Him endure the pain, but it would not lessen the pain itself.

c) How did Jesus react to our pain during His time on earth?

Jesus felt a great compassion for us, He healed many whether they were grateful for it or not, and he felt anger that we suffered pain and death.

*Challenging*

1. What imagery does Isaiah use in the beginning of this passage to show that the Messiah was life in a dead place?

Isaiah said he was a tender green shoot in dry ground. Dry ground cannot give birth to such life.

2. Do you know anything about sheep? Why do you think God would compare us to sheep?

Sheep follow each other and tend to get lost. Their shepherd has to keep an eye on them. We tend to follow the spirit of our times, tend to wander away from God, and without Him, we are lost.

3. Match each of the following verses from Isaiah 53 with its corresponding verse in the New Testament.

| Verse from Isaiah 53  | Verse from New Testament  |
|---|---|
| <p>7 He was led away like a lamb to be killed. Sheep are silent while their wool is being cut off. In the same way, he didn't open his mouth.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">__10__</p> <p>Christ carried the burden of our sins. He was nailed to the cross, so that we would stop sinning and start living right (1 Peter 2:24).</p>  |
| <p>9 But his body was buried in the tomb of a rich man.</p>   | <p style="text-align: center;">__3__</p> <p>They put a purple robe on him, and on his head they placed a crown that they had made out of thorn branches. They made fun of Jesus and shouted, "Hey, you king of the Jews!" (Mark 15:17,18)</p> |

Chapter 2: Prophecy  
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| 5  | His wounds have healed us.                                 | —9— | That evening a rich disciple named Joseph from the town of Arimathea went and asked for Jesus' body...Joseph put the body in his own tomb (Matthew 27:57-60)                                      |

4. Was Manasseh, the king of Judah, right with God? Were the people of Judah right with God? Is there anyone who "had done no wrong and had never deceived anyone" (verse 9)? How, then, can you know if you are right with God?  
No, Manasseh was wicked. No, the people were worshipping idols. 1 John 1:8 says that if anyone claims to be without sin, he deceives only himself. We can know that we're right with God if we accept as our Lord and if we accept that we need Jesus' payment for our sins.
5. How can the servant have his life cut-off (section 8) - and yet at the same time "continue to live" and "see all his children" (segment 10)?  
Jesus was crucified and died in his early thirties - midstream. But He resurrected and sees the millions of people who have come to him since the time of His death.
6. The prophet Zechariah said, "Then I will pour out a spirit of grace and prayer on the family of David and on the people of Jerusalem. They will look on me whom they have pierced and mourn for him as for an only son" (Zech. 12:10). How does this passage from Zechariah tie in with Isaiah 53?  
Isaiah 53 can be seen as the sad song of regret that the "family of David" and the "people of Jerusalem" will be singing when they recognize that Jesus was the Messiah, what He had done for them, and how they had treated Him.
7. Isaiah said the Messiah would carry our weaknesses and sorrows. When Jesus came, he healed the sick, raised the dead, and fed the hungry. Yet he did not speak against Roman oppression. Instead, He confronted his own people about their hatred, hypocrisy, immorality, conceit, selfishness...and their indifference to their God. That is why they rejected and killed him.  
Why do you think He confronted His people, rather than their oppressors?

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### 2.1 Isaiah 53, the Messiah

Sin is the root cause of oppression. The Romans weren't the only oppressors, His people were oppressors as well.

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This knowledge would help Him endure the pain, but it would not lessen the pain itself.

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### 2.1 Isaiah 53, the Messiah

#### c) How did Jesus react to our pain during His time on earth?

Jesus felt a great compassion for us, He healed many whether they were grateful for it or not, and he felt anger that we suffered pain and death.

Chapter 2: Prophecy  
2.2 The Olivet Discourse

Prophecy: 2.2 The Olivet Discourse      Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21

Timeline

|                |   |  |
|----------------|---|--|
| 63 BC          | Roman general Pompey conquers the Seleucids and controls Judah  | Between the Testaments   |
| 40? 41? BC     | Roman Emperor Julius Caesar appoints Herod the Great as King of Judea. On Herod's death, the Hasmonean kingdom is divided up among 3 of his sons. | Matthew 2  |
| 6 BC           | Caesar Augustus Taxes the Roman Empire  | Luke 2   |
| 5 BC ?         | Birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, Judea; Joseph and Mary flee to Egypt with Jesus before Herod the Great kills the male babies in Bethlehem            | Matthew 2  |
| AD 30 ?<br>33? | Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension   | Matthew 27,28;<br>Mark 15,16; John 17-21; Luke 23, 24;<br>Acts 1 |
| AD 66-70       | First Jewish revolt against Roman Rule. Most of Jerusalem destroyed, Temple destroyed   | Not covered in the New Testament                                 |
| AD 70          | Jerusalem falls to Titus  | Not covered in the New Testament                                 |
| AD 73          | Masada falls to Romans under Flavius Silva  | Not covered in the New Testament                                 |
| AD 132-135     | Second Jewish revolt led by Bar-Kokhba; most Jews of Judea killed or exiled, Judea renamed Syria Palestine  | After the New Testament was written                              |

Source: Bible Timeline - [Biblehub.com/timeline/#complete](https://biblehub.com/timeline/#complete). All dates are approximate.

## Background

### The Arch of Titus

When the first Jewish revolts against Rome started in 66 A.D., Rome sent general Vespasian to quell the rebellion. Vespasian's son, Titus, also a general, was with him. Vespasian returned to Rome to become emperor in 69 A.D., leaving Titus as the leader of the Roman siege of Jerusalem.



## Chapter 2: Prophecy

### 2.2 The Olivet Discourse

Titus became emperor of Rome in 79 A.D. After his death, his brother, the Emperor Domitian, had a Roman arch built to commemorate Titus's victories. On this arch is a marble carving showing Roman soldiers having the solid gold Temple Menorah and the gold-plated Table of Showbread from the Temple to Rome. The Arch of Titus still stands today at the entrance to the Roman Forum.

This event is further documented by the Jewish historian, Josephus. Josephus was present in Rome when the Romans destroyed the Temple. He wrote down the account of the Romans taking the gold Temple menorah to Rome and placing it in the temple built by Vespasian.

#### The Jewish Revolts

In the time of the New Testament there was a political movement among the Jews to overthrow the occupying Roman government. One of the main issues, mentioned in the Bible, was taxation. Rome taxed the people heavily. Rome allowed the tax collectors to put an unlimited surtax on top of the Roman tax; this surtax going into the tax collector's own pockets. (Jesus chose Matthew the tax collector for one of his disciples.)

The members of this resistance movement were called the Zealots. (Jesus chose Simon the Zealot for one of His disciples.)

The cause of the Zealots grew greatly in popular appeal during the reign of the Roman emperor Caligula; in AD 39 Caligula declared himself to be a god and ordered that a statue of himself be set up in every temple in the Roman Empire. Only the timely death of Caligula prevented Rome from forcibly putting Caligula's statue in the Jerusalem Temple.

#### *The First Revolt:*

In 66 A.D. the Roman procurator Florus stole a large quantity of silver from the Jerusalem Temple. In retaliation, the Zealots led a victorious attack against the Roman garrison in Jerusalem. When Rome sent in reinforcements from Syria, the Zealots defeated them as well.

Rome then sent an army of 60,000 to attack the Zealots in Galilee and brutally conquered it. The surviving Jews of Galilee fled south to Judea, with the Romans following.

The Jews of Judea wanted to seek peace. This enraged the more radical of the Zealots who then killed all fellow Jews who advocated making peace with Rome. Some Zealots burned the stores of food supply in Jerusalem to force the Jews of Jerusalem to join with them or die of starvation.

Rome destroyed the Temple and much of Jerusalem. Between the Zealots and Rome, as many as one million Jews died during the revolts.

## Chapter 2: Prophecy

### 2.2 The Olivet Discourse

#### *The Second Revolt*

In 118 A.D., the Roman emperor Hadrian changed Jerusalem's name to Aelia Capitolina and planned to found a Roman colony there. He also began to build a temple to Jupiter on Jerusalem's Temple Mount, where the Temple had stood. And Hadrian tried to force the Jews to join in Roman culture by outlawing circumcision.

In 132 A.D. under the leadership of Simeon bar Kosba Shimon, the Zealots became strong and victorious, reclaiming Jerusalem and much of Judea. He was proclaimed by the Jews to be the Messiah and his name was changed to Bar Kokhba ("Son of the Star").

Hadrian sent some of his best generals and 12 army legions from Egypt, Britain, and Syria to quell the revolt. The Romans crushed the Jewish forces. Judea was destroyed, and most of its Jewish population annihilated or exiled.

#### Wars, Volcanoes, and Earthquakes

There was a steady rise in the number of armed conflicts throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. European wars decreased after WW II, as did most global wars. But civil and regional wars elsewhere kept the number of conflicts rising. It was thought that increasing economic development would slow the incentive for war, but it also made wars more economically feasible. In 2017 there were more than 40 active conflicts. Many civil wars do not make our news.

Although graphs of volcanic activity over the past centuries do show an increase in that activity, scientists believe that the apparent increase is due mainly to an increase in the reporting of volcanic activity.

Not so with earthquakes; a global network of seismometers capable of detecting all global earthquakes greater than magnitude 5.0 was in place by the end of the 1960s. When earthquake data is plotted into magnitudes of 5.0-5.9; 6.0-6.9 ; 7.0-7.9; vs. time, it can be seen that the number of earthquakes in each of these groupings have been increasing over the past decades since then; there is some evidence of increase in the earthquakes of magnitude 8.0-8.9; none in magnitudes of 9.0-9.9.

#### The Abomination of Desolation

In Matthew 24, speaking of the end of the age and the tribulation to follow, Jesus said, <sup>15</sup>So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel - let the reader understand - then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains."

Daniel was a prophet of Israel who lived in the time of the Babylonian, then Persian, rule over the people of Judah. Daniel prophesied about the coming Greek Empire and the desecration of the Temple that would happen at that time. The Greek Seleucid ruler,

## Chapter 2: Prophecy

### 2.2 The Olivet Discourse

Antiochus Epiphanes IV put a statue of the Greek god Zeus in the Temple and sacrificed a pig to Zeus on the Temple altar. This desecrated the Temple (the holy place).

Some theologians think that Jesus' words to flee when they saw the "abomination of desolation" meant that the Christians should flee Jerusalem when they saw the Romans enter the Temple and start to destroy it. The act of a Gentile entering the Temple (where only priests could go) and the Temple's second room, the Holy of Holies, (where only the high priest could go - and then only once a year on the Day of Atonement) was the "abomination of desolation".

Other theologians think that the "abomination of desolation" meant another act like that of Antiochus Epiphanes would happen; that another statue of a god (or a person demanding worship as a god) would be placed in the Temple. The ancient Romans of Jesus' time did not ever defile the Temple in that way. Therefore, these theologians think that Jesus was talking about both the impending destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. (in which this type of abomination did not take place) and of a future act of desecration in a future Temple - that will exist in the end of the age. Now in many prophecies in the Bible there are these layers of near and distant prophecies given simultaneously.

If these theologians were correct, Israel would have to exist again as a nation - and it would have to build another temple. These theologians predicted this would happen long before there was any hint that Israel could ever exist again as a nation. Modern Israel does have plans to rebuild a temple; they already have made the Temple's furnishings and the priests' clothing. They have trained the priests, bred the required sacrificial animals, and have started practicing animal sacrifice on Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement).

It presently looks impossible for Israel to build another temple on the Temple Mount - especially since the Arabs built a mosque over top of the actual place that the Temple had stood. But if this does happen, then Jesus' prophecy here would mean that temple - the third temple - would be desecrated by the Antichrist himself. This because 2 Thessalonians 2:4 says of the Antichrist, "He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshipped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God." That would be the signal to the Jews of Jerusalem to flee the city and the signal that the Tribulation will have begun in earnest.

#### Before you read:

1. Has anyone ever given you a warning to help you avoid trouble?
2. Did you listen to the warning?

Feel free to share your own experiences and encourage a few students to do the same. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked.

Chapter 2: Prophecy  
2.2 The Olivet Discourse

'What Do You Think'

This section is for students to speak freely. Not everyone needs to answer all the questions. It is to get them thinking and talking. Steer them back to the story if discussions get sidetracked.

Passage Questions

What kind of Future?

Look at the underlined prophecies in the text. Write down the negative words and phrases that mean a terrible future, and the positive words that mean a happy future. The first one is done for you.

| Terrible Future   | Happy Future  |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• War</li><li>• Starve &amp; famine</li><li>• earthquakes</li><li>• evil will spread</li><li>• worst suffering</li><li>• sun will become dark</li><li>• moon will not shine</li><li>• stars will fall</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Peace</li><li>• end of oppression</li><li>• (Messiah) coming with power</li><li>• and great glory (Note: This is happy for those who love Jesus, but terrible for those who don't.)</li></ul> |

What comes last, the terrible future or the happy future? How does that make you feel? The coming of the Messiah with great glory comes last. The point of this is that whatever is going on in the world, it is temporary. Jesus Christ is assuring us that for those who trust Him, there is a great hope that is 100% certain!

Fill in the blanks with the following words: oppression, betrayal, starve, Zealots, trample

1. The \_\_\_Zealots\_\_\_ were a Judean political group who were against the Roman government.
2. The prophets said the Messiah would stop the \_\_\_oppression\_\_\_ of the people.
3. If people have nothing to eat for a long time they will \_\_\_starve\_\_\_ and die.
4. When people give information about their friends to enemies, it is a terrible \_\_\_betrayal\_\_\_.
5. We must never \_\_\_trample\_\_\_ on other peoples' rights, wishes, or feelings, or treat people as if they were not important.

## Chapter 2: Prophecy

### 2.2 The Olivet Discourse

#### Discussion

#### *Easy*

1. **What did the prophets say about the Messianic Kingdom?**

The prophets said it would be a time when the Messiah ruled the world from Jerusalem, on David's throne. It would be a time of peace, an end of oppression. Israel would be free from war forever.

2. **What are some of the things that will happen in the beginning of the end of the age?**

Wars, threats of wars, nations and kingdoms against each other, famines and earthquakes. People would stop loving each other, and before the end, the gospel would be preached to the whole world.

3. **Why will people stop loving others?**

The love of most would grow cold because of the spread of evil. (If people embrace evil and wickedness, they would be embracing selfishness, greed, indifference, and be ungrateful, and abusive (2 Tim. 2:3).

4. **Who will see Jesus return? What will they do when they see Him?**

Jesus said that everyone on the earth will see Him return on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. He said the people would weep.

5. **What warning did Jesus give His disciples who would be living in Jerusalem and Judea?**

He told them that when they saw Jerusalem surrounded by soldiers, they were to flee. They were to leave Jerusalem. They were to run to the mountains. He said that the people of Jerusalem would be killed or carried off. (This happened. When the Roman army surrounded Jerusalem in 70 A.D., the Christians remembered Jesus' words and fled for Petra (Petra is now in Jordan. In the time of the New Testament it was called Bozrah and was located in neighboring Nabatea. Nabatea was originally called Edom and had belonged to the Edomites (the descendants of Esau) but had been taken over by the Arabs (Nabateans) in the time of the Babylonian Empire.)

6. **What armies surrounded Jerusalem? What did they do?**

The Roman army, under Titus, surrounded Jerusalem. They destroyed the Temple and the city. They killed hundreds of thousands of Jews and sent as many as slaves throughout the Roman Empire.

7. **Why did the soldiers pull down all of the stones of the Temple?**

Originally the soldiers had set fire to the Temple. The heat of the fire melted the gold on the roof and all the walls, and the gold ran down in and between the stones. The soldiers pulled down all the stones so that they could get the gold. (There was

## Chapter 2: Prophecy

### 2.2 The Olivet Discourse

no mortar in the spaces between the stones; they had been held in place by their sheer weight.)

8. Do you have any questions or comments about the story?  
Answers will vary here.

#### *Intermediate*

1. Why did Herod the Great renovate the Temple in Jerusalem? What were some of the improvements he made?

Herod was hoping to win acceptance by the Jews by making their Temple spectacular. He would have known that they were not happy with Rome making him their king. (Nevertheless, Herod immediately proceeded to kill all Jewish members of the preceding royal family (the Hasmoneans) who might pose a threat to his rule. He also killed over half of the Sanhedrin (the Jewish ruling council) and drowned the High Priest.)

Herod expanded the top of the Temple Mount itself and built large retaining walls to keep it in place. He covered the walls of the Temple in gold and used gold to ornament its roof. He put in fine marble floors and hung beautiful tapestries for its curtains.

2. Who were the Zealots? What were they trying to accomplish?

They were the Jewish resistance against Roman occupation. They were trying to rouse up the Jews to revolt against Roman occupation and take their nation back to its independence and self-rule. (In time the more radical element among them gained control of the movement and they became terrorists who brought about the destruction of their people and of Jerusalem and the Temple.)

3. What is the Messianic Kingdom? What would this mean for the Jews? For the Romans?

This would be the time when the Messiah establishes himself as king in Jerusalem, sitting on the throne as David did. (This Messiah would rule forever and give their nation rest from all enemies (2 Sam. 7:12).)

For the Jews this would mean that Rome would pull out of their land and the Jews would never again be ruled over by another nation.

For the Romans this would mean that they would lose control over all the land that had belonged to the nation of Judah before they took control (Galilee, Samaria, Judea, Idumea, Perea, and parts of the Decapolis); this would not go over well with the Romans as they controlled the entire perimeter of the Mediterranean (and Judah was a prosperous nation to own).

4. What do you think the disciples were thinking when Jesus said the Temple would be destroyed?

## Chapter 2: Prophecy

### 2.2 The Olivet Discourse

Answers will vary here. The disciples were impressed by the beauty of the Temple Mount; since it was a wonder of its time, they were probably proud of it. (The Temple was the centre of Jewish life as they knew it. They probably had no idea that the sacrificial system of the Temple would come to an end.) They may have realized that it was likely to be the Romans that would destroy the Temple, and they may have been disturbed by the implications of the Roman army carrying that out.

5. What things were signs of the "end of the age"? What do you think Jesus meant when he said, "but that isn't the end"(Section 7)? What is the significance of comparing this to birth pains?

The signs were wars and threats of war; nation rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; famines and earthquakes.

"The end is still to come" means that when we see this, the end is not imminent. Like "birth pains" means these things will increase in frequency and intensity.

6. Why would the spread of evil cause people to stop loving each other (Section 7)?

If people choose wickedness, they have turned their backs on God and on how to love as God loves. 2 Tim. 3:2 says that people will become lovers of self, proud, arrogant, abusive, ungrateful, unholy, disobedient to their parents - this is not the description of a loving person.

Some say that this could also mean that Christians themselves will cool in their love for Jesus, for God, and for each other.

7. Forty years passed before Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed. How was this prophecy fulfilled?

This prophecy was fulfilled literally. Because of the gold melting between the stones during the fire, the Romans literally tore the stones of the Temple apart leaving not one stone on top of another. Much of Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D., and they literally ploughed it to the ground in 135 A.D.

8. Was Jesus only speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans?

Since Jesus talked of "nation against nation, and kingdom against kingdom", this means the whole world will be involved in end of the age. Also, Jesus said the gospel will be preached to the whole world. He also said that if the Lord did not shorten the time of the Tribulation, that no human being would be saved. And He said that all the tribes of the earth would weep when they saw His return.

9. What effect do you think the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple had on the Jews? On the Christians?

Answers will vary here. Probably both groups loved Jerusalem and the Temple - and were devastated by its loss.

The Zealots had been convinced that God was on their side and they would defeat Rome - now it was obvious that God was not on their side. The Jews would have to

## Chapter 2: Prophecy

### 2.2 The Olivet Discourse

know that this was God's judgment on them, but they probably refused to acknowledge that.

The Christians would have wept over the loss of something so important to their people and history. But they would accept it because Jesus had told them this would happen. Also, they had received the Holy Spirit some 40 years earlier, had seen the formation of the church, and had seen the spread of the Spirit and the church to the Gentiles. Many of them had been dispersed by the persecutions of the non-believing Jews and had been further dispersed by the Roman attack. They had 40 years of experience with God's provision, so they would have the faith and strength for what was next.

#### *Challenging*

1. How did Herod the Great try to win the favour of the Jews? Why would he want their favour? Why do you think he didn't succeed?

Herod tried to win their favour by renovating the Temple. (Solomon's Temple had been magnificent, but the Babylonians had destroyed it. When the Jews returned from Babylon, they could only manage to build a modest Temple (Zerubbabel's Temple)).

Answers will vary here. He wanted their favour because his success as a ruler would depend on their willingness to accept him. He didn't succeed because the Jews did not want to be ruled by Rome; they wanted to return to being independent, self-ruled.

2. What did the shouts of "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!" mean, when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the donkey?

They expected that Jesus would declare Himself the Messiah and begin the Messianic Kingdom, ruling from Jerusalem. (It was close to Passover, and they may well have thought that Jesus would choose Passover to begin this rule. Passover marked the beginning of the Exodus, Israel's freedom from Egyptian oppression; they were now longing for freedom from Roman oppression). (The Jews believed that the Messianic Kingdom would be a rule like that of King David's. They believed the Messiah was a descendant of David and would rule on David's throne. That's why people called him the Son of David.)

3. Contrast the disciples' admiration of the Temple with Jesus' prophecy about it. Do you wish the Temple had survived? Why or why not?

The Temple was considered a wonder of the world. The disciples remarked on its beauty. Jesus simply said it would be destroyed; He showed no awe of it. (Actually, that week when they were in Jerusalem was the week that He made the whip and drove the money changers and merchants out of the Temple. They had set up shop in the colonnades that Herod had built.)



## Chapter 2: Prophecy

### 2.2 The Olivet Discourse

4. What things marked the beginning of the end of the age? What is the significance of calling them "birth pains"? What is the significance of Jesus saying, "the end is still to come"?

Wars and threats of wars, famines, and earthquakes marked the beginning. Like birth pains, events would become more intense and closer together.

The appearance of these things is not the sign of the imminent end of the world; they will go on for some period of time before the end. Therefore, Jesus could tell them to not be afraid of these things - just be prepared for what would come after.

5. When will the gospel of the kingdom be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations? What did this tell the disciples?

The gospel will be preached to all nations before the end of the world will come. Since the disciples had not brought the gospel to any nations yet - and since even if they started doing so it would take much more than their lifetimes - then they should have realized that the end of the world and the Messianic Kingdom was not going to happen right away.

(We don't know if they realized it would be them and generations after them who would preach the gospel to the world. Revelation 14:6 says John saw an angel flying through the air proclaiming the gospel during the Tribulation - so maybe they thought that angels would do the entire job. After all, it was angels who first announced the gospel to the shepherds in Bethlehem. )

6. What are some of the tribulations that the world has gone through so far?

Answers will vary. The 20<sup>th</sup> century gave us World Wars I and II; the Holocaust; the Armenian genocide; Bangladesh; Cambodia; Rwanda; Nanking; the Russian revolution; the Communist revolution in China; and many, many more. The only thing we know is that the Tribulation will be the worst, for Mark wrote, "For in those days there will be such Tribulation as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, and never will be" (Mark 13:19).

7. How will Jesus return, and who will see Him? What will be their response to seeing Him? Why do you think they will react that way?

Jesus will come on the clouds of heaven and everyone on earth will see Him. They will all weep (Matt. 24:30).

Answers will vary on why they will weep. Some commentators say people will weep because they have done evil and dread the coming judgment on them. Other commentators think this might be a godly weeping of repentance when they realize that they had been wrong in their disbelief. Zechariah 12:10 says, "And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will weep for

## Chapter 2: Prophecy

### 2.2 The Olivet Discourse

him as one weeps as for an only child and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son."

8. What do you think Jesus meant when He said, "Jerusalem will be trampled by foreign nations until their time comes to an end"?

This is a prophecy of the 70 AD trampling of Jerusalem by the Romans and the loss of Jewish ownership of Jerusalem in 135 AD.

It's also a prophecy that Jerusalem would stay under the control of Gentiles until their time came to an end.

(Jerusalem was under the control of the Romans, then the Byzantines, then the Sassanians (Iran), then the Arab Islamic Caliphates, then the Ottoman Turks, and then Britain.)

Even now, though Israel is a nation again, the Gentile nations of the world dispute its right to make Jerusalem its capital city. And Israel does not have control of its Temple Mount, Jordan does.

This prophecy also tells us that the times of the Gentiles are limited. That means that one day their control of Jerusalem will end.

9. It's been said that unlike any other religion, Christianity stands or falls on history. Why do you think that's the case?

Throughout the Bible there are many references to people and places and events. This actually shows the authenticity of the writers - they knew details that only an eye witness could know, such as the names of insignificant villages, the names commonly used by people in that region at the time, and the names of leaders of the time. There are several early manuscripts of the New Testament dating to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, and a fragment of Mark's gospel dating to the 1<sup>st</sup> century. There would have been many manuscripts at the time, for they were copied in every church and then sent on to other churches. Everyone of that time would have known the people, places, and events that were described in the New Testament and so would have been able to immediately determine its integrity. (There are also thousands of early manuscripts of the New Testament that let us check against each other for the accuracy of its writings.) (This is how the writings of the gnostics were shown to be false.)

10. Some Hebrew scholars today say that the ancient Hebrew word "hosanna", means not only "save us" but "I beg you, please save us". Why do you think God lets people go through things - like the siege of Jerusalem, and like the events of the end of the age - that we beg to be delivered from?

Answers will vary here. When astronauts go into space and can move freely and easily without the force of gravity pulling on them, they lose muscle mass and bone strength. And, as the saying goes, a diamond is just a lump of coal that made good under pressure. Without struggle, we would not become the people we are today.

### Timeline

|         |   |                             |
|---------|---|-----------------------------|
| 1446 BC | Moses begins the Exodus from Egypt to Canaan    | Exodus 13-18                |
| 1406 BC | Joshua begins the conquest of Canaan            | Joshua 1                    |
| 1399 BC | The land of Canaan is allotted among the Tribes | Joshua 13-22                |
| 1043 BC | Saul becomes the first king of Israel           | 1 Samuel 8-10               |
| 1003 BC | David becomes the second king of Israel         | 2 Samuel 5, 1 Chronicles 11 |

Source: Bible Timeline - Biblehub.com/timeline/#complete. All dates are approximate.

### Background

#### Poetry in the Bible

Poetry typically has elements such as:

1. *Assonance*: the way the word sounds; either the same vowel sound, (feet/seat) or the same consonant sound, (keep/cape)
2. *Alliteration*: words starting with the same consonant, for example "No one needs negative nonsense."
3. *Rhyme*: words that sound similar especially at the end of a poetic line, for example: "Give me the time/ and I'll give you a dime."

However, these are not essential ingredients of Hebrew poetry. Instead, the essential formal characteristic of Hebrew poetry is parallelism. Parallelism occurs when the content of one line is repeated, contrasted, or advanced by the content of the next. It is more of an arrangement of thoughts rather than words.

The three main types of parallelism in biblical poetry are synonymous, antithetic, and synthetic.

1. *Synonymous parallelism*: A parallel segment repeats an idea found in the previous segment. Usually a kind of paraphrase is involved; line two restates the same thought found in line one, by using similar expressions.

Examples of synonymous parallelism are found in Psalm 2:4: "He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; / The LORD shall hold them in derision." Or in Psalm 51:2-3:

## Chapter 3: Poetry

### 3.1 Psalms 1, 42, 100

"Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, / And cleanse me from my sin. / For I acknowledge my transgressions, / And my sin is always before me."

2. *Antithetic parallelism*: In this poetic construction, the thought of the first line is made clearer by contrast - by the opposition expressed in the second line. In English we use the conjunction "but" or the adverb "however" to express this idea.

Examples of antithetic parallelism may be found in Psalm 1:6: "The LORD knows the way of the righteous, / But the way of the ungodly shall perish"; in Psalm 34:10: "The young lions lack and suffer hunger; / But those who seek the LORD shall not lack any good thing";

3. *Synthetic parallelism*: It is a form used often in the Book of Psalms. The first part of the idea is expanded or completed in the second part. An example is Psalm 42:1 "As a deer gets thirsty for streams of water, I am thirsty for you, my God." Or Proverbs 21:27 (NIV) "The sacrifice of the wicked is detestable—how much more so when brought with evil intent!"

- Poetry of the Bible. Angelfire. (n.d.)

[http://www.angelfire.com/sc3/we\\_dig\\_montana/Poetry.html](http://www.angelfire.com/sc3/we_dig_montana/Poetry.html). Accessed April 2019.

#### Before you read:

1. What do you like about these poems? Why?
2. What questions might someone have about these poems?
3. What do you learn about people?
4. What do you learn about God?

Feel free to share your own experiences and encourage a few students to do the same. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked.

#### 'What Do You Think'

**This** section is for students to speak freely. Not everyone needs to answer all the questions. It is to get them thinking and talking. Steer them back to the story if discussions get sidetracked.

#### Passage Questions

##### True or False

1. Poetry in the Bible is used only to worship God. \_\_\_F\_\_\_
2. The Book of Psalms is a book of poetry. \_\_\_T\_\_\_
3. Psalm 1 is a poem of thanksgiving. \_\_\_F\_\_\_

Chapter 3: Poetry  
3.1 Psalms 1, 42, 100

4. The writer of Psalm 100 wants the people to be glad and rejoice when they come before God. \_\_T\_\_
5. The writer of Psalm 42 feels sad. \_\_T\_\_

Multiple Choice

1. The Psalms are written as:  
a. history  
b. scientific knowledge  
c. poetry  
d. stories
2. Psalm 1 is a poem about  
a. the kind of people God blesses  
b. how God protects His followers  
c. what evil people are like  
d. all the above
3. Psalm 42 is about:  
a. thirsty deer  
b. a longing for God  
c. tears as a kind of food  
d. some questions the writer wants answers for
4. Psalm 100 is about:  
a. people who are sheep-like  
b. how to worship God  
c. entering God's temple  
d. everyone on this earth
5. The Bible is a collection of:  
a. stories about God  
b. a set of poems  
c. historical events  
d. all the above

Fill in the blanks with the following words: lament, sneering, inspire, transitory, discouraged

1. To be discouraged means to feel very sad and defeated.
2. Something transitory is something that is there for a short time.
3. A lament is an expression of painful feelings.
4. The Psalm writer wants to inspire people to trust God.
5. People express their dislike of something by sneering.

Discussion

*Easy*

1. Do you have a favourite line from any of these Psalms? Which one? Why?  
You may answer this question yourself first as an example. Encourage students to speak, but don't pressure them.

## Chapter 3: Poetry

### 3.1 Psalms 1, 42, 100

2. Looking at Psalm 1, compare the two types of people mentioned.  
Those who don't follow sinners (refuse to sneer at God; obey the Law; live successful lives) and those who do (evil; blown by wind; judged by God).
3. What kind of feelings do the natural images of trees and water make you think about?  
A healthy natural life with good resources and strong solid roots.
4. Why is the Psalm writer so unhappy in Psalm 42?  
He feels God is far away.
5. How does Psalm 42 take the reader from sadness to hope?  
He will trust God because God always helps him. The writer feels hope because he remembers that God helps.
6. Why did the Psalm writer think the people should be joyful in Psalm 100?  
They should be joyful because they are worshipping God.
7. Can you think of times in your life when any of these Psalms would express your feelings or thoughts?  
Answers will vary. Again, you can answer first as an example.

#### *Intermediate*

1. What is the purpose of poetry in the Bible? How can words inspire the imagination?  
Its purpose is to express thoughts and strong feelings and glorify God. Words express feelings and allow us to think about things differently.
2. What are three types of Psalms? Can you think of any more types of Psalms?  
Three types are Wisdom, Lament and Thanksgiving Psalms. There are also Royal (Psalm 2); Imprecatory (Psalm 7); Pilgrimage (Psalm 121); Enthronement (Psalm 49)  
- See SPTT. What are the Different Types of Psalms. (n.d.) *Sermon Preparation Tips*.  
<https://www.sermon-preparation-tips.com/what-are-the-different-types-of-psalms/>. Accessed April 2019.
3. Looking at Psalm 1, the Wisdom Psalm, compare the two types of people mentioned. What are the advantages of those who follow the Lord?  
Those who don't follow sinners (refuse to sneer at God; obey the Law; live successful lives) and those who do (evil; blown by wind; judged by God).  
They will be successful; be healthy; and be protected.
4. What kind of feelings do the natural images of trees and water make you think about? How effective is the use of natural imagery in this Psalm?  
A healthy natural life with good resources and strong solid roots. It is a strong image of a person who is well connected to God.

## Chapter 3: Poetry

### 3.1 Psalms 1, 42, 100

5. Why is the Psalm writer so unhappy in Psalm 42, the Lament Psalm? What kinds of things were making him unhappy?  
He feels God is far away. He wants to see His face. Other people are mocking him for his trust in God.
6. How does Psalm 42, the Lament Psalm, take the reader from sadness to hope? How can our attitudes affect our feelings? Was the Psalm writer just trying to make himself feel good or was there substance to what he was declaring?  
He will trust God because God always helps him. If we let circumstances dictate our mood, we will always be on an emotional rollercoaster. If we always think the worst, we will find it hard to look at life positively. We must reflect on the goodness of God and remember all He has done for us.
7. Why did the Psalm writer think the people should be joyful in Psalm 100, the Thanksgiving Psalm? What does it mean to be joyful?  
They should be joyful because they are worshipping God. It is more than being happy: it is a state of pure happiness resulting from a feeling of well-being.
8. What does Psalm 100 say about God and our relationship to Him?  
God is our creator: we belong to him and we are the sheep in his pasture.

#### *Challenging*

1. What is the purpose of poetry in the Bible? How can words inspire the imagination? How does that relate to God?  
Its purpose is to express thoughts and strong feelings and glorify God. Words express feelings and allow us to think about things differently. These can be used to glorify God.
2. What are three types of Psalms? Can you think of any more types of Psalms? Why do you think it is important to have different types of Psalms?  
Three types are Wisdom, Lament and Thanksgiving Psalms. There are also Royal (Psalm 2); Imprecatory (Psalm 7); Pilgrimage (Psalm 121); Enthronement (Psalm 49). Different Psalms express different thoughts and feelings depending on the occasion.  
- See SPTT. What are the Different Types of Psalms. (n.d.) *Sermon Preparation Tips*. <https://www.sermon-preparation-tips.com/what-are-the-different-types-of-psalms/>. Accessed April 2019.
3. Looking at Psalm 1, compare the two types of people mentioned. What points of comparison does the Psalm writer use? What are the advantages of those who follow the Lord?  
Those who don't follow sinners (refuse to sneer at God; obey the Law; live successful lives) and those who do (evil; blown by wind; judged by God).

## Chapter 3: Poetry

### 3.1 Psalms 1, 42, 100

Points of comparison: attitude toward God (loving the Law vs sneering at God); condition of life (rooted vs blown around); and future (condemned on road to ruin vs protected).

They will be successful; be healthy; and be protected.

4. What kind of feelings do the natural images of trees and water make you think about? How effective is the use of natural imagery in this Psalm?

A healthy natural life with good resources and strong solid roots. It is a strong image of a person who is well connected to God. In a rural society these images are easily remembered.

5. Why is the Psalm writer so unhappy in Psalm 42? What kinds of things were making him unhappy? Would you feel unhappy about the same things?

He feels God is far away. He wants to see His face. Other people are mocking him for his trust in God.

(answers vary)

6. How does Psalm 42 take the reader from sadness to hope? How can our attitudes affect our feelings? Was the Psalm writer just trying to make himself feel good or was there substance to what he was declaring?

He looks to God after expressing his troubles. He will trust God because God always helps him. If we let circumstances dictate our mood, we will always be on an emotional rollercoaster. If we always think the worst, we will find it hard to look at life positively. We must reflect on the goodness of God and remember all He has done for us.

7. Why did the Psalm writer think the people should be joyful in Psalm 100? What does it mean to be joyful? How can we express our joy in the Lord today?

They should be joyful because they are worshipping God. It is more than being happy: it is a state of pure happiness resulting from a feeling of well being. We can express our joy creatively: through words, song, dance etc.

8. What does the writer of Psalm 100 say about God and our relationship to Him?

He is our creator: we belong to him and He is good! His love and faithfulness will last forever. We can call Him faithful because He always keeps His promises even when we fail to keep ours.



Chapter 3: Poetry  
3.2 Agape Love

Poetry: 3.2 Agape Love

1 Corinthians 12, 13

Timeline

|         |   |                             |
|---------|---|-----------------------------|
| 1446 BC | Moses begins the Exodus from Egypt to Canaan    | Exodus 13-18                |
| 1406 BC | Joshua begins the conquest of Canaan            | Joshua 1                    |
| 1399 BC | The land of Canaan is allotted among the Tribes | Joshua 13-22                |
| 1043 BC | Saul becomes the first king of Israel           | 1 Samuel 8-10               |
| 1003 BC | David becomes the second king of Israel         | 2 Samuel 5, 1 Chronicles 11 |

Source: Bible Timeline - Biblehub.com/timeline/#complete. All dates are approximate.

Background

Poetry

In his article, *God Filled Your Bible with Poems*, John Piper said, "I define poetry as an effort to share a moving experience by using language that is chosen and structured differently from ordinary prose." He said, "Using words differently from ordinary prose is the poet's way of trying to awaken something of his experience (and perhaps even more) in the reader.

It has always boggled my mind that so much of the Bible is poetry. God inspired this, and he did not have to do it this way... God can raise the dead by any means he pleases. He can waken dull hearts to the reality of his beauty any way he desires. And one of the ways he pleases to do it is by inspiring his spokesmen to write poetry."

- John Piper. *God Filled Your Bible with Poems*. Desiring God. Aug. 16, 2016.

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/god-filled-your-bible-with-poems>. Accessed April 2019.

Agape Love

During the times of Jesus and the apostle Paul, ancient Greek was still a common language in the eastern Mediterranean region. Greek was the language that the New Testament writers chose to record their teachings in.

Greek had four different words for love. Each word described a different type of love. In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul chose the Greek word *agape* for love. The word *agape* describes a love that is ever-lasting, ever-giving, ever-selfless, and ever-focussed on doing good for others. It is a love that continues to love someone even when they reject you. It is a love that suffers long and is kind; a love that puts a covering over the sins of others. It is a love that loves the person who is unlovable.

## Chapter 3: Poetry

### 3.2 Agape Love

The apostle John wrote, "Love comes from God, and when we love each other, it shows that we have been given new life...God showed his love for us when he sent his only Son into the world to give us life...God sent his Son to be the sacrifice by which our sins are forgiven. Dear friends, since God loved us this much, we must love each other...God is love" (1 John 4:7-16).

#### Spiritual Gifts

1 Corinthians 12 lists these spiritual gifts: wisdom, knowledge, great faith, power to heal, power to work miracles, prophecy, recognizing God's Spirit, speaking languages, interpreting languages. In that chapter Paul tells us that spiritual gifts are given for building up the church. Love has to be the motivation for using the gift.

Commenting on 1 Corinthians 12, *Insight for Living* gives the following insights about spiritual gifts:

Although the details and delegation of spiritual gifts aren't explained in great detail, the Bible is clear they exist and are given to believers by the Holy Spirit intended to edify the Body.

<sup>4</sup> There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but they all come from the same Spirit. <sup>5</sup> There are different ways to serve the same Lord, <sup>6</sup> and we can each do different things. Yet the same God works in all of us and helps us in everything we do.

<sup>7</sup> The Spirit has given each of us a special way of serving others. (1 Cor. 12:1-7)

The passage goes on to highlight wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment, tongues, and interpreting of tongues.

Perhaps it helps to keep in mind spiritual gifts aren't specific skills or talents, but a spiritual passion or urge leading to action. For some this is to remain single and not marry, so their attention can be devoted to the Lord. And for others this passion develops into an urge to pray for healing at certain junctures. These are often the impulses from the Holy Spirit and we can learn to recognize and grow these passions.

Spiritual gifts tests can help point you to areas you may be gifted in, but another way to discover your gifts is to spend time in prayer and reflect on what you're already passionate about. If you suspect an area, go and do it with intention. The more you become involved in a certain aspect of ministry you will find your passion either subsides or intensifies. If it does grow, this is probably an area you're gifted in and you should continue doing. If it does not, don't be discouraged! Continue following your passions and trying new areas of ministry until something sticks.

There are many spiritual gifts mentioned in Scripture. Here are some starting points.

- 1 Corinthians 7

## Chapter 3: Poetry

### 3.2 Agape Love

- 1 Corinthians 12
- Romans 8
- Romans 12
- Ephesians 4
- 1 Peter

- Robyn Roste. How Do I Discover My Spiritual Gifts? April 13, 2018. Insight for Living Canada.  
<https://www.insightforliving.ca/read/articles/how-do-i-discover-my-spiritual-gifts>. Accessed April 2019.

#### Before you read:

1. What are some words that describe love?

Feel free to share your own experiences and encourage a few students to do the same. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked.

#### 'What Do You Think'

This section is for students to speak freely. Not everyone needs to answer all the questions. It is to get them thinking and talking. Steer them back to the story if discussions get sidetracked.

#### Passage Questions

Match the word with its meaning.

| Word                    | Meaning   |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1. __d__ clanging       | a. easily made angry  |
| 2. __b__ rude           | b. be unpleasant, offensive, disrespectful                    |
| 3. __a__ quick tempered | c. to think in a logical and sensible way                     |
| 4. __c__ reason         | d. the loud, ringing sound of metal hitting against something |
| 5. __e__ boastful       | e. arrogant, talking about how great one's self is.           |

Complete the sentence: Match the following phrases to complete the thought Paul expressed in his poem.

| Beginning Phrase                    | Ending Phrase            |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. __d__ Love rejoices in the truth | a. unless I loved others |

## Chapter 3: Poetry

### 3.2 Agape Love

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 2. <u>e</u> What is perfect will someday appear | b. we quit our childish ways                  |
| 3. <u>a</u> I would be nothing                  | c. but then we will                           |
| 4. <u>b</u> When we grew up                     | d. but not in evil                            |
| 5. <u>c</u> We don't know everything            | e. and what isn't perfect will then disappear |

#### Discussion

##### *Easier*

1. Name three of the spiritual gifts in verses 1 - 3 that God gave to the Corinthians. Wisdom, knowledge, great faith, prophecy, sacrifice, speaking languages, and interpreting those languages.
2. What are two things that love is not?  
Jealous, boastful, proud, rude, selfish, quick tempered, keeping a record of wrongs.
3. What are two things that love is?  
Kind, patient, rejoicing in truth, supportive, loyal, hopeful, trusting.
4. Do you think it is possible for people to love in this way?  
People are not perfect, and therefore they cannot love perfectly. Only God can love perfectly, but He better enables us to love in His way, if we allow Him to perfect us through the Holy Spirit.
5. Can you give any examples of actions that show this kind of love? ?  
Encourage students to tell stories about ways someone has shown love to them. You can lead with an example.
6. Which of the following spiritual gifts would you like to have? Wisdom, great faith, power to heal, knowledge? Why would you like that gift?  
Answers will vary.
7. How does Paul compare the present knowledge with the future?  
Paul says that at present we do not see God clearly, but in the future, we will see him face to face. And in the present, we don't know everything, but then we will. And in the present things are imperfect, but then they will be perfect.
8. What is the greatest gift according to Paul?  
Love.

##### Intermediate

1. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul lists these spiritual gifts: wisdom, knowledge, great faith, power to heal, power to work miracles, prophecy, recognizing God's Spirit, speaking

## Chapter 3: Poetry

### 3.2 Agape Love

languages, interpreting languages. Other passages in the Bible speak of the gifts of serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leading, and showing mercy.

Which of these gifts would you most like to have, and why?

Answers will vary.

2. What was the goal of the spiritual gifts that God gave the Corinthians?  
To serve others in love and build up the church.
3. What are some of the things that love is? That love isn't?  
Love is kind, patient, rejoicing in truth, supportive, loyal, hopeful, trusting.  
Love is not jealous, boastful, proud, rude, selfish, or quick tempered, nor does it keep a record of wrongs.
4. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul said that the people in a church are like the parts of a body.
  - a) Why would he compare the people to parts of a body?  
The body needs all its parts; each part has its own unique and important function. The parts have to work together in order for the body to accomplish something.
  - b) How does being part of a body relate to spiritual gifts?  
Spiritual gifts are the function of the part of the spiritual body. The spiritual body needs to produce all the spiritual gifts in order to be healthy; each part performing its own gift.
5. Paul said, "but when we grew up, we quit our childish ways" (v. 11).
  - a) Why is love evidence of being a mature human being?  
The type of love that Paul talks of is not romantic love, but loving others the way God loves us. Understanding that type of love and being able to express it takes maturity.
  - b) How can spiritual gifts be used to express love?  
If we use a spiritual gift (serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leading, wisdom, knowledge, etc.) to serve others, to meet their needs, then we are expressing love.
6. What is present knowledge like compared to the future knowledge that God will give us?  
Our present knowledge - particularly our knowledge of God - is like the hazy image in a polished bronze mirror; it's imperfect. Our knowledge in the future will be complete - particularly our knowledge of God; it will be perfect. (Spurgeon, commenting on this, said that we couldn't handle perfect knowledge on this side of eternity because if we knew more of our own sinfulness, we might be driven to despair; and if we knew more about God, we might die of terror.)
7. Do you agree with Paul about the greatest gift?  
Answers will vary.

## Chapter 3: Poetry

### 3.2 Agape Love

#### Challenging

1. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul lists these spiritual gifts: wisdom, knowledge, great faith, power to heal, power to work miracles, prophecy, recognizing God's Spirit, speaking languages, interpreting languages. Other passages in the Bible speak of the gifts of serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leading, and showing mercy. Which of these gifts would you most like to have, and why?  
Answers will vary.
2. What are some of the things that love is? That love isn't?  
Love is kind, patient, rejoicing in truth, supportive, loyal, hopeful, trusting.  
Love is not jealous, boastful, proud, rude, selfish, or quick tempered, nor does it keep a record of wrongs.
3. Paul finished chapter 12 with these words, "Together you are the body of Christ. Each one of you is part of his body," What do you think Paul's purpose was in likening the Corinthian believers to a body?  
The body needs all its parts; each part has its own unique and important function. The parts have to work together in order for the body to accomplish something.
4. Paul said, "but when we grew up, we quit our childish ways" (v. 11).
  - a) Why is love evidence of being a mature human being?  
The type of love that Paul talks of is not romantic love, but loving others the way God loves us. Understanding that type of love and being able to express it takes maturity.
  - b) How can spiritual gifts be used to express love?  
If we use a spiritual gift (serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leading, wisdom, knowledge, etc.) to serve others, to meet their needs, then we are expressing love.
  - c) Can you think of an example of using a spiritual gift at the expense of love?  
Answers will vary. Many things need to be done in a church - such as setting up tables, cleaning up, teaching Sunday school, console someone who has suffered loss - saying that's not your spiritual gift is not an excuse for ignoring a need. We are all called to share the gospel, whether we are particularly gifted at it or not.
5. Why are "faith, hope, and love" a better way than "miracles, power, and gifts"? Which do you think people would rather have?  
Christians will individually receive one or more spiritual gifts; but all Christians will be given faith, hope, and love. In 1 Thess. 5:8, Paul said that in order to do spiritual warfare, we need to put on the breastplate of faith and love, and the helmet of the hope of salvation. Paul said in 1 Cor. 13 that the spiritual gifts will pass away, but faith, hope, and love will always remain.

## Chapter 3: Poetry

### 3.2 Agape Love

6. **Why might Paul have chosen to write 1 Corinthians 13 as a poem?**

It's been said that poems stimulate our imaginations and our emotions; and so, make what is said in the poem more memorable. The use of parallelism in Hebrew poetry (where the thought in one line is embellished in the next line) is able to get an idea across with more impact than a plain statement would.

Chapter 4: Wisdom  
4.1 Solomon

Wisdom: 4.1 Solomon      1 Kings 3:16 - 27; Proverbs 12:18, 13:22, 17:28, 19:17; Ecclesiastes 3:1-13

Timeline

|         |                                       |                                 |
|---------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2081 BC | God's covenant with Abram             | Genesis 15                      |
| 1446 BC | Exodus from Egypt to Canaan begins    | Exodus 13                       |
| 1043 BC | Saul becomes the first king of Israel | 1 Samuel                        |
| 1003 BC | David becomes king over Israel        | 2 Samuel 5, 1 Chronicles 11     |
| 967 BC  | Solomon becomes king over Israel      | 1 Kings 3-11                    |
| 931 BC  | Rehoboam becomes king over Israel     | 1 Kings 11, 12; 2 Chronicles 11 |
| 931 BC  | The kingdom is divided by a civil war | 1 Kings 12, 13                  |

Sources: Bible Timeline - Biblehub.com/timeline/#complete. All dates are approximate.

Solomon was the son of King David and Bathsheba. When he was still a young man, he became the third king of Israel and ruled for 40 years. 1 Kings 10:23 says, "He was the richest and wisest king in the world."

**Solomon's Dream: *You may want to have the Challenging Group read this section from 1 Kings 3:4-13 directly from the Bible:***

*Early in his reign, Solomon sought after God. 1 Kings 3 records a dream he had at that time:*

*<sup>6</sup> One night while Solomon was in Gibeon, the LORD God appeared to him in a dream and said, "Solomon, ask for anything you want, and I will give it to you."*

*<sup>6</sup> Solomon answered:*

*My father David, your servant, was honest and did what you commanded. You were always loyal to him, and you gave him a son who is now king. <sup>7</sup> LORD God, I'm your servant, and you've made me king in my father's place. But I'm very young and know so little about being a leader. <sup>8</sup> And now I must rule your chosen people, even though there are too many of them to count.*

*<sup>9</sup> Please make me wise and teach me the difference between right and wrong. Then I will know how to rule your people. If you don't, there is no way I could rule this great nation of yours.*

*<sup>10-11</sup> God said:*

*Solomon, I'm pleased that you asked for this. You could have asked to live a long time or to be rich. Or you could have asked for your enemies to be destroyed. Instead, you asked for wisdom to make right decisions. <sup>12</sup> So I'll make you wiser than anyone who has ever lived or ever will live.*



## Chapter 4: Wisdom

### 4.1 Solomon

<sup>13</sup> *I'll also give you what you didn't ask for. You'll be rich and respected as long as you live, and you'll be greater than any other king" (1 Kings 3:4-13).*

Solomon: How could anyone so wise be so foolish ?

Got Questions notes that Solomon started off well in life, but in time forgot his own counsel and the wisdom of Scripture. They point out that Deuteronomy 17 contains clear instructions from God for anyone who would be king: no amassing of horses, no multiplying of wives, and no accumulating of silver and gold - but Solomon excelled at breaking all three of these commands.

*1 Kings 11 says, "King Solomon...loved many foreign women...Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites. They were from nations about which the Lord had told the Israelites, "You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods." Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love... He followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites. On a hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable god of Moab, and for Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites. He did the same for all his foreign wives...Although he had forbidden Solomon to follow other gods, Solomon did not keep the Lord's command."*

The passage goes on to say that the Lord told Solomon that because of this, he would tear the kingdom away from him; He would do this in the reign of Solomon's son, Rehoboam; yet he would not tear away the whole kingdom - for the sake of David and for the sake of Jerusalem, he would give Rehoboam one tribe to rule over.

In Rehoboam's early rule, there was a civil war, and 10 of the tribes of Israel broke away and appointed one of their own men, Jeroboam, as their king. They made their capital city Samaria. Only the tribe of Judah, the tribe that David had come from, remained loyal to David's grandson, Rehoboam. The nearby small tribe of Benjamin also decided to stay with Judah. That is why after the time of Rehoboam, the people of Jerusalem were not always called the Israelites; rather they were called the people of Judah - or as they are more commonly known, the Jews.

Got Questions says of Solomon's foolishness, "Solomon was not a puppet king. God did not force him to do what was right." It adds, "The story of Solomon is a powerful lesson for us that it does not pay to disobey. It is not enough to start well; we must seek God's grace to finish well, too. Life without God is a dead-end street."

- Why did God allow Solomon to have 1,000 wives and 300 concubines? Got Questions.  
<https://www.gotquestions.org/Solomon-wives-concubines.html>. Accessed March 2019.

## Chapter 4: Wisdom

### 4.1 Solomon

#### Song of Solomon

Solomon wrote one more book that we know of, "The Song of Solomon" - also known as "Song of Songs" and "Canticles." Although it is classified as wisdom literature, it is better known as a love song. In this book, Solomon wrote of the passion and beauty of courtship and marriage.

Some say that this book shows us what God intended love between a man and woman to be. Song of Solomon 8:7 is sometimes quoted at weddings:

*Many waters cannot quench love;  
Rivers cannot sweep it away.  
If one were to give  
All the wealth of one's house for love,  
It would be utterly scorned. (NIV)*

Some say that this book can be seen as an allegory of God's love for His people. In Ephesians, Paul likens marriage between a man and a woman to the relationship between Christ and the church: "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.' This is a profound mystery - but I am talking about Christ and the church" (Eph. 5:31,32).

#### Turn! Turn! Turn! (To Everything There is a Season)

Many of the passages of the Bible are timeless; they say things in such a way as to resonate within us. Because of this, even secular musicians have taken verses from the Bible and incorporated them into their lyrics.

Pete Seeger (1919-2014) was a well-known American folk singer and social activist. In this story about Solomon, we quoted Solomon's passage from Ecclesiastes 3. Seeger put this same passage to music in 1959. It became one of his most famous songs and was recorded by many artists. It became a number one hit in the U.S. for the American rock group, the Byrds, in 1965.

As an extension to this lesson, the students might enjoy listening to this passage put to popular song. The following video link will take you to a performance by Seeger singing his version in 1962: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GbPI91kTFro>. The Byrd's performance can be had at this link, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T51nmyCODHQ> (this video shows the 1960's American night club scene - complete with go-go dancers). Artist Judy Collins has a beautiful voice; her version of the song can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3kKqfTjsj0>.

Seeger's lyrics remained faithful to the words of Solomon, except for an addition of the last two lines of his song, "A time for peace, I swear it's not too late". Other artists performing his song sometimes left Seeger's addition out.

## Chapter 4: Wisdom

### 4.1 Solomon

#### Before you read:

1. Are 'intelligence' and 'wisdom' the same thing?
2. Every culture has proverbs, or sayings that give good advice. Can you share any proverbs from your culture?

Feel free to share your own experiences and encourage a few students to do the same. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked.

#### 'What Do You Think'

**This** section is for students to speak freely. Not everyone needs to answer all the questions. It is to get them thinking and talking. Steer them back to the story if discussions get sidetracked.

#### Passage Questions

**Matching:** Match the best Proverb to each situation. (There may be more than one right answer.)

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. <u>B</u> Sharp words cut like a sword, but words of wisdom heal. (12:18) (Encourages people to use words for good and not for harm)  | A. Someone you know at work loves to talk at meetings, usually without knowing much about the topic. |
| 2. <u>C</u> If you obey God, you will have something to leave your grandchildren. (13:22) (Stealing breaks God's law and can be trouble for future generations!) (Giving food to the poor is obeying God and may teach future generations.) | B. Two children are yelling and calling each other bad names.  |
| 3. <u>A</u> Even fools seem smart when they are quiet. (17:28) (Better to keep one's mouth shut if you don't have knowledge.)   | C. You catch someone stealing.   |

## Chapter 4: Wisdom

### 4.1 Solomon

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 4. <u>D</u> Caring for the poor is lending to the Lord, and you will be well repaid. (19:17) (One can never out-give God, and God blesses giving to the poor.) | D. Someone buys food to give to a Food Bank. Check that they understand 'Food Bank' concept |
|--|---|

**A Wise Ruling:** Retell this story of Solomon's wisdom using these 6 pictures. You could have each student take one picture, or simply go around the class with each student giving only one sentence until the story is finished. (You may ask them afterwards, "Did we miss anything?")

1. The two women come to Solomon
2. The first woman tells her side of the story - she thought her baby had died, then realizes that the baby she's holding isn't hers; the other woman switched the babies.
3. The other woman claims she is the real mother, and the first woman is lying.
4. Solomon calls for someone to divide the baby with a sword and give half to each woman.
5. The first woman pleads for the baby's life, saying to give the baby to the second woman rather than kill it.
6. Solomon decides the first woman is the real mother.

**Synonyms:** For each list of words below, underline the synonyms

1. Significance: good, importance, poor
2. Toil: dream, rule, work
3. Prostitute: sex worker, mother, teacher
4. Fool: idol, timer, senseless person
5. Fathom: understand, measure, take

### Discussion

#### *Easy*

1. What is Solomon famous for? Where did this come from? Solomon is famous for wisdom. This wisdom came from God, after Solomon asked for wisdom to rule his country well. God was pleased with this request and gave him wisdom, but also wealth and respect.
2. What were the two women arguing about?

## Chapter 4: Wisdom

### 4.1 Solomon

They were arguing over who was the mother of the living baby, and who was the mother of the dead baby.

3. Why did Solomon say he would cut the child in half? (What did he want to find out?) Solomon wanted to find out which woman truly loved the baby. He never wanted to kill the child. He wanted to see the women's reaction.
4. Do you think the four proverbs in the passage are true in your experience? Answers will vary. Try to get them to tell their experiences. (Give one of your own, if no one answers.)
5. In the last paragraph, what did Solomon say was "the gift of God"? He said that to "eat and drink, and find satisfaction in their toil" was God's gift. (Ask them whether they think of work as a gift.)
6. What did Solomon say was "as senseless as chasing the wind"? Solomon said this about seeking to find meaning from the pursuit of pleasure, wealth, knowledge, wine, and projects - apart from God.
7. What brings you satisfaction in life? Does the satisfaction last long? Answers will vary. (It is a chance to compare temporary material pleasures with lasting joy.)

#### *Intermediate*

1. What did Solomon ask for? What did God give him? Why?  
Solomon asked for the wisdom to know right from wrong, so that he could rule the people well. God gave him wisdom, but also wealth and respect. God gave these things to Solomon because he could have asked for it but hadn't - and God was pleased with Solomon because of this.
2. If God had given you wealth what would you do with it? What would you have done with it if you had been 20 at the time?  
Answers will vary. Probably people would think of some fun things to do with it, and some serious and good things to do with it. But had we been young, we likely would not have had the maturity to invest it and use wisely for God.  
Agur wrote in Proverbs 30:8,9, "give me neither poverty nor riches... Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you...Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God."
3. On what basis can we claim that something is right or wrong?  
Solomon asked God to tell him this, showing that he did not think he could do this on his own (unlike most people). Ravi Zacharias often points out that we cannot have a universal moral code without a universal moral code giver; otherwise, on what

## Chapter 4: Wisdom

### 4.1 Solomon

basis can we argue that something is right or wrong? When we throw out the Standard, we live in a moral quagmire.

4. What are some of the decisions in life that we need wisdom for? Are there times in your life when wise counsel really benefitted you? Or when lack of wisdom got you into interesting circumstances?

Answers will vary here. Hopefully there will be some good stories shared.

5. Do you think the four proverbs in the passage are true in your experience? Answers will vary. Try to get them to tell their experiences. (Give one of your own, if no one answers.)

6. Over time Solomon lost the desire to follow God. He took 700 wives and 300 concubines and worshipped their gods. His people complained that he oppressed them with taxes. Because of him, God tore away much of the kingdom of Israel. Why do you think Solomon in all his wisdom pursued such a course? Why did God not intervene and stop him?

Solomon lost sight of wisdom when he lost sight of God.

God gives us free choice; He does not beg us to follow Him for His sake; He presents His case and moves on.

7. What do you think this means? - God "has set eternity in the human heart".

Answers will vary. Human beings have always set their minds and hearts on life beyond death and back to life's origins.

### *Challenging*

1. When you were 20, what would you have asked God for - wealth, respect, greatness, or wisdom? What would you have done with it? What choice would you make now?

Answers will vary here. There is perspective gained with age. You could ask the students what they would do if they were given a large amount of wealth, or Wisdom?

2. Solomon wanted the Lord to give him a heart that could understand the difference between good and evil, for the sake of his people. Do you think most leaders would value this ability today? Do they have it? Do you think it matters?

We probably all want to think of ourselves as having this quality, and certainly want it in our leaders.

Leaders probably want to think of themselves as having this quality, and probably want others to think of them as having this quality. Globally, during a political election, we often hear new leadership hopefuls promising their population that - unlike the incumbent leader - they will not ever be corrupt.

The disconnect between what we want to be and what we are makes us aware of our need for God's salvation.

## Chapter 4: Wisdom

### 4.1 Solomon

3. What are some of the decisions in life that we need wisdom for? Are there times in your life when wise counsel really benefitted you? Or when lack of wisdom got you into interesting circumstances?

Answers will vary here. Hopefully there will be some good stories shared.

4. Over time Solomon lost the desire to follow God. He took 700 wives and 300 concubines and worshipped their gods. His people complained that he oppressed them with taxes. Because of him, God tore away much of the kingdom of Israel. Why do you think Solomon in all his wisdom pursued such a course? Why did God not intervene and stop him?

His father David had set an example of bringing destruction on his family and his throne for the sake of his pursuit of Bathsheba. The apple doesn't fall far from the tree.

Solomon knew God's will and he would have known the consequences - but he still put more value on having many women than on obedience, and still chose to worship other gods rather than be faithful to the only God. He apparently regarded women as playthings, so perhaps he hadn't much care for the welfare of his people either. God gives us free choice; He does not beg us to follow Him for His sake; He presents His case and moves on.

5. When Solomon turned from the Lord, he sought meaning for existence in wealth, pleasure, knowledge, and projects - yet this only gave him a sense of emptiness. What things in life give you a sense of joy or hope? What can you do to bring a sense of joy to others?

Answers will vary. Chuck Swindoll said these things bring him joy: telling God why you trust Him; building relationships with friends who have confidence in God; viewing hard times as gifts from God; taking the long view of financial investments and life.

Chuck's wife, Luci, said to develop a zest for living. She told the story of a boy who took joy playing with a piece of mirror, using it to shine sunlight into dark places. She said we are like mirrors that can shine God's light into dark hearts - and we accomplish this by both the things we choose to do and choose not to do. Proverbs 17:22 says a cheerful heart is a good medicine.

6. If there is nothing beyond death, is life good or evil?

Answers will vary. Many people claim that they are content with there being nothing beyond death. They say they take happiness in living life well while they are here. Of course, there's a convenience to a philosophy of living life in the belief that there will be no consequences for what you choose to do.

Others write philosophical books of angst about the inevitability of death and the meaningless that gives to life.

## Chapter 4: Wisdom

### 4.1 Solomon

Bottom line is that God said there is life after death; He placed eternity in our hearts, so we are without excuse for knowing this. Therefore, we must live our lives with an eye to eternal accountability.

God created life to be good; it's only the fallen nature of the world - which humanity daily contributes to - that makes it painful.

#### 7. Are we designed for eternity? What do you think an eternal body would be like?

Solomon said God put eternity in our mind, therefore God did design us for eternity. (He also promises to give us an eternal body.)

The idea that in eternity we will be floating on clouds whilst playing harps does not come from the Bible. It is strange to us that God promises to redeem our bodies (Romans 8:23), not just our inner selves. God didn't just call the spiritual good, He also called matter good; each day of creation God looked at what He had made and called it good.

In 1 Corinthians, Paul said our resurrected bodies will be raised imperishable - no more aging, sickness, debility, or the dishonour of the weakness, dementia and incontinence of old age. Paul used what we know of a seed that's planted in the ground and the plant that grows from it as an analogy for our current body and our resurrected body. Unless you're a botanist, you probably can't tell from looking at a seed, what its plant will be like.

John MacArthur, talking on this, said that we have no idea whether we will all look alike, or all look unique. He proposes that our outward appearance will have nothing to do with whether we recognize each other, for God could well give this recognition to us in the form of innate knowledge. (The Uniqueness of Our Resurrection Bodies. *Grace To You*. October 23, 2016.

<https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-496/the-uniqueness-of-our-resurrection-bodies>. Accessed March 2019.)

Looking at some of the creation, we know that God created fun. So, we know we'll have fun with those bodies.



Chapter 4: Wisdom  
4.2 Wisdom in the New Testament

Wisdom: 4.2 Wisdom in the New Testament

1 Cor. 2:3-16;

James 1:2-8; 3:13-18

Timeline

|       |  |   |
|-------|--|---|
| 27 AD | Jesus calls Peter, Andrew, James, and John to be his disciples       | Matthew 4; Mark 1; Luke 4                         |
| 30 AD | Jesus' betrayal, trial, crucifixion, and resurrection, and ascension | Matthew 27; Mark 15; Luke 23; John 18, 19; Acts 1 |
| 30 AD | Pentecost, first church forms in Jerusalem                           | Acts 4  |
| 45 AD | James Writes his Letter  | James 1-5   |

Source: Bible Timeline - Biblehub.com/timeline/#complete. All dates are approximate.

Background

Wisdom and the Importance of Bible Study

**Wisdom is defined in the dictionary as the ability to make sensible decisions and give good advice because of the experience and knowledge that you have.**

<https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/wisdom?q=wisdom>. Accessed April 2019.

"In order to practice the wisdom of the Word of God, we must first have knowledge of the Word. By reading, studying, and learning the Word, we can apply the knowledge we gain, thus acting with wisdom.

In the Church Epistles, wisdom is one of the benefits of being born again, if we know it is available, and how to obtain it. Many Christians don't know that they can have this wisdom, and stumble through life without it. 'Word of Wisdom' is one of the nine manifestations of the gift of Holy Spirit. By operating the Holy Spirit via the nine manifestations, we can receive the wisdom needed for guidance in our lives.

**I Corinthians 12: 7, 8 - The Spirit has given each of us a special way of serving others. Some of us can speak with wisdom, while others can speak with knowledge, but these gifts come from the same Spirit.**

We see here that wisdom is provided because we can profit by it. Using wisdom to make the right decision or the right judgment puts us 'in the black' spiritually. We read in the Church epistles how much God wants us to have and use this wisdom.

**Ephesians 1: 17, 18, 19 -I ask the glorious Father and God of our Lord Jesus Christ to give you his Spirit. The Spirit will make you wise and let you understand what it means to know God. My prayer is that light will flood your hearts and that you will understand the hope that was given to you when God chose you. Then you will discover the glorious blessings that**

## Chapter 4: Wisdom

### 4.2 Wisdom in the New Testament

will be yours together with all of God's people. I want you to know about the great and mighty power that God has for us followers. It is the same wonderful power he used.

**Colossians 1: 9** -We have not stopped praying for you since the first day we heard about you. In fact, we always pray that God will show you everything he wants you to do and that you may have all the wisdom and understanding that his Spirit gives.

**Colossians 3: 16** -Let the message about Christ completely fill your lives, while you use all your wisdom to teach and instruct each other. With thankful hearts, sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.

We are exhorted to allow the word of Christ, his life and example, to dwell within us, using it with wisdom which we are then to use to teach others. The only thing better than a single believer acting with wisdom is a group of believers acting with wisdom.

There is another kind of wisdom mentioned in the Bible -- the wisdom of the world. Worldly wisdom is the opposite of God's wisdom.

**I Corinthians 1:20** - What happened to those wise people? What happened to those experts in the Scriptures? What happened to the ones who think they have all the answers? Didn't God show that the wisdom of this world is foolish?

**I Corinthians 1:25** - Even when God is foolish, he is wiser than everyone else, and even when God is weak, he is stronger than everyone else.

In I Corinthians, worldly wisdom is described as foolish (dullness of mind; not acute). Verse 25 shows how absurd it is to compare the two, because the 'foolishness' of God (which doesn't even exist), is wiser than anything man can do or even think.

The epistle of James describes the wisdom of the world as sensual and devilish because that is exactly what it is.

**James 3: 13 - 17** - Are any of you wise or sensible? Then show it by living right and by being humble and wise in everything you do. <sup>14</sup> But if your heart is full of bitter jealousy and selfishness, don't brag or lie to cover up the truth. <sup>15</sup> That kind of wisdom doesn't come from above. It is earthly and selfish and comes from the devil himself. <sup>16</sup> Whenever people are jealous or selfish, they cause trouble and do all sorts of cruel things. <sup>17</sup> But the wisdom that comes from above leads us to be pure, friendly, gentle, sensible, kind, helpful, genuine, and sincere.

Wisdom that causes strife and confusion is worldly wisdom, inspired by Satan and his devil spirits. True wisdom from God is the opposite, pure and unadulterated, promoting only peace and mercy.

We as believers have vast resources of God's wisdom available to us in His written Word. The direction and guidance provided by the Bible will help us to make the right decisions and judgments daily. There is also the manifestation of 'word of wisdom' that we can believe to operate via the manifestations of the gift of Holy Spirit. God can tell our spirit what we

## Chapter 4: Wisdom

### 4.2 Wisdom in the New Testament

need to know for a given situation, and how to act upon it. The wisdom of God will always bring profit, peace, and good fruit. We will make the proper decisions and choose the right paths if our only source for wisdom is the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We gain access to this wisdom by seeking it out from God's Word -- GOD IS HIS WORD. We STUDY -- that is the one criteria/condition that God expects and requires us to fulfil."

- The Wisdom of the Word. Absolute Bible Study. (n.d.)

[http://www.absolutebiblestudy.com/Word/The\\_Wisdom\\_of\\_the\\_Word.htm](http://www.absolutebiblestudy.com/Word/The_Wisdom_of_the_Word.htm). Accessed April 2019.

#### Before you read:

1. Who is the wisest person you have ever met?
2. What made them wise?

Feel free to share your own experiences and encourage a few students to do the same. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked.

#### 'What Do You Think'

**This** section is for students to speak freely. Not everyone needs to answer all the questions. It is to get them thinking and talking. Steer them back to the story if discussions get sidetracked.

#### Passage Questions

##### True or False

1. True wisdom comes from God's Spirit. \_\_T\_\_
2. Jesus said wisdom is proved by thoughts. \_\_F\_\_
3. The writer of Corinthians didn't want the people to have faith because of human wisdom. \_\_T\_\_
4. James said to ask God for wisdom. \_\_T\_\_
5. James said that sensible people are full of jealousy. \_\_F\_\_

#### Multiple Choice

1. God's wisdom is:
  - a. easy for all to understand
  - b. a way of learning science
  - c. hidden from people who don't know Him
  - d. impossible
2. God's Spirit is:
  - a. powerful
  - b. all knowing
  - c. a teacher
  - d. all the above

## Chapter 4: Wisdom

### 4.2 Wisdom in the New Testament

3. To receive *God's* wisdom, one must:
  - a. be patient and kind
  - b. endure everything
  - c. go to church every Sunday
  - d. ask for it
4. Human wisdom:
  - a. is earthly
  - b. will disappear
  - c. is selfish
  - d. all the above
5. Wise people are:
  - a. proud
  - b. friendly
  - c. jealous
  - d. insincere

Fill in the blanks with the following words: mysterious, mature, sensible, endure, bitter jealousy

1. To have \_\_\_bitter jealousy\_\_\_ is to feel extremely angry about what some one else has or is.
2. Something \_\_\_mysterious\_\_\_ is something that is secretive or hard to understand.
3. A \_\_\_mature\_\_\_ person is an adult physically, emotionally and spiritually.
4. James said the Christians had to learn \_\_\_endure\_\_\_ by having their faith tested.
5. \_\_\_Sensible\_\_\_ people make wise life choices.

### Discussion

#### *Easier*

1. Why didn't Paul try to sound wise when he spoke to the Corinthians?  
He wanted to let *God's* Spirit show his power so they would have faith because of *God's* power and not because of human wisdom.
2. Why don't Christians think the same way as the rest of the world thinks?  
*God's* Spirit has shown them everything, even what is deep in the mind of *God*. *God* has given them his Spirit. That's why they don't think the same way that the people of this world think.
3. In what ways are Christians able to be wise?  
They can understand spiritual blessings. Anyone who doesn't have *God's* Spirit thinks these blessings are foolish. People who are guided by the Spirit can make all kinds of judgments, but they cannot be judged by others.
4. According to James 1:2-8, why should Christians be glad when they have trouble?  
Trouble creates endurance which leads to maturity.
5. What should you do if you need wisdom?

## Chapter 4: Wisdom

### 4.2 Wisdom in the New Testament

You should ask God for it.

6. According to James 3:13-18, how does a wise person live?

He lives right by being humble and wise in everything he does.

7. What does the *wisdom that comes from above* lead people to be like? (Do you know anyone like that?)

It leads them to be pure, friendly, gentle, sensible, kind, helpful, genuine, and sincere. (Answers to 2<sup>nd</sup> question will vary.)

8. What did you learn about wisdom from these passages?

(answers vary)

#### *Intermediate*

1. According to these passages, what is the source of true wisdom?

True wisdom is God's wisdom and it can only come from His Holy Spirit. Only God's Spirit knows the mind of God, and His thoughts are far wiser than any human's.

2. Jesus said, "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock." (Matthew 7:24) What is Jesus comparing his words to?

Jesus compares his words to a rock, which is a solid foundation and high above the flood waters. The metaphor of a house implies our souls can stand on solid ground and be safe from evil if we rely on the wisdom of Jesus' words/ God's Word.

3. What did Jesus mean when He said, "But wisdom is proved right by her actions"?

"There are times, when words or verbal responses are not necessary because you're able to speak more clearly and effectively by living out wisdom."

- <https://www.wisdominallthings.com/wisdom/new-testament-scriptures-on-wisdom/>

4. What was Paul's purpose in saying this: "When I talked with you or preached, I didn't try to prove anything by sounding wise. I simply let God's Spirit show his power."?

He wanted to let God's Spirit show his power so they would have faith because of God's power and not because of human wisdom.

5. Why don't Christians think the same way as the rest of the world thinks? What has the Holy Spirit to do with this?

God's Spirit has shown them everything, even what is deep in the mind of God. God has given them his Spirit. That's why they don't think the same way that the people of this world think.

6. What advantages do Christians have when it comes to wisdom?

## Chapter 4: Wisdom

### 4.2 Wisdom in the New Testament

They can understand spiritual blessings. Anyone who doesn't have God's Spirit thinks these blessings are foolish. People who are guided by the Spirit can make all kinds of judgments, but they cannot be judged by others.

7. According to James, why should Christians be glad when they have trouble? What does the testing of their faith produce?

They should be glad when they have trouble because they learn to endure by having their faith tested. The testing of their faith produces maturity and spiritual completeness.

8. What should you do if you need wisdom? Are there any conditions attached to asking?

You should ask God for it, but when you ask for something, you must have faith and not doubt.

9. According to James 3:13-18, how does a wise person live? Explain how earthly wisdom and Godly wisdom differ.

A wise person lives right by being humble and wise in everything he or she does.

Earthly wisdom is selfish and comes from the devil himself. Whenever people are jealous or selfish, they cause trouble and do all sorts of cruel things. But the wisdom that comes from above leads us to be pure, friendly, gentle, sensible, kind, helpful, genuine, and sincere.

10. Summarize what you learned about wisdom from these passages.  
(answers vary)

### *Challenging*

1. Jesus said, "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock." (Matthew 7:24) What is Jesus comparing his words to?

Jesus compares his words to a rock, which is a solid foundation and high above the flood waters. The metaphor of a house implies our souls can stand on solid ground and be safe from evil if we rely on the wisdom of Jesus' words/ God's Word

<https://www.wisdominalthings.com/wisdom/new-testament-scriptures-on-wisdom/>

2. What did Jesus mean when He said, "But wisdom is proved right by her actions."?

"There are times, when words or verbal responses are not necessary because you're able to speak more clearly and effectively by living out wisdom."

<https://www.wisdominalthings.com/wisdom/new-testament-scriptures-on-wisdom/>

3. What was Paul's purpose in saying this: "When I talked with you or preached, I didn't try to prove anything by sounding wise. I simply let God's Spirit show his power."?

## Chapter 4: Wisdom

### 4.2 Wisdom in the New Testament

He wanted to let God's Spirit show his power so they would have faith because of God's power and not because of human wisdom.

4. Do you agree that Christians think differently than the rest of the world? What has the Holy Spirit to do with this?

(Answers will vary.) God's Spirit has shown them everything, even what is deep in the mind of God. God has given them his Spirit. That's why they don't think the same way that the people of this world think.

5. What advantages do Christians have when it comes to wisdom? Do you think that is accurate? Are there any qualifiers to this wisdom?

They can understand spiritual blessings. Anyone who doesn't have God's Spirit thinks these blessings are foolish. People who are guided by the Spirit can make all kinds of judgments, but they cannot be judged by others.

(answers vary) They need to be guided by the Spirit. There is still choice involved: they can choose to seek God's wisdom or rely on their own.

6. According to James, why should Christians be glad when they have trouble? What does the testing of their faith produce? How does this lead to maturity?

They should be glad when they have trouble because they learn to endure by having their faith tested. The testing of their faith produces maturity and spiritual completeness. The maturity comes as they learn to depend on God and grow closer to Him.

7. What should you do if you need wisdom? Are there any conditions attached to asking? Why would God require them?

You should ask God for it, but when you ask for something, you must have faith and not doubt. It reveals what you think about God: can you trust Him? Do you think He is trustworthy? (Imagine asking a friend for advice: if you are not going to trust the advice, why ask?)

8. According to James 3:13-18, how does a wise person live? Explain how earthly wisdom and Godly wisdom differ. Can you think of any life examples?

A wise person lives right by being humble and wise in everything he or she does. Earthly wisdom is selfish and comes from the devil himself. Whenever people are jealous or selfish, they cause trouble and do all sorts of cruel things. But the wisdom that comes from above leads us to be pure, friendly, gentle, sensible, kind, helpful, genuine, and sincere. (Life examples will vary.)

9. Summarize what you learned about wisdom from these passages.

(answers vary)

Chapter 5: Epistles  
5.1 Letter to the Philippians

Epistles: 5.1 Letter to the Philippians      Philippians 1:1-2, 2:1-18;  
4:21 - 23

Timeline

|       |  |  |
|-------|--|--|
| 30 AD | Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection                | Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, John 20, 21      |
| 30 AD | The first church forms in Jerusalem                | Acts 2   |
| 34 AD | Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus          | Acts 9   |
| 48 AD | Paul's First Missionary Journey                    | Acts 13  |
| 49 AD | Paul's Second Missionary Journey, Paul in Philippi | Acts 16  |
| 54 AD | Paul's Third Missionary Journey                    | Gal. 2; 1 Cor. 18; 2 Cor; Rom. 15; Acts 11, 20 |
| 62 AD | Paul writes to the Philippians                     | Philippians 1-4                                |

- Sources: Bible Timeline. *Bible hub.co.* (n.d.). Biblehub. <https://biblehub.com/timeline>. Accessed March 2019.

The Third Missionary Journey of Paul the Apostle. *Bible History.com.* (n.d.) <https://www.bible-history.com/new-testament/pauls-third-missionary-journey.html>. Accessed March, 2019.

## Background

### Historical Information

*The church in Philippi was founded by Paul and his party on his so-called second missionary journey as related in the eyewitness account in Acts 16:12-49. They began the mission in the province of Macedonia with the assurance that God had specially summoned them to work there (Acts 16:9-11). Commencing work on European soil, the missionaries were conscious that they were bringing the Gospel to a new province of the Roman world, but the distinction between Europe and Asia was not as sharply drawn then as today.*

*The number of converts initially made is not certain, but apparently it was not very large. Luke's account centers on representative conversions—Lydia the business woman, the soothsaying slave girl (her conversion is not actually asserted), and the Rom. jailer. The first and the third of these involved a number of others (two households). That Clement as well as Euodia and Syntyche (Phil. 4:2,3) were also won at this time is not certain. The membership was apparently heterogeneous in character and predominantly Gentile in origin. Philippi did not have enough Jews to form a synagogue. The prominence of women in*



## Chapter 5: Epistles

### 5.1 Letter to the Philippians

*the Philippian church from the first is consistent with conditions that prevailed in Macedonia generally.*

*Luke apparently remained in Philippi to aid the young church; this is implied by the cessation of the "we" upon completion of his account of the Philippian mission. That strong ties were forged between Paul and his converts is evident from their monetary gifts to him while he was working at Thessalonica and Corinth (Phil. 4:15; 2 Cor. 11:9) as well as from the contents of this letter.*

*Upon termination of his work at Ephesus on the third journey, Paul again visited Philippi before going down to Corinth for the winter (Acts 20:1-3; 2 Cor. 2:13; 7:5). The following spring he made an unexpected visit to Philippi, spending the Passover season there (Acts 20:3, 6). 1 Timothy 1:3 indicates that Paul again visited Philippi following release from his Roman imprisonment. His contacts with the Philippians were not confined to these occasional visits. Communications were maintained through messengers to and from them (Acts 18:5; 19:22; 2 Cor. 11:9; Phil. 2:25) and probably also by letters (Phil. 3:1, 18; Polycarp, To the Philippians, 3:2).(cf. [Phil 3:1, 18](#); Polycarp, To the Philippians, 3:2).\**

\*Paul and the Philippian Church. Letter to the Philippians. *Bible Gateway*. (n.d.)  
<https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/encyclopedia-of-the-bible/Letter-Philippians>. Accessed March 2019

#### Information about the Letter to the Philippians

*It is believed that Paul wrote this letter while he was in a prison at Rome in about the year AD 62. That was more than 30 years after Jesus died. At that time, Philippi was an important city in Macedonia (the northern part of Greece).*

*In his letter, Paul tells the Christians that they are very special to him. Like Paul, they are Christ's servants. So, because they also work for Christ, they help Paul to be stronger for Christ. Paul loves Christ. Christ is much, much more important to him than anything else is. The whole purpose of Paul's life is to tell people about Christ.*

*Christ obeyed God so completely that he died on our behalf. Paul wants the Christians at Philippi to obey God completely too. He wants them to be like Christ. Paul is afraid that they might listen to false teachers. The false teachers were teaching wrong ideas. Paul wants the Christians to do the things that make God happy. They must continue to believe God. They must continue to obey God, even when other people are not kind to them.*

*Also, Paul thanks the Christians at Philippi for the gifts that they had sent to him. He tells them that he will send Timothy and Epaphroditus to Philippi. These men will tell all the news about Paul to the Christians there.\**

(\* "Christ is Worth More than Everything". *Easy English Bible*. February 2009,  
<https://easyenglish.bible/english-learners-bible/philippians-taw.htm#>. Accessed March 2019)

Chapter 5: Epistles  
5.1 Letter to the Philippians

Before you read:

1. How do you start a formal letter in English? How do you end the letter?
2. Is it the same for email or text?

Feel free to share your own experiences and encourage a few students to do the same. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked.

'What Do You Think'

This section is for students to speak freely. Not everyone needs to answer all the questions. It is to get them thinking and talking. Steer them back to the story if discussions get sidetracked.

Passage Questions

Match the Question to the Answer

| Question  | Answer   |
|---|--|
| __D__ 1. How does Paul want Jesus' followers to think of each other?                | A. He wanted to obey God, even though it was a difficult sacrifice.          |
| __E__ 2. What should followers of Christ not do?                                    | B. On the Last Day, when Jesus Christ will come back to earth.               |
| __A__ 3. Why would Christ choose to become human?                                   | C. God is working in Christians to make them willing and able to obey him.   |
| __C__ 4. Who makes it possible for Christ followers to do what God wants?           | D. They should consider others better than themselves.                       |
| __B__ 5. When will Paul know that all his work with the Philippians was successful? | E. They should make sure they give no reason for others to say they are bad. |

Multiple Choice

1. Paul describes living in harmony as:
  - a. thinking of yourself first
  - b. not getting into fights
  - c. showing love for one another
  - d. avoiding people who are evil
2. Jesus set an example to the church by:
  - a. being born
  - b. being humble
  - c. sitting in the highest place
  - d. all of the above
3. The children of God should not:

Chapter 5: Epistles  
5.1 Letter to the Philippians

- a. grumble                      c. shine as lights among the evil
  - b. argue                         d. both a and b
4. Paul sends greetings to the Philippian church from:
- a. Christians staying with him                      c. Christians in the ruler's house
  - b. Christians in his area                              d. all of the above
5. Paul wants Jesus' followers to rejoice and be glad if:
- a. he has to die    c. they are jealous and proud
  - b. everyone thinks they are smart                      d. none of the above

Fill in the blanks with the following words: emperor, crooked, humble, grumbling, sacrifice.

1. Paul said the Philippians service to the Lord was like a sacrifice offered to God.
2. Christians were told to do everything without grumbling.
3. The emperor of Rome was the leader of a large area with many cultures and languages
4. Paul said, "Don't be jealous or proud but be humble."
5. He said, "You live among people who are crooked and evil."

### Discussion

#### *Easier*

1. What does Paul say about living in harmony in the first paragraph?  
Living in harmony can be achieved by loving one another.
2. What are some ways that people can live in harmony?  
By being united in thought, not jealous or proud, caring about others as much as yourself, thinking like Jesus.
3. What does Paul say about Jesus?  
Jesus was truly God, but he gave up his equality with God and became a slave. He was humble and obedient to God.
4. What does Paul say about living with the people the Christians lived among?  
"You live among people who are crooked and evil, but you must not do anything that they can say is wrong. Try to shine as lights among the people of this world, <sup>16</sup> as you hold firmly to the message that gives life."
5. What does Paul compare to a sacrifice?  
The Philippian's faith in the Lord and their service are like a sacrifice offered to God.

## Chapter 5: Epistles

### 5.1 Letter to the Philippians

6. What kind of words does Paul use to talk about others who share his belief in Jesus Christ? What does this show about his relationship with them?

He calls them 'dear friends', 'brothers and sisters', and not 'students', even though he claimed authority and asked them to obey him. He was very close with them and loved them as family.

7. What does Paul mean when he says his own blood may have to be poured out? How does he feel about that?

He is saying that he may be killed, but he still tells the Philippians to rejoice and be glad with him. In Phil. 1:21-22, Paul rejoices that "to live is Christ and to die is gain", so he is joyful whatever happens.

8. Can you do any of the things Paul talked about?

(answers vary)

#### *Intermediate*

1. What are the important elements of living in harmony that Paul talks about in the first paragraph?

Living in harmony can be achieved by loving one another. It involves being united in thought, not jealous or proud, caring about others as much as yourself, thinking like Jesus.

2. What do verses 2: 6-11 reveal about Jesus?

Jesus had the right to be proud, but He chose to become humble and live, although He was equal to God, as obedient to God.

3. How does Paul expect the Christians to live with their neighbours?

They should not do anything anyone would perceive as wrong but shine as lights among their neighbours.

4. What does Paul compare to a sacrifice? Why were sacrifices important to Jewish people?

He compares the faith and service to the Lord to a sacrifice. Sacrifices were part of the Jewish worship of God. Therefore, the faith and service of the Philippians was seen as worship.

5. When will Paul know for sure that all his work and teaching with the Philippians was worth the effort? How might that future event also encourage the Philippian church?

He will know on the day when Christ returns. The assurance that Christ is returning would remind the church that their difficulties are temporary, and that their sacrifices are worthwhile.

6. Towards the end of this letter (4:6-7), Paul tells them not to worry about anything, <sup>6</sup> *but pray about everything. With thankful hearts offer up your prayers and requests to God.* <sup>7</sup> *Then, because you belong to Christ Jesus, God will bless you with*

## Chapter 5: Epistles

### 5.1 Letter to the Philippians

*peace that no one can completely understand. And this peace will control the way you think and feel.*" How does Paul tell them to pray? What is the result of doing that? He asks them to pray thankfully and about everything. Then they would experience peace beyond human understanding.

7. Have you ever experienced peace from God, even though the situation is difficult?  
Answers will vary.
8. Summarize some of the significant things you have learned from this epistle. Is there anything you might want to put into practice now?  
Answers will vary.

#### *Challenging*

1. What does Paul ask the Philippians to do in Chp.2: 1-2? What reason is behind the making of this request?  
He asks the Philippians to live in harmony by showing love for each other, being united in thought. The reason is that this is what God encourages us to do. (John 17:21: "I want all of them to be one with each other, just as I am one with you and you are one with me. I also want them to be one with us. Then the people of this world will believe that you sent me." )
2. What are some of the things revealed about Jesus in the passage? What is significant about each thing?
  - i) Christ was truly God but he gave up everything and became a slave.
  - ii) He became like one of us.
  - iii) Christ was humble and obedient even to death on a cross.
  - iv) God gave Christ the highest place and honored his name above all others.
  - v) At the name of Jesus everyone will bow down and agree that Jesus Christ is Lord.(Get the students to think about the significance of each of these points- answers will vary)
3. What lessons about living in the current society does Paul teach the Philippians?  
Not only not doing evil but do nothing that could appear as evil which others could then falsely accuse you of doing. Hold on to the gospel message and try to be like a light (to reveal goodness and truth).
4. Paul says "Your faith in the Lord and your service are like a sacrifice offered to him. And my own blood may have to be poured out with the sacrifice. If this happens, I will be glad and rejoice with you. In the same way, you should be glad and rejoice with me." What point is Paul making to his brothers and sisters in Philippi?

## Chapter 5: Epistles

### 5.1 Letter to the Philippians

The Philippians should be happy that their faith and service is recognized and that Paul himself is part of that sacrifice- he may be murdered/executed for his faith. They should also see that as a sacrifice and rejoice.

5. What reason does Paul give the Philippians to be glad? Could you be glad for the same reason? Could you be glad even if your life was very difficult and people wanted to kill you?

Always be glad in the Lord- He is coming! Sacrifice is a privilege with a reward. Our happiness is not based on our circumstances but on the hope we have within us.

6. Towards the end of this letter (4:6-7), Paul tells them not to worry about anything, *"<sup>6</sup> but pray about everything. With thankful hearts offer up your prayers and requests to God. <sup>7</sup> Then, because you belong to Christ Jesus, God will bless you with peace that no one can completely understand. And this peace will control the way you think and feel."* How does Paul tell them to pray? What is the result of doing that?

He tells them to pray thankfully about everything and then they will experience peace. Anxiety is not part of the life of faith, although we do get anxious. When those moments happen, we are to turn to prayer until our peace is restored.

7. Have you ever experienced peace from God, even though the situation is difficult? Answers will vary.

8. Summarize some of the significant things you have learned from this epistle. What can you put into practice today?

Answers will vary.

Chapter 5: Epistles  
5.2 Letter to the Ephesians

**Epistles: 5.2 Letter to the Ephesians Eph. 1:1-2; 15-23; Eph. 6:10-24**

Timeline

|       |  |  |
|-------|--|--|
| 30 AD | Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection                | Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, John 20, 21      |
| 30 AD | The first church forms in Jerusalem                | Acts 2   |
| 34 AD | Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus          | Acts 9   |
| 48 AD | Paul's First Missionary Journey                    | Acts 13  |
| 49 AD | Paul's Second Missionary Journey, Paul in Philippi | Acts 16  |
| 54 AD | Paul's Third Missionary Journey                    | Gal. 2; 1 Cor. 18; 2 Cor; Rom. 15; Acts 11, 20 |
| 62 AD | Paul writes to the Ephesians                       | Ephesians 1-6                                  |

- Sources: Bible Timeline. *Bible hub.co.* (n.d.). Biblehub. <https://biblehub.com/timeline>. Accessed March 2019.

The Third Missionary Journey of Paul the Apostle. *Bible History.com.* (n.d.) <https://www.bible-history.com/new-testament/pauls-third-missionary-journey.html>. Accessed March, 2019.

## Background

### History of the Ephesian Church

*In the Book of Acts, the history of church at Ephesus begins with the ministry of Paul on his second missionary journey, as recorded in Acts 18:18-28. Paul, accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila, arrived in Ephesus. Paul went to the synagogue in Ephesus and proclaimed Christ, and was asked to stay on and teach further. Paul declined, promising to return later in the will of the Lord, leaving behind Priscilla and Aquila. During Paul's absence, Apollos arrived, and began to preach those things which pertained to Jesus, based on the Old Testament and on the preaching of John the Baptist. Apollos seems to have been an Old Testament saint, but does not seem to have known about or trusted in Jesus Christ personally. Priscilla and Aquila took Apollos aside and filled him in on that which was lacking in his preaching. In time, he was sent to Achaia, where he powerfully and publicly refuted the Jews, showing that Jesus was indeed the promised Messiah.*

*After strengthening the believers in "the Galatian region and Phrygia" (18:23), Paul returned to Ephesus, where he spends nearly three years, preaching and teaching. For three months, Paul taught in the synagogue, but then opposition caused him to change his meeting place to the school of Tyrannus, where he reasoned daily for two years (Acts 19:8-10). During this*

## Chapter 5: Epistles

### 5.2 Letter to the Ephesians

*time, God gave supernatural witness to the ministry of Paul by empowering him to perform many miracles (19:11-12). As a result of the chastening of the seven sons of Sceva, many in Ephesus renounced their magical practices, which was demonstrated when they publicly burned their magical books, worth a considerable amount of money. This, in turn, had a great impact on the city (Acts 19:13-20).*

*Paul planned to leave Asia, planning to visit Macedonia and Achaia, where he would gather a collection for the poor in Jerusalem and Judea, and then deliver the gift to the church in Jerusalem, and then press on to Rome. He sent Timothy and Erastus ahead, staying behind in Asia for a while (19:21-22).*

*It was during this brief stay that a serious crisis arose in Ephesus, as a direct result of the preaching of the gospel. The gospel had not only caused many to turn from their magical practices, it also turned many from the worship of Artemis, the goddess whose elaborate temple was constructed in Ephesus, over a period of more than 200 years. This specifically impacted the idol-making industry which had developed in the city. A near riot was instigated by Demetrius, which was finally dissipated by an appeal from the town clerk. This incident caused Paul to move on to Macedonia (Acts 19:23-20:1).*

*On his way to Jerusalem, Paul's travels took him to Macedonia, and then Greece, where he spent three months (Acts 20:2-3). His eagerness to reach Jerusalem by Pentecost caused him to sail past Ephesus and to make port at Miletus, not far from Ephesus. And so he called for the elders of the church at Ephesus, giving them a final word of encouragement and admonition. After a tearful farewell, Paul sailed on toward Jerusalem (Acts 20:17-38).*

*As Paul had purposed, he did reach Jerusalem, and then Rome, but not in a way that we would have anticipated. When Paul reached Jerusalem, he took the advice of the (Jewish) leaders of the church there, and as a result was arrested on false charges. Through a sequence of events, Paul felt compelled to appeal to Caesar, and thus he was taken to Rome for trial. There in Rome, he was granted considerable freedom of access, and thus he continued to minister. It is here, in Rome, that the history of the Apostle Paul (and the church) ends in the Book of Acts (see chapter 28).*

*While in prison, Paul penned several epistles, which came to be known as the "prison epistles:" Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. Philippians was delivered by Epaphroditus, who was sent home by Paul after his recovery from a serious illness (Philippians 2:25-30). Tychicus (see Acts 20:4), accompanied by the returning slave, Onesimus, would deliver the Epistle of Colossians and the letter to Philemon (Colossians 4:7-9), and also the Epistle to the Ephesians (Ephesians 6:21-22).*

- Deffinbaugh, Bob. 1 The Uniqueness of Ephesians Among the Epistles. *Bible.Org*.  
<https://bible.org/seriespage/1-uniqueness-ephesians-among-epistles>. Accessed March 2019.



Chapter 5: Epistles  
5.2 Letter to the Ephesians

Before you read:

1. Do you ever pray?
2. What kinds of things do you do or say when you pray?

Feel free to share your own experiences and encourage a few students to do the same. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked.

'What Do You Think'

This section is for students to speak freely. Not everyone needs to answer all the questions. It is to get them thinking and talking. Steer them back to the story if discussions get sidetracked.

Passage Questions

True or False

1. This Epistle was written as an essay for an exam. \_\_\_F\_\_\_
2. Paul tells his friends he prays for them. \_\_\_T\_\_\_
3. Paul says God put everything under Christ's power. \_\_\_T\_\_\_
4. Paul wants the Ephesians to keep the lights on in their homes. \_\_\_F\_\_\_
5. Paul says armor makes us strong. \_\_\_F\_\_\_

Multiple Choice

1. Paul says he asked God to:
  - a. give food to the Ephesians
  - b. help the Ephesians to succeed in life
  - c. show love to the Ephesians
  - d. give the Ephesians the Holy Spirit
2. Jesus rules over:
  - a. all powers and authorities
  - b. all the future world
  - c. all beings in this world
  - d. all of the above
3. Paul asks his friends to pray:
  - a. always
  - b. for himself
  - c. in the Holy Spirit's power
  - d. all of the above
4. Paul tells his friends that:
  - a. they should fight their neighbours
  - b. God chose them
  - c. they can relax
  - d. they are powerless
5. Christians should put on the full armor of God by:

## Chapter 5: Epistles

### 5.2 Letter to the Ephesians

- a. ignoring what is happening around them    c. not listening to neighbours  
b. thinking about good things                      d. none of the above

Fill in the blanks with the following words: grateful, glorious, authorities, alert, brave

1. \_\_\_Brave\_\_\_ people do what they need to do, even when they are afraid.
2. People who have power and knowledge are called \_\_\_authorities\_\_\_.
3. Paul feels \_\_\_grateful\_\_\_ for the Ephesian church.
4. Parents with young children must be \_\_\_alert\_\_\_ for danger.
5. Paul says the Ephesians will discover \_\_\_glorious\_\_\_ blessings.

### Discussion

#### *Easier*

1. What does Paul explain about what the Holy Spirit does in section 3?  
The Holy Spirit will make them wise and give them understanding so they can know God and understand their hope from God.
2. What does Paul want the Ephesians to know about God's power?  
Nothing is more powerful than God. The Ephesians lived in a society that worshipped Artemis, a powerful goddess of the Greeks and Romans. They also practiced magic and the occult arts.
3. What does Paul say about Jesus?  
"God has put all things under the power of Christ, and for the good of the church he has made him the head of everything."<sup>23</sup> The church is Christ's body and is filled with Christ who completely fills everything."
4. What word picture does Paul use to describe the relationship between Christ and the church? (Ephesians 1:23) Why would he use that picture?  
He calls the church Christ's body. (Distinguish between the building and the believers). One body has many parts that are interconnected, sharing a single life and purpose. Christ is the head of the church and joins all parts together (Romans 12: 4-5), as all members are filled with Christ/Holy Spirit.
5. Who makes us strong against evil? Why is that important to know?  
"Finally, let the mighty strength of the Lord make you strong". We don't make ourselves strong. If we rely on our own strength, we will fail. We have a spiritual weakness that the evil one can easily overcome. Together with God nothing can overcome us.

## Chapter 5: Epistles

### 5.2 Letter to the Ephesians

6. What are the pieces of spiritual armor that Paul describes? How can each help us against evil?

- (Belt): Truth. We stop the evil one's lies about God. God doesn't hate us and He is not indifferent to us, and, yes, He is real and alive.
- (Chest Armour /Breastplate) God's justice/ righteousness. God's justice achieved through Christ's sacrifice means we may claim Christ's righteousness as our own through faith (Eph 2:8). When we accept his sacrifice and forgiveness, this protects our hearts against the devil's accusations. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness". (1John 1:9)
- (Shoes): Telling the good news to others. We need to spread the news that the evil one doesn't want to get out, because it will weaken his plans.
- (Shield): Faith which stops the evil one's arrows. The evil one will try to hurt us physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually.
- (Helmet): God's saving power. The head is the most important place on the body to protect. This is the place the evil one wants to get into, and knowing we have salvation secures our minds.
- (Sword): God's word, the Bible. God's word is powerful and is a weapon not only of defense against evil but also active offensively against evil.

7. What is the last thing in the passage that Paul tells the Ephesians to do?

Never stop praying, especially for others. Always pray by the power of the Spirit. Stay alert and keep praying for God's people.

8. Why doesn't Paul pray for safety, money or political power for himself or others? (Would you ever want to follow his prayer example?)

Paul is concerned with spiritual safety and strength. He knows that God's power is enough to supply every need of ours (Phil 4:19), as long as we seek Him and His will. (Answers vary)

### *Intermediate*

1. What are some of the important things Paul prays for the Ephesians in sections 2 and 3?

He prays that God will give them his Spirit; that the Spirit would make them wise and let them understand what it means to know God. That also they would understand the hope that was given to them when God chose them.

2. Why does Paul want the Ephesians to know about God's power? What authority has God given Jesus?

- God's power is great
- It's the same power God used to raise Christ
- Christ rules over all for all time: He has been given all authority.

## Chapter 5: Epistles

### 5.2 Letter to the Ephesians

3. What word picture does Paul use to describe the relationship between Christ and the church? (Ephesians 1:23) Why would he use that picture?

He calls the church Christ's body. (Distinguish between the building and the believers). One body has many parts that are interconnected, sharing a single life and purpose. Christ is the head of the church and joins all parts together (Romans 12: 4-5), as all members are filled with Christ/Holy Spirit.

4. Who makes us strong against evil? Why is that important to know?

"Finally, let the mighty strength of the Lord make you strong". We don't make ourselves strong. If we rely on our own strength, we will fail. We have a spiritual weakness that the evil one can easily overcome. Together with God nothing can overcome us.

5. What are the pieces of spiritual armor that Paul describes? How can each help us against evil?

- Belt: truth. We stop the evil one's lies about God. God doesn't hate us, and He is not indifferent to us, and ,yes, He is real and alive.
- Shoes: telling the good news to others. We need to spread the news which the evil one doesn't want to get out.
- (Chest Armour /Breastplate) God's justice/ righteousness. God's justice achieved through Christ's sacrifice, means we may claim Christ's righteousness as our own through faith (Eph 2:8). When we accept his sacrifice and forgiveness, this protects our hearts against the devil's accusations. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1John 1:9).
- Shield: faith which stops the evil one's arrows. The evil one will try to hurt us physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually.
- Helmet: God's saving power. The head is the most important place on the body to protect. This is the place the evil one wants to get into.
- Sword: God's word, the Bible. God's word is powerful and is a weapon not only of defense against evil but also active offensively against evil.

6. What is the last thing in the passage that Paul tells the Ephesians to do? How important do you think this is?

Never stop praying, especially for others. Always pray by the power of the Spirit. Stay alert and keep praying for God's people. It is very important. It is our way to connect with God whose Presence and power we need.

7. Why doesn't Paul pray for safety, money, or political power for others or for himself? (Would you ever want to follow his prayer example?)

Paul is concerned with spiritual safety and strength. He knows that God's power is enough to supply every need of ours (Phil 4:19), as long as we seek Him and his will. (Answers vary)

## Chapter 5: Epistles

### 5.2 Letter to the Ephesians

#### *Challenging*

1. What are some of the important things Paul prays for the Ephesians in the first paragraph? What is Paul's purpose in telling them his prayer?

He prays that God will give them his Spirit; that the Spirit would make them wise and let them understand what it means to know God. That also they would understand the hope that was given to them when God chose them. His purpose may be to encourage them to explore their faith more deeply.

2. What is the significance about God's power? What authority has God given Jesus? Why is it important for the Ephesians to know about God's power?

God is omnipotent. God has given all authority to Christ. The church is Christ's body and is full of Christ.

3. What metaphor does Paul use in Ephesians 1:23 to describe the relationship between Christ and the church? Why would he use that picture?

He calls the church Christ's body. One body has many parts that are interconnected, sharing a single life and purpose. Christ is the head of the church and joins all parts together (Romans 12: 4-5), as all members are filled with Christ/Holy Spirit.

4. Who makes us strong against evil? Why is that important to know? Why do we need the armor of God?

"Finally, let the mighty strength of the Lord make you strong". We don't make ourselves strong. If we rely on our own strength, we will fail. We have a spiritual weakness that the evil one can easily overcome. Together with God nothing can overcome us. The armor of God are the practical ways we can prepare ourselves, using His Presence and strength.

5. What are the pieces of spiritual armor that Paul describes? How can each help us against evil? Is one piece more important than another?

- Belt: truth. We stop the evil one's lies about God. God doesn't hate us and He is not indifferent to us, and, yes, He is real and alive.
- Shoes: telling the good news to others. We need to spread the news which the evil one doesn't want to get out.
- (Chest Armour /Breastplate) God's justice/ righteousness. God's justice achieved through Christ's sacrifice, means we may claim Christ's righteousness as our own through faith (Eph 2:8). When we accept his sacrifice and forgiveness, this protects our hearts against the devil's accusations. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1John 1:9).
- Shield: faith which stops the evil one's arrows. The evil one will try to hurt us physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually.
- Helmet: God's saving power. The head is the most important place on the body to protect. This is the place the evil one wants to get into.

## Chapter 5: Epistles

### 5.2 Letter to the Ephesians

- *Sword: God's word, the Bible. God's word is powerful and is a weapon not only of defense against evil but also active offensively against evil.*

*No one part is more important. A soldier needs all his armor.*

6. **What is the last thing in the passage that Paul tells the Ephesians to do? How important do you think this is in the light of the previous advice about the armor?**

*Never stop praying, especially for others. Always pray by the power of the Spirit. Stay alert and keep praying for God's people. It is very important. It is our way to connect with God whose Presence and power we need.*

7. **Why doesn't Paul pray for safety, money, or political power for others or for himself? (Would you ever follow his prayer example?)**

*Paul is concerned with spiritual safety and strength. He knows that God's power is enough to supply every need of ours (Phil 4:19), as long as we seek Him and his will. (Answers vary)*

8. **Summarize some of the significant things you have learned from this epistle. Is there anything you would want to put into practice today?**

*(Answers vary)*

Chapter 6: Parables  
6.1 The Parable of the Ewe Lamb

Parables: 6.1 The Parable of the Ewe Lamb

2 Samuel 12

Timeline

|         |  |                                   |
|---------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1446 BC | Exodus, Moses leads the Israelites out of Egypt and back to Canaan | Exodus 13-18                      |
| 1407 BC | Joshua leads the Israelites in the conquest of Canaan              | Numbers 27-35; Joshua 1-24        |
| 1010 BC | David becomes the second king of ancient Israel                    | 1,2 Samuel; 1 Chronicles; 1 Kings |
| 1000 BC | David plans to build a Temple to house the ark                     | 1 Chronicles 17                   |
| 996 BC  | Solomon builds the Temple in Jerusalem and brings the ark to it    | 1 Kings 9, 2 Chronicles 2-7       |
| 640 BC  | Josiah rules over Judah  | 2 Kings 22, 2 Chronicles 33       |
| 586 BC  | Babylon conquers Jerusalem and destroys the city and its temple    | 2 Kings 25, Jeremiah 52           |
| 537 BC  | Jewish exiles return to Judah                                      | Ezra 2                            |
| 515 BC  | Zerubbabel's Temple built  | Ezra 6                            |
| 40 BC   | Herod the Great rules over Judea                                   | Matthew 2                         |
| 5 BC    | Birth of Jesus   | Matthew 1, mark 1, Luke 2, John 1 |

Source: Bible Timeline - Biblehub.com/timeline/#complete. All dates are approximate.

Background

*Nathan's use of a parable*

In this story Nathan uses a parable about the ewe lamb to enable David to see his sin in the light of the eyes of others - and since Nathan was a prophet - what this sin was like in the eyes of God.

A parable is a teaching method that works by analogy. It uses a story from everyday life to throw light on a more profound truth.

Parables were a method of teaching in that culture at the time. They continued to be used through the time of Jesus, who often used parables to teach with.

Parables are based on everyday life. It was not uncommon in the culture of the time for a lamb to be taken as a pet and kept in the house. And it's not uncommon in many times for someone who is wealthy to oppress someone who is poor for their own financial gain.

By using a parable, Nathan was able to avoid confronting David directly. The story wasn't close enough to the actual story of David to give away the point that Nathan wanted to

## Chapter 6: Parables

### 6.1 The Parable of the Ewe Lamb

make. Nathan could then set David up to become emotionally involved in the story. That's when Nathan delivered the punch by telling David, "You are the man."

In this way Nathan had been able to generate a response of admission and remorse in David, rather than a response of defence and anger.

How was Nathan able to do this? *Got Questions* says that for one thing, Nathan was a prophet in Israel and so he was close to God, and for another thing, he had already established a good relationship with David.

One scene in the building of the relationship between them was when David really wanted to build the temple, and asked Nathan for approval. At first Nathan told David that this was a great idea and that he was sure that God would be pleased with this. But Nathan, being a prophet, didn't leave it there. He sought God on it, and when God said no to this idea, Nathan went back to David. Nathan told David that he (Nathan) had been wrong, and that God had said He didn't want David to build the temple because he had been a man of blood (a warrior) and therefore He chose Solomon to build the temple instead. David accepted this from Nathan.

Nathan's confrontation with David in the parable of the ewe lamb didn't end the relationship between the two. Sometime later, when his son Adonijah declared himself as David's successor, Nathan went to Bathsheba and told her how they should let the elderly David know about this, remind him that God had chosen Solomon for this, and have him take immediate action. Nathan also accomplished this task in a way that maintained trust with David. He carried out his plan with gentleness, respect, and effectiveness.

Reference: What is the story of David and Nathan? *Got Questions*. <https://www.gotquestions.org/David-and-Nathan.html>. Accessed March, 2019.

#### Before you read:

1. Have you ever heard of someone who did good things, but then did something bad?
2. What happened to that person?

Feel free to share your own experiences and encourage a few students to do the same. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked.

#### 'What Do You Think'

**This** section is for students to speak freely. Not everyone needs to answer all the questions. It is to get them thinking and talking. Steer them back to the story if discussions get sidetracked.



Chapter 6: Parables  
6.1 The Parable of the Ewe Lamb

Passage Questions

True or False

1. Uriah was a very good soldier. \_\_T\_\_
2. In this story, David led Israel's army into war. \_\_F\_\_
3. The rich man had no pity on the poor man. \_\_T\_\_
4. God told David he would die because he had sinned. \_\_F\_\_
5. David asked God to cover his guilt. \_\_T\_\_

Fill in the blanks with the following words: comforted, pity, adultery, guilt, offering

- a. Sexual relationship outside of marriage is \_\_adultery\_\_.
- b. When we see someone suffering, we have \_\_pity\_\_ on them.
- c. We can give the church an \_\_offering\_\_ of money or service.
- d. The father \_\_comforted\_\_ his crying daughter by putting his arm around her.
- e. People have \_\_guilt\_\_ when they do something wrong.

Note: Guilt and shame do not carry the same meaning in many cultures. You may wish to ask, "If no one finds out about the bad action, does a person still have guilt?" ( Yes, according to God's law.) "If people think someone does something bad even when someone is innocent, does that person have guilt?" (No, according to God's law, but they may feel shame in spite of innocence.)

Tell the Story using the pictures below.

Using the pictures, try to have the group re-tell each story of healing, with volunteers giving only one sentence at a time until the story is complete.

1. The Israelite army went off to war, but David stayed at home.
2. David sent men to bring Bathsheba to him, and he had sexual relations with her.
3. David arranged for Uriah to be killed in battle.
4. Nathan told David the story of the ewe lamb.
5. Nathan told David, "You're the man." (The oppressive rich man who took and killed the lamb.)
6. David and Bathsheba's baby died. David comforted Bathsheba.

Ordering: Number the following events of the story in the proper order.

- a. \_\_4\_\_ Nathan told David a story about a rich man who stole his neighbour's only lamb.

Chapter 6: Parables  
6.1 The Parable of the Ewe Lamb

- b.   3   David sent Uriah back to the army with a letter for the commander.
- c.   2   Bathsheba sent a note to David to tell him she was pregnant.
- d.   5   David's son by Bathsheba became sick and died.
- e.   1   David sent his men to bring Bathsheba to him.

### Discussion

#### *Easier*

1. How does the Bible describe King David?  
He was courageous, compassionate and just. He loved God and wrote songs of praise to Him. God said that David was a man after his own heart.
2. What did David do when it was time for kings to go to war?  
David sent his commander (Joab) to lead the army; he himself stayed home in the comfort of his castle.
3. Where was Bathsheba when David saw her?  
She was taking a bath in the courtyard of her home.
4. When David called Uriah back from war, what did David want Uriah to do? Why?  
David told Uriah that he wanted an update on how the battle was going. But what David really wanted was to have Uriah spend the night with his wife, Bathsheba. That way, when the baby was born, everyone - including Uriah- would think the baby was Uriah's.
5. How did David arrange to have Uriah killed?  
David gave Uriah a letter to take back to his army commander (Joab). The letter told the commander to arrange to have Uriah killed in battle. (In the full story, David instructed his commander, Joab, to place a group of soldiers close to the wall of a town they were fighting against. Joab was to put Uriah in that group; the other men in the group were told to pull back during the battle and leave Uriah on his own.)
6. How many sheep and lambs did the rich man have? How many did the poor man have?  
The rich man had many sheep and lambs (and cattle). The poor man had only the one lamb.
7. Did David's actions against Uriah surprise you? Why do you think he did it?  
(Answers will vary) Even though David is described as a 'man after God's own heart', he got morally lazy and did not resist temptation, as he was able to do. The fact that he was King and could perhaps get away with it is an example of giving into power corruption.

## Chapter 6: Parables

### 6.1 The Parable of the Ewe Lamb

#### 8. Did David feel bad about his sin? How do you know this?

When he first committed his sins, he apparently didn't feel bad about them. (Though Psalm 32: 3 -4 seems to suggest he felt something: "Before I confessed my sins, my bones felt limp, and I groaned all day long.<sup>4</sup> Night and day your hand weighed heavily on me, and my strength was gone as in the summer heat.) But when Nathan came to him, David confessed his sin and was heartbroken. We see this in his writing; in Psalm 51 he wrote that he felt deep sorrow in his heart.

#### 9. God forgave David. Why, then did David's son have to die?

We still often have to pay the consequences for our sin, otherwise there would be no justice. God is the author of love and mercy, but He is also the author of justice. This justice was necessary for Uriah's family to have, and it was a warning for all those who knew what happened. We don't read of David sinning like that ever again. Most people, if they lose a loved one to a criminal want to see justice for their loved one. Who, if they had a child kidnapped and killed by a child molester, would want to see that molester go free?

Thankfully for us, Jesus took the consequences for our sins on Himself, and so satisfied the need for justice.

### *Intermediate*

#### 1. How did David meet Bathsheba? What did this show about David?

When David was walking on the roof top of his palace, he saw Bathsheba bathing. He lusted after her and sent some men to bring her to him. This shows that he was dishonourable in his conduct towards her, Uriah - her husband and his loyal soldier, and God. He put the satisfaction of his own passion above them all.

#### 2. What do you learn about Uriah in this story?

Unlike David who stayed home and pursued comfort when the army was in the fields; Uriah refused comfort even when offered it by the king. Uriah was loyal to David, and he took the letter from David back to the army commander without opening it. (This story doesn't cover what happened when Uriah was killed in battle. David's letter told the commander to send Uriah with a group of men to fight close to the wall of the city they were attacking, then have the men withdraw and leave Uriah on his own. Uriah must have known that going close to the wall was dangerous and unwise, but he obeyed his army commander and did so.)

#### 3. a) How did David have Uriah killed?

David sent a letter to the army commander to set up Uriah to be killed in battle.

#### b) Did David repent of all he had done?

David did repent. He realized how awful he had been. He acknowledged what he had done and that it was sin in a psalm that he wrote.

#### c) What were the consequences of David's sins? Was this just?

## Chapter 6: Parables

### 6.1 The Parable of the Ewe Lamb

The baby that David had with Bathsheba became sick and died. Although David did everything he could to plead with God for the baby's life, he could not prevent it. Yes, it was just. David had caused great calamity on the lives of Bathsheba, Uriah, and their families. They would need to see that God had not left David unpunished for this injustice. (God also told David that his actions had brought a sword to his own house. David had three more sons die - each of them also were guilty of lusts and died a violent death; Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah.)

4. **Why do you think Nathan used a parable, rather than directly confront David with his sin?**

Nathan's use of a parable avoided a direct confrontation with David. And a parable is a strong teaching tool; it brought David to the position of being able to see his sin for what it was.

5. **Why is adultery like theft?**

Adultery is like theft, for in it someone takes something that didn't belong to them, another person's spouse. The spouse suffers an irreversible loss.

6. **Was Bathsheba innocent?**

Bathsheba had some responsibility to block the view of her bath with a curtain. But David hadn't tried to woo Bathsheba into having an affair with her, instead he sent guards to bring her to him. She may have felt too powerless or been in too much shock or been in too much awe of David (for he was a great hero in Israel) to fight off David. Any Canadian court of law would rule that David had used his power over her to take what he wanted.

If Bathsheba had been a willing and eager partner in the adultery, it seems unlikely that God would have blessed her with a second son, Solomon, who would be the next king of Israel.

#### *Challenging*

1. **Do you think David's conscience bothered him following his adultery and murder?**

Answers will vary here. This is a good example of someone ignoring their conscience, and God's spirit.

2. **How did Nathan show wisdom in approaching David on the matter?**

Nathan's use of a parable avoided a direct confrontation with David. And a parable is a strong teaching tool; it brought David to the position of being able to see his sin for what it was.

3. **Was Bathsheba innocent?**

Bathsheba had some responsibility to block the view of her bath with a curtain. But David hadn't tried to woo Bathsheba into having an affair with her, instead he sent

## Chapter 6: Parables

### 6.1 The Parable of the Ewe Lamb

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If Bathsheba had been a willing and eager partner in the adultery, it seems unlikely that God would have blessed her with a second son, Solomon, who would be the next king of Israel.

#### 4. Is adultery theft?

Adultery is like theft, for David took something that didn't belong to him, another man's wife, and Uriah suffered irreversible loss.

#### 5. What might have happened if David had refused to listen to Nathan?

Answers will vary here. Probably God would have had to bring David to repentance in a more severe way.

#### 6. Did David claim - or did anyone in the story claim - that he (David) was basically a good man and circumstances just tempted him beyond his ability to resist? What is the importance of this observation?

David did not seek any excuse for his behaviour; neither did anyone else. This shows that David did fully acknowledge his sin and did fully repent of it.

We live in a time when it is popular to believe that everyone is basically good, and that most wrong-doing can be excused as a temporary deviation from this basic goodness; and that the deviation was caused by outside circumstance, not a failure of the man himself.

#### 7. David honestly repented with all his being, and God forgave David. Why then, did David's son still have to die?

Forgiveness cannot stop consequences. David had irreparably harmed Bathsheba, Uriah and their families. Justice for them demanded more than a "I'm really sorry about this." And David had broken a bond of trust in the palace and in his own family - this would also have to be addressed.

Chapter 6: Parables  
6.2 Kingdom Parables

Parables: 6.2 Kingdom Parables

Matthew 13:1-16; 13:24-35

Timeline

|                |  |   |
|----------------|--|---|
| 5 BC ?         | Birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, Judea; Joseph and Mary flee to Egypt with Jesus before Herod the Great kills the male babies in Bethlehem | Matthew 2   |
| 27 AD          | Jesus calls his first disciples  | Matthew 4, Mark 1, Luke 5                                     |
| AD 30 ?<br>33? | Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension  | Matthew 27,28;<br>Mark 15,16; John 17-21; Luke 23, 24; Acts 1 |

Source: Bible Timeline - Biblehub.com/timeline/#complete. All dates are approximate.

Background

Explanation about Jesus' Parables

"It has been said that a parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. The Lord Jesus frequently used parables as a means of illustrating profound, divine truths. Stories such as these are easily remembered, the characters bold, and the symbolism rich in meaning. Parables were a common form of teaching in Judaism. Before a certain point in His ministry, Jesus had employed many graphic analogies using common things that would be familiar to everyone (salt, bread, sheep, etc.) and their meaning was fairly clear in the context of His teaching. Parables required more explanation, and at one point in His ministry, Jesus began to teach using parables exclusively.

The question is why Jesus would let most people wonder about the meaning of His parables. The first instance of this is in His telling the parable of the seed and the soils. Before He interpreted this parable, He drew His disciples away from the crowd. They said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" Jesus answered them, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. For whoever has, to him more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says,

'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive; For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn,

## Chapter 6: Parables

### 6.2 Kingdom Parables

So that I should heal them.' But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it" (Matthew 13:10-17).

From this point on in Jesus' ministry, when He spoke in parables, He explained them only to His disciples. But those who had continually rejected His message were left in their spiritual blindness to wonder as to His meaning. He made a clear distinction between those who had been given "ears to hear" and those who persisted in unbelief—ever hearing, but never actually perceiving and "always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth" (2 Timothy 3:7). The disciples had been given the gift of spiritual discernment by which things of the spirit were made clear to them. Because they accepted truth from Jesus, they were given more and more truth. The same is true today of believers who have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit who guides us into all truth (John 16:13). He has opened our eyes to the light of truth and our ears to the sweet words of eternal life.

Our Lord Jesus understood that truth is not sweet music to all ears. Simply put, there are those who have neither interest in nor regard for the deep things of God. So why, then, did He speak in parables? To those with a genuine hunger for God, the parable is both an effective and memorable vehicle for the conveyance of divine truths. Our Lord's parables contain great volumes of truth in very few words—and His parables, rich in imagery, are not easily forgotten. So, then, the parable is a blessing to those with willing ears. But to those with dull hearts and ears that are slow to hear, the parable is also an instrument of both judgment and mercy."

Why did Jesus teach in parables? Got Questions. <https://www.gotquestions.org/Jesus-parables.html>. Accessed March 2019.

#### Before you read:

1. Can you tell any teaching story?
2. What truth does it teach?

Feel free to share your own experiences and encourage a few students to do the same. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked.

#### 'What Do You Think'

**This** section is for students to speak freely. Not everyone needs to answer all the questions. It is to get them thinking and talking. Steer them back to the story if discussions get sidetracked.

Chapter 6: Parables  
6.2 Kingdom Parables

Passage Questions

Tell the 3 Parables using the pictures below.

1. A man plants a mustard seed - a very small seed.
2. The small seed grows into a large tree that birds can nest in.
3. A woman mixes a little bit of yeast into her bread flour, and all the dough made with it rises.
4. A man plants good seed in his field.
5. At night an enemy plants seeds of weeds in the man's field.
6. When the plants grow up, the man realizes what his enemy has done. He says it's best to let the plants and weeds grow up together until harvest.

Multiple Choice

1. Jesus used parables to:
  - a. confuse people
  - b. help people learn how to farm
  - c. make the Pharisees angry
  - d. teach the truth
2. Isaiah said the people:
  - a. didn't want to understand
  - b. would not listen
  - c. were stubborn
  - d. all of the above
3. The parable of the farmer and the weeds was about:
  - a. how to farm successfully
  - b. the problems with weeds
  - c. what to do with evil people
  - d. how God allows evil and good to coexist for awhile
4. The meaning of the mustard seed parable was:
  - a. something can start small but get very big
  - b. the problems with mustard seeds
  - c. the size of mustard seeds
  - d. why you should pray
5. The parable of the yeast was about:
  - a. religious people out of control
  - b. the benefits of yeast
  - c. baking as a survival skill
  - d. yeast is tiny, but very powerful

Symbol Matching

Match the *symbol* in the Farmer Parable to its *meaning*.

| Symbol     | Meaning                     |
|------------|-----------------------------|
| _b_ wheat  | a. God                      |
| _e_ weed   | b. people who listen to God |
| _a_ farmer | c. angels                   |



Chapter 6: Parables  
6.2 Kingdom Parables

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| _c_ farm workers | d. Satan/ devil                        |
| _d_ enemy        | e. people who will not listen to God   |
| _f_ harvest      | f. time when God will judge all people |

Fill in the blanks with the following words: symbol, weed, stubborn, scatter, yeast

1. \_\_\_Yeast\_\_\_ is used to make bread rise.
2. The red maple leaf is a \_\_\_symbol\_\_\_ of Canada.
3. A \_\_\_weed\_\_\_ is a plant that nobody wants in the garden.
4. Farmers used to \_\_\_scatter\_\_\_ seed on the ground.
5. \_\_\_Stubborn\_\_\_ people are people who don't like to change their minds or the ways they do things even if you show them a better way.

Discussion:

*Easier*

1. What question do the disciples ask Jesus? What was his answer?  
They asked, "Why do you use nothing but stories when you speak to the people?" Jesus answered: "I have explained the secrets about the kingdom of heaven to you, but not to others." Implied: You want to hear the truth, but the others do not, just like Isaiah's example.
2. Why does Isaiah say the people of Israel are not able to hear or see God?  
He said that the people of Israel were stubborn: therefore they cannot see or hear no matter how much they listen. The implication is that they do not want to hear.
3. What happened at the beginning of the first parable?  
A farmer scattered good seed in a field but while everyone was sleeping, an enemy came and scattered weed seeds in the field and then left.
4. Who was responsible for the weeds in the story? Do you think there is a connection between the 'weeds' and the one who put them there?  
The enemy of the farmer. Yes, the weeds symbolize people who follow the evil one.
5. Why did the farmer in the story want to leave the weeds in the field?  
If they tried to pull up the weeds, they might destroy the crop. The weeds and the wheat could be sorted out after the harvest.
6. What is the meaning of the mustard seed parable?  
The kingdom starts small: Jesus had a few dedicated followers, but His Kingdom is encompassing the world.

## Chapter 6: Parables

### 6.2 Kingdom Parables

#### 7. What is the meaning of the bread and yeast parable?

Only a little yeast is needed: it is very powerful and can spread easily, just like the Kingdom of God.

#### 8. What is the Kingdom of Heaven? What do these 3 parables say about it?

The Kingdom of Heaven is where Jesus Christ rules completely. Its citizens are those who love Him and listen to God. Not all people enter this Kingdom. Those who reject God and follow Satan will not enter. The Kingdom is and has been growing 'exponentially' with great power. The Enemy tries to interfere, but all will be sorted out on judgment day, when God's children will be gathered into the Kingdom of Heaven and His enemies will be destroyed.

### *Intermediate*

#### 1. What question do the disciples ask Jesus? How did he answer?

They asked, "Why do you use nothing but stories when you speak to the people?" Jesus answered: "I have explained the secrets about the kingdom of heaven to you, but not to others." Implied: You want to hear the truth, but the others do not, just like Isaiah's example.

#### 2. What does Isaiah say about the people of Israel? Was Jesus indicating there was a change in the people's response over the following generations?

He said that the people of Israel were stubborn: they cannot see or hear no matter how much they listen. They were the same in His day: still not seeing who was in front of them.

#### 3. What happened at the beginning of the first parable? Why do you think Jesus told a farming story?

A farmer scattered good seed in a field but while everyone was sleeping, an enemy came and scattered weed seeds in the field and then left. Jesus used stories about familiar things. Most of his listeners were farmers or fishermen.

#### 4. Who was responsible for the weeds in the story? What are the weeds a symbol of? What purpose did the enemy have in doing that?

The enemy of the farmer. The weeds symbolize people who follow the evil one. He wanted to destroy the harvest of the farmer. The evil one wants to destroy the kingdom of God by placing his evil followers among us.

#### 5. Why did the farmer in the story want to leave the weeds in the field? What spiritual parallels is Jesus making?

If they tried to pull up the weeds, they might destroy the crop. The weeds and the wheat could be sorted out after the harvest. God does not judge us now, but when the "harvest" comes, there will be a separation.

## Chapter 6: Parables

### 6.2 Kingdom Parables

6. What are the meanings of the mustard seed parable and the yeast parable? How do these two parables relate to the kingdom of God?

The kingdom starts small: Jesus had a few dedicated followers, but His Kingdom would encompass the world. Only a little yeast is needed: it is very powerful and can spread easily, just like the Kingdom of God.

7. Jesus has talked about bread, yeast, and seeds in other places in the gospels. Can you think of some examples?

Examples: Jesus called Himself "the Bread of Life" in John 6:35; Jesus spoke about bread on the boat in Matthew 16.

8. How would you define the Kingdom of Heaven? Summarize some of the significant things you have learned from these parables. Can you re-tell them in modern context?

The Kingdom of Heaven is where Jesus Christ rules completely. Its citizens are those who love Him and listen to God. Not all people enter this Kingdom. Those who reject God and follow Satan will not enter. The Kingdom is and has been growing 'exponentially' with great power. The Enemy tries to interfere, but all will be sorted out on judgment day, when God's children will be gathered into the Kingdom of Heaven and His enemies will be destroyed. (Re-tell answers will vary.)

### *Challenging*

1. Read Matthew 12:1-9 and find out what the day had been like for Jesus before the start of the passage. What is the significance of it being the Sabbath?

He had spent his day in the synagogue arguing with the Pharisees. It was the only day of the week when the people weren't working, therefore they had time to listen to Jesus. Matthew 12 tells us that... (students comment on what they found).

2. What question do the disciples ask Jesus? What did he answer? Why did he answer using a passage of Scripture?

They asked, "Why do you use nothing but stories when you speak to the people?" Jesus answered: "I have explained the secrets about the kingdom of heaven to you, but not to others." To help them to understand that this was written about long ago and is now happening.

3. What does Isaiah say about the people of Israel? Was Jesus indicating there was a change in the people's response over the following generations? How do we know that this is the word of God and not just words of a frustrated prophet?

He said that the people of Israel were stubborn: they can not see or hear no matter how much they listen. They were the same in His day: still not seeing who was in front of them. The prophet's words came true: this is always the proof of a true prophet.

4. What happened at the beginning of the first parable? Why do you think Jesus told a farming story? What kind of story would Jesus have used in our culture and times?

## Chapter 6: Parables

### 6.2 Kingdom Parables

A farmer scattered good seed in a field but while everyone was sleeping, an enemy came and scattered weed seeds in the field and then left. Jesus used stories about familiar things. Most of his listeners were farmers or fishermen. Jesus would use stories about things familiar to us: perhaps social media or cell phones.

5. Who was responsible for the weeds in the story? What are the weeds a symbol of? What purpose did the enemy have in doing that? How does this relate to the kingdom of God?

The enemy of the farmer. The weeds symbolize people who follow the evil one. He wanted to destroy the harvest of the farmer. The evil one wants to destroy the kingdom of God by placing his evil followers among us.

6. Why did the farmer in the story want to leave the weeds in the field? What spiritual parallels is Jesus making? What are some of the implications of this?

If they tried to pull up the weeds, they might destroy the crop. The weeds and the wheat could be sorted out after the harvest. God does not judge us now, but when the "harvest" comes, there will be a separation. Make sure you are in God's kingdom before it is too late.

7. What are the meanings of the mustard seed parable and the yeast parable? How do these two parables relate to the kingdom of God?

The kingdom starts small: Jesus had a few dedicated followers, but His Kingdom would encompass the world. Only a little yeast is needed: it is very powerful and can spread easily, just like the Kingdom of God.

8. Jesus has talked about bread in other places in the gospels. Can you think of some examples? What does bread often symbolize? Are there passages in the Old Testament where bread is mentioned?

Examples: Jesus called Himself "the Bread of Life" in John 6:35; Jesus spoke about bread on the boat in Matthew 16.

Bread symbolizes God's provision.

Example in Old Testament: Exodus 12:17 Celebrate this Festival of Thin Bread (Passover) as a way of remembering the day that I brought your families and tribes out of Egypt. And do this each year.

9. How would you define the Kingdom of Heaven? Summarize some of the significant things you have learned about it from these parables. Can you retell them in a modern context?

The Kingdom of Heaven is where Jesus Christ rules completely. Its citizens are those who love Him and listen to God. Not all people enter this Kingdom. Those who reject God and follow Satan will not enter. The Kingdom is and has been growing 'exponentially' with great power. The Enemy tries to interfere, but all will be sorted out on judgment day, when God's children will be gathered into the Kingdom of Heaven and His enemies will be destroyed. (Re-tell answers will vary.)

Chapter 7: Law  
7.1 The Mosaic Law

Law: 7.1 The Mosaic Law Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy

Timeline

|                     |   |                |
|---------------------|---|----------------|
| 2081 BC??           | God's covenant with Abraham                             | Genesis 15     |
| 2066 BC??           | Abraham's son Isaac is born                             | Genesis 21     |
| 2006 BC??           | Isaac's son Jacob is born                               | Genesis 25     |
| 1921 BC? - 1903 BC? | Jacob's 12 sons are born                                | Genesis 29-35  |
| 1875 BC?            | Jacob (Israel) and his family move from Canaan to Egypt | Genesis 46     |
| 1446 BC? - 1406 BC? | Moses leads the Israelites from Egypt back to Canaan    | Exodus 13-18   |
| 1406 BC?            | Death of Moses  | Deuteronomy 34 |

Source: Bible Timeline - Biblehub.com/timeline/#complete. All dates are approximate.

Background

Where is Mount Sinai?

Mount Sinai is also known in the Bible as Mount Horeb (Har Horeb) (aka Mount Horev).

1 Kings 19 says that when Elijah fled Jezebel, he went to Beersheba (in southern Israel), then he went a day's travel from there into the desert and that's where an angel gave him food and water. After that he travelled for 40 days and 40 nights until he came to Mount Horeb. Elijah took refuge in a cave there; and the Lord appeared to Elijah.

Paul speaks of Mount Sinai being in Arabia: "25 Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia ..." Gal. 4:25.

Many scholars think Mount Sinai is present day Jabal al-Lawz, a mountain in Saudi Arabia. This mountain is in what was once the ancient land of Midian, on the east side of the Gulf of Aqaba (the Sinai Peninsula is on the west side of the Gulf of Aqaba). Exodus says that Moses had fled to Midian after he killed the Egyptian slave master. His father-in-law was a priest in Midian.

The Tabernacle

The tabernacle was a place of worship which the Israelites built according to the instructions the Lord gave Moses. It could be taken down and carried by the Levitical priests (in ox carts and on men's shoulders) as they travelled during the Exodus. The word *tabernacle* is a translation of the Hebrew word *mishkan*, which means "dwelling-place".

## Chapter 7: Law

### 7.1 The Mosaic Law

When the Israelites finished building the tabernacle, all of it was anointed with olive oil. Burnt offerings were offered on the altar. Exodus 40 says that then the cloud of the Lord's presence covered the tabernacle and His glory filled it. Whenever the cloud lifted from above the tabernacle, the Israelites would set out to travel further on their journey. Whenever the cloud settled, the Israelites stayed in that place until the cloud rose again. The cloud of the Lord was over the tabernacle by day, and fire was in the cloud by night. It was in the sight of all the Israelites during all their travels.

The tabernacle tent was 10 cubits (4.6 m) wide and 30 cubits (15 m) long, and 10 cubits (4.6 m) high. It had a wooden frame, covered with gold. Each plank of the frame sat into a silver base. Its entrance was a curtain door hanging on 5 pillars; each pillar covered with gold. The entrance faced east. Embroidered curtains hung along the outside walls of tabernacle. The building was then covered with several layers of hides and cloth.

The first room was called the Holy Place. It was 20 cubits long (9.2 m) and 10 cubits across (4.6 m). In it was a golden lampstand (the menorah). It had three ornamented branches coming out of each side and a central shaft; each had a lamp on top of it, for 7 lamps. Each lamp was lit with olive oil. The menorah was made of solid gold.

There was also a table made of wood and overlaid with gold. Twelve loaves of fresh bread were placed on the table every Sabbath (the seventh day, the day of rest). The high priest's family would eat the bread at the end of the week when it was replaced. There was also a square incense altar 1 cubit (0.45 m) long, 1 cubit wide, and 2 cubits (0.9 m) high. It had horns as well and all of it was overlaid with gold. Incense was burned on it.

The second room was the Holy of Holies. It was a cube 10x10x10 cubic cubits. It housed the Ark of the Covenant. The ark was  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cubits long,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cubits wide, and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cubits high. Inside the ark were the two stone tablets on which the Lord had written the Ten Commandments; the rod of Aaron that had budded (Num. 17); and a pot of manna. Beside it was the original copy of the Torah that Moses wrote and placed there during the Exodus. The ark was made of wood covered with gold inside and out. It had a gold lid and on the lid were two gold cherubim with their wings held up and touching each other. This lid was called the mercy seat of God. The presence of God was in that room. It had a thick curtain in front of it.

The courtyard of the tabernacle was 100 cubits (46 m) long and 50 cubits wide (23 m). The fence around it was about 5 cubits (2.3 m) high. The fence curtains were made of fine woven linen. They were hung from silver hooks. The hooks hung from rods and the rods were mounted between pillars. Each pillar had an ornamental top of silver, a band of silver, and was set into a bronze base. The pillars were 5 m apart; 20 along the length, and 10 along the width. The pillars were held in place by cords and bronze pegs. The gate to the courtyard was 20 cubits long (9.2 m) and its screen was made of woven linen embroidered with blue, purple, and scarlet thread.

The altar was made of wood overlaid with bronze. It was 3 cubits (1.37 m) high, 5 cubits (2.3 m) long and 5 cubits (2.3 m) wide. There was a horn at each of its four corners.

Chapter 7: Law  
7.1 The Mosaic Law

Before you read:

1. Tell about a promise or an agreement that must not be broken.
2. What would happen if you break it?

Feel free to share your own experiences and encourage a few students to do the same. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked.

'What Do You Think'

**This** section is for students to speak freely. Not everyone needs to answer all the questions. It is to get them thinking and talking. Steer them back to the story if discussions get sidetracked.

Passage Questions

True or False

1. God called all the people up to the mountain to talk with them. \_\_F\_\_
2. God said that parents were not important. \_\_F\_\_
3. God told Moses that He would meet him between the cherubim. \_\_T\_\_
4. The tabernacle contained three rooms. \_\_F\_\_
5. God said He would never forgive the sins of His people. \_\_F\_\_

Matching: Match the word and the definition.

- |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. <u>__C__</u> worship     | A. to make something right after doing something wrong, by taking punishment |
| 2. <u>__E__</u> mediator    | B. perfect, healthy, and whole.  |
| 3. <u>__A__</u> atone       | C. show love by singing to, praying to and giving gifts to a god             |
| 4. <u>__B__</u> unblemished | D. to move something from one place to another                               |
| 5. <u>__D__</u> transfer    | E. someone who helps the relationship between two others                     |

Ordering: Number the following events of the story in the proper order.

- a. \_\_5\_\_ Moses told the people that the Lord would one day atone for their sins.

Chapter 7: Law  
7.1 The Mosaic Law

- b.   4   The Israelites made the tabernacle with two rooms in it.
- c.   2   God brought the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt.
- d.   3   God called Moses up to meet Him on Mount Sinai.
- e.   1   God told Abraham that he would have more descendants than could be counted.

## Discussion

### *Easier*

1. **What did God promise to give to Abraham?**  
God promised to give Abraham the land of Canaan, and more descendants than could be counted. He said that through those descendants all the nations of the earth would be blessed. God gave this promise to Isaac, and then to Jacob.
2. **How many Israelites went into Egypt? How many left Egypt?**  
The Bible says that 70 people of Jacob's family (Jacob, his sons and their wives and children, his daughter Dinah, and perhaps some servants). The Bible says that 600,000 Israelite men plus the elderly, women, children, and perhaps Egyptians who wanted to go with them left Egypt. (Scholars estimate that there were probably at least 2½ million people in the Exodus.)
3. **What did God give to Moses on Mount Sinai?**  
God gave Moses all the laws to govern the Israelites (ceremonial laws that regulated worship, civil laws for the structure of society; and moral laws.)
4. **Name two things the law told people to do and three things it told them not to do.**  
Do: respect parents; be faithful in marriage.  
Do not: worship other gods, make idols, misuse God's name, do work on the Sabbath, steal, murder, lie about people, want what belongs to others
5. **What do you think is the hardest law to obey?**  
Answers will vary
6. **What happened if someone disobeyed the laws?**  
There were penalties for breaking the law. For some laws the penalty was to make restitution for the wrong. Other laws required an animal to be sacrificed on the offender's behalf. Still other laws carried the punishment of banishment, or even death.
7. **How many rooms were in the tabernacle? What separated the rooms?**  
There were two rooms. (The first room was called the Holy Place. It housed the menorah, the table of showbread, and the incense altar). The second room was called the Holy of Holies; it housed the ark of the covenant. There was a thick curtain between the two rooms.



## Chapter 7: Law

### 7.1 The Mosaic Law

8. **Why were animals sacrificed in the courtyard of the tabernacle?** So the one who sinned could transfer their sins to the innocent animal; it died in their place
9. **Who was allowed to go into the Holy of Holies?**  
Only the high priest was allowed to go into that room. And he could only go in once a year (on the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur).
10. **Why do you think the ark of the covenant (promise) was covered with gold?**  
Answers will vary. Gold symbolized purity and was costly so this showed reverence for God. But also, gold does not react chemically with oxygen in the air or with water, so it wouldn't tarnish. Gold would preserve the ark. (King Tut's outer coffins were covered with gold. He died in 1323 BC and his outer coffin is still intact today. His inner coffin was made of pure gold.)

#### *Intermediate*

1. **What did God promise to Abraham?**  
God promised Abraham the land of Canaan, more descendants than could be counted, and that through those descendants all the nations on earth would be blessed. God also gave this promise to Isaac, and then to Jacob.
2. **What did God tell Abraham about his descendants?**  
God told Abraham that they would be strangers in a land not their own and would be enslaved and mistreated there for four hundred years.
3. **How long were the Israelites in Egypt? Why do you think they were there that long?**  
Genesis says 400 years, and Exodus says 430 years. (We don't have a good answer for the difference in time. There probably is a good reason, but we just don't know it yet.)  
Answers will vary on why they lived there so long. During that time the Israelites lived in good pastureland without being attacked by stronger nations. This allowed them to thrive; they grew from a tribe of 70 to a nation of over 600,000. And they picked up many skills from living in the great civilization of Egypt.
4. **God gave Moses laws for the Israelites to follow. What relationships did these laws govern?**  
These laws (10 commandments) governed the people's relationship with God and the people's relationships with one another.
5. **What were some of the punishments for breaking the law?**  
The punishment depended on the law broken. For some laws the violator had to make restitution (pay back someone whom they had cheated or damaged the property of (intentionally or otherwise - plus add 20% to the payment)). For other

## Chapter 7: Law

### 7.1 The Mosaic Law

laws they had to offer an animal sacrifice in their stead. For other laws they could be banished from Israel or killed (cut off from their people).

6. Which laws do you think would have been the most difficult to keep? Would you have broken them?

Answers will vary here.

7. Which laws did Jesus say were the most important ones?

Jesus said it was the law to love God and to love others.

8. What is the Pentateuch?

The five books of the Bible that Moses wrote: *Genesis*, *Exodus*, *Leviticus*, *Numbers*, and *Deuteronomy*. (Penta is Greek for "five".) These books are also known as the Torah.

9. What is the importance of Mount Sinai?

Mount Sinai is where God gave Moses the tablets with the 10 Commandments written down on them and the other laws as well. It's also the place where the Israelites heard the voice of God.

10. Who was allowed to come close to God?

At first only Moses was allowed. Later his brother Aaron and his two sons went up along with 70 elders of Israel, and Joshua. (There were eight ascents. On the first three ascents Moses went up alone. On the fourth ascent, God told Moses to bring his brother Aaron. On the fifth ascent, only Moses went up. On the sixth ascent God told him to bring Aaron again along with Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu, the seventy elders of Israel, and Joshua. Moses went up by himself on the seventh ascent and the eighth ascent.)

11. Describe the layout of the tabernacle.

The tabernacle was a tented building with two rooms. Between the two rooms was a thick curtain. The second room was called the Holy of Holies, and in it was the Ark of the Covenant. There was a courtyard around the tabernacle, and the altar of sacrifice was in that courtyard.

12. Why do you think the ark of the covenant (promise) was covered with gold?

Gold is rare and expensive and pure. It reflected the holiness of the Lord. It also would have preserved the ark, since it formed an impermeable coating (gold does not react with air or water). (King Tut's outer coffins were covered with gold. He died in 1323 BC and his outer coffin is still intact today. His inner coffin was made of pure gold.)

13. Who was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies? How did they enter it?

Only the high priest could enter this room. He could only enter it once a year on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). He entered with the blood of an animal that had

## Chapter 7: Law

### 7.1 The Mosaic Law

been sacrificed for the sins of the people. (He sprinkled this blood on the Ark of the Covenant. He also brought some of the burning incense into the room.)

#### *Challenging*

1. Why did people place their hands on the head of the animal they were offering?

This symbolized the transference of the sins of the one who brought the animal, from the person to the animal. The animal then died for the sins of the person.

2. A mediator is someone who brings people to agreement. How did Moses act as a mediator between the people and God?

Moses was the go-between between the Lord and the Israelites. The Israelites were afraid of the Lord and asked Moses to be the one who mediated between them. Moses conveyed the laws and commandments to the people. (Exodus 20:19 says the people said to Moses, "Speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God speak to us or we will die." Exodus 33:10 says, "The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend.")

3. How did the construction of the tabernacle show that God intended to use a mediator between Himself and His people?

Only the priests were allowed into the first room of the tabernacle. There was a thick curtain between the first room and the second room, the Holy of Holies. That is where God's presence was, and only the high priest could enter there, and only once a year - and that to offer the blood of the sacrifice for the sins of the people and of himself. (After Moses' death, the priests would become mediators, interpreting and teaching the law.)

4. In Deuteronomy 4, it states that at Mt. Sinai the Lord made the Israelites hear His voice: *"<sup>12</sup>and the Lord spoke to you from the fire. You could hear him and understand what he was saying, but you couldn't see him...<sup>13</sup>The Lord then said he was making an agreement with you...* What was the importance of Mount Sinai? Why do you think God wanted all the Israelites to hear His voice?

This is where God gave all the laws and commandments to Moses. This is also where the Israelites heard the voice of God.

All the Israelites then became witnesses of the covenant God was making with them. As witnesses they were responsible for keeping it. (This is unlike Islam, Mormonism, and other religions where one person claimed that god spoke only to him and everyone else was to take their word for it.) Also, hearing God's voice would have strengthened their faith. This was needed for the rest of the journey ahead of them and the conquering of Canaan. And it put their trust in Moses as their leader.

## Chapter 7: Law

### 7.1 The Mosaic Law

5. In Exodus 34 God says, *'I am the Lord God. the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, I am merciful and very patient with my people. I show great love, and I can be trusted. I keep my promises to my people forever, but I also punish anyone who sins...'* (Ex. 34:6-7).

**What qualities does God have that show that He wants us to know Him and to love Him?**

Answers here will vary. This passage says He is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, forgiving and just. The Lord had all the Israelites hear His voice when He was talking with Moses on Mount Sinai. He therefore wants people to know His character so that we might love Him.

6. **Why do you think God chose to use a mediator between Him and His people?**

Answers will vary here. A mediator brings opposing sides together to bring about a settlement. The Israelites (like us) were sinners and could not bridge the gap between themselves and the Lord on their own. They needed someone to do this for them. God chooses a mediator to bring this point home to them - they could not stand before His holiness on their own. Moses taught the Lord's laws and commandments to the Israelites. After Moses' death, the priests would continue to do this. Jesus is our mediator (Hebrews 9:11). It is only because of Jesus that we are able to stand before God, clothed in the robes of righteousness that Jesus gives us.

7. **How did God set apart the Israelites?**

He gave them a set of laws and commandments to govern themselves and by which to have a relationship with Him. He intended the Israelites to be a nation of priests, being mediators and witnesses to the pagans around them. He had them hear His voice - He said that no other people had done that. In this way He set them apart.

8. **What were the repercussions for the Israelites if they broke the laws?**

The punishment depended on the law broken. For some laws the violator had to make restitution (pay back someone whom they had cheated or damaged the property of (intentionally or otherwise - plus add 20% to the payment). For other laws they had to offer an animal sacrifice in their stead. For other laws they could be banished from Israel or killed (cut off from their people).

9. **Which laws do you think would have been the most difficult to keep? Would you have broken them?**

Answers will vary here. And there may not be much knowledge of those laws. But certainly, we all fail at consistently loving God with all our heart, soul, and strength. And we fail at loving our neighbour as ourselves.

10. **Some scholars think that God made his first promise to Abraham about 2081 B.C.; and that Jacob and his family moved to Egypt about 1875 BC; and that the Exodus**

## Chapter 7: Law

### 7.1 The Mosaic Law

from Egypt began around 1446 B.C. What do you think are some of the reasons why God moves over such long periods of history?

Answers will vary here. But because He moves over such long periods of history, His ways are documented over long periods of history. The Israelites recorded His involvement with them. His story was written throughout the Old and New Testaments showing the consistency of His character over thousands of years.

Chapter 7: Law  
7.2 The New Covenant

Law: 7.2 The New Covenant Gen., Lev., Deut., Jer., Matt., John, Rom., Gal., Heb.

Timeline

|          |   |   |
|----------|---|---|
| 1446 BC  | Moses leads the Exodus.   | Exodus 13-39  |
| 627 BC   | Jeremiah becomes a prophet  | Jeremiah  |
| 593 BC   | Ezekiel becomes a prophet in Judah  | Ezekiel   |
| 40 BC    | Judah becomes a province of Rome  | Luke 2  |
| 37 BC    | Rome appoints Herod the Great king of Judea   | Matthew 2, 24; Luke 1, 5, 9   |
| ~ 6 BC?  | Birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, Judea  | Matthew, Mark, Luke, John   |
| 4 BC     | Herod the Great dies. Herod's son Archelaus is ethnarch of Samaria, Judea, and Idumea       | Matthew 2   |
| 6 AD     | Roman prefects rule over Samaria, Judea, and Idumea   | Matthew 27; Luke 3, 14, 23, 24; Mark 15; John 18, 19; Acts 3, 4, 13; 1 Tim. 6 |
| 26-36 AD | Pontius Pilate is prefect of Judea  |   |
| 26 AD    | 15 <sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, John the Baptist begins his ministry | Luke 3  |
| ~26 AD   | Jesus is baptized by John the Baptist, and begins His ministry                              | Matthew, Mark, Luke   |
| ~30 AD   | Crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus   | Matthew 27, 28; Mark 15,16; Luke 23, 24; John 18-21                           |
| 70 AD    | Destruction of the temple and razing of Jerusalem by the Romans under Titus                 |   |
| 135 AD   | Romans plowed Jerusalem to the ground, and renamed Judea as Syria Palestine                 |   |

Sources: Bible Timeline - [Biblehub.com/timeline/#complete](http://Biblehub.com/timeline/#complete). All dates are approximate. Got Questions.org

## Background

### The Sacrificial System of the Mosaic law

Leviticus chapters 1 to 7 describe five types of offerings in the sacrificial system of the Mosaic law. When an animal was sacrificed, it had to be killed in such a way as to not cause pain to it. Each of these five types of sacrifice were "a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ" (Colossians 2:17). The sacrificial system was fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Jesus' atoning death on the cross was the only needed sacrifice for sin, offered once for all (Hebrews 10:1-10).

- Burnt offerings were a voluntary act to express commitment to God or to use as an atonement for unintentional sin. The offering was an unblemished male animal. It could be a bull, a sheep, goat, or a pigeon or dove. The whole animal was burned in the altar fire. The person bringing the animal laid their hands on the head of the animal. Lev. 1:4 said that this way the animal would be accepted on the man's behalf to make atonement for him. The hide of the animal was removed before the animal was burned. The hide was given to the priests who could later sell it to earn money.

In addition, the priest would offer a male lamb every morning and every evening as a burnt offering for the peoples' sins against God, and as a dedication of their life to God.

- Grain or meal offerings were a voluntary offering to express thanksgiving to God. The offering was made of fine flour mixed with oil. Unleavened baked good could also be offered. Part of the grain offering was burned with salt and incense on the altar. The remainder went to the priests.
- The peace or fellowship offering was a voluntary offering to express thanksgiving fellowship. It was symbolic of God's provision. The offering could be a male or female animal - an oxen, sheep, or goat. The fat and the organs of the animal were burned on the fire. This offering also included unleavened cakes. The breast and the right thigh of the animal was given to the priests. The rest of the animal could be eaten by the worshipper.
- Sin offerings were mandatory. They were to atone for sin and cleanse from defilement. The offering was an unblemished young bull, male or female goat, a dove or pigeon, or a grain offering. The type of animal sacrificed depended on the identity and wealth of the giver. The fatty portions, and the lobe of the liver, and the kidneys were burnt on the altar. The rest of the animal could be totally burned on the altar and the ashes thrown outside the camp to atone for the high priest and the congregation. But the rest of the animal could also be eaten within the courtyard of the tabernacle.
- Guilt or trespass offerings were a mandatory offering. The sacrifice was exclusively a ram (a male lamb or goat). This offering was given as an atonement for sins that

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required reimbursement to an offended person, such as shortchanging someone on a financial transaction. In this case the offender was to also repay the money taken plus an extra 20% of that amount. This offering could also be made as a cleansing from defiling sins or physical illnesses.

Sources:

- The 5 Levitical Offerings. *Bible History online*. [https://www.bible-history.com/tabernacle/TAB4The\\_5\\_Levitical\\_Offerings.htm](https://www.bible-history.com/tabernacle/TAB4The_5_Levitical_Offerings.htm) Retrieved January 2019
- "What were the various sacrifices in the Old Testament?". *Got Questions*. <https://www.gotquestions.org/Old-Testament-sacrifices.html> Retrieved Feb. 2019

### The New Covenant

In the last chapters of the book of Deuteronomy Moses has led the Israelites to the border of the land of Canaan and he addresses them before he dies (c. 1400 B.C.) In Deuteronomy 29:4 he tells the Israelites, "But to this day the Lord has not given you a mind that understands or eyes that see or ears that hear." In Deuteronomy 30:6 Moses tells them, "The Lord your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live."

Around 600 years before the birth of Jesus, the prophet Jeremiah spoke of the New Covenant to the people of Judah. Jeremiah 31: 31-34 says:

<sup>31</sup> "The days are coming," announces the LORD.

"I will make a new covenant  
with the people of Israel.

I will also make it with the people of Judah.

<sup>32</sup> It will not be like the covenant

I made with their people of long ago.

That was when I took them by the hand.

I led them out of Egypt.

But they broke my covenant.

They did it even though I was like a husband to them,"  
announces the LORD.

<sup>33</sup> "This is the covenant I will make with Israel  
after that time," announces the LORD.

"I will put my law in their minds.

I will write it on their hearts.

I will be their God.

And they will be my people.



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<sup>34</sup> They will not need to teach their neighbor anymore.  
And they will not need to teach one another anymore.  
They will not need to say, 'Know the LORD.'  
That's because everyone will know me.  
From the least important of them to the most important,  
all of them will know me,"  
announces the LORD.  
"I will forgive their evil ways.  
I will not remember their sins anymore."

The book of Hebrews contrasts the Mosaic Law with the New Covenant. Hebrews 7: 7-13 says that if perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood why did God speak of another priest to come in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron? It says that when the priesthood is changed (from Aaron) the law must be changed also. It says the former Mosaic Law was set aside because it made nothing perfect and the New Covenant brought in a better hope - one by which we draw near to God. It points out that Jesus is the guarantor of this covenant.

Hebrews 8: 7-13 tells us that by calling this covenant "new," God has made the Mosaic Law obsolete, and what is obsolete soon disappears.

Hebrews 9: 1-28 tells us, that in the Mosaic Covenant only the high priest could enter the inner room of the Temple - and only once a year - and only with the blood of a sacrifice; and he has to do this again and again. But Jesus, our high priest entered the perfect tabernacle- the one that is not made with human hands and is in heaven. He did so with His own blood, and in so doing gave us eternal redemption. And He did this once for all. This also set people free from the sins committed under the Mosaic Covenant. And when Jesus appears a second time, it will be to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

The book of Romans says that we died to the law through Christ, and because we died, we have been released from the law so that we can serve in the new way of the Spirit (7:4-6). It tells us that God's word is now in our mouth and in our heart (10:8). Romans 12 tells us how to live under the New Covenant - offering our bodies as a living sacrifice, being renewed in our minds, practicing our gifts, sharing with others, blessing those who persecute us, rejoicing with those who rejoice and mourning with those who mourn, etc. Romans 13 tells us that the commandments are "summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbour as yourself" ... "Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law" (13:9). And it tells us how to relate to

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government - paying taxes, respect, honor, paying our debts. Romans 14 tells us how to relate to weaker brothers and sisters in the body of Christ.

Before you read:

1. Is it easy or difficult to do what is right Can you give an example?

Feel free to share your own experiences and encourage a few students to do the same. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked.

'What Do You Think'

This section is for students to speak freely. Not everyone needs to answer all the questions. It is to get them thinking and talking. Steer them back to the story if discussions get sidetracked.

Passage Questions

Multiple Choice

1. Who could claim to perfectly please God?
  - a. the high priest
  - b. the people
  - c. Jesus
  - d. John the Baptist
2. The New Covenant
  - a. provided forgiveness of sins
  - b. makes us new people
  - c. retained the Mosaic laws
  - d. both a and b
3. Who told the people that God would atone for our sins?
  - a. Moses
  - b. Jesus
  - c. Jeremiah
  - d. all of the above
4. When Jesus died, He
  - a. took the punishment for our sins
  - b. brought in the New Covenant
  - c. fulfilled the Mosaic law of sacrifice
  - d. all of the above

OLD or NEW? Write 'Old' or 'New' beside each phrase that talks about covenants. The first one is done for you.

1. OLD A priest kills an 'unblemished' animal to cover a person's sin.
2. NEW Jesus allowed himself to be killed to take away people's sins.
3. OLD The high priest brings the blood of an animal into the Holy of Holies to atone for his own sin and for the people's.
4. OLD The priests were the mediators between the people and God.

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5. NEW Jesus is the mediator between people and God.
6. NEW People who accept Jesus as their High Priest can come into God's presence through his Holy Spirit.
7. OLD People please God by obeying a written law.
8. NEW People please God by listening to and obeying His Holy Spirit.

Fill in the blanks with the following words: *hell, substitute, atonement, fool, ancestors*

1. An innocent animal was the substitute for a man's life.
2. Hell is a terrible place that is separated from God forever.
3. To make atonement means to make things right by paying the penalty for bad behaviour.
4. A person who lacks good sense or judgment is a fool.
5. My parents, grandparents and their grandparents are all my ancestors.

### Discussion

#### *Easier*

1. Where was God's presence in the tabernacle?  
In the inner room, the Holy of Holies.
2. Who could enter this room? How often could he enter? What did he have to do first?  
The high priest. He could enter once a year, and he first had to sacrifice an unblemished animal for his sin and the people's.
3. Why were animals sacrificed in the old covenant?  
They were a substitute for the people who had sinned, so their sins would be covered.
4. What did Jeremiah say about the New Covenant?  
Jeremiah said that people would have the law written inside them on their hearts and minds. He said that God would forgive the people's sins and that His people would all obey Him.
5. Why did Jesus say it was best that he was going away?  
Jesus said that the Holy Spirit could not come to help his followers until he went away back to Heaven. Then the Holy Spirit would come and show the truth to them and help them to obey. (It is implied that this will happen for those who love Jesus and want to obey him, which is what the Holy Spirit is helping them do. )
6. Did Jesus deserve to die?  
Jesus was innocent of any wrong and did not deserve to die. He was fully God, and therefore perfect. God's voice came from Heaven calling him "My own dear Son" and

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saying, "I am pleased with you." He was 'unblemished' in every sense, more than the requirements for the unblemished animal substitute for people in the old covenant.

#### 7. Why did Jesus have to die?

Because Jesus was perfect, and without sin (blemish) then He alone could be the substitute to whom our sins could be transferred (the Lamb of God). His death also brought an end to the Mosaic Law and allowed for the change of priesthood and law.

#### 8. What happened to the curtain in the temple when Jesus died? What does this show us?

The curtain tore in two from top to bottom. This showed us that there was now no longer a separation between us and God; we can freely enter His presence. (Hebrews 10 tells us that we have confidence to enter the Holy of Holies because the blood of Jesus opened the curtain for us, and therefore we can draw near to God (Heb. 10:18-22).)

#### 9. How can we come into God's presence and know what pleases God?

(This is probably not clear to students from this lesson alone; last week's lesson has some of the information.) Just like the people under the Mosaic law would put their hands on the sacrificial animal, placing their sin on it, we must accept Jesus sacrifice for our sin. This means admitting that we have sin (confessing & repenting). Then the Holy Spirit teaches us and serves as our conscience if we are willing to listen. God's Word (the Bible) also teaches us; the New Testament and the Epistles give us the teachings of Jesus. The pastors of our churches teach us; and we also learn from others who have the Holy Spirit.

When we fail Him, we need to confess this to God, and He will forgive our sins and purify us (1 John 1:9) because the sacrifice is already made.

### *Intermediate*

#### 1. Describe how the tabernacle was made and what the priest's role in the tabernacle was.

The tabernacle consisted of two rooms, one behind the other. The inner room was called the Holy of Holies. (The first room was called the Holy Place.) The entrance to the Holy of Holies was covered with a thick curtain. Around the tabernacle was a courtyard (the fence was made of hanging curtains).

The priests offered sacrifices in the courtyard; a lamb every morning and evening, and animals that the people brought as sin offerings (this could be a bull, sheep, goat, or dove, depending on the giver's wealth - and an offering of grain was acceptable from the very poor. As well there were grain offerings from all people, some of which was burned on the altar and the rest given to the priests.)

#### 2. What commandments of the Mosaic Law were people unable to keep?

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They could not be holy as God called them to be. They could not have a pure heart and love God and others as God had commanded them to. They could not keep the inward obedience of the law as Jesus told them they were supposed to do - they did have anger in their hearts.

3. **It's been said that a mirror shows us that we have dirt on our face, but it cannot clean our face for us. How does that relate to the Mosaic Law?**

The Mosaic Law showed the Israelites how they were supposed to relate to others and to God, but they could not meet its standards. They had to sacrifice animals over and over again to atone for their failures. But these sacrifices could not make them holy nor purify their hearts.

4. **What did Jeremiah say about the New Covenant?**

He said that it would not be like the covenant He made with them during the Exodus (the Mosaic Law), rather He Himself would forgive their sins and forget the evil things they had done. Jeremiah said that people would have the law written inside them on their hearts and minds.

5. **Why did the Mosaic Law have to be fulfilled? Why could only Jesus fulfill it?**

The Mosaic law pointed to Jesus by continually emphasizing the sins of the people and the need for sacrifice; its demands could not be met by anyone other than Jesus and therefore had to be fulfilled by Jesus. Jesus could fulfill it because He was fully God and fully man. As God, He was perfect; as man, He could die in our place. The Mosaic Law also had to be fulfilled so that it could be ended and make way for the New Covenant.

6. **Why did Jesus' death on the cross allow the New Covenant to be brought in?**

He fulfilled the law by keeping it perfectly, and by taking the death sentence the law passed on us, onto Himself. The tabernacle and the priests were sprinkled with the blood of atonement when the Mosaic law started. Jesus sprinkled the New Covenant with His blood as He brought it in as the new priest of the better covenant.

7. **In Matthew 9:16 Jesus said, "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse." Some Christians think that they are supposed to still follow the Mosaic Law by not eating pork or shellfish, or by worshipping on Saturdays. Is this okay, or not? Why?**

Jesus is saying here that you can't patch Him as the Messiah onto the Mosaic law. That is, you cannot ignore the New Covenant and instead keep the Mosaic law with the addition of acknowledging Him as Messiah. Ephesians 7 said that when the priesthood was changed, the law must be changed also; the former regulation (the Mosaic law) was set aside. Romans 7 said we have been released from the law to serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code. Galatians 2 says that if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing. In Galatians 5, Paul said that circumcision was nothing. To hang on to the Mosaic law

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rather than to follow the New Covenant is actually a refusal to submit to God's plan for the fulfillment of the law in Jesus.

8. Ephesians 5 says, "1Follow God's example ...2and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us ...8For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light 9(for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) 10and find out what pleases the Lord" (Eph. 5:1-8).

- a. Some accuse Christians of being lawless. How can you answer that?

John 14:26 says that God sent the Holy Spirit in Jesus' name to teach us all things and to remind us of everything Jesus taught. Ezekiel 36:27 said that when God puts His Spirit within us, the Spirit will cause us to walk in God's ways. Philippians 2:13 says "For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose." The Spirit and the Word constantly tell us how to behave, how to think, and how to act.

- b. How do we learn to walk in a way that is pleasing to God?

We surrender our will to God by accepting that Jesus is our Saviour - the necessary atonement for our sins, and that Jesus is our Lord. The Holy Spirit will then start working on us. We also learn from the sermons in churches and from fellowship with other believers, and from Christian speakers and teachers.

- c. What happens when we fail God? Why? Did Jesus' disciples ever fail Him?

When we fail, we are to confess our failure and God will forgive and restore us (1 John 1:9). Jesus' disciples failed Him many times. Peter denied Jesus the night He was arrested. After His resurrection, Jesus went after Peter and restored him to serve Him.

9. What was the significance of the curtain of the temple being torn in two when Jesus died?

That curtain had covered the entrance to the Holy of Holies, where God's presence was. The tearing of the curtain showed that there was no longer a barrier between God and His people. We can freely come into God's presence. Ephesians 3:12 says, "In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence." Hebrews 10 tells us that we have confidence to enter the Holy of Holies because the blood of Jesus opened the curtain for us, and therefore we can draw near to God (Heb. 10:18-22).

### *Challenging*

1. Why were animals sacrificed in the tabernacle, and later in the temple? How did the sacrificial system in the Mosaic Law show God's grace?

From the time of Adam and Eve's fall, they were under the sentence of death, and so were their offspring after them. When Abel offered a lamb to God it may be because

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he realized that the lamb was a substitute for his life (being the first family he wouldn't have learned this from anyone else).

It was in the Mosaic law to offer unblemished animals as an atonement for sin.

This showed God's grace because He accepted the animals as an atonement and did not cut the Israelites off because of their frequent failures.

2. Hebrews 7 says, <sup>27</sup> *...Jesus doesn't need to offer sacrifices each day for his own sins and then for the sins of the people. He offered a sacrifice once for all, when he gave himself.* <sup>28</sup> *The Law appoints priests who have weaknesses. But God's promise, which came later than the Law, appoints his Son. And he is the perfect high priest forever* (Heb. 7: 27-28). **How does having Jesus as our High Priest change our access to God under the new covenant?**

By accepting Jesus as our High Priest, we have access to God forever through His eternal intercession for us. We are accepted by God because of Jesus' perfect final sacrifice.

3. The apostle Paul wrote: "<sup>18</sup> *...Even when I want to do right, I cannot... With my whole heart I agree with the law of God.* <sup>23</sup> *But in every part of me I discover something fighting against my mind, and it makes me a prisoner of sin that controls everything I do.* <sup>24</sup> *What a miserable person I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is doomed to die?*" (Rom. 7:18-24). **What was it that the apostle Paul wanted that the Mosaic Law couldn't give him?**

Paul wanted to be free of the control of sin. He realized that he wanted to do what was good, but sin was already there with him, making him its slave. He must have longed to be holy, to be able to come into the presence of God, for when He believed He passionately served Jesus with his life.

4. **Why was Jesus able to bring in the New Covenant?**

Jesus was able to fulfill the Mosaic law because He was perfect and without sin. He was perfect because He was God incarnate. After fulfilling it, it was finished. He was the final sacrifice for sin; nothing could repeat what He had accomplished.

When He died, the Mosaic law died with Him. (Heb. 7) Upon resurrection, He became a new priest in a new order (in the order of Melchizedek, not Levitical) and brought in a new law (Heb. 7).

5. a. **What did Jeremiah say about the New Covenant?**

Jeremiah said the New Covenant He made with Israel would not be like the covenant He made with them when He took their ancestors out of Egypt. Rather, in the New Covenant, He would forgive their wickedness and remember their sins no more. He also said the New Covenant would be written inside on people's hearts and minds.

- b. Hebrews 12:13 says of Jeremiah, "By calling this covenant "new," he has made the first one obsolete." Why did it have to be fulfilled before it could end?

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The law pointed to Jesus, so because of that it had to be fulfilled by Jesus. Also, the law was given by God, and so had to be fulfilled - because God's word cannot be broken, it could not just be randomly ended.

6. After His resurrection, Jesus spent 40 days with his apostles teaching them. Even when He ascended to Heaven, He still taught them. It was a hard learning curve for them at times. In Acts 10 Peter saw in a vision a large sheet containing all kinds of animals. Peter heard Jesus tell him, "Get up, Peter. Kill and eat." Peter said, "Surely not, Lord!", because many of those animals were forbidden under the Mosaic Law. But Jesus said, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean."

In Matthew 9:16 Jesus said, "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse."

In Galatians 2:21 Paul said, "I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!"

Many people try to mix the Mosaic Law with the New Covenant. Why do you think they try to do this? Why is it so hard for people to give up living under laws?

People have a natural inclination to want to follow laws. Perhaps this may give them a feeling of security (although it would be a false security) or a feeling of righteousness (self-righteousness) from having completed a check list of behaviours. And it may be an ingrained cultural practice. They may also fear that God's grace is too good to be true.

What they lack is a proper understanding of God's grace and Spirit. God's Spirit gives us the desire and the strength to seek to know His will and to carry it out; it teaches how to live in a way that pleases God. Ditto God's Word - Philippians 4:8 says, "...whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things." That is just one of the many teachings of the Bible.

7. Jesus said, "... the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you" (John 14:26). Ephesians 5 says, "<sup>1</sup>Follow God's example ...<sup>2</sup>and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us ....<sup>8</sup>For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light <sup>9</sup>(for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) <sup>10</sup>and find out what pleases the Lord" (Eph. 5:1-8).

- a. Some accuse Christians of being lawless. How can you answer that?

They do not know of, or don't understand, that the Spirit and the Word are constantly telling us how to behave, how to think, how to act. John 14:26 says that God sent the Holy Spirit in Jesus' name to teach us all things and to remind us of everything Jesus taught. Ezekiel 36:27 said that when God puts His Spirit within us, the Spirit will cause us to walk in God's ways. Philippians 2:13 says "For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose."



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**b. How do we learn to walk in a way that is pleasing to God?**

We learn this by being sensitive to the Spirit, by reading the Word regularly, by listening to good sermons, and fellowshiping with mature believers.

**c. What happens when we fail God? Why? Did Jesus' disciples ever fail Him?**

When we fail, we are to confess our failure and God will forgive and restore us (1 John 1:9). Jesus' disciples failed Him many times. Peter denied Jesus the night He was arrested. After His resurrection, Jesus went after Peter and restored him to serve Him.

