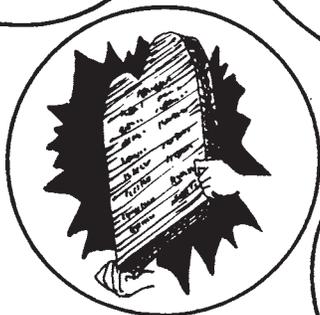
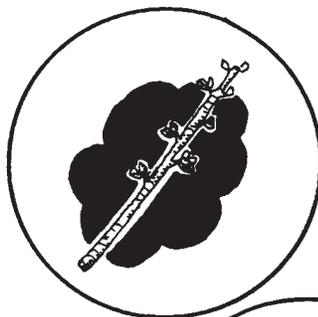
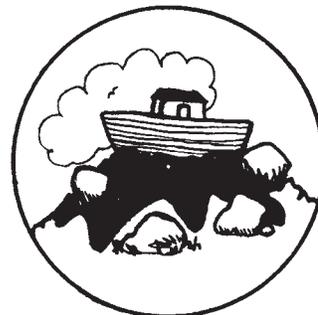
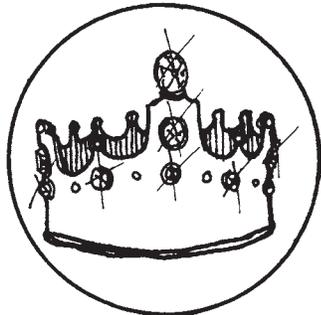
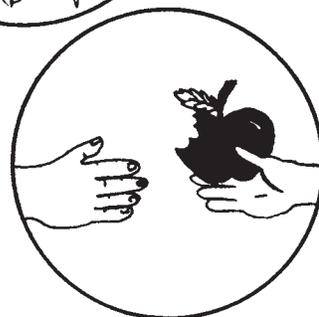
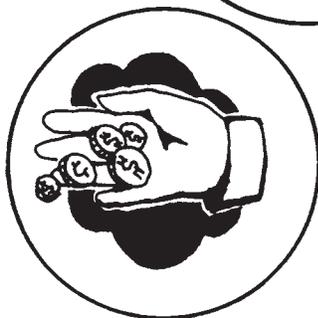


IT'S A FIRST





The Inward Look

A Self-check List for Sunday School Teachers

Feeling a bit discouraged about your efforts as a Sunday school teacher? Are you bothered by symptoms of ineffectiveness? Here's a short questionnaire that will help you identify just where your problems lie. It's a sort of self-diagnosis for concerned teachers. Write True or False in the space provided to the left of each statement and then total your score.

TEACHER TRAINING

- I look forward to workshops and teachers' training sessions and feel they have been a benefit to my teaching.
- I have familiarized myself with the Teacher's Handbook and refer to it often.

LESSON PREPARATION

- I set aside a regular time early in the week for lesson preparation.
- I use my Teachers Guide and other reference materials in preparing my lesson.
- I plan an opener, a visual aid, and a conclusion that stress the objective of the lesson.
- I think about what response I want from my students and carefully plan how to achieve it.

CURRICULUM

- _____ I study the Teacher's Guide carefully before beginning to plan my lesson presentation.
- _____ As a part of my study, I look over the materials presented for teachers on levels other than the one I am teaching.
- _____ I encourage my students to use the provided materials through appropriate contests and other motivational devices.

IN-CLASS EVANGELISM

- _____ I know which of my students have experienced salvation.
- _____ I pray with my students around the altars.
- _____ I make an effort to acquaint myself with the special needs, home situations, or decisions facing my students.
- _____ I try to gear my teaching around the interests and involvements of my class, bearing in mind that their spiritual gain must be the focus of every class session.

SCHEDULING

- _____ I arrive at least fifteen minutes before Sunday school begins.
- _____ I make round table and Sunday school related activities a priority in my monthly schedule.
- _____ I take time to observe and note ideas and methods used by other teachers.

STUDENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS

- _____ I maintain friendly and open communication lines with my students.
- _____ I regularly contact my students, absentees, and visitors by phone, mail, or in person.
- _____ I recognize and reward good behavior in class.
- _____ I make a conscious effort to never embarrass or put any of my students on the spot.
- _____ I try to develop a sense of security in my class members by always using fair, consistent discipline.

TEACHING METHODS

- _____ I vary my teaching methods from week to week.
- _____ I try to involve my students actively in the lesson whenever possible.
- _____ I attempt different methods of eliciting class discussion, and observe which ones work particularly well in my class.
- _____ I analyze all available resources in deciding the best method to use for each lesson.
- _____ I'm not afraid to try new methods and ideas.

TEACHING AIDS

- _____ I frequently use pictures, objects, sound effects, etc., as teaching aids in my class sessions.
- _____ I utilize my bulletin boards as a teaching device and change them frequently.
- _____ With my class I have explored techniques that are appropriate, involving art, drama, writing, quizzes, etc.

PRAYER

- _____ I truly believe that prayer is the single most effective tool in teacher preparation.
- _____ I pray daily for each student in my class.
- _____ I pray for ideas and inspiration for class material, reviews, and any contribution I am asked to make for the Sunday school.

How did you score? Do most of these statements apply to you—or do you need to improve in some areas? Evaluate the items where you recorded a False. Are these important aspects of teaching? What effect might a True make on your teaching? Ask God to help you really focus in on the importance of the job you have been called to do for Him. With His help, your vigor, enthusiasm, and spiritual strength can be renewed in your teaching ministry.



Role Playing as a Teaching Tool

WOULD YOU LIKE TO MAKE the Bible live for your students? Transport them back in time to mingle with Bible people, smell the aroma of fish frying on a fire by the Sea of Galilee, feel the sting of the blowing desert sand, or hear the sounds of people walking the streets of busy Jerusalem. Do it through role playing!

From the time they first say, "You be the mommy and I'll be the daddy," pretending is a fun way for children to learn. Why not capitalize on it? Role playing can make characters that once were only names on the pages of Bible history come alive for your students. Through drama, your students can experience the joys, fears, and hopes of many different characters.

Role playing is the acting out of a situation, followed by a discussion of what happened in the situation and why. The teacher's job is to help clarify the role for the students and to ask questions exploring how the Bible character might have felt and reacted. Role playing usually lasts only a few minutes, and ends when the important elements of the situation have been presented.

Written role play can be utilized for students old enough to feel comfortable with a writing project. Provide each student with a piece of paper and a pencil. Read together the Scripture

text, and then divide your class into groups that will focus on various characters in the lesson.

For instance, suppose you are studying Peter's prison experience in Acts 12. Ask group one to pretend they are Herod. Why did he have Peter imprisoned? How did Herod react when he heard about Peter's escape?

Group two might imagine they were Peter. Let them discuss and note how he felt when he was imprisoned, when he saw the angel, when he was released. What might Peter have learned about God through this experience?

Ask group three to take the part of Rhoda. What were her thoughts when Peter knocked on the door? How did she feel when people refused to believe her?

Group four could assume the part of the people praying for Peter. What were their feelings before the knock came? afterwards? What did this do for their faith in God's ability to hear and answer prayer?

Allow several minutes for the groups to discuss their thoughts. Then have a person from each group share what they have written. By encouraging the entire class to apply the story to present-day situations, this can be used as a springboard for discussing how God answers prayer today and how our faith in Him can be strengthened.

Dramatic role play can be an interesting teaching tool as well. Assign character roles to your students and allow them to act out incidents from the Bible text. Simple props or costumes can add to the effect and help the students really get involved in the role they are playing. Your students might even enjoy putting on a presentation for the whole department.

Can you see some dramatic possibilities in our lessons for this quarter? A glance through the titles should bring to mind a number of suggestions. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Aaron, Saul—these giants of biblical history offer almost limitless scope for the imagination.

The next time you are looking for an innovative way to present your lesson, rely on a role play!



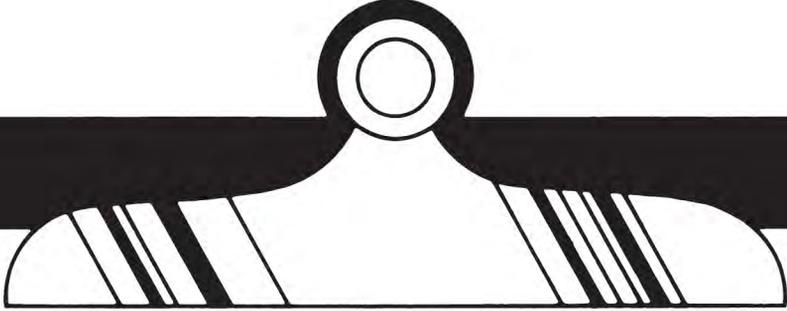
Bible Learning Activities

There are many Bible-learning activities which can be incorporated into your teaching. A Bible-learning activity requires the examination of God's Word in order to work on the assignment, and it can be an extremely effective teaching tool. It does not allow the student to be merely an observer, but involves him in the learning process.

Your students may focus their attention on the mechanics of the activity or presentation. But you are aware that through the students' own efforts, they are learning to discover and understand the truth of Scripture brought out in the objective for the lesson. Your role as teacher is to reaffirm their discoveries and conclusions, and add additional insights from Scripture for them to consider.

Some Principles for Choosing Learning Activities

1. Activities giving the most direct experience will result in the most learning.
2. They should have an element of novelty and newness.
3. They should demand involvement.
4. They should allow for maximum creativity on the part of the students.
5. They should move toward the objective and communicate the key concept.
6. They should be appropriate for the age and skills of students.
7. They should be achievable and practical.
8. They should use media creatively and purposefully.
9. They should touch on all three learning domains—to know, to feel, to do.



Theme Thoughts

Since the beginning of our world, God has had a plan for everything. It is not difficult to go through the Bible and compile an extensive list of first events from which we can learn valuable lessons.

Most people are interested in how or when something started and who started it. This quarter will focus on beginnings. The first two lessons deal with the beginning of everything - Creation and the first man. The next two are about the first sin and the first plan or escape from God's judgment for sin. The next lesson is about the people who built the first "skyscraper" and the pitfalls of trying to be independent from God.

Four Bible characters will be studied: the first Hebrew, Abraham; the first leader, Moses; Israel's first priest, Aaron; and the first king of Israel, Saul. There also will be a lesson on God's first written law.

The point of studying these lessons is to help the students get a better understanding of some of the firsts in Bible history and, more importantly, to help them grow spiritually from what they have learned.

In the Beginning

TEXT: Genesis 1:1-25

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Nehemiah 9:6; Hebrews 11:3

KEY VERSE: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him. — Colossians 1:16

RESOURCE MATERIAL: Tract No. 58 — God the Creator — First, Last, and Always

RESPONSES

1. With each successive act of creation, God was preparing a perfect world. In order for man to be sustained here on this earth, it was necessary that the earth be prepared before the creating of life. God's first creative act was to command light; for light and the heat which attends it are essential to life. On the second day, He created the firmament, separating the vaporous waters above from the condensed waters below. Land along with the grasses, fruits, and herbs were created on day three, providing food for the living things which were to follow. Geographers say that the proportion of land to water is a perfect balance, essential to provide moisture for life upon the land. On the fourth day, the sun and moon were placed in the heavens. Then, on day five, God created the fish and the fowls. On the sixth day, God created animals and creeping things. Then He made man, for whom all needs had been provided.

2. Discussion of this question should bring out that when God spoke things into existence Scripture says, "and it was so." He also said, "and the evening and the morning were the first day," etc. On the seventh day God rested from all His work. It is evident that God used twenty-four hour days in His creation. When He speaks, it doesn't take a long period of time for things to happen.

3. Read each of the verses in the lesson text that begin, "And God said," showing that the entire universe and the things in it were spoken into existence from nothing, by God's word (Hebrews 11:3). Discuss some of the marvelous inventions and discoveries of recent years, bringing out that these are just a rearrangement of the materials that God made in the beginning. Man cannot make something from nothing, but God can and did.

The Bible is not only a book of beginnings, but also a book of eternities. The very supreme revelation of the Bible is the revelation of God. If one starts to think of the beginning, using his own reasoning, he will have trouble and will possibly supply a humanistic assumption for the real beginning. He would therefore substitute the creature's point of view for the Creator's point of view. Among many scientists there are basic differences of opinion as to the origin of the universe. Evolutionists hold that all living things developed from non-living materials. Creationists believe that all basic categories of nature were brought into being by a supernatural force. It takes as much faith to subscribe to the theory that our complex universe is a mere chance happening as to accept the first verse of the inspired Word which declares, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

1. Make a list of what God created on each of the six days.

2. Many say that the days mentioned in the Creation account are actually long periods of time. What does Scripture teach about the length of these days?

3. Can man create something from nothing? Explain. See Ecclesiastes 1:9,10.

3

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

4. What scientific principle is illustrated by each of these verses?

- Job 26:7
- Job 26:8
- Job 26:10
- Ecclesiastes 1:6
- Ecclesiastes 1:7
- Isaiah 40:22
- Jeremiah 33:22

5. What is meant by the statement, "after his kind," in the creation of the plants, water creatures, fowls, and animals?

6. Make a list of ways in which we benefit from the "lights" God made for us.

7. In studying the entire first chapter of Genesis, how is the existence of the Holy Trinity demonstrated in the account of the Creation?

Though no declaration which God makes needs to be substantiated by evidence or argument, the portions of His wonderful Book that touch upon the subject of Creation still serve greatly to strengthen our faith. For example, the Psalmist proclaims, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard" (Psalm 19:1-3). The heavens, and the earth also, are declaring to man by innumerable evidences—by the stars, by the seas, by the mountains, by the trees—that God is the Creator of all that is.

- 4. Job 26:7 — earth's suspension in space
 - Job 26:8 — precipitation
 - Job 26:10 — controlling of the seas
 - Ecclesiastes 1:6 — atmospheric circulation
 - Ecclesiastes 1:7 — water cycle
 - Isaiah 40:22 — the roundness of the earth
 - Jeremiah 33:22 — vastness of the universe
- Explain that true science does not contradict any of the truths of the Creation, but confirms them. Go over each of these Scriptures showing the wonders of God's universe. Emphasize that the men of God who were inspired to write these words bring out the same facts that modern-day scientists have proven in their studies.

5. Each bird, animal, etc., was made after its own species, and remains the same until this day. Discussion of this question should bring out that although different members of the same species can be interbred, making a different variety, yet an apple cannot be made into an orange, or a cat into a dog, or an ape into a man. Nothing has evolved from one kind to another since the Creation, which disproves the theory of evolution.

6. They determine the seasons, days, and years (verse 14). They are our source of physical light (verse 15). Scientific investigation has proved that the moon controls the tides. It is evident there could be no kind of life on the earth without the sun. Ask the students how this parallels the Christian's dependence on spiritual "light," bringing out that there could be no spiritual life without the "light of the world," Jesus Christ (John 8:12).

7. In verse 2, the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. In verse 26, God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." In the New Testament we read that, "All things were made by him [referring to Jesus]; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:3). This is reinforced in Colossians 1:16. Emphasize the fact that as one of the Godhead (John 5:18; Philippians 2:6), Jesus had an equal part in the Creation and should be honored as our Creator, as well as our Savior.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What is the difference between making something and creating something?

What is the difference between the way you create something and the way God created things?

In the correct order, what was created on each of the six days of Creation?

What do you think it might have been like to have been there at the time God created our world?

Why is the Creation story so important?

How do we know that the Creation was the work of the Trinity?

What is the meaning of the word *firmament*?

Why do you suppose God created things in the order that He did?

In the ANSWER story, what had happened at school that disturbed Lynnda? What brought back her peace of mind?

THINGS TO DO

Toss the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle into the air, demonstrating that they do not fall into a perfect picture. Do this several times, or have the students try it, to show that God's Creation could not have just fallen into place accidentally.

Bring a microscope to class and examine the intricacies of a leaf, hair, drop of water, etc.

Make a class mural of God's Creation. Let each student draw a picture of something that God created.

Show your class some pictures of different things God created. Divide a bulletin board into six sections and number them one to six representing the days of Creation. Have the students match each picture to the correct day on the bulletin board.

Bring to class some nature books with lots of color pictures of living things. Display these books for the students so that they may see the beauty, perfection, and wonders of God's creation.

Divide a chalkboard or posterboard into three sections to represent the first three days of Creation. Write at the top of each section what was created on that day: Day 1 — Light; Day 2 — Divided water; Day 3 — Dry land. Explain to your class that God's Creation was done in an orderly way. On the first three days He created the realms. On the next three days He created the rulers of these realms. Have the class fill in what was created on these days: Day 4 — Sun/moon/stars; Day 5 — Birds/fish; Day 6 — Animals/man.

Answers for ANSWER

It Was Very Good!

Our Bible tells us that, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth...and, behold, it was very good." Some of the things God created are listed below, but you'll need help to read them. Next to each set of unfinished words are three groups of letters. Choose the group that will fit in the starred space and become the ending and the beginning of each pair of words given. Write the words on the lines provided. The first one has been done for you.

1. CAM * EPHANT - AP EL CAR
2. P * GLE - EA SU TE
3. ZEB * M - SA ED RA
4. CR * L - OW AN OB
5. FI * EEP - IH SH UP
6. APP * AF - KO LE AL
7. VIO * TUCE - LET OPE CAM
8. TURT * OPARD - OP AN LE
9. B * S - APE EAR REA

Creation List

1. Camel	Elephant
2. Pea	Eagle
3. Zebra	Ram
4. Crow	Owl
5. Fish	Sheep
6. Apple	Leaf
7. Violet	Lettuce
8. Turtle	Leopard
9. Bear	Ears



The lines below are numbered to represent three days of creation. Take the words from the creation list and write them next to the day on which they were created. Can you do this without looking in your Bible?

Day 3 Pea, Leaf, Apple, Violet, Lettuce

Day 5 Eagle, Crow, Owl, Fish

Day 6 Camel, Elephant, Zebra, Ram, Sheep, Turtle, Leopard, Bear, Ears

Lesson 2

TEXT Genesis 1:26-31; 2:7,18-23

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE Genesis 5:1-2

OBJECTIVE The students will realize that man is unique, differing from all God's other creations in that he alone was created in the image of God and has a living soul.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him. — Genesis 1:27

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. — Genesis 2:7

**ANSWER
TITLE:** **The First Man**
**SEARCH
TITLE:** **The First Man**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

Create means “to cause to come into existence, form out of nothing.” *Image* is “an imitation of any person or thing, likeness.” These words have special significance in this lesson.

We see in this text the crowning achievement of God's creation. It has been said that all other parts of creation are the effect of God's Word, but man is the work of God, created in His image and likeness, by God's hand.

Adam was the name God gave the first man. It comes from the Hebrew word meaning “of the ground.” He was

created of the dust of the earth, the last of all the things created on the sixth day, the same day as the beasts, but by a separate act of creation and in the image of God. Adam received a special blessing—dominion over the earth and its inhabitants. Adam died 126 years before the birth of Noah. He was 930 years old when he died.

In the beginning God gave man vegetables and fruit to eat. The animals were to eat of the green herbs. It wasn't until the fall of man that the animals began to prey on other animals.

YOUR OPENER

The First Man

TEXT: Genesis 1:26-31; 2:7,18-23

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE: Genesis 5:1-2

KEY VERSE: And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. — Genesis 2:7

RESPONSES

1. God made man for His glory. Everything was created for God's glory and pleasure, but man has the added blessing of being created in God's image. Ask your students, what man can do that the animals can't do. Show that man was created a spiritual being who was given the ability to praise, thank, and worship his Maker. Since God made man to enjoy perfect fellowship with Him, how can that fellowship be deepened?

2. Allow time for your students to give their answers. Help them recognize that man was formed from the dust of the earth. The biologists of today confirm this: the basic elements of which man's body is composed all came out of the dust. But his creation was unique in that man alone was created in the image of God, and was given a living soul. As he came from the hand of his Creator, he was perfect in body, soul, and spirit, without a blemish or taint of sin—the noblest specimen of God's handiwork.

3. When God breathed into man the breath of life, man received an immortal soul that he might be able to spend eternity with his Maker. See Ecclesiastes 12:7. Ask your students to define *soul*. Discussion of this should bring out that man's soul is his spiritual, eternal essence—the part of him that lives forever.

What a person believes about his origin greatly affects his entire philosophy of life. If a man were convinced that he does not have an eternal soul, then it would seem to him that he would have no responsibility to God for the way he lives his life. But a person's disbelief in the Bible does not release that one from his responsibility to God. As Christians, we believe that the most important decision a man can make is the one that will affect the eternal destiny of his soul. It is imperative that we arm ourselves against those who would erode this basic belief—that man was created by God in His own image and possesses a never-dying soul. We can do this by studying the Bible, God's divine Word, with simplicity of faith.

1. When the initial part of the Creation was completed and the earth was in readiness, God performed His last creative act—He made man. Why did God make man? See Isaiah 43:7 and Revelation 4:11.

2. How was man's physical body created? What factor made the creation of man unique or different from all the creative acts which had already taken place?

3. Man is distinguished from all other living creatures in that he alone possesses a living soul. How and why was man given a soul?

5

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

4. Genesis 1:26-27 states that man was created in God's image and likeness. What does this mean to you?

5. Causing a deep sleep to come upon Adam, God took one of Adam's ribs and from it created a woman. Then He brought the woman to Adam for a helpmate. Why did God feel man needed a helpmate?

6. Read Psalm 8:4-8. What place was man given in God's creation?

7. What is meant by the word *dominion*, in Genesis 1:28?

8. How will the Christian look at God's creations differently than the non-Christian?

4. Let students discuss their answers. Point out that man has an intellect, an ability to reason, a conscience, a capacity to choose, emotions, etc., all characteristics also possessed by God, but not to any significant extent by animals.

5. God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." Lead the students into a discussion about the love God had for Adam. Such things as God putting him in the beautiful Garden of Eden, and giving him the privilege of naming all the animals, birds, etc., show the elevated status of Adam. But among all of God's creation there was not found a "help meet" for Adam, so God made a woman and brought her to Adam.

6. Begin your discussion of this Scripture by asking your students to define *preeminence*. Lions dominate the jungle, sharks dominate the sea, yet man rules over all. God granted man superiority over all the animal kingdom. Reinforce the point that man is also the only one of God's living creatures charged with responsibility concerning his never-dying soul.

7. Your students' answers should bring out that *dominion* means "responsible oversight and authority." This does not mean freedom to exploit as one pleases. It is as though God gave to man the rights of managership, or stewardship. Final authority belongs to God the Creator, but in His wisdom and love, God delegated responsibility for management to mankind. Man as manager must report to God the owner, for with dominion goes accountability.

8. Responses to this question should bring out the thought that when a person is one with his Creator, he is one with His creation. Contemplation of nature, and the marvel of man's creation may cause one to extol God's greatness; but the person who has been born again and saved from sin by his faith in Christ has even more reason to shout: "O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What is your soul?

What makes man unique?

Who was God speaking to when He said, "Let us make man in our image"?

Adam was created from the dust of the ground. How was Eve created?

Why did God make a wife for Adam?

Did Adam have anything to keep him busy? If so, what?

In the ANSWER story, what is the reader to imagine?

Why was it important for God to create the other things before He created man?

THINGS TO DO

Have an interview session with your class. Ask one student to be Adam, another to be a reporter asking Adam questions such as: "How did the earth look the first time you saw it?" "How did you feel when you saw Eve?" "What were some of the things you and God talked about when you walked with Him in the Garden?"

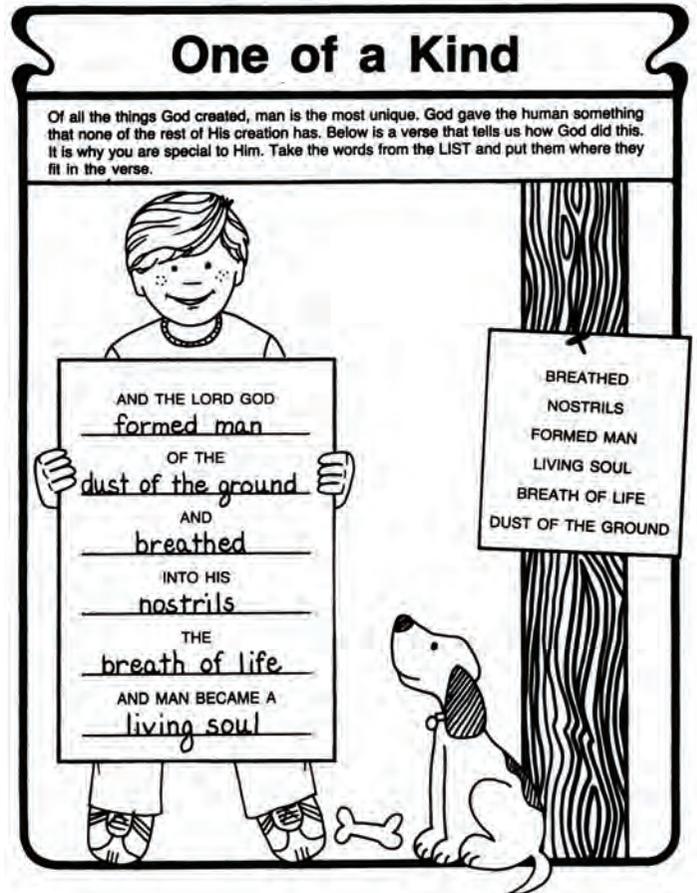
Bring clay or playdough to Sunday school and let students mold a man from it. Show that there is no life.

Use an ink pad to take each child's fingerprint, pointing out that each one is unique. (Bring a magnifying glass.)

Show the students some charts of the human body which picture the skeletal system, the muscular system, the heart, etc. Talk about how complex the human body

is. Even so, doctors and scientists have worked and experimented until they are able to transplant most of the parts. But they cannot start from scratch and make a living soul. God created a soul in man and that is what makes man unique. Animals can move about and do things that are instinctive to their kind, but only man, through his soul, can touch the heart of God.

Answers for ANSWER



Lesson 3

TEXT Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-19

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE James 1:2-3,12-15

OBJECTIVE The students will understand that temptation comes to all, but that it is yielding to temptation that results in sin. They will further realize that if we ask for it, God does give strength to overcome temptation.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations. — 2 Peter 2:9

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. — 1 Corinthians 10:13

ANSWER TITLE: **Tim’s Birthday Surprise**

SEARCH TITLE: **The First Temptation and Sin**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

God put man in the Garden with the instructions to dress it and keep it. Undoubtedly the Creator felt that man would be happier if given some type of activity. God placed one restriction upon our foreparents and, sad to say, they failed to be obedient in that.

Verse 6 of our text states that the tree was “good for food,” “pleasant to the eyes,” and a tree “to make one wise.” Adam Clarke brings out that these are representative of the three sources from which all moral evil sprang.

They are exactly what the Apostle calls the desire of the flesh (the tree was good for food); the desire of the eye (the tree was pleasant to the sight); and the pride of life (the tree would bring wisdom).

The first sin in the universe was an act of free will in which the creature deliberately, responsibly, and with adequate understanding of the issues, chose to corrupt the holy, godly character with which God originally endowed His creation.

YOUR OPENER

The First Temptation and Sin

TEXT: Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-19

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE: James 1:2-3, 12-15

KEY VERSE: There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. — 1 Corinthians 10:13

RESPONSES

1. Originally *tempt* meant “to test or try.” It is generally defined as “to try to persuade (a person), induce, entice, allure, especially to something sensually pleasurable or immoral.” However, it is important to make clear to your students that this lesson is dealing with temptation that would lead into sin. You might ask your students what some of the different types of temptation are.

2. Allow time for your students to give their definitions. Consider using 1 John 3:4 as part of your response. The dictionary defines *sin* as “the breaking of religious law or a moral principle, especially through a willful act.” Where there is no knowledge of good and evil, sin cannot be imputed. See Romans 5:13. Eve, who knew exactly what the Lord had told her not to do, transgressed when she yielded.

3. Your students may have a variety of answers. However, the main thought that should come from this question is the fact that God made man with the power of choice—He made man a free moral agent. He could have served God implicitly, obeying and believing Him. Through the ages of time man has been faced with making a choice between obeying God or giving in to temptation to do wrong. You may wish to ask for examples of Biblical characters who escaped sinning by their choice of not yielding to temptation. Some examples may include the three Hebrew children, Daniel, and Joseph.

Temptation is the means by which Satan attempts to deceive mankind into disobeying God. It is the common lot of all. But a Christian who faces up to temptation and utilizes the source of his strength—the overcoming power of God—will not fall into sin as did Adam and Eve.

1. What is the dictionary definition of the word *tempt*?

2. Give a definition of *sin*.

3. Temptation always precedes sin and yet it is obvious the two are not the same. Yielding to Satan’s temptations is what causes sin. What means did God provide for Adam and Eve to escape yielding to the temptation?

7

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

4. How did the serpent's question, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" lead into temptation?

5. The devil promised Eve that she and Adam would be as gods, knowing good and evil. What could they gain by yielding?

6. Sin was introduced by the first lie. What was the first lie? What are the characteristics of a lie?

7. Using 1 John 2:16, what are the points of contact with the world that would lead us into temptation?

8. John 17:15,16 indicates that we do not need to be taken out of the world in order to be kept from evil. List several things we can do to avoid being overcome by temptation.

Through man's temptation and subsequent yielding, the curse of sin was brought into the world. But God offers mercy through His plan of redemption. The first promise of this is given in Genesis 3:15. On the Cross, the heel of the Savior was bruised in death, but the head of the serpent (Satan) is bruised every time a lost soul is redeemed or one of God's redeemed withstands temptation.

8

4. His question contained the characteristic of instilling a doubt in the mind of Eve regarding God's Word. Satan is a disputer, and many times he openly challenges; but at other times he comes quietly, and very subtly presents a question in the mind as to whether it is actually wrong to do something under certain circumstances. Ask the students to give some examples of how the devil uses these methods today.

5. Since Adam and Eve had known nothing but good, the only thing they could gain was the knowledge of evil and the awful sorrow it causes in a life. This knowledge brought condemnation, and plunged the whole human race into sin.

6. "Ye shall not surely die." As sin was introduced by a lie, so has it been mainly sustained and propagated. Lies are conceived in the mind and heart. They may be uttered by the lips or they may be acted out in life. That which presents the unreal as truth, or is meant to deceive by what is said or unsaid, is a lie.

7. This question could lend itself to some lengthy discussion. You might want to split your class three ways for a few minutes and have each group explain one of the following: lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Then bring the groups back together and have one person from each group tell what that group's thoughts were. The class should conclude that their natural senses—sight, taste, touch, hearing, smell—are their contacts with the world. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life were all included in the first temptation, and every other one that has followed.

8. You may want to use a circle response to get a variety of answers. (Always remember to inform the students that if they prefer not to contribute, they may pass, and you will go on to the next student.) The students' answers may include: fleeing from temptation, avoiding situations which would make one vulnerable to temptation, keeping a spirit of worship and praise to God in the heart, placing a high value on what God has said, fortifying themselves with the Word of God, and having the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. See Isaiah 59:19.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

How does Adam's and Eve's disobedience affect us?

What is sin?

Realizing that no one is free from temptation, can you name some types of temptation that different individuals and groups of people (children, teenagers, young adults, etc.) might have to face?

What do you think Adam and Eve may have had to do to dress and keep the Garden? Would they have had to weed, prune, spray? Why or why not?

Why would God not want man to eat of the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?

What is the meaning of the word *subtil*? In what way does this characteristic show up in the temptations of people today?

Adam and Eve knew what God told them to do and did something different. How did their choice affect all their descendants?

In what ways do our choices to do right or wrong affect others?

In the ANSWER story, how was Tim tempted? How did his choice affect him? others?

How would you explain the difference between temptation and sinning?

THINGS TO DO

Show your students two boxes—one wrapped beautifully and one plainly. Have something good or beautiful in the plain box; nothing in the fancy one. Explain how the things that look tempting may not always prove to be the best choice.

Needed: Mousetrap and bait (cheese). How could any mouse be dumb enough to walk into this big wooden trap? But when you set a trap, the mouse doesn't look at the wood and springs and such. All he sees is the bait, that small bit of good cheese you have set there for him.

That is what traps him! Satan does the same thing. He doesn't show you the big trap you will be caught up in if you sin. He just shows you the tantalizing bits of pleasure. But that moment of pleasure can trap you so that you are controlled by sin. Take a good look at the pleasures around you, then look beyond them to see where they will lead you. Don't get trapped!

Take to class a fishhook and bait, mousetrap, flypaper, duck call, and other such traps and ask what they have in common. Discuss and list things that might be "traps" for us.

Have two students do a dialogue between Adam and Eve as she tempts him to bite into the forbidden fruit.

Answers for ANSWER

Using God's Strength

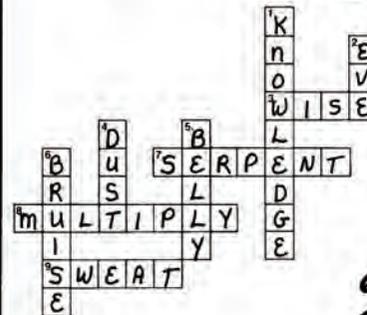
The devil tries to tempt everybody. But God gives you strength so you don't have to do what the devil says. Adam and Eve didn't use God's strength. The answers to this crossword puzzle can help you remember how sin first began here on earth. The numbers at the end of each sentence or question are the chapter and verse where the answer can be found. All the verses are in the Book of Genesis.

DOWN

- Of what tree did God forbid Adam to eat? (2:17)
- Who took the first bite of the fruit? (3:6)
- What did God tell Adam and Eve they were formed of and would return to? (3:19)
- God cursed the serpent and said it would eat dust and go on its _____. (3:14)
- God said the woman's seed would the serpent's head. (3:15)

ACROSS

- Eve desired to be _____. (3:6)
- What was more subtle than any beast of the field? (3:1)
- God told Eve He would greatly _____ her sorrow in childbearing. (3:16)
- Adam's punishment was having to work the ground by the _____ of his face. (3:19)



TEXT Genesis 6:5-22; 7:1-24

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE Matthew 24:37-39

OBJECTIVE The students will realize that wickedness, unless repented of, will bring judgment. They will further see, through the example of Noah and his family, that God provides a way of escape from judgment for those who turn to Him.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER The seed of the righteous shall be delivered.
— Proverbs 11:21

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.
— Isaiah 26:20

ANSWER TITLE: **Where Have You Been?**

SEARCH TITLE: **The First Plan of Escape**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

Noah’s ark is referred to in Matthew 24:38 and Luke 17:27 as a warning of coming judgment; in Hebrews 11:7 as an example of faith; and in 1 Peter 3:20 as an example of the “long-suffering of God,” followed by disaster for the disobedient, but salvation for the few who entered the ark. Noah was tenth in descent from Adam in the line of Seth. When he was 480 years old, he was warned of God that the world would be destroyed by water. He was then given exact instructions for building the ark.

The ark had room for about 7,000 animals. It is esti-

mated that the building of it took 120 years. The ark’s measurements are taken from Genesis 6:14-16: 547 feet long, about 91 feet wide, 54 1/2 feet high. In the English system, the cubit is 18 inches.

The Flood occurred in approximately 2350 B.C. The floodwaters began in Noah’s 600th year, increased steadily for 40 days, maintained their mountain-covering depth for 110 more days, and then subsided sufficiently for Noah to disembark in the mountains of Ararat after another 221 days. Noah, his family and the animals were in the ark about a year. See Genesis 7:11 and 8:13.

YOUR OPENER

The First Plan of Escape

TEXT: Genesis 6:5-22; 7:1-24

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE: Matthew 24:37-39

KEY VERSE: Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. — Isaiah 26:20

RESPONSES

1. The earth was to be destroyed by a flood, but the ark would provide a way of escape for those inside. God gave Noah explicit dimensions and directions for building the ark. Ask your students what kind of labor and time went into building the ark? How does this correspond to the effort on man's part toward his salvation? God freely gives His salvation, but there must be considerable diligence and effort on man's part to act and live as God would have him. Noah probably felt almost overwhelmed when confronted with his task, but knew it was well worthwhile when the Flood came. In like measure, people sometimes feel that it is almost more than they can do to live a Christian life, "but he that endureth to the end shall be saved." It will be well worth any effort demanded if, at the end of life, the person can see Jesus and enter into eternal life.

2. The ark was made of gopher wood, sealed within and without with pitch, three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide, by thirty cubits high. The ark was to have three stories with a door in the side and a window at the top. Noah had faith that if he followed God's directions the finished product would accomplish the purpose that God intended. In order to build such a large vessel, where did Noah and his sons obtain so much lumber and of such huge sizes as would be needed? He could not order it from the lumberyard; he had to go to the forest to hew it. The purpose of this question is to bring out the enormity of the project that faced Noah and his family in order to be spared from the Flood.

3. God gave Noah seven days to get his family and the animals into the ark. It seems that God gave the people a last chance to repent. Have your students rehearse the events just before the Flood came. Though the people had not believed Noah's warning of the impending flood, one might expect that they would have felt some curiosity when they saw all the animals going into the ark. The Bible tells us that men are willingly ignorant concerning the things of God (2 Peter 3:5). Ask your students to identify some of the events happening in the world today that point to Jesus Christ's imminent Second Coming to earth.

Just a few generations after Adam's sin, God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Being grieved with this condition, God decreed judgment upon corrupt mankind, but "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" and he and his family were spared from destruction. Thus we find from the beginning of God's dealings with men that His love provides, for those who repent, a way of escape from judgment.

1. Why was Noah told to build the ark, and from what source did he receive instructions to build such a vessel?

2. Give a description of the ark. How did Noah know that it would be seaworthy, or even float?

3. What took place as soon as Noah was finished building the ark? What space of time came between this event and the actual Flood? What significance can be placed upon this circumstance?

9

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

4. Who shut the door when Noah and his family were in the ark? Why?

5. Because Noah was a righteous man, he was saved from the Flood. Do you feel that God will eventually destroy the righteous with the wicked when He sends judgment upon the earth again? Why or why not?

6. Explain how the earth will eventually be destroyed. See 2 Peter 3:10.

7. What similarity is there between the days of Noah and the days in which we live? Matthew 24:37-39.

4. God shut the door of the ark. Have the students talk about the finality of a God-closed door (Revelation 3:7). Perhaps the cries of the people perishing on the outside of the ark caused pity in the hearts of the family inside, but Noah could not open the door to admit anyone. Ask your students to parallel this to God's warning which comes to mankind today to enter the door of mercy while it is open. They should conclude that the day will come when it will be closed forever. See Luke 13:24-25.

5. God will never destroy the righteous with the wicked, because He has pledged that He will not do so. Bring out the fact, with your students' participation, that some righteous people have died along with the ungodly in times of crises such as fires, floods, and wars. Jonathan was an exemplary man, yet he died in war along with his backslidden father, but there was a difference. No doubt Jonathan's soul went to eternal bliss, while King Saul's soul went to a lost eternity. Scripture shows us that God will not destroy the righteous with the unrepentant wicked. Refer to Genesis 18:23-25 and the key verse. Point out that death for the Christian is not destruction but, rather, a transition to eternal life.

6. The earth will be destroyed by fire. What was destroyed in Noah's time? God was grieved with the sins of men, so He destroyed mankind and all the animals that did not go into the ark. In the last days "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." Emphasize the truth that the sins of men are under God's judgment. The only place of safety is in God's grace through repentance and forsaking of sin.

7. "As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Ask your students what characterized the hearts of men in Noah's time? Discussion should bring out the fact that the sins of men were great and their hearts were only evil continually. Jesus taught that just prior to His coming back to earth, the actions of men would be much the same. He emphasized that people continued living their lives just as if no judgment had been pronounced. As the antediluvians found no reprieve from the Flood after the door of the ark was shut, so those who refuse to repent while God's love is calling will find no place of repentance after the door of mercy has been closed—only a lost eternity.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

Why did Noah and his family escape destruction?

How old was Noah when the Flood came?

How long did it rain upon the earth?

What were some of the characteristics of Noah that caused him to find favor with God? Why might these characteristics be important to people today?

Noah was given very specific instructions. How important is it to follow directions in order to escape judgment or to reach desired goals?

What are the directions for escaping sin and judgment?

Think how it must have been for Noah to build the ark. How would you feel if you did not understand boat building yet were directed to build a craft with which you were not familiar?

What is coming upon the earth soon, that God compared to the time of the Flood?

Noah escaped by obeying God. What must we do to prepare for Heaven?

What comparisons might be made between conditions on the earth today and those in Noah's time?

Do you think God will again destroy man from the face of the earth? Why or why not?

In the ANSWER story, Kim disobeyed her parents. What did she do to cover up for her disobedience? Will a "cover-up" keep one from being punished? Why or why not?

THINGS TO DO

Using the alphabet as a guide, ask each student to name an item that went into the ark; for example, A — aardvark, B — baboon, C — cat. If a student cannot think of something, just go on to the next person.

Show your students pictures of the ark and a cross. Explain them in this way: ARK — The ark was prepared

to save Noah and any who would believe and follow him into it. Eight people, in all, were saved from that destruction. CROSS — God sent Jesus to die for us. If we will believe and follow Him we will be saved from the end-time destruction. How many people, in all, will be saved?

Bring a road map and a Bible to class. Have your class look at the map and help you choose a starting point and a destination. Decide the best road to travel. Now that you know the best way, it would make no sense to start traveling on back roads or streets that go in the opposite direction. The same is true when we know we want our destination to be Heaven. The Bible is our road map and it tells us that the only way to get there is to repent of our sins. How foolish to think we can get to Heaven in any other way.

Answers for ANSWER

A Way of Escape	
Sin will always bring punishment, but God has made a way for us to escape His punishment. He sent Jesus. God has always provided a way of escape for those who love Him. Over four thousand years ago He made a way for Noah to escape. Answer the questions below to find out why and how. The numbers at the end of each question are the chapters and verses where the answers can be found. They are all from the Book of Genesis.	
1.	Why was God going to destroy the earth and the people in it? (6:5) They were filled with violence
2.	Why did God save Noah and his family? (6:9) He was a just man and walked with God
3.	How many people were saved in the ark? (7:13) Eight
4.	What kind of wood was used in making the ark? (6:14) Gopher wood
5.	How many stories (decks) did the ark have? (6:16) Three
6.	How many doors and windows did the ark have? (6:16) One door — One window
7.	How long was Noah in the ark before it began to rain? (7:10) Seven days
8.	Who closed the door of the ark? (7:16) The Lord
9.	How long did the waters last upon the earth? (7:24) 150 days
10.	What two birds were sent out from the ark? (8:7,8) A raven and a dove

The First Skyscraper

TEXT: Genesis 11:1-9; 1 Corinthians 3:9-15

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 55:6-9

KEY VERSE: Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. — Jeremiah 17:5

It is astounding that, with Noah still alive about one hundred years after the Flood, the people of the earth should so lose their fear of God that they did not hesitate to join themselves in a project defying Him. Building a tower and concentrating their population instead of spreading out and repopulating the earth as God had commanded (Genesis 9:1), demonstrated their independent spirit and resistance to God. Because of their disobedience, God intervened and confused their language, thus preventing the world from again being given over totally to sin and lawlessness. God's Word is our blueprint for building our spiritual house. Deviation from this blueprint will result in the same confusion and disaster experienced by the people of Babel.

1. Who did the people of Babel consult with as they made plans to build a city and a tower? Who should they have approached about the matter? Why?

2. Note here two reasons why the men of Babel decided to build a city and a tower whose "top may reach unto heaven."

3. Who visited the people as they attempted to build the city and tower at Babel, and why? Is God interested in our plans today? Why or why not?

RESPONSES

1. Genesis 11:3 says, "they said one to another." Obviously they left God out of their plans. The students should be made to realize the importance of including God in all their plans. James 4:13-17 gives us some key words—"If the Lord will, . . ."

2. Verse 4 tells us that they desired to make themselves a name, and they wanted to prevent their being scattered over the face of the whole earth. Here is an opportunity to point out that God pays particular attention to men's motives and their desires to obey or disobey Him. The class should realize that pride figured strongly in the motives of these people. Proverbs 16:18 says, "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." The second reason given in verse 4 was in conflict with God's command to Noah and his posterity (Genesis 9:1). The men of Babel wished to concentrate their power and kingdom as a people, rather than do as God had instructed, to repopulate the earth. Men's desires often result in an attempt to rationalize away God's Word by wresting Scripture out of context, and by explanations which, in essence, say God didn't mean what He said. If our plans are in conflict with God's Word, we can be sure they will meet with disaster.

3. God himself visited the people at Babel. The students should understand that God is vitally interested in how each one builds his spiritual house, so interested, in fact, that He visits people individually by His Holy Spirit, speaking to each one's conscience. He also visits them at times through Christians who preach to them the Word of God. His Holy Spirit witnesses to each soul as to what the truth is. Discuss with the class other ways in which the Lord makes His visits known to man.

4. In this case, the Lord chose a simple non-violent means of terminating the Babel project—confusion of tongues. Discuss with the class how the subsequent scattering of the people accomplished God's twofold purpose. It imposed restraint on man's ability to consolidate his defiance of God, and accomplished the command given to Noah and his sons to repopulate the earth. This is a chance to point out that if a Christian's plans seem to be blocked, he should take a second look at them to be sure of God's guidance. As Christians, we should not make it difficult for God to accomplish His purpose in us. See Philippians 2:13.

5. God furnishes the foundation of our spiritual house (1 Corinthians 3:11), which is Jesus Christ. Here is an opportunity to teach salvation from sin through faith in Christ. God's part

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

4. What action did the Lord decide to take regarding the building project at Babel? Why?

5. As Christians, we are co-laborers with God in building our spiritual house. List several things which show God's part in this labor. List several things which show our part.

6. In 1 Corinthians 3:12, the writer mentions various materials which one might use to build his spiritual house. Note here several Christians' experiences and Christian character attributes which he may be referring to as "gold, silver, precious stones." Now contrast these with what you think the writer may mean by "wood, hay, stubble." See John 17:17; Acts 2:39; Galatians 3:2-3; 5:22-23; Hebrews 6:1; James 1:22 and 1 Peter 1:5-7.

7. Explain what you feel the word *fire* refers to in 1 Corinthians 3:13.

8. How is it possible to lose the heavenly reward which we might have gained in our service for Christ? And how is it possible to be assured of that reward?

is His grace imparted at salvation. Our part is believing on the Lord Jesus Christ with all our hearts, having confessed and repented of all our sins. We must co-labor with God in order to be kept from sin. Our part is to study and apply God's Word to our lives, and to do as Jesus said, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." God's part is to give His peace and power, "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7).

6. The students should recognize that sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost are precious stones in one's spiritual house, without which it cannot be completed. Sanctification brings a special unity with Jesus Christ and God's purposes into the life. The baptism provides the Christian with power to witness for the Lord. The character attributes of Galatians 5:22-23 and 1 Peter 1:5-7 are part of the gold and silver with which the spiritual house can be overlaid. Mark 16:15 and Revelation 12:11 further remind us that witnessing for Jesus is an indispensable part of one's spiritual house. Galatians 3:2-3 reminds us that trusting in one's own works, proceeding with spiritual pride and self-righteousness, is to build with "wood, hay or stubble." Explore with the students other concerns such as priorities, lukewarmness, and carnality. Any deviation from God's blueprint, the Bible, is using these latter materials.

7. The word *fire* is most often used to mean "trials and temptations," but in this case it refers to the final testing time when Jesus returns to earth. Extend your students' thinking to include God's special revelation regarding the motives back of what one does in His service. It is possible to be doing many of the right things but with self at the center instead of giving all glory to Jesus Christ. See 2 Corinthians 13:5.

8. Use this as a wrap-up by turning to Matthew 7:21-23, and also 1 Samuel 16:7. The students should realize that God knows our thoughts and our motives as well as all our actions. Obedience is the key factor in our lives. If we fail to obey we will someday hear those words, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." If our spiritual house is to withstand the "fire" it must conform day by day to God's Holy Word. Should we find through prayer and Bible study, with self-examination, that we need to improve, Christ has promised to reveal even this to us. See Philippians 3:15. Let us be sure that we are adding "gold and silver" to our Christian character daily so that, should Jesus come at any moment, or we be called suddenly to leave this world, we will be greeted with the words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

Imagine the people of Babel living today. How would you explain to them the way to be happy?

What is the meaning of the word *babble*, as used in our language today? Relate this definition to our lesson.

Is there proof of the tower of Babel in the world today? What is that proof?

Can you think of things that would be different if the tower of Babel had never been built?

Why did the men of Babel want to build a city and a tower?

What did God do to the men of Babel as a result of their disobedience?

What is the meaning of verses 13 and 15 of our 1 Corinthians text?

In the ANSWER story, Mark made a suggestion for a quicker route to school. Was it a good idea? Why or why not?

THINGS TO DO

Have someone start to tell your students a story, then switch into a foreign language (or use a tape). This will help to illustrate the confusion which resulted when the language was suddenly changed at Babel.

Draw a tower with windows, taping a square of paper over each window. Under each square, write a question concerning the lesson. Let each child pick a window and answer the question.

Take a recipe to class. Ask your students to help you alter it "just a little." For example: put in six eggs instead of one, powdered sugar instead of flour (it looks the same, doesn't it?), salt instead of sugar. Then ask what the result will be. This helps to illustrate that we should not attempt to do things in our own way and ignore God's plan.

Have the students do drawings to represent things in which people of our day may take pride. For example: a book to represent education and religious knowledge,

a building to represent a business or home, a church to represent church attendance, money to represent good works, and books on etiquette and manners to represent good living habits.

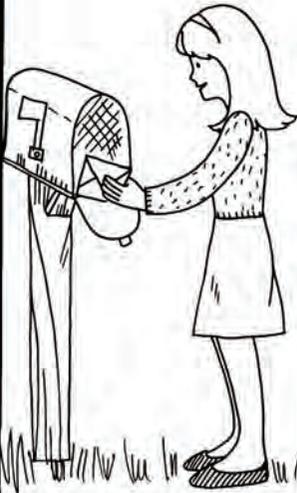
At the end of the lesson give each student a piece of paper and a pencil and have him write in his own words the story that was presented to him and what he has learned during class time.

To illustrate the consequence of the pride and disobedience of the men of Babel, have the students name as many different languages and dialects as they can. Stress the fact that, although we speak different languages and come from different backgrounds, God can still speak to each heart and wants us all to love and obey Him.

Answers for ANSWER

A Letter of Hope

Pretend you lived long ago when the people decided to build the tower of Babel. Write a letter to the people and tell them what you think of the idea of building the tower. Let them know the true and only way they can be happy.



Dear People of Babel,

Sincerely,

Lesson 6

TEXT Genesis 12:1-3; 17:1-8

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE Psalm 1:1-6

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to list the benefits that came to Abraham through believing and following God. They will further be able to cite the benefits that come to Christians today when they follow the same course of action.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. — Genesis 15:1

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. — Romans 5:1-2

ANSWER TITLE: **God’s Promise to Abraham**

SEARCH TITLE: **The First Hebrew**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

The account in Genesis 12:1-3 takes place about four hundred years after the Flood, and already man had forgotten God. In verse 2, God promises Abram to “make thy name great.” *Abram* means “a high father.” *Abraham* means “the father of a multitude of nations.”

Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born, the beginning of the fulfillment of God’s promise of many descendants.

The first use of the word *Hebrew* is found in Genesis 14:13. There doesn’t seem to be a clear meaning for its origin. The first suggestion in Smith’s Bible Dictionary is that Abraham was called Hebrew because he had crossed the river. His original home, Ur, was near the Euphrates River. The name also may have referred to his ancestor Heber (“Eber” in Genesis 11:14), the great grandson of Shem.

YOUR OPENER

The First Hebrew

RESPONSES

1. The first three verses of our text establish the framework for this lesson and reveal the seven special promises that were given to Abram. God's promises to Abram were conditioned on his leaving his country and kindred. Ask your students if Abram would have benefited from the promises if he had not followed God's command. Sum up this question by bringing out that receiving the fulfillment of God's promises is based on some prerequisites. Then move directly to the next question.

2. God has made many promises to the saved and unsaved. Starting with the universal call to repentance, God promises eternal life, the fruit of the Spirit, spiritual experiences, healing, etc. Added to these, He has promised that we can be joint heirs with Christ. But as Abram had to leave his country and kindred, so must we be willing to turn our backs on our former life, and become new creatures in Christ. Also, as Abram believed God, we, too, must exercise faith and look for that City "whose builder and maker is God."

3. Discussion of this question should bring out that the promise, "in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed," refers to the coming of a Savior—Jesus. What a wonderful promise! Ask the class if they think Abram knew just what this promise meant. Might it be possible that there are depths to some of the promises God has given us that are not fully understood yet?

4. In Genesis 17:8 we read that God promised the land of Canaan to Abraham and his children forever. He confirmed the covenant in many other Scriptures: Genesis 12:7; 13:15; 15:7,18; 26:3; 35:12; 50:24; Exodus 6:8; Leviticus 20:24; Numbers 14:8; Deuteronomy 6:10; 31:20; Joshua 5:6; Judges 2:1. The students should understand that this land was given to Abraham's descendants by the Lord and it should be theirs today.

5. God knew that a covenant between Himself and Abram required a close communion, and that required perfection. God is still looking for sinless perfection—not absolute perfection. Sin is the deliberate transgression of the known will of God, to do something one knows he shouldn't, or failure to do what he knows he should do. Mistakes, errors, miscalculations, and oversights are not sin, but are human frailties that we should ask the Lord to help us overcome.

6. Some of the New Testament references on perfection: Matthew 19:21; Luke 6:40; John 17:23; 2 Corinthians 13:11; Ephesians

TEXT: Genesis 12:1-3; 17:1-8

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE: Psalm 1:1-6

KEY VERSE: Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. — Romans 5:1-2

God is continually looking for one who will make up the hedge and stand in the gap (Ezekiel 22:30). Often He is disappointed, but the Bible tells us of some who did respond to the call of God. Among these was Abraham. Because of his implicit faith in God, he is known as "the Friend of God" (James 2:23). Isn't it wonderful that Jesus said we, too, can be His friend (John 15:14-15)?

1. What were the promises that God made to Abram and on what were they conditioned?

2. List some promises God has made to you and reflect on what you have to do to receive them.

3. Of the seven promises God gave to Abram, which do you consider to be the most important to us? Why?

4. Genesis 12:1 tells us Abram was promised a land which God would show him. Where was that land? What other verse in our text brings out God's promise that He would give this land to Abram's descendants?

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ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

5. When Abram was ninety-nine years old God told him to "walk before me and be thou perfect." Explain in your own words what this means. Why did God require this of Abram? See Genesis 17:2.

6. In His sermon on the mount, Jesus tells us to be perfect (Matthew 5:48). How many other references to perfection can you find in the New Testament?

7. What significance is there in the fact that God changed Abram's name to Abraham?

8. List some ways that Psalm 1 might apply to Abraham.

9. It is obvious that Abraham received some wonderful benefits by following the Lord. In reading Psalm 1, we find some benefits to which we, too, have access if we follow the Lord. The first verse of this Psalm lists three contingencies. For each, give an example or illustration applicable to our day.

10. Psalm 1:3 promises the godly man that "whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." How can we explain this verse in light of the fact that, obviously, all Christians are not materially prosperous?

4:13; Philippians 3:15; Colossians 1:28; 2 Timothy 3:17; Hebrews 13:20-21; James 1:4; 1 Peter 5:10.

7. Genesis 17:5 indicates that his name was changed as a confirmation of God's promise that he would be the father of many nations. This was the first recorded instance in the Bible where God changed a person's name. Ask your students some of the ways God confirms His promises to people today. For example: His Spirit bears witness with our spirit, He brings to our minds portions of Scripture which confirm a promise, or He allows another person to receive the same assurance.

8. Allow time for your students to discuss each verse. For example, verse 1 of this Psalm might remind them that Abram followed God's leading rather than seek the advice of the ungodly (Genesis 12:1,5). Verse 2: Abraham's delight was in his communion with God, and he often built altars unto the Lord (Genesis 12:7; 13:18). Verse 3: He was very prosperous (Genesis 12:2). Verse 4: When four ungodly kings fought against Sodom and Gomorrah and took Lot captive, Abraham overcame them with 318 men (Genesis 14:14,15). Verse 5: He recovered all the spoil, and the four kings fled before him (Genesis 14:16). Verse 6: The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, and He knew Abraham's heart and ways (Genesis 18:19).

9. Your students' examples of the phrases, "walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful" should reinforce the necessity of being separate from the world if they are to receive the blessing of God. Just as Abram left Haran and the things with which he was familiar, so must they disassociate themselves from things which might interfere with whatever God calls them to do.

10. As your students talk this over, they should conclude that prosperity does not mean only financial plenty. Direct them to Matthew 6:33 which promises that if we seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness then all these things will be added unto us. God knows what is best for us, and if we are living according to His Word and His will, then we can be sure that whatever happens to us is for our good. Conclude your class session by considering Abraham once more. As he stepped out in faith to obey God's command, did he see prosperity every step of the way? Did he immediately see the blessings that had been promised him? Christians today may, like Abraham, have to walk by faith for a time. But consider the eternal reward for doing so!

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

Part of Abram's reward concerned the identity of one of his descendants. Who was He?

Did God tell Abram where he was going when He told him to leave? How do you think Abram felt?

Imagine you are told unexpectedly to move to a totally new area. How would you feel about leaving friends, school, etc.?

Which verse of our text tells us the meaning of the name *Abraham*?

What does the word *covenant* mean to you. What covenant did God make with Abraham? How was it fulfilled?

Give a New Testament Scripture that shows we must be separate.

Our text lists some promises God gave to Abram if he would believe and obey. What promises does God give us if we believe and obey?

Of what significance are the ages of Abraham and Sarah in showing God's power and ability to keep promises?

Genesis 17:8 lists a promise of the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession. How important is this statement in looking at current Middle East developments?

What position should our nation and all other nations take toward Israel?

What are some of the blessings believers receive while here on earth?

THINGS TO DO

Figure how many times you would have to walk around your own church building to cover the distance Abraham journeyed. (It was over one thousand miles!)

Bring a jar of sand to class and let the students try counting the grains.

Make a covenant with your students. Example: "If you

will read your lesson and memorize the key verse, I will bring you a prize next week."

Prepare a question-answer matching chart. Down one side write a list of questions about the lesson such as, "Did God tell Abram where he was going?" "How old was Abram when he left Haran?" "Who went with Abram?" On the other side of the chart list the answers but not in the correct order. Draw a line between the questions and the correct answers the students give.

Bring a dozen plastic eggs (or as many as you need for your class). In each egg put a slip of paper on which you have written a question about the lesson. Tell the students to choose an egg, and if they can answer the question they may have a prize.

Answers for ANSWER

Believe and Be Blessed

Abraham was blessed because he believed and followed God. Find the words listed below in the wordfind. Remember that if we believe and follow God we, too, will be blessed.

What does kindred mean?

It means people who are related to you.

TEXT Exodus 3:1-15; Isaiah 43:1-2

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to compare Moses' call from God with God's call in their own life, and understand that when God asks anyone to do something, He will be with that one.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. — Matthew 28:20

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. — Isaiah 41:10

ANSWER TITLE: **A Burning Bush**

SEARCH TITLE: **The First Leader**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

The Children of Israel were in Egypt from about 1800 B.C. to approximately 1400 B.C. The early part of their stay had been favorable for them. In the latter part of their stay their lifestyle had been reduced to slavery. The cry of their hearts was for deliverance. God heard their prayers and Moses was commissioned by God to lead the Israelites out of bondage.

As the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, Moses received the education of an Egyptian prince. In Pharaoh's court Moses learned arithmetic and how to read and write hieroglyphics, which are messages shown by pictures carved or drawn on monuments of stone. Moses probably also used a reed pen to write hieroglyphics on paper made from papyrus plants. When older, he learned philosophy, higher mathematics, and the study of the stars. Later lessons show how God used Moses' education.

Arab shepherds seldom took their flocks more than a

day's journey from camp but, in this account, Moses must have gone on a journey of several days. God in His plan was leading Moses to Horeb. Sinai and Horeb seem to be the same place. It has been suggested that Horeb is the name given to the entire mountain range, while Sinai denotes the particular mountain where the Law was given to Moses.

God's direction to "put off thy shoes" made sense to Moses. In the East it is an ancient as well as modern way of showing reverence. Egyptian priests observed this custom when they went into their temples to confess personal defilement and their unworthiness to stand in the presence of their gods.

The God Jehovah revealed Himself by the name "I AM." No other words could so perfectly express the truth and mystery of the nature of the true God. It means He is self-existent; He is self-sufficient; He is what He will be.

YOUR OPENER

RESPONSES

1. Moses was in the desert near Mt. Horeb. As your students discuss the second part of the question, they should see that the location wasn't as important as the condition of Moses' heart. The time was right for God to call him. The point should be made that God calls a person wherever he is, in whatever circumstances he finds himself. Each person's responsibility is to recognize God's call, and respond to it.

2. Moses was spared an untimely death in infancy, and was raised by Pharaoh's daughter. He was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and lived there until the age of forty. After avenging an oppressed Israelite by killing an Egyptian, he fled to Midian where he lived for forty years, married, and had two sons (their names are given in Exodus 18:2-4). Ask your students how this history might have affected Moses' ability to carry out God's call on his life. The point should be made that God can use our background, potential, and talents though His call is not dependent upon them. We can rest secure in His almighty wisdom, even when we feel His call is too great for our abilities.

3. Allow time for your students to offer some examples of the ways God calls people today. They may mention such things as, through the inspiration of a portion of Scripture, through a strong impression when seeking the Lord's will in prayer, or through the counsel or advice of the ministry. The importance of the call of God can be seen in many Scriptures. Romans 11:29 reveals that it is unchangeable. Philippians 3:14 associates it with a prize. In 2 Timothy 1:9 we read that it is a "holy" calling, given according to God's own purpose and grace. So, no matter how God's call comes to a person, it is of far greater value than any earthly calling.

4. As your students discuss their answers, you may wish to bring out that this statement may have been made to remind Moses of God's power. Undoubtedly Moses had been taught how God had led, sustained, and worked for the forefathers of his people. In recalling this, he would feel an assurance that God would also be with him. Just so in our day, recounting past blessings and recalling how God was with believers in former days, can reassure us of God's presence with us today.

5. Moses asked the Lord, "Who am I?" He obviously felt insufficient for the task God had set before him. Often today, those who feel that God is calling them to do some task for Him think they are incapable, so they

The First Leader

TEXT: Exodus 3:1-15; Isaiah 43:1-2

KEY VERSE: Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. — Isaiah 41:10

The commission Moses received from God, to lead the Children of Israel from bondage in Egypt to the Promised Land, was a huge one. Great issues were at stake and much would depend on him. One cannot blame Moses for saying, "Who am I?" When God calls one to a position of responsibility in His service, that person may not feel sufficient. But God's commands are His enablings; with an order there is given the required strength and wisdom. Surely there was great comfort and reassurance in the promise that God gave Moses: "Certainly I will be with thee."

1. Where was Moses when he heard the call of God? Why do you think God choose that location?

2. God allowed some unusual circumstances to direct the course of Moses' early life. Briefly outline those events, using Acts 7:20-29.

3. God used a supernatural manifestation to call Moses. How does He call people today? How can we know that any call from God is just as important as His call to Moses though it may not be given in such a spectacular way?

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

4. Of what importance was it to Moses when God declared Himself to be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?

5. Parallel Moses' response to how some people respond today when they feel the call of God.

6. In verse 12 of our text, God promised Moses a token. What was that token? Does God do this for us today? Explain.

7. In our key verse, God made three promises regarding what He will do for His people. What were they?

8. What did God promise Moses He would do for the Children of Israel? Draw the parallel between the promise to the Israelites and the promise to Christians.

9. Humility is an essential quality of leadership in the work of the Lord. What word is used in Numbers 12:3 to describe this quality in Moses' life?

hesitate. However, the promise to Moses that "Certainly I will be with thee" is extended to every person who answers the call of God and endeavors to work for Him. See Joshua 1:5.

6. God promised Moses that when the people came out of Egypt, they would serve God "upon this mountain." In beginning your discussion of this question, you may wish to point out some other Biblical instances where God gave a visible token or witness to a promise He had made. Some examples might include the sign of the rainbow given to Noah, Gideon's fleece, the promise that "a virgin shall conceive," and the shepherds' search for the Babe in swaddling clothes. Your students may point out that the "signs which follow" the preaching of the Gospel are a witness to the veracity of the call of God.

7. God promised to strengthen, help, and uphold. Encourage your students to relate specific ways these promises apply to each of them today. For instance, the promise to *strengthen* could mean, "to increase physical stamina, to give spiritual strength to defeat the powers of the enemy, to give mental strength in studying and perceiving the truths of His Word, to give strength and courage to be fearless in witnessing for Him." As your students explore the depths of this promise, it should become increasingly apparent what a tremendous assurance they have when they know the Lord is with them. Surely, with the strength, help, and upholding He has promised, they can fulfill the call He has placed upon their lives.

8. God promised to deliver the Children of Israel from Egyptian bondage and bring them into a land that flowed with milk and honey. The Christian's heritage includes the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come (1 Timothy 4:8). Discuss with the students how the Children of Israel went through some hard places before they arrived in the promised land, but God was with them and they were well pleased once they were settled in their new homeland. Christians face difficulties at times too. Ask the students to read some of the Scriptures showing this fact, such as Matthew 10:22; 1 Timothy 6:12; 2 Timothy 2:3.

9. Meek. In discussion with your class bring out that meekness is not cowardice, but in actuality shows that one can be meek and humble and still strong in character. See Luke 6:29. Even though Moses was a meek man, God enabled him to stand before Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and demand that God's people be released from bondage as God had commanded. As we follow the example of Moses and obey God's call, we can prove in our own lives the fact that God will be with us as He was with that first leader of the nation of Israel.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What qualities did God see that caused Him to choose Moses as the leader of the Israelites?

How can we equip ourselves so God can use us?

What are some things God might call young people to do?

Have you ever felt the call of God?

How old was Moses when God called him at the burning bush?

What was Moses' job at the time that he saw the burning bush?

What was Moses' job after God called him?

How did Moses know that it was God speaking to him?

Did God say He would go with Moses?

Will God go with us and help us when we choose to serve Him?

THINGS TO DO

Write the letters B-U-R-N-I-N-G B-U-S-H down the left side of a large piece of paper. Have your students help you fill in things they might be called to do, beginning with each letter. For example: B—Bring a friend to Sunday school, U—Urge people to follow Jesus.

On the left-hand side of a sheet of paper, draw a figure representing Moses. Repeat the figure on the right-hand side but add fire. Title the drawing, "Moses + God's Power." Between the two, list these words: Brave, Dishonest, Afraid, Great leader, Timid, Unkind, Weaker than enemies, Willing, Poor leader, Unhappy, Confident, Poor speaker, Strong. Have students draw lines connecting appropriate words to the picture on the left to show how Moses saw himself, and lines to the picture on the right showing what Moses could be with God's power.

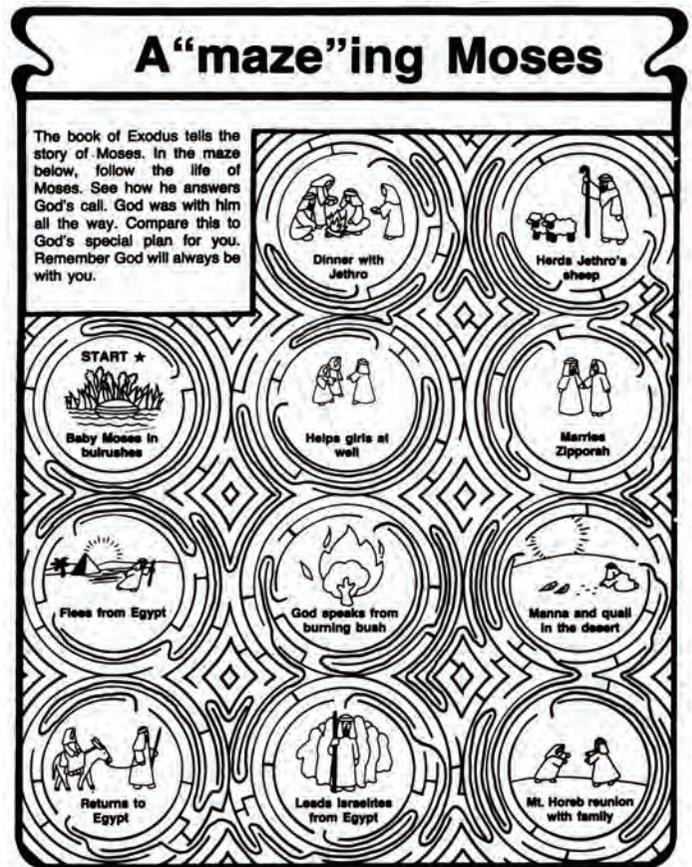
Bring a picture of a fire burning or a campfire. Ask the students if a fire can keep burning without adding more wood. Does a fire stay in one place or does it usually spread out? The burning bush was not consumed. A

campfire or forest fire will burn any wood that it comes in contact with.

Show the students several different timepieces: big clocks, small ones such as wristwatches, new ones, and old ones. Focus on the fact that we all have jobs to do for God. Each part of a clock is important no matter how small it is. We're all a part of the family of God, and each of us needs to do his job. It doesn't matter how old or how young we are; we can do anything with God's help.

Make word-picture review cards of the lesson. To do this, choose 8 to 10 important words from the story that can be illustrated simply (burning bush, shepherd, etc.). The cards should be about 4 x 9 inches in size. Have the students choose a card, pin it to the board, and tell what part of the lesson that word brings to mind.

Answers for ANSWER



TEXT Exodus 20:1-26; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

OBJECTIVE The students will learn that God’s first written Law was given to Moses for the Children of Israel. This directed God’s chosen people how to live in harmony with Him and with one another. They will further understand that people today must still follow God’s instructions if they desire peace with God and their fellow man.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER Great peace have they which love thy law.
— Psalm 119:165

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH This day the LORD thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.
— Deuteronomy 26:16

ANSWER TITLE: **The Words of God**
SEARCH TITLE: **God’s First Written Law**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

The Law, invested with divine authority and sanction, is revered because it embodies the will and wisdom of the Creator. God makes it plain that morality is not to be derived from human standards and the verdict of society, but from God himself. Right and wrong are not determined by the voice of the people, but by the voice of God. The Ten Commandments gave man the broad principles of God’s moral law, setting forth the only standard of righteousness acceptable to Him.

Originally the Law was spoken by God in a context calculated to produce unforgettable awe (Exodus 19:9-25). It was afterward “written with the finger of God” on two tables of stone (Exodus 31:18; 32:16). In fact, it was inscribed

by Him a second time after Moses in anger had shattered the first two tables (Exodus 34:1-4; Deuteronomy 10:1-4). Later the two tables of stone were placed in the Ark of the Covenant (Exodus 25:21; Deuteronomy 10:5) and thus enshrined at the very center of Israel’s worship.

Today, we no longer live under the Old Testament Law of Moses. We have a New Testament, a new covenant, given to us through Jesus (Hebrews 9:15). But while Jesus lived on earth He reiterated all except one of the Ten Commandments given to Moses. That one concerned the Sabbath Day. Most Christians chose to keep Sunday as the Lord’s Day because that was the day Christ arose from the grave.

YOUR OPENER

God's First Written Law

TEXT: Exodus 20:1-26; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

KEY VERSE: This day the LORD thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. — Deuteronomy 26:16

God's chosen people were the Children of Israel. His first written Law was given to them through the prophet Moses. It began with the Ten Commandments, which were later written on tables of stone by the finger of God (Exodus 31:18). All of these laws and ordinances were specific, and the people were required to know them and to teach them to their children. See Deuteronomy 6:6-9.

RESPONSES

1. God gave the Commandments on Mt. Sinai, three months after the people's deliverance from the Egyptians. Discuss with your class the fact that prior to this time the Children of Israel had been slaves. They came out of Egypt with no governmental body other than one leader appointed by God; no rules or regulations other than those given to them through Moses by the word of God. Apparently they had lived together for three months in this state. Now God calls their leader up to the mountain to establish His rules and guidelines for their conduct and worship.

2. Go over each of the Commandments with your class, showing how applicable they are even for us today. Bring out that all of them are reiterated in the New Testament except the fourth. Today, Christians keep Sunday as the Lord's Day and a day of rest from work.

3. The first four Commandments covered the people's relationship with God, and the other six, their relationship with their fellow man. Breaking any of these Commandments was a sin, and God's punishment under the Law was sure. Emphasize that today if man knows God's requirements and fails to do them, it is a sin (James 4:17). And punishment, though not always immediate, is sure to come. See Romans 6:23 and Hebrews 2:1-3.

4. He promised that they would be a peculiar treasure to Him, and that He would bless and prosper them. Bring out that God never changes. Today, to those who serve Him faithfully, He has given innumerable promises of His blessings here, and eternal life in the world to come. See Mark 10:30.

1. When and where did God give Moses and the Children of Israel the Ten Commandments? See Exodus 19:1,20-25.

2. Briefly write down each of the Ten Commandments.

3. Which of these commandments covered the people's relationship with God? with their fellow man?

4. What was God's promise to the Children of Israel if they kept all His commandments? See Exodus 19:5-6 and Deuteronomy 28:1-14

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ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

5. What did Paul the Apostle say was the first commandment with promise (Ephesians 6:2,3)? What does the phrase “with promise” signify?

6. What was Jesus’ reply when He was asked, “which is the great commandment in the law?” See Matthew 22:36-40.

7. What did Jesus mean, in Matthew 22:40, when He said, “On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets”?

8. What was the reply of the rich young ruler when Jesus told him he would have eternal life if he would “keep the commandments”? How did Jesus answer him? See Matthew 19:16-22.

9. Today we live under the New Testament covenant through Jesus Christ, and not under the Old Testament Law of Moses. Under this new covenant, where does God tell us He will put His laws? See Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Hebrews 10:16-18.

5. “Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land.” This is the fifth Commandment given to the Children of Israel, but it is the first one with a promise directly included as a part of it. What evidences do we see that shows how this Commandment is accepted by our society today?

6. He didn’t give any of the Ten Commandments, but quoted from Deuteronomy 6:5, “thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart,” and Leviticus 19:18, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” See next question.

7. These two Commandments cover all the precepts God has given. If one truly loves God and his neighbor, he will do what God requires of him. Bring out that the only way a person can love God with all his heart is to first have his sins forgiven, and then continue to walk close to God.

8. The six Commandments Jesus mentioned to the young man were the six that covered a person’s relationship with his fellow man. The young man said he had kept all those from his youth up, and then asked what he still lacked. Jesus’ answer showed that he lacked one thing—his relationship with God. His riches had come between God and himself. He had made idols of them and broken the first two Commandments. Explain to the students that anything in their lives that puts God in a secondary place can become the same as an idol to them and hinder their love for the Lord.

9. He said He will write His laws in our hearts and minds. When His law is fixed in our hearts and minds, we have peace with God and live in harmony with Him.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

Why are laws necessary?

Why did God give the Ten Commandments to the Children of Israel? Could you follow the Ten Commandments and still displease God? Why or why not?

What happens when God's commandments are broken?

What was the punishment if the Children of Israel did not follow God's Law?

What will happen if we do not live by God's Word?

How does a command differ from a suggestion?

What are some of the blessings today for those who keep God's commandments?

In the ANSWER story, what was the promise Gildeah's father said would be theirs if they kept the commandments of God?

THINGS TO DO

On a chalkboard, write the title, "Classifying the Commandments." Ask your class the following questions, and any others you might think of. Write their answers on the board.

1. Which commandments tell you to do something?
2. Which commandments tell you not to do something?
3. In which commandments does God give a reason for following? What are these reasons?
4. Which commandments govern actions which are still illegal today?
5. Which commandments refer specifically to your relationship with God?
6. Which commandments refer to your relationship with other people?

Choose one student to play the part of Moses. The other students can interview "Moses," asking questions such as: "How did you feel as you walked up the mountain?" "Were you afraid?" "Do you like the rules God made?"

Write each of the commandments on separate cards. Have the students arrange them in the order given by God to Moses. Discuss each one as you come to it.

Answers for ANSWER



Israel's First Priest

TEXT: Exodus 28:1-3; Hebrews 5:1-10

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE: Numbers 17:1-11

KEY VERSE: Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. — Hebrews 2:17

RESOURCE MATERIAL: A Series of Lessons on the Book of Hebrews

RESPONSES

1. The priests were appointed to represent the Children of Israel before God. Their main duty was to offer sacrifices for sins. Why did the Children of Israel need a representative? Why did they need sacrifices? Because of God's holiness and man's sinfulness, there has always been the need for one to stand between God and man, to plead for man. The blood of the sacrifice was needful to satisfy God's demand for atonement. See Hebrews 9:22.

2. He needed to make an offering for himself first because he also had sinned, and thus had to be purged. This answer should lead students to conclude that there was a need for a better priesthood. Refer to Hebrews 7:26-28.

3. God appointed him. What happened when one took the priesthood honors unto himself, without being appointed by God? Ask students for examples. See Leviticus 10:1,2; 2 Chronicles 26:16-20. The students should realize that Aaron was "called of God" (Hebrews 5:4).

4. The first covenant was not faultless, so the Lord made a new covenant. The students should understand that God intended the Old Testament priesthood to serve as an "example and shadow of heavenly things." "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ" (Galatians 3:24). When the Law was fulfilled in Christ, the priesthood, which was established for the administration of the Law, gave way to Him who came to fulfill it.

Included in the establishing of God's written Law was the process to be followed in administering the Law. The tribe of Levi was charged with the care of the sanctuary and the serving. Aaron and his sons, being of the tribe of Levi, were set apart for the priesthood; and this office was passed down from father to son.

1. What was the purpose of the Old Testament priesthood?

2. Why was it necessary for an Old Testament priest to make an offering for his own sins?

3. How was Aaron chosen to be the first high priest?

4. Why was the Old Testament priesthood not intended to be permanent? See Hebrews 8:4-11.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

5. Read Hebrews 7:11-16. Was Jesus a descendant of Aaron? After what order was He a priest?

6. What were some of the things Christ went through to obtain this better priesthood? See Hebrews 5:7-9.

7. How is it that Christ can so readily relate to our disappointments, frustrations, and trials? See Hebrews 2:16-18.

8. Why would you rather be under Christ's priesthood than the Levitical priesthood?

9. What is God's promise to one in the time of need? See Hebrews 4:16.

10. Read Numbers 16:41-48. In what way was Aaron a mediator for the Children of Israel? In what way is Christ our mediator today?

5. Jesus was not of the tribe of Levi but, rather, of the lineage of David, who was of the tribe of Judah. Discuss the significance of Hebrews 7:14. The significance is that Christ's priesthood was not established by the Law which dictates that a priest be of the tribe of Levi. The priesthood of Christ was of a higher order than "the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life" (Hebrews 7:16).

6. Though Jesus prayed with "strong crying and tears" He was, nevertheless, obedient to God the Father. Refer to times when He prayed in agony (Matthew 26:36-39; 27:46). Another time, Christ prayed through the night (Luke 6:12). Why was it necessary that He suffer so? Without His suffering, and ultimately His death, this better priesthood wouldn't be available to us. Do you think He knows how one feels who prays with strong crying and tears?

7. Christ took upon Himself the nature of man rather than angels, and was made like mankind so that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest.

8. Let the students discuss the advantages of being under the dispensation of Christ. Was the Levitical priest always sympathetic and understanding (Hebrews 4:14-15)? Did he always meet the conditions described in Hebrews 7:26?

9. If one comes boldly to the Throne of Grace he will obtain mercy and grace. Point out that individuals in the Old Testament needed to bring their offerings to the priest to find help in time of need. It was up to the individual to take the initiative, and when he did so in faith, he found mercy. We, too, must take the initiative in coming to our High Priest.

10. The students should realize that a priest stands between the living and the dead. This was true of Aaron in the tabernacle worship. This is true of Jesus who stands between God and man, interceding as our great High Priest.

YOUR WRAP-UP

TEXT 1 Samuel 9:1-2; 10:17-26

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to describe the attitudes of humility and obedience toward God which are two of the prerequisites for spiritual success, and also should realize that promotion comes from the Lord.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted. — Matthew 23:12

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another. — Psalm 75:6-7

**ANSWER
TITLE:** **A Humble Job**
**SEARCH
TITLE:** **The First King**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

It had been nearly four hundred years since the Children of Israel left Egypt. Had they obeyed the Lord and followed His commandments, they would have had the most outstanding government on earth. However, they chose to have their own way and worshiped idols. The Bible says that every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

Since the death of Joshua, who followed Moses, Israel had been led by a series of judges. We are not told of any formal national governing body; the twelve tribes were apparently loosely knit politically, but had a strong allegiance to one another, based on their family ties. See Judges 1:3-4.

This lesson covers a portion of time when Samuel was the prophet and judge. His calling at an early age was recognized by all of Israel (1 Samuel 3:20). He had become a prophet at a time when Israel was in an apostate condition (1 Samuel 3:1) and had been a channel God used to, again, communicate with the people. See 1 Samuel 3:19-21 and 4:1.

Samuel was now old and had judged well. The people respected and trusted him (1 Samuel 12:4), but knew that his sons were not following in Samuel's ways (1 Samuel 8:5). They used that as a reason in asking for a king. However, in doing so, they rejected God as their King (1 Samuel 8:7).

YOUR OPENER

The First King

TEXT: 1 Samuel 9:1-2; 10:17-26

KEY VERSE: For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another. — Psalm 75:6-7

RESPONSES

1. Samuel was also a judge over the Israelites “all the days of his life.” In 1 Samuel 12 we are told that he discharged his duties faithfully, calling upon the Lord (1 Samuel 7:5; 8:6; 12:23) in order to provide proper leadership and righteous judgment. A short discussion of Samuel’s humility and obedience can reinforce the fact that these are keys to spiritual success.

2. God said the people were rejecting Him. They no longer wanted God himself to reign over them. They were refusing His counsel and rebelling against His authority.

3. With God as their Leader the people had experienced the “good of the land,” but when they rejected Him they most certainly experienced the “sword.” Since the people continued to insist on an earthly king, God told Samuel to give them a king. Here is an opportunity for the students to learn that, if we insist, God often allows us our will even though it is not best for us. God has created us free moral agents. He will direct us to spiritual success through His Holy Spirit, the Bible, other Christians, and our own conscience, if we are “willing and obedient.” But disaster awaits those who “refuse and rebel.”

This study shows clearly that God is vitally concerned about benefiting His people. When Israel persisted in their request for a king, God used circumstances to bring together the long-time prophet Samuel and a young man whose name was Saul. Despite Saul’s impressive appearance, he demonstrated qualities of humility and obedience, two characteristics necessary to be a leader of God’s people. If we possess these qualities, we will experience spiritual success and promotion from the Lord.

1. What position did Samuel occupy in addition to being a prophet to the people of Israel? How long did he occupy this position? See 1 Samuel 7:15-17.

2. Samuel was grieved that the Israelites had asked for a king. He felt as though he had been rejected, but, in 1 Samuel 8:7, God told Samuel this was not so. Who did God say the people had rejected, and why?

3. Throughout 1 Samuel 8, we read that Samuel had carefully followed God’s instructions, pointing out to the Israelites the future oppression they would suffer under such kings who would require of them some of their sons and daughters and a portion of their wealth. Despite that, the people still rejected God’s council. How does Isaiah 1:19-20 agree with Samuel’s message to the people? What did God finally instruct Samuel to do? See 1 Samuel 8:22.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

4. Circle the right answer:

Saul was of the tribe of . . . (1) Dan (2) Ephraim (3) Benjamin (4) Judah

He was . . . (1) little of stature (2) taller than others (3) a poor physical specimen

His father's name was . . . (1) Abiel (2) Zeror (3) Bechorath (4) Kish

Saul was . . . (1) proud (2) humble and obedient (3) disobedient

5. The extent of a family's livestock in Saul's day was a measure of its prosperity. How did Saul respond to his father's request to seek the lost donkeys? Was he thorough in his search? Why? See 1 Samuel 9:3-10,20.

6. Do you think it was coincidental that Saul, in his search for the lost donkeys, came to Samuel at the end of his third day's search? Why or why not? See 1 Samuel 9:15, 16.

7. Mark the following statements true or false:

(a) Saul had been anointed by Samuel prior to his coronation in 1 Samuel 10:24. See 1 Samuel 9:16; 10:1.

(b) Saul traveled with Samuel to the coronation. See 1 Samuel 10:21-22.

(c) God demonstrated to the Israelites the man that He had chosen to be king by directing the casting of lots (similar to drawing names). First, a tribe was chosen (Benjamin), then a family from that tribe (Matri), then a man from that family. See 1 Samuel 10:20-21.

(d) Saul immediately confirmed his kingdom by putting the political dissenters into prison. See 1 Samuel 10:27.

8. God has given Christians a system of success and promotion in His service. This is very different from the system used by most individuals, corporations, or by those seeking political office today. After studying 1 Peter 5:5-6 and this lesson, comment here on how you feel God's system differs from that of the world's.

4. Correct answers are (3), (2), (4), and (2). The students should understand that Saul was chosen, not because of his stature, family, or tribe, but, because he was humble and obedient.

5. He was obedient and followed carefully his father's instructions. Saul and his servant searched a wide area encompassing perhaps thirty miles for a period of three days. He was determined to find the donkeys and accomplish his father's desire—to bring them home. The students can learn the importance of being thorough, not sloppy, in their obedience to God.

6. It was not coincidental. In 1 Samuel 9:15-16, we learn that God had previously told Samuel, "Tomorrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel, . . ." The discussion should bring out that if we are humble and obedient, we will experience God's arrangement of our lives. Details will miraculously fall into place as we are seeking His will.

7. The statements are — (a) True. (b) False, Saul showed his humility by hiding himself among the "stuff" where at first he could not be found. (c) True. (d) False, Saul demonstrated his new heart given him by God (1 Samuel 10:9) by not saying anything about the rejection of the political dissenters.

8. Encourage your students to share their thoughts by dividing your class into two groups. Have one group determine among themselves God's system for success and promotion. Have the second group determine business and political formulas for success and systems for promotion. In these determinations have the students include the character traits being looked for, the requisite abilities, and the various qualifications of the candidate. As a wrap-up, let the spokesman for each group present that group's conclusions. The contrast, despite occasional similarities, will be evident. Be prepared with your own list so you can fill in any gaps and guide the discussion.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

Why did the people decide they wanted a king when Samuel had been a good judge?

Why did Saul hide when God chose him to be king?

What attitudes or qualities did Saul have which qualified him to be the leader of Israel?

What makes a person a good leader?

Saul was used of God as long as he had the right spirit in him. What spirit should a Christian have in order to be used in the service of the Lord?

Saul was chosen by God to be king over Israel. What part does God have in choosing our leaders today?

Why does God require humility and obedience from those who serve Him?

Do you think it is possible for a leader to be humble? Why or why not?

How would you choose a leader? Does God choose His leaders the same way?

In the ANSWER story, who won the Camper of the Year award, and why was he chosen?

THINGS TO DO

Choose someone to read the Scripture text, then have your students work together to write a page like Saul may have written in his diary on the day he was chosen to be king. Stress that a diary reveals a person's inner thoughts. What would it feel like to be chosen king of Israel? What was Saul's attitude when he was chosen? Let the students share their writing assignments with the class.

Have your class imagine that they are going to hold a church service. Let the students choose who will be the minister, the song leader, the piano player, etc. After they have chosen the above, ask them how these positions are filled in our church. Who decides who will be a

minister? How does one become a song leader? What qualities are needed in a piano player, etc.?

Have students push or lift something heavy. Ask them if they are using everything they have available to move the item. Then explain they are not using you, the teacher! Use this to illustrate how we try to do things by ourselves while God is just waiting to help.

Have students be reporters interviewing Saul. Questions they might ask: How do you feel about being king? Who appointed you king? What happened when you were anointed king? Why did you hide? Will you be moving now?

Answers for ANSWER

Royalty Roll

Saul was the first king of God's people. Complete the crossword puzzle below to find Saul's name plus 19 other kings' in the Old Testament Scriptures.

DOWN	ACROSS
1. II Chronicles 29:1,2	3. II Chronicles 24:1,2
2. I Kings 12:6	4. I Kings 12:26
4. II Kings 23:34	6. II Kings 24:12
5. II Chronicles 33:11	8. II Chronicles 25:1,2
6. II Chronicles 17:10	10. II Chronicles 21:4
7. II Chronicles 26:9	11. II Kings 23:31
9. II Kings 25:2	14. II Chronicles 28:24,25
10. II Chronicles 27:1	15. II Chronicles 35:23
12. I Samuel 9:2	17. II Kings 21:23
13. I Kings 16:33	18. II Chronicles 22:1
16. I Samuel 17:49,50	19. I Kings 16:20

TEXT Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 25:35-40; Luke 21:1-4

OBJECTIVE The students will ascertain that when one fulfills his obligations to God he will reap the benefits of divine favor. They will be able to relate several ways they can give of their money, self, and time.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER It is more blessed to give than to receive. — Acts 20:35

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now here-with, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. — Malachi 3:10

RESOURCE MATERIAL Tract No. 31 — Tithing — God's Plan of Financing
Booklet No. 237 — Tithing

ANSWER TITLE: **Having and Giving**
SEARCH TITLE: **Give to God First**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

In thankfulness for God's goodness to them, and in acknowledgment of the fact that all the products of the land came from God, the Israelites brought an offering to Him of a portion of the fruits that ripened first. These were looked upon as an earnest of the coming harvest. Such an offering was made both on behalf of the nation (Leviticus 23:10-17) and by individuals (Exodus 23:19; Deuteronomy 26:1-11). These offerings were for the support of the priesthood.

Malachi 3:10, in which God promises to "open you the windows of heaven," is a promise of abundant rain and fruitful seasons, so that "there shall not be room enough to receive it." In other words, the barns and granaries would not be large enough to store the harvest. The "de-

vourer" mentioned in verse 11 is the locust, a pest which often destroys a whole crop.

Encourage your students not to hold on to their lives, time, and money so tightly that they are of no use to God. A future minister of the Gospel, or a future missionary, may be part of your present class. Or, it may be you have in your class a future housewife who will put God first in the home, taking time out to teach her children these same principles. Just so did Susanna Wesley, mother of John, who became God's undauntable minister of holiness to all of England, and later to the world. His brother Charles wrote about 6500 hymns, many of which have lasted to the present time.

YOUR OPENER

Give to God First

TEXT: Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 23:23-28; Luke 11:42

KEY VERSE: Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. — Malachi 3:10

RESOURCE MATERIAL: Tract 31 — Tithing — God's Plan of Financing; Booklet No. 237 — Tithing

RESPONSES

1. After having your students discuss their interpretations, focus on the words, "shalt not delay." God wanted the earliest gathering of their fruits. Possibly one reason for this was that if one puts off his giving, it is likely not to get done. Another reason might have been that after the gathering, a use would have been found for all of it, and there would have been none left to give. If delayed too long, the feeling of the need to give goes away.

2. Our tithes belong to the Lord. The tithes are "holy unto the LORD." Ask your class to enumerate some of the ways God blesses those who are obedient to Him in the paying of their tithes.

3. God's plan was that the tithes were to be given to the children of Levi. Bring out in discussion who the children of Levi were and what their duties and obligations were. Because they did the service of ministering to the people, God ordained they should use the tithes for their own sustenance.

The Lord does not need anything that man has accumulated. He owns the cattle on a thousand hills (Psalm 50:10), the silver and gold (Haggai 2:8), the earth and everything in it (Psalm 24:1). However, He expects us to be good stewards of what He permits us to acquire. From Abraham's time on, God has blessed those who have given tithes and freewill offerings to the Lord. The tithe and certain offerings were required under the Old Testament Law of Moses. Tithing is not dwelt upon in the New Testament, but it was still approved of by Jesus. At one point, as He was giving a warning to the scribes and Pharisees, He called them hypocrites. They did tithe, but neglected more important matters like justice, mercy, and faithfulness. If the plan of tithing were to be done away with, Jesus would not have told them they should do these vital things as *well* as give tithes. See Matthew 23:23.

1. Shortly after their deliverance from Egypt, the Children of Israel were told by God to be prompt in offering the first part of all their increase (Exodus 22:29). What do you think this meant?

2. The first written record we have of anyone's paying tithes was when Abram paid tithes to Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18-20). To whom do our tithes belong and why? See Leviticus 27:30.

3. The Israelites could not give their tithes to the Lord in person, but God had a plan for the tithes. In reading Numbers 18:21, what do you feel that plan was?

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

4. Since we are not Israelites with a priesthood to support, where should our tithes and offerings go?

5. What do you think is meant by Malachi 3:8?

6. What was God's promise to those who did bring in their tithes?

7. Do you think the "poor widow" mentioned in Luke 21:2 was foolish to do what she did? Give a reason for your answer.

8. How do you relate Matthew 25:35-40 with the thought of the title of this lesson?

YOUR WRAP-UP

4. Our text says, "into the storehouse." The students, knowing they cannot give directly to God, should recognize that they must follow the example established in the Old Testament and taught in the New Testament. The Apostle Paul says, "they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Corinthians 9:14). Since there are many and varied expenses in connection with the spreading of the Gospel, we should be diligent to pay our tithes promptly. We should also give freewill offerings whenever the Lord lays it upon our hearts to do so.

5. Ask a couple of your students to give their thoughts. Discuss with your class how most people would say that what they own or acquire belongs to them. In reality, we bring nothing into the world, nor will we take anything with us when we leave this world. What we have while here God has permitted, and He expects us to give a tenth as well as freewill offerings to Him. Anything less is robbing God.

6. God promised to abundantly bless if they brought all the tithes into the storehouse. Perhaps these Israelites felt that they were just having bad luck when insects devoured their crops and there was little or no rain. But they had ignored God's warning that He would make the rain as powder and dust (Deuteronomy 28:24). They paid no heed when He said that the insects which devoured their crops were His army (Joel 2:25). God told them to prove for themselves that if they would do what He required, the insects and worms would disappear and the rains would fall.

7. After your class has offered their answers, remind them of another widow, the one God had instructed to feed Elijah during the time when there was no rain in the land (1 Kings 17:8-16). If God was able to provide for that widow and her son in time of famine, He could certainly provide for this widow, who gave all she had. We do not know if she had knowledge of the Sermon on the Mount, but she was unquestionably putting the principle into practice. See Matthew 6:31-34.

8. The student's answers will be varied, but one thought which should be brought out is that a Christian must offer more to God than just his money. Paul said to "present your bodies a living sacrifice" (Romans 12:1). This would include using our time to visit shut-ins, the elderly, those in institutions and prisons, and helping the sick. Jesus said to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 19:19). To do this will cause one to sacrifice his time and strength in using his talents for the Lord.

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

How does one “rob” God?

What does God command us to do, according to Malachi 3:10?

At what age should a person begin tithing?

What are some ways the Lord and the church use our tithes?

Is God poor? Could God get along without your money? How would this affect you? Would you win or lose?

What other things besides money does God expect from us?

What are some of the ways God blesses those who willingly and freely give to Him?

What is of even greater value to God than our tithes and offerings?

Since God expected the firstfruits from the Children of Israel, what does that imply about the importance of our giving to God first? How does this relate to our priorities regarding our time and money?

In the ANSWER story, what did Tom say was the reason he gave money to his church?

THINGS TO DO

Take ten coins or dollars to illustrate tithes, or take random change and figure ten percent. Talk about the widow’s mite. A mite equals approximately 1/8 of a cent. A day’s wage was about one cent. This means she gave even more than the ten percent of one day’s wage.

Make a list of things a child can do for or give to the Lord’s service as an offering.

Bring a piece of flint, a hammer, a flashlight, a candle, and matches. Explain to your students that flint gives light only when hit with a hammer (forced to give). A flashlight button must be pressed (urged, begged) to give light. It will not give unless pressure is applied. A candle gives its life as it gives light and does not need to

be struck or pressured, only lit. We want to be “candles,” lit by God, and give willingly.

Present one envelope to each of three students. In one envelope, make up an I.O.U. slip; in another, a make-believe letter from a friend telling you that he cannot come to help you with your problems because he doesn’t have the time; and in the third envelope (should be large in size) place a small wrapped gift box, soiled and torn. Ask the students how they would react if they received these things from friends. Relate this to our lesson. How would God feel if He received poor or half-hearted efforts from us?

Have your students list the most important things in their lives. Discuss how these things can be given to the Lord.

Answers for ANSWER

Giving to God

Starting with number one, write on the lines below, each word according to the clue given. Go through all 16 clues. When you have finished you will have a verse that agrees with today’s lesson.

Answer: Honour the Lord with thy substance and with the first fruits of all thine increase. Proverbs 3:9

TEXT Psalm 103:1-22

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to give several reasons why it is vital to give thanks to God. They will further be able to tell various ways in which this can be accomplished.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. — Psalm 107:1

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people. — 1 Chronicles 16:8

ANSWER
TITLE: **Why Should I Be Thankful?**

SEARCH
TITLE: **Give Thanks First**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

Our Thanksgiving Day might be compared to the Feast of Weeks, which was observed on the fiftieth day after the Feast of Unleavened Bread where the people observed the offering of the barley sheaf. This feast included a holy assembly of the people and a restriction on manual labor. The Feast of Weeks is also known as the Feast of Harvest as well as Pentecost.

Since Thanksgiving is a legal holiday established by our government, you might want to bring in the historical origin of the day. We appreciate that a day for thanksgiving has been established in our country for the religious freedom that we still enjoy and which people in many parts of the world do not.

YOUR OPENER

Give Thanks First

RESPONSES

1. The Psalmist praised God with his soul and all that was within him. Jesus told the woman at the well, “The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.” Ask the students what they feel the word *soul* means, bringing out that “the soul is the living spiritual principle embodied in human beings.” It is acceptable with God and vital to man’s eternal welfare that this spiritual principle be centered in worship of the Father, whether that worship takes the form of blessing, praising, or thanksgiving.

2. The six benefits are: the forgiveness of all iniquities, healing of all diseases, redeeming life from destruction, crowning life with loving kindness and tender mercies, satisfying the mouth with good things, and renewing of youth. Allow the students time to express themselves regarding these benefits. The consensus will probably be that these benefits are vital to earthly well-being. A class discussion on this question could bring out which of these benefits are most essential, which benefits are the most enjoyable, and which benefits will probably be talked about the most at Thanksgiving time.

3. The reference is that our youth is renewed like the eagle’s. Thanksgiving should be given to God for every blessing that He bestows. Ask the students if they know how an eagle’s youth is renewed. Bring out that every year, through a molting process, the bird loses most of its old plumage. The lost feathers are then replaced with new, causing him to look like a young bird. Help the students draw a parallel between the renewal of the eagle and the benefits of those who serve God. On the whole, the Christian has better health than those who serve the devil. Christians do suffer afflictions, it is true, but God promises to deliver from affliction, and He does.

4. The Lord delivers righteousness and judgment for the oppressed who trust Him. There are many illustrations of this truth in the Bible. Have the students talk about David’s deliverance from the oppression of King Saul. The release of Peter from prison by the angel on the night before King Herod would have taken his life, is another example. Let the students add other deliverances to the list. This provision is a great blessing to those who trust God. How thankful we should be!

5. The Lord is merciful, gracious, slow to anger, not always chiding, and not keeping anger against us forever. Ask the students how many enjoy being scolded for their faults. Once the Lord has forgiven their

TEXT: Psalm 103:1-22

KEY VERSE: Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people. — 1 Chronicles 16:8

Among the definitions of the word *thanksgiving* are: “the act of giving thanks,” “a prayer expressing gratitude,” and “a public acknowledgment or celebration of divine goodness.” Although the word *thanksgiving* does not appear in Psalm 103, this Psalm is an excellent expression of heartfelt gratitude and praise to God. The more one praises and thanks God for His goodness, the more reasons he finds for doing so. To deny God genuine thanksgiving is to fail to recognize God’s wonderful bounty to each individual.

1. In looking at the first verse of our text, with what part of his being did the Psalmist bless [praise] the Lord? Why? See John 4:23.

2. Name six benefits the Psalmist listed as coming from the Lord. How do you feel about these benefits?

3. What is likened to the eagle in verse 5? Why give thanks for this?

4. How do the oppressed fare when they trust the Lord?

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

5. List five other items, mentioned in verses 8 and 9 of our text, for which we should be thankful.

6. What are the wages of sin (Romans 6:23)? How does the Psalmist treat this truth (verse 10)?

7. How far does God remove the sins of those who repent? Why should this cause thanksgiving?

8. Why does God have pity upon His children? See verses 13 and 14.

9. In what way is the duration of life brought to our attention?

10. In what way is the mercy of the Lord emphasized? Why should this be an inspiration for thanksgiving?

YOUR WRAP-UP

faults and sins, He does not scold or chide. He forgets those things in which they have transgressed, which certainly is a great theme for Thanksgiving.

6. The wages of sin is death. The Psalmist brings out that instead of exacting the full penalty for sins, the Lord has compassion upon the sinner, atoning for the sins as they are repented of and forsaken. Ask the students what the full penalty of sins would have been for the thief on the cross, had he not turned to Jesus, asking for mercy? The thief died, but his soul went to Heaven. Had he not turned to Jesus, believing on Him, he would have been judged for his sins and lost throughout eternity.

7. "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." How far is the east from the west? The east and the west never meet at one point. They are forever the same distance from each other. Just so are our sins removed to an eternal distance by God's mercy. This truth brings thanksgiving to the penitent's life in that he does not live any longer in that condition of sin which has brought so much grief, remorse, and suffering to his soul.

8. The Lord has pity [tender compassion] upon His children because He cares for them. He remembers that they are made from the dust. The picture is brought out of a father pitying his children. Many beautiful examples can be found to show this pity. King David, in his love for his son Absalom, who was killed, showed this pity. God demonstrates His concern in a far greater measure than any earthly father is able to do.

9. The Psalmist likens the length of human life to the grass and the flower of the field. Discuss with the students that life is much shorter for some than for others. No one has any promise of tomorrow. Impress upon your class the necessity of getting ready to meet God today.

10. "The mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting." This should bring forth a flood of thanksgiving from those who love God, just knowing that His mercy will never fail us. Over and over this Psalm emphasizes the mercy of the Lord to those who fear Him. Ask your students what part we have in showing mercy in order to please God. "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8) Bring the lesson to a conclusion by emphasizing that mercy is both good and necessary. God gives His mercy abundantly to those who serve Him, and He enables them to have this important attribute in their own lives.

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What is a psalm?

How are people affected by a thankful attitude?

Is it easier to thank God when you succeed or when you fail? Why?

Why should you give thanks unto God?

Does God care if you thank Him or not? Why?

How can you show God that you are thankful for the blessings He has given you?

In the ANSWER story, what was the Thanksgiving centerpiece supposed to remind the family of? What other holidays serve as a reminder to us to be thankful?

THINGS TO DO

Divide the class into two teams. Using the letters of the word THANKSGIVING as the first letter of each word, see which team can be the first to complete a list of things for which they are thankful.

After making a list of things to be thankful for, let two of your students role-play the parts of a thankful person and a person who always complains. The thankful student could go down the list of things to be thankful for, and the complainer could respond in character. (Or the complainer could be first.) Have your class decide which person they would rather be around. Ask the following questions when you have completed the activity: Why do some people find it so hard to be thankful? How does a thankful attitude affect other people?

Pass out slips of paper which will later be collected and made into a paper chain. Have each student write his name and something for which he is thankful. Put all the strips in a large paper sack and shake them up. Take them from the sack one at a time and start putting

them together to make the chain. Connect both ends of the chain so it makes a circle. Next, read the names on the chain. As each student hears his name read he should listen carefully for the next name because he is supposed to pray for that person. Tell the students to remember to thank God for the person praying for them.

List some things for which it might be hard to be thankful. Try to think of something positive for each one.

Answers for ANSWER

Give Thanks to God

Read the verse on the balloon, then find all the words in the wordfind. What are some of the benefits with which the Lord has loaded you today? List or draw a picture of them on the sign below. It always feels good to thank Jesus for His blessings. Have you thanked Him today?

Quarter Review

TEXT: Review Quarter Texts

KEY VERSE: Student's choice from this quarter

RESPONSES

1. Day 1 — Light; Day 2 — Waters divided; Day 3 — Land; Day 4 — Sun, moon, and stars; Day 5 — Fish and fowl; Day 6 — Animals and man. As your students discuss the progression of the Creation, reiterate the fact that the earth was prepared in perfect order for God's final creation, man.

2. Man was created in the image of God and has a living soul. As your class discusses these thoughts, direct their discussion to the fact that it was when God breathed into man the breath of life, that man became a living soul (Genesis 2:7). This was not done for any other of God's creations, nor was any other than this creation commanded to "Fear God, and keep his commandments" (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

3. God has promised that no temptation will be more than the individual can bear, and that with the temptation He will make a way to escape. Help your students rehearse the fact that temptation in itself is not sin, but yielding to temptation is sin, the devil's desired end result. However, God will give victory to all who love and trust Him. Ask your students what method Jesus himself used to overcome the devil's temptations (Matthew 4:1-11). Remind them that He is our example. See Hebrews 2:18.

4. The story of Noah and his family illustrates that God provides a way of escape from judgment for those who turn to Him. Ask your students to identify the judgment and the means of escape in Noah's case: the Flood being the judgment, and the ark the means of escape. To continue your discussion, have your students parallel this to the judgment facing individual sinners, and the means of escape available to them: eternity in Hell being the judgment, and salvation through Jesus' Blood the means of escape.

5. The Christian labors together with God. With Jesus Christ as the foundation, we are instructed to take care how we build. God imparts His grace as we serve Him. The Christian must study and apply God's Word to his life and do as Jesus said, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation" (Matthew 26:41). God gives His peace and power. See Philippians 4:7.

1. Make a list of what God created on each of the six days and explain briefly how the progression of the successive creative acts were perfectly arranged.

2. In what way is man unique from all God's other creations?

3. Temptation is common to man, but God has given a promise to those who serve Him. What is that promise? See 1 Corinthians 10:13.

4. What lesson can we learn from the example of Noah and his family regarding God's judgment?

5. The builders of Babel failed when they disobeyed God and attempted to create their own security, and make a name for themselves. According to 1 Corinthians 3:9-15, who is the Christian's co-laborer in building a spiritual house?

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ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

6. Abram had an intimate relationship with God. Because of his noble character and faith in God, James 2:23 tells us he was called which one of the following: a) helper, b) friend, c) brother, or d) father of God? How might a Christian in today's crowded environment cultivate this same relationship?

7. Briefly describe the manner in which God called Moses. Then list the similarities and differences between Moses' call and the call of God to individuals today.

8. The first written Law of God is known as the Ten Commandments. God gave them so that man might live in harmony with Him and with each other. What bearing do they have upon a Christian's life today?

9. Sinful man needs an intercessor in order to come to God. What steps did Jesus take to become our High Priest? See Hebrews 2:17.

10. Most people, unlike Saul, desire to be promoted in the eyes of those around them. Describe the prerequisites for spiritual success and explain where promotion comes from. Use 1 Peter 5:5-6 for a reference as well as the text for this lesson.

11. God ordained that the children of Levi were to use the tithes for their own sustenance. What are our tithes and offerings used for in the church today? Does God's blessing given in Malachi 3:10 still apply to us today?

6. He was called "the Friend of God." Direct your students' responses to the second part of the question to include a knowledge of God's written Word, a daily communion with God in prayer and supplication before the Throne of grace, and a carefulness in their attitude and motives.

7. God spoke to Moses in an audible voice from a burning bush which was not consumed. While God's call comes in different ways in our day, Moses' call was unique, due to the type of supernatural manifestation which accompanied it. It was similar to God's call today in that it was specific, it brought about a first reaction of insufficiency, it was unchanging, and it was accompanied by a promise of God's presence. Your students can be assured that when God asks them to do something for Him, He will be with them.

8. We know that Christ came to fulfill the Law, not to destroy it (Matthew 5:17). Yet He said by loving the Lord our God with all our hearts and our neighbors as ourselves that we would be keeping all the Law (Matthew 22:37-40). We cannot do this in our own strength. It is when we walk in the Light that we are able to have fellowship one with another—and it is then that we are cleansed from all sin (1 John 1:7). See 2 Corinthians 3:6.

9. Jesus came to earth to live and suffer as a mortal. Then He gave His life's Blood to atone for man's sins, and today He sits at the right hand of God making intercession for the souls of men (Romans 8:34). Ask your students who was appointed the first high priest of the Children of Israel. How had this appointment come about? The priesthood of the Israelites was a type of Jesus, our eternal High Priest.

10. In discussing this question, the students should realize that spiritual success requires humility and obedience to God. One must possess humility so that he does not get in God's way and block his own spiritual success. A successful Christian will consider the Bible his textbook for life.

11. As your students respond with such answers as the printing and distribution of Gospel literature, the building and upkeep of churches and property owned by the church, and the care of the faithful servants of God, remind them of Jesus' admonition that, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). That in itself is a great blessing, but God gives so much more. A word of caution: We must not think that giving tithes will ensure our having great wealth on this earth. But Philippians 4:19 tells us, "God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

Why is it important to believe the Biblical account of the Creation?

Who was the first man? Why did God make man?

What was the first temptation? When does temptation become sin? Can we resist temptation? How?

What did Noah do to make a way of escape from the Flood? Could anybody have done this? Why didn't they? Was Noah the only one warned of this destruction? Compare the warning given in Noah's time to warnings given for our day.

Why was it wrong for the people to build the tower of Babel? What lessons can we learn from this?

What did God call Abraham to do? What did God promise Abraham?

Who was the first leader of the Children of Israel? What was he called to do? How important is it to follow the things we are called to do?

Who was the first written Law given to? How was it written? Do we have a written law to follow today? Who gave this law to us? Must we follow these instructions?

What was Aaron's job? Was it God-given? Who took the sins of the whole world on Himself?

Who was Israel's first king and why was he pleasing in God's sight?

What are tithes and offerings?

THINGS TO DO

Have your class make a list of all the Bible subjects they can remember as having studied this quarter.

Bring several cards on which are printed the key verses from this quarter. On the backs of these cards have

various prizes written, such as a bookmark or lifesavers. For each verse that a student can remember, give him a card. At the end of class time the students can turn in the cards for their prizes.

Re-show some of the class openers from the previous lessons. See who can tell you what the lesson was about, or maybe just a main point of the lesson.

On flashcards write the Scripture reference for each past key verse. See which students can say the verse just by seeing the reference. Let every student have a chance.

Answers for ANSWER

Do You Remember

The signs below need to be completed. Fill in the answer to each one. You can find them in the lessons you have been studying this quarter.

Why should we give to God first? <i>A tenth of all we receive belongs to God.</i>	What was the first temptation? <i>To eat from the tree of knowledge</i>	How was the first written law given? <i>God wrote it on stone</i>
Name some blessings that Abraham received because he believed and obeyed God. <i>Land, Children, Long Life</i>	What were the builders of Babel doing? <i>Trying to make a name for themselves</i>	Why did Noah escape the Flood and destruction? <i>He was righteous</i>
What was Aaron's job? <i>High Priest</i>	Who was the first man? <i>Adam</i>	Who created the earth? <i>God</i>
What was the first leader's job? <i>To lead God's people from Egypt.</i>	Of what tribe was the first king? <i>Benjamin</i>	

ANSWERS FOR EXTRA ACTIVITY PAGES IN THE ANSWER

Activity Page 41

Verse Race

They're pasting up some signs for a key verse contest. Get together with some of your friends and see who can match up the verses the fastest — they have to be correct, too! If you've been learning them right along you should do great!

1. All things were made by him;
2. God created man
3. The Lord knoweth how to deliver
4. The wicked shall not be unpunished;
5. Pride goeth before destruction
6. After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram;
7. Lo, I am with you alway,
8. Great peace have they
9. We have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens,
10. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased;
11. It is more blessed to give
12. O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good:

- A. even unto the end of the world. — Matthew 28:20
- B. but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered. — Proverbs 11:21
- C. and an haughty spirit before a fall. — Proverbs 16:18
- D. Jesus the Son of God. — Hebrews 4:14
- E. and without him was not any thing made that was made. — John 1:3
- F. which love thy law. — Psalm 119:165
- G. and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted. — Matthew 23:12
- H. in his own image. — Genesis 1:27
- I. for his mercy endureth for ever. — Psalm 107:11
- J. than to receive. — Acts 20:35
- K. the godly out of temptations. — II Peter 2:9
- L. I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. — Genesis 15:1



Activity Page 42

What's on the Menu?

Autumn is a special time of year — a time when the weather gets cooler, nature changes colors, and crops are harvested. Below is a menu for a harvest feast. Use your Bible and look up the Scriptures and find out what's on the menu.

- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Genesis 25:28 | <u>VENISON</u> | Deuteronomy 14:4 | <u>OX</u> |
| Genesis 25:30 | <u>pottage</u> | Deuteronomy 22:6 | <u>sheep goat</u> |
| Genesis 43:11 | <u>fruit honey</u> | Deuteronomy 28:40 | <u>eggs olives</u> |
| | <u>spices nuts</u> | Judges 7:13 | <u>barley bread</u> |
| Numbers 11:5 | <u>leeks fish</u> | I Samuel 17:17 | <u>corn loaves</u> |
| | <u>melons onions</u> | Job 10:10 | <u>milk</u> |
| | <u>cucumbers garlic</u> | Proverbs 27:27 | <u>goats milk</u> |
| Numbers 11:32 | <u>quail</u> | Isaiah 7:15 | <u>butter</u> |
| Numbers 13:23 | <u>pomegranates</u> | | <u>honey</u> |
| | <u>grapes figs</u> | | |



Activity Page 43

What's the Word?

Here is a word puzzle in the shape of squares. All the words have been used somewhere in the lessons this quarter. To solve the puzzle, try to find where each eight-letter word begins and fill in the empty box with the correct missing letter. Write each word on the lines provided. (Hint: the words go clockwise.)

1. CREATION	2. OVERCOME	3. JUDGMENT
R E A C T N O I	O M E C O R E V	G M E D N U J T
4. BENEFITS		5. STRENGTH
S B E T N I F E		H S T T R G N E
		6. HUMILITY
		T Y H I U L I M



Activity Page 44

Read That Book!

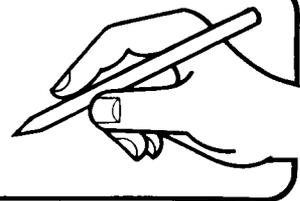
The text given in all our lessons is from the Bible. Below is a little test to see how well you can find things in your Bible. Use it to find the correct spelling for each Bible book described. Put the numbered letters in the spaces at the bottom of the page. Try each day to do what it says!

- Shortest book in the Bible JUDE
- Longest book in the Bible PSALMS
- First book in the Bible GENESIS
- Last book in the Bible REVELATION
- First book titled with a woman's name RUTH
- Book that could mean work JOB
- Book referring to mathematics NUMBERS
- Two books that refer to royalty KINGS
- Book that suggests singing SONG OF SOLOMON
- Longest single word title of book THESSALONIANS
- Book referring to people who make decisions JUDGES
- Two newspaper books CHRONICLES
- Book that refers to people who live in Italy ROMANS

READ THE
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
BIBLE IT IS
8 9 10 11 12 13 14
GOD'S BOOK
15 16 17 18 19 20 21



Teachers Everywhere Are Crying Help



Dear T.E.A.C.H.:

Can you help me out of my dilemma? My class of high schoolers are inconsistent in their attendance. Sometimes only three or four come and sometimes less. I love my students and I love to teach them God's Word, but I'm becoming discouraged.

Discouraged

Dear Discouraged:

First of all, don't equate numbers with success. The head count of students in your class is not the crucial factor, but the quality of class time and the relationship between students and teacher is what makes the successful class.

The key to working well with teenagers is that you have a genuine interest in them. Here are some suggestions:

Have an up-to-date bulletin board with pictures and items of personal interest like birthdays, achievements, and plans.

Show your interest in their activities, goals, and problems.

Listen to them with genuine attention.

Get acquainted with them and their families on a personal level.

Check your own attendance record. If you know you will be absent, tell them. A post card or a souvenir from an extended absence will let your students know that you thought of them.

Most importantly, don't let your discouragement show. It's contagious! A positive, upbeat enthusiasm about Sunday school in general, and your class in particular, will be an inspiration to your students.

Dear T.E.A.C.H.:

We have a group of eager, enthusiastic juniors, but much of the time they seem to be so noisy! I've tried hard to be patient, but I'm getting desperate. Can you offer any suggestions on how to turn down the volume?

Reverberating

Dear Reverberating:

Whenever children are totally involved in the learning process, there is likely to be more noise than otherwise, making it difficult to move the whole group from one activity to the next.

In order to deal with this situation, remember these three points:

First, there will be noise, but noise does not necessarily mean that you have lost control. It can be a sign that the students are participating wholeheartedly. This thought alone may help you deal with your anxiety.

Second, provide some quiet time between activities. During such periods you can regain class attention and allow students to recover from the excitement of one activity before beginning another.

Third, develop a standard procedure for restoring order. Ring a bell, raise your hand, or something of this sort whenever silence is desired. This will help your students collect and refocus their attention. The form doesn't matter as long as it is simple and practiced consistently.

One last thought: Compliment and reinforce quiet behavior rather than make a negative comment when the group becomes too noisy.

Sources for Reference Information

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