

Explore the Bible®

DEAF PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE



*Exodus;
Leviticus*

LIFE BY DESIGN

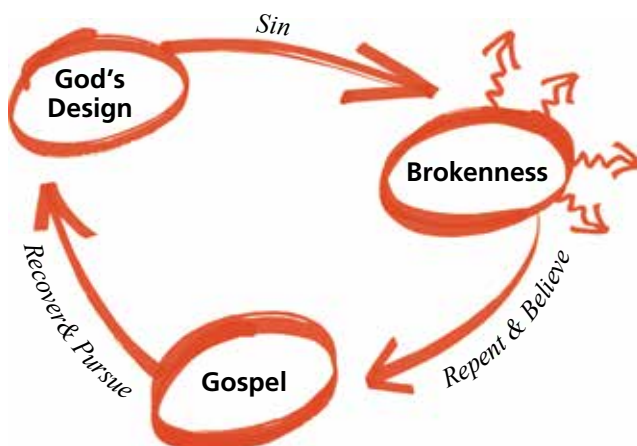
We live in a broken world. This brokenness is seen in suffering, violence, poverty, pain, and death around us. Brokenness leads us to search for a way to make **LIFE work.**

The Bible tells us that God originally planned a world that worked perfectly—where everything and everyone fit together in harmony. God made each of us with a purpose—to worship Him and walk with Him. (See Genesis 1:31 and Psalm 19:1.)

Life doesn't work when we ignore God and His original design for our lives. We selfishly insist on doing things our own way. The Bible calls this sin. Sin leads to a place of brokenness. The consequence of our sin is separation from God—in this life and for all of eternity. (See Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23.)

At this point we need a remedy—some good news. Because of His love, God did not leave us in our brokenness. Jesus, God in human flesh, came to us and lived perfectly according to God's Design. Jesus came to rescue us—to do for us what we could not do for ourselves. He took our sin and shame to the cross, paying the penalty of our sin by His death. Jesus was then raised from the dead—to provide the only way for us to be rescued and restored to a relationship with God. (See John 3:16, Colossians 2:14, and 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.)

We don't have the power to escape this brokenness on our own. We need to be rescued. We must ask God to forgive us—turning from sin to trust in Jesus. This is what it means to repent and believe. Believing, we receive new life through Jesus. God turns our lives in a new direction. (See Mark 1:15, Ephesians 2:8-9, and Romans 10:9.)



When God restores our relationship to Him, we begin to discover meaning and purpose in a broken world. Now we can pursue God's Design in all areas of our lives. God's Spirit empowers us to recover His Design and assures us of His presence in this life and for all of eternity. (See Philippians 2:13 and Ephesians 2:10.)

Now that you have heard this Good News, God wants you to respond to Him. You can talk to Him using words like these: My life is broken—I recognize it's because of my sin. I believe Christ came to live, die, and was raised from the dead—to rescue me from my sin. Forgive me. I turn from my selfish ways and put my trust in You. I know that Jesus is Lord of all, and I will follow Him.

Excerpted from Life on Mission: A Simple Way to Share the Gospel.

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» MEET THE WRITER



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BIBLE READING PLAN

MONTH 1

- ☐ Exodus 1:1-22
- ☐ Exodus 2:1-25
- ☐ Exodus 3:1-22
- ☐ Exodus 4:1-17
- ☐ Exodus 4:18-31
- ☐ Exodus 5:1-6:1
- ☐ Exodus 6:2-27
- ☐ Exodus 6:28-7:25
- ☐ Exodus 8:1-19
- ☐ Exodus 8:20-32
- ☐ Exodus 9:1-21
- ☐ Exodus 9:22-35
- ☐ Exodus 10:1-20
- ☐ Exodus 10:21-11:10
- ☐ Exodus 12:1-20
- ☐ Exodus 12:21-42
- ☐ Exodus 12:43-51
- ☐ Exodus 13:1-22
- ☐ Exodus 14:1-14
- ☐ Exodus 14:15-31
- ☐ Exodus 15:1-21
- ☐ Exodus 15:22-16:12
- ☐ Exodus 16:13-36
- ☐ Exodus 17:1-16
- ☐ Exodus 18:1-27
- ☐ Exodus 19:1-25
- ☐ Exodus 20:1-21
- ☐ Exodus 20:22-21:11
- ☐ Exodus 21:12-36
- ☐ Exodus 22:1-20

MONTH 2

- ☐ Exodus 22:21-23:9
- ☐ Exodus 23:10-33
- ☐ Exodus 24:1-18
- ☐ Exodus 25:1-22
- ☐ Exodus 25:23-40
- ☐ Exodus 26:1-30
- ☐ Exodus 26:31-27:8
- ☐ Exodus 27:9-28:5
- ☐ Exodus 28:6-30
- ☐ Exodus 28:31-43
- ☐ Exodus 29:1-21
- ☐ Exodus 29:22-46
- ☐ Exodus 30:1-21
- ☐ Exodus 30:22-31:11
- ☐ Exodus 31:12-32:14
- ☐ Exodus 32:15-35
- ☐ Exodus 33:1-23
- ☐ Exodus 34:1-28
- ☐ Exodus 34:29-35:19
- ☐ Exodus 35:20-36:7
- ☐ Exodus 36:8-38
- ☐ Exodus 37:1-29
- ☐ Exodus 38:1-31
- ☐ Exodus 39:1-21
- ☐ Exodus 39:22-43
- ☐ Exodus 40:1-38
- ☐ Leviticus 1:1-17
- ☐ Leviticus 2:1-16
- ☐ Leviticus 3:1-17
- ☐ Leviticus 4:1-21
- ☐ Leviticus 4:22-35

MONTH 3

- ☐ Leviticus 5:1-19
- ☐ Leviticus 6:1-23
- ☐ Leviticus 6:24-7:21
- ☐ Leviticus 7:22-38
- ☐ Leviticus 8:1-21
- ☐ Leviticus 8:22-36
- ☐ Leviticus 9:1-24
- ☐ Leviticus 10:1-20
- ☐ Leviticus 11:1-23
- ☐ Leviticus 11:24-47
- ☐ Leviticus 12:1-13:17
- ☐ Leviticus 13:18-46
- ☐ Leviticus 13:47-59
- ☐ Leviticus 14:1-32
- ☐ Leviticus 14:33-57
- ☐ Leviticus 15:1-33
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- ☐ Leviticus 21:1-24
- ☐ Leviticus 22:1-33
- ☐ Leviticus 23:1-22
- ☐ Leviticus 23:23-24:9
- ☐ Leviticus 24:10-25:7
- ☐ Leviticus 25:8-31
- ☐ Leviticus 25:32-26:13
- ☐ Leviticus 26:14-46
- ☐ Leviticus 27:1-34



ACCEPTING CHRIST



Carter Bearden's Testimony

I was born in Dallas, Texas, May 26, 1928. I lost my hearing at the age of three. My mother took me to a public school near our home. They told my mother that they were not able to take me as a student. They advised her to place me in the Texas School for the Deaf in Austin. She took me to Austin by bus. She enrolled me there at the age of seven. My father died in a Dallas auto accident when I was eight years old. I remember his casket was in the parlor room of my grandparents' house for two days. His death caused my mother to get a job at the Internal Revenue Service.

I was born again (spiritually) at the age of fourteen at the Congress Avenue Baptist Church in Austin. I was home in Dallas for the summer of 1945 between school sessions when I received the call to the ministry. A Deaf man by the name of John Sheppard was like a father to me. He worked as a baker at the Atlantic and Pacific Bakery. He helped me get a summer job there. During that time, I told him I felt the call to preach the gospel. He thought it would not work out. Two weeks later I shared my call again with him. He did not say much about that call. I returned to Austin for the new school year. In October of 1945, I went down the church aisle to surrender myself to God's call. I was sixteen years old.

Mrs. Miriam Johnson's father was Dr. John Walter Michaels. Dr. Michaels was a Home Mission Board missionary to the Deaf for many years. Mrs. Johnson was the director of the Deaf ministry at Congress Avenue Baptist Church. She became my spiritual guide and friend. Carrie Abbot, the daughter of Deaf parents, and Miriam Johnson took turns interpreting the **worship** services at Congress Ave. The church pastor, Dr. John B. Davidson, took an interest in my call and training. I left for Gallaudet in the fall of 1946. I entered Baylor from Gallaudet in November of 1948. Five months later Dr. Davidson arranged the service for me to be ordained as a minister.

On Sunday, April 24, a council of pastors from the Austin Baptist Association met at Congress Avenue Baptist Church. They were there to ordain me to the gospel ministry. An article about my ordination service appeared in the Home Mission Board magazine in July, 1949. The article explained how Dr. W. C. Raines asked me some questions. My "accurate and spirit-filled answers" were given again through the interpreter. Carey Shaw was a Deaf deacon at First Baptist Church in Houston. He led the ordination prayer. Several Austin pastors spoke at the service. Rev. Jarrel Gaddy closed the meeting.

The Home Mission Board appointed me as a student missionary on February 1, 1949. I served the Home Mission Board in different roles through the years until I retired on June 7, 1997. All together I served Southern Baptists for over 48 years. Today I live in the Atlanta, Georgia area and continue to serve the Lord and teach Bible lessons at church.

In the second paragraph I mention the word *gospel*. You may ask, “What is the gospel?” I would like to explain it to you. You may want to open your favorite Bible translation to 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. I am using the New International Reader’s Version (NIRV). Paul says: 1. “Brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the good news I preached to you. You received it and have put your faith in it. 2. Because you believed the good news, you are saved. But you must hold firmly to the message I preached to you. If you don’t, you have believed it for nothing. 3. What I received I passed on to you. And it is the most important of all. Here is what it is. Christ died for our sins, just as Scripture said he would. 4. He was buried. He was raised from the dead on the third day, just as Scripture said he would be.”

So there are three facts or truths within the gospel. Number 1 is: Christ died for our sins. Number 2 is: Christ was buried. Number 3 is: Christ was raised from the dead. This is the gospel. This is the good news.

Paul says in Romans 1:16 (NIRV): “I am not ashamed of the good news. It is God’s power. And it will save everyone who believes. It is meant first for the Jews. It is meant for those who aren’t Jews.” Paul says in 2 Timothy 1:12 (NIRV): “But I’m not ashamed. I know the One I have believed in. I am sure he is able to take care of what I have given him. I can trust him with it until the day he returns as judge.”

The gospel is for you to be saved. Open your heart and mind to it. Believe it with all your heart. Jesus died for your sins. He was buried. He rose from the dead to give you life. That life lasts forever. Trust in the Jesus who died and rose, and you will be saved.

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS AND LEVITICUS

The Jewish people saw the Books of Exodus and Leviticus as a part of a history that began in Genesis and was completed in Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. These five books are called the books of the Law. The Greek word is *Pentateuch* which means “five scrolls.” The Jewish people call these five books the Torah. *Torah* is a **Hebrew** word that means “instruction.” **Exodus** is a Latin word that came from the Greek word that means “to go out.” *Leviticus* is from a Latin word referring to the Levites and priests.

Exodus is a book about the **redemption** of God’s people. It tells how God made people free again. Leviticus is a book about **atonement** and living in **holiness**. It tells us how redeemed people became cleansed from sin, how those people must **worship**, and how those people must serve God.

»» Who wrote the Books of Exodus and Leviticus?

Most Bible teachers believe Moses wrote Exodus and Leviticus. Several verses in Exodus tell us Moses wrote at least part of the book (Exodus 17:14; 24:4; 34:27). Joshua said the command in Exodus 20:25 was “explained in the Book of the Teachings of Moses” (Joshua 8:31). Several New Testament verses identify Moses as the author of all five books of the Law. (See Mark 7:10; 12:26.)

»» When were the Books of Exodus and Leviticus written?

According to 1 Kings 6:1, the Exodus from **Egypt** took place 480 years before the fourth year of King Solomon’s reign. From other sources, we know that was about 966 B.C., so counting this way the Exodus occurred about 1446 B.C. If you read a Bible commentary on the Exodus from Egypt or if you look it up online, you will find that it is not easy to find the perfect date for the Exodus. Exodus tells the history of the Jewish people for a little more than forty years, ending just before they entered the **promised land**.

Moses wrote Leviticus while the Jewish people were camped at Mount Sinai (Leviticus 7:38; 27:34). God spoke the words of Leviticus during the first month of the second year after the Exodus from Egypt. Moses probably wrote them before the wilderness journey recorded in Numbers.

»» Why were the Books of Exodus and Leviticus written?

The Book of Exodus is a history book to help the Jews remember how God led them out of Egypt and into the promised land. Leviticus was written to help the Jews remember God’s holiness and their need to be holy and worship God in the right way.

The sacrificial rituals point us to the atoning death of Jesus, our great High Priest. The letter to the Hebrews explains the Book of Leviticus in

this **relationship** with Jesus. Other New Testament books refer to and quote from the Book of Leviticus. Romans 10:5 and Galatians 3:12 refer to Leviticus 18:5. Matthew 19:16-20; Mark 12:28-33; Luke 10:25-28; Galatians 5:14; and James 2:8 all refer to Leviticus 19:18.

OUTLINES OF EXODUS; LEVITICUS

EXODUS

- I. Preparation for Deliverance (1:1–4:31))
- II. Moses Confronts Pharaoh (5:1–13:16)
- III. Freedom Gained (13:17–15:21)
- IV. Into the Wilderness (15:22–18:27)
- V. At the Foot of Mount Sinai (19:1–34:35)
- VI. Building the Tabernacle (35:1–40:38)

LEVITICUS

- I. Laws for Sacrifices and Offerings (1:1–7:38)
- II. Ordination and Ministry of Priests (8:1–10:20)
- III. Purity Laws (11:1–16:34)
- IV. God's Requirements for Holiness (17:1–27:34)



SLOW TO OBEY

God called Moses and empowered Moses to serve Him and His purposes.

EXODUS 3:4-14; 4:13-16

FIRST THOUGHTS

God called Moses to serve Him. God also calls us to serve Him. When God calls, He also gives the power to do the work. You may wonder if God talks to us today like He did in the Bible. He does, but we may not be ready to listen to Him.

Think back about a time when you felt strongly that God was speaking to you. You may want to share it with your Bible study group this week.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT (EXODUS 1:1–3:3)

From Genesis 50, we learn how Jacob's family continued to live in **Egypt**. Many years later, Jacob's family was very large (1:9). The king became afraid they may cause trouble, so he forced them to become slaves. Later he said that all **Hebrew** baby boys must be killed at birth. One Jewish woman chose to save her son and put him in a basket on the Nile River. The king's daughter discovered the child and raised him. She named him Moses.

When Moses was forty years old, he went to Midian, a town near Mount Sinai. He met Jethro, a priest, and married Jethro's daughter. He worked for Jethro as a shepherd for forty years.

God saw the suffering of His people, and appeared to Moses in a burning bush (Exodus 3:1-3).

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. God's Presence (Exodus 3:4-6)

VERSE 4

⁴*When the LORD saw Moses was coming to look at the bush, God called to him from the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And Moses said, "Here I am."*

Moses saw the bush was burning, but not burning up. He thought this was strange. When Moses went closer to the bush, God spoke from it and called Moses by his name. Moses' answer, "Here I am," was a servant's answer. Moses showed he was available to God."

VERSES 5-6

⁵*Then God said, "Do not come any closer. Take off your sandals, because you are standing on holy ground."*

⁶*"I am the God of your ancestors—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Moses covered his face because he was afraid to look at God.*

God told Moses not to come close to the bush. He then told Moses to remove his shoes because the place was **holy** ground. The place itself was not holy. It became holy because God was there. In some nations today, people remove their shoes when they go into their church.

The Almighty God is holy, but we can be thankful He chooses to show His faithfulness and plans through people. God had a plan and a person ready to save His people and bring them out of Egypt.

Why did God tell Moses He was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?

Why was Moses afraid?

How might we fear God?

KEY DOCTRINE: *God's Holiness*

Throughout the Bible we read about God's holiness. Moses said there is no one like God (Exodus 15:11). The psalms frequently speak of God's holiness, as in Psalm 99:9. Isaiah heard the angels singing, "Holy, holy, holy" (Isaiah 6:3). John wrote that God alone is holy (Revelation 15:4).

"Holy" has two main meanings. The first is "to be separate, different, set apart." God is set apart and is different from all others. The second meaning is "to be good and right in ones actions and thoughts." God is always good and right. Thus, He is always holy.

God's people become holy as we become what God wants us to be, separated for His use. The Holy Spirit guides Christians to holiness (1 Corinthians 6:19-20, 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8).

2. God's Call (Exodus 3:7-10)

VERSES 7-8

⁷*The LORD said, "I have seen the troubles my people have suffered in **Egypt**, and I have heard their cries when the Egyptian slave masters hurt them. I am concerned about their pain,*

⁸*"and I have come down to save them from the Egyptians. I will bring them out of that land and lead them to a good land with lots of room—a fertile land. It is the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites."*

This is the first time God used the words "my people." God said He saw the troubles of His people and He was ready to save them. He said He would lead them to a good land. That land is called the **promised land**.

Verses 9-10

⁹ *"I have heard the cries of the people of Israel, and I have seen the way the Egyptians have made life hard for them.*

¹⁰ *"So now I am sending you to the king of Egypt. Go! Bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt!"*

God said He would use Moses to save the **Hebrew** people. This was God's call to Moses. God often does His work through people like He did with Moses. He has a plan for every person's life. It took eighty years for Moses to find God's plan for his life. God always works with His timetable, not ours.

When we pray for help in terrible situations, we can be thankful. God may help us in unexpected ways and through unexpected persons.

Can you think of a time when you had a strong feeling God was calling you to do something? Share that experience with your Bible study class. Write a few words about that experience here.

3. God's Name (Exodus 3:11-14)

VERSE 11

¹¹ *But Moses said to God, "I am not a great man! How can I go to the king and lead the Israelites out of Egypt?"*

Moses felt he was not important enough to go talk with the king. The Bible has other stories of men who felt like Moses. Read about Gideon (Judges 6:14-16) and Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:6-8). God also told both of these men, "I am with you."

How many times have you answered God by signing, "But..."? "But I am Deaf." "But I am too old (or too young)." "But I am too busy right now, maybe later." We all tend to do this. It means we are thinking of some excuse or reason not to obey Him!

VERSE 12

¹² *God said, “I will be with you. This will be the proof that I am sending you: After you lead the people out of Egypt, all of you will worship Me on this mountain.”*

Moses was on a mountain named Horeb. The same mountain is also called Sinai. We read about this mountain often in our Bible.

To answer Moses’ excuses to obey His call, God promised to be with Moses. When God asks us to do something, He is with us too. Jesus promised to be with His disciples always (Matthew 28:20).

VERSES 13-14

¹³ *Moses said to God, “When I go to the Israelites, I will say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors sent me to you.’ What if the people say, ‘What is his name?’ What should I tell them?”*

¹⁴ *Then God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM. When you go to the people of Israel, tell them, ‘I AM sent me to you.’”*

Moses had another question for God. Maybe he was still trying to understand all God wanted him to do.

God told Moses his name is “I AM.” The Old Testament **Hebrew** language did not have any vowels (a-e-i-o-u). Later vowels were added by different sets of dots under the other letters. The word that means “I AM” is spelled YHWH in Hebrew. The Jews felt it was not respectful to say that word for God. They spoke another word, *Adonai*, which means “Lord.” When vowels from Adonai were added to YHWH, it became YAHWEH. Some people say that word as *Jehovah*. In English, we use the word *Lord* when we translate the word *Jehovah*. Some Bible translations use capitals, LORD, for this.

I AM may seem to be an odd name. But it is full of meaning. Whatever else it may mean, it certainly means this—God is. He is alive and always has been. That name had such power over all other gods because they were only idols, and they were not alive or real. But the “I AM” is alive and real.

**Sometimes when we pray, we say God, or Our Father, or Our Lord.
When you pray, what name do you use for God?**

Why do you choose that name?

What does “I AM” tell us about God??

BIBLE SKILL

God made promises to Abraham and his children after him. Look up the promises and write down what God promised.

Genesis 12:1-3 _____

Genesis 15:13-16 _____

Genesis 26:2-4 _____

Genesis 28:13-15 _____

After doing this study write why you think Israel is often called the promised land. _____

4. God’s Plan (Exodus 4:13-16)

VERSES 13-14

¹³ But Moses said, “Please, Lord, send someone else.”

¹⁴ The LORD became angry with Moses and said, “Your brother Aaron, from the family of Levi, is a skilled speaker. He is already coming to meet you, and he will be happy when he sees you.”

In verse 3:4 Moses called out “Here I am” when God called his name from the burning bush. But now, when God told him to go to the king of **Egypt** and lead the people out of slavery, Moses’ answer was basically, “Who, me?”

After giving reasons why he was not able to do the job, Moses asked God to send someone else to do it. God promised to help Moses and said Moses could use his brother, Aaron, to speak for him. It will help you understand this better if you read all the conversation between God and Moses in Exodus 3:9–4:9.

The Lord became angry with Moses. Does that seem odd to you? God's anger does not simply mean God becomes unhappy. God's anger is always directed toward **sin** and toward the people who do not obey His will (Deuteronomy 9:7-23), and especially to the **worship** of idols (Psalm 78:56-66). John wrote, "Those who believe in the Son have eternal life, but those who do not obey the Son will never have life. God's anger stays on them" (John 3:36). God's anger is often described as burning or coming as fire. His anger will finally lead to punishment. King Josiah read the Old Testament Books of the Law that the Jews ignored for many years. He said, "The Lord's anger is burning against us, because our ancestors did not obey the words of this book" (2 Kings 22:13).

VERSES 15-16

¹⁵ *"You will speak to Aaron and tell him what to say. I will help both of you to speak and will teach you what to do."*

¹⁶ *"Aaron will speak to the people for you. You will tell him what God says, and he will speak for you."*

Aaron and Moses were descendants of Levi, a son of Jacob (Exodus 6:20). Aaron spoke for Moses to the Jewish people and to **Pharaoh, the king of Egypt** (Exodus 7:1-2). God named Aaron as the high priest (Exodus 28:1-3). He failed to be faithful to God when Moses left him in charge while Moses went up the mountain (Exodus 32:1-26). Later, he and his sister Miriam became jealous of Moses (Numbers 12:1-9).

In verse 3:12, God said, "I will be with you." God did not say to Moses that everything would be fine. He did not say it would be easy. He did not promise that only good would happen to Moses. He only said, "I will be with you." That is exactly what He says to us today.

**When you feel afraid to serve God because you may fail,
what can you do?**

IN MY CONTEXT

God wanted to move Moses from his comfortable life into the work God planned for him. Moses was never the same again. He had a new **relationship** with God. He knew God as a friend (Exodus 33:11).

Think of a time when you realized God is your friend. Share that experience with your Bible study group.

Moses forgot his past failures. He received new power for his call to service. The same can be true for us. God's job description for you will not be the same as for Moses, but it will be real and challenging. God does not look for ability. He looks for availability.

Write a few sentences about what you understand God wants you to do for Him.

If you are not sure about God's plan for you, ask God today to show you what He wants you to do.

What are some excuses people make when they feel God leading them to do something?

Tell God you are available and ready to do His will. Instead of giving excuses, thank God for being with you.

List some ways you can use what you have learned in this lesson, and how this lesson can help you grow in Christ.

MEMORY VERSE

God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. When you go to the people of Israel, tell them, 'I AM sent me to you.'"

—Exodus 3:14



Session 2

CHALLENGE

Moses met with **Pharaoh**. God showed His power. This reminds us that God alone is worthy of **worship**.

EXODUS 7:1-13

FIRST THOUGHTS

Moses did not feel he was able to do what God wanted him to do. He made several excuses, but God encouraged him to obey. When Moses obeyed, God gave him the strength and wisdom to do the job.

Sometimes, Deaf people say they cannot do certain things because they are deaf.

When someone says, "I am deaf, I can't do that," how can you answer them?

Sometimes, when we are willing to try to do something new, we learn that God helps us do it.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT (EXODUS 5:1–10:29)

Read Exodus chapters 5-10 to understand all that happened between God, Moses, and Aaron, and Pharaoh. Moses did what God told him to do. Still it was hard to accomplish God's plan.

In Exodus 5 and 6, Moses and Aaron told Pharaoh (the king of **Egypt**) how God said to let them go into the **desert** to worship. Pharaoh refused and made them work harder.

Moses stood before Pharaoh and demanded the freedom of the people of **Israel**. Pharaoh was stubborn, and he did not cooperate in any way.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

Pharaoh's heart was hard. He was stubborn. He was selfish. He closed his mind to God.

1. God's Plan (Exodus 7:1-5)

VERSE 1

¹*The LORD said to Moses, "I have made you like God to the king of Egypt, and your brother Aaron will be like a prophet for you."*

This is God's encouragement to Moses: "You think you are weak, but the king thinks you are a god!"

The Egyptians worshiped many different gods. It would not be difficult for the king to see Moses as a god. But the king thought he was more powerful than any of the gods of other people.

Egypt is one of the oldest nations of the world. It was a powerful nation in the time of Moses. It is still a great nation today. At the time of the **Exodus**, the Egyptians were skilled in the use of metals, fine fabrics, jewels, and pottery. They built buildings and great pyramids using large stones. Their army included horses with chariots.

While Joseph was in power in Egypt, the Jewish people were honored guests. But four hundred years later, they had become slaves. While they were slaves in Egypt, they too became skilled in many kinds of work. This prepared them for their work after they left Egypt. We will read about some of their **skills** in lessons later this quarter.

VERSES 2-4

²*"Tell Aaron your brother everything that I have commanded you, and let him tell the king of Egypt to let the Israelites leave his country."*

³ *"But I will make the king stubborn. I will do many miracles in Egypt,*

⁴ *"but he will still refuse to listen. So then I will punish Egypt terribly, and I will lead My divisions, My people the Israelites, out of that land."*

God showed His power nine times. The king refused nine times. The king was stubborn. Some translations use the words, "he hardened his heart." That means he thought he was more powerful than the God of Moses. He refused to listen to God.

When God said He would harden the king's heart, it means that He would let the king become stubborn. We know from the Bible that God does not make a person **sin**, but God will let a person sin.

The Lord is all powerful in all that He does. He knows how we will respond to Him. God knows what we will do, just as He knew what Moses would do, and how Moses would learn to trust God completely.

We have a free will to decide, and we are responsible to God for our decisions. God has a plan for our lives just as He did for Moses and the Jewish people.

They were slaves. God wanted them to become free. People are often slaves to sin. God wants all of us to be free from sin. As you study these verses, think of it as a drama between you and God about your slavery to sin. Ask God to help you get rid of those sinful habits and to help you know the joy of walking with Him in freedom.

Verse 5

⁹ *"I will punish Egypt with My power, and I will bring the Israelites out of that land. Then they will know I am the LORD."*

So far, in their meeting with **Pharaoh**, Moses and Aaron simply delivered God's command. Now the time came for them to show God's power and carry out the **amazing** signs that proved they were truly sent by God. The Lord let Moses and Aaron know that it would take more than one or two miracles to make the king change his mind. God would increase His signs and wonders in the land of **Egypt**.

God would let Pharaoh resist (become hard hearted) and refuse the request. God would use this opportunity to show His power to Pharaoh and to the people of Egypt.

These verses tell us what God planned to do. We know before we read any more verses that God did it because God always keeps His promises. He promised to take His people out of Egypt and make them free.

Why is it hard to obey God?

What excuses do people give to God instead of obeying Him?

KEY DOCTRINE: *God, All-Powerful*

The prophet Isaiah said God is “The Lord All-Powerful.” Our strength, like Moses’ strength, comes from God (Habakkuk 3:19). David sang, “When I was helpless, He saved me” (Psalm 116:6). In the New Testament, the people saw the power of God through His Son, Jesus. The disciples saw the power of Jesus during the storm (Mark 4:35-40). Others came to Jesus and found healing (Mark 5:25-29; 9:17-29). The little boy with his loaves and fish saw Jesus’ power to feed 5,000 people (John 6:5-13). When we see our weakness, God shows His power as He did in these chapters in Exodus.

2. Simple Obedience (Exodus 7:6-7)

VERSES 6-7

⁶*Moses and Aaron did just as the LORD had commanded them.*

⁷*Moses was eighty years old and Aaron was eighty-three when they spoke to the king.*

In the Book of Acts we read that Moses lived the first forty years of his life as the son of the king of Egypt (Acts 7:20-23). He had a good education. He learned how to lead and direct the people.

Then, he spent forty more years in a place named Midian (Acts 7:30, Exodus 3:1). During this time he must have had many hours of talking with God. He was alone much of the time, and God was able to speak to his heart.

Moses was now eighty years old. Some people at that time lived to the age of 120 or more. Most people lived much shorter lives. Because of his age and his experiences in life, Moses was well trained to do the work God called him to do. Even though he was old, God was going to use him. God always prepares us for His work.

After Moses’ experience with the burning bush and his conversations with God, he was ready to obey.

How old were you when you became a Christian?

Do you feel you are old enough now to obey anything God wants you to do? YES NO.

Why do you feel this way?

3. God's Miracles (Exodus 7:8-13)

VERSES 8-9

⁸ *The LORD said to Moses and Aaron,*

⁹ *"Moses, when the king asks you to do a miracle, tell Aaron to throw his walking stick down in front of the king, and it will become a snake."*

Egypt had many large snakes. In their religion, the snake represented the beginning and end of time. As the sun (god) moved through the sky, it became a snake and fought against other snakes (powers, or gods).

The snake was also the Egyptian king's symbol of power. Most countries have a symbol to represent the country. In the United States the eagle is such a symbol. The **pharaoh** wore an emblem of a snake on his forehead to show he was the supreme ruler.

In each of the miracles, the object of the miracle (insects, blood in the water, etc.) related to something very important to the Egyptians. Every miracle represented the defeat of an Egyptian god.

VERSE 10

¹⁰ *So Moses and Aaron went to the king as the LORD had commanded. Aaron threw his walking stick down in front of the king and his officers, and it became a snake.*

In Exodus 4:2-5, God had Moses do this miracle. It was one of the ways God helped Moses to be brave. It was easier for Moses to do this because he had seen what God did in the past. This gave him courage for the next miracles when he had not seen God do it in the past.

People who study the Bible and other histories have different ideas about what this "snake" really was. The **Hebrew** word could even mean it was a crocodile! Whatever it meant, it was clear to the Egyptians when they saw it.

VERSES 11-12

¹¹ *So the king called in his wise men and his magicians, and with their tricks the Egyptian magicians were able to do the same thing.*

¹² *They threw their walking sticks on the ground, and their sticks became snakes. But Aaron's stick swallowed theirs.*

Do you think this surprised Moses and Aaron? Maybe it did. But then Aaron's snake was much larger and ate the snakes made by the magicians! That surprised the magicians!

We do not know how these magicians did this, but we have seen magicians do some tricks that are a lot like this. What the magicians did was a trick. What God did was a miracle!

Today humans attempt to copy God's works. Hospitals promise cures for drug abuse. Psychiatrists offer freedom to **guilt**-ridden people. In certain cases, they certainly do help people. But true freedom from every dependency and life-changing forgiveness is the work of God. Pharaoh was unwilling to see the difference between what his magicians could do and what God could do.

When Moses showed Pharaoh the signs God gave him, Egyptian magicians copied them. Some students of the Bible say the Egyptian magicians used trickery. Snake charmers today cause a cobra snake to become stiff by pressing on a nerve in its neck. Then they throw the snake on the ground to awaken it. Others believe that the secret arts of Egypt's magicians was actual magic, performed with the devil's help. In this case, the argument between Moses and Egypt's magicians was a true test of supernatural powers.

VERSE 13

¹³ *Still the king was stubborn and refused to listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the LORD had said.*

God warned Moses this would happen. It happened nine times before Pharaoh finally said the Israelites could leave.

Use a colored pen or pencil to underline the last six words in this verse. You will see these words often. God always does what He says He will do.

Later, after God did more miracles, even Egypt's magicians told Pharaoh, "The power of God has done this" (Exodus 8:19).

When God asks you to do something, how can you believe He will do what He says?

Think about something you have seen in life that only God could do.
Write it here.

BIBLE SKILL

God used Moses and Aaron to do ten miracles. Look up these verses and write a few words to tell what the miracle was. In each case the miracle had special meaning to the Egyptians, much more than just what happened. Use a Bible dictionary to find what each of these meant to the Egyptians. Plan to share this with your Bible study group.

Exodus 7:14–24_____

Exodus 7:25–8:15_____

Exodus 8:16–19_____

Exodus 8:20–32_____

Exodus 9:1–7_____

Exodus 9:8–12_____

Exodus 9:13–35_____

Exodus 10:1–20_____

IN MY CONTEXT

This lesson reminds us of God’s power and our faith in His power.

What does God want you to do with your life?

Read these verses and write a few words to help you remember what they teach about finding and obeying God’s will for your life.

Philippians 4:6-7 _____

Colossians 3:15-17 _____

Psalms 37:3-5 _____

Proverbs 16:9 _____

Give an example of how you have been faithful to God.

God is not finished with you or with His plan. Never fear the Lord. He already knows your heart.

What can we do when we have doubts?

Doubts are a normal part of accepting a responsibility of faith. But we must trust the Lord and work through our doubts and fears. We can pray and ask God to lead in our lives. He will answer.

MEMORY VERSE

“I will make you My own people, and I will be your God. You will know that I am the LORD your God, the One who saves you from the hard work the Egyptians force you to do.”

—Exodus 6:7



FREEDOM

God will give freedom to those who are willing to trust Him.

EXODUS 12:1-13

FIRST THOUGHTS

This is one of the most important stories in the Old Testament. It tells about the first **Passover**. Through all the Old and New Testaments, the Passover was a part of the life of Jewish people. It is still an important part of their life today. We study the Passover to help us understand how God gives freedom to His people.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT (EXODUS 11:1–13:16)

Read chapter 11 carefully. Verses 2-3 tell how God prepared the Egyptian people to be kind to the Jewish people. They had been slaves for a long time. They probably did not have many things of value. But God prepared them for their long trip. They only needed to ask their neighbors for silver and gold. Imagine what would happen if you went to your neighbors and asked them to give you a lot of their money and gold! But God prepared the hearts of the Egyptian people for His glory.

Then God told Moses what to tell the Egyptian king. The other nine miracles are small compared to this last one.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Prepared (Exodus 12:1-5)

VERSES 1-3

¹*The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt:*

²*“This month will be the beginning of months, the first month of the year for you.*

³*“Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man must get one lamb for the people in his house.”*

This chapter begins with the words, “The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of **Egypt**.” God was not finished with **Pharaoh**.

God told Moses to tell the people some good news. God directed Moses and Aaron to establish this as the first month of their new year. God also gave them requirements for the animal that would be the center of the Passover. The Passover is the New Year’s Day of their religious calendar. This month, called Nisan, is during March and April in our calendar. Our date for Easter changes each year because it is three days after Passover. The death of the lamb made a new beginning, just as the death of Christ made a new beginning for the believer.

Moses told them how to prepare for what God was about to do in their lives and in the lives of the Egyptians. Before the first Passover, they prepared for what was to come. From that time on, the preparation was a celebration in honor of what God did.

The **ceremony** shows the importance of the lamb and how it is used. Each house prepared a lamb to eat with none of it left until morning and none of the lamb was thrown away. This is a picture of a complete and total separation from the life of the past.

VERSES 4-5

⁴*“If there are not enough people in his house to eat a whole lamb, he must share it with his closest neighbor, considering the number of people. There must be enough lamb for everyone to eat.*

⁵*“The lamb must be a one-year-old male that has nothing wrong with it. This animal can be either a young sheep or a young goat.”*

In chapter 11, God sent Moses back to Pharaoh. Moses went to Pharaoh nine times to ask for their freedom. Every time, **Pharaoh** refused to set them free. Each time, something terrible happened. Nine times, God sent terrible punishment upon the Egyptians because Pharaoh failed to release the Jewish people. Now, the tenth and final time came. Moses asked the king to set the Jewish people free, and again, the king refused.

God gave the **Passover** to help them remember the loss of life that gave them freedom. It was a service of **worship** and a festival. It was a time to remember and a time to celebrate.

The animal must be a perfect one-year-old male. This is a picture of Christ's perfection and **sacrifice**. Christ is the Lamb of God. We can experience a new beginning when we trust in the Lord to **deliver** us. We too must obey His instructions.

The Jewish people remembered this as a night different from all other nights of the year. God delivered His people from Egyptian slavery. Passover was Independence Day for the nation of **Israel**. On that night the Lord gave them freedom from slavery and also demonstrated His great power over the gods and armies of **Egypt**.

From that day forward, this month was the beginning of the year for the Jews. This day was the beginning of their new life as children of the living God. They were now free to worship and follow Him.

Why is it important for the lamb to be perfect?

How does the Passover lamb remind us of Jesus?

2. Sacrificed (Exodus 12:6-7)

VERSE 6

⁶“Take care of the animals until the fourteenth day of the month. On that day all the people of the community of Israel will kill them in the evening before dark.”

On the fourteenth day, each animal was killed between three and five p.m. Every Jewish family killed the lamb they had prepared.

VERSE 7

⁷“The people must take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs.”

Each family took the blood from the lamb and put it around the doorframes of their houses. In this way, each home was covered by the blood of the lamb. The angel of death did not enter there, and the followers of God received life and freedom. Each family obeyed the warning, showing their faith in God's provision for their safety.

The blood of the lamb on the sides and top of the doorframe was a picture of God's promise to block the entry of death by His gift of life. In the same way, the blood of Christ prevents spiritual death from coming to us. Through the blood of Jesus Christ, the believer knows he has spiritual life for eternity.

How did the Hebrew people show their faith in God?

How do you show your faith in Jesus?

How did the blood of the lamb protect the Hebrew people?

How does the blood of Jesus protect you?

3. Ready (Exodus 12:8-11)

VERSES 8-10

⁸ *"On this night they must roast the lamb over a fire. They must eat it with bitter herbs and bread made without yeast.*

⁹ *"Do not eat the lamb raw or boiled in water. Roast the whole lamb over a fire—with its head, legs, and inner organs.*

¹⁰ *"You must not leave any of it until morning, but if any of it is left over until morning, you must burn it with fire."*

Bitter herbs (such as endive, chicory, and dandelions) were a picture of the bitter experience of slavery in Egypt and the sorrow and grief for past sin.

The bread without yeast was a picture of leaving in a hurry. The meat was roasted whole. God commanded the Jews not to eat any of the meat raw as some of the pagans did. None of the meat was to be left until morning. They were to burn any leftover meat.

VERSE 11

¹¹ “This is the way you must eat it: You must be fully dressed as if you were going on a trip. You must have your sandals on and your walking stick in your hand. You must eat it in a hurry; this is the LORD’s Passover.”

God told Moses and Aaron that the people should eat the **Passover** lamb and be ready to travel. All of this was an act of faith in God’s promise to **deliver** them. It was important for them to obey and not delay. Every person was dressed in traveling clothes, ready to depart with their staffs in their hands.

Today Jewish people eat bread without yeast for seven days during this time of remembrance of the Passover. In the Bible, yeast often symbolizes evil, because yeast is a substance that grows rapidly and becomes part of the whole lump of dough. Yeast represented the **sin** that belongs to the old life. Bread without yeast (**unleavened bread**) therefore represented purity.

We must understand the importance of doing as the Lord commands concerning our deliverance from sin. The Bible tells us how God wants us to live.

The Jewish people turned from their life of slavery. In the same way, we must turn from a life of sin and receive Jesus as Savior.

KEY DOCTRINE: *Baptism and the Lord’s Supper*

Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are important to the Christian, just as the Passover was to the Jewish people.

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is a picture of the believer’s faith in Jesus as Savior.

The Lord’s Supper is a picture of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, and of our faith in His second coming.

Read some of these verses to help you understand more about baptism and the Lord’s Supper: Matthew 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 8:26-39; 16:30-34.

4. Free (Exodus 12:12-13)

VERSE 12

¹² *“That night I will go through the land of Egypt and kill all the firstborn animals and people in the land of Egypt. I will also punish all the gods of Egypt. I am the LORD.”*

In the tenth **plague**, God killed the firstborn of every Egyptian household. The angel of death passed over the homes that had the lamb's blood over the doorframe. No one died in those houses. Finally, **Pharaoh** recognized the superiority of Moses' God over all the gods of **Egypt** and over himself. In the first meeting with Moses and Aaron, Pharaoh said boldly he did not know the Lord. Now he learned about the Lord and His power.

The plagues finally resulted in **Israel's** freedom. The purpose of the plagues was the revelation of God. Not only did Pharaoh and the Egyptians come to know the Lord through the events of these mighty works, but Moses and the Jewish people also learned more about their God.

This plague was the worst plague of all. The firstborn child of every Egyptian home died, from the firstborn of the prisoners in the dungeon to the firstborn of the royal household. In every home in all of Egypt someone died. In this way, God punished Pharaoh and showed His power over the Egyptian gods.

The lamb chosen for the Passover meal was to be perfect (Exodus 12:5). Isaiah identified the Messiah as the Lamb of God (Isaiah 53:7). John the Baptist identified Jesus as the Lamb of God (John 1:29-34). Peter identified Jesus as the perfect sacrificial lamb (1 Peter 1:18-21). Paul wrote about Jesus as our Savior (Romans 8:1-4). John referred to Jesus as the Lamb several times in the Book of Revelation. Jesus fulfills the picture we find in the Passover lamb.

VERSE 13

¹³ *“But the blood will be a sign on the houses where you are. When I see the blood, I will pass over you. Nothing terrible will hurt you when I punish the land of Egypt.”*

The blood of the lamb was enough to save the Jewish people from death. The people had to eat the meat of the lamb to get enough strength for their journey. Salvation is just the beginning. We must receive Christ if we are to have the strength to follow Him. The rest of chapter 12 tells how the people must always remember this day. They did this with the annual celebration of the **Feast** of the Passover.

**Compare the Passover celebration with the Lord’s Supper.
How are they alike or different?**

BIBLE SKILL

Read these verses and draw a line to the words that tell what is in that verse.

Deuteronomy 16:1-2	Jesus celebrated the Passover.
Exodus 12:24-27	Jesus is the Lamb of God.
Luke 22:14-20	The Passover lamb was killed at the place of worship.
Exodus 12:5	The lamb chosen for the Passover meal must have nothing wrong with it.
Isaiah 53:7	The Messiah was the Lamb of God.
John 1:29-34	The story of the first Passover was told each year.

IN MY CONTEXT

What was the final plague God sent to the Egyptians?

What must the Jewish people do to celebrate the Passover?

Why is Jesus called the Passover Lamb?

Why is it so important to tell our children about our experiences with God?

Christians may feel they are slaves to a sin or habit in life. We may feel bound like the Jewish slaves. What can we do to feel free?

What are some of the things of this world that threaten to entrap Christians and keep them from free and joyful obedience to God?

What do most Christians search for in their spiritual lives?

Jesus can fill that empty spot and ease that ache and longing we have inside our hearts.

MEMORY VERSE

Moses said to the people, "Remember this day, the day you left Egypt. You were slaves in that land, but the LORD with his great power brought you out of it. You must not eat bread made with yeast"

—Exodus 13:3



VICTORY

God will always be victorious over His enemies and the enemies of His people.

EXODUS 14:13-28

FIRST THOUGHTS

This lesson is about the victory God had over the Egyptians. It is a reminder to us how God is always ready to give victory to His people when they obey and pray in faith. Are you facing some difficult problem or decision? Pray and ask God to give you the victory.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT (EXODUS 13:17–15:21)

Exodus 12:14—14:12 is the story of how the Jewish people left **Egypt**. In these verses they went from praising God to complaining to Moses.

No one knows the exact location of the place where they crossed this large sea. At the place they crossed, the sea was large enough to block their path. It was also large enough to drown the Egyptian army that chased them.

When **Pharaoh** realized the Jewish people were really gone, he had a change of heart and mind. He sent out his army to chase them. The Israelite men numbered over 600,000 (Exodus 12:37). That means there were well

over a million people when women and children are included. There were also many sheep and other animals. You can imagine this was a huge crowd. Keep this in mind as you study the rest of these verses. This was not just a handful of people! It was like moving a large city and they were walking, driving their animals, and carrying many things the Egyptian people had given to them. Pharaoh caught up with them near the Red Sea.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

When everything seemed to be going right, the people thought Moses was a great man. As soon as things seemed to be going wrong or trouble came, the people wished Moses had left them alone in Egypt. They accused him of bringing them to the **desert** to die. They said it would have been better to stay in Egypt as slaves and die of old age than to face death in the desert.

1. The Stage (Exodus 14:13-18)

Read these verses as a drama. First, look at the stage where the action is.

God scolded the people for complaining against Him and directed them to prepare to move forward. God told Moses that He would part the sea so they could pass and He would defeat the Egyptian army for His honor.

VERSES 13-14

¹³ *But Moses answered, "Don't be afraid! Stand still and you will see the LORD save you today. You will never see these Egyptians again after today."*

¹⁴ *"You only need to remain calm; the LORD will fight for you."*

Moses encouraged the people to have faith in God to protect them. They must stand still. They must not tremble. They must not fight. They must not cry out in fear. They must be calm because the Lord was fighting for them.

The people were trapped between the sea and the Egyptian army. Salvation could only come from God.

Moses knew the way of victory was to trust the Lord. He gave three commands. The first was, "Do not be afraid," because God is on your side. The second was, "Stand still," because you cannot win this battle in your own strength. The third command was to have patience because you will see the Lord save you today. God will fight for you. It is important that we stand still and wait for God. We must stand by faith. Then we can walk by faith.

VERSES 15-16

¹⁵ *Then the LORD said to Moses, “Why are you crying out to Me? Command the Israelites to start moving.*

¹⁶ *“Raise your walking stick and hold it over the sea so that the sea will split and the people can cross it on dry land.”*

God then ordered Moses to tell the people to start moving. The fact that **Israel** was facing the sea was no problem to God. He told Moses exactly what to do. When Moses lifted up his walking stick, the waters divided and the people walked across on dry land. At Moses’ signal, the waters then flowed back, the Egyptian soldiers were drowned, and the Jewish people were blocked from going back to **Egypt**.

VERSES 17-18

¹⁷ *“I will make the Egyptians stubborn so they will chase the Israelites, but I will be honored when I defeat the king and all of his chariot drivers and chariots.*

¹⁸ *“When I defeat the king, his chariot drivers, and chariots, the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD.”*

Why did God perform these miracles for the Jewish people? They didn’t deserve it. They cried out in fear and complained that God did not know what He was doing. God kept His promise to **deliver** His people (Exodus 3:7-8). God had another reason for this miracle. He showed His power and glory in the defeat of the Egyptian army. The Egyptians would recognize God as the Lord.

Why did the Egyptians think it would be easy to capture their runaway slaves?

Why were the Jewish people afraid?

Why do people fear today?

2. Act 1: The Separation (Exodus 14:19-20)

VERSES 19-20

¹⁹ Now the angel of God that usually traveled in front of Israel's army moved behind them. Also, the pillar of cloud moved from in front of the people and stood behind them.

²⁰ So the cloud came between the Egyptians and the Israelites. This made it dark for the Egyptians but gave light to the Israelites. So the cloud kept the two armies apart all night.

The angel of God stood between Israel and the Egyptians, keeping both groups separated through the night. The cloud that had led them now protected them from their enemy. The Egyptians could not see the Jewish people, so they could not fight them.

This first act of the drama is a wonderful picture of how God protects His people. At this time, the people knew about the cloud which protected them. But most of the time God protects His people, and we do not see it happen this clearly. When we have a safe trip, it is because of God's protection. When we wake up each morning, it is because God watched over us during the night.

What are some times that you have been aware of God's protection?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Salvation*

This lesson teaches us about how God saved the Jewish people. We can use this story to help us understand how we become saved through faith in Jesus Christ.

God offers salvation freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. By His own blood Jesus obtained eternal salvation for the believer. Other words used in the Bible to describe salvation are regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification.

3. Act 2: The Crossing (Exodus 14:21-22)

VERSES 21-22

²¹ Then Moses held his hand over the sea. All that night the LORD drove back the sea with a strong east wind, making the sea become dry ground. The water was split, ²² and the Israelites went through the sea on dry land, with a wall of water on their right and on their left.

This is the second act of the drama. The Egyptians could not see what was happening because of the cloud between them and the Jewish people.

When Moses held his staff over the sea, God separated the water so they were able to escape from the Egyptians on dry land. This is so unbelievable that many people try to explain how it may have been just a dry time of the year, and the water was not deep. Today, as Christians, we show our faith in God by obediently believing in His power to perform miracles.

God used the wooden staff of Moses to show His power. During the demonstration of God's power in the plagues, Aaron's staff became a serpent (Exodus 7:8-13). When Moses struck the river with the staff the river turned to blood (Exodus 7:19-20). With this staff came plagues of frogs, lice, hail, and locusts (Exodus 8-10). Later Moses' staff was used to bring water for the people (Exodus 17:5-7). The staff became a symbol of God's power in battle and led to victory (Exodus 17:8-13).

How do you think the Israelites felt while crossing the sea?

How do faith and obedience work together?

Is it harder today to obey God than back then? Why or why not?

4. Act 3: The Victory (Exodus 14:23-28)

VERSES 23-25

²³ *Then all the king's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers followed them into the sea.*

²⁴ *When morning came, the LORD looked down from the pillar of cloud and fire at the Egyptian army and made them panic.*

²⁵ *He kept the wheels of the chariots from turning, making it hard to drive the chariots. The Egyptians shouted, "Let's get away from the Israelites! The LORD is fighting for them and against Egypt."*

The Egyptians chased the Jewish people into the dry bottom of the sea. Then God caused their chariots to get stuck.

VERSES 26-28

²⁶ *Then the LORD told Moses, "Hold your hand over the sea so that the water will come back over the Egyptians, their chariots, and chariot drivers."*

²⁷ *So Moses raised his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its place. The Egyptians tried to run from it, but the LORD swept them away into the sea.*

²⁸ *The water returned, covering the chariots, chariot drivers, and all the king's army that had followed the Israelites into the sea. Not one of them survived.*

Again, God told Moses to hold his staff over the sea, and the water came back together and destroyed the Egyptian army. This was not only to make His people free, it was how God punished the Egyptians because they rejected Him.

In Psalm 77:15-20, David wrote, "By your power You have saved Your people, the descendants of Jacob and Joseph. God, the waters saw You; they saw You and became afraid; the deep waters shook with fear. The clouds poured down their rain. The sky thundered. Your lightning flashed back and forth like arrows. Your thunder sounded in the whirlwind. Lightning lit up the world. The earth trembled and shook. You made a way through the sea and paths through the deep waters, but Your footprints were not seen. You led your people like a flock by using Moses and Aaron."

Verse 31 helps us understand how the people of Israel saw that day: "When the Israelites saw the great power the Lord had used against the Egyptians, they feared the Lord, and they trusted Him and His servant Moses."

God's people can strengthen their faith and encourage each other to keep on in faith by speaking out about the great things God has done. God is worthy of our **worship** and praise as the victorious God.

The Jewish people had much for which to thank God. List a few things God has done for you in the past few weeks. Then take time to thank Him for all His love and care.

BIBLE SKILL

The Lord led His people by way of the Red Sea. Bible teachers agree that this is not the best translation for the Hebrew Yam Suph. The Yam Suph is better translated, the Sea of Reeds, or the Reed Sea. The Red Sea is over 1,000 miles long and averages about 150 miles wide. The width at that time may have been more or less than it is today due to the changing geography of the desert. Most Bible teachers today believe that the Sea of Reeds crossed by the Hebrew people was some place nearer to the Land of Goshen where the Hebrews lived in Egypt.

Read what others said about the crossing of the Red Sea:

David: Psalm 106:7-12.

Joshua: Joshua 2:10; 4:19-24; 24:1-7.

Stephen: Acts 7:36.

Bible teachers agree that the Hebrew people crossed water in which the Egyptians drowned. However, today we do not know exactly where this happened.

IN MY CONTEXT

It is easy to love the Lord when things in your life are going well. You can sing praises and pray prayers of thanksgiving. You can sign hallelujah.

However, what happens when things in your life are not so good? Do you still praise the Lord or do you complain and blame God like the Jewish people did? Think about this and search your heart.

Make a list of things God has done for you.

Try to remember the little things as well as big things. Take time to thank God again for each blessing.

Make another list of problems you face. Ask God to help you through each of these. Trust God to work miracles in your life.

List some ways you can use what you have learned in this lesson. How can this lesson help you grow in Christ?

MEMORY VERSE

“The LORD gives me strength and makes me sing; He has saved me. He is my God, and I will praise him. He is the God of my ancestors, and I will honor Him”

—Exodus 15:2



GOD GIVES US ALL WE NEED

God meets the needs of His people.

EXODUS 16:1-5,11-20

FIRST THOUGHTS

In our lesson today, we learn how God met the needs of the Jewish people while they were in the **desert**. The **Hebrew** people needed food to eat. God provided all the food they needed. In the lesson we will see how God did this. God has always met my needs. Sometimes it was just enough—but it was enough! Sometimes I began to worry, but He has always been faithful.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT (EXODUS 15:22–18:27)

Chapter 15:1-18 has a beautiful song written by Moses and Miriam. Read it and you will understand how Moses and the people rejoiced because God saved them from **Egypt**.

Then, starting with verse 22, the story continues. Again, the Israelites had a problem. The water was bitter, and they could not drink it. Again they complained to Moses, Moses talked with the Lord, and the Lord made the water sweet. The wood of the tree that Moses threw into the water did not have a magical effect on the water. It was a simple item God used to work a miracle, like when Moses lifted his walking stick over the sea (Exodus 14:16).

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Questions about the Future (Exodus 16:1-3)

VERSE 1

¹*The whole Israelite community left Elim and came to the Desert of Sin, which was between Elim and Sinai; they arrived there on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had left Egypt.*

This story begins four weeks after the Israelites left Egypt. Use the inside back cover to trace the places they travelled. The name Sin is a Hebrew word. It has nothing to do with the English word **sin**. In this story Sin was the name of the desert.

The end of chapter 15 tells how the people camped for a while. Elim was a place with lots of water and palm trees. They were comfortable there. It was a pleasant place for the tired people to rest. But it was not the **promised land**, so God told them to move on.

VERSES 2-3

²*Then the whole Israelite community grumbled to Moses and Aaron in the desert.*

³*They said to them, "It would have been better if the LORD had killed us in the land of Egypt. There we had meat to eat and all the food we wanted. But you have brought us into this desert to starve us to death."*

After the Lord delivered the Hebrew people from the hands of **Pharaoh's** army, the people rejoiced, celebrated, and sang songs of victory.

But when they went back into the desert, they complained again about not having food like they had in Egypt. They had been away from Egypt only a few weeks and still remembered the meat and other food they had in Egypt. (See Numbers 11:4-6.) They forgot the hard work, the beatings, and the pain of their forced labor as slaves. They accused Moses and Aaron of leading them into the desert to die.

They had real problems, but they failed to trust God to meet their needs. Doubting is always easier than faith. Believers must become aware of their doubts and turn to God in faith.

Why do people complain when they face problems?

2. Questions about Obedience (Exodus 16:4-5,11-12)

VERSES 4-5

⁴ *Then the LORD said to Moses, “I will cause food to fall like rain from the sky for all of you. Every day the people must go out and gather what they need for that day. I want to see if the people will do what I teach them.*

⁵ *“On the sixth day of each week, they are to gather twice as much as they gather on other days. Then they are to prepare it.”*

God heard their complaining, and in His grace and mercy, God met their needs. In the morning, He rained bread from heaven (verse 4). He told them they would have meat (quail) to eat in the evening (verse 8).

While the people complained because of the hardship, the Lord’s plan was to test and develop their faith. Believers today must be humble. We must learn from the example of the Jewish people and remember God may test our faith, too.

God spoke to Moses in front of the people, announcing the coming of bread and meat. God plans tests that require His followers to depend on Him in greater ways in order to build their trust in Him.

When we pray for “our daily bread,” we are trusting God to provide for us all we need for each day (Matthew 6:11).

VERSES 11-12

¹¹ *The LORD said to Moses,*

¹² *“I have heard the grumbings of the people of Israel. So tell them, ‘At twilight you will eat meat, and every morning you will eat all the bread you want. Then you will know I am the LORD your God.’”*

These verses do not tell us the people asked God for food. They just complained because they were hungry. That sounds like us when things do not go the way we want, doesn’t it? God heard their complaints, and in His grace and mercy, He met their needs.

James wrote, “...You do not get what you want, because you do not ask God. Or, when you ask, you do not receive because the reason you ask is wrong. You want things so you can use them for your own pleasures” (James 4:2-3).

Testing is a normal and healthy part of growing up. Children test the limits set by their parents. Parents test the maturity of their children by giving more responsibility and seeing what they do with it. This growing and learning can include uncomfortable times for both parents and children.

We test batteries to see if they still have power in them. The point is to find the ones that truly work. We do not test to see how many batteries we can throw away, but how many we can keep.

Complaining and testing are important ideas in this chapter. Whenever they complained, God answered in a calm way. God tested the people, not to make them fail, but to see how well they followed His directions. Following the Lord must be the way of life for the believer.

Why did God test the Jewish people?

How have you experienced God testing you?

BIBLE SKILL

Complaining may be one of the oldest characteristics of God’s people! Find these verses and make a note to help you remember who was complaining and why.

Exodus 14:10-12 _____

Exodus 16:2-3 _____

John 6:41-51 _____

1 Peter 4:7-10 _____

Look again at each complaint. What could people have done in these stories instead of complain?

3. Questions about God's Blessings (Exodus 16:13-18)

VERSES 13-16

¹³ *That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning dew lay around the camp.*

¹⁴ *When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost were on the desert ground.*

¹⁵ *When the Israelites saw it, they asked each other, "What is it?" because they did not know what it was. So Moses told them, "This is the bread the LORD has given you to eat.*

¹⁶ *"The LORD has commanded, 'Each one of you must gather what he needs, about two quarts for every person in your family.'"*

Read Numbers 11:31. God used the east wind to blow the birds to the ground. The birds covered a large area around their camp.

When the people saw this food from heaven they called it "**manna**" (Exodus 16:31). The **Hebrew** word manna means "what's that?" or "what's-its-name?" In later Scriptures, manna serves as a symbol of God providing what we need. The Lord knows our basic needs, and He acts to meet them. We may not know how God will bless us. We just trust that He will. For many of us that can be a hard choice.

On the sixth day, they gathered two days' worth of the manna. This was so they did not need to gather it on the seventh day, because God did not send it on the seventh day. That was to be a day of rest and **worship**. Moses told them to gather as much as they needed and those who worked and gathered would have just enough.

Moses instructed the people to fill a jar with about two quarts of manna and place it before the Lord. It was to be kept there forever as a reminder to the people in future generations of God's provisions for His people (Exodus 16:32-34; Hebrews 9:4). The term manna is used today to mean "something God provides for us without our working for it."

The seventh day, the **Sabbath**, was a time of rest. They were free from slavery, so they could enjoy a day (Sabbath) of joy and rest. People who tried to gather manna on the seventh day were surprised because there was none.

The manna appeared on the ground, where people had to stoop down and gather it. God provided, but He expected His people to work for what they got. Today, God provides for our needs, but He expects us to work for it also.

VERSES 17-18

¹⁷ *So the people of Israel did this; some people gathered much, and some gathered little.*

¹⁸ *Then they measured it. The person who gathered more did not have too much, nor did the person who gathered less have too little. Each person gathered just as much as he needed.*

The manna appeared every day except the sabbath. Jesus taught His disciples to ask God for their daily bread (Matthew 6:11). God meets our needs day by day, so we will continue to depend on Him. Jesus wanted His disciples and us to remain dependent on God, so we will seek Him daily and grow in our **relationship** with the Lord every day. The lesson here is that we must get our spiritual nourishment each day as we study God's Word and pray. God knows our needs and when we trust Him, He will provide.

How would you feel if you had the same diet every day?

Would you still be thankful for God's provision? Explain why.

Remember, God made it. Therefore, it perfectly met the needs of His people. When God supplies our needs, we need nothing more.

The real question is: How do you show you are trusting God to meet your needs?

Write about a time when God blessed you in a special way.

KEY DOCTRINE: *Jesus, the Bread of Life*

The words "Bread of Life" mean the spiritual food we need. Without Jesus (the Bread of Life) we cannot live spiritually. Just as we need bread (food) in order to live, the Bread of Life feeds our soul.

In our lesson today, God gave the people manna from heaven. The manna saved the physical life of the people. In the same way, God offered His Son for the salvation of our soul. The Jewish people needed to eat every day, but when we have the bread of life, we do not need to ask for it again. Read more about this in John 6:35-58.

4. Questions about the Next Meal (Exodus 16:19-20)

VERSES 19-20

¹⁹ *Moses said to them, “Don’t keep any of it to eat the next day.”*

²⁰ *But some of the people did not listen to Moses and kept part of it to eat the next morning. It became full of worms and began to stink, so Moses was angry with those people.*

God told Moses to warn the people, but some of them saved part of the **manna** to eat the next day. They ignored Moses, and the remaining manna ruined. Their failure to follow God’s warning made Moses angry with them. When they tried to keep some manna overnight, it meant they did not trust God for the next day’s food. Believers express trust in God through obedience to His commands.

The manna in the **desert** pointed to the Messiah. God wanted the people to remember the manna, so they would recognize the Messiah. One day Jesus came to earth as the living bread (John 6:35-58).

God meets our needs day by day, so that we will continue to depend on Him. If God put ten million dollars in our bank account, we would have so much bread we would have no need to look to the Lord daily. Jesus wants His disciples to seek Him daily and grow in our **relationship** with the Lord daily.

How does God’s daily provision teach us to depend on God?

If you are a parent, what can you do to teach your children to depend on God?

IN MY CONTEXT

In the lesson today we learned about how God provided for the daily needs of His people. Think about all that God did for them in the **desert**.

Make a list of how God provided for the Hebrew people.

Now think about how God provides for us. We know that He has given us the Bible. The Bible reminds us of how God cares for us and how He supplies our needs. But God also helps us as individual persons. How has God met your needs in life?

Make a list of ways God has met your needs in your daily life.

How can you show your trust and dependence on God everyday?

What can you tell others about how He has cared for you throughout your life?

Here is an exercise for you to do. Tell someone in your Bible class a story of a time you saw God meet your needs.

MEMORY VERSE

“I have heard the grumbings of the people of Israel. So tell them, ‘At twilight you will eat meat, and every morning you will eat all the bread you want. Then you will know I am the LORD your God’”

—Exodus 16:12

GOD'S COMMANDS

God clearly tells His people how to live a life that is **holy**.

EXODUS 20:1-17

FIRST THOUGHTS

A life of **holiness** is not just a suggestion from God. It is a command. Don't be afraid of the word **holy**. It does not mean perfect. It means to be dedicated (separated) for God. It means to be ready to follow wherever God leads. It means to be ready for His use. It also means to live in the right way that God wants.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT (EXODUS 19:1–24:18)

Three months after the Jewish people left **Egypt**, they were near Mount Sinai. Moses went up into the mountain, and God talked with him. Then Moses talked with the people, and they all agreed to obey God (Exodus 19:7-8). God came down from the mountain, near the people. He was in a cloud, like smoke. The people prepared themselves to be in the **presence** of God (Exodus 19:14). Then God called Moses and Aaron to come up into the mountain (Exodus 19:24). Moses and Aaron received from God His Law for His people.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. The God of the Commandments (Exodus 20:1-2)

The first eleven verses have four commandments. These four commandments are about our **relationship** with God. The last six commandments are about our relationship with other people. These seventeen verses contain the famous Ten Commandments.

VERSES 1-2

¹ *Then God spoke all these words:*

² *"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt where you were slaves."*

This chapter begins with, "God spoke all these words." What we call the Ten Commandments were called the Ten Words by the Jewish people.

In these first two verses, God identified Himself. He reminded them who He is. He is the Lord. He has the authority to give His commandments.

When Christians study the Bible and pray, we are in the presence of God. How can we prepare ourselves spiritually for meeting with God?

2. How to Relate to God (Exodus 20:3-11)

VERSE 3

³ *"You must not have any other gods except Me."*

This is the first **commandment**. This is not something God asked the people to discuss. He did not say it is something nice for them to do. It is God's law. God does not want His people to give Him second place with any other god.

We can apply this verse to ourselves as individuals and also to us as a people.

The Israelites had lived in Egypt all their lives. The Egyptians had many gods. The Jewish people were going into **Canaan**. The Canaanites had many gods. Many times sexual sins were part of the **worship** of the idols. God knew His people would be tempted to worship the other gods.

Today, in many countries, people worship other gods. Some worship their ancestors. Some worship a statue or idol. Some worship other kinds of gods. What about in your country? Do people worship other gods?

Some people **worship** the gods of other nations, but many more worship the ideas they learn from non-believers. They say, “I am an agnostic.” An agnostic is someone who believes no one can know for sure about God. Others may say, “I am an atheist.” An atheist is someone who does not believe God exists.

When Jesus was tempted by the devil, He said, “It is written in the Scriptures, You must worship the Lord your God and serve only Him” (Matthew 4:10). See also Deuteronomy 6:13.

VERSES 4-6

⁴ *“You must not make for yourselves an idol that looks like anything in the sky above or on the earth below or in the water below the land.*

⁵ *“You must not worship or serve any idol, because I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God. If you hate me, I will punish your children, and even your grandchildren and great-grandchildren.*

⁶ *“But I show kindness to thousands who love me and obey my commands.”*

The second **commandment** is similar to the first. The first commandment told God’s people not to have any other gods in their life. This commandment tells them not to put any “thing” ahead of God in their life.

The prophet Isaiah said people who made idols waste their time and energy. He said they get a piece of wood and use half of it to make an idol and the other half to burn in their fire (Isaiah 44:13-19).

Today, many people are not tempted to worship idols or other gods, but many people put other things ahead of God. Sometimes, things money can buy are first and God is second. God will not accept second place in your life.

What does it mean to worship an idol?

VERSE 7

⁷ *“You must not use the name of the LORD your God thoughtlessly; the LORD will punish anyone who misuses His name.”*

The third commandment is about the name of God. The command about using God’s name carelessly or without respect. This commandment tells us we must control our use of words or signs.

Some people try to use God’s name as magic. They think if they use His name, then great things can happen. You can read Acts 19:11-15 for an example. We must be careful not to think when we pray in Jesus’ name that we are calling on some magical power to make our prayer come true.

Others use God's name to suggest they are telling the truth. Someone may say, "So help me God." (See Leviticus 19:12.) This is a way of calling on God to make our words become true. God said we must not use His name in this way.

The most common way people misuse God's name is in profanity. When people say or sign something using God's name in this way, they are calling on God to "damn" something or someone. They are using God's name carelessly.

VERSES 8-11

⁸ *"Remember to keep the Sabbath holy.*

⁹ *"Work and get everything done during six days each week,*

¹⁰ *"but the seventh day is a day of rest to honor the LORD your God. On that day no one may do any work: not you, your son or daughter, your male or female slaves, your animals, or the foreigners living in your cities.*

¹¹ *"The reason is that in six days the LORD made everything—the sky, the earth, the sea, and everything in them. On the seventh day He rested. So the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy."*

The fourth commandment is about the **Sabbath** Day. The command is to keep the Sabbath Day **holy**. The word holy means "to keep it separate for God." Many people know only verse 8 and ignore verses 9-11. Verse 9 tells the value of work. What we do on the other six days is as important as what we do on the seventh day. This is not just about the days we work in our job. It means all the things we do as part of our daily life.

The Jews recognized the Sabbath (seventh) day for this. So, why don't we worship on Saturday, the seventh day? God did not say Saturday. He said the seventh day. The New Testament churches began to set aside Sunday as their day of rest and worship. Why? Because this was the day Christ rose from the dead. It became known as the Lord's Day.

Today, many people must work on Sunday. Many businesses are open seven days a week. Emergency and health-care agencies must serve "24/7." When people have a job that requires Sunday work, they can set aside another day as their day of rest and worship.

The Jewish leaders had a list of thirty-nine things a person must not do on the Sabbath. God's emphasis was not on what man must not do, but on what he must do. We must use the day to honor God. The day must be separate from the rest of the week as God's day.

Think of what you have done on the last few Sundays. Did you make those days a time of rest and worship? YES NO.

How can you change your activities so you can obey this commandment?

KEY DOCTRINE: *The Lord's Day*

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It reminds us of the resurrection of Christ from the dead and includes worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should honor the Lord. This means more than just going to church. Anything we do on the Lord's Day must be pleasing to Him. See these verses for examples of "First Day" worship: Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 10:2.

3. How to Relate to People (Exodus 20:12-17)

God gave us six Commandments that identify how His people should relate to one another. Believers can show their love and commitment to God by treating other people with respect and dignity.

VERSE 12

¹² *"Honor your father and your mother so that you will live a long time in the land that the LORD your God is going to give you."*

Commandment number five has a promise with it. We must honor our parents. The **Hebrew** word translated as *honor* means "to give importance to" parents. It is not just a commandment for children. It reminds us as adults to care for our aging parents.

The promise in this verse is a bit difficult to understand. We all know someone who showed great honor to his parents but died while he was still young. So, what does it mean to us today? The promise in Deuteronomy 5:16 gives an added explanation: "Then you will live a long time, and things will go well for you in the land that the Lord your God is going to give you." Paul also wrote about this promise. "Then everything will be well with you, and you

will have a long life on the earth” (Ephesians 6:3). It may refer to the nation of **Israel** in the **promised land**, or it may refer to the quality of life for the individual, or it may refer to eternal life in heaven.

VERSE 13

¹³ *“You must not murder anyone.”*

This is the sixth commandment. Every life is important to God. No man has the right to destroy a life God has given. The Jewish people understood the difference between murder, accidentally causing someone’s death, and **capital punishment**, because God gave them laws later about those things.

The Hebrew word for murder means “to take the life of another person in anger, hatred, prejudice, or any other feelings that suggest the life of another person is not important.” Jesus explained this commandment includes our thinking, our emotions, and our desires (Matthew 5:21-22).

VERSE 14

¹⁴ *“You must not be guilty of adultery.”*

This is commandment number seven. God established the family and marriage (Genesis 2:24). In Old Testament times, women had very few rights. This commandment was for both the husband and the wife. They must remain faithful to each other. Jesus made it clear that our wrong **attitude** and thoughts about marriage and the family are also **sin** (Matthew 5:27-28).

VERSE 15

¹⁵ *“You must not steal.”*

Commandment number eight is easy to understand. In Old Testament times, people thought taking something from another person was not wrong unless they got caught! In many nations today, no one seems to think it is wrong to take something if it is not locked or behind a fence.

This commandment tells us we must respect the property of other people. Jesus said this commandment also includes our thinking and planning to take another person’s property (Mark 7:20-23).

VERSE 16

¹⁶ *“You must not tell lies about your neighbor.”*

The ninth **commandment** means more than just telling the truth in court. God demands that His people tell the truth all the time. The Bible says a lot about lying. God is a God of truth, and He hates lies. This commandment tells us we must respect the truth. Today, gossiping is one of the most common ways of breaking this commandment. Too often, the story we repeat is not true, or part of it is true and part is not true. James wrote about the need to control our tongue—or hands! (James 3:2-12).

VERSE 17

¹⁷ “You must not want to take your neighbor’s house. You must not want his wife or his male or female slaves, or his ox or his donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

The tenth commandment is about **envy**. Envy means “wanting what someone else has.” Another word for this is **covet**. It does not mean just wanting something, but wanting what belongs to another person. Jesus said, “Life is not measured by how much one owns” (Luke 12:15).

This law looks at feelings that are inside of us. All the other laws are about actions. God is also concerned about how we think.

BIBLE SKILL

These verses in Exodus are not the only place where the Ten Commandments are given or discussed. Find these verses and read how they relate to the Ten Commandments in Exodus. Write a brief note to help you remember what they say.

- Deuteronomy 5:6-21 _____
- Ecclesiastes 12:13 _____
- Psalms 19:8 _____
- Exodus 34:1-28 _____
- Exodus 40:20 _____
- Ephesians 6:1-3 _____
- Matthew 5–7 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

The Ten Commandments were written over three thousand years ago. Today, many of our laws are based on the truths of these commandments. The commandments are still the best rules for living with other people and serving the God we **worship**.

What did God tell the Jewish people about Himself before He gave the Ten Commandments?

How many commandments are about our relationship to God, and how many are about our relationship to other people?

Why did God tell His people they must not make any idols?

Why must we keep the Sabbath Day holy?

What did God promise with the commandment about honoring parents?

As you studied these verses, did God speak to your heart about some **sin** in your life? If so, ask God now to forgive that sin and help you not to continue to sin in that way.

Copy these commandments from your Bible. Keep a copy where you can see it often. Ask God to show you how to obey Him more fully. It is easy for us to see sin in the lives of other people. Use these verses to help you see the sin in your own life.

MEMORY VERSE

“You must not have any other gods except me.”

—Exodus 20:3



EQUIPPED

God gives His people what is needed to do the work He calls them to do.

EXODUS 25:1-9; 31:1-6

FIRST THOUGHTS

Today our lesson is about our **relationship** with God. First, we will learn about giving, then we will learn about serving and how God prepares us to do His work. God does not call us to do something and then leave us to work without the right tools.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT (EXODUS 25:1–31:18)

Read Exodus 21-24 to understand what happened between last week's lesson on the Ten Commandments and this week's lesson. God gave many laws to the people about how they must live. These laws are based on the Ten Commandments from chapter 20. Chapter 23 also established some special days of **worship**, called **feast** days. These feasts were special times to honor God.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. The Offering (Exodus 25:1-7)

God told Moses to call on the Jewish people to willingly offer the supplies they needed to build the **Tabernacle**. Believers always honor God by giving offerings for His purposes.

In these verses, God gave a long list of what people must give to God. Look at that list. Each item has real value. We must not give God something that is worthless.

But first, think about this: The Jewish people were slaves for many years before they left **Egypt**. Where did they get the gold, jewels, and fine cloth? Exodus 12:35-36 tells how God did this: “The Israelites did what Moses told them to do and asked their Egyptian neighbors for things made of silver and gold and for clothing. The Lord caused the Egyptians to think well of them, and the Egyptians gave the people everything they asked for. So the Israelites took rich gifts from them.” God knew they would need these things when they became free so He planned far ahead for them to have what they needed. God has planned for us to have what we need to do His work. We must be generous in giving back to Him what He has given us.

VERSES 1-2

¹ *The LORD said to Moses,*

² *“Tell the Israelites to bring me gifts. Receive for me the gifts each person wants to give.”*

God gave them everything they had. He trusted them to take care of it until He needed it. In this verse, God asked them to give some of it back to Him. We talk about things we “own,” but God has given everything to us. All things truly belong to God. He trusts us to take care of them for Him.

VERSES 3-7

³ *“These are the gifts that you should receive from them: gold, silver, bronze;*

⁴ *“blue, purple, and red thread; fine linen, goat hair,*

⁵ *“sheepskins that are dyed red; fine leather; acacia wood;*

⁶ *“olive oil to burn in the lamps; spices for sweet-smelling incense, and the special olive oil poured on a person’s head to make him a priest;*

⁷ *“onyx stones, and other jewels to be put on the holy vest and the chest covering.”*

This is an **amazing** list. It includes materials to make the Tabernacle (tent) where they would worship God. It includes materials for the special clothing the priests must wear.

Each person had something they could give, but they made the decision to give it or not.

God told them what color the thread must be and the quality. **Linen** is very fine thread. Thread made of goat hair would be strong and waterproof. Tents were made from goat hair, because rain did not go through it. Paul probably used goat hair when he earned his living by making tents (Acts 18:3). The sheep skins must be dyed red. Acacia trees grew in that area near Mount Sinai. Olive oil and spices probably came from plants in that area, also.

Read about how the special clothes were made for the priests in Exodus 28:15-30.

The most common mistake people make when they do not give faithfully to God is that they forget that all they have is already His! God has given us what we have. He asks us to give some of it back to Him as a part of our **worship**. When we give, we tell God we are thankful for all He has given us. God gave them all they needed to build the **Tabernacle** and to worship Him. When they gave it back to God with a thankful heart, they honored and worshiped Him.

God did not want the people to make the Tabernacle out of cheap things. God does not want us to give Him things that have no value.

Does your church ever collect food or clothing as a mission project? Do you help by giving food and clothing? What have you given in the past? Did you give worthy gifts or did you only give what you did not value? Did you give worn out clothes and cans of food that were too old to use?

What does God ask us to give to Him?

KEY DOCTRINE: *The Church*

In this lesson, we have learned about the Tabernacle where the Jewish people worshiped. We worship in our church building, but the church is made up of people, not bricks. Can you give a good definition of what a church is?

A New Testament church is a self-governing, local congregation of baptized believers. They are joined in the faith and fellowship of the gospel and observe the two ordinances of Christ (baptism and the Lord's Supper). They follow His laws and use the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word. God's people seek to share the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. Each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord.

2. The Purpose (Exodus 25:8-9)

VERSE 8

⁸ *"The people must build a holy place for Me so that I can live among them."*

God said He would live in the Tabernacle, and He would always be with His people. The Jewish people met together near the Tabernacle to worship God. We meet together in our church buildings to worship God and encourage each other.

Go online to find information about the Tabernacle. It was very big. It was made of valuable materials. Each detail in the Tabernacle had a special meaning.

The Tabernacle was not just a little camping tent. It was huge. The cloth wall around the Tabernacle was forty-five feet long, fifteen feet wide, and fifteen feet tall. The cloth walls were held up by forty-eight boards fifteen feet long and twenty-seven inches wide. The ten curtains were forty-two feet long and six feet wide. All this was covered by the "tent" made of goat's hair cloth, covered by red leather, and then covered again with animal skins. A tent wall 150 feet long and seventy-five feet wide surrounded all this. You can see it was quite large.

If God is spirit and God is everywhere, why should His people build a place for Him so He could be with them? God did not need a place. The people needed a place so they could feel God's **presence**.

We feel the same way when we go to church. We know it is just a building, but when we go into the **worship** area, we feel closer to God.

VERSE 9

⁹ *"Build this Holy Tent and everything in it by the plan I will show you."*

Moses received much of the information from God while he was on the mountain for forty days and nights (Exodus 24:12-18). God gave detailed plans for building His **Tabernacle**, or **holy** tent. It was important for Moses to follow God's plans for the Tabernacle. Moses reported this four times in the book of Exodus (25:9; 25:40; 26:30; 27:8) and again in Numbers 8:4. Stephen reminded the Jewish leaders of this in Acts 7:44. Why is this important? God wanted to teach His people the importance of obeying Him in small things as well as in very important things. Also, it was important because Hebrews 9 tells us that the earthly Tabernacle is a copy of a greater one in heaven.

The next few verses explain how to make the special box called the **Ark** of the **Covenant**. Do not confuse this ark with Noah's ark! The contents of the Ark of the Covenant are described in Hebrews 9:2-4. It included a golden pot with **manna** Moses saved (Exodus 16:32), Aaron's rod (Numbers 17:8-11), and the Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy 10:1-5).

Why is it important to have a special place in your home where you have your personal time of worship, prayer, and Bible study?

How can you make it a place where you are not bothered?

3. The Leaders (Exodus 31:1-6)

Chapters 26-30 tell how God led the people to build all the things that went into the Tabernacle. Read these chapters carefully. Notice how many details God gave to Moses.

As you read, remember the Jewish people were out in the **desert**. They were not in a town with many shops. But also remember there were more than a million people, so they were like a big city.

VERSES 1-2

¹Then the LORD said to Moses,

²“See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri from the tribe of Judah.” (Uri was the son of Hur.)

God gave special **skills** to some people. This man, Bezalel was from the large **tribe** of Judah and a descendant of Caleb (1 Chronicles 2:18-20). In the Old Testament, people were usually identified by the names of their parents.

VERSES 3-5

³“I have filled Bezalel with the Spirit of God and have given him the skill, ability, and knowledge to do all kinds of work.

⁴“He is able to design pieces to be made from gold, silver, and bronze,

⁵“to cut jewels and put them in metal, to carve wood, and to do all kinds of work.”

This study can lead us to what Paul wrote about the special gifts God has given to each believer. We need to remember that God gives some special spiritual gifts. He also give us talents and helps us learn special **skills**. God equips us to use our gifts and talents for His purposes.

In verse 2, God said He chose Bezalel. In verse 3, God said He gave Bezalel “the spirit of God” and the skill, ability, and knowledge he needed for that work. Maybe Bezalel learned these skills while he was in **Egypt**. That may be how God gave him those skills.

God gives us the skills we need for His work, but often we must do our part to improve our knowledge and skills. God will give us the ability to learn.

VERSE 6

⁶“I have also chosen Oholiab son of Ahisamach from the tribe of Dan to work with Bezalel. I have given skills to all the craftsmen, and they will be able to make all these things I have commanded you.”

Oholiab is another man that God called and prepared to do His work. It is interesting that God led men to write all these details in the Old Testament. They could have written, “God called these people and told them what to do.” But it gives so many details we begin to see how God is also interested in all the details of our lives. God is interested in how we build our church buildings. Nothing is too small (or too big) for God!

God is Spirit. We cannot see God. We cannot touch Him. That is why God designed the Tabernacle. It gave the people a place to focus their worship. True worship is from our hearts. The place of worship helps us prepare our hearts for true worship.

The rest of this chapter, along with chapters 26–27, give more details about the Tabernacle and the items that were used in the worship services. Chapter 28 and the first part of chapter 29 tell how Aaron and his sons must be set aside as priests. Notice how much detail is given about the clothes the priests must wear. All these things were part of the symbolism that helped them in their **worship**.

God always spoke about His **presence** as separate from the things used in worship. The **Tabernacle** and the **Ark** of the **Covenant** had no meaning if the people did not want to worship God in their hearts.

We enjoy a beautiful church with stained glass windows and nice carpets and pews. This helps us worship. However, these things are not God. We can only worship God in our hearts.

What special skills does God give His people today?

How has God’s Spirit prepared you to serve Him?

BIBLE SKILL

In this lesson we see God giving the Hebrew people everything they needed to build the Tabernacle. One of the important lessons we learn from this is how God provides for His people. Not only does God provide things, God provides spiritual gifts for His people. Find these verses and write a short statement about what Paul said concerning spiritual gifts:

Romans 12:6-8 _____

1 Corinthians 12:8-10 _____

1 Corinthians 12:28-30 _____

Ephesians 4:11 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

God desires that we worship Him. How can we prepare our hearts and minds for worship?

How can we encourage each other in worship?

Sometimes when we go to church, we spend time criticizing the singing or the preaching. We tend to look for problems. We want to chat with friends more than we want to worship God.

God also wants us to use our talents and skills to serve Him. How are you using yours for Him?

God is always near. When we do not feel Him near us, it is not because He has moved away from us. He is still with us.

Here are some ideas for you to think about today when you go into your place of worship. Mark the ones you will try to do each week.

_____ **Bow your head and ask God to be very near you.**

_____ **Tell God how much you love Him.**

_____ **Thank God for all He does for you.**

_____ **Praise God with a song from your heart.**

List some ways you can use what you have learned in this lesson. How can this lesson help you grow in Christ?

MEMORY VERSE

“I have given skills to all the craftsmen, and they will be able to make all these things I have commanded you.”

—Exodus 31:6



REBELLION

Worshiping anyone or anything other than the one true God is **rebellion** against Him.

EXODUS 32:1-6,11-14

FIRST THOUGHTS

In these verses we see how quickly the Jewish people could turn away from God to **worship** an idol. God tested the faithfulness of the people by keeping Moses on the mountain for a long time. The people failed their test. How sure are we that we will remain faithful to God, no matter what happens?

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT (EXODUS 32:1–34:35)

Read Exodus 31:8-18. These verses tell more about the **Tabernacle**, the things that went into it, and how the people rested on the **Sabbath** Day.

The people now had a place to worship God—a brand new “church” building. Did this help them stay faithful to God? No. If our hearts are not right with God, a place to worship will not help.

Maybe God wanted to talk to Moses face to face, but He also wanted to help the people understand that each individual must be faithful, not just the leaders. They needed to trust God, not Moses. This is something we must

remember today. “It is better to trust the Lord than to trust people” (Psalm 118:8).

Three months after they left **Egypt**, the Israelites camped near Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:1-2). God gave Moses some instructions for the people to dedicate themselves to Him. Then God told Moses to come to the top of the mountain to meet Him (19:20). Chapters 20-31 report all the things God said to Moses, including the Ten Commandments and plans for the Tabernacle. Moses was with God for forty days.

While Moses remained on the mountain for forty days, the people became restless and demanded that Aaron make an idol for them to worship. Aaron listened to them, collected gold rings, and made a calf for the people to worship. Believers must stand against any acts that are in rebellion against God.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Rebellion (Exodus 32:1-4)

VERSE 1

¹*The people saw that a long time had passed and Moses had not come down from the mountain. So they gathered around Aaron and said, “Moses led us out of Egypt, but we don’t know what has happened to him. Make us gods who will lead us.”*

While Moses was gone, the people became impatient. They thought maybe something happened to Moses, and he would not come back. God told them to wait for Moses to come back to them, but they were tired of waiting.

How long must we wait for God to do something? God’s time and our time are not always the same. We do not always understand why God seems slow to answer our prayers but we know from the Bible God will answer in His time, and His time is always right.

If the people truly thought about their situation, they probably would not have sinned. They could remember how God brought them out of slavery. They could remember the miracles God did before they left Egypt. They could remember how they crossed the Red Sea on dry land. They could remember all the things God did for them. But they did not remember. They thought only about “today.” Today, they were afraid Moses was not coming back. They were afraid because they did not know what the future held for them. They were afraid God left them. In their fear, they turned back to what they knew. They turned to worship an idol.

The people asked Aaron to make a golden calf for them to worship. This is not as strange as it may seem when we first read it. For many years they lived in Egypt. Their neighbors all worshiped a golden calf. The Canaanite people

also worshiped a golden calf. Some of the Israelites started worshiping this idol too.

Maybe they thought about returning to **Egypt**. If they went back with a golden calf, perhaps the Egyptians would accept them back into their country. Stephen spoke about this before he was killed for his faith in Christ (Acts 7:38-42). The Israelites quickly forgot what God told them in the first two commandments.

VERSES 2-4

²*Aaron said to the people, “Take off the gold earrings that your wives, sons, and daughters are wearing, and bring them to me.”*

³*So all the people took their gold earrings and brought them to Aaron.*

⁴*He took the gold from the people and formed it with a tool and made a statue of a calf. Then the people said, “Israel, these are your gods who brought you out of the land of Egypt!”*

Aaron was Moses’ brother, and he was next in command after Moses (Exodus 24:14). Aaron quickly gave in to the pressure from the people. He told them to give him all the gold from their jewelry.

The calf was probably made from wood and then covered with gold. Later it was burned (Exodus 32:20). The leaders of each **tribe** told the people, “This is the god that led you out of Egypt.” The calf represented many gods, so the people often referred to it as gods rather than just god. The bull god was worshiped by the people in many nations. It represented fertility (ability of plants and animals to reproduce) and strength. Some nations also worshiped it as the rain or storm god. Good crops of wheat and other grain depended on getting enough rain at the right time. Because it represented fertility, the **worship** often included temple prostitutes.

How did the Jewish people fail in their obedience to God? They became impatient and decided to do something different from what God wanted them to do. (See 1 Corinthians 10:5-11.)

How do we often fail? We don’t wait on God. We don’t try to find God’s will. We act without learning what God wants us to do. In other words, we fail because we ignore God’s teachings.

We may read this and think the Jewish people were foolish to turn from God when Moses was only gone for a few weeks. But think about your own life.

Have you had a great spiritual experience and then soon faced some serious temptation? What did you do?

Remember that Jesus was tempted very soon after He began His work. Jesus rejected the temptation and so can we. Read Hebrews 4:15 and write a few words to help you remember this great verse.

How can keeping your focus on Christ help you stay faithful to God?

KEY DOCTRINE: *God Alone is Worthy*

One of the most important gods in Egypt was called Apis. This idol was made to look like a calf. Other nations also had gods in the shape of a calf. The people wanted the calf because they thought Moses would not come back down from the mountain. From what Aaron said, it seems he thought this calf would help them worship God, not to take the place of God.

Read Psalm 106:19-21. David wrote about the sin of the Jewish people in this lesson when they made a golden calf and worshiped it.

Read 1 Kings 12:26-33. The Jewish people worshiped a golden calf again when Jeroboam was king over the Northern Kingdom. Jeroboam wanted the people to worship in the north and not go to Jerusalem to worship in the temple. The calf is an example of the Jewish weakness when tempted to follow the idol worship of their neighbors.

We know from God’s Word that we owe God our highest love, honor, and obedience. Only the true God is worthy of these things.

2. Turning to Idols (Exodus 32:5-6)

VERSES 5-6

⁵When Aaron saw all this, he built an altar before the calf and announced, “Tomorrow there will be a special feast to honor the LORD.”

⁶The people got up early the next morning and offered whole burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. They sat down to eat and drink, and then they got up and sinned sexually.

Aaron built an **altar** and announced a day of celebration. The next day, the people offered sacrifices to the idol, followed by sexual sins that were often part of the idol **worship**.

We have no information about how the Jewish people worshiped while they were in **Egypt**. They did not have the Law of Moses. That came later. They knew something about sacrifices because Cain, Abel, Noah, and Abraham all made sacrifices to God. They surely knew God was different from the Egyptian idols.

When Moses went up into the mountain, Aaron and Hur were the leaders. The people remembered the gods they worshiped in Egypt, so they asked Aaron to make them an idol. They never saw God, but they knew He was in the cloud. They did not want an invisible god. They wanted something they could see and touch. This seems to be a natural thing for all people. Every group of people wants something to worship. They could see and touch Moses, but now he was gone.

In some churches, the people are faithful until their pastor leaves, then some people stop going to church. They were looking to their leader rather than looking to God.

In your church’s ministry with the Deaf, imagine what would happen if two or three of the leaders moved away. Would you be able to take up their responsibilities? YES NO.

Why or why not?

What do people trust as idols today?

3. Appeal for God's Grace (Exodus 32:11-14)

In verses 7-10, God saw what the people were doing and told Moses to go down from the mountain because He planned to destroy the people and build a great nation from the family of Moses.

VERSES 11-12

¹¹ *But Moses begged the LORD his God and said, "LORD, don't let your anger destroy your people, whom you brought out of Egypt with your great power and strength.*

¹² *"Don't let the people of Egypt say, 'The LORD brought the Israelites out of Egypt for an evil purpose. He planned to kill them in the mountains and destroy them from the earth.' So stop being angry, and don't destroy your people."*

Moses spoke to the Lord for the people. He appealed to God's faithfulness to His **covenant** with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Today, as believers, we can pray to God for our friends who disobey God. We can ask God to give them an opportunity to repent.

Why was God so upset with the Hebrew people?

VERSE 13

¹³ *"Remember the men who served you—Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. You promised with an oath to them and said, 'I will make your descendants as many as the stars in the sky. I will give your descendants all this land that I have promised them, and it will be theirs forever.'"*

Moses asked God to remember what He had promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Of course, God remembered, and Moses knew that. God did not need to be reminded. But Moses was praying for the people. This kind of prayer is called intercessory prayer.

VERSE 14

¹⁴ *So the LORD changed His mind and did not destroy the people as He had said He might.*

This verse can raise questions in our mind. Some Bible translations read, "God repented." Did God make a mistake and then correct it? We know the Bible tells us that God never changes from His nature or His plans for His people.

We know that God does not **sin**, so He would not “repent” of His sin. So, what does this mean? We must always let the Bible explain itself. We know that God will hear and answer the prayers of His people because of His love. He may change the way He planned to do something when people turn from sin. He will not punish them. Truly, this experience was for Moses to help him understand God more fully.

Do you have a friend who has turned away from God? YES NO.

Write a few words about what you want to say to God when you pray for this friend.



BIBLE SKILL: *Intercession*

In our lesson today, Moses asked God not to punish the people. That kind of prayer is called intercession. It means we talk to God and ask Him to bless (or not punish) someone else.

Read Genesis 18:22-32. Abraham asked God to spare Sodom if there were some righteous people there. He was thinking primarily about his nephew, Lot, and his family. God did save Lot and his family.

Read the following verses and write about the intercession you find in these passages.

Numbers 14:19 _____

Deuteronomy 9:22-29 _____

1 Samuel 7:5-9 _____

1 Timothy 2:1-2 _____

James 5:14 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

God is a loving, merciful God. He wants His people to obey Him. But when we **sin**, God is not pleased with us. Then, when we admit our sin and turn back to Him (repent), God is ready to forgive (see 1 John 1:9).

Write a few words about your experience with God's forgiveness.

If you have not asked God to forgive you and save you, ask God today to show you your sin, and then sincerely ask Him to forgive you. There are many people you could talk to about this. You could talk to your Sunday School teacher or your pastor. If you are in a Deaf church, you can talk to your Deaf pastor.

Find a time this week when you can be alone with God. Think about this lesson and how quickly the Jewish people fell into sin. Ask God to show you your sin. When God causes you to think of something you have done wrong, immediately ask God to forgive you for that sin. Then, take time to thank Him for His great love.

Probably you have never worshiped an idol. Have you ever let anything other than God be in first place in your life? Think about that time and write a few words about that time in your life.

What did you do that helped you come back to following Jesus?

How can you help other people stay faithful to God?

MEMORY VERSE

The LORD answered, "I myself will go with you, and I will give you victory."

—Exodus 33:14



GOD'S PRESENCE

God enjoys living in **fellowship** with His people when they obey Him.

EXODUS 39:42-43; 40:1-4,34-38

FIRST THOUGHTS

No one has seen God, but these verses tell how Moses and the Jewish people were very much aware of His **presence**. God wants us to feel His presence when we **worship** and obey Him. The people were often afraid of God's presence, especially when they had sinned. As we study this lesson, we will learn how God led the people to make a special tent, called the **Tabernacle**. The Tabernacle represented the place where God lived with His people.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT (EXODUS 35:1–40:38)

The context for our lesson today all relates to the building of the Tabernacle. In Session 7 we saw instructions for building the Tabernacle. But the rebellion we saw in Session 8 delayed making it. Finally, beginning in Exodus 35, the Tabernacle project began.

The context passages are long and are not easy to read through. However, they are very interesting in their own way. When you read chapters 35:1–40:38, you will learn what the people gave for the Tabernacle, how all the

pieces of the Tabernacle were made, and what the clothes of the priests were like. All this was required by God to prepare a fitting place for God and His people to meet.

As you read the context, you will see how the many pieces were made for the Tabernacle. Most of these pieces seem strange to us. You will see the altar, the lampstand, the bronze bowl, the curtain, and many other items. Each piece had special meaning. These things are not in our churches today, but we can still learn about God through these ancient tools for worship.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

Finally, at the end of Exodus 39, the Tabernacle was finished. The building of the Tabernacle required thousands of pounds of gold and silver. Hundreds of feet of wood and cloth were used to make the curtains. Building the tent for worship was a large project.

Now that it was done, what would Moses think of it? More importantly, what would God think of it? Would it a right place to worship the true and living God?

1. Tabernacle Finished! (Exodus 39:42-43)

VERSES 42-43

⁴² *The Israelites had done all this work just as the LORD had commanded Moses.*

⁴³ *Moses looked closely at all the work and saw they had done it just as the LORD had commanded. So Moses blessed them.*

They finished making all the items for the Tabernacle in just the way God told them. Moses reviewed the work and blessed the people for their faithful work. We can always find satisfaction when we finish some work God has given to us to do.

In a lesson a few weeks ago, we read how God asked the people to give “things” to build the Tabernacle. In those verses, God asked the people to do some special work. Why didn’t God just make the Tabernacle and give it to the people? He did not do that. He wanted them to have a part in creating it. Today, God gives us the ability and desire to do His work, but we must do it. Your Deaf Bible study group will not just grow on its own. Members must go to other Deaf people, invite them to come visit, and then continue to love them into the **fellowship** of the group and of your church. God still gives us His work to do and He still expects us to do it.

Prayerfully look around your church building for something that needs to be done. What is something your class can do?

Check with the committee or staff person who is responsible for taking care of the building and ask if you can do that job. It may be cleaning a room, pulling weeds in the parking lot, or something else. How can you make this job a true gift to God?

2. A Place for Everything (Exodus 40:1-4)

VERSES 1-2

¹Then the LORD said to Moses:

²"On the first day of the first month, set up the Holy Tent, which is the Meeting tent."

Do you remember that God told His people that their new calendar would begin with the **Passover**? It was now one year after they were made free from the Egyptians. They had worked on the **Tabernacle** and all the other things for nine months. God gave Moses very specific instructions about setting up the Tabernacle. It would all be ready exactly one year after they left **Egypt**.

VERSE 3

³"Put the Ark of the Agreement in it and hang the curtain in front of the Ark."

Read Exodus 37:1-9 to learn how the **Ark** of the Agreement (or **Ark** of the **Covenant**) was made and what was inside this box. This went into the center of the Tabernacle and it was the most important item.

What was the reason for the curtain? Does that seem like an odd item? We do not have curtains in our churches between the pulpit and the people. But the ark was the place where God's presence was most intense. It was also where the most important sacrifices happened. The curtain protected the people from the intense presence of God. We must never forget God's high holiness. The curtain reminded the people that there was still a separation between them and God.

VERSE 4

⁴ *“Bring in the table and arrange everything on the table that should be there. Then bring in the lampstand and set up its lamps.”*

Read verses 5-33 to learn how everything was put in its place, just the way the Lord told them to do it. Everything had some special meaning for them. Many of the things helped them understand more about God and **worship** Him. Verse 4 mentions the candlestick and the table. The candlestick gave the only light for the priest to see. The table held tools for worship and twelve loaves of bread representing the twelve tribes of Israel as they came before God. We Christians know that all of these items point to Jesus.

This section emphasizes how God selected certain people to do certain jobs. God still calls people today to special responsibilities in their church and in mission fields around the world.

When you look around your worship center in your church, do you see some things that have special meaning to you and to the members of your church?

List some things that have meaning to you, such as the Lord’s Supper table.

How do these things help you worship God?

3. A Place for God (Exodus 40:34-35)

VERSE 34

³⁴ *Then the cloud covered the Meeting tent, and the glory of the LORD filled the Holy Tent.*

When everything was ready, God appeared in the completed **Tabernacle**, filling the tent with His glory. The Tabernacle was small. It was only fifteen feet wide and forty-five feet long. The people must have been amazed and

filled with joy when that cloud moved from the top of Mount Sinai and came down into this small tent. When God's people obeyed Him, He came to live with them.

Today, when we receive Jesus as our Savior, the **Holy** Spirit comes to live in each believer. We, too, need to celebrate God's **presence** in us.

KEY DOCTRINE: *The Holy Spirit*

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. He is the third person of the Trinity and, therefore, is God. He inspired men to write the Scriptures. He helps us to understand truth. He honors Christ. He convicts us of sin and encourages us to seek the Savior. The Holy Spirit helps us develop Christian character. He comforts us. He gives us the spiritual gifts by which we can serve God through His church. He gives us understanding and joy through the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

VERSE 35

³⁵ *Moses could not enter the Meeting tent, because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the Holy Tent.*

In the past, Moses had been near God when God was in the smoke or cloud (Exodus 24:15-17). When the Tabernacle was finished, the cloud that led them settled on it. The glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle and Moses could not enter. Moses was the leader, but he was not the priest. Aaron was the priest, and he could enter the Tabernacle.

Today, God wants to fill us with His Holy Spirit "...God put his special mark of ownership on you by giving you the Holy Spirit that He had promised. That Holy Spirit is the guarantee that we will receive what God promised for His people until God gives full freedom to those who are His—to bring praise to God's glory" (Ephesians 1:13-14). He wants our life to be completely filled with Him until we have no place left for self to come in. That is what the Bible means with the words "Christ-like." When we are like Him, He fills us completely. We experience that more and more as we grow in Him.

How can you feel closer to God when you are in your church worship center?

What can you do to keep your attention on worship?

How can you encourage others in your Bible study group to learn to be more worshipful when you go into the worship center?

BIBLE SKILL

Find these verses and draw a line to the name(s) of the people who were in God’s presence.

Acts 2:1-4	Two or three people praying
Genesis 2:15-17	Noah
Genesis 32:30	New believers
Genesis 5:22-24	Jacob
Genesis 6:9	Enoch
Matthew 18:20	David
Matthew 28:18-20	All believers
Psalms 41:12	Adam

4. God Leads (Exodus 40:36-38)

VERSES 36-38

³⁶When the cloud rose from the Holy Tent, the Israelites would begin to travel,
³⁷but as long as the cloud stayed on the Holy Tent, they did not travel. They stayed in that place until the cloud rose.
³⁸So the cloud of the LORD was over the Holy Tent during the day, and there was a fire in the cloud at night. So all the Israelites could see the cloud while they traveled.

God led the people on their journey by means of the cloud that settled on the Tabernacle. When the cloud moved, the Israelites followed.

God offers direction today through His Word and His Holy Spirit. God's Word and His Spirit will agree with each other. The Holy Spirit helps us understand the Bible, and the Bible reminds us that God speaks to us through the Bible and through the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will not lead you to do something different from what the Bible says.

Elijah felt God leading him. "The Lord said to Elijah, 'Go, stand in front of me on the mountain, and I will pass by you.' Then a very strong wind blew until it caused the mountains to fall apart and large rocks to break in front of the Lord. But the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind, there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake, there was a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. After the fire, there was a quiet, gentle sound" (1 Kings 19:11-12). Some translations have "a still small voice" for the last part of verse 12. That is how God speaks to us and calls us to follow Him.

When God leads, it is our responsibility to follow. He doesn't lead today with smoke or fire, but we are aware of His leading. King David saw God leading in the same way a shepherd leads his sheep. "The Lord is my shepherd; I have everything I need. He lets me rest in green pastures. He leads me to calm water" (Psalm 23:1-2).

**When the cloud of God's presence moved, the Israelites followed.
How does God lead us today?**

How can we follow when He leads?

How can we know what God wants us to do?

IN MY CONTEXT

God had a job for everyone. Some gave what they had in order to build the **Tabernacle**. Others gave their **skills** and their work. God chose some people for special jobs.

What has God called you to do?

Ask God to show you what you can give to His church. Ask Him to show you what skills you have that you can use to serve Him. Ask Him to use you in any special service.

What skills do you have? Think of all you have done this past month or year. List several things you know how to do.

Then ask God to show you how to use those skills for His work.

What needs to be done in your church?

Ask God to show you how to give more than just your tithe to help His church.

Is there a mission trip you should take, or someone in your community who needs your help? What can you do?

This ends our study of the Book of Exodus. Next week, we will begin four lessons from the Book of Leviticus. Read the first three chapters of Leviticus before class next week.

MEMORY VERSE

The Israelites had done all this work just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

—Exodus 39:42



SPECIAL OFFERINGS

God is satisfied when His people are thankful and **worship** Him.

LEVITICUS 1:3-9; 2:1-3; 3:1-5

FIRST THOUGHTS

The Book of Leviticus teaches us much about how to worship God. It also teaches us to be thankful for all God gives to us and does for us. Read the introduction to this book in the front of this Personal Study Guide. This will help you understand each of these lessons better.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT (LEVITICUS 1:1–7:38)

The first two verses in the Book of Leviticus remind us that we must give to God from what we have: “The Lord called to Moses and spoke to him from the **Meeting tent**, saying, ‘Tell the people of **Israel**: When you bring an **offering** to the Lord, bring as your offering an animal from the herd or flock.’”

In our last lesson, we learned how God led the Jewish people (called “the people of Israel” in these verses) to make the **Tabernacle** (meeting tent) and all the things in it. This is where God met with Moses.

In your church you probably have seen the words tithes and offerings. The word *tithe* means “ten per cent of everything we get.” Often in the Bible it is a tithe of our increase. That can mean anything we earn and anything else we receive. The tithe is the Lord’s. The word *offering* is what we choose to give. It is not required. It is what we want to give to God because of our love and thanksgiving to Him.

Because the people of Israel were mostly farmers, they did not have income like someone working for a company today. They gave from the animals and grain they grew.

The Israelites understood the idea of giving an animal to be sacrificed (killed on the **altar**). The animal must die. This is a picture of Jesus as the **sacrifice** for our **sin**. Keep this idea in mind as you study the Book of Leviticus.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. The Burnt Offering (Leviticus 1:3-9)

VERSE 3

³ *“If the offering is a whole burnt offering from the herd, it must be a male that has nothing wrong with it. The person must take the animal to the entrance of the Meeting tent so that the LORD will accept the offering.”*

God gave detailed rules for presenting a burnt offering. This daily offering was a reminder that the people must confess sin regularly. This “whole burnt offering” is one of five special offerings explained in the Book of Leviticus.

The offering must be taken to the Tabernacle. Why? Because that is where the people felt the **presence** of God. And, it was a public place. The offerings could not be done in secret. If the person made his offering in secret, God would accept the gift.

Verse 3 told us the offering must have nothing wrong with it. The offering had to be a perfect sacrifice. It is easy to see how Jesus fills that need. We know Him as the ultimate perfect sacrifice to which these sacrifices pointed.

VERSE 4

⁴ *“He must put his hand on the animal’s head, and the LORD will accept it to remove the person’s sin so he will belong to God.”*

Why did the person need to put his hand on the animal’s head? It was a way of saying to God, “This represents me and my sin.”

First, the offering must be done in the right place. Second, it must be done in a way to show it represented that person's sin. Then, again the verse says God will accept it and remove that person's sin.

This act of sacrificing an animal is called **atonement**. The word *atone* means "to bring man and God back together by removing man's sin." We can sign this as pay, but it is more than that. Jesus' death on the cross atoned for our **sin**.

VERSES 5-9

⁵ *"He must kill the young bull before the LORD, and Aaron's sons, the priests, must bring its blood and sprinkle it on all sides of the altar at the entrance to the Meeting tent.*

⁶ *"After that he will skin the animal and cut it into pieces.*

⁷ *"The priests, when they have put wood and fire on the altar,*

⁸ *"are to lay the head, the fat, and other pieces on the wood that is on the fire of the altar.*

⁹ *"The animal's inner organs and legs must be washed with water. Then the priest must burn all the animal's parts on the altar. It is a whole burnt offering, an offering made by fire, and its smell is pleasing to the LORD."*

In these verses and the rest of chapter 1, God gave detailed instructions about what the priests must do with the animal. Sometimes they burned everything but the skin. The skin belonged to the priests (Leviticus 7:8).

From other verses (see Exodus 12:5) we know that the animal had to be perfect. It must not have anything wrong with it. The blood of the animal was also important. Jesus, as the Lamb of God, was God's perfect **sacrifice** for our sin. He gave His blood and His life for our sin.

Also, a poor person could offer a bird to be used in place of the lamb. "But if the person cannot afford a lamb, he must bring two doves or two young pigeons to the Lord as the penalty for his sin" (Leviticus 5:7). No one was excused from making a sacrifice.

We must be serious about our sin. The price for sin can only be paid by an acceptable sacrifice. The burning of the sacrifice made a sweet smell that went up to God. This pleased God.

Why don't we make animal sacrifices today? The answer to that question is because Jesus is our sacrifice. But we do make offerings to the Lord. We must give our money, of course, but also our time and our **worship** are part of our "**offering**" to Him. When we give to help other people, it is the same as giving to Him (Matthew 25:40). When we give anything to God, it pleases Him. Why? Because it shows we are thankful, and we want to praise and worship Him.

Read Romans 12:1. How can we please God?

Think about what you give to God. What can you do this next week to make a special thanksgiving offering to God?

How does this Old Testament sacrifice make us think about Jesus?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Salvation*

The New Testament teaches that a person is saved when he or she trusts Jesus Christ to be personal Savior and Lord. When we talk about salvation we often use these words: convict, repent, redeem, justify, and sanctify. All these words are important in the doctrine of salvation.

Convict . . . the Spirit makes us know our sin

Repent . . . to be truly sorry for sin and to turn from it

Redeem . . . to take someone out of sin by the death of Jesus

Justify . . . when God no longer sees us as sinners

Sanctify . . . the process of God setting believers apart to a holy life

2. The Grain Offering (Leviticus 2:1-3)

Chapter 1 is about an offering to receive forgiveness for sin. Chapter 2 is about an offering of thanksgiving.

VERSES 1-3

¹ *"When anyone offers a grain offering to the LORD, it must be made from fine flour. The person must pour oil on it, put incense on it,*

² *"and then take it to Aaron's sons, the priests. The priest must take a handful of the fine flour and oil and all the incense, and burn it on the altar as a memorial portion.*

It is an offering made by fire, and its smell is pleasing to the LORD.

³*“The rest of the grain offering will belong to Aaron and the priests; it is a most holy part of the offerings made by fire to the LORD.”*

Another type of offering was the grain offering. This offering required the people to use “fine flour.” They worked hard to grind the grain and make flour. They could use it without making it really fine, but God wanted only the best. It could not be something they could not use. It must be the best. The oil was olive oil. It was used in many ways when they cooked their food.

Grain was important because the flour was needed for many things they cooked. The grains included wheat and corn.

The grain **offering** showed the person remembered (in verse 2, a memorial) all the things God did for him and gave him. Read more about this idea of a memorial or reminder in Leviticus 2:1-16.

Today, we honor God when we give something in a way that shows we are thankful. We are thankful when we remember all that God has done for us.

Giving back to God shows our gratitude for what He has done.

BIBLE SKILL

God’s grace includes forgiveness. Jesus told a story about a lost son who came back to his father and his father forgave him (Luke 15:11-32). How does this story teach forgiveness?

Read Ephesians 4:32. What did Paul tell the people to do?

Read Matthew 18:21-22. What did Jesus say about how many times we should forgive someone?

Read Matthew 6:12-15; 18:21-35. What do these verses tell us about forgiving others?

Only God can forgive sins, but we can forgive the persons who hurt us by showing love and not remembering the hurt.

Think about what you have seen and done this past week. List some things God has given you or done for you. As you list each one, thank God for it.

3. The Fellowship Offering (Leviticus 3:1-5)

Chapter 3 is about an offering to show **fellowship** with God. Think of this as sitting at your dining table with God as your special guest!

VERSES 1-5

¹ *"If a person's fellowship offering to the LORD is from the herd, it may be a male or female, but it must have nothing wrong with it.*

² *"The person must put his hand on the animal's head and kill it at the entrance to the Meeting tent. Then Aaron's sons, the priests, must sprinkle the blood on all sides of the altar.*

³ *"From the fellowship offering he must make a sacrifice by fire to the LORD. He must offer the fat of the animal's inner organs (both the fat that is in them and that covers them),*

⁴ *"both kidneys with the fat that is on them near the lower back muscle, and the best part of the liver, which he will remove with the kidneys.*

⁵ *"Then the priests will burn these parts on the altar, on the whole burnt offering that is on the wood of the fire. It is an offering made by fire, and its smell is pleasing to the LORD."*

The fellowship offering has the idea of the worshiper and God sitting down and eating together at peace with each other. The **fellowship** offering came after the burnt offering. The meaning here is clear. There must be forgiveness before there is fellowship with God.

How can we have this fellowship with God today? First, we become part of the family of God through faith when we accept Jesus as our Savior. Then we find fellowship with Him as we study the Bible and pray, and when we join with others in Bible study and **worship** in our church. When we do these things, we experience peace with God.

Again, as in the first offering, the person making the **sacrifice** placed his hand on the animal's head. It showed he is giving himself to the Lord. All these sacrifices seem strange to us. But to the people who practiced this way of worship it seemed as normal as our worship does for us today.

When you read the details of this sacrifice, you will have many questions about a fellowship offering. Why was the sacrifice made from fat, kidneys, and the best parts of the liver? These were thought of as the best pieces. These pieces were given to God as a burnt offering. The worshipper knew when this offering was made, he was sharing the best in the presence of God.

Do you have sweet fellowship with your family? It is often difficult for the Deaf member of the family to be able to talk easily with his parents or sisters and brothers. It is so good when someone in the family learns ASL so the Deaf person is able to know what they are talking about.

Do you have sweet fellowship with the other Deaf people in your church and Bible study group? Often, it is the only place all week when we can talk easily. Before all the technology we have today, the only places a Deaf person could have this fellowship was in the Deaf Club on Friday night and the Deaf church on Sunday. Technology has opened new ways for communication to happen but it is not possible to have true fellowship through FaceBook. Real sharing of life should and can happen in our churches.

Write a few words about a time when you enjoyed that sweet fellowship with God and God's people.

The Bible has many verses that tell us how to have that **fellowship**. Fellowship in the church is not just sitting together to eat or drink coffee. Fellowship in the New Testament means together we obey God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ (1 John 1:3-4).

Find these other verses in the Bible that are about Christian fellowship. Write a few words explaining what you learn from them.

1 Corinthians 1:9 _____

2 Corinthians 13:14 _____

1 John 1:3-7 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

In this lesson, we learned about three kinds of offerings. The first was for forgiveness of **sin**. The second was for thanksgiving. The third was for fellowship with God. Look at your life, and use this as a “check list” of your **relationship** with God.

Check List

Write Yes or No in each blank.

- _____ Have you received forgiveness for your sins by accepting Jesus as Savior?
- _____ Have you recently thanked Jesus for all that He has done for you?
- _____ Do you read your Bible and pray every day?
- _____ Do you truly look forward to spending time with God?
- _____ Do you say a prayer of thanksgiving before ytour meals?
- _____ Do you turn to Jesus in prayer when you are troubled or sad?
- _____ Do you pray for friends and others when they have problems?
- _____ Do you attend Bible study and worship at your church each week?
- _____ Do you invite others to attend church with you?
- _____ Do you have the kind of peace that God gives (Philippians 4:6-7)?

How did you do on this check list?

How many YES answers? ____ How many NO answers? ____

What do you need to do to have a better score? _____

MEMORY VERSE

“The fire must be kept burning on the altar all the time; it must not go out.”

— Leviticus 6:13

SEPARATED

God's people are to live a **holy** life, separated from the sinfulness of the world around them so they may serve Him.

LEVITICUS 9:15-24; 10:1-3

FIRST THOUGHTS

Believers must be separated from the wrong way of life that non-believers live. Then we are to live the way God wants us to live. The word for this is **sanctification**. That word does not mean to become perfect. It does mean "to be separated from **worldly** things for God's use." It means we must try to obey God in every way.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT (LEVITICUS 8:1–10:20)

The first chapters of Leviticus identify the special offerings God told the Jewish people they must practice. These were burnt **offerings** grain offerings, **fellowship** offerings, **sin** offerings, and offering.

In chapters 8 and 9, we see these offerings being made on behalf of Aaron and his sons. They were the priests who must offer the sacrifices for the people. It was necessary first for sacrifices to be offered for the sins of the priests.

When you read these verses, you will probably think to yourself, “Why is this important? Jesus died to fulfill all this law. We do not need to bring animals to be sacrificed for our sin.” The writers in the New Testament often referred to the Books of Exodus and Leviticus because of the truths about our **relationship** with God.

What can we offer God today? No, we do not need to bring animals to **sacrifice** because Jesus was our sacrifice. But we do need to confess our sin to God. We need to try to make it right with people we have hurt with our actions. We can offer our lives (Romans 12:1-2). We can also offer to God our **worship** and praise, and offer to God our service to others (Hebrews 13:15-16).

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Cleansed (Leviticus 9:15-21)

Many of the offerings were for individuals and other offerings were for all the people. In these verses, Aaron, the high priest, prepared offerings for all the people.

These chapters also tell about how the priests, Aaron and his sons, were prepared to lead in the sacrifices at the **altar**.

VERSES 15-21

¹⁵ Then Aaron brought the offering that was for the people. He took the goat of the people's sin offering and killed it and offered it for the sin offering, just as he had done the first sin offering.

¹⁶ Then Aaron brought the whole burnt offering and offered it in the way that the LORD had commanded.

¹⁷ He also brought the grain offering to the altar. He took a handful of the grain and burned it on the altar, in addition to the morning's burnt offering.

¹⁸ Aaron also killed the bull and the male sheep as the fellowship offerings for the people. His sons brought him the blood, and he sprinkled it on all sides of the altar.

¹⁹ Aaron's sons also brought to Aaron the fat of the bull and the male sheep—the fat tail, the fat covering the inner organs, the kidneys, and the best part of the liver.

²⁰ Aaron's sons put them on the breasts of the bull and the sheep. Then Aaron burned these fat parts on the altar.

²¹ He presented the breasts and the right thigh before the LORD as the priests' share of the offering, as Moses had commanded.

God was very clear about how the offerings were made and why each one was made. This may seem boring to you because we do not

need to do these things. But these offerings and the work of the priests point us to Jesus. He was both the priest and the offering for our salvation.

None of these offerings had any value if the hearts of the people were not right with God. They needed to confess their **sin**—as individuals and as a nation.

After all the preparations were made, it was time to make an **offering** to the Lord for the sins of the priests and the sins of the people. The priest must first offer a **sacrifice** for his own sin (Leviticus 9:7-8), and then for the people.

Several sacrifices were made, and there is much importance in each part of it. But here is what is important to remember: the offering showed that sin was serious. It also showed that sin must be dealt with. Sin separates us from God. Confession, repentance, and forgiveness come at a high price. The Old Testament sacrifices showed this high price. The sacrifices we study here show the need people have to be **clean** from sin. In the Old Testament the sacrifices led the people to forgiveness. Now we have Jesus. Jesus cleans us from sin. Further, we no longer need a priest to offer sacrifices. Jesus is both the sacrifice and the High Priest.

In the New Testament we learn that all believers are priests. You are a priest if you have received Jesus as your Savior! “You are a chosen people, royal priests, a **holy** nation, a people for God’s own possession. You were chosen to tell about the wonderful acts of God, who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light” (1 Peter 2:9).

How do we prepare ourselves to be used by God today?

What sins might keep a person from being able to serve God?

What does a holy life look like for today’s believer?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Priesthood of the Believer*

The New Testament tells us that all believers are priests (1 Peter 2:9). The words for that idea are the priesthood of the believer. Each believer, as a priest, is individually responsible to God. Believers can and need to read and interpret the Bible for themselves.

Each believer in the church, as a priest, is equal to each of the others. Decisions are made by the group as they seek to know the will of the head of the church, the great High Priest, Jesus Christ. They do this by prayer, Bible study, meditation, discussion, and decision.

Here is one way to think about the duty of the priests. Priests represented the people to God and then represented God to the people. Since all believers are priests before God we now all have this duty. We feel responsible to bring other people to God. We also feel responsible to bring God and His love to the people of the world.

2. Blessing (Leviticus 9:22-24)

VERSES 22-23

²² *Then Aaron lifted his hands toward the people and blessed them. When he had finished offering the sin offering, the burnt offering, and the fellowship offering, he stepped down from the altar.*

²³ *Moses and Aaron went into the Meeting tent. Then they came out and blessed the people, and the LORD's glory came to all the people.*

The priest stood between the people and God. Aaron offered the sacrifices to God for the people, then he lifted his hands toward the people and blessed them for God. Numbers 6:23-26 gives us the words of the blessing Aaron gave: "May the LORD bless you and keep you. May the LORD show you his kindness and have mercy on you. May the LORD watch over you and give you peace."

After offering a blessing upon the people, Moses and Aaron entered the tent of meeting. The verse does not say why they went into the **Tabernacle**, but it may have been to pray and prepare themselves to speak to the people for God.

When they came out, they said another blessing and all the people felt the glory (**presence**) of God. In the same way, when we offer ourselves to the Lord, we feel very close to Him. Read Romans 12:1-2; 1 Peter 1:13.

Verse 23 says “The Lord’s glory came to all the people.” The word glory means something about the “weight” of God’s presence. When God is present with His people, we can almost feel him pressing in on us. It seems this is exactly what happened in this story. We worship differently today. Still when God is with us, we know it. Perhaps you have felt before the weight of His glory.

VERSE 24

²⁴ Fire came out from the Lord and burned up the burnt offering and fat on the altar. When the people saw this, they shouted with joy and bowed face down on the ground.

God sent fire to burn the offerings on the **altar**. The people responded with praise and **worship**.

The fire was the way God showed His pleasure for their worship. There are other times in the Bible when God showed His pleasure: Abel’s **sacrifice** (Genesis 4:4), when the temple was dedicated (2 Chronicles 7:1), with Gideon (Judges 6:21), and when Elijah challenged the priests of the god Baal (1 Kings 18:38).

The people were filled with joy when God did this. They shouted praises and then fell face down in humility and in honor to God.

Fire is often used to represent God’s power to bless or to punish. In Acts 2:3-4, when the **Holy** Spirit came onto the believers the Spirit looked like flames of fire.

Write a few words about a time you remember when you felt like God was very near to you.

How did the presence of God change your life?

BIBLE SKILL

In these lessons, we have learned how everything and everyone dedicated to God becomes holy. Another word for this is sanctified. The word “sanctified” means “to be separated (set apart) for God’s use.” The word does not mean perfect.

Read these verses and write a few words to help you remember what each verse says.

1 Peter 1:15-16 _____

1 Thessalonians 3:13 _____

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8 _____

2 Corinthians 7:1 _____

Romans 6:19-22 _____

3. Holy (Leviticus 10:1-3)

VERSES 1-3

¹ Aaron’s sons Nadab and Abihu took their pans for burning incense, put fire in them, and added incense; but they did not use the special fire Moses had commanded them to use in the presence of the LORD.

² So fire came down from the LORD and destroyed Nadab and Abihu, and they died in front of the LORD.

³ Then Moses said to Aaron, “This is what the LORD was speaking about when he said, ‘I must be respected as holy by those who come near me; before all the people I must be given honor.’” So Aaron did not say anything about the death of his sons.

Two of Aaron’s sons offered an **offering** without following God’s instructions. What they did may not seem important, but it represented an **attitude** of disobedience. It showed they were careless with the things of God and they died because of their disobedience. The fire showed God’s anger, just as it showed His approval earlier. It reminded everyone that He is holy and should be worshiped.

Does this seem like God was too hard on these two priests? We need to understand better what their **sin** was. Their sin was in their **attitude** toward God. They were not ignorant; they knew what they were doing. God said, “Do not use this **altar** for **offering** any other incense, or burnt offering, or any kind of grain offering, or drink offering” (Exodus 30:9). Their actions said to God, “We want to do it our way.” The sin also gave a wrong picture of God. God gave the sacrifices as a way of revealing Himself to His people. Because all of this was new to God’s people, God made an example of these two priests. God used this to show how serious He was about the offerings.

The most awful judgments are promised against anyone who either adds to or takes away from God’s words. “I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to these words, God will add to that person the disasters written about in this book. And if anyone takes away from the words of this book of prophecy, God will take away that one’s share of the tree of life and of the **holy** city, which are written about in this book” (Revelation 22:18-19).

As you read the verses, notice the sadness in verse 3. Aaron said nothing because he knew God was right.

How can people be careless in the way they live their lives?

How can we give honor to God today?

IN MY CONTEXT

This lesson taught us about being separated to serve God. Think about where you are in your spiritual growth. It will help you know where you need to give special attention as you try to become what Christ wants you to become.

What was your life like before you were saved?

Write a few words about the time when you were saved.

How do you feel about sin in your own life? What can you do when you feel like Paul said about himself? “I do not understand the things I do. I do not do what I want to do, and I do the things I hate” (Romans 7:15).

Describe the love you have for God in your heart.

Paul wrote about how his love for God controlled his life (2 Corinthians 5:14).

When Christians spend time together, how does that time together help our lives become stronger in our dedication to Christ?

Don't become spiritually lazy. Trust the Lord to keep working in your life. “God began doing a good work in you, and I am sure He will continue it until it is finished when Jesus Christ comes again” (Philippians 1:6).

MEMORY VERSE

“You must keep what is holy separate from what is not holy; you must keep what is clean separate from what is unclean.”

—Leviticus 10:10



SET FREE

God promised a way for His people to be free from the **guilt** of **sin**.

LEVITICUS 16:3-10,29-30

FIRST THOUGHTS

These verses give us a beautiful picture of how God forgives our sin and sends it far away from us so it does not bother us anymore. David said, “He has taken our sins away from us as far as the east is from west” (Psalm 103:12). A good friend of mine always said, “God buried my sins in the deepest sea and put up a sign that said NO FISHING!” He meant that we do not need to go back to find those sins after God forgives us.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT (LEVITICUS 11:1–16:34)

Read chapters 11-15 to understand what happened between last week’s study and today’s study. Chapter 11 has many rules about what was right and what was not right for the people to eat. Chapter 12 gives some rules for new mothers. Chapters 13-15 give some rules about skin diseases and how to care for a person’s body. These rules may seem strange as you read them, but you will see many things that we know today as rules for good physical and spiritual health.

In addition to good health, these rules also showed that Israel was different from the people who lived around them. Laws about food, motherhood, and disease showed that in all things Israel belonged to God. They were a holy nation.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Preparing to Sacrifice (Leviticus 16:3-6)

These verses explain how Aaron, the high priest, had to prepare himself before he could offer sacrifices for the people.

VERSES 3-6

³ *“This is how Aaron may enter the Most Holy Place: Before he enters, he must offer a bull for a sin offering and a male sheep for a whole burnt offering.*

⁴ *“He must put on the holy linen inner robe, with the linen underclothes next to his body. His belt will be the cloth belt, and he will wear the linen turban. These are holy clothes, so he must bathe his body in water before he puts them on.*

⁵ *“Aaron must take from the people of Israel two male goats for a sin offering and one male sheep for a burnt offering.*

⁶ *“Then he will offer the bull for the sin offering for himself to remove sins from him and his family so they will belong to the LORD.”*

God, through Moses, identified how Aaron was to prepare himself to offer a special annual **sacrifice** in the center of the **Tabernacle** called the **Holy of Holies**. These rules helped the people understand how to be prepared to **worship** God. We can learn from this how important it is for us to prepare ourselves to enter into God’s **presence**.

The clothes Aaron wore were white **linen**. In Leviticus 8:7-9 the priest’s clothes were very beautiful, with a lot of color. But when he prepared to make sacrifices, he wore simple white clothes to show people he was not important. What he was doing was important.

The priest had several kinds of clothes he wore during this special day. He had a breastplate, an **ephod**, a robe, and a plate of gold (Exodus 28:1-39). He changed five times as the types of **offering** changed throughout the day. These rituals served as a way of teaching the importance and **holiness** of worship.

One of the lessons we learn from these verses is how important it is for our leaders in church to be spiritually prepared to lead us. In some churches the pastor may wear special clothes. In many of our churches they do not have special clothes. But there are other ways that they prepare. They study

and pray. Some get up early to prepare their minds for worship. These are important steps of preparation.

Christ, our High Priest, did not need to make a sacrifice for Himself like Aaron did, before He could offer Himself for our sins (Hebrews 7:27). Jesus Christ was already perfect, with no sin. He did, however, prepare Himself for the cross. How did He prepare? You may remember that when Jesus was anointed (Matthew 26:6-13), Jesus also shared the Last Supper with His disciples and prayed in the garden. This was preparation for sacrifice.

How can we prepare ourselves for worship today? Make a list of some ideas to share with your Bible study group this week about how you can be ready to worship when you go into the morning worship service.

How you can prepare for the Bible study time, so you will be ready to learn when you meet together?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Atonement in the New Testament*

The Book of Hebrews tells us much about the atonement made by Christ's death and how it is different from atonement in the Old Testament. Atonement in the Old Testament depended on annual sacrifices of animals. What Christ did is greater than what the high priest did in the Old Testament. The Book of Hebrews tells us that "The law says that almost everything must be made clean by blood, and sins cannot be forgiven without blood to show death" (Hebrews 9:22). Every year on the Day of Atonement the high priest entered the Holy of Holies with the blood sacrifice. But Christ entered once and for all into the presence of God, to atone (pay) for our sin with His own blood.

2. The Chosen Goat (Leviticus 16:7-10)

VERSES 7-10

⁷ “Next Aaron will take the two goats and bring them before the LORD at the entrance to the Meeting tent.

⁸ “He will throw lots for the two goats—one will be for the LORD and the other for the goat that removes sin.

⁹ “Then Aaron will take the goat that was chosen for the LORD by throwing the lot, and he will offer it as a sin offering.

¹⁰ “The other goat, which was chosen by lot to remove the sin, must be brought alive before the LORD. The priest will use it to perform the acts that remove Israel’s sin so they will belong to the LORD. Then this goat will be sent out into the desert as a goat that removes sin.”

God instructed Aaron to take two goats and cast lots to determine which animal would be sacrificed and which animal would be sent into the **desert**. The way the high priest cast lots was to take two items from a box or urn, one with each hand. One had the words, “for the Lord,” and the other, “for the **scapegoat**.” If the one that said “for the Lord” was in his right hand, the goat on the right was sacrificed and the one on the left was set free.

The goat that was sent into the desert was called a scapegoat. Most of the time we see the word scapegoat to mean “when a person is blamed unfairly for problems.” You might see the word on captioned TV in a story when someone is blamed for the problems in government or in a business. This is somewhat like the scapegoat **offering**.

In the scapegoat offering, the goat took the blame or the sin of the people. You can see why this word is used like it is today. The goat was not unfairly blamed. It represented the people. The goat itself was not guilty, but the **sin** of the people was placed on the goat and it was sent out into the desert.

The scapegoat is a picture of how Christ took on Himself all the sin of all the people of the world. Christ was not sinful, but He took our sin. The **Hebrew** people knew this **sacrifice** took away their **guilt**. Now we Christians are confident that the death of Jesus removes our guilt. We stand before God free from sin.

As a believer the guilt of your sin is gone. How important is it for Christians to know their guilt is gone? Write your thoughts about this question.

How did the death of Jesus provide atonement for our sin?

How is the cross of Jesus important to our salvation?

BIBLE SKILL

Do you have a problem with some of the words we use when we talk about becoming a Christian, or about becoming saved? Read the words below. All these words are important in our understanding of salvation.

Look up these words in a Bible dictionary or online. Write a short definition of each word.

atone _____

salvation _____

justify _____

redeem _____

3. The Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:29-30)

VERSES 29-30

²⁹ “This law will always continue for you: On the tenth day of the seventh month, you must deny yourself and you must not do any work. The travelers or foreigners living with you must not work either.

³⁰ “It is on this day that the priests will make you clean so you will belong to the LORD again. All your sins will be removed.”

The tenth day of the seventh month is the same as our month of September.

The **Hebrew** name for the Day of **Atonement** is **Yom Kippur**.

God established the Day of Atonement for the Jewish people to be celebrated each year. This is still the most **holy** day of all the special days. The purpose of this was to make atonement for the sins of **Israel**. Later, as we know from the New Testament, Jesus’ death made atonement once and for all for the sins of humanity.

This special holy day, the Day of Atonement, was a day of fasting. The Israelites did not eat anything that day. This was also a day when people did not do their usual work. This showed they set the day aside only for the Lord. Everyone with the Israelites obeyed these rules: servants, visitors, and people that were not Jews.

This was the only time during the year when the high priest went into the center of the **Tabernacle**, called the Holy of Holies. He did this to make atonement for the sins of all the people. The word for atonement in Hebrew means “to cover.” The blood **sacrifice** covered (hid) the sins of the people. This shows how **sin** separates us from the **holiness** of God.

At the moment Jesus died, the curtain in the temple was torn in two pieces (Matthew 27:51). Jesus became our high priest (Hebrews 8-9) and entered heaven once for all time. He became the sacrifice of atonement for our sins. Believers understand that the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross fulfilled the requirement of Yom Kippur.

Today, Yom Kippur is still the most important holy day for Jewish people. In 2017, this special time was celebrated September 29-30.

Then, and now, salvation is based on the true **attitude** of a person’s heart, not on the activities of the day. We are saved when, by faith, we believe that Christ’s death on the cross cleansed all His people from all their sins so that we stand pure and **clean**, without **guilt**, before the throne of God (Colossians 1:21-23).

God has provided all that is needed to remove sin. In Old Testament times and today, salvation has come to those who trust God’s provision in Jesus.

The Superiority of Christ's Priesthood

- *On the Day of Atonement, the high priest offered the blood of animals; Jesus offered His own blood (Hebrews 9:12).*
- *The high priest entered an earthly tent; Jesus offered His sacrifice in the presence of God in heaven itself (Hebrews 9:24).*
- *The high priest had to offer sacrifices for his own sins; Jesus had no sin (Hebrews 7:26-27; 9:7).*
- *The high priest had to offer sacrifices repeatedly; Jesus offered Himself as a sacrifice once and for all (Hebrews 9:25-26; 10:11-12).*
- *The old covenant sacrifices were “a shadow of the good things to come” (Hebrews 10:1); Jesus abolished the old covenant and established the new covenant in His sacrifice on the cross (Hebrews 8:13).*

IN MY CONTEXT

In this lesson today we learned how **sin** was covered and removed in Old Testament times. God gave the **Hebrew** people sacrifices that led to **atonement** for sin. All our Old Testament study helps us to understand what the death of Jesus did for us. The death of Jesus provided the final atonement for sin. The New Testament teaches that we must respond to the atonement offered by Jesus. We do this when we admit that we have sinned and repent from sin. In faith we trust God for forgiveness offered through Jesus.

How did the Old Testament atonement look forward to what Jesus did on the cross?

Have you accepted Jesus as your Savior? If not, read the page “Accepting Jesus” at the front of this Personal Study Guide, and talk to your Bible teacher or pastor today. If you have accepted Jesus, share Jesus with others. Use the information on the “Accepting Jesus” page with someone this week.

In your Sunday School class explain atonement to a friend. Write a short sentence here to help you remember how to explain it.

MEMORY VERSE

“It is on this day that the priests will make you clean so you will belong to the LORD again. All your sins will be removed.”

—Leviticus 16:30



GOD'S PROMISES

God promises to bless us when we are faithful to Him and to discipline us when we are not faithful.

LEVITICUS 26:3-16,40-45

FIRST THOUGHTS

These verses begin with a promise from God. He said He will bless all people who obey Him. Then, we have a warning from God about what He will do when His people do not obey Him. Finally, we have God's plan to forgive His people when they repent and turn back to Him.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT (LEVITICUS 17:1–27:34)

Read chapters 17–25 to help you understand what happened between last week's lesson and today's lesson. These chapters tell about other laws and identify sins the people must **avoid**. God told the Israelites what would happen if they did not obey Him. In chapters 22–23, God gave special rules to priests. They were the leaders, so they had to set an example of living the way God wanted His people to live.

Chapter 23 begins a discussion of special holidays including the **Sabbath** and the **Passover**.

Our lesson today is from chapter 26. This chapter tells about rewards for obeying God. The first two verses repeat the command against idols, and the reminder, “I am the Lord your God.” Verse 2 is a reminder of the law about the Sabbath. Both idolatry and failure to obey the Sabbath law are sins that show the people turned away from God.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Promises (Leviticus 26:3-13)

VERSES 3-10

³ *“If you remember my laws and commands and obey them,*

⁴ *“I will give you rains at the right season; the land will produce crops, and the trees of the field will produce their fruit.*

⁵ *“Your threshing will continue until the grape harvest, and your grape harvest will continue until it is time to plant. Then you will have plenty to eat and live safely in your land.*

⁶ *“I will give peace to your country; you will lie down in peace, and no one will make you afraid. I will keep harmful animals out of your country, and armies will not pass through it.*

⁷ *“You will chase your enemies and defeat them, killing them with your sword.*

⁸ *“Five of you will chase a hundred men; a hundred of you will chase ten thousand men. You will defeat your enemies and kill them with your sword.*

⁹ *“Then I will show kindness to you and let you have many children; I will keep My agreement with you.*

¹⁰ *“You will have enough crops to last for more than a year. When you harvest the new crops, you will have to throw out the old ones to make room for them.”*

Read these verses carefully. Verse 3 begins with the word *if*. This is an important word. These verses have God’s promises, and God always keeps His promises; but the word *if* requires His people to do something. Parents tell their children, “You may go to the party if you **clean** your room.” The child must learn that there are requirements that must be met before the reward is given. Obedience comes first.

God promised good harvests, peace, safety, and victory over other nations. The people knew God could do this, because He had taken care of them from the time they left **Egypt**. Farmers will understand these verses better than anyone else, but some of us have had gardens, or a new lawn, and know the value of having rain at the right time and in the right amount. If we do not have enough rain, our plants will not grow. If we have too much rain, the seeds may be washed away. The Jewish farmers depended on rain

after they planted their seeds and again a short time before harvest when the plants were producing their grain.

God also promised victory when enemies attacked them. A small number of God's people would have victory over large armies. There are examples of this very things happening in Judges 7:22-23 and 1 Samuel 14:13-15.

VERSES 11-12

¹¹ *"Also I will place my Holy Tent among you, and I will not turn away from you.*

¹² *"I will walk with you and be your God, and you will be my people."*

The promise of physical **blessings** was wonderful, but the greatest promise was the **presence** of God. God offers a future and peace to those who follow Him out of obedient love.

God walked with the Israelites as they traveled. When God led them to move, they took the **Tabernacle** with them. When God led them to stop for a while, they set it up. This promise in verse 12 is so powerful. God's people are called a chosen people (1 Peter 2:9; 2 Corinthians 6:16). Solomon later built the Temple that replaced the Tabernacle. In the New Testament, Jesus came and lived among God's people. He was with them physically (John 1:14). After the resurrection, God's presence was not in a building, but within His people (John 14:16-17).

VERSE 13

¹³ *"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, where you were slaves. I broke the heavy weights that were on your shoulders and let you walk proudly again."*

This verse is a reminder of who they were and where they came from. As we study the Bible, God reminds us that we are His children who walk in His light. He brought us out from a life of **sin** and darkness.

The "heavy weights" on their shoulders was like the **yoke** they put on oxen. The yoke was made of heavy, strong wood. It was placed across the necks of two oxen and ropes were tied to it and to the plow or other things the oxen pulled. This yoke is often used as a picture word for slavery. Just as God freed them from the yoke of slavery in **Egypt**, Christ took away the yoke of our spiritual enemies (Galatians 5:1).

The Bible has many verses that tell of God's promises. Which Bible promise is special to you? Write the verse here:

Explain how obedience to God brings peace for believers today?

BIBLE SKILL

A “covenant” is “an agreement that God makes with His people.” Usually the covenant is an “if” “then” agreement. That means, if the person will do what God asks, then God will do what He promises. Read the Bible verses and write the name of the person with whom God made a covenant.

Genesis 9:8-17 _____

Genesis 12:1-3 _____

Genesis 17:21 _____

Genesis 28:13-15 _____

2 Samuel 23:5 _____

2. Warnings (Leviticus 26:14-16)

VERSES 14-15

¹⁴ “But if you do not obey me and keep all my commands,

¹⁵ “and if you turn away from my rules and hate my laws, refusing to obey all my commands, you have broken our agreement.”

The first word in verse 3 is *if*. The first words in verse 14 are *but if*. These two verses are tied together with that little word *but*. God warned them that if they disobeyed His commands, they would face God’s discipline, which would include suffering defeat by their enemies. In the same way believers should expect God’s discipline when we disobey His commands.

The Law told the people how to live. But when they disobeyed God, the Law showed their sin (Galatians 3:10).

VERSE 16

¹⁶ *“As a result, I will do this to you: I will cause terrible things to happen to you. I will cause you to have disease and fever that will destroy your eyes and slowly kill you. You will not have success when you plant your seed, and your enemy will eat your crops.”*

This verse follows the words about the people disobeying God’s laws. If they did not obey, this would be the result. It is almost the opposite of the promise to them if they obeyed! It included disease, defeat, and dried-up crops. We need to be careful and not say that “if we obey God everything will be perfect.” Not all disease or other bad things are the result of **sin**. Do you remember what Jesus said about the blind man in John 9:1-3? God can, and does, use these things to punish people, but not all of the bad things are because of sin.

What is clear from these verses is if we do not obey God we can expect Him to discipline us. His discipline leads us to better obedience.

What do these verses teach us about the consequence of sin?

What happens to a Christian who sins?

When is God’s discipline good for us?

3. Repenting (Leviticus 26:40-45)

Our lesson jumps to verse 40. Read verses 17-39. The verses given describe what will happen if Israel does not obey God. What will God send to His people? He will send drought, famine, enemy armies, military defeat, captivity, slavery, and the end of their nation. This is an **amazing** summary of the history of the nation of **Israel**—before it happened!

VERSES 40-43

⁴⁰ *“But maybe the people will confess their sins and the sins of their ancestors; maybe they will admit they turned against me and sinned against me,*

⁴¹ *“which made me turn against them and send them into the land of their enemies. If these disobedient people are sorry for what they did and accept punishment for their sin,*

⁴² *"I will remember my agreement with Jacob, my agreement with Isaac, and my agreement with Abraham, and I will remember the land.*

⁴³ *"The land will be left empty by its people, and it will enjoy its time of rest as it lies bare without them. Then those who are left alive will accept the punishment for their sins. They will learn that they were punished because they hated my laws and refused to obey my rules."*

This section begins again with the word *but*. First, God said, "if you do this." Then He said, "But if you do not do this." And now in this section, He said, "But maybe the people will confess..."

God promised to listen to His people when they confessed. He said He would again have **fellowship** with them. Today, we can find hope in the fact that God offers forgiveness to all who turn to Him in repentance. But it is very dangerous to think it is fine to keep on sinning with a plan to ask God sometime in the future to forgive. That **attitude** does not show repentance for sin. We must be sorry for our sin and confess to God that we know we have sinned.

Again, as we look at the history of the nation of Israel, we see how this also came true. Daniel prayed and confessed the sin of all the people (Daniel 9:4), and God heard and answered his prayer. The people turned away from God, and He let other nations defeat them and carry many into captivity in Assyria and Babylon. This did not happen because the other nations were stronger than Israel. It was God's judgment against them.

God said when His people repented, He would remember His agreement with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (verse 42). That agreement included growing in number to become a great nation, mercy and **blessings** to His people, and the promise of the Messiah coming from their families. (See Luke 1:68.) God would also give them back their land and make it productive again (verse 43).

VERSES 44-45

⁴⁴ *"But even though this is true, I will not turn away from them when they are in the land of their enemies. I will not hate them so much that I completely destroy them and break My agreement with them, because I am the LORD their God.*

⁴⁵ *"For their good I will remember the agreement with their ancestors, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt so I could become their God; the other nations saw these things. I am the LORD."*

Now we have the word *but* one more time. This one is very important. It tells us that God may punish His people for their sin, but He will never stop loving them.

See these great phrases: "I will not turn away from them . . ." and "I will not hate them . . ." and "I will remember . . ." Here is one of the

lessons we learn—when we sin we move away from God. But because of His love and His character, God never moves away from us. God certainly keeps His promises. (See Romans 11:26-27.)

What do these verses teach us about God?

How would you describe God's grace to a person who has moved away from God?

KEY DOCTRINE: *God's Grace*

Grace is the undeserved acceptance and love from God to us. The Greek word refers to the pleasure given by the act of love. It includes the concept of mercy and forgiveness. God's grace to us gives us salvation (Acts 15:11) and eternal life (Romans 5:21, Titus 3:7). God's grace is given to us. It cannot be earned (Ephesians 2:8-9). God's grace gives us power to do His work (1 Corinthians 15:10). The response of the person who receives grace is thanksgiving. This is why we sometimes refer to the prayer at a meal as "grace." It is our thanksgiving to God for providing for us, even though we have not earned His love. Peter wrote that grace is not given for us to use in a selfish way (1 Peter 4:10), but it is given to people who are humble (1 Peter 5:5).

IN MY CONTEXT

In this study we first looked at God's plan to provide for His people. God owns all things and can easily take care of His people. He did have a requirement of them, however. God wanted the Israelites to obey Him. He always gave them a choice. They could choose to obey and enjoy God's **presence**. Or they could choose to disobey and suffer for it. We have the same choice today.

How has God taken care of you?

What do you notice about His provision for you?

We also studied about God's great forgiveness. What kind of attitude does God expect from us when we ask for forgiveness?

It is also important for us to forgive others. Jesus mentioned this idea when He taught His disciples to pray (Matthew 6:12). Is there someone you need to forgive?

Ask God if this is the time you need to go to that person and offer forgiveness for anything that is the other person's fault, and ask for forgiveness for anything that is your fault. God wants us to have a good **relationship** with other people. We must not let things keep us apart.

God spoke these words to all of His people. Ask your Bible study group to join you in praying for your church, your community, and our nation.

MEMORY VERSE

"For their good I will remember the agreement with their ancestors, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt so I could become their God; the other nations saw these things. I am the LORD."

—Leviticus 26:45

TEN COMMANDMENTS

COMMANDMENT	PASSAGE
Do not have other gods besides Me.	<i>Exodus 20:3; Deuteronomy 5:7</i>
Do not make an idol for yourself.	<i>Exodus 20:4-6; Deuteronomy 5:8-10</i>
Do not misuse the name of the LORD your God.	<i>Exodus 20:7; Deuteronomy 5:11</i>
Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.	<i>Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:12-15</i>
Honor your father and your mother.	<i>Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16</i>
Do not murder.	<i>Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:17</i>
Do not commit adultery.	<i>Exodus 20:14; Deuteronomy 5:18</i>
Do not steal.	<i>Exodus 20:15; Deuteronomy 5:19</i>
Do not give false testimony against your neighbor.	<i>Exodus 20:16; Deuteronomy 5:20</i>
Do not covet.	<i>Exodus 20:17; Deuteronomy 5:21</i>

RELATED OLD TESTAMENT PASSAGE	RELATED NEW TESTAMENT PASSAGE	JESUS' TEACHING
<i>Exodus 34:14; Deuteronomy 6:4,13-14; 2 Kings 17:35; Psalm 81:9; Jeremiah 25:6; 35:15</i>	<i>Acts 5:29</i>	<i>Matthew 4:10; 6:33; 22:37-40</i>
<i>Exodus 20:23; 32:8; 34:17; Leviticus 19:4; 26:1; Deuteronomy 4:15-20; 7:25; 32:21; Psalm 115:4-7; Isaiah 44:12-20</i>	<i>Acts 17:29; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6,10-14; 1 John 5:21</i>	<i>Matthew 6:24; Luke 16:13</i>
<i>Exodus 22:28; Leviticus 18:21; 19:12; 22:2; 24:16; Ezekiel 39:7</i>	<i>Romans 2:23-24; James 5:12</i>	<i>Matthew 5:33-37; 6:9; 23:16-22</i>
<i>Genesis 2:3; Exodus 16:23-30; 31:13-16; 35:2-3; Leviticus 19:30; Isaiah 56:2; Jeremiah 17:21-27</i>	<i>Acts 20:7; Hebrews 10:25</i>	<i>Matthew 12:1-13; Mark 2:23-27; 3:1-16; Luke 6:1-11; John 5:1-18</i>
<i>Exodus 21:17; Leviticus 19:3; Deuteronomy 21:18-21; 27:16; Proverbs 6:20</i>	<i>Ephesians 6:1-3; Colossians 3:20</i>	<i>Matthew 15:4-6; 19:19; Mark 7:9-13; Luke 2:51; 18:20; John 19:26-27</i>
<i>Genesis 9:6; Leviticus 24:17; Numbers 35:33</i>	<i>Romans 13:9-10; 1 Peter 4:15</i>	<i>Matthew 5:21-24; 19:18; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20</i>
<i>Leviticus 18:20; 20:10; Deuteronomy 22:22; Numbers 5:12-31; Proverbs 6:29,32</i>	<i>Romans 13:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9; Hebrews 13:4; James 2:11</i>	<i>Matthew 5:27-30; 19:18; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20; John 8:1-11</i>
<i>Leviticus 19:11,13; Ezekiel 18:7</i>	<i>Romans 13:9-10; Ephesians 4:28; James 5:4</i>	<i>Matthew 19:18; Mark 10:19; 12:40; Luke 18:20</i>
<i>Exodus 23:1,7; Leviticus 19:11; Psalms 15:2; 101:5; Proverbs 10:18; Jeremiah 9:3-5; Zechariah 8:16</i>	<i>Ephesians 4:25,31; Colossians 3:9; Titus 3:2</i>	<i>Matthew 5:37; 19:18; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20</i>
<i>Deuteronomy 7:25; Job 31:24-28; Psalm 62:10</i>	<i>Romans 7:7; 13:9; Ephesians 5:3-5; Hebrews 13:5; James 4:1-2</i>	<i>Luke 12:15-34</i>

WORD LIST

As you read the **Personal Study Guide**, you see words in bold print. Following is a list of those words and what they mean.

Accidental—Not intended.

Altar—A table where the priests offered the sacrifices.

Amazing—Surprising, inspiring.

Ark—A gold covered box in the Tabernacle filled with special things.

Atonement—Doing what is necessary to remove sin.

Attitude—How we feel or think about something.

Avoid—To keep away from.

Blessings—Good things God gives to people.

Canaan—The name for the area that is also called the promised land.

Capital punishment—Taking the life of someone because of his crime.

Ceremony—A formal act, as in worshipping God.

Chariot—A two-wheeled cart pulled by one or two horses.

Clean—Honorable.

Commandment—Rules we must obey.

Conviction—The work of the Holy Spirit that leads us to repent.

Covenant—An agreement, or promise.

Covet—To want something that belongs to another.

Deliver—To make free.

Desert—An area that is mostly sand, with little water.

Egypt—A nation in North Africa.

Envy—Jealousy.

Ephod—A part of the special clothing worn by priests.

Exodus—A Greek word that means to go out.

Feast—A special meal to help people remember an important event.

Fellowship—A special relationship with other people or with God.

Godly—Like God's character.

Guilt—Responsibility for sin.

Hebrew—The Jewish language, or a Jewish person.

Holiness—The idea of being separated for God's use.

Holy—Set aside for God’s use.

Israel—Descendants of Jacob. God gave Jacob the name Israel.

Justification—To be judged as right or innocent even though one is guilty.

Levite—A descendant of Jacob’s son, Levi. All priests were from the tribe of Levi.

Linen—A cloth made from flax.

Manna—Special food God sent to the Jewish people in the desert.

Meeting tent—The Tabernacle.

Offering—A gift.

Passover—The Jewish special day for remembering when they were made free from Egypt.

Pharaoh—The Egyptian king.

Plague—Something terrible, that makes much trouble.

Presence—God’s presence means God is with us.

Promised Land—The area God promised to Abraham.

Rebel, Rebellion—Turn away, turn against, disobey.

Redeem, Redemption—Pay to receive back, pay for sin to provide salvation.

Regeneration—Make something like new again as in salvation makes us new.

Relationship—How people get along together.

Sabbath—The seventh day or seventh year.

Sacrifice—Something given to God. This was often an animal or grain burned on the altar.

Sanctification—The process of growing spiritually.

Scapegoat—The goat that takes away sin on the Day of Atonement. Today the Jewish people call this day Yom Kippur.

Sin—Anything that is against God’s rules.

Skills—Abilities, what we know how to do.

Sovereign—The highest power. God is sovereign. No power is greater than God’s power.

Tabernacle—The Meeting tent where the Jewish people worshiped God.

Tribe—Descendants of a person, as the descendants of the sons of Jacob.

Unclean—Not right for worshiping God.

Unleavened bread—Bread made without yeast.

Worldly—Not spiritual, things of the world, not of Christ.

Worship—Praise and honor.

Yoke—A heavy wooden piece that fits over the necks of two oxen so they can pull together.

Yom Kippur—The Hebrew words for the Day of Atonement.

RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS AND LEADERS

- Online Commentary: <http://www.easyenglish.info/bible-commentary/index.htm>
- Bible verses in this publication are from the New Century Version (NCV).
- The ASL Bible is produced by Deaf Missions and available at www.deafmissionsstore.com.
- The ASL Bible for mobile devices is available at www.DeafBible.com or www.Bible.is/Deaf.
- Let's Sign Hymnal and the ASL Bible are available on Amazon.

Explore the Bible.®

LEADER GUIDE

40. And the land of Egypt,
 41. The night to be kept *holy* to the Lord,
 because he brought them out of the land
 of Egypt: this is that night of the Lord,
 when all the children of Israel must keep
 throughout their generations.
 42. Also the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron,
 This is the wave of the Passover:
 no stranger shall eat thereof.
 43. But every Israelite that is bought for money,
 when thou shalt circumcise him, then
 shall he eat thereof.
 44. A stranger or an hired servant shall not
 eat thereof.
 45. *In one house shall it be eaten: thou shalt
 carry none of the flesh out of the house,
 neither shall ye break a bone thereof.
 46. All the Congregation of Israel shall observe it.
 47. But if a stranger dwell with thee, & will
 observe the Passover of the Lord, let him
 circumcise all the males that belong unto
 him, and then let him come and observe
 it, and he shall be as one that is borne in
 the land: for none uncircumcised persons
 shall eat thereof.
 48. One law shall be to him that is borne
 in the land, & to the stranger that dwelleth
 among you.
 49. Then all the children of Israel did as
 the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron.
 50. And the Passover was kept that night.

40. & 41. The
 night of the
 Passover.
 42. & 43. The
 wave of the
 Passover.

43. & 44. The
 wave of the
 Passover.

45. & 46. The
 wave of the
 Passover.

46. & 47. The
 wave of the
 Passover.

48. & 49. The
 wave of the
 Passover.



SLOW TO OBEY

God called Moses and empowered Moses to serve Him and His purposes.

EXODUS 3:4-14; 4:13-16

MEMORY VERSE: Exodus 3:14

PLAN AHEAD

- Pray for group members. Pray that they will become quick to obey the Lord.
- Ask _____ to study the Introduction to the Books of Exodus and Leviticus and summarize it for the class.
- Make the lesson come alive! Find a map of the time of the **Exodus**. Be ready to show the group the area where the Israelites traveled as they left **Egypt**.
- Practice signing the story for today's lesson. It would be good to do in two parts, Exodus 3:4-14 and Exodus 4:1-14. Prepare so that you do not need to look at the book while you sign it. You could also ask one of the members to sign the story.

FOCUS ATTENTION

Ask the volunteer to explain the Introduction to the Books of Exodus and Leviticus. Show the group the area on the map where the action will happen in the lessons for this quarter.

Ask the class: Has God ever asked you to do something but you were afraid to do it? If they answered “yes” they will understand how Moses felt in this story. Sign the first part of the story for the class.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. God's Presence (Exodus 3:4-6)

Ask: Why did God ask Moses to take off his shoes? When we meet for **worship**, how can we show our respect for God? During our prayer time at home, how can we show respect for God?

2. God's Call (Exodus 3:7-10)

Sign this part of the story again. **Ask:** What do you notice about God in these verses? (He listens to His people's prayers, He answers, and He has a plan.)

3. God's Name (Exodus 3:11-14)

Ask: How did Moses answer God? **Ask:** When you ask your children to do something, how do you want them to answer? If your members do not have children **Ask:** When your parents asked you to do something, how did they want you to answer? Moses was not quick to obey, he had excuses. Perhaps we all understand how he felt.

4. God's Plan (Exodus 4:13-16)

Sign the second part of the story. You can summarize verses 4:1-12 and focus on 13-16. **Ask:** What do you notice about God in these verses? (He can become angry, He promised to be with Moses, and He let Aaron help.) Why did God become angry? (See the discussion in the Personal Study Guide.)

IN MY CONTEXT

Discuss: God is still the same today. He does not change. He still listens to His people and answers our prayers. When He asks us to do something, He will make a way for us to obey (Philippians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:16-17). He is with us always (Matthew 28:20). We even have the **Holy** Spirit living in us to help us know what to do (John 14:26; Ephesians 4:11-13).

Ask the group to list some things that God wants Christians to do. Ask them to think about things that He wants them as individuals to do. They can share their answers from In My Context in the Personal Study Guide.

Pray together. Ask God to help us learn to obey quickly and trust Him to help.

CHALLENGE

Moses met with **Pharaoh**. God showed His power. This reminds us that God alone is worthy of **worship**.

EXODUS 7:1-13

MEMORY VERSE: Exodus 6:7

PLAN AHEAD

- Pray for group members. Pray they will recognize that we must worship God because He is worthy.
- Ask _____ to study Exodus 4:27–6:12 and summarize it for the group.
- Make the lesson come alive! Review the nine miracles (plagues) from Exodus 7:14–10:29. Be prepared to discuss them. Look online for pictures of the plagues to show the class.
- Review the questions from In My Context. Be ready to discuss these with the group.

FOCUS ATTENTION

Ask the volunteer to summarize Exodus 4:27-6:12. Note that the meetings with the pharaoh did not go well. Pharaoh made the work of the **Hebrew** slaves even harder. Moses became discouraged and had doubts. However, he still talked with God and continued to obey Him.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. God's Plan (Exodus 7:1-5)

Explain: The people of **Egypt** worshiped many gods. For example, they depended on the Nile River for many things. They decided the river was a god and worshiped it. They depended on the sun, so they decided it was a god and worshiped it. The Lord God wanted the Egyptians and the Israelites to know that there is only one God. He is the only one they should worship. In these

verses, God makes it clear that He had a plan. When He showed His power to the people, they would “know that I am the Lord” (Exodus 7:5).

Ask: What reminds you that our God is the Lord? How do you know He is the only God?

2. Simple Obedience (Exodus 7:6-7)

This section is very short, just two powerful verses. Ask someone to sign the verses for the group. **Ask:** How did Moses and Aaron respond to God? (They obeyed.) Why do you think Moses included their ages in verse 7?

3. God’s Miracles (Exodus 7:8-13)

Many Christians know about the miracles God did in Egypt. God showed that He is more powerful than anything the people in Egypt worshiped. When the Nile River turned red, God showed He was more powerful than the Egyptian god of the river. When the darkness came, God showed His power over the Egyptian sun god. Ask the group to describe the first 9 miracles (we will discuss the 10th next week). They can use their information from the Bible Skill in the Personal Study Guide. Note that in some of the miracles, God specifically protected the Israelites.

Ask: How did the pharaoh respond to each of the miracles? (He hardened his heart.) What does it mean to “harden your heart”?

Explain: If we respond to the light (Word of God) in the right way by obeying God, He will give us more light and understanding. If we refuse to obey God, we may experience a darkness in our spirits. We will feel farther away from God. Our hearts may feel “hardened” toward God. How can we keep a soft heart toward God?

IN MY CONTEXT

Review the questions from In My Context in the Personal Study Guide. Pray together for God to help us be open to Him, ready to obey.

FREEDOM

God will give freedom to those who are willing to trust Him.

EXODUS 12:1-13

MEMORY VERSE: Exodus 13:3

PLAN AHEAD

- Pray for group members. Pray that they will more fully understand the freedom Jesus Christ purchased for us with His blood.
- Ask _____ to study Exodus 11 so they can summarize it for the group.
- Make the lesson come alive! Find a Seder plate (or a picture of one) that you can show to the group. You can find several online sites that explain the different parts of the Seder meal and what each part represents. Be prepared to tell the group about this meal that Jewish people have at **Passover**.
- Practice signing the verses from Exodus 12:1-13.
- Ask two volunteers to sign the following verses: Hebrews 9:22 and 1 John 1:7.

FOCUS ATTENTION

Remind the group about the nine miracles we studied last week. **Ask:** Which of the nine did you think was the worst? Why? Explain that today we will discuss the last of the miracles. Ask the volunteer to sign a summary of Exodus 11.

Ask the group members to think about how the events of the Passover help us understand more about Jesus and His **sacrifice** as we study the lesson.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Prepared (Exodus 12:1-5)

Sign the verses. **Ask:** Which of these instructions cause you to think about Jesus? What kind of animal were the Israelites to kill? (A one-year old male that has nothing wrong with it) Ask the group to look up 1 Peter 1:19 and discuss what it says about Jesus.

2. Sacrificed (Exodus 12:6-7)

Sign the verses. **Ask:** How is the sacrifice of the lamb the same as Jesus' sacrifice for our sins? Ask the volunteers to sign Hebrews 9:22 and 1 John 1:7. Discuss how Jesus' blood sacrifice is important to Christians.

3. Ready (Exodus 12:8-11)

Sign the verses. **Explain:** When God did the first miracle, changing the water to blood, the Israelites did not need to do anything. The same is true for the next eight miracles. The Israelites did not need to do anything. But for the tenth, they had to show their faith in God. The people were to dress and prepare to leave their homes quickly. **Ask:** Why did the Israelites have faith that God would do this miracle? (They saw what happened when God performed the other nine miracles. They saw God's power. They believed He could do what He said.) **Ask:** What have you seen God do that helps you have faith in Him? How do you know God can do what He says He will do?

4. Free (Exodus 12:12-13)

Sign the verses. **Ask:** How do these verses cause you to think of Jesus? Discuss how sad it must have been in **Egypt** on the night when all the first born males died. God knew how the people felt. He already had in His plan to sacrifice His only Son, Jesus, to cover the sins of His people. There was also much rejoicing that night because God saved His people.

IN MY CONTEXT

Explain: The Jewish people today still celebrate the Passover to remember how God brought them out of Egypt. Show the class the Seder plate. Explain what the different foods represent. **Ask:** What does our church do to remember what Jesus did for us? You can use the information from the Key Doctrine in the Personal Study Guide for discussion.

Close with prayer. Ask God to help us remember His actions and build our faith in Him.

VICTORY

God will always be victorious over His enemies and the enemies of His people.

EXODUS 14:13-28

MEMORY VERSE: Exodus 15:2

PLAN AHEAD

- Pray for group members. Pray they will trust God even when trouble comes.
- Ask _____ to study Exodus 13:17–14:12. They will summarize the information for the group. Be sure to include how God led the people with the pillar of cloud and pillar of fire.
- Make the lesson come alive! Practice signing the story in Exodus 14:13-28. Be prepared to sign it without looking at the text. Another option could be to ask some members to practice the parts of the story and allow each of them to tell a part of the story before discussion.
- Read these verses: John 16:33; James 1:2-3; 1 Corinthians 4:17-18; Romans 5:3; Romans 8:35-38; 2 Corinthians 12:10. They may be helpful to share in the discussion of In My Context. You may have verses to add to this list.

FOCUS ATTENTION

Ask the volunteer to summarize the background information for the group. The Israelites had seen God do so many miracles. **Ask:** Are you surprised that they began to complain? Why or why not?

EXPLORE THE TEXT

Sign the story from Exodus 14:13-28. **Ask:** What do you notice about God in the story? (He had a plan, He is all-powerful, He cares for His people, He wants obedience...) Discuss.

1. The Stage (Exodus 14:13-18)

Ask a member to sign this part of the story again (as much as they can remember). **Ask:** What did God (through Moses) tell the people to do? What did God want the Egyptians to know?

2. Act 1: The Separation (Exodus 14:19-20)

Ask another member to sign this part of the story. **Ask:** How did God protect His people during the night?

3. Act 2: The Crossing (Exodus 14:21-22)

Ask another member to sign this part of the story. Here we see how the Israelites obeyed God's commands. Moses obeyed by holding out the staff over the water. The Israelites obeyed by walking onto the land between the two walls of water. Because they obeyed, they experienced God's mighty work.

Ask members to share what they have experienced when they obeyed God. They could also share an experience someone else had or another Bible example.

4. Act 3: The Victory (Exodus 14:23-28)

Ask a member to sign this part of the story. **Explain:** From this time on, the Israelites did not need to worry about the Egyptians anymore. God destroyed them all. Ask the group to read Exodus 14:31 to see how the Israelites reacted to this great miracle.

IN MY CONTEXT

Some people are surprised that the Israelites complained and doubted God and Moses. They saw all the miracles and became free from slavery. Then when the Egyptian army chased them, they were afraid and angry. Does this seem familiar? Christians today sometimes expect everything to be easy. For some reason we don't expect to go through difficult times, or we wonder why we do. **Ask:** Why do you think God allows us to experience difficult times? What can we do when difficult times happen?

Close in prayer. Ask God to help us trust Him even in difficult times.

GOD GIVES US ALL WE NEED

God meets the needs for His people.

EXODUS 16:1-5,11-20

MEMORY VERSE: Exodus 16:12

PLAN AHEAD

- Pray for group members. Pray that they will be thankful for the way God meets the needs in their lives.
- Ask _____ to study Exodus 15:22-27 and be prepared to summarize the information for the group.
- Make the lesson come alive! Find an Old Testament map that shows the path of the Israelites from **Egypt** to the **Desert** of **Sin**.
- Ask some of the members to be ready to sign the sections of Scripture for the group.

FOCUS ATTENTION

Ask: Do you ever have questions about your future? Do you wonder if you can obey God or not? Do you want God's **blessings**? Do you wonder about your next meal? This lesson reminds us to trust God and obey Him. He will take care of our needs.

Ask the volunteer to summarize the information from Exodus 15:22-27. Show where the Israelites traveled on the map.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Questions about the Future (Exodus 16:1-3)

Remind the group that the Israelites had traveled for about a month at this time. It is also important to remember that they were a large group with over 600,000 men, plus women, children, and animals. Ask a volunteer to sign the verses.

Explain that the people were tired and hungry. Perhaps they were scared. They thought they might starve. **Ask:** How did they respond to this situation? Discuss.

2. Questions about Obedience (Exodus 16:4-5,11-12)

Ask a volunteer to sign the verses. **Ask:** How did God “test” the people? Discuss.

Ask the group to read Exodus 16:8 to see what God planned to provide. They would have meat in the evening and bread every morning. **Ask:** What did Moses mean when he said, “You are not grumbling against Aaron and me, because we are nothing; you are grumbling against the Lord”? What can we learn from this? How should we respond when God tests us?

3. Questions about God’s Blessings (Exodus 16:13-18)

Ask a volunteer to sign the verses. God provided as He promised. He also gave the people a job to do. **Ask:** What did they need to do? How often did they need to do it? Discuss the information from this section in the Personal Study Guide.

4. Questions about the Next Meal (Exodus 16:19-20)

Ask a volunteer to sign the verses. **Ask:** Why do you think God allowed the **manna** to spoil if the people left part of it? Discuss how obedience shows our trust in God.

IN MY CONTEXT

It is normal for us to recognize our needs. Unfortunately, it is also normal to complain. However, as Christians we can trust God to take care of us. How pleasing it would be to God for us to change our “normal” of complaining. Instead, when problems come, we can try asking God to take care of it (Philippians 4:6). We can trust that He has a plan (Proverbs 3:5-6). Or we can ask for His wisdom in the situation (James 1:2-5).

If there is time, members can discuss their answers to the questions from In My Context in the Personal Study Guide.

Close with a prayer. Thank God that He always has a plan to provide for His people.

GOD'S COMMANDS

God clearly tells His people how to live a life that is **holy**.

EXODUS 20:1-17

MEMORY VERSE: Exodus 20:3

PLAN AHEAD

- Pray for group members. Pray that they will respect God's laws.
- Prepare slips of paper with the following on them: #1 Exodus 20:3; #2 Exodus 20:4; #3 Exodus 20:7; #4 Exodus 20:8; #5 Exodus 20:12; #6 Exodus 20:13; #7 Exodus 20:14; #8 Exodus 20:15; #9 Exodus 20:16; #10 Exodus 20:17. You will use these for the activity below.
- Make the lesson come alive! Find a picture of the Ten Commandments to show the group. Also, find Mt. Sinai on the Old Testament map to show during the group meeting.
- Read Exodus 19. Prepare to summarize how the people were to get ready to meet with God.

FOCUS ATTENTION

Explain: God brought His people, the Israelites, out of **Egypt**. They lived in Egypt for 400 years. Perhaps they acted like the Egyptians. God wanted the Israelites to “look like” His people. They needed to be different from other people. God showed them His power and taught them to trust Him. In today's lesson He will teach the Israelites (and us) how to behave as His holy people.

First, the people needed to prepare to meet God. Summarize the information from Exodus 19 to introduce the lesson.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. The God of the Commandments (Exodus 20:1-2)

Show the group where Mt. Sinai is on the map. It took the Israelites about three months to arrive there from Egypt. Sign verses 1-2. At this time, God reminded the people that He is the Lord God. He had, and still has, the authority to give the law to His people. **Ask:** What does “authority” mean? God already proved His power to protect and lead His people. He had the right to expect them to obey and behave in the right way.

2. How to Relate to God (Exodus 20:3-11)

The first four commandments tell us how to keep a good **relationship** with God. When we obey these commandments, other people will recognize our love and respect for God. Use the information from the Personal Study Guide to discuss each of these commandments. **Ask:** How can Christians show the world their love and respect for God?

3. How to Relate to People (Exodus 20:12-17)

The last six commandments tell us how to have good relationships with other people. Again, use the information from the Personal Study Guide to discuss what each **commandment** means. Ask a volunteer to sign Matthew 22:37-40. Jesus emphasized that love for God and love for others are the most important commandments. **Ask:** How can just two laws summarize all the laws?

IN MY CONTEXT

Divide the members into three groups. Ask two groups to take three slips of paper that you have prepared and the third group will take four. Ask them to do a short skit to act out each of the commandments they drew. Give them a few minutes to prepare. Then let each small group do its skits while the others guess which commandment they are demonstrating. The skits may help each member remember the commandments better.

Close with prayer. Thank God for giving His people rules for right behavior to live a life that is holy.

EQUIPPED

God gives His people what is needed to do their work He directs them to do.

EXODUS 25:1-9; 31:1-6

MEMORY VERSE: Exodus 31:6

PLAN AHEAD

- Pray for group members. Pray that they will do the work God wants them to do.
- Before class, ask three members to be ready to answer when you ask the question about a dinner for the homeless. One will answer, "I can't go to the dinner, but I will give money to help buy the food." Another will answer, "I can do the shopping." The third will answer, "I can come cook the food."
- Make the lesson come alive! Find a picture of the **Tabernacle** to show to the group.

FOCUS ATTENTION

Ask: This week we will have a dinner for some homeless people. Can any of you help with that? (The three volunteers should answer here.)

Explain: Last week we learned about God's authority to set up laws for His people. As their king, God had the right to expect His people to obey. In today's lesson we will see that God also has the right to ask for offerings (gifts) from His people. Offerings can take different forms, like the three volunteers just showed.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. The Offering (Exodus 25:1-7)

Sign the verses for the group. The Israelites were slaves for a long time. Slaves normally do not have many nice things. **Ask:** How would the Israelites be able to give God these things? (If no one remembers, ask the group to read Exodus 12:35-36.)

Ask: When we give back to God, what does that communicate to Him? (We are thankful, we trust Him, we are willing to obey...) What should our **attitude** be? (2 Corinthians 9:7)

2. The Purpose (Exodus 25:8-9)

Why did God ask for this **offering**? Show the picture of the Tabernacle. God had a detailed plan. The people would take it with them as a reminder of his **presence**. **Ask:** Why do you think the people needed the Tabernacle? As Christians we have the Spirit of God living in us. This means He is always with us. When we are with other Christians or in our church, we may feel His presence in a stronger way. Being together can be our reminder that God is with us.

Ask: What kind of offerings does our church collect? (Building fund, missions offerings, etc.).

3. The Leaders (Exodus 31:1-6)

In the example at the beginning of class, there were three ways people were willing to serve: giving money, shopping, and cooking. An offering does not only mean money. God gives each person the ability to serve Him in some way. Our service is a gift to God also. **Ask:** What kinds of workers would be needed to build the Tabernacle? (People who could work with wood, with fabric, with metal...)

The title of today's lesson is "Equipped." **Ask:** What does that word mean? Ask the group to read Ephesians 2:10 and Ephesians 4:11-12. **Ask:** What kinds of talents or spiritual gifts does God give to His people. Why does He give us the talents or gifts?

IN MY CONTEXT

Sign Romans 12:1. **Ask:** How can Christians "**sacrifice**" their lives for God?

Close with prayer thanking God for equipping us to do His work and the ability to give Him offerings.

REBELLION

Worshipping anyone or anything other than the one true God is **rebellion** against Him.

EXODUS 32:1-6,11-14

MEMORY VERSE: Exodus 33:14

PLAN AHEAD

- Pray for group members. Pray that they will stay faithful and **worship** only God.
- Ask _____ to study Isaiah 44:16-18 and sign the verses for the group.
- Make the lesson come alive! Cut out pictures from magazines of things that take our attention away from God (cars, TV, food, people, etc.). Make a poster with the pictures.
- Practice signing the story of Exodus 32:1-14 or ask a volunteer to sign it during the session.

FOCUS ATTENTION

Write the word “Worship” on the board. **Ask:** What does this word mean to you? Some signs that might help define this idea are: pay attention to, spend time, think about, talk about, serve, cherish, love. Show the poster to the group. **Ask:** Which of these things do you like? Do we spend time with these things? Do we give too much attention to them? Is it wrong to enjoy those things?

Sign the story of Exodus 32:1-14.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Rebellion (Exodus 32:1-4)

Explain: This story is one that many people know. It is famous because the people rebelled in such a terrible way. God did so much for the people. And as we learned in last week’s lesson, the people were glad to give God offerings

to build the **Tabernacle**. It seemed things were going well. But when their leader, Moses, was not with them for 40 days, the people became restless. They decided to make some gods!

Ask the volunteer to sign Isaiah 44:16-18. Discuss how silly it is to “make” gods. How do people today “make” gods?

2. Turning to Idols (Exodus 32:5-6)

Sign this part of the story again (including verses 5-10). **Ask:** What did you notice about God in the story? (He knows what people do, He became angry when they worshiped the idol) Why was God angry? Do you think He was right to be angry?

3. Appeal for Grace (Exodus 32:11-14)

Sign this part of the story again. Ask: How did Moses try to convince God not to destroy the people? (He said other nations would say bad things about God, Moses said he was willing to give up his place with God to save the Israelites.) Moses loved people the same way God did. He was willing to die in their place. (See John 15:13.) Exodus 32:14 says, “God changed His mind...” We need to remember God does not change, His character stays the same. But He can change His mind about the actions He will take. In this situation God decided to show His grace to the Israelites again.

Discuss the information from the Key Doctrine in the Personal Study Guide. **Ask:** How can we make a plan to pray for others? Encourage members to pray for lost Deaf people.

IN MY CONTEXT

Ask the group to look at the poster again. **Ask:** Is it wrong to have these things or enjoy them? (Yes, if they take our attention away from God or if they lead us to **sin**.) How can we encourage each other to keep God in our minds? What can we do to **avoid** “worshiping” the idols of today’s world?

Close with prayer. Thank God for His grace and patience.

GOD'S PRESENCE

God enjoys living in **fellowship** with His people when they obey Him.

EXODUS 39:42-43; 40:1-4,34-38

MEMORY VERSE: Exodus 49:42

PLAN AHEAD

- Pray for group members. Pray that they will experience the **presence** of God.
- Ask _____ to study the Key Doctrine in the Personal Study Guide. They will summarize the information for the group session.
- Make the lesson come alive! Find a picture of the **Tabernacle** that shows the inside layout with the **Ark** of the **Covenant** and the **Holy** of Holies.

FOCUS ATTENTION

Exodus 33 tells about a “**Meeting tent**” Moses set up outside the camp. This was before the Tabernacle was ready. If the people needed to know something, Moses would go into the tent to talk with God about it. Exodus 33:11 says, “The Lord spoke to Moses face to face as a man speaks with his friend.” Moses had a special **relationship** with God. Perhaps today’s lesson will help us to understand the reason for this. Moses obeyed God. In Exodus 40 there are seven places where it says, “Moses did everything that the Lord commanded him” (Exodus 40:16,19,21,23,25,27,29).

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Tabernacle Finished (Exodus 39:42-43)

The people finished the work God told them to do. They brought everything to Moses. He checked it to be sure every part was correct. The people were faithful to give their gifts; they gave their time and talents. When Moses saw everything was right, he blessed the people. What does this mean? He communicated God’s pleasure with them. God was happy with what the

people did. **Ask:** How do you feel when you do a job well and do it right? Have you felt God's pleasure because of your actions? Explain.

2. A Place for Everything (Exodus 40:1-4)

God clearly explained where He wanted each part of the Tabernacle to go. He had a plan for each item. Show the picture of the Tabernacle. Point out the Holy of Holies and the Ark of the Covenant.

There may be some things you wish God would communicate clearly to you. Perhaps you have questions about your future. Remember, Moses did not know everything about the future. He did not know what the Israelites would face. But when God told him what to do, Moses obeyed. **Ask:** List some things you KNOW God wants Christians to do. (Write the list on the board or on a poster.) As we obey, we will learn more about what God wants us to do.

3. A Place for God (Exodus 40:34-35)

Sign these verses. Moses put everything in the Tabernacle as God told him. When the Tabernacle was ready, the cloud of God's presence covered it. His glory filled the Tabernacle.

4. God Leads (Exodus 40:36-38)

Sign these verses. This Scripture is a beautiful visual image. Imagine how all the people could look over to the Tabernacle and see the cloud. They waited on God to lead them. They needed to look every day so they could follow God when He decided to move.

Ask: How can we "look" to God every day? How can we know when He is ready for us to do something?

IN MY CONTEXT

The Holy Spirit lives in Christians. This means God's Spirit is always with us. Ask the volunteer to summarize the information from the Key Doctrine.

Ask: How does God speak to us? (He speaks to us through the Bible, prayer, and through other Christians.)

Close with prayer thanking God for living in us.

SPECIAL OFFERINGS

God is satisfied when His people are thankful and **worship** Him.

LEVITICUS 1:3-9; 2:1-3; 3:1-5

MEMORY VERSE: Leviticus 6:13

PLAN AHEAD

- Pray for group members. Pray that they will choose to give thanks to God.
- Ask three volunteers to sign the verses from the sections of the lesson. One member will sign Leviticus 1:3-9, the second will sign Leviticus 2:1-3, and the third will sign Leviticus 3:1-5.
- Review the testimony at the front of the book. Be ready to explain the plan of salvation to the group.

FOCUS ATTENTION

When people do something good or kind for another person, it is appropriate for that person to be thankful. They can show they are thankful in some way.

Ask: When your friends or coworkers do something nice for you, how do you show that you are thankful? Today we will discuss how God taught the Israelites to show their thankfulness to Him. He did so much for the people, so it was right for them to worship God and be thankful. Their acts of worship and thankfulness would lead them to understand future events as well.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. The Burnt Offering (Leviticus 1:3-9)

Ask the first volunteer to sign the verses. Use the information from the Personal Study Guide to explain more about this **offering**. Emphasize that the sacrifices reminded the people that asking for forgiveness should be a regular activity. All people must recognize the **sin** in their lives in order to know their need for salvation. **Ask:** How did the people know they had sin in their lives? (God gave them the law, the Ten Commandments, which taught

them right and wrong.) Sign Romans 12:1 and discuss what it means to be a living **sacrifice**.

2. The Grain Offering (Leviticus 2:1-3)

Ask the second volunteer to sign these verses. Use the information in the Personal Study Guide to explain more about this offering. **Ask:** What do Christians offer God today to show their thanks to Him?

3. The Fellowship Offering (Leviticus 3:1-5)

Ask the third volunteer to sign the verses. *Explain:* Once God forgives a person's sin, that person shows his or her thankfulness to Him. Then the person and God can enjoy a sweet **fellowship** together. This offering symbolized that fellowship. **Ask:** What does the idea, "fellowship," mean to you? How can we improve our fellowship with God and with each other?

It may be difficult for Christians to understand how killing and burning an animal could be an act of worship. However, animals were important to the people. Animals helped them to work and provided food. It was a true sacrifice for them to worship. **Ask:** What do we sacrifice in our worship today?

IN MY CONTEXT

The burnt offerings described in Leviticus gave an "aroma pleasing to God" (Leviticus 1:9,13,17). The offerings and worship were a hint of what would come when Jesus sacrificed His life once for all. Ephesians 5:2 says, "And walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." **Ask:** Why was there no more need for the animal sacrifices after Jesus died?

Close with prayer thanking God for the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus.

SEPARATED

God's people are to live a **holy** life, separated from the sinfulness of the world around them so they may serve Him.

LEVITICUS 9:15-24; 10:1-3

MEMORY VERSE: Leviticus 10:10

PLAN AHEAD

- Pray for group members. Pray that our **worship** is holy and acceptable to God.
- Ask _____ to practice signing the story in 1 Samuel 15:1-22. If you are not able to get a volunteer, practice signing the story yourself.
- Make the lesson come alive! Find a picture of a **sacrifice** to show to the group. There are some online that show the **Tabernacle** with the **altar**. This would help the members to visualize how a sacrifice may have looked.

FOCUS ATTENTION

In today's session we will see the contrast between an **offering** that pleases God and one that does not. Ask the group if they remember the story of Saul's disobedience in 1 Samuel 15. Ask the volunteer to sign the story. Point out 1 Samuel 15:22. Explain that we will see another example of God's requirement for obedience in today's Scripture.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Cleansed (Leviticus 9:15-21)

Show the picture of the Tabernacle with the altar. **Explain:** Aaron and his sons already offered the sacrifice to pay for their sins (9:1-14). Now it was time to offer the sacrifice for the sins of the people. Sign these verses (9:15-21). Ask the group to look at verses 16 and 21 again. **Ask:** What do you notice in these verses? Aaron and his sons performed the sacrifices as God commanded. They obeyed Him in their actions.

2. Blessing (Leviticus 9:22-24)

Sign Leviticus 9:22-24. Also sign Numbers 6:24-26. Explain that this may have been the blessing Aaron said to the people. **Ask:** How do you think God felt about the offerings? Why? Note that the people “shouted for joy” when they saw God accept the offerings. **Ask:** How do we feel when we give an offering that pleases God?

3. Holy (Leviticus 10:1-3)

Sign these verses. **Ask:** What do you notice about God from this story? Remind the group that the system of offering sacrifices was new. The people needed to understand the importance of this new way of worship. It was a serious process and God demanded the right **attitude**. It is interesting to note that the fire from God brought such joy when it burned the sacrifice. But when Aaron’s sons disobeyed God, His fire brought terrible punishment.

Remind the group about what happened to Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5. This happened at the beginning of the church age. Again, God started a new way of worship after the sacrifice of His Son. He wanted the people to see the importance of **holiness** in the church.

IN MY CONTEXT

Ask: What kinds of attitudes toward **sin** do we notice in the world today? We see people say, “God understands.” “I can’t help it.” “My sin isn’t as bad as others.” What is God’s attitude about sin? How can we please God with our worship?

The way we worship teaches others about God. People learn about God’s character as they watch us. It is important that we try our best to show others an accurate picture of who God is. If there is time, discuss the members’ answers to the questions from In My Context.

Close in prayer. Ask God to teach us more about worshiping Him in ways that please Him.

SET FREE

God promised a way for His people to be free from the **guilt** of **sin**.

LEVITICUS 16:3-10,29-30

MEMORY VERSE: Leviticus 16:30

PLAN AHEAD

- Pray for group members. Pray they will understand how Jesus' death on the cross covered and removed sin and guilt.
- Ask volunteers to be prepared to sign the following verses: Matthew 5:23-24; Psalm 119:11; Colossians 3:15-17; 1 John 1:9; Psalm 103:12.
- Review the information from In My Context. Be prepared to help any members who have questions about salvation.

FOCUS ATTENTION

Some people read the many rules in Leviticus 11–15 and think the rules are quite strange. It is difficult to imagine a world so different from ours today. We enjoy modern medicine, **clean** water flowing into our homes, and easy access to food. During Old Testament times God taught His people how to take care of their health with the rules in Leviticus. He was concerned with their physical health as well as their spiritual health. Choose a few of the rules to share with the group.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Preparing to Sacrifice (Leviticus 16:3-6)

Sign the verses for this section. **Explain:** Aaron needed to **sacrifice** a bull to pay for his sins (as we learned last week), so that he would be prepared to offer the sacrifices for the people. God had a specific way for Aaron to prepare.

Ask: How can Christians prepare our spirits for **worship** today?

Ask volunteers to sign the following verses: Matthew 5:23-24; Psalm 119:11; Colossians 3:15-17; 1 John 1:9. Discuss actions that will help us prepare for worship. (make peace with others; keep God's Word in our hearts; teach each other; confess our sins.)

2. The Chosen Goat (Leviticus 16:7-10)

Sign verses 16:7-10. Remind the members that the sacrifices were pictures of what would come in the future. The sin **offering** was a picture of Christ's death to cover and pay for our sins. However, one sacrifice could not show the whole picture. The second goat walking into the **desert** was a picture of Christ removing our sin and the guilt of our sin. The two actions together gave a more complete picture of Christ's work for us on the cross.

Ask a volunteer to sign Psalm 103:12. Remind them about the "No Fishing" story in the Personal Study Guide. **Ask:** What does it mean to have guilt removed? **Explain:** Jesus paid for our **sin**. God, the judge, now looks at us and says we are "not guilty."

3. The Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:29-30)

Sign verses 29-30. Use the information from this section in the Personal Study Guide to explain the Day of **Atonement** or the Day of Cleansing.

IN MY CONTEXT

Ask a volunteer to sign Matthew 27:50-51. **Ask:** When the veil tore, what did this mean for believers? We now have full access to God the Father through Jesus Christ. We do not need a high priest to offer a sacrifice for our sins each year. We can have a direct **relationship** with God each day. And every Sunday we celebrate Jesus' resurrection from the dead which made this possible.

Close with a prayer of thanksgiving for the wonderful gift of salvation.

GOD'S PROMISES

God promises to bless us when we are faithful to Him and to discipline us when we are not faithful.

LEVITICUS 26:3-16,40-45

MEMORY VERSE: Leviticus 26:45

PLAN AHEAD

- Pray for group members. Pray that they will learn to trust God's promises.
- Ask _____ to study the Key Doctrine (Grace) and summarize the information for the group.
- Make the lesson come alive! Ask a volunteer to prepare to sign the story of Gideon in Judges 7:1-11,19-22. This story helps explain the meaning of Leviticus 26:7-8.
- Take some time to think about who God is and what He does. Make a list of His characteristics that you can share during In My Context. Have a white board or some paper available so you can list things members share.

FOCUS ATTENTION

Explain: Moses wrote Exodus and Leviticus over 3,000 years ago. Some people may feel that these books do not apply to our lives today. However, in today's lesson we will see how God's character is the same today as it was in Moses' time.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Promises (Leviticus 26:3-13)

Sign these verses. Ask the group to list the things God said He would do for His people. **Ask:** What did God require from the people in order to receive His **blessings**? (Obedience) Ask the volunteer to sign the story of Gideon as an example of what is mentioned in verses 7-8.

Explain: God blesses New Testament Christians in the same way. Ask a volunteer to sign James 1:22-25 and another to sign Galatians 6:7-10. Discuss some of the ways God blesses His people; list on the board or on a poster. Be sure to focus on spiritual blessings such as peace, joy, victory over **sin**, opportunities to serve, and Christian brothers and sisters.

Ask the members to share Bible promises that are special to them. **Ask:** How does knowing these promises influence your life?

2. Warnings (Leviticus 26:14-16)

Sign these verses. **Explain:** God, as a good Father, must discipline His children. Ask a member to sign Hebrews 12:6-11. **Ask:** Why do we need God's discipline? (It helps us become **holy**, gives us peace, we start living right.) How does discipline show love? Do you think it is right and fair for God to discipline His people?

3. Repenting (Leviticus 26:40-45)

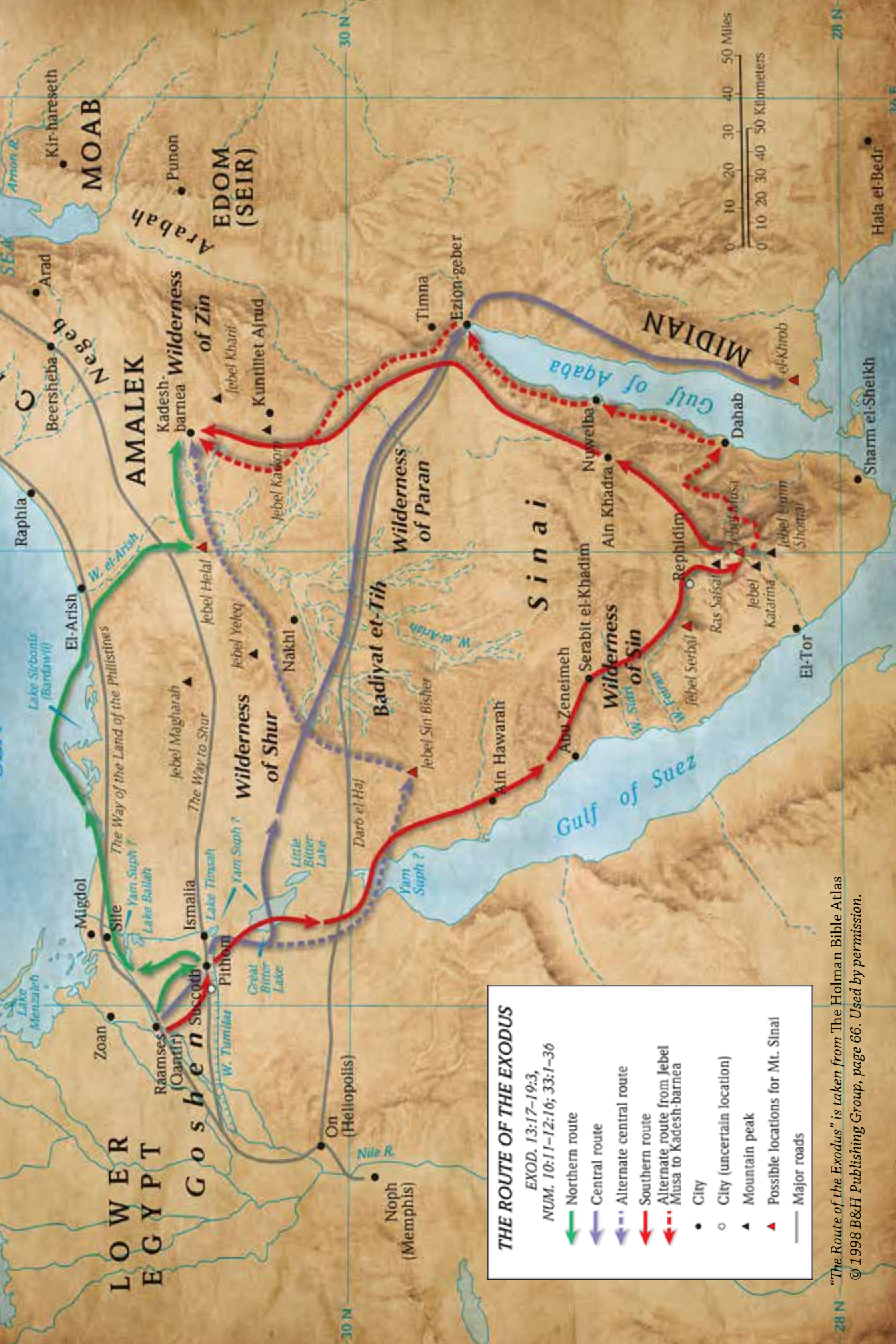
Sign these verses. **Explain:** God knew how His people would behave. He knew they would disobey Him. How did He know? He knows all things. He had a plan for bringing them back to **fellowship** with Him. They only needed to recognize their sin, confess it to Him, and repent. This is true for Christians today as well. Sign 1 John 1:9. **Ask:** What does *repent* mean? Explain that it does not mean to just say "sorry" and continue sinning. (See Romans 6:1-2.) Confession and repentance include agreeing with God. We recognize that He is right and we are wrong. We turn from sin and go to Him.

IN MY CONTEXT

As a review, ask the group to recall and summarize stories from the last twelve weeks. After each story is shared, **Ask:** What did you notice about God in this story? What are His characteristics? (List the characteristics as members name them.) We have seen God's holiness, patience, love, anger, and forgiveness. We know that God will do what He says. When He makes a promise, it will happen. He is involved with His people and He cares for them. **Ask:** Why do we need to know more about God? How can it help us?

Close with prayer thanking God for His promises.

PRAYER LIST



THE ROUTE OF THE EXODUS
EXOD. 13:17-19:3,
NUM. 10:11-12:16; 33:1-36

- Northern route
- Central route
- Alternate central route
- Southern route
- Alternate route from Jebel Musa to Kadesh-barnea
- City
- City (uncertain location)
- Mountain peak
- Possible locations for Mt. Sinai
- Major roads