

DATE	2019-20 FPC GENTOREVEV WEEKLY LESSONS	TEXT / TBS GUIDE PAGE NO. REV 09/03/19 thebiblestudy.org
Sep 8	<i>Bible and Old and New Testament Introductions</i>	Various / p5
15	1. The Creator, Creation and Fall	Genesis 1-11 / p13
22	2. Covenant and Lineage	Genesis 12-50 / p21
29	3. Bondage, Freedom and Law	Exodus / p29
Oct 6	4. Sin, Sacrifice and Holiness	Leviticus / p37
13	5. Organization, Trials and Testing	Numbers / p45
20	6. Discipline and Obedience	Deuteronomy / p53
27	7. Conquering and Conquests	Joshua / p61
Nov 3	8. Justice and Deliverance	Judges, Ruth / p69
10	9. Governments of God and Man	1, 2 Samuel, 1 Chron. / p77
17	10. Man's Destruction and Exile	1, 2 Kings, 2 Chron. / p85
24	11. Return, Rebuild, Reform and Restore	Ezra, Neh., Esther, Job / p93
Dec 1	12. Worship, Wisdom, Preaching and Song	Psalms, Prov., Eccl., SS. / p101
8	13. Pointing Ahead to Christ, Judgment and Peace	Isaiah / p109
15	14. Pointing Ahead to Failure and Future	Jer., Lam., Ezk., Dan. / p117
Jan 5	15. Pointing Ahead to Hope and Promise	Hosea – Malachi / p125
12	16. The Savior, the Son of God	Matthew / p133
19	17. The Savior, the Son of Man	Mark / p141
26	18. The Risen Lord is our Savior Redeemer	Luke / p149
Feb 2	19. Salvation is for Believers	John / p157
9	20. The Holy Spirit and the Church	Acts / p165
16	21. Justification	Romans / p173
23	22. Love	1, 2 Corinthians / p181
Mar 1	23. By Grace through Faith	Galatians, Ephesians / p189
8	—Missions Sunday—	—Missionaries sharing—
15	24. Joy in Knowing Christ	Philippians, Colossians / p197
22	25. Waiting for Christ	1, 2 Thessalonians / p205
29	26. Gifts and Leadership	1, 2 Tim., Titus, Philm. / p213
Apr 5	27. Faith	Hebrews / p221
12	—Easter Sunday—	—No class—
19	28. Sanctification and Good Works	James, 1, 2 Peter / p229
26	29. Discerning Truth	1, 2, 3 John, Jude / p237
May 3	30. Glorification and Overcoming Evil	Revelation / p245
10	<i>Review</i>	Trinity, Maps and Outlines

FOREWORD

BY DR. LUDER G. WHITLOCK

To read the Bible is a good thing and a blessing. To know the Bible is far better but seldom achieved. It doesn't have to be that way and your participation in this 30-lesson overview of the Bible is a fine way to remedy that deficiency.

The Bible is God's word. It is a compilation of a collection of books into one that explains who God is and how you got here. It provides the information necessary for your redemption so that if you respond to its message in faith, you can be assured of everlasting life. As God's word, it is the final authority for what you believe and how you live, so you cannot afford to neglect its message any more than you can afford to neglect the fine print in a contract you sign.

One reason for mastering an overview of the Bible is that it enables you to understand the grand narrative and, with it, how God has developed His redemptive plan throughout human history, ultimately sending Christ into the world for your salvation. You not only know what happened and why but you have a clearer grasp of what the future holds.

As you know, there are many questions about what the Bible teaches and often disagreements occur among good Christians, not to mention the jibes and challenges from non-believers. When you have the big picture, as you should after completing this series, you will be much better equipped to know how to handle those matters. You will know where to go to find the answers and have a clearer sense of how important those may be in comparison to the whole counsel of God. After all, it is His plan and His message that you must understand if you hope to please Him and the place to begin is through your commitment to get the big picture.

If you are diligent through this overview you will not regret it. You will be in a much better position to serve the Lord knowledgeably and faithfully.

DR. LUDER G. WHITLOCK, JR. is president emeritus of Reformed Theological Seminary and author of the new book, *Divided We Fall: Overcoming a History of Christian Disunity*, (2017). He was executive director of the *Spirit of the Reformation Study Bible* and served on the editorial council of Eternity Advisory board for the *English Standard Version of the Bible*.

INTRODUCTION

GENESIS TO REVELATION

God inspires His all-time best-selling book, the Bible, explicitly to relate to His created men, women, boys and girls who bear His image. In it—from the very beginning of earth and creation—He documents the earliest history of His created world, to the Bible’s last book which gives us visions of eternity with Him.

Genesis 1 begins, *“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light.”* Thus began the world. But more importantly, through the Bible God draws all mankind—including you—to Himself through the Light and Word—Jesus Christ. Your Bible includes the world’s history, purpose and future.

GOD’S WORD IS A ROADMAP FOR YOUR LIFE

The whole-Bible story is best learned in its order; the themes understood in a contextual building process—from Genesis to Revelation. With this inter-denominational, inductive study, you can learn the major themes with corresponding book names and study many key scripture points that support them.

You might additionally plan to read through the whole Bible—perhaps in a summer—and personally learn the key scriptures for your discussions and memory. The more we learn about our Creator and Savior, the more we want to hear His plan for our lives.

CONSIDER what you know and think about the Bible and God. Do you wish to know more about who created you? What about the possibility of learning more about what God may have planned for your own life? Consider using this opportunity to learn about the Old Testament Father, Creator, Provider, and Sustainer of our forefathers in Christ. Consider how the Father sent His Son, God’s second “person” Jesus Christ, to visit earth as your Lord, to teach us in the four Gospels about life eternal, and to offer you salvation in Him. Consider how Jesus promised His disciples the third “person” of God—His Spirit demonstrated in Acts and the Letters—to follow after Him on earth as our Counselor and Guide in this personal salvation. And finally, consider the visions of the eternal Heaven that Christ shows you in Revelation. This adventure is the outline of your whole-Bible study.

You may want to establish personal learning goals for your journey through the Bible using these 30 key themes and corresponding study lessons. These weekly lessons include home-study questions which are the basis for your journal and small-group discussion. Pray, read and complete these questions (based on the English Standard Version), in order to be fully prepared for sharing and learning together.

Following your questions, a summary is provided that ties together the lesson's themes for that book or group of books. Together in a building process, these themes and lessons demonstrate the overall point of what God is doing in that part of history. These steps will strengthen your personal belief and growth. If you are in a class or Bible study group, you should extend your learning through active discussions and in fellowship. This 30-theme lesson Guide is designed for both personal and group studies, in class or small-group settings. It will be a basis for later in-depth studies of each book.

STUDYING THE BIBLE

From the beginning of time God has guided us to learn His words—the basic laws for all times (Deut. 11:18-25). In God's planned timing, Jesus, the Word of God incarnate, completed for us the law (Gal. 4:4) for "*a people prepared,*" (Luke 1:17).

The writer of Hebrews describes the Word as "*living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword,*" (Heb. 4:12). The Bible is the only book that contains living words, can pierce our soul and judge our thoughts, by which all men and women will be judged, and that gives us the keys to eternal life.

Luke records of Jesus, "*Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,*" (Luke 24:45).

Many of us have found the Bible to be somewhat difficult to completely understand on our own, so we depend mainly on others to "tell us about it." Paul says, however, that "*For we are not writing to you anything other than what you read and understand and I hope you will fully understand,*" (2 Cor. 1:13).

Paul thus tells us that God gave us His written word so that we can read it and understand it. In doing so, we can allow the Spirit to use that knowledge to transform our lives. And the value of knowing scripture, Paul told Timothy, is that as you learn you become convinced, receive wisdom, and are led to salvation. The words you read are all inspired by God for teaching, reproof, reform, and equipping mankind for good works (2 Tim. 3:14-17).

Interpretative Principles for Your Study

1. **Hebrew and Greek**—the Bible Old Testament origins were Hebrew. We speak English and are "Western," like the Greek culture and language. So we tend to think "Greek," missing much of the Eastern-written Hebrew meanings. Hebrew is and was an "Eastern" language like Asian languages today and is written and spoken using illustrations, or word-pictures (e.g., "*the early bird gets the worm*"). Greek is a Western language with concrete, literal and descriptive phrases, like English today (e.g., "*the first person to arrive will have the advantage*").

2. **Literary Forms**—writers and early oral “tellers” of the Bible used various literary forms to tell the messages; i.e., poetry, prose, news or journalism, imagery, symbolism, illustrations, etc.
 3. **Literal Interpretation in Context**—literal interpretation of the surrounding context is key to understanding what God is asking us to learn in any specific text. We should follow typical rules of grammar, context, syntax, and literary style, listening for God’s explanation and plan.
 4. **Scripture Interprets Scripture**—scripture is not in conflict with scripture, but helps us understand from different perspectives. It is dangerous to attempt to interpret scripture with science, modern history, philosophy, or any other self-driven human work.
 5. **Explicit Interprets the Implicit**—always use the “explained” passage to understand the “implied” passage of the same topic, using scripture for cross-references.
 6. **Limitation Principle**—the Bible does not tell us everything about everything, as science (and our Greek-trained minds) would want. The Bible tells us what God wants us to know, and no more. It focuses on relationships between God, us, and others.
 7. **Historical Principle**—the message should be seen in relation to its context in God’s redemptive plan. It is very dangerous to take verses out of their context. A Genesis-to-Revelation study helps us see the narrative message.
 8. **Jesus Christ is the Key**—Jesus said to His followers, *“These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”* Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,” Luke 24:44-45. (See also John 5:39, 46-47.)
-

THE BIBLE IS A BOOK AND A LIBRARY

The Bible is both one book and a whole library—with a single narrative story. God Himself narrates this 66-book story—which is our history and future with Him. His story is our history and becomes our personal journey. He first appears as our Father in the Old Testament, directly speaking to our patriarchs and prophets who are the inspired writers (see Appendices I-IV, pages 253-255).

In the Gospels God again appears personally in His “second person” as Christ the Son of God who speaks directly and inspires the Gospel writers (see Appendices V and VI, pages 256-257). He acclaims Himself the Messiah King. At the end of the Gospels Christ promises God’s “third person” and appears as the Holy Spirit—our Counselor and Guide.

The Old Testament—the first 39 books—are His “preparation” of His earth and man to receive Him personally. The Hebrews writer says, *“Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,”* (Heb. 1:1).

The New Testament’s 27 books begin with the four Gospels when Christ acclaims Himself the Son of God, Savior, Messiah, King. Acts, and the 22 letters are the “completion” of God’s redemptive plan for man. Heb. 1:3 continues, *“but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by*

the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

Paul writes, *“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’”* (Gal. 4:4-6).

Christ says to His apostles, *“I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. ‘I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you,’”* (John 16:7b-15).

The final chapter of the Bible, Revelation 22, Jesus concludes the Bible text through John’s writing, saying, *“I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.”* He extends His invitation in love saying, *“The Spirit and the Bride say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who hears say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price,”* (Rev. 22:17).

1. Read Deut. 11:18-25—Learning God’s Words

From the beginning of time God has guided us to follow His Word and learn His laws for all times. Moses had the responsibility of sharing God’s Word with the people of Israel.

- a. What are some of the ways they learned His words?

- b. How in these times might you benefit from knowing His words?

2. Read 2 Cor. 1:12-14—Understanding God’s Words

Paul writes to the Corinthians that *“we write nothing else to you than what you read and understand, and I hope that you will understand to the end.”*

- a. How does earthly wisdom differ from wisdom that is by the grace of God? (See also Heb. 13:7-9.)

- b. What is God’s ultimate purpose in Paul’s desire for them? What do you think “the day of our Lord Jesus” means?

3. Read 2 Tim. 3:14-17—Continuing in God’s Words

The value of knowing scripture, Paul told Timothy, is that as you learn you become convinced, receive wisdom, and are led to salvation.

- a. How do you think the Bible might make you *“wise for salvation”*?

- b. In what ways do you think knowing Scripture might be useful throughout your life? Why? (See verses 16 and 17.)

THE CREATOR, CREATION AND FALL

GENESIS 1 - 11

The opening of Genesis shows us how such a great and powerful God over the universe begins His relationship with man and woman as His “crown of creation.” God made them in His own image and over His perfect creation. But then, their selfish rebellion leads all of mankind into a desperate need for God’s forgiveness and redemption.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Read Gen. 1:1-4 and John 1:1-5, 14—God Is the Triune Creator

- a. Who created the heavens and the earth? (See 1:1-2.) Who besides the Spirit was with God at Creation? (See John 1:1-5, 14.)

- b. What was the first thing created that the Creator told us was and is “good”? (See 1:3-4.) What did Jesus call Himself in John 8:12? How do we receive goodness and redemption through Jesus?

2. Read Gen. 1:26-29—God Gave Man and Woman Relationship with Himself, Others and Earth

- a. Describe God’s relationship with man and woman before and after the rebellion. (See 3:8-19 and 5:1-5, 22-23, 32.)

- b. Describe God’s intended relationship for man with the earth and animals.

3. Read Gen. 2:1-8—Man and Woman Created

- a. How did God form man and woman, giving them life? (See also 2:18-23.)

- b. What three kinds of trees were in the Garden of Eden, cited in verse 9? What two specific trees are cited in verse 9? Which tree is everlasting? (See Rev. 22:1-2.)

- c. Which tree is prohibited? (See also 2:15-17.) What does God expect of man? Why? (See also 1:26-27.)

4. Read Gen. 3:1-7 and 4:1-7—Man and Woman Fell into Sin, But Are Promised Redemption

- a. What were the root causes of the temptation and fall? (See also 3:13, James 1:12-15 and Rev. 12:7-12.)

- b. Why did God “punish” them for disobedience? How might the curse of the serpent have led to the redemption offer for all mankind? (See John 8:44 and Rom. 16:19-20.)

- c. What did God offer woman and man as paths toward redemption? (See 3:14-19.) Who is “He” in verse 15?

- d. Compare God’s sacrificial expectations of Cain and Abel, and their responses (4:1-5). How does sin “crouch at the door?” (See also 1 Peter 5:6-11.)

- e. What guidance does God give Cain in verses 6-7? Why?

5. Read Gen. 6:5-22 and 8:20-22—God Saw the Faith of Noah and Gave Redemption

What two things did Noah build? (See 6:14-22 and 8:20-22.) Why did God protect and treat Noah differently than all the rest of mankind? (See Heb. 11:7.) Why and how did God treat his family?

6. Read Gen. 9:18-27, 10:6-20, 11:1-9—God Divided Nations and Languages

a. What generational consequences do Shem, Ham, and Japheth illustrate? (See 9:18-27.) What did Ham do that displeased God? How did God respond? (See 10:6-20.) What was the future for Ham’s descendants and lands of Canaan, Sodom, Gomorrah, Philistia and Gaza?

b. At the Babel tower, how did men try to be like gods? What did man do before and at the tower? (See 11:4.) What two things did God do?

COVENANT AND LINEAGE

GENESIS 12 - 50

Genesis shows us how the God over the entire universe begins His relationship with His created mankind. As men and women are constantly tempted in sin, they hear directly from their Creator-Redeemer. Beginning with chapter 12, God covenants with men and women an offer of divine relationship, and provides a protected lineage to enact and sustain that relationship leading to life in Christ.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Read Gen. 12:1-4—God Blessed Abram with a Covenant to be a Blessing to the Whole World

- a. What things did God promise all mankind through the covenant with Abram (12:1-3)? What special role did Abram receive? His family?

- b. Does God really care about His creation? All people? You?

- c. What was Abram's response? (See 12:4) What is our role in this covenant?

2. Read Gen. 15:1-6, 18-20 and 16:1-4, 15—Sarai and Abram Disobeyed God

- a. Describe God's plan for Sarai and Abram's family. What did Sarai and Abram do outside of God's plan? (See also 17:1-21, 18:9-14.)

- b. What is meant by "limited freedom"? Why does God give us limits? (See also Rom. 3:9-12, 19-26.)

- c. What names did God change and why? (17:5, 15) How did God use circumcision in His plan of redemption? What similar sign of faith does He use today? (See 1 Peter 3:18-22 and Col. 2:11-12.)
-

3. Read Gen. 18:17-26, 19:14-17, 23-29—God Separated His Righteous from the Wicked

- a. Why did God separate His lineage from others?
-
- b. What was Sodom's wicked practice? How might that have hurt God's plan for Abraham's family to be a blessing?
-
-

4. Read Gen. 21:1-7 and 26:3-6—Abraham and Sarah Bore Isaac, Received God's Blessing

- a. How did God's plan with Isaac ultimately succeed over the family's selfish human failings?
-
-
- b. What roles did Sarai (Sarah), Abram (Abraham), Hagar, Ishmael, and Isaac play? (See 21:12-21, 26:1-5.)
-
-

5. Read Gen. 22:1-13—Abraham and Isaac were Faithfully Obedient

- a. How did God test Abraham's faith?
-
-
- b. How did God use Isaac to confirm His covenant promises to Abraham and Sarah? (See also Heb. 11:17-20.)
-

- c. Compare 22:1-13 with Matt. 27:43-50. In each passage, who is the father, the only son, the sacrifice, and the Lamb of God?

6. Read Gen. 30:1-7 and 35:9-12, 22-29—Jacob and the 12 Tribes Were God's Lineage for Blessings

- a. How did God's plan unfold for Israel as a nation?

- b. How would he use these 12 brothers and their families to advance the covenant? (Read Stephen's summary in Acts 7:1-16.)

- c. How did Joseph forgive his brothers? (See 45:4-5.) How did God achieve confession for forgiveness? (See 45:13.)

- d. What role might God give you today in sharing His blessings with all the families of the earth? (See Acts 3:24-26.)

BONDAGE, FREEDOM AND LAW

EXODUS

God, in a rescue act complete with drama and thrill, in Exodus leads His people out of sinful captivity—bondage—toward a promised place of freedom, justice and protection. After 400 years of bondage in Egypt, Israel was ready to leave the chains of slavery and seek its covenant-promised homeland as a new, holy nation of God.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Read Ex. 1:1-14 and 2:23-3:12—Israel Was Strong but Cried Out Under Egypt's Bondage

- a. How did Israel's bondage and cries to God make them stronger? (See 1:11-14 and 2:23.)

- b. Read 2:1-14. As God protected His lineage in Egypt, how did God use the evil king's daughter for good? Why Moses? (See 3:1-12.)

2. Read Ex. 4:1-12—Moses Gave Excuses While God Persisted and Equipped Him for the Exodus

- a. What were Moses' excuses? (See 4:1, 10.)

- b. What were God's three miracles, or "signs," for Moses to use to convince his detractors? (See 4:2-9.)

3. Read Ex. 6:1-13, 7:1-6—God Promised Deliverance and Cursed Egypt with Ten Plagues

- a. God cursed Egypt with plagues even as He blessed Israel (Scan 7-11). How do these events fulfill the covenant with Abraham? (Read Gen. 12:3 and compare Ex. 12:12-13.)

- b. As Moses pleaded to Pharaoh, "*Let my people go,*" Pharaoh was warned and briefly repented for Egypt before God (9:27-35). Do you think God hardens people's hearts? If so, how?

- c. How did God "pass over" and save His chosen followers? (See 12:12-13, 29-30 and 13:17-14:4.)

4. Read Ex. 12:1-7 and 16:1-7—Freedom Was Given for Israel and Passover Commemorated

- a. Compare the Passover in Egypt to God's sacrifice and memorial for our salvation in Christ's death. (Compare 12:26-28, 43-50 with 1 Cor. 11:23-26.)

- b. When God fought off Israel's enemies and they were devoured by the Red Sea, what was Israel's response in 14:31 and 15:1-18? What is your favorite line in the song?

- c. How did future generations remember God's protection and deliverance at the Red Sea? (See Josh. 4:19-24.)

5. Read Ex. 15:22-27, 16:4-8—The People Complain

- a. How many days into "freedom" did the people complain of thirst? What did God provide and what were His "tests"?

- b. In 16:4-8, what did God provide the people for their hunger and how did they respond? What lessons were they learning from God?

6. Read Ex. 18:8-23; 19:5-8; 20:1-20—Judges and Laws were Instituted for Justice and Order

- a. When Moses told Jethro about God's provisions, the peoples' disputes, and their interests in God, what was Jethro's reaction to God's faithfulness? (See 18:12.)

- b. What was Jethro's advice for statutes, laws, justice and peace? (See 18:19-23.)

- c. Compare the first nine Commandments (20:1-16) to the tenth (20:17). What is different about the tenth that makes it less visible and less accountable to others, and thus harder?

- d. What three purposes does Moses tell the people about God's laws? (See 20:20.) Compare Christ's purposes for today (See 1 Tim. 1:8-11 and Rom. 3:19-20.)

SIN, SACRIFICE AND HOLINESS

LEVITICUS

In Genesis and Exodus, God created His people in His image, taught them about sin and selfishness, cursed evil when they were tempted, gave them a covenant of redemption, freed them from bondage, and gave to them laws and justice. In Leviticus we see how God, as part of this covenant redemption, sets apart His people to know and follow Him through sacrificial selflessness and a new, sanctified walk.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Read Lev. 1:1-4 and 7:37-38—God Taught Sacrifice as a Way to be Holy

- a. What kind of offering were the Israelites to bring? (See 1:3.) What is the purpose of God accepting the offering? (See 1:4.) Using a dictionary, define atonement.

- b. What are the main types of sacrificial offerings? (See 7:37-38.) When and where did God command these offerings?

2. Read Lev. 4:1-3, 20-26, 31-35 and Heb. 7:22-28—Priests Made Atonement in Sin Offerings

- a. What were priests' roles in Israel's sin offerings? (4:1-3, 20.)

- b. Compare Jesus' role in being your "permanent high priest." (See Heb. 7:22-28.) When did His sacrifice occur? (See 7:27.)

3. Read Lev. 11:1-8, 44-47—God Protected Health by Designating Healthy Foods and Practices

- a. How did God protect Israel in diet? (See 11:44-47.) From contagious disease? (See 13:45-46.)

- b. What things do you think nomadic Israel gained from God’s dietary and health restrictions? (See 11:44.)

- c. How today can we be holy? What are our sacrifices? (See Rom. 12:1-2.)

4. Read Lev. 16:6-10, 30-34—Aaron Offered a Bull and Two Goats as Sacrifices and Scapegoat

- a. What was the Atonement Day and what was its purpose? (See 16:30-34.)

- b. For what purposes were the bull and first goat sacrificed? (See 16:16.)

- c. What is the purpose of the live scapegoat? (See 16:21-22.) How is Christ our “live scapegoat”? (See Luke 24:45-48.)

- d. How is Christ our high priest and sacrifice? (See Heb. 9:11-22.) Our eternal redeemer and mediator of a new covenant?

5. Read Lev. 17:1-5—Israel to Make Tent Offerings

Why do you think God made the public tent the place for sacrifice and forgiveness?

6. Read Lev. 17:10-12, Heb. 13:20 and 1 John 1:7— Only Blood for Sacrifice; Life Is in the Blood

a. How was blood the symbol of Israel's sacrifice? (See 17:11.)

b. What is the eternal covenant? (See Heb. 13:20.)

c. What does it mean to "walk in the light in fellowship with Jesus"? (See 1 John 1:7.)

7. Read Lev. 25:1-12—Sabbatical and Jubilee Years

a. What explicitly did the people do in the 6 years and not do in the 7th year? What purposes do these "Sabbath rests" have?

b. What do they do and not do in the 50th year? (See 25:8-22.)

ORGANIZATION, TRIALS AND TESTING

NUMBERS

In Numbers God equips, leads, and teaches His people to trust and follow Him. From Mt. Sinai to the border of Canaan, they faced trials in a new, sanctified, stronger walk. Blessed to be a blessing to the world, Israel must become the holy nation that God promised.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Read Num. 1:1-4 and 2:1-2, 17, 32-34—God Ordered a Census and Organized Camp

- a. Why did God order the numbering of His people? (See also 26:1-4, 51-56.)

- b. How was the camping to be organized by each tribe? (See 2:1-2.) What and who would be at the center? Why? (See 2:17, 32-34.)

- c. What were roles and responsibilities of the Levites? (See 3:5-10.) What is our “priesthood” role today? (See 1 Pet. 2:5, 9.)

2. Read Num. 5:5-7, 6:1-5, 13-15 and 30:1-4—Confession and Vows Instituted

- a. What constituted sin and confession? (See 5:5-7). What constituted restitution?

- b. Why do you think God instituted vows? (See 6:1-5, 13-15 and 30:1-4.) Why the specific vows for the Nazirites? (See also Judges 16:13-18.) What are some of our symbols of vows today?
-
-

3. Read Num. 11:1-9, 16-18—God Provided Help for His Grumbling People

- a. In what physical ways does God provide for His people? (See 11:1-9 and 14:7.)
-
- b. What organization and leadership did God provide? (See 11:16-18 and 13:1-3.) What is the Spirit's role? (See 11:17.)
-

4. Read Num. 14:1-9 and 14:20-24—God Gave Joshua and Caleb a Different Spirit

- a. What did Joshua and Caleb say about the land of Canaan where God was leading them? (See 14:6-9.)
-
- b. What was different about Caleb's spirit? (See 14:6-9, 24.)
-
- c. What happened to the "naysayers"? (See 14:36-38.)
-
- d. What roles did Joshua and Caleb play? (26:63-65, 27:15-20 and Josh. 1:1-3.)
-

5. Read Num. 20:2-12—God Said "*Tell the Rock,*" but Moses Struck the Rock Instead

- a. What were Moses and the people quarreling about? (See 20:2-5.)
-
- b. What did God ask Moses to say or do? (See 20:8-9.) How did Moses respond? (See 20:10-11.)
-

- c. How did God respond to Moses' lack of faith? (See 20:12.)
When later did Moses appear in the promised land? (See Matt. 17:1-5.)
-
-

6. Read Num. 25:1-18, 10:6-20, 11:1-9—God Exercised Vengeance through His War Against Sin

- a. How did God use war as an instrument of His vengeance against the sins of the Midianites? What were Israel's sins? (See 25:1-5.)
-
-
- b. Is God just in avenging sin among His people? (See 25:8, 12-13.) Does God stage war against sin today? How?
-
-

7. Read Num. 33:50-56—God Promised Land Grants as Faithful Reminder of the Covenant

- a. What two things specifically did God want removed as they entered and received land? (See 33:52.) Why? (See 33:55.)
-
-
- b. How does this relate to God's covenant promise to Israel? (See Gen. 17:6-8.)
-
-

DISCIPLINE AND OBEDIENCE

DEUTERONOMY

Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers together narrate Israel’s 40 years of wandering and distrust of God’s plan and provisions, after God sent His people to complete their covenant mission—to be a blessing for the world. In Deuteronomy—which means “second telling of the law”—Moses reviewed in three sermons God’s plan for His people and gave guidance, passionately reminding them of their covenant mission.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Read Deut. 1:1-8 and Num. 33:50-56—Moses Reminded Israel of God’s Laws and Plan

- a. How long had they traveled compared to the actual distance? (See 1:2-3.) What instructions did Moses give on November 1 of the 40th year after the Exodus? Where were they to go and why? (See 1:6-8 and Num. 33:50-56.)

- b. How had Israel grown since going into Egypt as 70 people of Jacob’s family? (See Deut. 1:8-11 and Gen. 15:5-6.)

2. Read Deut. 3:18-22—God Provided a Military Plan and Family Protections

- a. Describe God’s plan for military “valor” and troops to claim the promised land. (See 3:18.)

- b. How did God’s plan protect the families and possessions? (See 3:19-20.)

3. Read Deut. 4:1-14 and 11:18-25—Israel Forgot and Ignored its Laws and Statutes

- a. How many of the laws were the people to know and obey? (See 4:1-2.) Compare 4:2 with Rev. 22:18-19.

- b. What benefits would the laws and statutes give Israel? (See 4:6-8.)

- c. How would future generations teach and receive the laws? (See 4:9-14, 6:6-9 and 11:18-25.)

4. Read Deut. 4:15-19—God Commanded Against Idols, Nature Worship and Astrology

Describe the kinds of idolatry with which the world and Satan might tempt God's people.

5. Read Deut. 9:1-6—God Drove out Wickedness in His War Against Sin and Evil

Why did God's covenant plan need to remove the native inhabitants of Canaan? What is the moral warning God gave His people and why? (See 9:4-6.)

6. Read Deut. 14:22-29—God's People were Taught to Tithe Offerings to Their Provider

- a. Who chose the place God's people would tithe? (See 14:23.)

- b. For what four reasons connected to God were they to tithe? (See 14:23, 29.) How might these apply today?

7. Read Deut. 24:1-5—God Gave Laws for Marriage and Honeymoons

How do you think healthy marriages strengthened Israel's communities, families and nation? Why were the certificates and reasons necessary?

8. Read Deut. 28:1-24—God Distinguished Obedience from Disobedience

- a. What were God's blessings of obedience? (See 28:1-14.)

- b. What were some of God's curses of disobedience? (See 28:15-24.)

9. Read Deut. 30:15-20 and 32:44-47—Moses Urged the People to "Choose Life"

How do we choose life and good over death and evil? What were Moses' final words to Israel?

CONQUERING AND CONQUESTS

JOSHUA

In the book of Joshua God leads His people from the banks of the Jordan River into Canaan—personally and collectively—in a war against sin. Together, they are striving toward the covenant plan of being blessed by God and becoming a blessing for the whole world.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Read Josh. 1:1-9 and Gen. 12:1-4—Joshua Assumed Leadership for the Covenant Passage

- a. How does God's call of Joshua to lead His people compare to that of Abraham?

- b. Compare Abraham's response (Gen. 12:4), Joshua's response (Josh. 1:10-11), and Israel's response (1:16-18).

- c. Compare also Moses' call (Ex. 3:4-10) and responses (Ex. 3:11, 13, 4:1, 10 and 13.) Consider also Deut. 34:4.

2. Read Josh. 2:1-14—God Used Rahab's Position and Testimony to Take Jericho

- a. Describe Rahab's occupation, reputation and connection to the king. (See 2:1-3.)

- b. Describe Rahab's belief and faith in Israel's God. (See 2:8-13 and 6:15-17, 22-25.) Describe her salvation. (See also Matt. 1:5.)
-
-

- c. Do you think Rahab's falsehoods and cover ups were sins or faithfulness? (See 2:3-7.) Why? How did God use her?
-

3. Read Josh. 3:5-11 and 4:4-7—The Ark of the Covenant and Memorial Stones Were Symbols

- a. How did God use the Ark of the Covenant and Moses' Laws to strengthen and remind His people through this Jordan River passage? (See 3:3-11, 16-17.)
-

- b. How were the Memorial Stones used for signs of each tribe? For teaching future generations? How do the Red Sea and Jordan River crossings compare? (See 4:19-24.)
-

4. Read Josh. 5:1, 13-15—God Melted Spirits of Local Kings, and Commander of Army Appears

- a. How did God prepare for Israel to take control of the Promised Land?
-

- b. Were the people prepared to win control on their own? (See also Deut. 3:18-22.)
-

- c. Who do you think is the "Commander of the Lord's Army"? Compare with Ex. 3:5.
-

5. Read Josh. 6:18-19 and 8:20-22—Faith was Broken; Israel Defeated at Ai

- a. What was God's instruction for the spoils of Jericho? (See 6:18-19, 24.)
-

- b. What did Achan do, and what was God's reaction? (See 7:1, 10-13.) Read Joshua's reaction and Achan's confession. (See 7:19-21.)
-

- c. Do you think God hates sinful people or sin itself? In Jericho and Ai, was God at war with people or at war against sin?
-

6. Read Josh. 8:24-28, and 12:7-24—Israel Defeated Ai, All of South and North Canaan

- a. Read also 8:30-35. How did Joshua strengthen God's people for the war against sinful Canaan?
-
-

- b. Read also 11:6-8. How did God counsel Joshua and weaken Israel's enemies?
-
-

7. Read Josh. 13:1-7, Scan 13:8-22:34—Joshua Allotted Land; Philistines Remained a Threat

- a. How did the allotment of land fulfill God's covenant with Abraham? (Compare Josh. 1:1-11 with Gen. 12:1-4.)
-

- b. In what way were the Philistine and Gaza areas still a threat? (See 13:1-7, Judges 3:1-6 and 1 Sam. 4:1-11.)
-

- c. Read Joshua's farewell in 24:14-15. What were his fears for the peoples' faith? What is their response (See 24:16-19.)
-

- d. Read 24:19. How today does Jesus make us able to serve a Holy God and bring us forgiveness of transgressions?
-
-

JUSTICE AND DELIVERANCE

JUDGES AND RUTH

The book of Judges is a rotation of leaders called “judges” who deliver a falling Israel from sinful oppression and their own sinful hearts. God raised judges over all Israel calling them to return to His holy nation of worship, where they could accept priestly, sacrificial forgiveness. (See Appendix III, page 254.) God judged His people based upon whom they chose to serve. As it is now, when His people sought and served Him, God delivered them from evil.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Read Jud. 1:27-32 and 2:1-4, 11-15—Israel Disobeyed God, Mixing with Sinful Nations

a. How did Canaan’s locals become threats to Israel in their new land? (See 1:27-32 and 3:1-6.)

b. What are five consecutive things the people did in a “downward spiral”? (See 2:11-12.)

c. What was God’s response in 2:14? Was this fair? Describe God’s justice, mercy and grace. (See 2:16-18.)

2. Scan Jud. 3:7-31—God Raised Up Othniel, Ehud and Shamgar as His Judges

a. Who was Othniel and what was his relationship with God? (See 3:9-11.) How many years did Othniel serve as judge, and how did Israel respond? Why? (See 3:10-11.)

b. Who was Ehud and what was his relationship with God? (See 3:15, 28-30.) How did Ehud bring God’s judgment on the enemies? How many years did Ehud judge?

d. Who was Shamgar and what did he accomplish? (See 3:31.)

3. Read Jud. 4:1-8—God Called Deborah and Barak

a. What was the state of Israel under King Jabin of Canaan? What was Deborah's occupation when God called her?

b. What roles did Deborah and Barak take on in serving God? (See 4:6-10.) What was the outcome? (See 4:15-16, 23-24.)

4. Scan Jud. 6-8—Gideon Defeated the Midianites

a. What were causes and results of Israel's broken relationship with God? (See 6:1-6.)

b. Compare the prophet God sent to Israel (6:7-10) with the angel God sent to Gideon (6:11-18). What was the angel's true identity, and Gideon's reaction? (See 6:19-24.)

c. Why did Gideon take only 300 men to defeat the Midianites rather than 32,000? (See 7:1-3, 15-25.)

d. What was their reaction after the defeat, and Gideon's response? (See 8:22-23.) What happened after Gideon died? (See 8:33-35.)

5. Read Jud. 9:1-6, 22-25—The People Debated God’s Rule Versus a King’s Rule

- a. Compare 8:22-23 with 9:1-6? How did Abimelech conspire to become a king like other nations have?
-

- b. Was Israel seeking God’s holy laws or a king’s human might?
-

6. Read Jud. 11:1-15 and 12:7-13:7—God Called Jephthah and Samson to Rescue Israel

- a. What were Jephthah’s background and qualifications to rule over Israel? (See 11:7-15.)
-

- b. What was the state of Israel when Samson was born? (See 13:1.) Why do you think God picked these Nazirites to bear Samson? (See 13:21-25.)
-

- c. After a colorful life, God allowed Samson to bring down the Philistines. (See 16:28-31.) Describe his faith in God.
-

- d. After Samson’s death, no judges upheld God’s laws. (See 21:25.) Who did the people follow without God’s judges?
-

7. Read Ruth 1:1-6 and 2:1-4—Ruth and Naomi

- a. Who were the three widows and why were they in the fields? (See 1:1-6.) Describe the faith of Ruth. (See 1:15-18.)
-

- b. How did God lead and bless these women? How did Boaz greet them? (See 1:22-2:4.)
-
-

- c. Connect Ruth’s roles in 4:11-21 and Matt.1:5-6, 17.
-
-

GOVERNMENTS OF GOD AND MAN

1, 2 SAMUEL, 1 CHRONICLES

The two books of Samuel and 1 Chronicles cover a period of great transition in the history of the nation of Israel. It is from the “theocratic” judges of God, such as Samson, Eli and Samuel, to the “autocratic” kings of men, like Saul and his many successors. (See Appendices III and IV, pages 254-255.) It is in these peoples’ transition away from God that we see His plans for their self-government and for those leaders whom He calls for them.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Read 1 Sam. 1:1-20—Hannah Was Blessed with Son Samuel to Succeed Judge Eli

- a. How did God use Hannah’s emptiness to birth a devoted leader of God? (See 1:9-11.) What was Hannah’s response? (See 1:21-28.) Scan her prayer in 2:1-11.

- b. Since Eli was a judge over Israel, what were the prospects of his sons succeeding him as judges? Why? (See 2:12-17, 22-25.)

- c. Who called Samuel to succeed Eli, and what was Eli’s response? (See 3:9-21.)

2. Read 1 Sam. 4:1-11—The Ark of the Covenant Became Israel’s Coveted Idol

- a. In what way(s) did the Ark of the Covenant become Israel’s idol? (See 4:3-11.) Who guarded the Ark? (See 4:4.)

- b. What happened to Judge Eli? (See 4:15-18.) What happened to the Philistines in Ashdod, Gath and Ekron? (See 5:6-12.) Describe the idolatry and repentance when the Ark was returned. (See 6:13-21.)

3. Read 1 Sam. 7:1-4, 12-17, 8:1-9—Samuel and Sons Judged Israel; But Israel Cried for a King

- a. How did Judge Samuel address Israel? (See 7:1-4.) How did Samuel's sons judge Israel? (See 8:3.)

- b. For what did the elders ask Samuel? (See 8:4-5.) What was Samuel's reaction? (See 8:6.) And God's? (See 8:9, 19-22.)

4. Read 1 Sam. 9:15-17, 10:9-27—Saul Became the First King of Israel

- a. What roles did the people, God, Samuel and Saul have in appointing the first King? (See 9:15-19 and 10:22-27.)

- b. What warnings about a king did God give the people through Samuel? (See 8:10-18 and 10:17-18.)

- c. Read 12:11-25. Summarize Samuel's farewell address and advice for the new monarchy.

- d. Read the summary of Saul's reign in 14:47-52. Then read God's summary in 15:10-11 and 22-23. Compare and contrast sacrifice and obedience.

5. Read 1 Sam. 16:1, 10-14 and 2 Sam. 5:1-5—Young David Anointed the Next King for Israel

- a. Describe Samuel's role in the transition. (See 1 Sam. 16:1, 10-14.) Why do you think God used Samuel for the transition?

- b. Why was Israel divided? (See 2 Sam. 3:1.) How old was David when he was made king? How long did he reign over united Israel and Judah? (See 2 Sam. 5:1-5.)

6. Read 1 Chron. 10:1-14 and 17:16-27—Saul Died, David became King and Prayed for Israel

- a. Summarize Saul's reign. (See 10:13-14.) Why was David anointed king by God?

- b. How would you describe David's heart for God? (See 17:16-27.)

- c. Describe David's monarchy. (See 18:14-17 and 2 Sam. 8:15-18.)

7. Read 2 Sam. 5:1-10 and 1 Chron. 15:1-5—David United Israel at Jerusalem; Sinned Against God

- a. Describe God's plan for David to unite Israel and Judah at Jerusalem. (See 2 Sam. 5:1-5, 9-10.)

- b. Describe God's plan for the Ark and the Temple, as the Prophet Nathan conveyed. (See 1 Chron. 15:1-15.)

- c. Describe David's sin in the Prophet Nathan's rebuke. (See 2 Sam. 12:7-9, 13.)

8. 1 Chron. 28:1-8, 20-21—David Pledged to Build the Temple, Charged Role to King Solomon

Why did God assign Solomon to build the Temple. (See 28:1-10.) What condition did God place on building the Temple? (See 28:7-10.) What relationship did God require of him?

MAN'S DESTRUCTION AND EXILE

1, 2 KINGS, 2 CHRONICLES

The two books of Kings cover practically all of the period of kingly monarchy over the ancient people of Israel, when the people drifted away from God in political and material desires, and God continually called them back through prophets. The united kingdom had begun under King David (2 Sam. 5), and continued under King Solomon for 40 years (1 Kings 1-11 and 2 Chron. 1-9). Israel divided under Solomon's successors (1 Kings 12-14) into Israel (North) and Judah (South). Israel fell to Assyria (2 Kings 17) and Judah survived 155 years until falling to Babylonia (2 Kings 25 and 2 Chron. 36). (See Appendix IV, page 255.)

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Read 1 Kings 1:11-14, 28-31—God Used Prophet Nathan to Call and Seat Solomon Next King

- a. Whom did Prophet Nathan warn might become king of Israel? (See 1:11-14.) Who had God already anointed as King David's successor? (See 1:13, 28-31.)

- b. What was David's advice to Solomon? (See 2:1-4.) God's? (See 6:11-13.) Solomon's prayer? (See 3:9-14.) How did he reign over Israel? (See 11:1-8.)

2. Read 1 Kings 11:9-13, 26-33—God Raised Up Adversaries Against Solomon; Sent a Prophet

- a. What was God's reaction to Solomon's sins? (See 11:9-13.) What would happen to Israel and Jerusalem?

- b. Who were Jeroboam and Ahijah? (See 11:26-33, 41-43.) Why did God plan to split the kingdom?

- c. Read 12:16-24. What command of God did Prophet Shemaiah give to King Rehoboam of Judah?
-

- d. Read 12:25-33. What were some of the sinful acts of King Jeroboam of Israel? (See also 13:33-34.)
-

- e. Read 14:21-24, 29-31. Summarize the reign of King Rehoboam of Judah.
-

3. Scan 1 Kings 15—Rehoboam Was Followed by Abijam and Asa; Jeroboam by Nadab, Baasha

- a. Describe Abijam's reign over Judah. (See 15:3.) Describe Asa's reign over Judah. (See 15:11-14.)
-

- b. Describe Nadab's reign over Israel. (See 15:25-26.) Describe Baasha's reign over Israel. (See 15:33-34.)
-

4. Read 1 Kings 16:29-34—King Ahab of Israel Brought Israel Into Sin and Decline

- a. Describe King Ahab and his reign over Israel. Define Baal worship.
-

- b. Read 18:20-29. Between what "two opinions" did Prophet Elijah confront Israel to choose? How did Baal respond?
-

- c. Read 18:30-40. Describe Elijah's offering and God's response. What impact do you think God's prophet Elijah and the Mt. Carmel miracle had on the people of Israel?
-

5. Read 2 Chron. 17:1-9, 29:1-11, 34:1-7, 19-21—Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah and Josiah Were Godly

- a. Describe King Jehoshaphat's reign over Judah. How did God use him and bless Judah?

- b. Describe the reigns of Kings Hezekiah and Josiah over Judah. How did God use them?

6. Read 2 Kings 17:1-8 and 13-18—Israel Captured and Exiled to Assyria in 722 B.C.

- a. Why did God's people fail and surrender to their enemies?

- b. How did God warn His people of Israel?

- c. How would you describe their hearts? (See 17:14-18.)

7. Read 2 Kings 24:1-25:11—Judah was Captured and Exiled to Babylon in 597 and 586 B.C.

Why did God's people fail and surrender to these enemies?

8. Read 2 Chron. 36:15-16—God Sent Messengers

- a. Who were God's messengers, and what roles did they play?

- b. Describe God's compassionate efforts and the response.

RETURN, REBUILD, REFORM AND RESTORE

EZRA, NEHEMIAH, ESTHER AND JOB

After their defeat, God's people from Israel in the North were exiled to Assyria by 722 B.C., and later from Judah territories in the South, to Babylon by 586 B.C. But God would never deny His people full redemption by His covenant promises. In these four books we see God call His people back to worship Him in Jerusalem—to return, rebuild foundations, reform their ways, and restore relationship with Him.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Read 2 Chron. 36:17-23 and Ezra 1:1-5—Persian King Cyrus Released the Israelites from Exile

- a. Describe in a few words Jerusalem's capture, destruction and exile to Babylon. (See 2 Chron. 36:17-21.)

- b. Describe Jeremiah's prophesy of the 70-year exile. (See Jer. 25:8-14.) Describe Cyrus' decree. (See Ezra 1:1-4.)

2. Read Ezra 3:1-11—Offerings and Worship Given

- a. Describe the offerings to God in the seventh month, to raise money for re-building. (See 3:6-7.)

- b. Describe the Levites' roles and the people's worship. (See 3:8-13.) How many rebuilt the Temple? (See 2:64-70.)

3. Read Ezra 6:13-16—Darius Decreed The Temple Completion; Israel Worshiped with Passover

- a. How did God work through the prophets and kings? (See 6:14-15.)

- b. How did the offerings and Passover help to return Israel to its covenant with God? (See Ex. 12:24-28.)

- c. Read Ezra 7:6-10, 25-28. Why do you think Ezra was picked to come and teach in Israel? Upon whom did Ezra depend? (See 8:21-23.)

4. Read Neh. 1:1-3 and 2:4-8, 17-18—Nehemiah Called by God to Rebuild Jerusalem's Walls

- a. Who informed Nehemiah of the demise? Who called him to rebuild the city? (See 2:4-5.)

- b. Read 6:15-16. How did the surrounding nations react to the Jerusalem wall?

- c. How did Ezra and Nehemiah restore the people's faith? (See 8:1-9.)

5. Read Esther 1:12-19 and 2:1-8, 15-18—Esther Chosen Persian Queen after Vashti is Removed

- a. Why was Queen Vashti removed? How and why was Esther, an exiled Jew, selected as the new queen?

- b. Why did Esther's cousin Mordecai not bow down to Haman? What was Haman's revenge? (See 3:1-6.)

- c. How did Esther save Mordecai and the Jews? (See 7:1-10 and 8:7-8.) What role do you think God had in this rescue?

6. Read Job 1-2:10—Faithful Job Tested by Satan; Lost Property, Children and Health, But Not God

- a. Describe Job and his faith. (See 1:1-5.)

- b. Read 1:6-12. Why do you think God allowed Satan to test Job? (See also James 1:2-18.)

- c. Read 1:20-22 and 2:9-10. How did Job respond to his trials and losses?

7. Read Job 42:1-17—Job Confessed his Faith; Prayed for Doubting Friends; Restored by God

- a. How did Job praise God? (See 42:1-6.) How did he help his doubting friends? (See 42:7-9.)

- b. How did God restore Job's blessings? Why? (See 42:12-17.)

WORSHIP, WISDOM, PREACHING AND SONG

PSALMS, PROVERBS, ECCLESIASTES, AND SONG OF SOLOMON

These books help us worship our God and Lord, as they helped Kings David, Solomon and many others throughout the ages. They can inspire us with meaningful illustrations, petitions, litanies and praises as God has heard these prayers from the mighty and meek alike over many generations. Within them we find wisdom, nurture, comfort and joy in our Creator and Redeemer.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Read Psalms 23, 139, 32 and 51—Personal and Penitent Psalms

- a. What do you find most personal in Psalms 23 and 139? What connects most to your own life?

- b. How might the “penitent” psalms help a person be rid of sin and guilt? How did David recommend repentance? (See 51:13-14.) How could these verses help you in understanding and receiving God’s forgiveness?

2. Read Psalms 55 and 92—Psalms of Praise and Thanksgiving

What ways could you find in these two Psalms for you to be more thankful? When in 92:1-4 is the Psalmist thankful?

3. Scan Psalm 22 and Read 110—Psalms of Messianic Prophecy

- a. What prophecies of the Messiah can you find in Psalm 22? (See also Matt. 27:31, 35, 41, 43, and 46.)

- b. What prophecies of Christ can you find in David's Psalm 110? (See also Matt. 22:44, Heb. 7:14-17.)

- c. How do you think these prophecies helped Israel's relationship with God? In what ways might they help you in your relationship with God?

4. Read Prov. 1:1-19—The Purposes of Proverbs

- a. What are a few ways we might benefit from the Proverbs in 1:1-7?

- b. What are some warnings we find in 1:8-19?

5. Scan Prov. 22—Proverbs of Wisdom

- a. How might God give wisdom, knowledge, and even our words? When might He grant wisdom? (See 22:17-19.)

- b. Write in your own words the wisdom you find in Prov. 22:6, 17-19.

- c. Read Prov. 31:10-31. Think of a God-fearing woman you admire and note some of her godly traits from these verses.

6. Read Eccles. 1:12-18—Preaching in Ecclesiastes

- a. Who is the preacher and what is his experience in seeking wisdom? (See also Eccles. 1:1.)

- b. Compare Eccles. 1:13-18 with Gen. 3:22-24. How do God and Solomon each describe the difficulty of knowledge? How can Christ resolve this difficulty?

7. Compare Song of Sol. 3-4, Rev. 19:7-10, and Isaiah 62:4-6—Love Stories of Brides and Grooms

- a. In each story, who might be the bride and groom?

- b. Read Rev. 22:16-17. What does the Bridegroom Jesus say to His church?

POINTING AHEAD TO CHRIST, JUDGMENT AND PEACE

ISAIAH

Isaiah gave the people of Judah warnings (Isaiah 1-39) and hope (40-66). He warned of God's current and future judgment on the nation, and then expanded the message to the judgment of other sinful nations. The best news of all the prophets comes when Isaiah consoled the people with God's promises of the Messiah Savior. Yahweh God, he said, is the all-powerful Savior who will come to rescue His people.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Scan Isaiah 1—Isaiah Warned of Wickedness

- a. Who was Isaiah? (See also 2 Pet. 1:20-21.) Where was he located and who were the kings? (See verse 1.)

- b. In a few words, what was the state of Judah? (See 1:2-31.)

2. Read Isaiah 6:8-13—God Commissioned Isaiah

- a. Describe the conversation between God and Isaiah. (See 6:8-10.) Why would the peoples' hearts be dulled?

- b. Read 6:11-13, 8:1-10, and 10:20-23. Describe the vision of the exiled Jerusalem, conquering by Assyria, and return.

3. Read Isaiah 9:1-7 and 11:1-5, 10—For Unto Us a Child is Born

- a. How explicit was Isaiah's prophecy? Give examples. (See 9:1-7 and Luke 2:11.)

- b. Who was Jesse? Why was this important to the story of Christ? (See 11:1-5, 10 and Acts 13:22-23.)

4. Read Isaiah 25:7-9 and Rev. 21:1-4—Mt. Zion and the New Jerusalem

Compare Isaiah's Mt. Zion and Jerusalem prophecy to John's New Jerusalem vision.

5. Read Isaiah 30:18-22—The Lord Is Gracious

Describe God and Christ in Isaiah's terms. What will the redeemed say after they reject their idols?

6. Read Isaiah 32:1-8 and 9:7—God Will Send a Righteous King

Compare King Jesus' righteousness to that of David's throne.

7. Read Isaiah 44:1-3, 6-8—Israel was Chosen for a King, a Spirit for Offspring, a Redeemer

- a. Describe how Israel was chosen by God and given the Redeemer King. (See also Acts 2:1-4, 16-21, 32-36.)

- b. Describe Jesus' uniqueness and future reign as King of Israel. (See also John 17:1-4.)

8. Read Isaiah 51:3, 15-16—Zion Restored to Eden

How will the new Zion compare to the Eden garden? (See 51:3, Gen. 2:8-9 and Rev. 22:1-4.)

9. Read Isaiah 52:13-53:12—He Was Despised, Rejected and Pierced for Our Transgressions

- a. Find several descriptions of Christ at His crucifixion, and reasons Isaiah gives for His death.

- b. Review 53:10-12. Using Isaiah's vision, describe God's gift of sacrificing Christ, the reasons and purposes.

POINTING AHEAD TO FAILURE AND FUTURE

JEREMIAH, LAMENTATIONS, EZEKIEL AND DANIEL

The books of prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel show us three men of God whom He called, appointed and commissioned to communicate His messages with the kings and people of Israel. They show us a just God who has delayed His judgment over a sinful and rebellious people. Jeremiah preached during Jerusalem's darkest days, and wrote Lamentations for the fallen Jerusalem. Ezekiel and Daniel were deported to Babylon in exile and became God's mouthpieces to the kings of Babylon and God's people.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Read Jer. 1:1-10 and 2:1-9—God Called Jeremiah Before Birth

- a. How and when do you think God planned Jeremiah's role as a prophet to Judah? (See 1:4-9.) What roles did Jeremiah play? (See 1:10 and 29:11.)

- b. How did God put the words into Jeremiah's mouth, and what was the message to Jerusalem? (See 2:1-9 and 2 Pet. 1:21.)

2. Read Jer. 31:31-34, 32:36-41 and Heb. 8:1-13—Jeremiah Prophesied the New Covenant

- a. Describe the new covenant. (See 31:33-34 and 32:36-41.)

- b. Describe the new covenant in Hebrews. (See Heb. 8:6-7.) Why and how is it better?

3. Read Lam. 1:1-8 and 3:22-27—Jeremiah Lamented Suffering and Praised His Lord

- a. What was Jerusalem's downfall? (See 1:7-8.)

- b. Compare the "lamentations" in 3:1-20 with the "praises" in 3:21-27.

- c. Read Lam. 3:58-66. Describe Jeremiah's hope and faith in his Lord.

4. Read Ezek. 36:1-27 and Rom. 3:19-26—Ezekiel Prophesied a New Heart and a New Spirit

- a. For what did God seek vindication? What did God offer that would lead His people to follow His statutes and rules?

- b. What comes through the law? (See Rom. 3:19-20.)

- c. In Christ, how are we justified? (See Rom. 3:21-26.)

5. Read Ezek. 37:1-14—Ezekiel and the Dry Bones

- a. Compare Ezek. 37:5-6 with Gen 2:7 and note similarities.

- b. Read Ezek. 37:12-14 and 1 Thess. 4:13-18. Note similarities.

6. Read Dan. 1:1-21—Daniel Deported from Judah

- a. Describe, from Daniel's account, the final exile. (See 1:1-7.)

- b. Describe Daniel's faithfulness to his God, and how he accomplished permission to honor his beliefs. (See 1:8-16.)

- c. How did God use Daniel in Israel's exile? (See 1:17-21.)

7. Read Dan. 2:1-45—Daniel Interpreted Dreams

- a. What did Daniel do before his appointment with the king? (See 2:16-18.)

- b. What was God's response to Daniel, and Daniel's response to God? (See 2:19-23.)

- c. Read verse 44 and 2 Pet. 1:11. What Kingdom will never be destroyed? What empires were destroyed after this dream?

POINTING AHEAD TO HOPE AND FUTURE

MINOR PROPHETS HOSEA - MALACHI

The 12 “minor” prophets, the group of shorter books bearing their names, were once in a single scroll. They include nine who prophesied during the declines: Hosea and Amos to Israel in the North (2 Kings 14); Obadiah to Edom (2 Kings 8); Joel, Micah, Habakkuk and Zephaniah to Judah in the South (2 Kings 12-23); and Jonah and Nahum to Assyria (2 Kings 13, 21). Three prophesied in Jerusalem and broader Judah after the exile: Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi (Ezra 5, 13). Other prophets include “oral” prophets and “major” prophets (see pages 113-114 and Appendix IV, page 255.)

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Read Hos. 1:1-11—Hosea’s Family Was a Vision

Compare his family in 1:2-8 with Israel in 1:10-11.

2. Read Joel 2:26-29, 31-32—Joel Foretold Holy Spirit at Pentecost, Christ’s Second Coming

a. Compare 2:28-29 with Acts 2:1-4. Note similarities.

b. Compare 2:30-32 with Rev. 6:12-16 and Matt. 24:29-31.

3. Read Amos 2:4-16—Amos Told of Judgments

a. What were Judah’s transgressions? (See 2:4-5.)

b. What were Israel’s transgressions? (See 2:6-16.)

4. Read Obadiah :10-12, :18—Judgment of Edom

Why did God use His wrath against Edom?

5. Read Jonah 1:1-17, 4:2—A Mission to Nineveh

a. Why do you think Jonah avoided God's call to Nineveh?

b. Read Jonah 3. What resulted when he followed God?

6. Read Micah 5:1-4—Christ's Birth in Bethlehem

Compare 5:1-4 with Matt. 2:1-6, detailing his prophesy.

7. Read Nahum 2:2, 8-13—Nineveh Will Perish

What were God's reasons for destroying Nineveh?

8. Read Hab. 1:1-17—God Will Bring Salvation

a. List questions Habakkuk asks God. (See 1:1-4, 12-17.)

b. Summarize God's answers. (See 1:5-11 and 2:2-6.)

9. Read Zeph. 1:1-3, 14—The Great Day of the Lord

- a. Compare Zeph. 1:1-3 with Matt.13:41-43.

- b. Compare Zeph. 1:14-15 with Matt 24:29-31.

10. Read Haggai 2:1-9—Prophecies for All Nations

- a. Compare 2:6-7 to Luke 24:44-47. What do you think “*all nations, beginning from Jerusalem*” refers to?

- b. How do you think the Great Commission might fulfill the covenant with Abraham in Gen. 12-1-3?

11. Read Zech. 1:1-6, 8:20-23, 9:9—Worship the Lord on a Colt in Jerusalem

- a. When did God call Zechariah? Describe his vision for restoring worship in Jerusalem. (See also Luke 19:28-38.)

- b. Compare Zech. 4:1-6 with Rev. 1:10-20. How does Zechariah’s vision compare to John’s vision?

12. Read Mal. 3:1-2—God Previews Christ’s Arrival

Compare Mal. 3:1-2 with Luke 7:24-27. In Jesus’ words, what did Malachi mean in his prophesy?
