THE STORY OF THE BIBLE

BOOK 1 **GROUP 1**

Series 701	*THE STORY OF THE BIBLE*
Group 1	**THE CONTENTS OF THE BIBLE**
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AUTHORS: MEREDITH R. CHILDRESS / RONALD B. ROARK

2016

BOOK 1
CONTAINS 48 LESSONS
GROUPS 1-4

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— The Bible Is the Word of God 1

The most important information about the Bible is that the Bible is the Word of God. The Bible is God's means for answering many important questions that are frequently asked: What am I? Who am I? Where did I come from? What is my purpose here on earth? Where am I going? What does the future hold for me? These questions are answered by one person — **God** — in one book — **the Bible**.

The reality is that no one can say absolutely that, ***In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth***, based on science which was developed by Mankind. No informed person has a conviction that Mankind knows all things — new information about the human body or disease or a cure for disease is announced nearly every day. A basic principle of science is that we are able to learn what is true or what is accepted as being true **through observation**. No one was present to witness Creation. Any conclusions about the origin of the physical universe based on scientific observations are only an interpretation of the available evidence. There is no scientific evidence that contradicts what the Bible says about Creation.

The reality is that no one can say absolutely that the Bible is the Word of God on the basis of scientific evidence. A discussion of some of the evidence that should be considered is presented in this lesson. God used men that He chose (called prophets and apostles) to write down the information that He wanted to be known and retained for Mankind to read and they were guided by the miraculous aid of the Holy Spirit.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God … 2 Tim 3:16-17 (also, 1 Cor 2:1-16)

… has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets. Eph 3:5

SOME OBSERVATIONS - There is a God. God created Mankind. Mankind was created in the image of God [God is Spirit; each person has a spirit which is like God's spirit, with intellect, wisdom, judgment, moral consciousness, etc.] God has revealed Himself and His will to Mankind and the Bible is that revelation. If God had given no revelation, Mankind could know that a supreme being existed (Rom 1), but could not know the person God or His will for Mankind without this revelation.

SOME EVIDENCES TO CONSIDER THAT THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD (page 3)

(1) **Unity** of the Bible – many writers over time, but agreement throughout the Bible

(2) **Fulfilled prophecy** – example: many prophecies of O.T. fulfilled in N.T.

(3) **Archeological evidence** – digs reveal accuracy of things written in the Bible.

(4) **Scientific accuracy** – scientific statements written in the Bible are accurate.

(5) **Pre-scientific knowledge** (6) **The style of writing** (7) **Moral standard**

(8) **Its Survival** over the centuries (9) **The Bible** is the work of **men** or of **God**

SOME EVIDENCES TO CONSIDER THAT THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD

(1) **Unity** of the Bible: Many writers over time, but agreement throughout the Bible.

The Bible is a compilation of **66 books** written by **40 different writers** over a period of **1600 years**. The writers lived in different regions, spoke several different languages and had different backgrounds (shepherds, kings, etc.); yet their writings share a common set of morals, principles and values, as well as a message with a common thread that ties all of the books together and shows that they had their origin from one common source.

(2) **Fulfilled prophecy**: Example is that many prophecies of O.T. fulfilled in N.T.

There are many prophecies of the Old Testament which were fulfilled in the Old Testament period. There are many others which were written hundreds of years before they were fulfilled in amazing detail, too numerous to name here. There are over 200 prophecies in the Old Testament that pertain to the person we know as the Christ which were fulfilled by **Jesus of Nazareth**. One chapter of prophecy is Isaiah 53, which Matthew shows was fulfilled by Jesus. Matthew 8:17; 27:12-14, 57-60.

(3) **Archeological evidence**: Digs reveal accuracy of things written in the Bible.

Many historical facts recorded in the Bible have been shown to be accurate. One example is **the walls of Jericho**, Garstang 1929-36. (See Joshua 5:13-6:27.)

(4) **Scientific accuracy**: Scientific statements written in the Bible are accurate.

Although the Bible is at least 1,900 years old, it contains no statements that are inaccurate with respect to geographical or historical facts or scientific information. [Most books of medicine, astronomy, geology, etc., are outdated within 50 years.]

(5) **Pre-scientific knowledge**: Scientific truths are stated in the Bible as facts hundreds of years before they were "discovered" by men of science. The suspension of the earth in space and the empty space in the north are mentioned in Job 26:7.

(6) **The style of writing**: The style of writing is unlike the writings of men. Brevity and calmness are utilized even when writing about some of the most amazing events. The creation of the world is recorded in 2 chapters. The flood that covered the earth was recorded in 3 chapters. The death of Christ was recorded in eight chapters. The writers were also impartial in what they said about people (some "heroes" had faults).

(7) **Moral standard**: The greatest moral standard it is possible to imagine was set forth in the Bible. It has purpose; it is reasonable; it is fair; it is sensible. Yet much of it was written in a culture of shameless immorality. It is the only moral standard that provides everything that human beings need, but protects all from harm.

(8) **Its Survival** over the centuries: Most books that do not work are cast aside. This book was written by unknown and often uneducated men. Their writings have been attacked by atheists and agnostics for centuries — **the Bible still stands!**

(9) **The Bible** is the work of **men** or of **God**: The only answer to this question for any reasonable person is that the Bible is the revelation of God for Mankind.

The Bible Is the Word of God

- Memory Verse – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Tim 3:16-17

MY CHALLENGE - is the same as the challenge of every human being:

1) Simple observation provides conclusive evidence that an intelligent power exists and controls the physical universe. I can know this and still be unable to know the person who is this intelligent power. I understand that we cannot come to know this intelligent power through human intuition or human wisdom. I can conclude that intelligence designed how things function in the universe and that these things function in a way that is beneficial to me (I have what I need to sustain my life). It is reasonable that such a power is the cause of my existence and would desire to communicate with its intelligent beings.
2) Since Mankind has the ability to communicate with words, and does so normally in his daily life, God chose this method to communicate with Man.
3) God did choose to use men to speak to whatever person or people He wanted to address, generally called prophets. He also used men to write down the information He wanted men to know and remember. [The Bible is the singular greatest book of history that exists.] These men were chosen by God. They were given the aid of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous way in what they spoke or in what they wrote. This aid guaranteed the accuracy of what was said or written — **it is the word of God.**

➢ ***I, Paul…how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery…which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets…*** Eph 3:1-7

➢ ***…every nation of men…so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us.*** Acts 17:22-31

4) The information given in this lesson is sufficient for reasonable people to accept the fact that **the Bible Is the Word of God**.
5) The facts stated in the Bible are accurate.
6) Every effort to discredit the Bible has failed.
7) Every person who believes and obeys the Bible is blessed by God in his life.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Ps 23:1-3

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 5 books of the Bible.

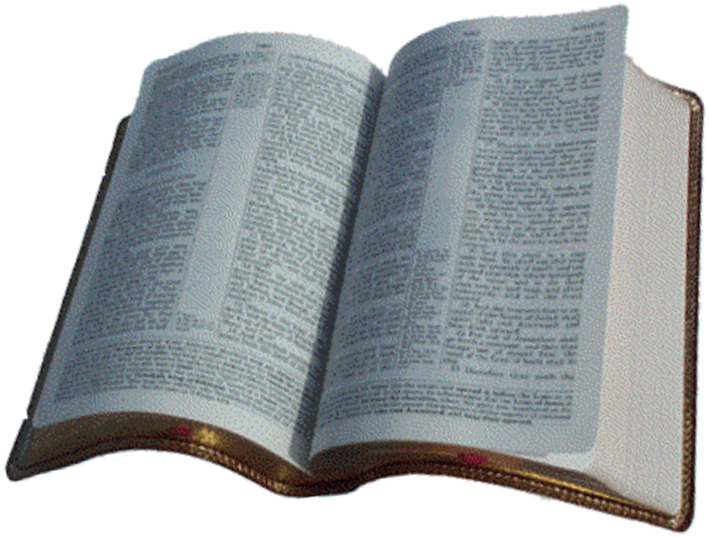
The Bible Is the Word of God

2 Timothy 3:16-17

> ***All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.***

Ephesians 3:3-5

> ***···how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:***



— The Books of the Bible 2

OLD TESTAMENT



5 BOOKS OF LAW

The first books of the Bible are called books of law. Genesis tells us about the Creation, the Flood, and God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob which includes God's institution of marriage and God's covenant with Mankind. Exodus tells of the bondage of Israel in Egypt and the deliverance God gave to them. The Law of Moses (given by God through Moses) is recorded in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

12 BOOKS OF HISTORY

The books of history tell of the conquest of Canaan and Israel's early history there. Samuel through Esther is about the priesthood and kings, 70 years of Captivity, the return, the restoration of Judah to their land and God.

5 BOOKS OF POETRY

The books of poetry present God's message primarily in poetic style. Much figurative language is used to express praise to God, some realities of life and living, the power and greatness of God and the Christ and His kingdom.

5 BOOKS OF PROPHECY - major

The books of prophecy are 17. The 5 "major" prophets tell us very much about how God feels and thinks about the nations of the earth and people of the earth. What is right and what is wrong is seen very clearly.

12 BOOKS OF PROPHECY - minor

The books of prophecy tell us about God's relationship with His people, the single most important concept in the Bible. They tell of the coming of a Savior and king through whom God would save and bless Mankind.

— The Books of the Bible

4 GOSPELS - The Life of Christ

The 4 gospels are the first books in the New Testament. Four different writers tell us the story of the Life of Christ on earth. All Old Testament prophecies of a Savior and king were fulfilled by Jesus. Jesus showed Himself to be the Son of God by the example of His sinless life, His teachings and His miracles. Jesus died on the cross as the sacrifice for our sins, He was buried, and He rose from the dead – He reigns today in heaven!

NEW TESTAMENT



1 BOOK OF HISTORY

One book of history tells of many beginnings: preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to every person – in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, all nations (Mk 16:15-16; Col 1:23). The dynamic effect of the saving gospel was seen everywhere.

14 BOOKS OF PAUL'S LETTERS

These letters were written to explain and clarify how to understand and apply the teachings of Jesus Christ. Problems of churches and individuals were discussed. Proper conduct for persons and churches is set forth.

7 BOOKS OF GENERAL LETTERS

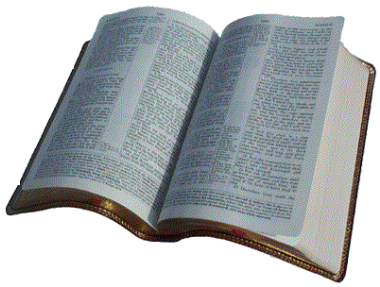
These letters were written to Christians and deal with the general needs everywhere. A call to serve the Lord and reject every false/sinful way is usually given (considering the blessings now and eternal life in the spiritual realm).

1 BOOK OF PROPHECY

The book of prophecy tells us of the relationship of Jesus with the churches. The rulership of Jesus is declared in a wonderful way. Jesus and the saved of all the earth will be victorious over Satan. Final judgment – life or death.

The Books of the Bible — OLD TESTAMENT 39 books

Genesis	Gen	Ecclesiastes	Eccl
Exodus	Ex	Song of Solomon	Song
Leviticus	Lev	Isaiah	Isa
Numbers	Num	Jeremiah	Jer
Deuteronomy	Deut	Lamentations	Lam
Joshua	Josh	Ezekiel	Ezek
Judges	Judg	Daniel	Dan
Ruth	Ruth	Hosea	Hos
1 Samuel	1 Sam	Joel	Joel
2 Samuel	2 Sam	Amos	Am
1 Kings	1 Kings	Obadiah	Ob
2 Kings	2 Kings	Jonah	Jon
1 Chronicles	1 Chr	Micah	Mic
2 Chronicles	2 Chr	Nahum	Nah
Ezra	Ezra	Habakkuk	Hab
Nehemiah	Neh	Zephaniah	Zeph
Esther	Esth	Haggai	Hag
Job	Job	Zechariah	Zech
Psalms	Ps	Malachi	Mal
Proverbs	Prov		



The Books of the Bible — NEW TESTAMENT 27 books

Matthew	Mt	1 Timothy	1 Tim
Mark	Mk	2 Timothy	2 Tim
Luke	Lk	Titus	Titus
John	Jn	Philemon	Philem
Acts	Acts	Hebrews	Heb
Romans	Rom	James	Jas
1 Corinthians	1 Cor	1 Peter	1 Pet
2 Corinthians	2 Cor	2 Peter	2 Pet
Galatians	Gal	1 John	1 Jn
Ephesians	Eph	2 John	2 Jn
Philippians	Phil	3 John	3 Jn
Colossians	Col	Jude	Jude
1 Thessalonians	1 Thess	Revelation	Rev
2 Thessalonians	2 Thess		

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 5 books of the Bible.

The Books of the Bible

66 Books in the Bible

39 in the Old Testament **27 in the New Testament**

40 Different Writers

From 3 different continents (Europe, Asia, Africa)

From different cultures (Egyptian, Hebrew, Babylonian…)

With different backgrounds (shepherd, king, tax-collector…)

During the existence of 6 major world empires

Written in 3 different languages: Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek

Written in a period which covered about 1600 years

Some books were a chronology, written to record the historical events.

Some books were prophecy, written to pronounce God's judgments on nations, kings, and individuals, and also to foretell events in the future.

Some books were law, written to tell what God required of men and the good consequence of obedience and the evil consequence of disobedience.

All of the books of the New Testament were written within a period of about 50 years, covering a period of time of about 100 years.

All of the writers were guided by the Holy Spirit in what they wrote. The Bible was verbally inspired. 1 Cor 2:1-16 **It is THE WORD OF GOD.**

With all of this variation, the Bible has only

ONE PRIMARY THEME

GOD'S AMAZING PLAN OF REDEMPTION

God tells us what happened and what we need to do to be saved from our sins so that we can have a close personal relationship with God while we live here on earth and also so that we can live with God eternally in heaven.

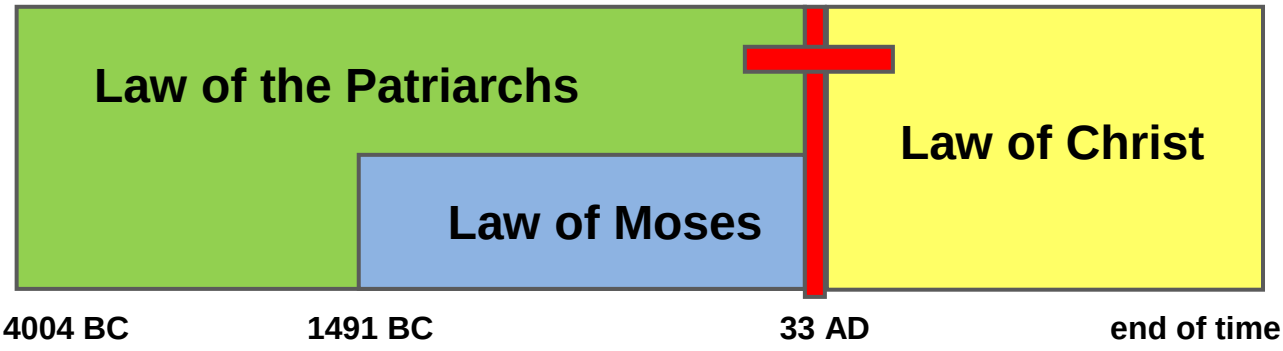
— Periods of the Laws of God in the Bible 3

In the world today, **every human being is under one law to God**. There are 3 periods of the laws of God described to us in the Bible. During the first period of law, God spoke directly to the head of the family. The head of the family had the responsibility to say what God said. All of the family respected God and the head of the family as the person through whom God was speaking. God gave His commands, expressed His approval or disapproval of what was happening, and received praise or worship from each person (sacrifices were usually offered by the head of the family). We do find some prophets and some priests during this period. This law was not a written law and so there is little detail of what God required. We do learn some very important commands and principles which apply to all human beings for as long as the earth shall stand. The law itself was **effective until Jesus died on the cross**.

The Law of Moses was given **to the nation of Israel** and was applicable only to them. Most people are familiar with the 10 commandments of this law. This law included instruction for the family, civil law and ceremonial law. Every aspect of a person's life was directed through this law. There was a requirement to love God and keep His commandments. God dealt with the people more as a group with respect to blessings and punishments. This law was **effective until Jesus died on the cross**.

The Law of Christ was given **to everyone in the world**. It replaced the previous laws and **became effective when Jesus died on the cross.** It was preached to every person under heaven (Col 1:23). The basis of this law is faith (faith in God, faith that Jesus Christ is the Son of God). Love of God, neighbor, fellow Christian and family is required. All preachers, teachers and writers of the New Testament (The Law of Christ) connected **love**, **faith** and **obedience**. If you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, you will obey Him. This law was completely revealed in the first century and will be **effective until the end of time** (when Christ returns and judges the world). This law is according to God's eternal purpose and reflects His grace, mercy and love which bring eternal salvation to everyone who believes and obeys it.

PERIODS OF THE LAWS OF GOD IN THE BIBLE



Periods of the Laws of God in the Bible

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***And as for Me, behold, I establish My covenant with you and your descendants after you.*** Gen 9:9

➢ ***And this is the law which Moses set before the children of Israel.*** Deut 4:44

➢ ***But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.*** Heb 8:6

LAW OF THE PATRIARCHS –

This law was not a written law. Some of the specifics of the law are stated as the story of the Bible is being told. God spoke to the Patriarch (father) of the family. Adam lived 950 years, during which time God would have spoken through him. Do not murder, offer animal sacrifices in worship to God, etc. are some examples. The long life of people meant that the story of Mankind and his relationship with God did not need very many people to cover 2,500 years of history—the story is accurate.

1. Name some of the laws which are stated in Genesis, chapter 9.
2. What punishment was established by God for murder?
3. What was the sign of the covenant of God with Mankind?

LAW OF MOSES –

This law was a written law. The specifics for observing the Passover were given to Israel just before they left Egypt. They crossed the Red Sea and came to Mount Sinai. This is where the Ten Commandments were given and many other provisions of the law. This law was given to Israel. It was a tutor to bring us to Christ.

4. The 10 commandments are the foundation of this law. Are they in effect today?
5. Ceremonial law - tabernacle, priesthood, sacrifices… Discuss the concept ***HOLY***.
6. Moral law – love your neighbor… What moral laws are in the 10 commandments?

LAW OF CHRIST –

This law was a written law. It was written by the apostles and prophets of Jesus Christ who were guided by the Holy Spirit in what they wrote. Jesus taught His apostles personally and told them to teach what He had taught them. He also sent the Holy Spirit so that their message in preaching and in writing was the word of God. This law was fully revealed in the first century and has not been changed. Every person will be judged by the words of Jesus (what is in The New Testament).

7. Who are the saved? By what are they saved? From what are they saved? For what?
8. Christ is the head of the church. Who sets the rules for the church to follow?
9. Who will be the judge in the final judgment? By what will everyone be judged?

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 5 books of the Bible.

— The Old Testament of the Bible 4

There are two primary components of the Bible —

The Old Testament **The New Testament**

The names of most of the books of the Bible come from the name of the author or the name of the person or church to whom the book was written. Some books were named for a primary purpose or idea within the book. The first book of the Old Testament is about **beginnings**, the meaning of the word ***Genesis***.

The order in which the books appear in the Old Testament is according to category and then chronology (law, history, etc.) So a book of history may mention a prophet and what he was doing at that time in history; but the book written by that prophet does not appear in the Bible until later. This is very important to understand. For example, David and Solomon are mentioned in Kings and Chronicles, but David's writings appear later in Psalms and Solomon's writings in Proverbs, etc.

➢ Below is a concise statement of the substance of each book of the Old Testament:

GENESIS 4004-1635 B.C. - Moses wrote this book of ***beginnings***: God's creation was the beginning of the physical universe, all life forms and Mankind. God set the order by which all things would function. A singular statement suggests the character and quality of God's creation: ***Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.*** (1:31) A singular concept commanded by God reflects the purpose in His creation — **L I F E !** ***Be fruitful and multiply…after its kind.*** This book tells us of the perfectness of God's creation and the perfect life which Adam and Eve lived in the garden of Eden. Then we read about the beginning of **sin**. Sin brings death, the opposite of God's purpose. Nearly everything that follows in the Bible is impacted by the sin of Adam and Eve. Much of the Story of the Bible is about God's relationship with Mankind; how that relationship is maintained and how it is broken; and how God worked through people on earth to bring about eternal salvation for every person who will believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and obey Him.

God's **institution of marriage** was important when it was established by God for all Mankind (when there was only one man and one woman), and Jesus said that the same principles apply today (during the New Testament period, Matt 19:3-9). The nature of the relationship between a man and his wife was also established by God.

EXODUS 1604-1490 B.C. - Moses wrote this book about God's people who lived in Egypt for 430 years. During this time period, Egypt was saved from a famine. Then Israel lived with respect; but over time, the people of Israel were enslaved. They cried to God who remembered **His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob**. He sent Moses to lead His people **out of** Egypt to a fruitful land called Canaan. After they left Egypt, God blessed them and gave them a law which was called **The Law of Moses**.

The Old Testament

LEVITICUS 1490-1490 B.C. - Moses tells us that God chose the tribe of Levi to care for spiritual needs and the teaching of His law to His people with the family of Aaron to serve as priests. God set in order the sacred things and the way things should be done with respect to the tabernacle, sacrifices, feasts and worship of God. God also set in order the proper conduct of people in their service to God and in their daily lives.

NUMBERS 1490-1451 B.C. - Moses mentions some historical events and gives many laws in the book of Numbers. God told Moses to take a census of the people. These numbers help us to understand the composition of the nation of Israel and the disposition God makes of the people in various jobs or occupations. Special information is given about the Levites and their duties as well as some of the spiritual duties. In Chapter 10, the people depart from Mount Sinai and march in the direction of the land of Canaan. The people complain about their circumstance. They refuse to go into the land that God promised to give to them. So God said that they would wander in the wilderness for 40 years. The story of Balaam and Barak tell us about God's attitude and provision for His people.

DEUTERONOMY 1451-1451 B.C. - Moses recounts the history of God and His relation-ship with the people of Israel to the present time. Moses restates the law and expresses the great importance of the law being taught and followed. Moses blesses the people before he dies. Joshua becomes the next God-appointed leader of Israel.

JOSHUA 1451-1443 B.C. - God promised the people of Israel to give them the land of Canaan. Joshua tells us in this book the story of the Conquest of Canaan with Joshua as the God-appointed leader of Israel. The land was taken with the help of God. Near the end of the book, Joshua called the people together, declaring that they must choose now whether they would serve the true God of heaven, **the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob**, or the false gods (idols) which they had learned about before entering Canaan. **Faith** in the true God and **serving Him faithfully** are emphasized.

The people said (24:15), ***We will serve the Lord!***

JUDGES 1443-1406 B.C. - God chose several judges as needed to lead and to judge His people according to the Law of Moses. In general, the people would serve the Lord; then they would begin to turn away from Him; God would send an enemy against them; they would cry to the Lord for help; the Lord would raise up a judge to deliver them for their enemy; this judge would be the leader for a period of time and the people would follow God; then the cycle would repeat. **Leaders** are very important, but **personal faith** and **obedience to God** always takes precedence when it comes to The Story of the Bible. A sad statement is made at the end of the book (21:25),

There was no king in the land,
and the people did what was right in their own eyes.

Faith – Commitment – Integrity – Righteousness

RUTH 1186-1085 B.C. - The wonderful character of **Ruth**, **Boaz** and **Naomi** are significant to this story. God was involved in choosing the person or persons through whom the Messiah would come. This is seen in the choosing of Jacob rather than Esau. God chose Ruth and Boaz to be in the lineage of the Messiah. This is the story of a woman who chose God and the people of God rather than her home country and her family. Her faith in God is a very important part of this story, as is the integrity, righteousness and strength of Boaz. Naomi is a woman of wisdom, courage, faith and strength in spite of difficult circumstances in her life.

1 SAMUEL	1171-1056 B.C.– Eli (Judge/High Priest) & Samuel (last Judge)–Saul first King until his death
2 SAMUEL	1055-1017 B.C.– David, King over Judah, then over all Israel until King David was old
1 KINGS	1015- 896 B.C.– David–Solomon–Rehoboam – 2 kingdoms: Judah (south) Israel (north) **KINGS – Judah**: Rehoboam until Jehoshaphat **Israel**: Jereboam until Ahaziah
2 KINGS	896-562 B.C. – **Judah**: Jehoram until Zedekiah **Israel**: Ahaziah until Hoshea **722 B.C. Israel ceased to exist as a nation 605 B.C. Judah taken away to Babylon**
1 CHRONICLES	4004-1015 B.C.–Genealogies (Adam to David)–King Saul until end of King David's reign
2 CHRONICLES	1015- 536 B.C. – Solomon–Rehoboam – 2 kingdoms: Judah (south) Israel (north) **KINGS – Judah**: Rehoboam until Zedekiah **Israel**: Jereboam until nation does not exist

1 SAMUEL 1171-1056 B.C. - This story begins with a woman named **Hannah** who had no children. She prayed earnestly to God for a child, promising that she would give him to God for His service if He would allow her to have a child. She conceived and had a son, whom she named **Samuel**. When he was old enough (about 8 years old) she presented the child to Eli, the High Priest, and told him what had happened. Samuel lived with Eli and learned about God, the Law of God, and the priestly service. Eli and his sons were not serving God acceptably. Samuel had some visions from God which told that Eli and his sons would be replaced. Samuel is a great hero of the Bible – he served God faithfully and led the people of Israel to serve the Lord. Following God's instructions, he anointed **Saul**, of the tribe of Benjamin, to be the first earthly king of Israel. The people rejected God as their king in order to have an earthly king. Saul served well for a time and then he rejected the authority of God. God chose **a man after God's own heart** (David, of the tribe of Judah) whom Samuel anointed to be king of Israel instead of Saul or his descendants. Knowing this, Saul tried for years to kill David, but without success. The great story of **David**, a young shepherd boy, killing Goliath, a war-hardened giant, with the help of God, is a story often used even today [the small or insignificant person facing the big or significant person and overcoming]. David was honorable in all of His activities and became the king of Israel after Saul was killed in battle. Saul reigned for 40 years.

The Lord has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be commander over His people… 13:14

2 SAMUEL 1055-1017 B.C.- David reigned as king over Israel. He fought many battles and killed many giants. He led the people to follow the true God of heaven. He was the standard by which other kings of Israel and Judah would be judged (by God). Under his leadership, Israel reached its greatest size in land area. He proposed to build a house for the Lord (a permanent house instead of the tabernacle). God agreed that a house might be built, but told David that he would not build it, because he was a man of blood. David began the work, preparing the stones for the walls and other things that would be needed. [His son would build the temple.] He reigned 40 years.

1 KINGS 1015- 896 B.C. - David suffered both insult and injury when his son Absalom sought to kill him and become king in his stead. Absalom was killed by accident, while trying to conquer David's army. Later, as David neared death, he chose his son **Solomon** to be king after his death. God appeared to Solomon and asked what he would like to receive from God. He asked for wisdom to be able to rule well. God said that, since he had asked for wisdom, God would give him wisdom and also great riches. Solomon was considered by most people of his day to be a very wise man and a great king. He sought to establish better methods for agriculture, horticulture and ways of raising and caring for animals.

Solomon built the temple for God at Jerusalem and presided over its dedication. **The Glory of the Lord entered the temple**, indicating God's presence. This temple became the focal point of the people of Israel and their worship of God. Over time, Solomon married 700 wives and 300 concubines and, eventually, his heart turned away from God. He built temples for some of his wives and their gods, which greatly displeased God. These actions of a king, a leader of the people, influenced many in Israel to worship idols, which compromised their faith and they became disobedient. In general, Solomon's reign was one of peace, prosperity and greatness from the viewpoint of the world, but a failure from the viewpoint of God. Solomon's writings (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon) are very helpful in understanding "life under the sun"—what is real in life, what is important and what is not, what works and what does not, what is right and what is not, understanding love that is real.

When Solomon died, his son Rehoboam became king. Based on bad advice, he decided to oppress the people—the 10 northern tribes rebelled and formed a new kingdom called **Israel** over which **Jereboam** ruled. The 2 southern tribes formed a kingdom called **Judah** over which **Rehoboam** ruled. This book gives the history alternately of Israel and Judah in chronological order as nearly as possible.

Jereboam caused **Israel** to sin by leading them to worship idols from which they never recovered. Jereboam is the standard by which most of the kings of Israel are measured with respect to their faith and obedience to God. No king of Israel led the people to obey the true God of heaven. Ahaziah is the last king of Israel in this book.

1 Kings continued **-** **Rehoboam** ruled over **Judah** for 17 years. Many people began to worship idols and act as though they had no king. There is nothing good mentioned about his reign. His son **Abijam** ruled for 3 years after him in the same way. Then **Asa** became king and ruled for 41 years—***Asa did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, as did his father David.***—We are able to see that **David** is the king by which the kings of Judah would be measured with respect to faith and obedience. Some kings were good and others bad. Jehoshaphat is the last king of Judah in this book.

2 KINGS 896-562 B.C. - This book begins where 1 Kings left off, with **Ahaziah**, king of **Israel**. We quickly see the prophet Elijah enter the picture to speak for God to pronounce a condemnation and a death sentence on Ahaziah.

In chapter 2, we see the story of **Elijah** being taken into heaven without dying a physical death. [**Enoch** was the only other person mentioned in the Bible for whom this was done by God.] Elijah is held up as a prophet to emulate. He risked his life to proclaim that the God of Israel is the only true God. Elisha takes his place.

There are several interesting stories in this book about God and His power and how that power was used for the benefit of man and also to punish the evildoer. But the primary story in this book continues to be the kings of Judah and Israel. **Ahab** had 70 sons who were killed as God had promised (Ahab's household would be cut off in Israel). **Jezebel**, Ahab's wife, also died a violent death. Assyria conquered more and more of the land that was a part of Israel and carried the people away. **Hoshea** was the last king. The kingdom of Israel ceased to exist as a nation.

Jehoash of **Judah** repaired the temple in Jerusalem. **Hezekiah** restored the things of God and led the people to follow the Law of Moses, have faith in God and obey Him. Judah prospered under his rule. They were also delivered by God from a great army of Sennacherib, king of Assyria. God caused 185,000 men of Assyria to die in one night. When Sennacherib returned to his home, his own relatives killed him. **Josiah** restored true worship to Judah. Because the kingdom of Judah persisted in the evil ways of idolatry, God sent Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, who eventually took captives away to Babylon where God said they would stay for 70 years. There were three occasions of taking away (B.C. 605, 597 and 586). The legitimate king of Judah was taken captive, blinded and taken to Babylon where he lived for 70 years. The kingdom of Judah continued to exist although it was not functioning as such. The temple at Jerusalem was destroyed.

1 CHRONICLES 4004-1015 B.C.- 1 and 2 Chronicles give us the same information about the kingdoms and kings of Judah and Israel that is recorded in 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings. There is also important information about genealogies from Adam to David and other tribes and families as well as other nations. Chronicles is an official record of the kings. There seems to be more emphasis on **Judah** in Chronicles.

2 CHRONICLES 1015-536 B.C. - God determined to show Israel the importance of following God according to His word. He caused the king of Babylon to come to Judah, conquer it and take away captives. God told the people through His prophets what was going to happen and that they should not resist because it was a work of the Lord. At first, a close relative of the legitimate king named Zedekiah reigned as a vassal king for a period of time until most of the people were taken away. Many years later, at the time spoken by God, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, the king of Persia, who made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, saying (36:23),

Thus says Cyrus king of Persia:

All the kingdoms of the earth the Lord God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah.

Who is among you of all His people?
May the Lord his God be with him, and let him go up.

God does not allow this book to end without telling about the restoration of the kingdom of Judah in their own country. Notice the manner in which God does this.

EZRA 536-515 B.C. - The people of Judah were in captivity in Babylon. During this time there were prophets of God who spoke to the people of Judah. There were some prophets who had a special advisory position with the king as wise men, such as Daniel. The main point is that God did not forsake them while they were in Babylon, but continued to bless them and remind them of who they were and that they would return to their homeland. When King Cyrus made the decree, **Zerubbabel** and **Jeshua** (the high priest) were leaders of the people. A primary command was the building of a house for the Lord—rebuild the temple. There was also a command to restore the worship of God according to His word (the Law of Moses).

About 50,000 people (volunteers) returned and made up the first group. There is a detailed list of who these people were. When they arrived in Jerusalem, they set up the altar and restored the daily sacrifices and the feasts commanded in the law. Then they began work on the temple. The foundation was completed. Then the commander of the region came and commanded them to stop the work. He wrote a letter to King Artaxerxes accusing the Jews of being a rebellious people. He said to stop the work.

Later, some of the Jews in Jerusalem resumed the work with the aid of God's prophets. The regional governor wrote to king Darius recounting the history of how the Jews came to be captives in Babylon and that Cyrus had commanded this work to be done. Darius said to do the work. The temple was completed in 516 B.C.

King Artaxerxes commissioned Ezra to go to Judah and evaluate the status. He was given far-reaching authority to see that the law of God and the law of the king were followed in Judah. Over 1700 people came with him, mostly priests.

Ezra continued -

For we were slaves. Yet our God did not forsake us in our bondage;
but He extended mercy to us in the sight of the kings of Persia,
to revive us, to repair the house of our God, to rebuild its ruins,
and to give us a wall in Judah and Jerusalem. 9:9

Then **Ezra** prayed to God and acknowledged the sins of Judah and pleaded for the people. Then he led the people to put away their foreign or pagan wives. They came to realize the importance of this. They agreed to do it and they did it.

NEHEMIAH **517-505 B.C.** - **Nehemiah** was a butler (or cup bearer) to king Artaxerxes. He inquired about the conditions and circumstances of the people who had returned to Judah and received a distressing report. He asked the king for permission to go to Judah and provide assistance. The king made him governor and gave him financial assistance and authority to complete the original mission, a primary part of which was to rebuild the walls of the city.

Nehemiah surveyed the situation without a lot of other people knowing what he was doing. When he saw what needed to be done, he made a plan. He called the leaders together and explained his plan. They agreed to do the work of rebuilding the walls. They worked with one hand and carried their weapon in the other hand—this expresses the fear of imminent enemy attack—because they were building the wall.

Their enemies laughed at them and made fun of them and said that they could not complete the work and if they did, a fox on the wall would cause it to fall. They tried many schemes to discredit Nehemiah. But Nehemiah prayed to God for help and told the people that God would fight for them. So they completed the work in 52 days ***for the people had a mind to work***. ***And all Israel were in their cities.***

Now all the people gathered together as one man in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate; and they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded Israel...
Then he read from it from morning until midday…
and the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law. 8:1-3

Nehemiah caused the people to keep the Sabbath Day holy. He removed all of the pagan things. He continually relied on God and sought assistance from Him that he might do the right thing and that God would support his actions so that they would not be in vain. The repetition of the list of people who returned from Babylon with **Zerubbabel** shows its importance. Nehemiah caused Jerusalem to be populated. He cleansed the temple of improper things and caused what should be there to be there. The priests, the scribes, the singers and the other Levites received what was appropriate according to the Law. Order was established for the priestly service.

ESTHER 568-556 B.C. - The people of Judah were in captivity in Babylon. There were prophets of God who spoke to the people of Judah and others who were part of the king's closest advisers, such as Daniel. God did not forsake them while they were in Babylon, but continued to be with them and bless them.

King **Ahasuerus** (Artaxerxes) had a wife named Vashti who was the queen. She refused to obey an order given by her husband, so he banished her. Later he chose another queen from many who competed for the honor. Esther was chosen and became his wife and the queen. Then a person who was close to the king made a decree in the king's name that on a certain day throughout the realm, anyone could attack and kill any Jew and take their possessions. This evil man was **Haman**, a descendant of king Agag (an Amalekite), who hated all Jews.

Esther was a Jew who was raised by her uncle **Mordecai**. Mordecai had helped her to become the queen. Now he approached her to say that being queen would not save her from being killed. He asked her to speak to the king in behalf of the Jews. She did so at the risk of her life. The evil intentions of Haman became known. The king said that the law could not be changed but that Mordecai could write a new law for the benefit of the Jews. Mordecai wrote that, on the day designated for the destruction of the Jews, the Jews could defend themselves.

Esther, an orphan who was a slave in a foreign land, became the queen of the realm. Mordecai, probably a porter at the palace, became the king's right hand man with great power. Haman, a man with evil intentions, was destroyed by his own hatred. Ahasuerus, the king, showed his wisdom in dealing with the circumstances. He was king for many years while the Jew were captives in Babylon. God cares for His people and is able to save.

JOB - Little will be said about this book because it is not a part of The Story of the Bible. It is a great story about a righteous man who had great faith in God, humility, patience in adversity, and perseverance in spite of everything. There is much said in this book about the realities of life and the realities of God. These truths are demonstrated in a wonderful way in the personal relationship which **Job** had with his God. This is a true source of faith for everyone.

PSALMS - Most of the psalms recorded were written by **David**, a king of Israel. We learn about the greatness of God and how to praise God. We also see the faith in God and trust that He could and would do what He said. David was righteous. David was a great leader. David was a great king. He was also a prophet of God who said many things about the Messiah who was promised to come to deliver God's people.

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners…But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night…For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish. 1:1-6

The Old Testament

PROVERBS - Proverbs are "wise sayings" or sayings that are generally true. These sayings were written by **Solomon**, a king of Israel. He is considered to be the wisest man who ever lived. These sayings were also inspired by the Holy Spirit. So then the words of this book should not be treated lightly.

ECCLESIASTES - This book was also written by **Solomon**. It is reflective of the experiences of his life. He purposely followed many paths to achieve success or happiness or fulfillment. Most of these paths he said were vanity (empty, a waste of time, with little or no meaning). After writing about many things, he concludes with these words of wisdom about life under the sun,

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:
Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all.
For God will bring every work into judgment,
including every secret thing, whether good or evil. 12:13-14

SONG OF SOLOMON - This book was also written by **Solomon**. It is the story of true love of a man for a woman in the form of a song or allegory. Many believe that this is figurative language which expresses the true love that Jesus Christ would have for His church (Eph 5:22-33).

ISAIAH - JEREMIAH - LAMENTATIONS - EZEKIEL - DANIEL - These five books were written by prophets of God. They are generally called the Major Prophets because they wrote more words than the Minor Prophets.

A prophet of God is a person whom God chose and to whom He gave the gift of prophesying. This was a miraculous gift which allowed the Holy Spirit to give the prophet what he should say or what he should write. What these prophets wrote was God's message. Most of the literary prophets wrote about God's judgments against certain kings or certain nations or certain people which would be fulfilled in the future. They also wrote about the need to repent and come back to God and the way of God. Many wrote about the blessings of believing in God and obeying God. All of the prophets wrote about the coming of the **MESSIAH** and the **SALVATION OF GOD** which He would make available for all Mankind. (Acts 3:22-26)

HOSEA - JOEL - AMOS - OBADIAH - JONAH - MICAH - NAHUM - HABAKKUK - ZEPHANIAH - HAGGAI - ZECHARIAH - MALACHI - These 12 books were written by prophets of God. They are generally called the Minor Prophets because they wrote fewer words than the Major Prophets. In general, there were condemnations of certain kings, nations or people. There was a foretelling of the restoration of Israel to Judah and a message of **HOPE** and **SALVATION** to come.

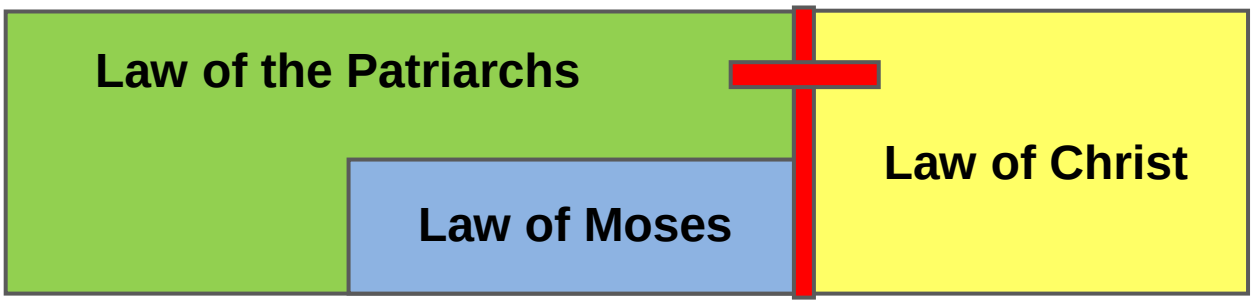
THE PERIOD OF SILENCE – God did not speak to Mankind for a period of 400 years by means of prophets who wrote down a message from God for Mankind from the last book of the Old Testament (Malachi) until the Christ (Messiah) was born.

Why did God have different ways of dealing with people during history?

Why were there different periods of law?

When Christ died on the cross, every previous system of law given by God was no longer effective as law. Why?

PERIODS OF THE LAWS OF GOD IN THE BIBLE



We may not know WHY, but God tells us WHAT.

1. **God has given a New Covenant or NEW TESTAMENT (Matthew through Revelation). This is our law which was given to us by God. It is also properly called the Law of Christ since this law was given through Him and He is the mediator of it. This is the Law of God that every person on earth is obligated to follow.**
   Heb 8:6-13

2. **Jesus said that He is the Judge who will judge everyone.**
   2 Cor 5:10; Mt 25:31-46

3. **Jesus said that the Words that He has spoken will judge everyone on the Day of Judgment.**
   Jn 12:48; Acts 3:22

4. **God has appointed the Day and the Judge. He has appointed the Law by which we will all be judged.**
   Acts 17:30-31; Rev 20:11-15

God defines what is right and what is wrong in the New Testament. God tells us how we should conduct ourselves while we live here on the earth. May God help us to understand His will for us.

— The New Testament of the Bible 5

There are two primary components of the Bible —

The Old Testament **The New Testament**

The New Testament is the covenant which God made with Mankind by Jesus Christ which Jesus sealed (validated) with His own blood. It is the testament or covenant that everyone in the world is obligated to obey. The Law of Moses is referred to by the expression "old covenant" by New Testament writers.

The names of most of the books come from the name of the author or the name of the person or church to which the book was written. The order in which the books appear in the Bible is according to category (gospels, history, etc.) So the book of history may mention an apostle or a prophet whose writings appear in the Bible later.

- Below is a concise statement of the substance of each book of the New Testament:

MATTHEW - An apostle of Jesus Christ wrote this book in the Aramaic language to record The Life of Christ from the perspective of the Jewish way of thinking. The coming king and kingdom is a dominant message. The birth, life, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus are recorded. Some of the teachings and miracles of Jesus are given. His miracles proved that He was the Son of God. His teachings discussed attitudes, faith, sin, righteousness and salvation. What He taught looked forward to the coming kingdom which was established by Him — **the spiritual kingdom** about which Daniel prophesied (Daniel, chapter 2). Every Christian is now in this kingdom over which Christ now reigns from heaven. Jesus restated God's **institution of marriage** for all Mankind (Matt 19:3-9); the same principles apply today.

MARK - A prophet of Jesus Christ wrote this book in the common Greek language (the universal language) to record The Life of Christ from the perspective of the Roman way of thinking. It closes with the command to preach the gospel to every person on the earth, which was accomplished in about 30 years. Jesus said that this message must be believed and obeyed for a person to be saved,

He who believes and is baptized will be saved.

LUKE - A prophet of Jesus Christ wrote this book in the literary Greek language to record The Life of Christ from the perspective of the Greek way of thinking. These 3 gospels are called the synoptic gospels because much of what is recorded by Matthew is also recorded in Mark and Luke.

JOHN - An apostle of Jesus Christ wrote this book in the common Greek language to record The Life of Christ from the perspective of God's way of thinking. Most of what John wrote occurred in the last 6 months of the life of Jesus. Only a few of the **miracles** of Jesus are recorded, but in detail, and each has great significance.

The New Testament

ACTS - This book was written by Luke, a prophet of Jesus. He was a physician who accompanied the apostle Paul on his missionary journeys. It is a book of history (covers about 30 years) which relates the ascension of Jesus to heaven, the preaching of the gospel of salvation, the beginning of the church, and the growth and development of the church throughout the world.

ROMANS - This book was written by Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, who was the last apostle to be chosen by Jesus. Although he was important to the Jews who were Christians, his main function was to be a light to the Gentiles. He served as a catalyst to bring all Christians together, both Jew and Gentile. This book focuses on the gospel of Jesus Christ—its power, its preaching and the results of it being preached. There is a wonderful explanation of the process by which a person is saved. There are many explanations of various aspects of the gospel. There are comparisons made of the New Testament to the Old Testament.

1 CORINTHIANS - Paul wrote this letter. He was in Corinth when this church began. It is apparent that Corinth had a special place in his heart. He addresses them as: ***The church of God which is at Corinth.***

These Christians had believed, were baptized into Christ, and were saved. Paul says that they had a great desire to do what was right, but they had some problems which Paul addressed. [Remember that most of them had been idolaters just a short time before. Most of them did not previously have a covenant relationship with God as did the Jews (the Gentiles were under God's law to the Patriarchs).] The Corinthians had been involved in sexual activity in the worship of their false gods before becoming Christians and were immature in their service to God. Paul dealt with many important topics in this letter, including sexual immorality, marriage, authority, the church, love, the resurrection of the dead, and our victory in Christ. A closing exhortation:

Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong.
Let all that you do be done with love. 16:13-14

2 CORINTHIANS - Paul continues in this letter what he began in the first. He makes it clear that they had done what he asked them to do in the first letter, for which he commends them. He talks about the triumph that Christians have in Christ. He discusses the glory of the New Covenant by comparison to the Old. He gives us an assurance of the resurrection of the dead and then makes a very sobering statement:

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ,
that each one may receive the things done in the body,
according to what he has done, whether good or bad. 5:10

Paul discusses the spiritual warfare which is taking place in which all Christians have a part. Paul had great love and concern for the church at Corinth. He wrote to them the message for God which they needed to follow to be saved eternally.

GALATIANS - The gospel of Jesus Christ is the primary topic of this letter. **There is only one gospel.** That gospel was revealed by Jesus Christ through His apostles and prophets who were guided miraculously by the Holy Spirit to write what they wrote (Eph 3:1-7). Paul said that he had preached the gospel to the people in Galatia; they had believed it, obeyed it, and were saved by it. Then some people began to teach some things in a different way and perverted the gospel of Christ. He warned that anyone who taught a different gospel than the gospel of Jesus Christ would be cursed. The gospel is a blessing. A perverted gospel is a curse. A primary purpose of the Law of Moses was to bring us to Christ so that we could be justified by faith.

EPHESIANS - In this letter to the Ephesians, Paul describes some of **the spiritual blessings that we have in Christ**. He describes the spiritual condition of the Ephesians before they became Christians: they were sinners—without God, without hope. But now, in Christ, they were saved, they were citizens in the kingdom, they were the people of God. He tells us that we are saved by grace through faith, which was made possible by the blood of Jesus Christ. He says that each person is **a new person** when he becomes a Christian. He describes the manner of life that we should follow—what to do—what not to do. A Christian should wear ***the armor of God***.

PHILIPPIANS - Paul describes some of his circumstances as he writes this letter to the church at Philippi. He indicates that he is glad to suffer shame and imprisonment for the sake of the gospel of Christ—the gospel must be preached—it is the power of God to salvation. Paul gives the example of Jesus and tells us to think like Christ:

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ. 2:5

He tells us that we should press toward ***the goal***—***heaven***—run the race of life keeping the goal in mind. Paul thanks them for their care and concern for him and the assistance which they had sent to him for his work in preaching the gospel.

COLOSSIANS - **The preeminence of Jesus Christ** is the primary topic of the book of Colossians. He is the origin of every created thing and all things are held together by His word. Of great significance to us is that this person with all power is our Lord and our Savior and our friend. He has made possible **salvation** and every truly great blessing that we have. And he has made possible eternal life in heaven—the hope of every Christian. Christ has delivered us from the power of Satan and translated into His kingdom—we have **redemption** and **forgiveness** through **His blood**. We should give our all for Christ. He also discusses several important relationships and how they should work.

For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth,
visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers.
All things were created though Him and for Him.
And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. 1:16-17

1 THESSALONIANS - Paul was with this church only a short time from its beginning, but he writes a remarkable commendation, he remembers their…

WORK OF FAITH — LABOR OF LOVE — PATIENCE OF HOPE

…you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe.

— For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth.

— Your faith toward God has gone out.

— You turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.

— And to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

Paul writes many things about the proper conduct of a Christian in order to please God. He also speaks of Christ's return at the final day to bring His saints to heaven.

2 THESSALONIANS - Paul speaks first about the certainty of God's judgment of every person and the certainty of condemnation and punishment for the ungodly. He tells of ***the lawless one*** who would come before Christ's return. While this is likely referring to a particular person who claims the powers or rights of God, there are many people through history who fit the description of one who usurps the power of God [they make the spiritual rules for people to follow as though they are God]. Paul then discusses some Christians who are walking disorderly who must be disciplined.

1 TIMOTHY - This letter was written to an evangelist who had been a companion of Paul as he traveled to preach the gospel. We read about Timothy in several places in the Bible. He is pictured as an effective preacher of the gospel, a person with a good spiritual background, a person of integrity and commitment. Paul writes to tell Timothy how he should conduct his personal life, how he should view his work, some responsibilities he had in the work, and some things he should preach in the church. He gives some qualities that a man should have if he would serve as an **elder** (bishop, presbyter or pastor) in the Lord's church. He also gives qualifications for a man who would serve as a **deacon** (servant of the church).

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life…

2 TIMOTHY - This letter was also written by Paul to Timothy. Stand for the truth of the gospel. Stand against false teachers. He warns that some will fall away from the faith. He charges Timothy to ***Preach the word!*** Be ready to preach the gospel at any time to anyone as may be needed. He also gives the source of all scripture:

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine,
for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,
that the man of God may be complete,
thoroughly equipped for every good work. 3:16-17

TITUS - Titus was also an evangelist to whom Paul wrote to give instructions for him personally and for the church. He tells him about the qualifications for a man to serve as an **elder** in the Lord's church. He says that the mouths of certain people must be stopped. He tells Titus to ***speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine…***

Paul gives a wonderful summary of some realities of the gospel of Jesus Christ,

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,
teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts,
we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,
looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and
Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us,
that he might redeem us from every lawless deed
and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.
2:11-14

PHILEMON - Paul writes to a Christian named Philemon about several spiritual things as a brother in Christ. He gives direct instructions about the manner in which he should treat a slave who was also a Christian and had been helpful to Paul. Paul had confidence that Philemon would do as he had instructed.

HEBREWS - This letter was written to Jews (Hebrews) who had become Christians. It is full of comparisons of things in God's law to Israel (the Law of Moses, called the First Covenant) and the Gospel of Jesus Christ which is God's law for everyone in the world (called the Second Covenant). It really describes **the superiority of Jesus Christ** and everything that came by Him which is a part of the New Testament (Covenant) that was sealed or made effective by **the blood of Jesus**. The greatness of Jesus and the greatness of the promises of the New Covenant are discussed. The specific aspect of this covenant which is awesome on God's behalf is said to be,

For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness,
and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.

Our God is wonderful. He is full of grace and mercy and love which He has abundantly bestowed on those who believe and obey Him. When we do believe and obey Him by being baptized into Christ, we enter into this covenant relationship with God and Christ and the Holy Spirit. A new and living way came by Jesus Christ which is a part of this covenant relationship in the New Covenant:

Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus,
by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is,
His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with
a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil
conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the
confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.

JAMES - This letter describes practical Christianity. It tells us the kinds of things that will happen to a person in daily life and how he should respond. Concepts of faith, avoiding temptation and sin, concern and care for those who need assistance, and other things about which Christians should make appropriate judgments. The tongue can be used for good or evil; it is difficult to control; use your tongue for good and not for evil. We often bring trouble on ourselves—we love the world and the things in the world so we try to have things that are not good for us or we try to do things that are wrong—friendship with the world makes a person an enemy of God.

Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

He condemns some rich people for cheating poor people—do not pay what was earned. Christians should try to lead sinners to repentance and righteousness. The need for prayer in our daily lives and the power of prayer is discussed:

The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

1 PETER - The apostle Peter writes to Christians who are in various cities. Hope:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

He then talks about the trial of our faith and its benefits. We need to focus our thoughts and try to be holy because God is holy. We have been redeemed with the precious blood of Christ and our souls have been purified in obeying the truth through the Spirit. Christians are the chosen people of God**.**

Peter gives many suggestions for obeying the Lord in our daily lives. What God asks of us is reasonable and practical. It is also the best way of life for every human being. He explains many aspects of the spiritual blessings that we have in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. We should be willing to do whatever is necessary to be true and faithful to our God—He has done so much for us!

God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

2 PETER - This letter is remarkable in its content and meaning. The beauty of the revelation of God and its meaning to Christians is amazing. A wonderful list of things that we should add to our faith is given with the end result—eternal life in heaven. Peter declares that he was an eyewitness of Jesus Christ and His majesty. He then describes some false teachers and the destructiveness of error. He describes the end of all physical things. He concludes with an exhortation that we should be faithful.

1 JOHN - John writes about some important spiritual truths in an absolute sense to tell us that he was an eyewitness and what he declares to be true is true. He first gives us some insight into the **HOLINESS** of God. We must walk in the light, the revelation of God. If we do so, God will wash away our sins in the blood of Christ and we can have fellowship with God and with other Christians. As Christians, if we confess our sins, God will forgive us. We should not love the world nor the things in the world. We should love God and the people of God and the way of God. God and Christ demonstrated what true love is. John gives us an assurance of our faith in Christ,

These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God,
that you may know that you have eternal life,
and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.

John gives us an assurance that the prayers of a Christian will be heard and answered. But we should pray in an appropriate manner and for the right reasons. The God of all love and mercy has given us an honor that we do not deserve,

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should
be called children of God! … Beloved, now we are children of God…
And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

2 JOHN - John writes to commend some who were ***walking in the truth***. He recalls the commandment of love and applies it by saying that we show God that we love Him by keeping His commandments.

John warns that many deceivers have gone out into the world. He says that a person who does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is a deceiver and an antichrist. Then he adds that we should be careful not to be deceived, nor should we aid those who are deceivers; we should aid those who teach the truth.

This is love, that we walk according to His commandments.

3 JOHN - John writes to Gaius, a faithful Christian, to commend him,

…you do faithfully whatever you do for the brethren and for strangers…

A man who wants to have preeminence in the church often opposes those who are doing what is right. Diotrephes was a man who loved to have the preeminence. He opposed those who were doing right, even the apostle John.

John praises Demetrius who had a good testimony from all.

JUDE - Jude writes to tell Christians to ***earnestly contend for the faith***—the context shows that this was urgent. **THE FAITH** had previously been revealed to the saints (Christians). Contend for it means to fight for the gospel—stand up for what God has revealed. You cannot allow false teachers to destroy the truth or the peace and love that exists among Christians. Important Principle: **Hate the sin but love the sinner.** Remember that Enoch (the seventh from Adam) knew about judgment to come. This is not a recent revelation of God. This was known at least as far back as Enoch.

The New Testament

REVELATION - This book is a summary of all that is in the New Testament. It begins by saying that this is ***the revelation of Jesus Christ***. It was written by the apostle John to the seven churches of Asia—Christians. The writing uses many symbols of the Old Testament, but with a slightly different meaning. There is little in this book that had not been revealed in previous writings; but it gives a complete picture of all that God had in mind for Mankind. There is a wonderful description of what Jesus did for us to secure our salvation,

To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,
and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father…

Then the person of the Son of God is described in figurative language. His constant concern for the churches is made very clear. He loves us and gave Himself for us.

Jesus Himself addresses the seven churches. Jesus had established His church over 60 years before this book was written (Acts 2:47). The gospel of Jesus Christ had been preached to every person on earth about 30 years previously (Col 1:23). So these churches had been in existence for a number of years. These 7 churches exemplify all churches of all ages. Any church will possess a few or many of the characteristics that are mentioned. We can learn what Jesus approves in a local church and what He does not approve. It is our obligation to try to please Him. Jesus also promises spiritual blessings, eternal in their scope, ***to him who overcomes***.

There is a beautiful picture of heaven and the throne of God and the constant activity there. All life and every authority on earth are governed from this throne. **The coronation of Jesus** as king and His worthiness are shown (see Matt 28:18).

What follows is a series of events described in figurative language about

- **the opening of the seals**
- **the sounding of the trumpets**
- **the pouring out of the bowls of the wrath of God**

Jesus Christ has all power and all authority and He rules as king over all things. As these events are described, we are able to see the universal application of the stated principles. The people on the earth will be punished because of sin. The people on earth will be punished because they do not believe in God and because they do not believe God. They will be punished because they are on the side of Satan and his army and they are not qualified to be on the side of Jesus and His army:

These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for
He is Lord of lords and King of kings,
and those with Him are called, chosen and faithful.

REVELATION (continued) - The message of this book is that those who love God and truth and righteousness will be able to overcome and will be with Christ when the final battle is fought. And with no regard for any apparent factors that may exist,

JESUS CHRIST WILL BE VICTORIOUS WITH ALL FAITHFUL CHRISTIANS!

This one tremendous assurance should be enough for every person—believe and obey God and you are going to win the victory—you are going to live in heaven forever and ever with God and Christ and the Holy Spirit and the holy angels and all the saved who have ever lived on the earth.

Then comes **the final judgment** of Mankind. Every person will hear Jesus say,

"Come, you blessed of My Father,
inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

OR

"Depart from Me, you cursed,
into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

These are the only 2 pronouncements—one says that you are going to **heaven** where you will spend eternity—the other says that you are going to **hell** where you will spend eternity. These are the only 2 options available. It is the judgment of everyone based on personal action that is based on personal faith and personal obedience.

Some things are mentioned about hell and those who will be there. Some things are mentioned about heaven and those who will be there. There is a curse against anyone who adds to this book or takes anything away from this book. Then there is the wonderful invitation of the Lord to drink freely of ***the water of life***. The Lord has done everything necessary for you to be saved, both now and for eternity. But He has left the choice in your hands—you do not have to do anything to go to hell—you must believe and obey God to go to heaven. The question is, what choice will you make? The consequence of your choice has already been set and you cannot change it; but you can choose to believe and obey God, beginning now. Will you?

In the middle of the book is a picture of Satan being expelled from heaven because the blood of Jesus now cleanses people of sin—God will no longer listen to the continual accusations of Satan. Christians are now able to overcome Satan by ***the blood of the Lamb***, by ***the word of their testimony*** and their faith in the reality of God and His salvation was so strong that ***they did not love their lives to the death***.

This book sums up what the Bible is all about. It sums up what God and Christ and the Holy Spirit have made available for us through Jesus Christ. It sums up your personal responsibility to live as God wants you to live. It tells you what will happen at the final judgment of Mankind; and it tells about the eternal destiny of every person who has ever lived on the earth. God has done His part. Will you do yours?

The Story of the Bible is complete. The story of your life is still being written.

Revelation 22:14-19

14 Blessed *are* those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. **15** But outside *are* dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie. **16** I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.

And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

A Warning

18 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; **19** and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.

Day by day, each of us moves closer to eternity.

WHERE WILL YOU SPEND ETERNITY?

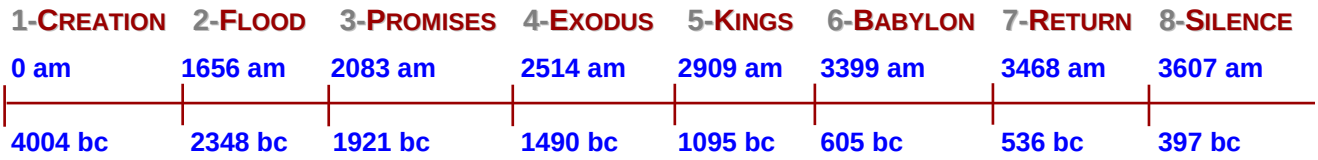
Please consider carefully the information about the New Testament.

— The Timeline of the Bible 6

T I M E L I N E has reference to when events of the Bible took place, which is a tool to help us to understand the context and substance of a statement in the Bible.

T I M E L I N E of Some Important Events — Old Testament Period

am = in the year of the world bc = years before Christ



1-CREATION of the physical universe, all life forms and Mankind **4004 bc**

- **ADAM** and **EVE** were created. Eve ***was the mother of all living*** (human beings). Gen 3:20
- **SIN** entered the world through Adam and Eve; a promise was given that **SOMEONE** would crush Satan.
- Cain and Abel are born to Adam and Eve. Abel is killed; Cain loses God's favor. Seth is born to Adam and Eve. His son Enosh is born—***then men began to call on the name of the Lord.*** Gen 4:26

2-FLOOD Mankind became evil—God destroyed the people on earth with a flood of waters. **2348 bc**

- **NOAH** and his family were righteous (**8 souls**) – God **saved** them in the ark that Noah built.
- God made a covenant with all Mankind (the rainbow is the token of that covenant). Gen 9 **2347 bc**
- God divided the peoples on the earth by confounding their language (did not understand…) **2247 bc**

3-PROMISES God gave promises to Abraham: Gen 12:1-3 **1921 bc**

NATION – I will make of you a great nation (descendants as sand on seashore)
SEED – In your seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed (**CHRIST** Gal 3:16)
LAND – I will give you this land (**CANAAN**)

4-EXODUS God delivered Israel from bondage in Egypt

- God gave the Law of Moses to Israel **1491 bc**
- The nation of Israel possessed the promised land—Canaan **1451 bc**

  Joshua said to Israel:
  Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve… We will serve the Lord.
- The nation of Israel was governed by judges **1413-1095 bc**

5-KINGS The Kingdom was united for 120 years. Then God divided it into 2 kingdoms. **1095 bc**

- The first earthly king Saul ruled in Israel **1095 bc** Followed by David Solomon Rehoboam
- The Kingdom of Israel was divided into 2 kingdoms: **ISRAEL** and **JUDAH** **975 bc**
- The Northern Kingdom (**ISRAEL**) ceased to exist as a nation forever. **722 bc**

6-BABYLON The first captives were taken from **JUDAH** to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzer. **605 bc**

7-RETURN The return and restoration of **JUDAH** and Jerusalem began **536 bc**

After the Law of Moses was given to Israel, God continued to send prophets to His people to call on them to repent and also to foretell future events. Some prophecies foretold of punishment of Israel or Judah or other nations. Other prophecies foretold the coming of the Messiah (or CHRIST), His KINGDOM and SALVATION.

8-SILENCE A 400-year period of **SILENCE** when God did not send prophets to speak to man. **397 bc**

— The Timeline of the Bible

T I M E L I N E **has reference to when events of the Bible took place.**

T I M E L I N E **of Some Important Events** **New Testament Period**

ad = in the year of the Lord



1-JESUS IS BORN John the Baptist is born to serve as a forerunner of Jesus. Then Jesus is born. Jesus develops as any other child in a Jewish family of that day. When He is 12 years old, He shows His knowledge and wisdom at the temple with the teachers of the Law (although He had no formal education). At age 30, John proclaims that Jesus is ***the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*** and that He is ***the Son of God***. Jesus is baptized by John the Baptist. A voice from heaven announces that ***This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased***. The Holy Spirit descends like a dove to rest on Jesus.

2-JESUS PREACHES John the Baptist begins to preach the gospel of the kingdom 6 months before Jesus. After Jesus is baptized, He begins to preach the gospel of the kingdom.
John prepares the hearts of the people for the coming of the Messiah—**JESUS**— John does not preach that he himself is great, but that the person who would come after him (later) is great. When Jesus came to John, he announced that Jesus of Nazareth is the person he had been talking about—that He is the sacrifice for the sins of everyone in the world—that He is **THE SON OF GOD**. Jesus preaches the gospel of the kingdom, calling on people to repent and turn to God. He explains some aspects of the Law of Moses. He sets forth teaching that would be applicable when His kingdom came into existence (His kingdom came into existence on the day of Pentecost in 33 a.d.). He heals multitudes of people, casts out demons, feeds multitudes, and calms the storm. He establishes beyond any doubt that **JESUS OF NAZARETH IS THE SON OF GOD**.

3-DEATH, BURIAL, RESURRECTION Jesus dies on the cross; He is buried and resurrected from the dead.
Evil men conspire to have Jesus crucified; Jesus **dies** on the cross as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of everyone; He **is buried**; He **is resurrected** from the dead, never to die again. The gospel (good news) message of salvation is preached on the day of Pentecost – thousands of people are **saved** – the church came into being– the Lord added the saved to the church – now the kingdom of Christ exists. Salvation is available to anyone in the world who will believe that Jesus is the Son of God and obey Him (the New Testament).

4-LETTERS TO CHURCHES The power of the gospel was clearly seen in the work of the apostles.
First of all, the Jews and then the other people of the world, most of whom were idolaters of long standing, turned to their **Savior Jesus**. People all over the world became Christians. The success of the gospel generated tremendous opposition so that it came to be acceptable to beat or throw into prison any person who confessed ***"Jesus Christ is the Son of God"***. In spite of opposition and even death, the number of Christians multiplied. Letters were written to churches to explain some aspects of the gospel, to set some things in order, to correct some existing problems and to commend churches and Christians for serving God faithfully. Most books of the New Testament were written during a period of 30 years. God's revelation through Jesus Christ (the New Testament) was completed in the first century.

5-GOSPEL TO EVERYONE In about 30 years, the gospel was preached to every person in the world.
Paul tells us this fact. Col 1:23 (written in 62 a.d.). Jesus commanded His apostles to preach the gospel to the whole world, to every person in the world. Mt 28:18-20; Mk 16:15-16 They accomplished this—the Holy Spirit guided this work and made it possible. God's justice can now hold all men accountable to the gospel.

6-FINAL REVELATION The theme of God's final revelation to Mankind is **VICTORY IN CHRIST**.
This is a primary theme of the entire New Testament. Revelation tells us about the constant concern and care of the churches by Jesus. It discusses good and bad attitudes and good and bad works in the churches. It tells about Jesus becoming the king, Satan being cast out of heaven down to earth, and the ultimate final and complete victory of Jesus and those with Him. **7-FINAL JUDGMENT** and **HEAVEN** and **HELL** are described to us.

— Introduction to the Old Testament 7

The Old Testament contains 39 books, beginning with the Creation in Genesis chapter 1 and continuing through the last literary prophet, Malachi. It covers a period of time of about 3,600 years. After Malachi, there was no prophet who wrote down messages from God for 400 years, **The Period of Silence**. The Old Testament of the Holy Bible contains the God-inspired **LAW OF MOSES**, the God-inspired writings of the **PROPHETS**, and the God-inspired **PSALMS**. Lk 24:44-45 All of these spoke about the coming of the **Christ** (Messiah). Acts 3:18,21 The Old Testament served an important purpose of God; but, when that purpose was fulfilled, the Law of Moses would be done away with AS LAW. The Old Testament would still be meaningful and important to our understanding of God and everything that God purposed and planned for the welfare of Mankind. Rom 15:4; Gal 3:2,11,16-19; Eph 3:10-11

1. The Old Testament reveals **GOD, THE CREATOR**.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Gen 1:1

This is one of the most profound and important statements in the Bible. The fact that God is our CREATOR tells us where we came from. The fact that human beings were created in the image of God tells us what we are. The fact that God existed in another realm before the creation of the physical heavens and earth tells us that something exists outside of the physical realm. In contrast to the idols that were worshiped as "gods" during the Old Testament period, the true God of heaven was often called the CREATOR GOD—a title or achievement which none of the false gods claimed—always showing the superiority of the true God to any other "god" or power/authority. Gen 1:1,21,27; 2:3-4; 5:1-2; Deut 4:32; Psa 19:1; 148:5; Isa 40:26; 41:20; 42:5; 45:18; Acts 17:24

2. The Old Testament reveals that it was God's desire that Mankind would believe in Him, believe Him (what He said), and obey Him (do what He said).
   a. Adam and Eve - God said, **DO NOT EAT** of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil which is in the middle of the garden. Eve ate the forbidden fruit; Adam ate the forbidden fruit—they sinned. Eve understood what God said, but chose to disobey Him. Gen 3:1-24 It was God's desire that they would obey Him.
   b. Cain and Abel - God told them the kind of sacrifice to offer. Cain refused. Abel obeyed. Gen 4:1-11 Do not follow Cain's example of disobedience. Follow Abel's example of **FAITH** and **OBEDIENCE**. Heb 11:4

3. The Old Testament reveals the LAW OF MOSES, the law (covenant) that God gave to the nation of ISRAEL. [The first 5 books are called **"LAW"**.]

God chose Abram (Abraham) to be the person through whom He would bless the world. This was a process, beginning with God speaking to Abram in the city of Ur in the region called Chaldees (later a part of Babylon). He told him to leave his family (except for his wife) and go to a land that God would show him. This was the land of Canaan which God promised to give to Abraham's descendants, "the promised land".

Abraham and his wife Sarah had a son named Isaac. Isaac and his wife Rebecca had twin sons named Jacob and Esau. God chose to pass His blessings and promises from Abraham to Isaac to Jacob. Jacob had 12 sons and 1 daughter. Jacob's descendants came to be called ISRAEL, a great nation when they left captivity in Egypt under the leadership of Moses. God gave His Law for Israel through Moses, The Law of Moses. This Law was also a Covenant between God and Israel. This Covenant contained Promises, some of which were fulfilled within a few years; but the most important promise was fulfilled by God through Jesus Christ, hundreds of years later. Gen 12:1-3; Ex 2:24; Gal 3:16 This Promise benefited all Mankind—ETERNAL SALVATION.

4. The Old Testament reveals the HISTORY OF MANKIND, and also, the HISTORY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOD AND MANKIND.

The Bible is the only book which gives us a history of the peoples of the earth. It tells us what happened, to what peoples, and often why these circumstances existed and why these things happened. Gen 5:1-11:31 There are 12 books called **"HISTORY"**.

These were the families of the sons of Noah, according to their generations, in their nations; and from these the nations were divided on the earth after the flood. Gen 10:32

The history of the peoples of the earth also includes the history of the relationship between God and Mankind. God created Adam in the image of God—Man has a spirit which is like God's spirit—this spirit will exist forever—it is this spirit that thinks and reasons and wills and has an emotional response to who he is and what he is and what occurs in his life—it is this spirit that **believes** and **obeys** God or refuses to believe or refuses to obey. This is the essence of WHY God created the physical realm and Mankind to live in this physical realm. It is the spirit of a man (the real man) that defines him. It is this spirit that God is testing while he lives in this life on the earth to see if he is suited to live with God in heaven. You see, before the Creation of the physical realm, God existed in Heaven. He had created angels. However, some of the angels who lived in the presence of God sinned. So, God devised a way to test the spiritual beings that He created—He confined every spirit in the physical realm to be connected to one physical body—as long as a man is connected to that physical body, he is ALIVE in the physical realm—when his spirit leaves his physical body, that man is DEAD to the physical realm—God's test is complete—what follows is the judgment of that man: he will LIVE forever in HEAVEN or exist forever in HELL.

5. The Old Testament contains 5 books of "wisdom", some in poetic form: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon. These books contain a lot of information about God, worship of God, Man, and our relationship with God and with other human beings. Psalms gives some of the clearest pictures of God and His Providence, the death of Jesus on the cross (prophecy), and **SALVATION**.

6. The Old Testament contains 17 books of PROPHECY. Many prophecies about future events were fulfilled in the near future; but all of the prophets foretold of the Christ (Messiah). Acts 3:18-26; Lk 24:44-45 **God's Plan for the Salvation of Man is the central theme of the Bible.** [The blood of Jesus saves us from sin and its consequences. It also saves us for eternal life in Heaven.] Thank you God! Lam 3:22-23

— Introduction to the New Testament 8

The New Testament contains 27 books, beginning with the Birth of Jesus and continuing through the last book of the Bible, Revelation. It covers a period of time of about 100 years. After this, there was no apostle and there was no prophet who wrote down messages from God. The New Testament was complete. From the time that miraculous spiritual gifts came to an end, NO PERSON has had any miraculous or supernatural power to know or reveal the mind of God and absolutely no authority from God to speak any message as though it was from God. The New Testament is God's LAW FOR ALL MANKIND. Every human being is obligated to believe and obey this law. Every human being will be judged by Christ on the Day of Judgment—according to this law. 2 Cor 5:10; Acts 17:30-31; Jn 12:48 It is God's Covenant with Mankind: God permits each person to choose to accept it or to reject it—**but the consequences for my choice have already been set by God** (**FREE WILL**).

1. The New Testament reveals **JESUS CHRIST, THE SAVIOR** of the world.

You shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins. Mt 1:21

There is born to you…in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. Lk 2:11

Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! Jn 1:29

… And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God. Jn 1:32-34

a. **The Birth of Jesus –** The angel Gabriel spoke to Mary to tell her that she was going to have a Son. She was a virgin, so how was this possible? It was a miracle—she conceived by the Holy Spirit, not through the usual means of having a sexual relationship with a man. Gabriel described the child that Mary would give birth to. The angels announced His birth to the shepherds. Simeon and Anna acknowledged WHO JESUS WAS when they saw him at the temple. The wise men from the east traveled a great distance to worship Him.

b. **The Early Life of Jesus –** Luke 2 gives us a brief glimpse of the early life of Jesus. The manner in which he grew up or matured is the example of how every person should grow up and become a mature human being. Lk 2:52

c. **The Teachings of Jesus –** The people who heard Jesus teach understood that He taught them as a person who had the authority to command. His teachings alone were sufficient to convince anyone that He was the Christ, the Son of God. Mt 7:28-29; Jn 6:66-69; 7:46

d. **The Miracles of Jesus –** John wrote His gospel about Jesus and some things that He taught and some things that He did. After telling about only 7 signs or miracles that Jesus did, John makes the following declaration (Jn 20:30-31):

And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

2. The New Testament contains 4 GOSPELS, which tell us about the Birth, Life, Death, Burial and Resurrection of Jesus: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John.

Who was Jesus? Why did He come down from Heaven to live on the earth as a man and die on the earth as a man? What did He do? What do these things reveal to us? Why did Jesus have to die on the cross? What do His Death, Burial and Resurrection mean for us today? These questions, and many more, are answered in these 4 books. The word ***GOSPEL*** means **"good news"**. As used in the New Testament, it means the good news of SALVATION IN JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD.

3. The New Testament contains 1 book which is called "History" – Acts.

Jesus talked to His apostles, just before He ascended to Heaven to reign over His spiritual kingdom (the church). Acts 1:1-11 He told them to go into all the world and preach the GOSPEL to every person. The book of Acts is the history of preaching the gospel to the whole world in a period of about 30 years. Mt 28:18-20; Mk 16:15-16; Col 1:23 This was possible because Jesus provided miraculous spiritual gifts to many who were preaching the gospel (Eph 4:7-16) and the work was directed by the Holy Spirit (Acts 16:6-10). God sent Jesus into the world to die so that the world could be saved (Jn 3:15-16). The Holy Spirit was sent into the world to aid the Christians in the first century to make the gospel known in the whole world (Jn 16:5-15). Mankind must **HEAR** and **BELIEVE** and **OBEY** THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST.

4. The New Testament contains 14 books or letters which were written by the Apostle Paul to various churches and individuals to reveal the will of Jesus Christ for His churches and for Christians (THE WAY of life for Christians.)

These letters do not appear in the same chronological order as they were written. It is apparent that the principles set forth in a letter that was written to one particular church applied to all churches and all Christians. Col 4:16; 1 Cor 14:33; 16:1 Example: A man was guilty of sin in the church at Corinth; so Paul gave specific instructions to the church at Corinth about how to deal with that man. 1 Cor 5:1-5 The same spiritual instruction applied in every church at that time and will apply in every church until the end of time. The Apostle Paul was guided by the Holy Spirit to write what he wrote. Eph 3:3-5 The words of the New Testament are the words of Jesus. Jn 16:12-15

5. The New Testament contains 7 books or letters, called General Epistles, which were written by various writers to Christians.

These letters address real people who are real Christians in real life. They are facing real persecutions and other real problems. These letters explain what is happening and why. They call on all Christians to be faithful to the Lord in spite of the difficulties that they are experiencing. The blessings of God and eternity will be theirs.

6. The New Testament contains 1 book of prophecy, Revelation.

This is the most complete book, dealing with events Past, Present, Future. It tells of the greatness/purpose/plan/power/authority of God and Christ. It tells about the good and bad attributes of 7 churches. It tells us about THE VICTORY OF JESUS CHRIST over all enemies—and those with Jesus are faithful Christians. Rev 17:14

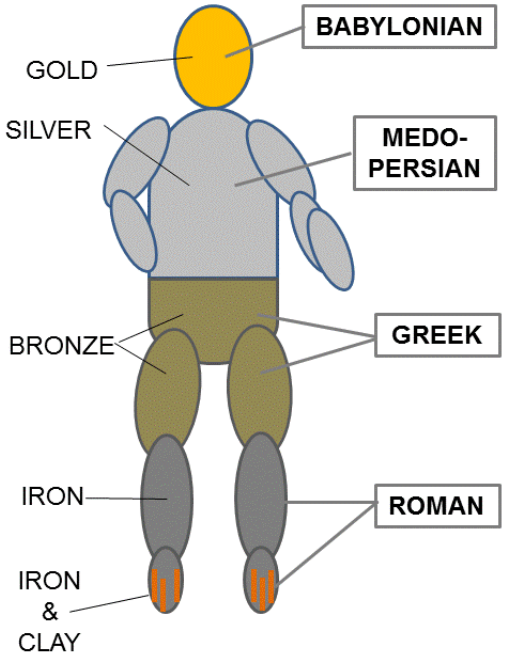
— The Period Between the Testaments 9

The Old Testament **The New Testament**

The Old Testament of the Bible (Genesis to Malachi) contains 39 books in all. The New Testament of the Bible (Matthew to Revelation) contains 27 books in all. The Holy Bible contains 66 books and covers a period of time of about 4,100 years.

There is a period of time between the last book of the Old Testament and the first book of the New Testament that is referred to as ***The Period Between the Testaments*** or ***The Period of Silence***. During this period, there was no God-inspired message recorded for us that is contained in the Bible. [Some versions of the Bible contain 14 books called "Apocryphal Books". These books make no claim of being inspired; and these books are not considered by most scholars to be given by God to be included in the canon of the Bible. These books contain some historical information which is both interesting and helpful to our understanding of ***The Period Between the Testaments***.]

> *God gave the prophet Daniel the interpretation of a dream of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon.* Dan 2:1-49



Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom was the head of gold. All 4 kingdoms in the vision are world-wide. The next kingdom was ruled by the Medes and Persians. The next kingdom was the Greek Kingdom, which was built by Alexander the Great. Then, the Roman Kingdom ruled.

Another kingdom is mentioned in this dream. It was a **spiritual kingdom** that would be set up by God in the days of the Roman kings. These earthly kingdoms would rise and fall; but this **spiritual kingdom** would be set up by God and would NEVER BE DESTROYED. This kingdom is the same thing as the church of the New Testament. Both John the Baptist and Jesus preached about it. Mt 3:1-2; 4:17,23 It was ***set up*** in Jerusalem after the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus and after He ascended back to Heaven to rule as King. Acts 2:1-47; Mk 16:19

The first world-wide kingdom was ruled by Nabopolassar, Nebuchadnezzar, Evil-merodach and Belshazzar. Dn 1:1-5:30 Little is said about the war between Babylon and the Medes and Persians. It is spoken of by Isaiah and Jeremiah, prophets of God. Cyrus, the Persian, took the city and killed Belshazzar. But Darius the Mede began to rule after the fall of the Babylonian Kingdom. Dn 5:31 The law of his kingdom shows that there was <u>one king</u> and <u>one law</u> and therefore <u>one kingdom</u>. Dn 6:8 Daniel records important events in the reign of Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian. Daniel served 5 great kings, much of the time near the top in authority in the kingdom. Dn 6:28

We have discussed a dream, the meaning of which God revealed by Daniel to the King, and the fulfilment of that prophecy: the Head of Gold – Babylon : the Chest and Arms of Silver – Medes & Persians. Perhaps the most intriguing descriptions of prophecy concern The Greek Kingdom and the Roman Kingdom. Both of these kingdoms came into existence during The Period of Silence.

The Greek Kingdom was not very big. King Philip was very astute as a king, a diplomat, and a soldier. His son Alexander was taught by Aristotle. When he was 18 years old, his father made Alexander an ambassador to another nation. At age 20, he was the Commander of the army of Greece. Circumstances caused the army to have to fight. Once he began fighting, Alexander continued until he had conquered the world.

When Alexander died (323 B.C., 33 years old), his kingdom was divided into 4 parts: the weakest and smallest was Greece; the largest and most powerful included Judah. Some of the culture which was spread throughout the world included (1) the Greek language: this language became the language of the world; it is the language that the New Testament was written in, except for 2 books. (2) the Greek culture stressed the importance of the family – so does the New Testament. (3) It also stressed the value of every individual: man, woman or child – so does the New Testament. (4) It pushed the importance of education (knowledge) for men and women – so does the New Testament with respect to the knowledge of God and Christ and truth. [Alexander built centers of learning in several places in the world. The Old Testament was translated into the Greek language 250 years before Christ was born, The Septuagint Bible. This reality takes away the claim that the disciples of Jesus wrote down things that Jesus did as though they were prophesied years before – this could not happen; also some claim that "Christians" changed the Bible to show that Isaac was God's chosen instead of Ishmael – that could not have happened.] The Greek Kingdom helped to prepare the world for the coming of Jesus Christ.

The Roman Kingdom was amazing. ***The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all other kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth…*** Dn 7:23 Rome expanded its power and control over other kingdoms through some Commanders of armies which went out to conquer nations for Rome. But Rome was ruled by 400 Senators – they had no king. Julius Caesar wanted to be King – his best friend Brutus killed him because such a thing was contrary to the tradition of ROME. However, Caesar Augustus (Caius Caesar Octavianus Augustus) was proclaimed to be emperor of Rome (in 29 B.C.). See Lk 2:1 (Daniel's prophecy required Rome to have a king.) The Roman Empire was described precisely by Daniel.

A careful study of history shows that what Daniel prophesied in detail about these kings and kingdoms was fulfilled in a remarkable way. For example, the character of a MALE GOAT is used to describe Alexander the Great–it suited him. Dn 8:20-22 Many of the things prophesied were unlikely, even impossible from Mankind's view; but they happened, just as God said. Know this: ***…the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, gives it to whomever He will, and sets over it the lowest of men.*** Dn 4:17 God prepared the world for the coming of the everlasting world-wide spiritual kingdom that would be greater than any earthly kingdom. **PRAISE GOD!**

— Summary of the Bible 10

The Old Testament **The New Testament**

The Bible contains 66 books. The Bible is the Word of God—The Truth. Jn 17:17 ***The Story of the Bible*** is the story of GOD and MAN. It is the story of the relationship which exists or may exist between God and Man. It is clear that God desires to have a close personal relationship with each of us. It is clear that God wants each of us to be saved for eternity—to live in Heaven with Him forever after this physical life is over.

This close personal relationship with God is developed over time, just as a close personal relationship with another human being is developed over time. We learn about God. We learn what we can expect from Him; we learn what He expects from us. We grow closer to God and He is closer to us as we share the good things in life together and as we face the bad things that life sometimes presents to us.

Therefore submit to God…Draw near to God and He will draw near to you… Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up. Jas 4:7-10

After Creation, God had a close personal relationship with Adam and Eve. They lived in the garden of Eden, a paradise on earth. Everything was wonderful until they sinned by eating the forbidden fruit. Because they sinned, God could no longer have a close relationship with them. SIN introduced DEATH—spiritual separation from God. God also drove them out of the garden so that they could not eat of the tree of life and live forever. When they sinned, they died spiritually to God, and they began to die physically as well. Here we learn that our relationship with God has conditions. God stated conditions—Eve understood what God said—She chose to disobey God—the consequences were already set—they sinned—they died! Their life on earth was changed dramatically because of their sin. Gen 3:8-24 **FREE WILL**

But, God immediately announced the coming of Jesus Christ. Gen 3:15 And, throughout the Old Testament, there are statements and promises and prophecies to tell of the coming of the Christ. Why? ***He will save His people from their sins.*** Mt 1:21

Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel. Isa 7:14; Mt 1:22-23

The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear… Deut 18:15-19; Acts 3:22-23

…Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures… Isa 53:1-12; 1 Cor 15:1-8

PURPOSE is the key to understanding the entire Bible. We cannot know everything about God or what God did or why God did it; but we can understand that, without doubt, God had a purpose for what He did. We can see purpose in all of Creation. **The eternal purpose of God** was spoken of by the apostle Paul. Eph 3:8-12

…according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus…

God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are eternal—they have always existed and always/forever will exist. Deut 33:27; Rom 1:20-21 Whereas, Angels are created beings—they existed in heaven with God before some of them sinned. Jude 1:6; 2 Pet 2:4; Mt 25:41 So it seems that God created another realm where spirit beings would be tested to see if they were suited to live in heaven with God. For God to accomplish His purpose, the Plan for the SALVATION OF MANKIND was set before the physical realm was created. Eph 1:3-7 God is all-knowing and all-wise. What God put in place for Mankind to believe and obey benefits Mankind during His lifetime on earth and provides the ultimate blessing of ETERNAL LIFE IN HEAVEN:

> ***God Himself will be with them, and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away…I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be His God and he shall be My son.*** Rev 21:3-7

These statements are made as the writer of the last book of the Bible is summarizing where all that God purposed and planned is being realized: this is what it is all about.

Regrettably, many people do not acknowledge the reality of God. Psa 14:1 Many acknowledge the reality of God, but do not grasp the greatness/power/authority/ goodness of God. Regardless of the reasons, people do not seek God (Acts 17:23-31)—they do not wish to know Him—they do not desire to worship Him (Jn 4:23-24)—they do not want to serve Him—they choose not to receive the blessings that God offers to those who will believe and obey Him (Mk 16:15-16). As a result, they live their lives on earth with no purpose beyond what they want to do/choose to do/have to do because of their circumstances—they live to themselves and for themselves.

Then there are many who have chosen to believe and obey Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. They honor and respect God and His Word of Truth—the Bible. As a result, they live their lives in full assurance of the blessings they receive from God each day while they live here on earth, and in full assurance of the HOPE of eternal life in Heaven with God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the holy angels, and all of the saved of all ages from the earth. We have numerous examples of people who followed this way of life in the New Testament. There are many such people alive today on earth.

God is Holy and He desires that we be Holy. Isa 6:3; Lev 19:2; 1 Pet 1:13-16 Who God is and who God wants us to be centers in this concept of **HOLY**. We often use the excuse for sinning, "I am only human." This excuse does not prove the case—God created us in His image—God gave us power and dominion (rulership authority). We have the power to control ourselves: our attitudes/desires/actions. Would you prefer to do business with an honest man or a crook? Do you want to be married to a faithful husband or to an unfaithful one? The way of life that God asks us to live is for our benefit while we live on earth; it also prepares us for life with God in heaven.

God is God! When I accept this, I am on the way to knowledge/understanding of God and His will for ME. The personal relationship that I have with My God is what the Bible is all about: ***I will be his God and he shall be My son.*** Rev 21:7

— Review Lessons 1 - 10 R 1

This group of lessons is about THE HOLY BIBLE and what is in it. We begin with the reality that ***The Bible Is the Word of God***. The Almighty God of Heaven, the Creator, spoke to the beings He created in His Own Image. What He revealed in the Bible is what God wants us to know. Sometimes God tells us WHY, sometimes He does not. The one thing we know for sure is that there is no doubt that JESUS CHRIST IS THE SON OF GOD and that HE is the SAVIOR of the world. He now rules over His Kingdom (the church) from the throne of God in Heaven. He also rules over everything that exists in Heaven and on earth. His reign will continue until the last enemy is destroyed, which is physical death. Every person who has ever lived on the earth will be judged by Jesus Christ according to the Word of God. 2 Cor 5:10

GOD IS REAL - GOD IS GOD - THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD - JESUS CHRIST IS THE SON OF GOD.

OPTION 1 - I can believe God and obey Him and be saved—my eternal existence will be Spiritual Life—with God forever in Heaven.

OPTION 2 - I can disbelieve God or disobey Him and be lost—my eternal existence will be Spiritual Death—separated from God forever in Hell.

FREE WILL - God has given every human being Free Will – the right to choose what he will do. This freedom of choice has consequences or results from the chosen action. For example, a fire is burning. I may choose to put my hand into the fire or I may choose not to do so. If I choose to put my hand into the fire, it will be burned. The freedom of choice does not change the consequence of the chosen action. The consequence is set by God before the choice is made. The same thing is true in the spiritual realm: If I choose…

(1) …to believe and obey God, the consequence is eternal life in Heaven.
(2) …to disbelieve/disobey God, the consequence is eternal punishment in Hell.

God has given me the right to choose what I will do; but He has already set the consequence for my action:

(1) Correct action—good consequence (right, good, according to God's word)
(2) Incorrect action—bad consequence (wrong, bad, not God's word)

Some people believe that we live in a period that precedes the "second coming" of Jesus Christ to the earth, when He will set up His Kingdom on the earth which will last for 1,000 years. This is the opposite of what the Bible teaches. The 1,000-year reign is going on right now and will continue until Jesus returns. At that time, JESUS WILL SURRENDER HIS REIGN. 1 Cor 15:24-28 Another teaching is Predestination —this is the OPPOSITE of Free Will. The eternal purpose of God is destroyed by such teaching. Why did God give us the Bible? Why did Jesus die on the cross? Why did Peter and Paul preach the gospel? Why will there be a Day of Judgment?

1 – The Bible Is the Word of God - There is a God. God created Mankind. God has revealed Himself and His will to Mankind and the Bible is that revelation.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God … 2 Tim 3:16-17 (also, 1 Cor 2:1-16)

… has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets. Eph 3:5

…every nation of men…so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us.
Acts 17:22-31

Every person who believes and obeys the Bible is blessed by God in his life on earth. He will also receive everlasting life in heaven if he lives faithfully during life on earth.

2 – The Books of the Bible - The books are listed by type/abbreviations listed.

3 – Periods of the Laws of God in the Bible. There were 3 periods of the Laws of God which are recorded in the Bible. Every person in the world today is obligated by God to believe and obey the Gospel of Jesus Christ (The New Testament).

4 – The Old Testament of the Bible - A brief statement of what is in each book of the Old Testament. Law, History, Wisdom Literature, Prophets—39 books.

5 – The New Testament of the Bible - A brief statement of what is in each book of the New Testament. Gospels, History, Letters of Paul, General Letters, Prophecy—27 books. [New Testament/New Covenant/The Gospel of Christ are the same thing.]

6 – The Timeline of the Bible - Shows the date in history of events that are recorded in the Bible. Since the books of the Bible are not in chronological order, this is helpful.

7 – Introduction to the Old Testament - What will I find out about if I read the Old Testament? Is there any benefit for me? Rom 15:4

8 – Introduction to the NewTestament - What will I find out about if I read the New Testament? Is there any benefit for me? Rom 1:16-17

9 – The Period Between the Testaments - From the last book of the Old Testament (Malachi) to the first book of the New Testament, there was a period of 400 years when God did not have a prophet writing something down, ***The Period of Silence***. There were many prophecies in the Old Testament about events that would take place during this period. We looked primarily at the prophecy of Daniel and a few of the fulfillments and the definitive nature of the prophecy and its fulfillment. God prepared the world for the coming of the Christ and His kingdom, including SALVATION.

10 – Summary of the Bible - This lesson is about the focus of the Bible. We talk about the Purpose of God, the Plan of God to fulfill that Purpose, the significance of FREEWILL, the benefit to a man to believe and obey God, and the evil consequence if he fails to do so. The Bible is about God and His relationship with man. Other things, like Marriage, the Church, etc., impact our lives in definitive ways.

God is God! When I accept this, I am on the way to knowledge/understanding of God and His will for ME. The personal relationship that I have with My God is what the Bible is all about: ***I will be his God and he shall be My son.*** Rev 21:7

— Review Series Lessons 1 - 10 S 1

Group 1 - The lessons in Group 1 describe in a concise way important observations about **THE CONTENTS OF THE BIBLE.** Should we read the Bible? Should we believe the Bible? **The Bible is the Word of God**. It should therefore be treated with respect. We should all desire to know what God said and what it means to us today.

The Old Testament tells us about the Creation of the Physical Universe. It also describes the Creation of Man and Woman. It is clear from the beginning that Mankind and other creatures or animals on the earth are different from each other. Man was created in the image of God—animals were not. Man has a spirit that is like God's spirit—animals do not. When an animal dies, his body returns to the earth and his spirit goes down to the earth. When a man dies, his body returns to the earth from which it came and his spirit goes upward to God from which it came.

> ***I know that whatever God does, it shall be forever. Nothing can be added to it, and nothing taken from it. God does it, that men should fear before Him. That which is has already been, and what is to be has already been; and God requires an account of what is past….God shall judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work.***
> Eccl 3:14-15,17

We should keep in mind that the Bible records many stories about people and what they do. Whether a person is a king or a slave, a rich man or a poor man, his story is going to end with a judgment by God. Every human being is important to God—what a man believes is important to God—what a man does is important to God—and every man must give an account of what he does while he lives on this earth—every human being is responsible for his own actions and God requires him to give an account: what did you do? and why did you do it? I do not have to answer for my wife's sins or my son's sins or my father's sins—I have to answer for my own life: my own righteous actions and my own sinful actions. Ezek 18:20 Some people believe that we go to a place called "Purgatory" after we die if we are not pleasing to God. BUT, it is possible to work your way out of there or someone can pay for your sins and pay your way out of there. The Bible does not teach this. With respect to your eternal destiny,

> ***And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.*** Heb 9:27

There is nothing that takes place from the time that a man dies until the Day of Judgment when all will be judged. Rev 20:11-15

The Book of Genesis is a foundation of what it is all about. It tells about the beginning of Mankind. It tells about the wonderful life that Mankind had in the Garden of Eden. It tells about the beginning of sin on the earth. We can see the adverse effects of sin. We see that God had a plan for the salvation of Mankind before Mankind ever existed. When man sinned, God immediately mentioned that one would come to crush the head of Satan. The lineage of the Messiah (Christ) is carefully documented until He is born in Bethlehem of Judea, about 4000 years later.

The Story of the Bible tells us about the relationship between God and Man from Creation until the Day of Final Judgment. What type of relationship does God want with man? We see this from the stories of the lives of people that are recorded for us in the Bible. We also see the attitudes and behaviors that please God and those that do not please God.

The story covers a period of about 4100 years. We are able to learn about God and His purpose for Mankind. We are able to learn about what God did to allow Mankind to be saved from sin. The promises of God give us the assurance and hope of life eternal in heaven with God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the holy angels and all the saved of the earth. The story describes the victory in Jesus for those who believe and obey God.

> ***…He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son. And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life….*** 1 Jn 5:9-13

The Story of the Bible is the wonderful story of
THE ETERNAL PURPOSE OF GOD and
GOD'S PLAN FOR THE SALVATION OF MANKIND.

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*** Gen 1:1

➢ ***So God created man in His own image; in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.*** Gen 1:27

➢ ***Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.*** Gen 1:31

➢ ***Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.*** Jn 17:17

Suggestions - This lesson gives important information about what the Bible is about. There is a brief overview of Lessons 1-10. The Bible is easier to comprehend if we understand where the information fits in history, the physical location and the people involved. The relationship of God with His people is what is most important. God reveals Himself and what it is all about through the Bible record.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 5 books of the Bible.

GOD IS GOD

GOD IS THE CREATOR

THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD

THE BIBLE IS THE STORY OF GOD AND HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BEINGS HE CREATED—HUMAN BEINGS

THE BIBLE REVEALS THE PERSON THAT WE CALL GOD

THE BIBLE REVEALS WHAT GOD REQUIRES MAN TO DO WHILE HE LIVES ON THE EARTH

THE BIBLE REVEALS WHAT GOD PROMISES TO MAN FOR HIS FAITH AND OBEDIENCE

BOOK 1 **GROUP 2**

Series 701	*THE STORY OF THE BIBLE*
Group 2	**MANKIND - EARLY HISTORY**
Subtopic	**The Beginning - Genesis**
En 701-011	The Creation of the Universe
En 701-012	The Creation of Mankind
En 701-013	Sin and Its Consequences
En 701-014	Worship God - Cain and Abel
En 701-015	Seth - Genealogy - Enoch
En 701-016	Mankind Becomes Evil - Noah Walks with God
En 701-017	Noah Builds the Ark According to God's Plan
En 701-018	The Flood
En 701-019	God's Covenant with Mankind
En 701-020	Tower at Babel - Nations Divided
En 701-R02	Review Lessons 11-20
En 701-S02	Review Series Lessons 1-20

AUTHORS: MEREDITH R. CHILDRESS / RONALD B. ROARK

2010

THE WAY OF LIFE
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— The Creation of the Universe 11

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

God created all things in the physical universe, a part of which was **the earth**. He looked upon the earth and saw that it was formless and empty and dark. Then God said: ***Let there be light. And there was light.*** And God saw that it was good. Then God separated the light from the darkness; He called the light **Day** and the darkness **Night**. There was evening and morning, the first day. Then God separated the waters under the firmament (sky) from the waters above the firmament. God called the firmament **Heaven**. This was on the second day. Next God gathered together the **waters** under the heavens, so that **dry land** appeared. And God called the dry land **Earth**, and the waters He called **Seas**. Then God created vegetation on the earth: **grass**, **herbs**, and **trees**, all according to their kind, having the seed inside of them to reproduce more. This was the third day. Then God made lights to set in the firmament: the **sun** to dominate the day, and the **moon** to dominate the night. He also made the **stars**. And God saw that it was good. All of this happened on the fourth day. On the fifth day, God created all the **creatures that live in the water** and all the **birds that fly in the air**. And they were to reproduce and multiply, filling the seas and skies. Then on the sixth day, God created all of the **animals**: large beasts, cattle and everything that creeps on the earth. And they also were to reproduce according to their kind and fill the earth. And God saw that it was good. Then God said: ***Let Us make man in Our image …. So God created man in His own image…***God made man from the dust of the ground and breathed life into him. And God planted the Garden of Eden and put man in it. In the garden there were many beautiful trees, including the ***tree of life*** and the ***tree of the knowledge of good and evil.***

God saw that it was not good for man to be alone—he needed a helper, comparable to him. All of the animals came before Adam, but a suitable helper was not found. So God took a rib from Adam's side, from which He made **woman**. God blessed Adam and Eve and told them to multiply and fill the earth and subdue it.

Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So God rested on the seventh day. And He blessed it and made it holy.

The truths of Creation are accepted without question by many people. But, in spite of these truths, people throughout history have often worshiped idols (false gods): animals, the elements, the sun or moon, and many other objects and creatures. Because elements controlled their world, they believed that pleasing the **Sun god** would make their crops grow. But it was God's will that all people know Him—His love, His care and His saving grace, and so He had men write down His plan for the world. Learning about God's character is what moves us to love and serve Him.

The Creation of the Universe

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*** Gen 1:1

➢ ***So God created man in His own image; in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.*** Gen 1:27

➢ ***Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.*** Gen 1:31

1. Who created the heavens and the earth?
2. What is included in the ***earth*** that God created?
3. What is included in the ***heavens*** that God created?
4. Describe and discuss what God created on **Day 1 -**
5. Describe and discuss what God created on **Day 2 -**
6. Describe and discuss what God created on **Day 3 -**
7. Describe and discuss what God created on **Day 4 -**
8. Describe and discuss what God created on **Day 5 -**
9. Describe and discuss what God created on **Day 6 -**
10. God created everything in 6 days. What did He do on **Day 7**?
11. **Life produces life** is a principle of science. Who established this principle?
12. Oak trees produce oak trees; wheat produces wheat. How did God state this principle of **reproduction**?

Day and night, the evaporation cycle, life produces life ***after its kind***, and all other principles of science were established by God at Creation.

Suggestions - This lesson is about God, the power of God, and the Creation of the physical universe by God. Everything that exists was created by God out of nothing. The face of the earth has changed because of the Flood, storms, erosion and God, who controls all things. But the order of the universe was established by God ***in the beginning***, and those principles (which we call the Laws of Nature) still control the physical realm which God created. The Creation of Mankind is the most significant aspect of Creation, since man is a spiritual being with the capacity to have a continuing spiritual relationship with God while living on the earth, and also anticipates living in the spiritual realm with God forever. What God requires of mankind is important to every person, making it necessary to believe and obey God.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 5 books of the Bible.

The Creation of the Universe

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Gen 1:1

- **The earth was without form and void.**
- **There was darkness (no light).**

DAY 1 - LIGHT DAY / NIGHT

Let there be light; and there was light.

DAY 2 - FIRMAMENT HEAVEN

Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters … and it was so.

DAY 3 - EARTH / SEAS DRY LAND / WATERS

Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together in one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so.

GRASS / HERBS / FRUIT TREES GRASS / HERBS / TREES

Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree which yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth; and it was so.

DAY 4 - SUN / MOON / STARS LIGHT - GREATER & LESSER

Let there be light in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night … and it was so. Then God made two great lights; a greater light to rule the day …

DAY 5 - SEA CREATURES / BIRDS FISH / BIRDS

Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly … Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let the birds multiply …

DAY 6 - CATTLE / CREEPING THINGS / BEASTS ANIMALS

Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind; cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind; and it was so. And God saw that it was good.

MANKIND HUMAN BEINGS – MALE & FEMALE

So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them… Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it.

DAY 7 - REST 7TH DAY SANCTIFIED

Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

C R E A T I O N

IF GOD IS GOD,
HE CAN DO THIS!

IF GOD IS NOT GOD,
THEN NOTHING MATTERS ANYWAY
—THIS LIFE IS ALL THERE IS!

THERE IS NO SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE WHICH REFUTES THE BIBLE ACCOUNT OF CREATION.

YOU CAN BELIEVE IN GOD WITH CERTAINTY BECAUSE OF THE MOUNTAINS OF EVIDENCE THROUGHOUT HISTORY.

AND YOU CAN BELIEVE WHAT GOD SAYS—HE IS TRUSTWORTHY.

— The Creation of Mankind 12

In the beginning, day after day for 6 days, God created all things in the physical universe. **Mankind** was made on the sixth day. In Genesis 1, God said:

Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

First, God created animals on the sixth day; then He made **Man,** then **Woman** to be man's companion. This is described more fully in Genesis 2, when God took dust from the ground and made **Man** and breathed life into him. And God planted the garden of Eden and put man in it, to tend and take care of it. Among the many trees God put in the garden was the ***tree of life,*** and also the ***tree of the knowledge of good and evil,*** a tree from which God told man not to eat or he would die. And God saw that it was not good for man to be alone—he needed a helper who was comparable to him. Then God brought all of the animals before Adam to see what he would name them, but no helper equal to him was found because animals are not made in God's image. So God put Adam to sleep and took a rib from his side. From Adam's side, or rib, God made **Woman**. When God brought her to him, Adam said, ***This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man.*** And God said: ***Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.***

God blessed Adam and Eve and told them to multiply and fill the earth and subdue it. And God saw everything that He had made, and it was very good. Then God rested. God blessed the seventh day and made it holy and sanctified it, because on that day He rested from all the work of Creation. God was not resting because He was tired, but was showing man a cycle of work and rest, which is for his good.

So what is man that God is mindful of him? Like animals, man has a **physical nature**; but unlike animals, man also has a **spiritual nature** and a soul which will return to God. Man alone has the capacity to commune with God in order to develop a relationship for his good, now and through eternity. God gave mankind all of creation to subdue and use. He gave work for Adam and his wife to do in the Garden, as well as rules to follow. Both of them were naked, yet not ashamed, because they had no knowledge of sin. Their lives in the Garden were perfect, and their conversations with God were normal to them. Eventually, man chose not to abide by God's rules and ate of the ***tree of the knowledge of good and evil.*** The impact of their choice dynamically changed their lives and the history of Mankind on earth!

The Creation of Mankind

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*** Gen 1:1

➢ ***So God created man in His own image; in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.*** Gen 1:27

➢ ***Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.*** Gen 1:31

➢ ***Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*** Gen 2:24

1. Who created the ***heavens*** and the ***earth***?
2. God had a purpose in creating the physical realm. ***God saw everything that He had made*** and had what response?
3. Who created Mankind – **man** and **woman**?
4. The creation of man was described in chapter 1. Chapter 2 gives a more detailed account of the Creation of Mankind. From what did God make **man**? From what did God make **woman**?
5. What work did God give for man to do?
6. What prohibition did God give to man?
7. Describe what <u>the life of man</u> in the garden of Eden.
8. Describe and discuss the concept of marriage which is presented in Genesis 2.

Suggestions - This lesson is about God and the Creation of Mankind. It is clear from the Bible that no animal was comparable to man. This is clear from Gen 1:26-27, **MAN** was created in the image of God and animals were not. John 4:23-24 tells us that ***God is Spirit.*** Paul speaks of Mankind as having ***spirit***, ***soul*** and ***body*** (1 Thes 5:23). And Zechariah tells us that God ***forms the spirit of man within him.*** (12:1) So while man is a physical being, he has a spirit within him which is like God's spirit. The spirit in man is what thinks and reasons and understands and disbelieves or believes, sins or obeys, etc. The spirit in man is the part of man that will continue to exist throughout eternity in heaven or in hell. The Bible has much to say about the physical aspects of man, but the emphasis is on the spiritual side of man because of its present and eternal consequences for every human being. What God requires of mankind is therefore important, making it necessary to believe and obey God.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 5 books of the Bible.

— Sin and Its Consequences 13

SIN is disobeying God's law or failing to do what God says for us to do.

Satan took the form of a serpent, the most cunning beast of the field, and tempted Eve to sin against God by saying to her: *Has God indeed said, You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?* Eve told him that they could eat of any tree in the garden, except the tree in the middle of the garden, and that if they ate of it or touched it, they would die. And Satan said: ***You will not surely die.*** *For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.* In other words, Satan said that God was afraid of their becoming like divine beings; therefore, God's motive was selfish and limiting for no reason. After all, he said, she would not really suffer if she ate the fruit. Then Eve saw for herself that the fruit was appealing and delightful to look at (**lust of the eyes**), it was good for food (**lust of the flesh**), and a source of wisdom (**pride of life**). So **she ate of the forbidden fruit** and gave it to her husband, and **he ate**. Having sinned, their eyes were opened to their nakedness—they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.

And when Adam and Eve heard God walking in the garden, they were afraid and hid among the trees of the garden. God called to Adam, who said that he was hiding because he was naked. And God said: ***Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?*** **Adam replied that he ate of the forbidden fruit** because the woman **God** had given to be with him gave it to him. So God turned to Eve and asked what she had done. She answered that **the serpent** had deceived her and she had eaten. First, God cursed the serpent, condemning it to move on its belly and eat the dust of the ground its whole life. Then Satan was cursed: God told him that he would cause some damage to the seed of woman, but that **her seed** (**Jesus**, born of the virgin Mary), would eventually crush and destroy him. To the woman, God said that her pain and sorrow would be increased in bearing children, that her desire would be for her husband, and that her husband would rule over her. To Adam, God said that, because he had listened to his wife rather than to Him, man would work the ground (which would produce thorns and thistles) in the sweat of his brow.

Then Adam named his wife **Eve**, meaning that she **was the mother of all living**. And God made tunics of animal skins and clothed them. Then God said: *Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil.* And to keep Adam from eating of the tree of life (which would allow him to live forever), the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground. Then God placed cherubim with a flaming sword, which turned in every direction, to guard the way to the tree of life. The consequences of sin for Adam and Eve were separation from God and death.

The primary CONSEQUENCE OF SIN is death—physical and spiritual.

Sin and Its Consequences

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?*** Gen 3:11

➢ ***And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.*** Gen 3:15

1. What is SIN?
2. What work had God given man to do in the garden?
3. Of what trees was man permitted to eat?
4. Of what tree was man not permitted to eat?
5. Satan entered what physical creature in order to speak to the woman?
6. There was a discussion between Satan and the woman about the tree in the middle of the garden. Did the woman understand God's command?
7. In the process of tempting the woman, did Satan lie?
8. Satan said that God had a self-serving motive for forbidding the eating of the tree. What did Satan say was this motive?
9. God said, "You will die" if you eat of the forbidden fruit. What did Satan say?
10. What are the 3 avenues which Satan used to tempt the woman?
11. What was the woman's thinking as she considered the fruit to eat or not?
12. Does Satan use the same avenues to tempt us today (1 Jn 2:15-17)?
13. Did the woman sin when she ate of the forbidden fruit?
14. Did Adam sin when he ate of the forbidden fruit?
15. What was the first thing they realized after eating the forbidden fruit?
16. What question did God ask them? [How penetrating was this question?]
17. God questioned them about what happened and why.
    a. Who did the man blame?
    b. Who did the woman blame?
    c. Who did God blame?
18. What did God say to the serpent?
19. What is the meaning of God's statement about **the seed of woman**?
20. What did God say to the man?
21. What does this mean: "For dust you are, and to dust you shall return"?
22. What does the name ***Eve*** mean? Why was she given this name? Explain.
23. Why did God cause Adam and Eve to leave the garden of Eden?

Suggestions - This lesson is about the beginning of sin on the earth which affects every person who has ever lived on the earth. Consider carefully the concept of sin and its consequences. How does this affect people today?

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 8 books of the Bible.

— Worship God - Cain and Abel 14

After leaving the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve had 2 sons: **Cain** and **Abel**. Cain tilled the ground (a farmer) and Abel kept sheep (a shepherd). God wanted sacrifices of animals from both men. But Cain made an offering to God from the produce of the ground, and Abel gave the very best of his flock. So God acknow-ledged Abel's offering, but not Cain's. Cain's response was anger and jealousy toward Abel. So God spoke to Cain, saying that if he followed his own will and not God's, he would be overcome by sin. But Cain refused to change his attitude. And when Cain and Abel went into a field together, **Cain killed his brother Abel**. When God asked Cain where his brother was, he replied that he did not know, and asked God, ***Am I my brother's keeper?*** Then God punished Cain because he had murdered his brother— he complained to God: *My punishment is greater than I can bear! Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will happen that anyone who finds me will kill me.* God promised Cain that whoever killed him would receive 7 times more punishment. Then God put a mark on Cain, so that those who saw him would not kill him. And Cain went out from God's presence.

Cain married and had children. He built the city of Enoch. And from his descendants came the practice of dwelling in tents and keeping livestock, music on stringed and wind instruments, and also the use of metals. Then one of Cain's descendants, Lamech, bragged to his wives in a song that he had killed a young man, but it did not matter, because God would protect him as He had Cain. Lamech originated a law of clan vengeance; but God's law said that whatever a man took— a life or an eye—the same would be taken from him. This was a great moral law. All Mankind would pay exactly the price for **justice** and no more, whether rich or poor.

In the beginning, **men worshiped the one true God**. And they gave offerings to God as proof of their faith. Later, men began to worship many objects and creatures, but it did not please the Creator. The first sin on earth was disobeying God by eating fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The second sin was **not pleasing God in worship**. God wants us to be obedient and true worshipers, not only for God's sake, but for ours as well. How else can we remember that God is our Creator and the Giver of all blessings? In worship, we bind our hearts and minds together with His, renewing and refreshing our spirits. Cain deliberately disobeyed God's instructions for his sacrifice, while Abel carefully obeyed them. Cain was cursed on the earth. And although Abel is no longer on earth, he still speaks through his righteous life, his example of **obedient faith** (Heb 11:4). He wanted to please God and live with Him forever. God gives everyone the opportunity to worship Him.

…True worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. John 4:23-24

Worship God - Cain and Abel

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***Am I my brother's keeper?*** Gen 4:9

➢ ***If you do well, will not you be accepted?*** Gen 4:7

➢ ***By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous…*** Heb 11:4

➢ ***Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.*** Heb 13:15

1. Name the first 2 sons of Adam and Eve.
2. What was Cain's occupation?
3. What kind of offering did Cain bring to worship God?
4. Was God pleased with Cain's offering?
5. It seems that Cain knew what kind of sacrifice to offer, but was unwilling to do so. It seems that he knew that God accepted Abel's sacrifice, but did not accept his. What was Cain's response to this fact?
6. What did God say to Cain about his offering?
7. What was Abel's occupation?
8. What kind of offering did Abel bring to worship God?
9. Was God pleased with Abel's offering?
10. What does the Hebrew writer say about the offering of Abel (Heb 11:4)?
11. Instead of repenting of bringing the wrong kind of offering to God, Cain chose to murder his brother Abel. Why?
12. When God asked Cain if he knew where Abel was, what did Cain respond?
13. Cain's response generates thinking about the responsibility we have to others. Discuss the question carefully: ***Am I my brother's keeper?***
14. As is often the case, a person wallows in sin; then when he has to suffer the consequences of his sin, he says, ***My punishment is greater than I can bear!*** What should we learn from this?
15. The picture of Cain's relationship with God is that the close relationship was broken. What caused this? Does sin cause the same result today?
16. Would you describe the descendants of Cain as "faithful servants of God"?
17. **Pleasing God in worship** was tremendously important in the history of Mankind as is very clear throughout the Bible. Is our worship to God important today?
18. What benefit does God receive from our worship of Him?
19. What benefit do we receive from our worship of God?
20. What kind of worshipers is God seeking to worship Him?

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 8 books of the Bible.

— Seth – Genealogy – Enoch 15

God created man in his likeness and image—pure and sinless. After Cain killed Abel, God graciously gave Adam and Eve a son, **Seth**, in his father's likeness and image, as well as the image of God, to replace Abel. And Seth's son was Enosh:

Then men began to call on the name of the Lord.

After this, the Bible tells of generations of men who multiplied and filled the earth. Following the lineage of Cain for 7 generations shows his descendants as they established themselves with worldly pursuits, openly setting aside God's instructions, so that lust, ungodliness and violence prevailed in Enoch, a city built by Cain and his sons. Cain's line ends with Lamech. Cain and his descendants are mentioned later in the Bible as examples of rebellion, wickedness and violence.

But as we look carefully at the lineage of Seth to Noah before the flood, there were generations of righteous men who were also bound by **the cycle** of birth—multiplying and filling the earth with sons and daughters—and dying. Down through the generations of Seth, there was righteousness until their intermarriage with the wickedness of Cain's descendants left their line with one righteous man: **Noah**. The corruption of righteousness within a long life seems to be a part of why God limited the length of days for man to live on the earth after the flood to about 120 years.

Enoch was a man who was especially righteous and did not die a physical death:

And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

Enoch's son was Methuselah, who lived 969 years—the oldest man. It was necessary for man to live a long life in order to fill the earth with people, to gain knowledge to progress and to continue faith in God's promise of a Deliverer. So Adam was still alive when Lamech was born; Lamech died 5 years before the flood; Methusehah died in the year of the flood! But most importantly, what we learn from Seth's genealogy is that his generations were **righteous** and are an example to us from Adam to Christ! By the time of Noah, most of the human race was evil. This grieved God, and He would have destroyed the world, except that **Noah found grace in His sight**. The righteousness of one man kept the world from being completely destroyed!

When you think that your choice to be a good person—following God's will instead of your own—does not matter in this world, think of the lineage from Seth to Christ, and those beyond, who have brought God's word into your life. What did Seth and those who were his descendants do that made this possible? **Each day they chose to live a life which was pleasing to God.** That means giving up some choices which may be more tantalizing and tempting through the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life; but the reward of **eternal life** makes it worth the effort.

Seth - Genealogy – Enoch

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***Then men began to call on the name of the Lord.*** Gen 4:26

➢ ***And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.*** Gen 5:24

➢ ***But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.*** Gen 6:8

1. What was the effect of **the righteousness of Enosh** on other people?
2. Cain was rebellious toward God and His commands and he became an unrepentant sinner. What was the effect of **his unrighteousness** on his descendants?
3. There is a consistent picture of the contrast between the righteous and the unrighteous. The adage, "Like father, like son" – The son will be like his father. Why is it important for a father to be righteous and set a good example?
4. Gen 6:1-3 – ***"The sons of God"*** has reference to men who are righteous (like Abel). ***"The daughters of men"*** are the daughters of unrighteous men (like Cain). When righteous men were married to unrighteous women, righteousness was corrupted. Discuss this concept in the world today. Is it the same today as in the days of Noah? Are righteousness and unrighteousness characteristics of human beings which have existed since creation and will exist until judgment?
5. How would you describe the person Enoch?
6. What happened to Enoch on account of his righteousness?
7. How would you describe the person Noah?
8. Noah was a preacher of righteousness during the time that he was building the ark (about 120 years). Is it possible to live righteously on the earth while surrounded by unrighteous people? Is it possible to teach God's truth in such circumstances?
9. What did Seth and his descendants choose to do each day?
10. What should you choose to do each day?
11. Name some of the consequences of an unrighteous life.
12. Name some of the blessings of a righteous life.
13. If the flood were to begin today, would God allow you to be saved on the ark?
14. If you died today, would God allow you to enter heaven?
15. Is God pleased by unrighteous behavior? by righteous behavior?

Suggestions - **Righteous people** is the focus of this lesson. The specific examples are sufficient to show the personal value of being righteous. But the impact on God of a person being righteous is of paramount importance. Everyone should consider the power of righteousness in his life for himself, for his family, for the world and for God. Morality, truthfulness, honesty, integrity and faith in God which is clearly seen in the life of a person is a powerful influence for good. God blesses the righteous.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 14 books of the Bible.

— Mankind Becomes Evil – Noah Walks with God 16

It was during the time of Noah when ***God saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*** God was so grieved by Mankind that He said: ***I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.*** But Noah was a **just** man, perfect in his generations, and he walked with God and found grace in His eyes.

How did it happen that Mankind became so wicked that God wanted to destroy the world? We can go back to the beginning, where God gave Mankind everything he needed for the best life possible: a luxurious, perfect place to live; food that was beautiful, delicious, and nutritious; interesting things to do, but no hard work; and fellowship and conversations with his Creator. Was mankind grateful that all his needs were met so fully? All the striving of Mankind is to achieve just such a status. But he was given one law to obey and what did he do? He broke the law and was driven from the garden, losing everything that was perfect and pure. Next, Adam and Eve brought sons into the world. Cain was angry that Abel's sacrifice was accepted and his was not. God spoke to him and said: ***Why are you angry? ...If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.*** Did Cain listen to God's voice? No! You may be surprised that Cain did not listen to God; but we have God's word, and too often we do not listen. Out of anger and jealousy, Cain killed his brother Abel. Separated from God and cursed to be a wanderer all his life, was he repentant? No! Cain's lineage had 7 generations of wickedness until the line simply disappeared.

But there was another line of those who chose **righteousness**. First we can look at Abel, who gave a sacrifice of the best of his flock. God was pleased with his offering because it was done with an obedient heart, according to His instruction. Abel having been killed, the line of Seth becomes the genealogy through which Christ comes. How was Seth able to be righteous when Cain was not? We know that with Seth and his son Enosh, men began to call on the name of the Lord. And we know that this worship included animal sacrifices, which looked forward to the time of the ultimate sacrifice for all mankind in Christ Jesus. These men had to choose not to follow the ways of the world, as well as not living to fulfill their own desires. They had to choose a relationship with God and maintain it throughout their lives to be righteous men. God does not leave us alone to make our way in the world. He has given us laws for our own good, and desires our thanksgiving, prayers, supplications and worship.

And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth … So the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created … But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord…Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God.

Mankind Becomes Evil – Noah Walks with God

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***Truly, this only I have found: that God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes.*** Eccl 7:29

➢ ***Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*** Gen 6:5

➢ ***Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God.*** Gen 6:9

God has given us this record of the history of Mankind so that we can learn from the good examples and the bad ones as well (Rom 15:4). It is very important for our wellbeing that we realize just how things are and how things work. We have learned in this series that God established the order of things in the physical universe. He established the order of things in the world for Mankind. He also established the order of things in the spiritual realm—what is right and what is wrong. It is God's order that we are obligated to follow. If we do not know what God wants, we have no hope. If we know what God wants and do not do it, we have no hope. **We have hope only if we believe and obey God.**

1. Mankind lived in a paradise with every wonderful thing available. Why did Adam and Eve choose to eat of the forbidden fruit?
2. Adam and Eve were driven from the paradise, away from the tree of life, and given work to do that would be difficult and often unpleasant. What can we learn from this story?
3. Since this one story is sufficient to illustrate the blessings associated with doing what is right and the foolishness of doing what is wrong, how did it happen that Mankind became so wicked that God wanted to destroy the world? [Describe the progression of evil in the world and why it did progress this far.]
4. A holy God could not continue to have a close relationship with Adam and Eve after they sinned. How does God feel about us when we sin?
5. God looked at all of His creation and God saw that it was very good. What corrupted the goodness of God's creation?
6. In the days of Noah, what had corrupted the goodness of Mankind?
7. The earth had existed for about 1,500 years at the time of this story. What did God first determine to do to solve the problem of sin on the earth?
8. What caused God to change His mind?
9. It seems that God decided to destroy the bad (or evil) and save the good. How was God going to accomplish this?
10. Discuss the sinfulness of Mankind on the earth.
11. Discuss the righteousness of Noah.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 14 books of the Bible.

— Noah Builds the Ark According to God's Plan 17

During the time of **Noah**, the world had become so wicked that the Lord was grieved about making mankind and determined to destroy the earth and everything in it with a flood of water. God had made mankind to be **good** and to have a good life; but, in fact, Mankind had become so violent and corrupt that his thoughts were only evil continually. One man, Noah, found grace in the eyes of God, as was said of him:

Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God.

So God decided to destroy the world with floodwaters, and to begin again with Noah and his sons after the flood. Therefore, God gave Noah instructions for building an ark upon which he and his family would be saved and a few of all of the creatures of the earth would be preserved. God said to Noah: ***"Make yourself an ark of gopherwood, make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch. And this is how you shall make it: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits."*** There was a lower, second, and third deck, and also a window, and a door in its side. And God also made a covenant with Noah so that he and his wife, and his sons and their wives would enter the ark. Noah was 480 years old when he began to build the ark with room for his sons and their wives who had not yet been born. Noah had 3 sons: **Shem**, **Ham**, **Japheth**. There was room for his families and for 2 of every living creature on the earth, male and female: 7 pairs of clean animals for sacrifice and food, and 2 pairs of unclean animals, and all other food that would be eaten. God gave specific instructions to Noah; and by faith Noah did everything according to all that God commanded him.

Given the conditions of our world today, we might wonder whether we would do everything according to all that God commanded. After all, we are a world full of ideas and improved technologies. The whole world believes in progress. Is it important to follow God's plan, or would it be acceptable—as Cain believed—to do it our own way? What was wrong with offering the fruit of the ground? What would be wrong with not putting pitch inside the ark? This kind of thinking leads us into the wrong attitude altogether. Not only would we change how much pitch, but how many animals would come aboard. The attitude that one instruction is not important would spread to all of God's instructions. We begin to disobey in one point and end with disobedience in many or all points. In Noah's day, the world had grown wicked and violent because mankind refused to live according to God's laws. Once mankind began to make up his own rules, he was moving toward **self-destruction**. God did not create Mankind to live an evil life. God created mankind to be **good** and **faithful** to His laws. Because good actions cause good results, God has given us everything we need to have a good life; but are we willing to do ***everything according to all that God commanded?*** To be pleasing to God, it is necessary to follow His instructions.

Noah Builds the Ark According to God's Plan

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

- ***Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God.*** Gen 6:9
- ***Thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did.*** Gen 6:22
- ***But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for He who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*** Heb 11:6

1. 6:13 - What did God say was going to happen soon?
2. 6:14 - What did God tell Noah to do?
3. What was the length, width and height of the ark in feet and inches? [1 cubit = about 18 inches]
4. From what kind of wood was the ark to be made?
5. What was Noah to put on the inside and on the outside of the ark? Explain.
6. Building the ark was a huge project. Would you have worked for 120 years to build a boat on dry land in anticipation of a flood like no one had ever seen? What do you think people were saying about Noah? Who was correct?
7. There were 3 decks and several rooms. As we contemplate all of the human beings and all of the animals and all of the food and other supplies to be on the ark for 375 days, how was it possible? (One word answers this question.)
8. How old was Noah when he began to build the ark?
9. How old was Noah when he entered the ark?
10. Name Noah's 3 sons.
11. How many people were saved in the ark? Who were they?
12. 1 Pet 3:18-21 What does Peter say about the salvation of Noah and his family?
13. Peter also says that <u>the scene will be just the same</u>, when it is time for the Lord to return for the resurrection of the dead and final judgment, as it was in the days of Noah—they just do not believe God and they therefore will not obey Him and will be lost eternally. Discuss 2 Pet 3:1-18
14. Heb 11:7 What does Hebrews 11 say about the faith of Noah and what he did because of his faith? What was the result?

Suggestions - This lesson shows us how important it is to follow God's instructions. That is what righteousness is. Think about the faith of Noah to continue to believe that what God said would happen would actually happen. Had he lost faith, he probably would have become slack in building the ark, and it would not have been ready when it was needed. Noah's faith caused him to do what God said. Noah's personal faith was the best tool that Noah used in building the ark ***according to all that God commanded him***.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 17 books of the Bible.

— The Flood 18

Before the Lord brought a flood on the earth, He said to Noah,

Come into the ark, you and all your household,
because I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation.

Then He told Noah to bring **7 pairs of clean** animals [suitable for sacrifice and food], male and female, and **2 pairs of unclean** animals, male and female; and also **7 pairs of birds**, male and female, to keep the various species alive on the earth. For the Lord was going to bring water on the earth for 40 days and nights to destroy all living things on the earth. Noah was 600 years old when the flood was on the earth and **he did all that the Lord commanded him**. Then Noah and his sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Noah's wife and his sons' wives entered the ark. Also every kind of beast, cattle and creeping thing, and every kind of bird went into the ark two by two, male and female, as God had commanded him; **and the Lord shut him in.**

Then God caused it to begin to rain on the earth and the fountains of the deep (oceans) were opened. For 40 days the waters on the earth increased and lifted up the ark, and it moved about on the surface of the waters. Everything on the earth was covered with water, even the highest mountains. And every living thing on the earth died. Only Noah and those in the ark with him [8 souls] were saved alive.

After 150 days, God remembered His covenant with Noah and caused a wind to pass over the earth, so that the waters began to dry up. The ark came to rest on top of Mt. Ararat. After 40 more days, Noah opened the window of the ark and sent out a raven and a dove to see if the ground was dry. The raven flew over the waters; but the dove returned, having found no place to rest. Noah waited another 7 days and sent out the dove again, who brought him a fresh olive leaf in her mouth. After another 7 days, Noah sent out the dove, and it did not return. So in the 601st year, the 1st month, the 1st day of the month, the ground was dry enough and Noah removed the covering of the ark. Then God spoke to Noah: ***Go out of the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you. Bring out with you every living thing of all flesh that is with you: birds and cattle and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, so that they may abound on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.*** Noah and his family went out of the ark with all the creatures of the earth.

Then **Noah built an altar to the Lord**, and took of every clean animal and bird, and offered burnt offerings to the Lord. God smelled the smoke of the burnt offerings as a sweet aroma, He said in His heart that He would never again curse the ground for man's sake, even though the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; nor destroy every living thing. And God said: ***While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease.***

The Flood

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***Then the Lord said to Noah, Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation.*** Gen 7:1

➢ ***And Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him.*** Gen 7:5

➢ ***While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease.*** Gen 8:22

1. Why did God cause the flood that covered the earth?
2. Why did God save Noah and his family?
3. Why did God have the animals brought onto the ark?
4. Could we say that God used water to cleanse the earth of sin and evil people?
5. How many clean animals did Noah bring onto the ark?
6. How many unclean animals did Noah bring onto the ark?
7. How many birds did Noah bring onto the ark?
8. This project: the building of the ark, bringing the animals together to enter the ark, the provisions needed for over a year, was a tremendous operation. Consider the work effort needed by Noah (and probably his family) to accomplish this task. Plan, building materials, animals, everything done with a tremendously good work ethic, and yet, this project could not have been done without God. Discuss this project and its satisfactory completion.
9. What made this project necessary?
   a. You may say, God should have … or Why did God not do this or that?
   b. When it comes to sin and forgiveness,
      1) God says what is right and what is wrong.
      2) God says what is sin and what is not.
      3) God says what is necessary for Him to grant forgiveness.
      4) For a person to receive forgiveness, he must accept and follow God's instructions.
   c. God determined what was needed and He brought it to pass. We should not question His judgment. The earth was cleansed. There was a new beginning.

Suggestions - This lesson is **The Flood** which covered the highest mountains on the earth so that every living creature on the earth died except for those who were in the ark. God took these extreme measures because He considered the spiritual condition on men on the earth to be so bad. Consider the overall picture carefully.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 17 books of the Bible.

— God's Covenant with Mankind 19

With the sacrifices of all of the clean animals and birds on the altar he had built, **Noah worshiped God** and **gave thanks to the Lord** for saving him and his family. A sweet aroma went up to God with Noah's offering, and God said that He would never again destroy every living thing by water. Then God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them: ***Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.*** And God put the fear and dread of man into every beast and bird and fish, and in every living creature. And to mankind, He gave for food the herbs (vegetables, grasses, etc.) and the meat of animals. Man was not to eat the blood, since the life is in the blood and was used in worship as a covering for sin. And God said: ***Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man.*** God made a law which said that, for every human life taken by man or beast, a reckoning would be made—a life for a life. Man was not allowed to murder another man because Mankind was made in the image and likeness of God. When a man murders another, he is killing a being who is essentially a whole world himself, with potential for goodness and kindness on the earth, as well as a spiritual being connected directly to God. Every person should have respect for life, especially the life of a human being.

And as for you, be fruitful and multiply;
bring forth abundantly in the earth and multiply in it.

This covenant is a covenant of **LIFE** and the perpetuation of **LIFE** in abundance!

Then God spoke to Noah and his sons to establish a **covenant** with them and their descendants, and with every living creature on the earth. God's covenant said: ***Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.*** Then God said: ***This is the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth.*** So the **RAINBOW** is the symbolic reminder of this covenant promise. Both God and man would be reminded of the covenant between them whenever a rainbow appears in the clouds after a rainfall.

A NEW BEGINNING - The earth was cleansed of evil men and a new beginning was the order of the day through the family of Noah. This included God and man and the character of the relationship between them. This covenant also included every living creature on the earth. The killing of animals for food was sanctioned by God, but man could not eat the blood (the blood must be drained). And God commanded Noah and his sons to multiply and fill the earth. One of Ham's descendants decided to locate in one place and establish a city, thus disobeying God's intention for mankind. Nimrod thought no one could stop him, but God did! The covenant was in effect.

God's Covenant with Mankind

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.*** Gen 9:1

➢ ***Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man.*** Gen 9:6

➢ ***I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth.*** Gen 9:13

1. 8:20 - What did Noah do when he came out of the ark?
2. 8:21 - How did God receive Noah's offering?
3. 8:21 - What did God promise that He would never do again?
4. Compare Genesis 1:28 and 9:1. What is indicated by the statement in Genesis 9:1?
5. God said to produce more human beings. God's covenant with Mankind and the animals of the earth is a covenant of **LIFE**. What was the punishment for murder?
6. What sign did God give of the covenant He had made?
7. The fear and dread of man was placed on what?
8. What did God say that man could have as food?
9. Man was not to eat animals with the blood in the body of the animal (the blood should be drained from the animal before it is prepared as food). Why did God make this prohibition?
10. A person has the right to be a "vegetarian" (a person who does not eat meat), but no one has the right to teach that it is a sin to eat meat. Discuss this principle.
11. Compare some of the things God wanted and required at Creation with what God wanted and required after the flood. Are there any similarities?
12. Discuss **the new beginning**.

Suggestions - This lesson tells us of **a new beginning**. God's Creation was very good. But **SIN** entered the picture and things changed. Mankind was created in innocence; but because of disobedience (sin), innocence was lost and the stated consequence of sin (death) came into play. There were many righteous people over the span of time from Creation to the Flood. But sin became more and more prevalent in the world. It seems that God thought to destroy Mankind; but one man found grace in the eyes of the Lord because he was righteous. God gave him His plan of salvation. Noah believed God and followed God's plan and he was saved. After the flood, God made a covenant with Mankind and all living creatures. That covenant is still in effect today. A part of this covenant shows the respect we should have for life, especially the life of every human being.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 22 books of the Bible.

— Tower at Babel – Nations Divided 20

The sons of Noah who went out of the ark were **Shem**, **Ham**, and **Japheth**. From these men and their wives, the whole earth was populated. Now Noah planted a vineyard. He drank of the wine and was drunk, and lay uncovered in his tent. Ham saw the nakedness of his father and told his brothers, who took a garment on their shoulders and walked backwards with their faces turned away, and covered their father's nakedness. Shem and Japheth showed respect for their father—Ham did not. When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what Ham had done, he said: ***"Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants he shall be to his brethren."*** And, ***"Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem, and may Canaan be his servant. May God enlarge Japheth, and may he dwell in the tent s of Shem; and may Canaan be his servant."*** [Canaan was a descendant of Ham.] His words were prophetic. So Noah lived 950 years.

One of Noah's descendants through Ham was **Nimrod**, who was a mighty hunter before the Lord. At a time when the whole earth had one language and one speech, Nimrod and his family went from the east to the well-watered plain of Shinar and lived there. Then they made bricks and put them together with asphalt to build a city and a tower whose top was in the heavens (sky). He established the city of Babel [later called Babylon], a capital city for an empire. All of these plans were in disobedience to God's command to ***multiply and fill the earth***, and were done out of pride and self-serving ambition. It was all done to make a name for themselves—and so they would not be scattered over the earth as God had commanded. *And the Lord said,"Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do;* ***now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them****. Come,* ***let Us*** *go down and there* ***confuse their language****, that they may not understand one another's speech."* So the Lord confused their language and scattered the people over all the earth. And they stopped building the city, which was called **Babel**, meaning ***to confuse***. Since these men refused to do as God had instructed them, God made them do it. And speaking different languages ended their attempt to build the tower and establish a vast kingdom (likely devoted to heathenism), which finds strength and happiness in the ways of sin rather than in the ways of God. Now the people who spoke the same language gathered together with the result that the nations were divided according to the 3 sons of Noah (Gen 10:32).

Although the descendants of **Ham** were the line through which the enemies of the children of Israel would come, the descendants of **Shem** are the line through which **Abraham** came. We are told that Nahor begot Terah and Terah begot **Abram**, Nahor, and Haran. And Haran begot Lot and died, so that Abram took his nephew Lot with him when God called him to go to a land that He would show him. This was the beginning of God's promises to Abraham and the nation of Israel, his descendants.

Tower at Babel - Nations Divided

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.*** Gen 9:1

➢ ***I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth.*** Gen 9:13

➢ ***Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem.*** Gen 9:26

1. There was **a new beginning** after the flood. From 3 men and their wives, the entire world will be populated. Some of the people became great people as far as this world is concerned. Others were great people as far as God is concerned. What were the names of the 3 sons of Noah?
2. Noah prophesied about his 3 sons after the incident with drunkenness. What can we learn from these words?
3. What was the name of the tower that man sought to build to make a name for himself?
4. Why was building this tower a bad thing?
5. As God thought about the nature of man and looked at what man was attempting to do, what did God say about man?
6. Since men had so much dominion on the earth and were all working together on a project God did not want, what did God decide to do?
7. What was the result?
8. According to what were the nations divided in the earth?
9. We are able to see the names of the descendants of Shem, Ham and Japheth in the Bible. As we locate these names on a map of the cities and countries, we are able to understand where the descendants of these men lived and see that what the Bible said is accurate. Locate Babel on a map.
10. The lineage of **Shem** (Shemites or Semites) is the line through whom **Abraham** would come. Who was Abram's father?

Suggestions - This lesson sums up the human experience on earth from the flood to Abraham. With Abraham came a new way for God to deal with Mankind. The earth had existed for about 1656 years when The Flood came. The Tower of Babel was about 1757 a.m. Then, about 2083 a.m., God made promises to Abraham which were the basis for God's chosen people (Israel) and the coming of the Messiah (Christ) into the world to make **salvation** and **eternal life** available for every human being. Consider the progression or digression of the human race from Creation to the flood. Then consider the same thing from the flood to The Tower of Babel. What happens to people when they live their lives? What happens to you?

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 22 books of the Bible.

— Review Lessons 11 - 20 R 2

This group of lessons is about the foundations of the physical realm and life and the quality of life for Mankind. The physical aspects of man's existence are not too complicated. God institutes marriage for the benefit of Mankind. This continues to be the foundation for order and happiness for Mankind on the earth. The spiritual being that man is becomes the dominant part of the story of the Bible, especially, his relationship with a God who is spirit. The moral character and integrity of Mankind is so important. But faith in God and obedience to Him is supreme. It is the subject of the entire Bible and it permeates every aspect of our existence. The implications for our daily lives and for eternity must be noted to gain the message of the story.

11 – The beginning of the physical universe occurred when God created the heavens and the earth out of nothing (physical). He created everything in which is life—God is the source of all life. He set everything in order for the physical universe—day and night; the seasons; everything living must produce after its kind; etc. God created Mankind. He brought every living animal to Adam so that he could name them. There was no mate found for Adam which would be comparable to him.

12 – God also created Mankind—man and woman. He gave Mankind some things to do and some things not to do. This was a perfect place for Mankind to live—the paradise of God. There was no hard work. They could eat all of the herbs, grasses and fruit of all of the trees, except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

13 – SIN entered the world when Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit. God had given a command—Do not eat of the tree which is in the middle of the garden—Eve knew what God said; Eve understood what God said—she chose to disobey God. The text says that Satan deceived her. This is the story of sin. This is the story of the world. When they sinned, **the consequences of sin** began to take hold—they knew that they were naked (they were no longer innocent)—they were driven from the garden and began the process that leads to physical death (they no longer had access to the tree of life)—they died a spiritual death in their relationship with God. Sin brings death.

14 – Worship God means that God is the focus of the activity which is done to show reverence to Him and is according to what He has commanded us to do. **Abel** demonstrated his faith by offering the kind of sacrifice that God had commanded in the manner prescribed by Him—his sacrifice pleased God and was acceptable to God. **Cain** demonstrated a rebellious spirit by refusing to offer the kind of sacrifice that God had commanded—his sacrifice did not please God and was not accepted by Him. We must worship God ***in spirit and in truth***.

15 – **Seth** came to be in the lineage of the Messiah after Cain killed Abel. (Abel was dead and Cain did not qualify.) His life and the life of his son caused people to ***call on the name of the Lord*** (appeal to what God had said for their actions). Seth's descendants chose each day to live a life which was pleasing to God. They are an example for us to follow. In this lineage was **Enoch** whom God took to heaven without physical death occurring because he was **a righteous man**.

16 – How did it happen that mankind became so wicked that God wanted to destroy the world? Over 1,500 years after Creation, God said that it is time—enough is enough—I will not tolerate this on and on. It seems that God decided to destroy every living thing that He had created—but **ONE RIGHTEOUS PERSON** named **NOAH** found grace in the eyes of the Lord—Noah walked with God. The Lord said that He would destroy the earth with a flood of waters but that He would save Noah and his family and the animals that God wanted Noah to take on the ark that he would build. Think about the power that a person has in the sight of God if he is righteous.

17 – **NOAH** continued in his faithful service to God during the 120 years that it took to build the ark. Noah did ***everything according to all that God commanded*** him. Mankind was on a willful path of **self-destruction** while Noah was on the path of **salvation**. To be pleasing to God, it is necessary to follow His instructions.

18 – The ark was completed and it was time for the destruction which God had promised; so He said to Noah, ***Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation.*** Noah and his family entered the ark along with 7 pairs (male and female) of clean animals and birds and 2 pairs of unclean animals. Just as God had said; ***and the Lord shut him in***. It began to rain and the fountains of the deep were opened. **THE FLOOD** increased until the highest mountains were covered. They were on the ark for 375 days.

19 – When God told Noah to leave the ark, ***Noah built an altar and worshiped God***. This was very pleasing to God. God made some promises about the earth and also made a covenant with Mankind and every living thing on the earth—God would never again destroy the earth with a flood of waters and the order for the earth that God had established would continue as long as the earth existed. The **RAINBOW** is the sign of that covenant. **LIFE** is the most significant factor in what God is saying to Noah and Mankind. The most significant concept of the Bible is **Eternal Life**.

20 – After the flood, God commanded Mankind to ***multiply and fill the earth***. Man decided to work together to build a tower into the heavens and make a name for themselves. This was against God's plan. He said, ***Now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them.*** The power of people working together is amazing. The people had one language; so God confused their language. They ceased building the tower. The people were divided according to the 3 sons of Noah. This brings us to Abram and God's promises which affect every human being.

— Review Series Lessons 1 - 20 S 2

Group 1 - The lessons in Group 1 described in a concise way some important observations about **THE CONTENTS OF THE BIBLE.** Should we read the Bible? Should we believe the Bible? The Bible is the Word of God. It should therefore be treated with respect. We should all desire to know what God has said and what it means to us today. A Timeline of the events recorded in the Bible helps us to put the information into perspective. An Introduction is given to the Old Testament and the New Testament. Why are there 2 testaments? Which one are we to follow, or should we follow both? There was a Period of Silence for 400 years during which time God did not speak to Mankind through the prophets in a manner to be recorded. We give some historical information briefly for this extraordinary period of history. Then the Bible is summarized – some key events and concepts are mentioned.

The Book of Genesis is a foundation of what it is all about. It contains the Creation of the physical universe and Mankind. It tells about the beginning of sin on the earth. We can see clearly the adverse effects of sin. We see that God had a plan for the salvation of Mankind before Mankind ever existed. When sin occurred, God immediately mentioned that one would come to crush the head of Satan. The lineage of the Messiah (Christ) is carefully documented until He is born in Bethlehem of Judea, about 4000 years later.

The Story of the Bible tells us about the relationship between God and Man from Creation until the Day of Final Judgment. What type of relationship does God want with man? We see this from the stories of the lives of people that are recorded for us in the Bible. We also see the attitudes and behaviors that do not please God.

The story continues for about 4100 years. We are able to learn about God and His purpose for Mankind. We are able to learn about what God did to allow Mankind to be saved from sin. The promises of God give us the assurance and hope of life eternal in heaven with God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the holy angels and all the saved of the earth. The story describes the victory in Jesus for those who believe and obey God.

Group 2 - The lessons in Group 2 tell us about **THE BEGINNING** and Creation and **THE EARLY HISTORY OF MANKIND.** They explain where we came from, who we are, and what we are. The significance of **God the Creator** to every human being is made clear. **LIFE** and all that connects to our lives is important. **SIN** destroys and brings death. God cleansed the earth of sinners with the flood; but **He saved 8 people** from that destruction because they were ***righteous***. God provides a **remedy for sin** which He made available through ***Jesus Christ***. After the flood, God made a covenant with Mankind. Then men tried to make a name for themselves instead of honoring and praising God.

Working together, there was no limit to what man could do. So God caused the people in different families (who lived in different regions) to speak different languages. Without communication, they did not work together for the purposes which they had devised. And God's purposes for Mankind began to be realized.

God is the Creator of all things. God is the Creator of Mankind. He gives to us life, breath and all things. He has also given us spiritual life. That life is realized through His Son, Jesus Christ. The Story of the Bible tells about many occasions and circumstances of God's dealing with Mankind. These were written down for our learning so that we could have hope (Rom 15:4). One example after another shows us the simplicity of the fact that if we will do what God says, God will accept us and have fellowship with us. That fellowship is available to every human being. It is a fellowship that exists while we live on earth and will continue to exist throughout eternity. Believe in God, believe God and walk with God.

Group 3 - The lessons in Group 3 will tell us of a family which believed in the God of heaven. God blessed this family and made it into a great nation, The promise of salvation came through this family/nation and was fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

The Story of the Bible is the wonderful story of
THE ETERNAL PURPOSE OF GOD and
GOD'S PLAN FOR THE SALVATION OF MANKIND.

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

- ***In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*** Gen 1:1
- ***So God created man in His own image; in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.*** Gen 1:27
- ***Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.*** Gen 1:31
- ***Am I my brother's keeper?*** Gen 4:9
- ***If you do well, will not you be accepted?*** Gen 4:7
- ***Then men began to call on the name of the Lord.*** Gen 4:26
- ***But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.*** Gen 6:8

Suggestions - This lesson reviews Lessons 1-20 and gives an overview of these lessons. The Bible is easier to comprehend if we understand where the information fits in history, the physical location and the people involved. The relationship of God with His people is what is most important. God blesses people with tangible things and also with intangible things. Consider some ways that God blesses people.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 22 books of the Bible.

WE HAVE COVERED IN THE BIBLE

4004 BC CREATION 0 AM

THE CREATION OF ALL THINGS IN THE PHYSICAL UNIVERSE.
THE CREATION OF MANKIND—ADAM AND EVE.
SIN ENTERED THE WORLD WHEN ADAM AND EVE SINNED.
GOD'S ETERNAL PURPOSE AND GOD'S PLAN FOR
THE SALVATION OF MANKIND BEGAN TO UNFOLD.

2348 BC FLOOD 1656 AM

GOD DESTROYED THE EARTH AND THE PEOPLE ON THE EARTH WITH
A FLOOD OF WATERS BECAUSE OF THE SINFULNESS OF MANKIND.
BUT NOAH FOUND GRACE IN THE EYES OF THE LORD.
GOD SAVED SOME OF ALL TYPES OF CREATURES ON THE ARK.
GOD SAVED NOAH AND HIS FAMILY BECAUSE THEY WERE
RIGHTEOUS—8 SOULS.

1921 BC PROMISES 2083 AM

GOD MADE SOME PROMISES TO ABRAHAM:
NATION - SEED - LAND
THE NATION PROMISE WAS FULFILLED IN EGYPT.
THE LAND WAS FULFILLED WHEN ISRAEL POSSESSED CANAAN.
THE SEED PROMISE WAS FULFILLED IN JESUS CHRIST.

BOOK 1 **GROUP 3**

Series 701	*THE STORY OF THE BIBLE*
Group 3	**MANKIND AND GOD - Relationships**
Subtopic	**God's Chosen People**
En 701-021	God Chose Abram - Abram and God
En 701-022	Abram and Lot - Melchizedek
En 701-023	Abram, Ishmael and God - Hagar
En 701-024	Abraham, Isaac and God - Sarah
En 701-025	God Destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah - Lot Is Spared
En 701-026	The Sacrifice of Isaac - a type of the sacrifice of Christ
En 701-027	Isaac and Rebekah - Eliezer
En 701-028	Jacob and Esau - Jacob and Rachel and Leah (Bilhah, Zilpah)
En 701-029	Laban and Jacob - Jacob and his wives-God blesses Jacob
En 701-030	Jacob and His Family - Jacob Is Blessed
En 701-R03	Review Lessons 21-30
En 701-S03	Review Series Lessons 1-30

AUTHORS: MEREDITH R. CHILDRESS / RONALD B. ROARK

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— God Chose Abram - Abram and God 21

Now God looked upon all the men living on the earth and saw Abram, a descendant of Shem after the flood. And God chose Abram to receive His blessings and promises. God told Abram to leave the country of his birth and go to a land that He would show him. Abram left Ur of the Chaldeans with his wife Sarai, his father Terah, his brother Nahor with his wife Milcah, and his nephew Lot (the son of his brother Haran). They traveled as God directed them to go to the land of Canaan. They lived in the fruitful plains of Haran until Terah died, then traveled to Bethel.

When God appeared to Abram in Ur, He made these promises (Gen 12:2-3):

- ***I will make of you a great nation;***
- ***I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing.***
- ***I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.***

Abram believed God and took his wife and nephew and went to the land of Canaan. In Canaan, God again appeared to him and promised to give the land of Canaan to Abram and his descendants. There Abram built an altar to the Lord, and worshiped the one true God, openly confessing his faith in God and belief in His promises.

When a severe famine came to Canaan, Abram took Sarai and Lot and went to live in Egypt. Just before they entered Egypt, Abram asked Sarai to tell the Egyptians that she was his sister, so that, when they saw her beauty, they would not kill him and take her. But Pharaoh heard of Sarai's beauty, and she was taken into his house. Abram was favored with sheep, oxen, donkeys, camels and servants. Then the Lord sent plagues on Pharaoh's house because of Sarai. And Pharaoh asked Abram why he had said that Sarai was his sister, since Pharaoh might have taken her as his wife. Then Pharaoh sent Abram on his way back to Canaan with his wife and possessions. And so they returned with riches of livestock, silver and gold to the place of Abram's first altar to God at Bethel, where Abram again ***called on the name of the Lord.***

So God chose Abram and his family from all the families on earth to carry His blessings and promises. But Sarai was barren and Abram had no offspring. Through this fact, Abram's faith was once again severely tested by God. [God is promising all of these things for the descendants of Abram; but Abram did not have any children.] <u>This promise became a covenant</u> as God continued to speak with Abram and deal favorably with him. This covenant applied to the people of Israel (descendants of Abram through Isaac and Jacob) which God acknowledged many years later when Israel was in Egypt, Ex 6:1-8. <u>Christ is the fulfillment of the last part of the promise</u>, ***and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*** Gal 3:16 The story in this lesson is the basis of everything that follows in all of the Bible. Consider it carefully.

God Chose Abram - Abram and God

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

- ***In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*** Gen 1:1
- ***Then men began to call on the name of the Lord.*** Gen 4:26
- ***But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.*** Gen 6:8
- ***And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*** Gen 12:3

1. What was the name of Abram's father?
2. He was a descendant of which son of Noah?
3. What were the names of Abram's brothers?
4. What was the name of Haran's son who went with Abram to Canaan?
5. Abram lived in Ur of the Chaldeans when God spoke to him. Locate ***Ur*** on a map.
6. When God told Abram, ***Get out of your country … to a land that I will show you***, what did Abram do?
7. ***Blessing*** is the most significant part of God's promises to Abram. God blesses people with both tangible and intangible things. God blesses people with life, health and material things. God blesses people with strength, power, and spiritual things. God blesses people with promises, salvation and hope.
   Discuss the promises which God made to Abram. Gen 12:1-3, 7
8. Describe in your own words the kind of faith that Abram had in God.
9. When Abram went to Egypt because of a famine, what did he ask Sarai to do?
10. Was Sarai Abram's half sister? What was the result of Abram's deception?
11. What did Abram do when he returned to Bethel in Canaan?
12. We who are in the world today are blessed by God's promises to Abram. Through what person who descended from Abram are we blessed today?

Suggestions - This lesson is about a man named **Abram** and his family. The events of this story are the basis for everything that happens and is recorded in the remainder of the Bible (more than 2,000 years of history). The significance of this story is mentioned many times in many parts of the Bible as we will learn throughout the study of these lessons. The promises to Abram, for example, will be discussed by God and Abram over a period of time, in which it becomes clearer what God intended to accomplish through this relationship with Abram. Consider carefully the fact that God chose Abram out of all of the people on the earth and that these promises were intended eventually to bless all of the people in the world.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 5 books of the Bible.

— Abram and Lot – Melchizedek 22

Now Abram came up out of Egypt with Sarai, Lot, and his riches of cattle, silver and gold. And he ***called on the name of the Lord*** at Bethel, where he had built an altar earlier. Abram's nephew Lot also had many flocks, herds and tents. Over time, Abram's herdsmen began to quarrel with Lot's herdsmen over land. The Canaanites and Perizzites also lived in the land at this time. So Abram said to Lot that they were kinsmen and should not be quarreling, especially since there was much land. It would be better for them to separate from each other. So he gave Lot first choice of the land that he would occupy. Lot chose the best land for raising cattle, well-watered with quality grass, much like the garden of the Lord. Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom, where the men were very wicked and sinful against the Lord.

But Abram stayed in the hill country of Canaan. God told him to look in every direction and see the land that would be given to him and his offspring forever, and walk in that land ***for I give it to you***. And God also promised that his offspring would be as numerous as the dust of the earth. Then Abram moved his tent to Hebron, and ***built an altar there*** and worshiped God.

Then there was a war between opposing kings in Canaan. The invading kings took the wealth of Sodom and Gomorrah, as well as Lot and his family. A fugitive from the war brought the news to Abram of Lot's capture. So Abram took 318 trained and armed servants of his household and deployed against the invaders, followed them for 150 miles, and defeated them. He brought back all of the goods, Lot and his possessions, plus the women and the rest of the people. And when Abram came back from defeating the invading kings, he was met by the king of Sodom and also by ***Melchizedek***, who was the ***king of Salem*** and the ***priest of God Most High***. Since Abram was the victor, he had the right to all of the spoils and all of the people. The king of Sodom told Abram to take all of the goods, but he asked that the people be returned to Sodom. But Abram wanted none of the spoils and refused his offer, except for the food which they had eaten and a portion for the men with him — this was because Abram knew that it was God who had defeated their enemies.

Melchizedek means "king of righteousness" and "king of peace". The person Abram is pictured in the Bible as **the Father of the faithful**. But Melchizedek is pictured as being greater than Abram in this story. Melchizedek believed in the one true God and served Him as a priest. Melchizedek brought bread and wine to meet Abram when he returned victorious. He blessed Abram, saying: ***Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand.*** The text shows that the lesser person is blessed by the greater person. Abram gave him a tithe (one-tenth) of all. [Melchizedek is a king-priest — a type of Christ (see Heb 7:1-4,20-28).]

Abram and Lot – Melchizedek

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***Now the Lord had said to Abram:***

Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you.
I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing.
I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Gen 12:1-3

1. What was the name of Abram's nephew who accompanied him in Canaan?
2. What kind of problems did Abram's herdsmen have with Lot's herdsmen?
3. What solution did Abram suggest?
4. What choice did Lot make?
5. What did Lot's choice indicate about his consideration for Abram?
6. What promise did God make to Abram about the land?
7. What did Abram do after God visited with him?

- It was a common thing for a king from one country to join with the king of another country to fight against a common enemy or for a common goal. Some kings decided to attack "the cities of the plain". The "spoils of war" (clothing, gold, silver people, etc.) would belong to the victor. The invaders were victorious. However, Abram learned of the war and Lot being taken captive. He took his trained men and pursued the invaders and was victorious.

8. Who met Abram when he returned?
9. What request did the king of Sodom make? Was the request granted? Why?
10. What did the king of Salem bring with him for Abram?
11. What other office did Melchizedek hold?
12. What did Melchizedek do for Abram?
13. What did Abram do for Melchizedek?
14. The king-priest <u>type</u> represented a person in the future. Who? Is this important?

Suggestions - Lot chose what he thought for the best land for himself. He should have deferred to Abram. The lesson demonstrates the importance of brotherhood. It also shows the importance of being prepared to defend yourself. Abram realized that God had given the victory. He refused to be rightfully enriched at the expense of God. The king of Sodom was more concerned about the people than the goods. Melchizedek blessed Abram. Abram gave Melchizedek one-tenth. **God dominates this story.**

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 5 books of the Bible.

— Abram, Ishmael and God – Hagar 23

Although God had promised Abram that the families of the earth would be blessed through him, he and Sarai were still childless. But God appeared to Abram and repeated His promise that his descendants would be as countless as the stars, and the land of Canaan would be theirs after a period of 400 years, a time when the judgment of God would come upon Egypt and the inhabitants of the land of Canaan. As a sign of this covenant, Abram offered animal sacrifices to God on an altar.

When Sarai saw that she was childless, she asked Abram to take her Egyptian maidservant, Hagar, for his wife. As was the custom, the child would be his heir. Abram listened to his wife, and Hagar conceived a child, but she despised her mistress because of it. Sarai found this very hard to bear, and treated Hagar so harshly that she ran away to the desert. Hagar followed the trade route to Shur, a road which passed through the Sinai peninsula. It was fearsome country with eroded hills and constant wind. Alone and unaided, it took great effort, but she got almost to Egypt. And it was there beside a spring, that the Angel of the Lord found her and told her to submit to Sarai, because God had heard her cry and would make her son the father of multitudes. The Angel of the Lord also said: ***Behold, you are with child, and you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, because the Lord has heard your affliction. He shall be a wild man; his hand shall be against every man and every man's hand against him.*** And Abram was 86 years old when Ishmael was born.

Then God appeared to Abram again when he was 99 years old and changed his name to **Abraham**, which means "the father of multitudes." And God now gave Abraham **a sign of the covenant** between them: all males in his household were to be circumcised of the foreskin; those born into his household were to be circumcised at 8 days old. Again Abraham believed God and obeyed Him. Abraham took every male in his household and circumcised them, so that they would not be cut off from their people (for any Hebrew not circumcised would have broken the covenant with God). God changed Sarai's name to Sarah. She conceived and Isaac was born.

When Isaac was about 2 years old, his mother weaned him, and Abraham had a great feast in honor of the occasion. When Sarah saw Ishmael, now about 16 years old, mocking Isaac, she was offended. She told Abraham to send Hagar and Ishmael away, which displeased Abraham, but God told him to listen to her. So Hagar and Ishmael were sent away with bread and water. They were dying of thirst in the desert when God heard the boy's cry and showed Hagar a well of water. <u>God promised Hagar that He would make a great nation of Ishmael</u>. So they lived in the Wilderness of Paran, which is today called Arabia, and Hagar took a wife for him from Egypt. And Ishmael became the father of 12 chieftains and many descendants.

Abram, Ishmael and God – Hagar

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

- ***Now the Lord had said to Abram:***

  Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you.
  I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing.
  I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Gen 12:1-3

- ***Behold, you are with child, and you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, because the Lord has heard your affliction. He shall be a wild man; his hand shall be against every man and every man's hand against him.*** Gen 16:11f

- ***For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens.*** Heb 7:26

1. Why did Sarai give Hagar to Abram to be his wife?
2. What happened between Hagar and Sarai when Hagar conceived?
3. Hagar left the house and was fleeing toward Egypt. What did an Angel say to her?
4. How old was Abram when Ishmael was born?
5. How old was Abram when God changed his name to **Abraham**?
6. What does the name "Abraham" mean?
7. What was **the sign of the covenant** which God gave to Abraham?
8. The sign of the covenant was for Abraham and his descendants through Isaac and Jacob. It was a part of the Law of Moses which was given to the nation of Israel who came to be known as the Jews. Is this **sign of the covenant** effective for God's people today? (Who are God's people today?) Gal 3:26-29; 5:1-6
9. Ishmael is considered to be the father of what people?

God makes it clear that Ishmael and his descendants are not included in the covenant that God made with Abraham. Ishmael would be blessed and his descendants would become a great nation. But the spiritual blessings of God's covenant with Abraham would be available only through Isaac and Jacob. Jesus Christ descended from Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, David… This lineage is important as is shown clearly in the New Testament.

Suggestions - Please understand that God did not cause hatred between nations or between races. But He did require separation so that His purpose could be accomplished. After His purpose was accomplished in Christ, there was no longer the need for any separation or distinction. All peoples from all races and all nations are acceptable to God if they believe and obey God according to the gospel of Christ.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 8 books of the Bible.

— Abraham, Isaac and God - Sarah 24

Then God said to **Abraham** that his wife would no longer be called Sarai, but **Sarah**, which means "princess" (may also mean "fruitful"). And God promised to give him a son by her, but Abraham had difficulty accepting it. He said to God that he wished that Ishmael would be his heir. But God said that his covenant with Abraham would be with his son by Sarah, and his name would be **Isaac**, meaning "to laugh".

One day 3 "men" appeared to Abraham; two were angels and one was the Lord. They asked for Sarah, who was in the tent. She heard Him say that she would have a son and laughed, because she and Abraham were past child-bearing age. But He said,

Is anything too hard for the Lord?

Abraham and Sarah were living in Gerar when Abraham again asked Sarah to say she was his sister, because he feared that he would be killed and Sarah taken. But Abimelech, the king, sent men who brought Sarah into his house. Then God said to him that he was a dead man, because Sarah was the wife of a prophet. Abimelech had integrity of heart, and God did not let him touch Sarah. But he was told that he must restore Sarah to her husband, or he and his household would die. So Abimelech gave Abraham sheep, oxen, servants, and restored Sarah to him. He also gave him 1,000 pieces of silver so that Sarah would be vindicated in the eyes of everyone.

About 25 years after the promise was first given, the Lord visited Sarah and she conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age (he was 100 years old)! Abraham called him **Isaac** and circumcised him when he was 8 days old, just as God had said.

Sarah lived 127 years and died in Hebron. Abraham mourned her and wept for her. Then he asked the Hittites for a burial place, since he was a foreigner with no land there. Abraham was respected as a prince among them; so they all offered to give him the best burial places. He asked the sons of Heth to arrange the purchase of the cave of Machpelah for him. Ephron, the Hittite, offered the cave and the adjacent field to him for free; but Abraham paid the full price of 400 shekels of silver. And so Abraham buried his wife Sarah in the cave of Machpelah in the land of Canaan.

The idea of ***Blessing*** is the most significant part of God's promises to Abram. God blessed Abram with a son named Ishmael of whom God promised to make a great nation. But the blessing to **Abraham** of his son **Isaac,** who was born to **Sarah**, was the fulfillment of God's promise to him. A part of this blessing was a covenant between God and man in which God said that He would bless this people and the people covenanted to believe and obey God. The physical elements of this covenant, such as **the land promise** and **the nation promise**, were very important; but the spiritual elements, such as **the seed promise** (Jesus Christ) and Salvation from Sin and eternal life in heaven, which God intended to provide for Mankind through Jesus Christ were the most important part of these promises!

Abraham, Isaac and God – Sarah

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***Now the Lord had said to Abram:***

Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you.
I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing.
I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Gen 12:1-3

➢ ***To your descendants I have given this land …*** Gen 15:18

➢ ***Is anything too hard for the Lord?*** Gen 18:14

1. God changed Sarai's name to **Sarah**. What does the name "Sarah" mean?
2. Abraham asked God to allow Ishmael to be his heir and thereby participate in the covenant with God according to the promises of God. What was God's response?
3. The appearance of 3 "men" (Gen 18) is one of the most important in the Old Testament story. The announcement of the birth of the promised son to Abraham and Sarah. What was the name of the son who was born to Abraham and Sarah?
4. What does the name "Isaac" mean?
5. The general laws pertaining to conceiving and giving birth would say that it was not possible for Abraham and Sarah to have a child. What was God's response?
6. In Gerar, what did God say to Abimelech about Sarah's husband?
7. How old was Abram when God first spoke to him and gave the promises?
8. How old was Abraham when Isaac was born?
9. What can we learn from this?
10. How old was Sarah when she died? Where was she buried?
11. Discuss God's promises and covenant with Abraham and his descendants.

God makes it clear that Isaac is the son of promise and the son of the covenant and not Ishmael. The blessings of God through the covenant with Abraham would be available only through Isaac and Jacob. Jesus Christ is the ultimate fulfillment of God's ***seed*** promise.

Suggestions - God chose Abraham and his descendants through Isaac to bless. He was their God and they were His people. God became the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as was stated clearly by Jesus Himself (Matt 22:32). The covenant which is mentioned in this lesson is the basis for the continuing relationship between God and His people. We have a New Covenant, established by Jesus Christ, which provides for a continuing personal relationship with God, which will continue eternally.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 14 books of the Bible.

— God Destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah – Lot Was Spared 25

Now the angels and the Lord were going to the city of Sodom to see if the city was as wicked as it seemed. And the Lord decided to tell Abraham that He was planning to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah since Abraham was to become the father of many nations who would be blessed through him. And when Abraham heard what He was about to do, he asked God to spare the city if there were 50 righteous people there. Then Abraham asked about 40, then 30, then 20, and at last 10. But there were not 10 righteous people in Sodom. Only Lot was called ***righteous*** (2 Pet 2:6-8). So the angels left Abraham and went to destroy those wicked cities.

The two men (angels) went to Sodom in the evening where Lot was sitting at the gate of the city. He asked them to stay at his house and leave early the next morning. After eating, but before they could go to bed, the men of the city were banging at the door to take the visitors and know them carnally. Lot offered his daughters instead, but they demanded the men. The angels pulled Lot into the house, and then struck the men of the city blind; but they still struggled to find the door. The angels told Lot to collect his family members, and leave Sodom because it was going to be destroyed. But Lot's two sons-in-law thought he was joking and would not leave.

The next morning, the angels told Lot to take his family and get out quickly or they might be consumed as well. As Lot lingered, the angels took them by the hand and led them out of the city, God being merciful to them. The angel warned them to escape for their lives to the mountains and not to look behind them as they fled. But Lot asked that a small city be spared and that they be allowed to flee there instead. His request was granted. Then the Lord rained down brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, on all the plain, on all the cities, all the inhabitants, and all that grew on the ground, except for the city of Zoar, to which Lot fled. As they were leaving, Lot's wife looked back and she became a pillar of salt. Lot was so frightened by all that was happening that he went on to the mountains and lived in a cave with his 2 daughters. His daughters realized that there were no men to give them children except their father. So they gave him wine to drink so that he would not know what they did, and both daughters came to be with child by their father. The older bore Moab, the father of the Moabites. The younger bore Ben-Ammi, the father of the Ammonites. Both of these nations were bitter enemies of the children of Israel later in history.

The sin of homosexuality came to be called "sodomy" because of the events of this narrative. Consider carefully the fact of God's judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah because of this sin. God considered all of the nations who participated in this sin to be defiled. God said that He would cause the people to be expelled from their land in the same way that a person who is sick vomits. The same applies today.

God Destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah – Lot Was Spared

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***Is anything too hard for the Lord?*** Gen 18:14

➢ ***But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.*** Gen 19:26

➢ ***And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot had dwelt.*** Gen 19:29

1. Why were the angels and the Lord going to Sodom?
2. God told Abraham about the punishment that He intended for Sodom and the cities of the plain. Upon what basis did the Lord agree with Abraham's request?
3. Can you understand the mercy of God better by considering this negotiation?
4. As the 2 angels came to Sodom, who met them at the gate of the city?
5. Lot invited them to his house. Who came to the house later? What did they want?
6. How dangerous was this situation? What did Lot offer to them?
7. After they refused Lot's offer, what did the angels do to those outside the house?
8. What did these blind men continue to do? (What can we learn from this?)
9. What did the angels tell Lot was going to happen? What must they do?
10. What was the response of the 2 men who were married to Lot's daughters when Lot told them about the coming destruction and the necessity of leaving Sodom?
11. They were told to leave Sodom and not to look back. What did Lot's wife do? What was the result?
12. To what city did Lot and his daughters flee?
13. Lot became afraid of what might happen in the city, so where did he go?
14. What did his daughters do? With what result?
15. Discuss the **sin** called "sodomy" or **"homosexuality"**.

— Homosexuality is a man having a sexual relationship with a man. A woman having a sexual relationship with a woman is also homosexuality. Any relationship of this kind is always condemned in the Bible as **sin**. In the Old Testament, any person committing this sin was to be put to death. This sin is against God's laws of nature. This sin is against God's laws of morality as shown: (a) in this story (b) in the law of Moses and (c) in the New Testament. Some people try to say that this is not a sin because some people are born that way. That is a lie! God could not justly condemn anyone for this sin if He created him that way. So anyone saying this is accusing God of being unjust. The sexual relationship in marriage is honorable; but any other sexual relationship is sin. (Heb 13:4; Gen 1:26-28; 2:18-25; 24:67; Lev 18:22-24; 20:13; Rom 1:26-32; 1 Cor 6:9-11; 2 Pet 2:4-11; Jude 1:7)

Suggestions - This lesson is about **sin** and its consequences. If a sin or a sinner has not yet been punished does not mean that he will not be. God will punish sinners. But God provides forgiveness for anyone who will repent of his sins and obey Him.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 17 books of the Bible.

— The Sacrifice of Isaac - a type of the sacrifice of Christ 26

About 25 years after God's promises were given, Abraham and Sarah were given a son, Isaac. But when Isaac was about 25 years old, God said to Abraham:

Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you. Gen 22:2

And so Abraham got up early the next morning, saddled his donkey, split wood for the altar, took 2 of his young men, and went toward the mountain with Isaac.

On the third day, Abraham left the 2 young men with the donkey, and told them that he and Isaac would go up the mountain to worship and return to them. Isaac carried the wood, and Abraham carried the knife and the fire. When Isaac asked about a lamb for the burnt offering, Abraham said, ***My Son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.*** On the mountain, Abraham built an altar, placed the wood on it, bound Isaac, and laid him on the wood on the altar. Then Abraham took the knife in his hand to kill his son. But the Angel of the Lord called to him and told him not to harm Isaac. Because Abraham was willing to give his only son to God, He knew that Abraham truly feared (respected) Him. Then Abraham saw a ram which was caught in a thicket by its horns; and he sacrificed it instead of Isaac. Not only do we learn about Abraham's strong faith, but we also learn about the submission of Isaac to his father and to the will of God even though it would cost him his life.

Again the Angel of the Lord called out to Abraham and said:

By Myself I have sworn, says the Lord, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son—blessing I will bless you, and multiplying, I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.

In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed,

because you have obeyed My voice. Gen 22:16-18

Then Abraham left the mountain and went to live in Beersheba.

Abraham had a choice to sacrifice his son or not. But he believed God, so he did what God told him to do without question (Heb 11:17-19)—**faith-based action**.

God did not have a choice—it was necessary for Him to send His only begotten Son into the world to be a sacrifice for the sins of Mankind (John 1:29)—Jesus died on the cross for everyone, in order for the families of the earth to be blessed through the seed of Abraham, ***Jesus of Nazareth***. In this story, Isaac was a type of Christ.

The Sacrifice of Isaac - a type of the sacrifice of Christ

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said,***

In Isaac your seed shall be called,

concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense. Heb 11:17-19 (the story seen in Gen 22)

1. Abraham was 75 years old when the promises were given. He was 100 years old when Isaac was born. How old was Isaac when God told Abraham to offer him as a burnt offering to the Lord?
2. About 50 years after the promises, what did God tell Abraham to do with Isaac?
3. Describe Abraham's response to God.
4. When they reach the mountain, Abraham and Isaac leave the young men and the donkey and continue toward the place of sacrifice. What question does Isaac ask?
5. How does Abraham respond to Isaac's question?
6. Abraham built an altar and placed the wood in order. Then he bound Isaac and placed him on the wood as the sacrifice to which Isaac submitted. When Abraham took the knife to kill Isaac, what happened?
7. What did Abraham find in a thicket to use as a sacrifice instead of Isaac? [Did God provide?] What did Abraham call the name of the place?
8. The Angel of the Lord spoke to Abraham again. What did he say?
9. In a figure, Abraham is like God and Isaac is like Christ with respect to the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. [***God will provide for Himself the lamb…***]
10. Read verse 18 and Gal 3:16. Discuss the **seed promise** based on these 2 verses.
11. We described what Abraham did as **faith-based action**. Explain why.

Suggestions - This lesson tells us that God put Abraham's faith to a test. Abraham and Sarah were impatient that they had no children only 10 years after the promises were given. Hagar enters the picture and then Ishmael. But God told Abraham Ishmael is not the heir. A son will be born to Sarah and his name will be Isaac. About 25 years after the promises were given, Isaac was born. Then 25 years later, God said to kill the child through whom the promises were to be fulfilled. Consider carefully Heb 11:17-19 and see the importance of the faith of Abraham as he did what God said without question. God restated the promise saying, ***Because you have obeyed…***

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 17 books of the Bible.

— Isaac and Rebekah – Eliezer 27

After the death of Sarah, Abraham wanted to find a wife for **Isaac**. Isaac's wife must not be a Canaanite, and she must be chosen by God. He knew that Nahor's family still lived in Mesopotamia, and so he sent his trusted servant, **Eliezer**, there to seek a suitable wife. Eliezer took 10 camels and left on his expedition of 450 miles with the Angel of the Lord going before him. When he arrived in the city of Nahor, he prayed that God would show him the young woman that He had chosen for Isaac by her willingness to give him and his camels water. Then **Rebekah** came to draw water and gave both he and his camels water to drink. This may sound like a simple task, but it was not. Each camel could hold 25 gallons of water, taking around 10 minutes to fill up. So Rebekah showed her kindness, her purity of heart and her personal beauty to Eliezer. In return, Eliezer gave her a gold nose ring and gold bracelets. And when he realized that she had done all that he had requested according to the sign from God, he bowed his head and worshiped Him. He thanked God for leading him to his master's family and for showing him Rebekah. Then he went to her father Bethuel's house to stay the night.

Rebekah's brother, Laban, saw the gold jewelry and invited Eliezer to stay with them. The camels were fed and the men's feet were washed and food was set before them. But Eliezer would not eat until he had explained his purpose for coming. He told Rebekah's family about Abraham's wealth, and that he wanted to take Rebekah to Canaan to be Isaac's wife. He next repeated all that had happened since his arrival. And when they had heard it all, they understood that ***the thing comes from the Lord*** and so they could not speak against it; so they told him to take Rebekah. So Rebekah was given silver and gold jewelry and clothing, and her brother and mother were given precious gifts. But when Eliezer got up to leave with Rebekah, they asked that she stay for 10 days with them. Now Eliezer asked them not to delay his leaving for his mission was successful so far, and he wanted to return to his master with Isaac's bride. And when they asked Rebekah if she would go with him, she agreed to go right away. Then Rebekah's family blessed her and said:

Our sister, may you become the mother of thousands of ten thousands;
and may your descendants possess the gates of those who hate them.

They could not know how true were the prophetic words they had used. So Eliezer took Rebekah and her nurse and left Mesopotamia to go to Canaan.

Isaac was walking and meditating in the field when he saw the caravan bringing Rebekah. Rebekah inquired as to who the man was. When she learned that the man was Isaac, she put a veil over her face as was the custom of the day. So Isaac took Rebekah into the tent of his mother, Sarah, and she became his wife. And he loved her. So Isaac was comforted by his marriage to Rebekah after his mother's death.

Isaac and Rebekah – Eliezer

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

- ***Then the man bowed down his head and worshiped the Lord.*** Gen 24:26
- ***Here is Rebekah before you; take her and go, and let her be your master's son's wife, as the Lord has spoken.*** Gen 24:51
- ***Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and she became his wife, and he loved her.*** Gen 24:67

— In many cultures at this time in history, it was customary for parents to choose a mate for their child when he/she became of age to marry. In the case of Abraham and Sarah, they wanted a woman for Isaac who would not be contaminated by the idolatry and immorality of the people in whose country they lived. So Abraham sent his trusted servant to make the arrangements. The Lord was a significant part of this choice and marriage.

1. Isaac was 40 years old when Abraham sent his servant to find a wife for Isaac from among his relatives in Mesopotamia. What was the servant's name?
2. To what city did the servant go?
3. He asked the Lord to bless him to find a suitable wife for Isaac. After he suggested some conditions to be satisfied to show him the woman the Lord had chosen, what happened and when?
4. What was the woman's name?
5. What was her mother's name and her father's name?
6. What was her brother's name?
7. Eliezer explained his errand to Rebekah's family. What was their conclusion?
8. Did Rebekah agree to go with Eliezer to become Isaac's wife?
9. Eliezer gave gifts to Rebekah, to her mother and other family members. What was the significance of these gifts and the value of these gifts?
10. Eliezer did not want to delay his return with Rebekah. This shows his character and desire to serve his master faithfully.
11. When Rebekah arrived where Isaac was, what did Isaac do?

Suggestions - This lesson tells us about the importance of the person you may choose to marry. Abraham was specific about several aspects of the choice Eliezer would make. He made Eliezer take an oath that this errand would be done with careful attention to Abraham's instructions. Eliezer did not fail to ask for the Lord's guidance and assistance on his journey that he might complete his errand in a satisfactory manner. The Lord showed Eliezer His choice. Eliezer pursued the negotiations in an urgent manner. The matter was quickly settled and Eliezer returned to Canaan with Rebekah. Isaac and Rebekah became husband and wife.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 17 books of the Bible.

— Jacob and Esau - Jacob and Rachel and Leah (Bilhah, Zilpah) 28

After 20 years of barrenness, Rebekah conceived twins. They struggled in her womb because they would become 2 nations and 2 peoples; and the older would serve the younger. The older son was born red and hairy and was called **Esau** (*red*). The younger took hold of his brother's heel and was called **Jacob** (*supplanter*). Isaac was 60 years old when they were born. Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the field, and his father favored him because he ate of his game. Jacob was a mild man, dwelling in tents, and his mother favored him. Esau was due the birthright because he was the elder son. But one day he sold his birthright to Jacob for a meal of red lentil soup, showing how little he valued it. When he was 40 years of age, he took two Hittite women to be his wives, choices which grieved his parents.

One day, when Isaac was 137 years old, he told Esau to bring him some game and prepare savory food for him and afterward, he would bless him, since he was near death. But Rebekah made Isaac the kind of meal that he loved from 2 goats. Then she prepared Jacob to deceive Isaac and receive the blessing due to the eldest son by putting the skin of the goats on Jacob's hands and neck, plus Esau's clothes. Isaac was suspicious, but the food, the smell of the clothes and the hairy hands made him believe that it was Esau. So Isaac gave Jacob the blessing. When Esau came in to be blessed, Isaac could only bless him with prosperity, and said that he would be inferior to Jacob. So Esau hated Jacob and planned to kill him after their father died. But Rebekah told Jacob to go to her brother, Laban, until Esau's anger cooled. Then Isaac blessed Jacob and told him to go to Laban to find a wife. Isaac's blessing of Jacob and Jacob's obedience to his parents angered Esau so much that he took a daughter of Ishmael for his wife. Esau's attitude was very wrong (he had sold his birthright).

On the way to Haran, Jacob slept on a stone pillow and dreamed of a stairway to heaven with angels going up and down on it. The Lord was above it and said to Jacob that He would give him the land and make his descendants as plentiful as the dust, and that all families of the earth would be blessed through him. Jacob worshiped God, then named the place Bethel because it was the house of God and the gate of heaven.

Then Jacob went to Padan Aram where he met **Rachel** at a well for watering animals. He agreed with her father, Laban, to work for 7 years to have her as his wife. But Laban tricked Jacob by giving him his older daughter **Leah**, who must have been veiled when he gave her to be married. When Jacob discovered the next morning that he was married to Leah, he agreed with Laban to work another 7 years for Rachel, with her becoming his wife after 1 week. Leah and her handmaid **Zilpah**, and Rachel and her handmaid **Bilhah**, all bore children to Jacob, 12 sons and 1 daughter.

Esau is the father of the Edomites — Jacob is father of the Israelites.

Jacob and Esau - Jacob and Rachel and Leah (Bilhah, Zilpah)

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***Two nations are in your womb, two peoples shall be separated from your body; one people shall be stronger than the other, and the older shall serve the younger.*** Gen 25:23

➢ ***Therefore may God give you of the dew of heaven, of the fatness of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine. Let the peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you. Be master over your brethren, and let your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, and blessed be those who bless you!*** Gen 27:28-29

Jacob's children - Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah. Because of this, the Lord gave Leah sons: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah. Rachel bore no children, and so she gave Jacob her maid, Bilhah, who bore Jacob two sons: Dan and Naphtali. Then Leah gave Jacob her maid, Zilpah, who bore him two sons: Gad and Asher. Rachel traded time with her husband for Leah's mandrakes, and Leah bore Issachar, Zebulun, and Dinah. Then the Lord remembered Rachel and she bore Joseph. Later, she also bore Benjamin.

1. How long were Isaac and Rebekah married before they had children?
2. Isaac pleaded with the Lord for his wife and she conceived twins who struggled within her. Rebekah inquired of the Lord. What was the Lord's response?
3. The twins were named Esau and Jacob. It is important to remember that the Lord said that the older would serve the younger – Esau would serve Jacob. What did Esau do one day because he was hungry? What did this show?
4. Esau was 40 years old when he married 2 women who were of what heritage?
5. Were Isaac and Rebekah happy with these marriages?
6. When Isaac was 137, one day he told Esau to bring some game and prepare it to be eaten and afterward he would bless him. What did Esau do?
7. Rebekah overheard the conversation. What did she do?
8. What did Jacob do to deceive his father and receive the blessing?
9. Name some of the elements of the blessing which Isaac gave to Jacob.
10. Why was this deception necessary? Did Isaac bless the son whom God chose?
11. What was Esau's response to the blessing Jacob received?
12. Where did Jacob go to find a wife? To what person?
13. Whom did he meet by the well?
14. What payment did Jacob agree to pay for the privilege of marrying Rachel?
15. Describe how Laban tricked Jacob. What was the result?
16. What people came from Esau? What people came from Jacob?
17. Discuss the wives and the children of Jacob. [Did God play a part in this?]

Suggestions - This lesson is about Jacob and Esau and their descendants.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 22 books of the Bible.

— Laban and Jacob - Jacob and his wives - God blesses Jacob 29

When Rachel bore Joseph, Jacob decided to leave Padan Aram and return to his home in Canaan. He had fulfilled his contract with Laban for his wives and flocks. **Laban** was not prosperous when **Jacob** came to work for him, and he understood that God had blessed him because of Jacob, and so he asked Jacob to remain and work for wages. Jacob asked only that he be allowed to keep the spotted and speckled animals as his pay. When Laban agreed, Jacob separated Laban's animals from his own. He also took rods from trees, stripped the bark off, and put them in the watering troughs for his animals to see. Then many spotted and speckled animals were born, so that Jacob's herds were greatly increased. Thus Jacob became a very prosperous man.

Jacob's prosperity did not please Laban, and he changed Jacob's wages 10 times to try to gain an advantage; but God continued to bless Jacob and to prosper him. After 20 years, Laban's unfair treatment of Jacob moved God to tell Jacob that it was time for him to return to Canaan. God promised to be with him, saying, ***I am the God of Bethel***. So Jacob gathered all of his family and possessions and left while Laban was away. When Laban heard that Jacob was gone, he and his brethren pursued them for 7 days into the mountains of Gilead. But God had spoken to Laban in a dream and told him not to harm Jacob. So Laban reproached him for leaving secretly, and asked Jacob why he had taken his idols (for unknown to Jacob, Rachel had stolen them). Jacob replied that he had nothing that belonged to Laban, and if any person was found with the idols, they would die. Then Laban searched all the tents, but Rachel sat on the idols she had hidden in the camel saddle, and he did not find them.

Now Jacob was angry that Laban had accused him of taking anything of his. He demanded their brethren sit in judgment between them. Jacob protested that he had borne the loss of Laban's animals and had protected them through heat and cold. He reminded them that he had worked 14 years for his wives and 6 years for his flocks. Then Jacob said:

> ***Unless the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God has seen my affliction and the labor of my hands, and rebuked you last night.***

Indeed, Laban would have taken everything away from him, if it were not for God's help. Then Laban wanted a covenant between them, and Jacob piled up stones as a "heap of witnesses," and named the place Gileed or Mizpah, saying:

> ***May the Lord watch between you and me when we are absent one from another.***

Then Jacob offered a sacrifice on the mountain; and he and all the brethren ate bread together and stayed on the mountain all night. And so Jacob continued on his journey.

Laban and Jacob - Jacob and his wives - God blesses Jacob

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed the pillar and where you made a vow to Me. Now arise, get out of this land, and return to the land of your family.***
Gen 31:13

➢ ***Unless the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God has seen my affliction and the labor of my hands, and rebuked you last night.***
Gen 31:42

1. What was the name of the region where Laban and Jacob lived?
2. What was the name of the country from which Jacob had come to Laban?
3. Jacob had been with Laban 14 years when Joseph was born. He asked Laban to let him leave Padan Aram and go back to Canaan. What did Laban realize?
4. What did Laban propose to Jacob?
5. What did Jacob ask to receive if he stayed with Laban and worked for him?
6. Jacob remained with Laban for 6 more years. During that time, how many times did Laban change his wages? For what purpose?
7. Because of the unfair treatment of Laban, what did God tell Jacob to do?
8. What did Rachel and Leah say their father had done with what belonged to them?
9. Jacob determined to leave without telling Laban. Describe what Jacob did.
10. When Laban learned of Jacob's departure, what did he do?
11. Laban had a dream from God. What did God say to him? Did Laban obey?
12. But Laban did want to find the household idols that had been stolen. Jacob said that he had nothing that belonged to Laban and that if the idols were found, the person who had them would die. Who had the idols? Where were they hidden?
13. Laban and Jacob made a covenant. What was the witness of the covenant?
14. Who would judge between Laban and Jacob with respect to the covenant?
15. Jacob offered a sacrifice on the mountain. What did they do then? for how long?
16. In the morning, what did Laban do?
17. What did Jacob do?

Suggestions - This story is about Jacob and his wives and their children. But the emphasis here is on Laban and Jacob. Compare these 2 men to each other? Who believed in God? Who was righteous? Does this story give us a better understanding of why God chose Abraham? Isaac? Jacob? What kind of people does God choose to bless today? Why?

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 22 books of the Bible.

— Jacob and His Family - Jacob Is Blessed 30

Jacob and his family, with his servants and his flocks and herds, had left Laban at Mizpah and continued their journey to the land of Canaan. On the way, Jacob was met by angels of God, who camped next to him. And Jacob said: "This is God's camp." Then Jacob sent messengers to his brother Esau to tell him that they were coming, and to find favor with him; but they returned with news that Esau was on his way with 400 men. This message caused fear and distress for Jacob. He divided the people and the flocks, herds and camels, hoping that if one group was taken, the other would be saved. Then Jacob prayed to God for deliverance from Esau, reminding Him of His promise to make his descendants as innumerable as the sand of the sea.

Then Jacob took 550 animals—goats, sheep, camels, cows and donkeys—and sent them to his brother Esau. Each group of animals was driven by a servant, so that Esau would meet each group, learning that they were sent to him by Jacob, who was behind them. But Jacob was alone in the camp that night since he had sent his wives, his female servants, and his eleven sons over the brook of Jabbok for safety. During the night, a Man (an Angel, or the Lord) wrestled with Jacob until dawn. And He touched Jacob's hip socket, so it was out of joint. Then he asked Jacob to let him go, but Jacob refused until He blessed him. He asked his name, and then said:

Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel ;
for you have struggled with God and with men, and you have prevailed.

And He blessed Jacob. And Jacob said: ***For I have seen God face to face and my life is preserved.*** Jacob limped the rest of his life, a constant reminder of this event.

When Jacob saw Esau coming with 400 men, he divided his family, so that the maid-servants went first, then Leah and her children, and last of all Rachel and Joseph. Then Jacob went before them to meet Esau and bowed himself to the ground 7 times. But Esau was no longer angry and ran to Jacob, kissing him. And they both wept. Jacob showed Esau his family and begged him to accept his gifts. Then the brothers parted. Jacob went to Succoth first; then to Shechem in Canaan, where he built an altar. He named the place ***El Elohe Israel***, meaning "God, the God of Israel."

Then God told Jacob to go to Bethel and build an altar there. So Jacob's household purified themselves for the journey to Bethel to worship God. Jacob built an altar and called the place ***El Bethel***. God repeated His promises saying that he would now be called ***Israel***. Then Jacob worshiped God there. On the journey home from Bethel, Rachel died after giving birth to Benjamin, Jacob's most beloved son after Joseph. She was buried there with a stone marker that still stands today. While living near Bethlehem, Jacob visited his father in Hebron. Later, Isaac died at the age of 180 and Jacob and Esau buried him. This showed that the earlier reconciliation of these brothers continued. **Unity** would be important in the future of ***the children of Israel***.

Jacob and His Family - Jacob Is Blessed

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***For You said, I will surely treat you well, and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.*** Gen 32:12

➢ ***Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel ; for you have struggled with God and with men, and you have prevailed.*** Gen 32:28

It is clear that God continued to bless Jacob — to **protect** him and his family and to **provide** for him — in such a way as to make him rich. It is also clear that Jacob's **faith** was **in God** and in the promises of God and that he worked very hard to care for his family and the abundance with which God had blessed him. **Jacob struggled to be blessed.**

1. Jacob continued on his journey to Canaan. Who met him and camped next to him?
2. Jacob was getting closer to Canaan. To whom did he send a message?
3. What did Jacob do to try to protect himself, his family and his possessions?
4. What did Jacob do to try to gain favor with Esau?
5. Jacob prayed to God to ask for deliverance. Of what did he remind God?
6. Jacob sent his family across the brook for safety and was alone in the camp. Describe what happened during the night.
7. What remarkable statement was made to Jacob to announce that he now would be called by a new name?
8. What new name was given to Jacob?
9. What did Jacob say after he was blessed?
10. During the struggle, what happened to Jacob's hip?
11. Describe what happened as Esau was approaching with his 400 men.
12. How did Esau receive Jacob when they met?
13. What did Jacob do when he arrived in Shechem of Canaan?
14. He named the place ***El Elohe Israel***. What does this name mean?
15. Where did God tell Jacob to go and what was he to do?
16. What did Jacob and his family do to prepare to go to Bethel to worship God?
17. God reassured Jacob with respect to the promises and confirmed his new name. What did Jacob do after God left him?
18. Rachel died in the process of giving birth to whom?
19. How old was Isaac when he died? Who buried him?
20. Discuss the importance of **Relationships**: family; brother - brother; God - man.

Suggestions - This lesson tells us about the faith of Jacob and his steadfast service to God. It shows us some ways that Jacob served and worshiped God. It describes briefly some of the events which involved family relationships. It tells us about how God blessed Jacob and continued his close relationship with him. Does this suggest anything to us about God and our relationship with Him today?

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 22 books of the Bible.

— Review Lessons 21 - 30 R 3

This group of lessons tells us about Abraham and his relationship with the God of heaven. This story shows how God spoke to Abram and made promises to him which affected every person who has lived since those promises were stated. God had a **purpose** and a **plan** to fulfill his purpose. **Abraham** was God's choice to begin the process that would bring the Christ into the world to be a sacrifice for the sins of all Mankind in order to provide salvation and the hope of eternal life. The family of **Abraham** through his son **Isaac** and his son **Jacob** would be the family that God would bless and cause them to become a great nation. God also promised to give to Abraham and his descendants the land of Canaan. So this story follows this family as it develops and grows and is blessed and protected by God. It also demonstrates the faith of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—they believed God, trusted God and obeyed God.

21 – God promised that He would cause Abram to have many descendants and that He would make of them **a great nation**. He promised to give the **land** of Canaan to Abram and his descendants. He promised that **in his seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed**. Jesus Christ was the fulfillment of that promise (Gal 3:16). These promises became a covenant between God and Abram and his descendants.

22 – Several kings joined forces and invaded the cities of the plain and took away the wealth of Sodom and Gomorrah and the people. They also took away Lot, his family and his possessions. Abram heard about it and went with his trained men to rescue the captives. Upon his victorious return, He was met by the king of Sodom and the **king** of Salem, Melchizedek, who was also a **priest** of God most high. Abram took nothing of the spoils for himself, but gave a tithe to **Melchizedek**, who blessed Abram.

23 – Abram and Sarai still had no children. Sarai gave Hagar to Abram who bore him a son named Ishmael. Later, God made it clear that Ishmael would become a great nation, but he was not the child of promise — God appeared to Abram to make a covenant with him and changed his name to **Abraham** and Sarai's name to **Sarah**. The sign of the covenant was the circumcision of all males. God told him that Sarah would bear him a son named Isaac, the son of promise and Abraham's heir.

24 – Two angels and the Lord appeared in the form of man and told Abraham that he would have a son. Sarah laughed. But 25 years after the promises were given, Isaac was born to Sarah just as God had promised. About 2 years later, a problem became apparent which caused God to tell Hagar and Ishmael to leave the household. They departed and went in the direction of Egypt. Sarah died at the age of 127 and is buried in the cave of Machpelah. ***Blessing*** was the most significant part of these promises.

25 – God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah because of their sin of homosexuality. Ten righteous souls were not found in Sodom. Only Lot was ***righteous***. Lot's family was aided by angels to leave, but Lot's wife looked back and became a pillar of salt.

26 – God told Abraham to offer his son as a burnt offering on a mountain that God would specify. He made the necessary preparations and left early the next morning to obey God's command. **God tested Abraham's faith** and he passed the test. God spared Isaac. He also provided a ram for a sacrifice. This entire story is a type of the sacrifice of Christ which shows us briefly how God the Father must have felt when Christ died on the cross. Abraham believed and obeyed God—**faith-based action**.

In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed,
because you have obeyed My voice. Gen 22:16-18

27 – After the death of Sarah, Abraham sends his faithful servant Eliezer to Padan Aram to find a wife for Isaac. With God's help Eliezer finds Rebekah and arranges for her to return with him. Isaac takes Rebekah as his wife. He loved her.

28 – Rebekah conceived and bore twin sons to Isaac, Jacob and Esau. As adults, Esau sold his birthright to Jacob because he was hungry one day. Jacob received the blessing of the eldest son from Isaac which made him the lawful heir. Esau threatened to kill Jacob. Jacob went to Padan Aram to the house of Laban, Rebekah's brother, to be safe from Esau's wrath and also to find a wife. He found Rachel for whom he worked 7 years. Laban tricked him by giving him Leah. Jacob received Rachel also after 1 week with Leah, for whom he worked another 7 years. Leah and Rachel and Bilhah and Zilpah bore 12 sons and 1 daughter to Jacob.

29 – Jacob decided to return to his home in Canaan. He had worked 14 years for his wives and flocks. God had blessed Laban on account of Jacob; and so he asked Jacob to remain and work for wages. During the next 6 years, Laban changed his wages 10 times. Jacob went toward Canaan with his family, servants and possessions. Laban pursued. Jacob and Laban made a covenant. Jacob continued his journey.

30 – Jacob prepared to meet Esau. One night, Jacob wrestled with the Lord and was blessed. Esau met Jacob amicably. Jacob gives many gifts to Esau. They were united as brothers. Jacob arrived in Shechem and built an altar. Later, the family went to Bethel to worship God. God blessed Jacob, renewed the promises, and gave Jacob a new name – ***Israel***.

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***Now the Lord had said to Abram:***
Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house,
to a land that I will show you.
I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great;
and you shall be a blessing.
I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you;
and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Gen 12:1-3

➢ ***To your descendants I have given this land …*** Gen 15:18

➢ ***Is anything too hard for the Lord?*** Gen 18:14

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 22 books of the Bible.

— Review Series Lessons 1- 30 S 3

Group 1 - The lessons in Group 1 described in a concise way some important observations about **THE CONTENTS OF THE BIBLE.** Should we read the Bible ? Should we believe the Bible? The Bible is the Word of God. It should therefore be treated with respect. We should all desire to know what God has said and what it means to us today. A Timeline of the events recorded in the Bible helps us to put the information into perspective. An Introduction is given to the Old Testament and the New Testament. Why are there 2 testaments? Which one are we to follow, or should we follow both? There was a Period of Silence for 400 years during which time God did not speak to Mankind through the prophets in a manner to be recorded. We give some historical information briefly for this extraordinary period of history. Then the Bible is summarized – some key events and concepts are mentioned.

Group 2 - The lessons in Group 2 told us about **THE BEGINNING** and Creation and **THE EARLY HISTORY OF MANKIND.** They explained what we are, who we are, and where we came from. The significance of **God the Creator** to every human being is made clear. **LIFE** and all that connects to our lives is important. **SIN** destroys and brings death. God cleansed the earth of sinners with the flood; but **He saved 8 people** from that destruction because they were ***righteous***. God provides a **remedy for sin** which He made available through ***Jesus Christ***. After the flood, God made a covenant with Mankind. Then men tried to make a name for themselves instead of honoring and praising God. [Working together, there was no limit to what man could do.] So God caused the people in different regions to speak different languages. Without communication, they did not work together for their own purposes. And God's purposes for Mankind began to be realized, at least there were some people who believed and obeyed God.

Group 3 - The lessons in Group 3 told of a family which believed in the God of heaven. From this family, **God chose Abram**. He spoke to him and told him to leave the land where he was born and had lived all of his life (Ur of the Chaldeans) and go to a land that He would show him (Canaan). He told him to leave his family. Some of his family went with him part of the way. His father died. Abram took his nephew Lot with him to Canaan. After some time together, they separated: Lot went to the plains and soon lived in Sodom. Eventually God destroyed the cities of the plain because of the sin of homosexuality but Lot was spared because he was ***righteous***.

An important event had to do with the occasion when Melchizedek met Abram as he returned from defeating some invading kings. Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of ***God Most High***. Abram paid tithes to Melchizedek and Melchizedek blessed Abram. Melchizedek is a type of Christ – both a **king** and a **priest**.

Confrontation, anger, conflict, and love are part of this story. The jealousy of Hagar toward Sarai caused her to leave. But God asked her to return to Abram and continue to live in the presence of Sarai. Later, this same strong feeling caused Hagar to leave with her son Ishmael (with God's approval), never to return. Abram's name was changed to **Abraham** and Sarai's to **Sarah**. Sarah bore a son to Abram named **Isaac**, who was Abram's heir. After Isaac died, his son **Jacob** became his heir. Jacob was the father of 12 sons and 1 daughter. These 12 men became the fathers of the 12 tribes of Israel.

These lessons begin with God speaking to Abram. He told him to go to Canaan. He also gave him some promises which are the basis of God's continuing relationship with Abram and his descendants. The Story of the Bible tells us about Abraham and his descendants who came to be a great nation called **Israel**. We learned about God – what he wants from Mankind and what His response is to **Faith**, **Obedience**, **Love**, **Holiness**, **Acceptable Worship**, and **Righteousness**. We also learned about God's response to sin and sinners. One tremendous lesson was how God could bless a person and no one was able to prevent it. God provided for, protected and blessed those whom He had chosen like a good father would do. Jacob wanted to be blessed by his father Isaac. He asked for God to protect him when he met Esau, reminding God of the promises He had made. **God blessed Jacob and his family.**

The Story of the Bible is the wonderful story of
THE ETERNAL PURPOSE OF GOD and
GOD'S PLAN FOR THE SALVATION OF MANKIND

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

- ***In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*** Gen 1:1
- ***Then men began to call on the name of the Lord.*** Gen 4:26
- ***But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.*** Gen 6:8
- ***In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.*** Gen 22:16-18
- ***Is anything too hard for the Lord?*** Gen 18:14

Suggestions - This lesson reviews Lessons 1-30 and gives an overview of the essence of these lessons. Much of the Bible is much easier to comprehend if we understand something of the time in history, the location, the people involved and some of the details about what is happening. Hopefully, it is clear that the relationship of God with His people always takes precedence in what is happening. Jacob had nothing of value when he went to Laban. Twenty years later, he had 4 wives, 12 children and he was a rich man – God had been with him and continually blessed him. ***Blessing*** is the most significant part of God's promises to Abram. God blesses people with tangible and intangible things. God blesses people with life, health and material things. God blesses people with strength, power, and spiritual things. God blesses people with promises, salvation and hope. Discuss the promises which God made to Abram.

WE HAVE COVERED IN THE BIBLE

4004 BC **CREATION** 0 AM

THE CREATION OF ALL THINGS IN THE PHYSICAL UNIVERSE.
THE CREATION OF MANKIND—ADAM AND EVE.
SIN ENTERED THE WORLD WHEN ADAM AND EVE SINNED.
GOD'S ETERNAL PURPOSE AND GOD'S PLAN FOR
THE SALVATION OF MANKIND BEGAN TO UNFOLD.

2348 BC **FLOOD** 1656 AM

GOD DESTROYED THE EARTH AND THE PEOPLE ON THE EARTH WITH A FLOOD OF WATERS BECAUSE OF THE SINFULNESS OF MANKIND.
BUT GOD SAVED NOAH AND HIS FAMILY BECAUSE THEY WERE RIGHTEOUS—8 SOULS.

1921 BC **PROMISES** 2083 AM

GOD MADE SOME PROMISES TO ABRAHAM:
NATION - SEED - LAND
GOD BLESSED ABRAHAM AND MADE HIM RICH.
ABRAHAM WAS RESPECTED BY ALL WHO KNEW HIM.
ABRAHAM WAS BLESSED BY MELCHIZEDEK, A KING / PRIEST.
ABRAHAM'S SON ISAAC HAD A SON JACOB. GOD WAS BLESSING JACOB CONTINUALLY. JACOB WAS THE FATHER OF 12 SONS WHOSE FAMILIES BECAME THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL. GOD MADE A COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM WHICH WAS CONTINUED WITH ISAAC AND JACOB AND THEN WITH THE NATION OF ISRAEL.

BOOK 1 **GROUP 4**

Series 701	*THE STORY OF THE BIBLE*
Group 4	**THE FAMILY OF ISRAEL**
Subtopic	**In Egypt, the Family Comes to Be a People**
En 701-031	Joseph Goes to Egypt
En 701-032	Joseph Has Authority over Potiphar's House
En 701-033	Joseph Is a Prisoner with Authority - Interprets Dreams
En 701-034	Pharaoh and Joseph - Joseph Rules in Egypt
En 701-035	Joseph and His Brothers
En 701-036	The Family of Israel Lives in Egypt
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AUTHORS: MEREDITH R. CHILDRESS / RONALD B. ROARK

2010

THE WAY OF LIFE
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— Joseph Goes to Egypt 31

Jacob had twelve sons and one daughter. Ten sons were by his wife, Leah, and his concubines, Bilhah and Zilpah. Two sons, Joseph and Benjamin, were by his beloved wife, Rachel, who died after giving birth to Benjamin. Rachel was buried on the way to Ephrath, now the city of Bethlehem. They lived in the land of Canaan, which today is called Israel. **Joseph** was his father's favorite son. This made his brothers jealous, especially when Jacob had given a beautiful tunic of many colors to Joseph. It was an ornamented coat fit for a prince. Joseph added to their jealousy and envy when he told his brothers about two of his dreams that prophesied a time when his brothers and his father and mother would bow down to him. In the first dream, Joseph said that he and his brothers were binding sheaves in the field when their sheaves bowed low to his sheaf, which remained upright. In his second dream, Joseph said that the sun, the moon, and eleven stars bowed down to him. Having two dreams with the same meaning showed that they were significant and would come to pass. This made his father and brothers angry, because they thought that the coat and the dreams were saying that one day Joseph would rule over them. Jacob held the incident in his mind.

Joseph was seventeen years old when his father sent him to see about the welfare of his brothers, who were tending sheep in Dothan, a place more than sixty miles from his home. Joseph often brought bad reports back to his father about his brothers. So now when the brothers saw Joseph coming, they remembered the dreams and the bad reports and decided to kill him. But the oldest brother Reuben begged them not to kill their own brother. So they took off Joseph's tunic of many colors and threw him into a large pit in the wilderness. Then they sat down to eat a meal some distance away. When they saw a camel caravan passing by on its way to Egypt with spices, balm, and myrrh, they decided to sell Joseph to the traders. He was pulled out of the pit and sold as a slave for twenty pieces of silver. Then the brothers dipped his beautiful tunic in the blood of a kid (young goat) to show to Jacob, so that he would think that Joseph had been killed by a wild beast.

And when Jacob saw the blood-soaked coat, he recognized it and believed that his son had been torn apart by a wild beast. He became distraught, tore his clothes and put on sackcloth. He expressed deep sorrow and mourned a long time. His children tried to comfort him; but he would not be comforted. His grief and loss were so great that he believed with all his heart that he would go down to his own death, mourning the loss of his son.

But **Joseph** was taken by caravan to the land of Egypt to be sold at the slave market. However, God was with him, and he was sold into the household of Potiphar, a man who was in a high position in the court of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

Joseph Goes to Egypt

- Memory Verse – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***And his brothers said to him, Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?*** Gen 37:8

1. What was the name of Joseph's father? Mother?
2. What name did God give to Joseph's father?
3. What did Jacob have made especially for Joseph to wear?
4. What effect did this have on Joseph's brothers?
5. Tell Joseph's <u>first dream</u>.
6. Tell Joseph's <u>second dream</u>. (Gen 41:32)
7. When Joseph was 17 years old, what was the occupation of 10 of his brothers?
8. What was Jacob's purpose for sending Joseph to visit his brothers?
9. What did Joseph's brothers want to do to him? Why?
10. What was the name of the brother who pleaded for them not to kill Joseph?
11. Where did they put Joseph to keep him from escaping?
12. When they saw a caravan of traders, what did they decide to do with Joseph?
13. To what country did these traders take Joseph?
14. Tell what they did to make their father think that Joseph was dead.
15. Joseph was sold in Egypt as a slave to whom?

Suggestions - This lesson is about a teenager named **Joseph** and his family. The events of this story set the stage for many important future events for the family of Jacob. Through Joseph, God will preserve them. We can see from this story how God reveals the lives of these people – their attitudes, feelings, what they did and why. This real story suggests many things to us about fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters and how these relationships play an important role in our lives. Also, where does God fit in? We can see His overriding continuous presence and participation in the lives of this family. As we continue in future lessons, we see that God had something in mind to help His people a long time before they had a problem. It is clear that God was with Jacob and his family. It is clear that God blessed Joseph in a special way. Consider carefully the relationship of Joseph and his brothers and the effect that this had on the family, on Jacob and on what happened to Joseph. God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their descendants.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 5 books of the Bible.

— Joseph Has Authority over Potiphar's House 32

In Egypt, **Joseph** was sold as a slave and entered the household of Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard. God was with Joseph in all that he did so that his work pleased Potiphar; and Joseph was put in charge of Potiphar's household both inside and out. This included everything except food, because there was a law in Egypt that only Egyptians could prepare the food for Egyptians, and only Egyptians could eat together. But Joseph was over all the farming, the gardening, the keeping of livestock and fishing. His young life, spent in watching sheep along with the other activities of pastoral life, served him well. Records were kept with extreme care and attention to detail, including all products, produce and livestock, so that dishonest workers would be caught. Joseph was over all other slaves in the household, and in charge of all the money coming and going from the estate. Potiphar saw how honestly and diligently Joseph served him and was pleased with everything he did. As an upright, faithful and conscientious man in a land where dishonesty was a general rule, Joseph was perfect for the position of overseer.

While **Joseph** was busy about the household, Potiphar's wife was seemingly without much to do and bored. She saw that Joseph was well-built and handsome, and that everything he touched was with a masterful hand. Her attitude was aggressive toward Joseph, even though he refused her with good reasons. He first told her that he would not betray the man who had put everything he owned into his keeping. And he reminded her that she already belonged to a man, and that man was his master. Then he told her that to lie with her would be sinning against God. But Potiphar's wife was not persuaded and coaxed him daily. One day when there was no one else in the house, Potiphar's wife caught Joseph by the garment, but he ran away so quickly that it was left in her hand. She told the servants that he had come in to lie with her, but she had screamed so loudly that he had run away, leaving his garment. If someone had heard her screaming, it would have verified her story, but no one heard her because she did not scream. She told the lie to make her servants and her husband believe her. When her husband came home, she told him that he had brought a Hebrew slave into their house who mocked them by trying to play with her, but she had screamed, and he had quickly fled, leaving his garment in her hand.

Potiphar was furious when he heard his wife's accusations, and put Joseph into the king's prison. But again, God was with Joseph, and the keeper of the prison showed him favor. In time, Joseph's uprightness and integrity impressed the keeper so much that he put him in charge of everything in the prison, including all prisoners. And so it was that Joseph moved from the management of Potiphar's household to the management of the king's prison. Eleven years had passed since Joseph had been sold into slavery. It seemed that his ***dreams*** were far from being fulfilled.

Joseph Has Authority over Potiphar's House

- Memory Verse – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.*** Gen 39:2

1. Joseph lived in Canaan with his family. His brothers sold him into slavery. To what country was he taken?
2. Who bought Joseph in Egypt?
3. How is Potiphar's position described?
4. What did Potiphar see about Joseph?
5. To what position did Potiphar appoint Joseph?
6. What was the extent of Joseph's authority in Potiphar's house?
7. God instituted marriage (Gen 2:20-25). Joseph understood it. Potiphar's wife wanted to have a sexual relationship with Joseph. Joseph said that it would be a sin against God. Explain this concept.
8. What is the cost of sexual immorality to a person who engages in it?
9. What is the value of sexual purity to a person?
10. Potiphar's wife persisted day after day. There came a day when only Joseph and Potiphar's wife were in the house. She insisted on being with Joseph; but he ran away leaving his outer garment in her hand. Why did she falsely accuse Joseph?
11. What was the result of her false accusation?
12. Can a false accusation be devastating to the life of a person?
13. What is the value of speaking the truth?
14. What is the value of being trustworthy?
15. What is the value of being faithful to God and His commandments?

Suggestions - The story of Joseph continues to be told. He is a responsible person in his work and dealings with other people. He is a person of integrity and moral purity. He became a slave at the age of 17. He is growing and learning and maturing. But in this process his integrity is challenged. He could have reasoned that "no one will ever know". Instead, he reasoned that "God will know" and "this is a sin against God" and therefore, "I cannot do this." That should be sufficient for us today as well. Who wants to do business with someone you cannot trust? Who wants to be married to a person who is morally corrupt? What is <u>the best policy</u> for your life?

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 8 books of the Bible.

— Joseph Is a Prisoner with Authority – Interprets Dreams 33

Joseph was a free man who became a slave. As a slave, he was the overseer of a great household. He became a prisoner who came to be in charge of the prison. In spite of adversity, he was successful because God was with him. Eleven years had passed since Joseph became a slave. Would Joseph's ***dreams*** ever be fulfilled?

Pharaoh's chief butler and chief baker displeased Pharaoh, and were thrown into prison where Joseph attended them. One night, each of them had a dream that was very troubling. Joseph saw their troubled mood and asked what was wrong. He told them that God would give an interpretation of their dreams. The butler related his dream first: there was a vine with three branches which went from buds to grapes very quickly. He took the grapes and squeezed their juice into Pharaoh's cup and put the cup into Pharaoh's hand. Joseph said that his dream meant that in three days, he would be pardoned and returned to Pharaoh's service. Joseph asked the butler to mention him to Pharaoh when he returned to court.

The chief baker was encouraged by the good interpretation of the chief butler's dream and told Joseph his dream also: he was carrying three baskets on his head with all kinds of food which he had prepared for Pharaoh. But birds came down and ate the food out of the baskets. Joseph said that the three baskets were three days. In three days, Pharaoh would take off his head and put it on a pole where birds would pick off his flesh. So it came to pass that in three days, on Pharaoh's birthday, that the butler was put back into his service and the baker's head was taken off.

And even though Joseph had done the chief butler a good service, the butler forgot him until 2 full years later when Pharaoh had two troubling dreams. Pharaoh brought in all the magicians and wise men in the land of Egypt, but none of them could give a good interpretation of his dreams. The butler told Pharaoh how Joseph had given an interpretation of two dreams in prison, and that they had come to pass as foretold. So Pharaoh sent for Joseph, who prepared himself to appear before Pharaoh.

Pharaoh told Joseph his <u>first dream</u>: he was standing on the bank of the Nile River when seven fat and fine looking cows came out of the water and fed on the grass. They were followed by seven ugly and gaunt cows, that ate the fat cows, but were no fatter. In Pharaoh's <u>second dream</u>, seven ears of plump and full grain were eaten up by seven thin, blighted ears of grain. Joseph told Pharaoh that God was showing him what was going to happen: there would be <u>seven years of abundance</u> in Egypt, followed by <u>seven years of famine</u>. And then Joseph gave Pharaoh some advice: search for a wise man who would gather grain during the seven plentiful years and store it for the years of famine. Because Joseph was able to tell the meaning of the dreams, Pharaoh believed he was the wisest man in the land. And so Pharaoh put the slave Joseph in charge of all the land of Egypt, second only to Pharaoh himself.

Joseph Is a Prisoner with Authority – Interprets Dreams

- Memory Verse – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under Joseph's authority, because the Lord was with him; and whatever he did, the Lord made it prosper.*** Gen 39:23

1. What was the extent of Joseph's authority in the prison?
2. Why did the keeper of the prison trust Joseph to such an extent?
3. Pharaoh's chief butler and chief baker were thrown into prison. Why?
4. Joseph was given a special assignment to care of these 2 prisoners. What happened to each of these men in one night?
5. The next day Joseph saw that they were sad. He asked them why. What was their response?
6. To whom did Joseph attribute the power to interpret dreams?
7. What was the butler's dream?
8. What was the interpretation of the dream?
9. What did Joseph ask the butler to do when he was restored to his former position?
10. What was the baker's dream?
11. What was the interpretation of the dream?
12. Three days after the dreams, what was the occasion of their fulfillment?
13. What happened to the butler?
14. What happened to the baker?
15. Were the dreams fulfilled just as Joseph had said?
16. Did the butler remember to tell Pharaoh about Joseph?
17. How long was it until Pharaoh had 2 dreams?
18. Could Pharaoh's magicians and wise men interpret the dreams?
19. The butler remembered Joseph and told Pharaoh. What did Pharaoh do?
18. What was the first dream?
19. What was the second dream?
20. What did the two dreams mean?
21. Who was telling Pharaoh by these dreams what was going to happen in Egypt?
22. When he heard the interpretation of the dreams and Joseph's advice, what did Pharaoh do?

Suggestions - This lesson is about Joseph being able to interpret dreams by the power of God. This ability allowed Joseph to meet Pharaoh personally and to give him some needed information and advice which caused Pharaoh to make Joseph ruler of Egypt.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 14 books of the Bible.

— Pharaoh and Joseph — Joseph Rules in Egypt 34

After Joseph gave God's interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams, he was appointed to rule over all the land of Egypt, 13 years after becoming a slave. He was made second only to Pharaoh himself, and was given charge of everything in Egypt except the throne itself. As a sign of his authority, he was given Pharaoh's signet ring to wear. And appropriate to his new position, he was dressed in robes of fine linen with a gold chain around his neck. He was given the chariot of Pharaoh's second-in-command, and he rode throughout Egypt to be honored by all the people. And Pharaoh gave Joseph a new name, Zaphnath-Paaneah, a name which fully honored him as **"the supporter of life"**. His position was further heightened among the ruling class when he was given a wife, Asenath, daughter of Poti-Pherah, priest of On. And so it was that before the famine came, Joseph had two sons. He took comfort in these sons and gave them Hebrew names, Manasseh and Ephraim. In the process of time, Jacob adopted them as his own sons, and made them two of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Joseph Rules in Egypt

The dreams of Pharaoh came to pass. For the first seven years, the fertile Nile land produced unprecedented quantities of grain and other produce for the people and livestock. [Egyptians looked upon their livestock as the symbol of Isis, goddess of earth, the one who nourishes : the cow represented earth, agriculture, nourishment.] Joseph was 30 years old when he began to rule and went throughout all the land of Egypt to set up the system for receiving and storing the grain. Joseph used great wisdom in gathering one-fifth of all the produce in the land which came to fill warehouses which were located in every city, production so bountiful that it could no longer be counted. The greatness of his rulership was seen when the famine began.

For the next seven years, the effects of the famine were felt by the people to such a great extent that the former fertility of the land was forgotten. The people became hungry and appealed to Pharaoh for food. Pharaoh sent them to Joseph, who sold them food in exchange for money. Even with the plenty that had been stored, Joseph wisely rationed the food over the seven years of famine.

But the famine was not only in Egypt, it was throughout the lands of the world; and people from other countries came to Egypt to buy grain. Foreigners needed permission from Joseph to buy grain. The land of Canaan, where Joseph's father and brothers lived, was also affected by the famine. Jacob heard that there was food in Egypt and roused his sons to make the trip to buy grain, so that they would not die. Jacob had two sons by his beloved wife Rachel – Joseph and Benjamin. He believed Joseph to be dead, so he would not let Benjamin make the trip because he could not bear the thought of losing him also. He sent only his 10 oldest sons to Egypt.

Pharaoh and Joseph — Joseph Rules in Egypt

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under Joseph's authority, because the Lord was with him; and whatever he did, the Lord made it prosper.*** Gen 39:23

➢ ***You shall be over my house, and all my people shall be ruled according to your word; only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you.*** Gen 41:40

1. Who gave Joseph the interpretation of the dreams?
2. Pharaoh acknowledged that the Spirit of God was in Joseph. Did this contribute to the decision of Pharaoh to appoint Joseph as the ruler of Egypt?
3. What was the extent of Joseph's authority?
4. Discuss how he was honored before the people to demonstrate to them that Joseph was the ruler in Egypt.
5. Pharaoh gave Joseph a name. What does it mean?
6. Pharaoh gave Joseph a wife. What was her name? Who was she?
7. How old was Joseph when he began to rule?
8. Where did he go to do his work?
9. It is apparent that Joseph built warehouses to store the grain which he would gather and save for the 7 years of famine. Where were the warehouses?
10. Describe the productivity and the amount of grain that was stored.
11. The 7 years of plenty ended. The 7 years of famine began. The people came to Pharaoh to ask for food. To whom did Pharaoh send them?
12. What did Joseph require from the people who received food?
13. Were other countries affected by the famine? What did they do?
14. Joseph had 2 sons. What were their names?

Suggestions - This lesson tells the story of Joseph and how he came to be the ruler of Egypt. It tells about his wisdom and discernment. It shows how God is with Joseph. It tells how God used His power to warn the king of Egypt of future abundance followed by famine. This warning allowed Pharaoh to prepare. Joseph was appointed by Pharaoh to rule over the land of Egypt in order to gather and store grain so that there would be food during the years of famine. Joseph prepared beyond the needs of the Egyptians – he was able to sell grain to people from other countries. We see in this story the significance of Jacob's love for Rachel and their 2 children – Joseph and Benjamin. We see also the significance of Joseph's 2 sons to him and to Jacob.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 17 books of the Bible.

— Joseph and His Brothers 35

About 2 years after the 7 years of famine had begun, Jacob sent 10 of his sons to Egypt to buy grain. In Egypt, the brothers came to Joseph and bowed low before him. Joseph realized that this was the fulfillment of his ***dream***; whereas his brothers saw only a wealthy and powerful Egyptian. Joseph noticed that Benjamin was not with them. He accused them of being spies and required them to bring their youngest brother to Egypt while Simeon was kept as security. They were keenly aware that God was punishing them for selling Joseph into slavery. What pangs of conscience sprang up in their minds as they realized that God's hand was upon their lives! Joseph heard them talking about the way he had pleaded with them not to sell him and they would not listen. Touched by their anguish, Joseph turned away from them and wept.

But the story was just beginning to unfold. The brothers went back to Canaan with provisions, but they found the money they had paid for the grain in their sacks. They wondered what God was doing to them. Back in Canaan, Jacob refused to let Benjamin go to Egypt; but when all of their food was gone, he consented. To soften the ruler, Jacob sent gifts of balm, honey, spices, myrrh, pistachio nuts, and almonds. Spices, balm and myrrh were also the trade goods of the Midianites (Gen 37:25).

Joseph's brothers returned to Egypt, came before Joseph, and bowed low before him. When Joseph saw Benjamin, overcome with emotion, he wept in another room. When he returned, he told his chief steward to prepare a dinner for his brothers at his house. This frightened them because they recalled the money in their sacks; but the chief steward assured them that they owed nothing. He gave them water to wash their feet and fed their animals. When Joseph arrived, the brothers once again bowed low and gave him their gifts. They were seated separately from Joseph, according to age, which astonished them. Benjamin was the guest of honor, which was indicated by the fact that he received five times the portion of food (in accordance with their custom).

The sons of Jacob were reunited and went on their way with their sacks full — surely their lives were back to normal and all was well. But they had not gone far when Joseph's chief steward caught them and asked them why they had returned evil for good — someone had taken Joseph's silver cup. When it was found in Benjamin's sack, the brothers tore their clothes in anguish. They threw themselves before Joseph, explaining that God was punishing them for their sins. Judah pleaded to be kept in Benjamin's place. He recounted the story of their father's love for Joseph, and how the sorrow of losing him must not be increased by losing his second favorite son, as it would kill him. When Joseph saw his brothers' change of heart, he could no longer control himself. He told them that he was their brother, Joseph. Dumbfounded, they could not speak because they did not believe him at first. He asked them not to blame themselves since it was God who sent him before them to save the lives of many.

Joseph and His Brothers

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

- ***The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under Joseph's authority, because the Lord was with him; and whatever he did, the Lord made it prosper.*** Gen 39:23
- ***You shall be over my house, and all my people shall be ruled according to your word; only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you.*** Gen 41:40
- ***And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.*** Gen 45:7

1. By Pharaoh's dreams, God said that there would be how many years of plenty? How many years of famine?
2. How many sons did Jacob have?
3. Joseph and Benjamin were brothers who were born to which wife of Jacob?
4. Before Joseph came to Egypt, he had 2 dreams. What did they foretell?
5. What did Joseph require his brothers to do to prove they were not spies?
6. As things began to go against the brothers, what did they realize?
7. What did the brothers find in their sacks as they were returning home?
8. Although Jacob did not desire it, Benjamin did go to Egypt with his brothers. What did Joseph do when he saw Benjamin?
9. In Genesis 43:32, why were the people seated separately for the meal?
10. The brothers were astonished that they were seated according to age. Why?
11. The 11 brothers were reunited and began their journey back to Canaan, believing that all was well. Joseph's chief steward caught them, accused them of stealing and took them back to Joseph. Describe Judah's plea to release Benjamin.
12. What was the most significant factor in Judah's plea?
13. What did Joseph come to understand about the attitude of his brothers toward him, toward Jacob and toward Benjamin?

Suggestions - This lesson centers around the family relationships in Jacob's family and God's care and protection for this family. What was a very bad attitude towards Joseph caused some of his brothers to sell him into slavery. This located Joseph in Egypt where he needed to be for God to use him to save Jacob and his family. About 22 years after Joseph became a slave, his brothers were bowing down to him and asking to buy grain from him. Joseph did not to reveal that he was their brother until he had tested them concerning their attitude toward him. What a great reconciliation. Joseph said that this was a work of God and they should not blame themselves.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 17 books of the Bible.

— The Family of Israel Lives in Egypt 36

Joseph sent many wagons of provisions for his father Jacob. The wagons were also used to take all his family and their possessions to Egypt. When Jacob saw that God had dealt favorably with Joseph, considered the great famine in Canaan and Pharaoh's invitation to come, he recognized these events as pointing to the period of time about which God had spoken to Abram, when his seed would leave Canaan and become strangers and enslaved. In visions one night, God said to Jacob (46:3-4):

I am God, the God of your father; do not fear to go down to Egypt,
for I will make of you a great nation there.
I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up again;
and Joseph will put his hand on your eyes.

Now Jacob was assured that leaving Canaan was part of God's plan for his family. So the children of Israel went to Egypt and lived in Goshen, a region suitable for livestock. In Goshen, Israel's family would be separated from the Egyptians physically, politically, religiously and socially. The outer circumstances of their lives made it possible to begin the transformation of a family into a holy nation for God's spiritual purpose.

Then Joseph told Pharaoh of his family's arrival, saying once again that they were shepherds and sojourners in the land, so that they could leave Egypt when they wished. And so the Israelites were in the best place for their families to live and serve God, and where their flocks and herds could flourish. So Joseph gave bread to all the families of Israel.

The people of Egypt were required by Joseph to pay for the food which Joseph had stored up for the period of famine. When they used up their money, they asked Joseph to take their cattle. When the cattle were gone, they asked him to take their land and their bodies (become slaves). So Joseph gathered all the money, all the cattle, all the land, and all the people in exchange for food during the famine in Egypt. **Joseph did all of this for Pharaoh!** And when the famine was over, Joseph showed the spirit of God within him and returned the land to the people, upon condition that they would give one-fifth of their produce as taxation. Everyone in the land was subject to the tax except the priests, for whom Pharaoh provided.

Jacob was 130 years old when he went to Egypt. He lived another 17 years in Goshen. When he saw that the time of his death was near, he called Joseph to him and expressed his faith in God's promises <u>to make his offspring a great nation</u>, <u>to bring them out of the land of Egypt</u>, and <u>to give them the land of Canaan for their possession</u>. Jacob made Joseph swear to take him out of Egypt and bury him in the cave of Machpelah with his fathers (Gen 23:19-20).

The Family of Israel Lives in Egypt

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

- ***You shall be over my house, and all my people shall be ruled according to your word; only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you.*** Gen 41:40
- ***And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and save your lives by a great deliverance.*** Gen 45:7
- ***So Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions there and grew and multiplied exceedingly.*** Gen 47:27

1. What factors influenced Jacob to take his family to Egypt to live?
2. Discuss what God told Jacob about going to Egypt.
3. How is the land of Goshen described?
4. Tell some ways that the land of Goshen was a good place for Israel to live.
5. How did Pharaoh receive the family of Israel?
6. What stipulation did Joseph make regarding the presence of his family in Egypt?
7. Who provided bread (food) for the family of Israel in Goshen?
8. What did the people of Egypt have to do to receive food from Joseph?
9. When the people ran out of money, what did they offer in exchange for food?
10. When they ran out of livestock, what did they offer for food?
11. What did Joseph accomplish for Pharaoh by the time the famine had ended?
12. On what condition was the land returned to the people?
13. How old was Jacob when he came to Egypt? How old when he died?
14. When Jacob was nearing death, what information did he share with Joseph?
15. What did he ask Joseph to swear that he would do?

Suggestions - The lesson is about the family of Jacob (Israel), their relationship with each other and their relationship with God. Remember that God reminds Jacob that He is God and that He is the God of the covenant that He made with Abraham. The assurance is that God will be with them when they go down into Egypt and that God will bring them up out of Egypt and give them the land of Canaan for their possession. Jacob's faith in God and the words spoken by God were the primary factors which influenced Jacob to go to Egypt to live. The reality of the famine and the invitation of Pharaoh also contributed to Jacob's decision. Joseph continued to rule in Egypt. He sold the grain that was stored for food. When people ran out of money, they exchanged their livestock for food and finally gave up their lands and their bodies in exchange for food. At the end of the famine, everything in Egypt belonged to Pharaoh: all the money, all the livestock, all the land, and all the people. Joseph restored the land to the people in exchange for a continual tax of 20%. Jacob reminded Joseph of God's promise to bless Israel and give them the land of Canaan.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 17 books of the Bible.

— Israel Blesses His Children 37

Before he died, Israel blessed his children, which now included both Manasseh and Ephraim, Joseph's sons. Joseph was given the right of the first born, two portions of land. And Joseph received a special gift of land in Shechem. But more importantly, Jacob gave Joseph assurance that God would bring the children of Israel out of Egypt to live in Canaan as their own possession. Israel had something to say about the future of his sons and their descendants (the 12 tribes of Israel). Jacob was saying that the attitudes and actions of his 12 sons would be seen in their children and that they would receive what was just. So the blessings or predictions of Jacob concerning his sons would be fulfilled. [Even their names (the meaning of the names) indicate their future which we see now in their history.] We know that God spoke directly to Jacob and guided Joseph as well. We do not see God speaking directly to any of the other sons at this point in history. In choosing the younger sons of a generation — Jacob / Joseph / Ephraim — God was saying that what determines your life is not your position or blood when you were born, but **what you do** and **who you are** as a man.

The land promise, which God made to Abraham and confirmed to his son Isaac and to his son Jacob, was repeated by Jacob to Joseph with the assurance from God that the promise would be fulfilled. This promise was so important because the children of Israel had no land and were wanderers in the world. **God chose them** to live by His laws in a place that He chose for them – the land of Canaan.

In a world of pagan gods,
God set apart a holy land and a holy people to live in it
so that they would worship and serve the one true God of heaven.

Jacob foretold what the lives of his sons and their descendants would be. Because of their sins, 3 sons were dispossessed. **Reuben** was unstable and defiled his father's bed (Gen 35:22) – his tribe never produced an important person. **Simeon** became the smallest tribe and shared territory with Judah. **Levi** was given the privilege of being the priestly tribe (priests and Levites). They received no territory, but did receive cities throughout the land. **Judah** became a large and prosperous tribe out of which came David and Solomon (kings of Israel) and Jesus, the Messiah. All the other sons were given a portion of land. Jacob's blessing to **Joseph** was for his sons to have growth and prosperity, along with conflict and hostility. The great prophet and judge, Samuel, came from the tribe of **Ephraim**. Gideon, the great warrior of God, came from the tribe of **Manasseh**. The tribe of **Benjamin** was small and warlike. Both Saul, the first king of Israel, and Saul of Tarsus, who became the apostle Paul, came from this tribe. So we learn from God's dealings with these tribes that the cost of sin can have lasting effects, both now and later. Jacob did not make his sons pay for their wrongs; but he did pronounce judgment on them as he was about to die. We also see that God blesses His people who believe Him and serve Him faithfully.

Israel Blesses His Children

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

- ***Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, To your descendants I will give this land.*** Gen 12:7
- ***I am the God of your father — the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.*** Ex 3:6
- ***The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to Him shall be the obedience of the people.*** Gen 49:10

1. What determines your life (what kind of life you will have)?
2. Why was the land promise important to the people of Israel?
3. Did God choose the land of Canaan for the people of Israel to possess?
4. Did God choose the people of Israel to be His people?
5. How does God describe Himself in Exodus 3:6?
6. For how long will this continue to be His name?
7. In a world of pagan gods, what did God do? Why?
8. What would be the function of the Levites in the promised land?
9. What would be the inheritance of the Levites in the promised land?
   Josh 13:14,33; 14:3-4
10. Judah was the most powerful tribe to which the others looked for leadership. Name the second and third kings of Israel (they were of Judah).
11. What would the other tribes call Judah?
12. What does this mean – ***Your father's children shall bow down before you?***
13. From which tribe would the ***Messiah*** come?

Suggestions - We have seen the importance of the blessing a son receives from his father. Jacob received a significant blessing from his father Isaac. Jacob first blessed the 2 sons of Joseph. He also declared his faith in God and in the promises of God, which were first made to Abraham, restated to Isaac, and then restated to Jacob. Jacob assures Joseph that the people of Israel would not remain in Egypt, but would come up out of Egypt and given the land of Canaan for their possession. God assured Jacob of this at the time He told him to go to the land of Egypt. This promise would continue to be important to the people of Israel as we will see in future lessons. Another important promise was that God would make of Israel a great nation while they were in Egypt. Finally, we see that Jacob blessed all of his sons. In this blessing, he foretold the future of his sons and their tribes. **God is the God of Israel!**

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 17 books of the Bible.

— The Death of Israel — The Death of Joseph 38

Israel blessed his sons and charged them with burying him in his homeland. He died at the age of 147 years. Joseph wept at his father's death. He then chose physicians to embalm Israel in preference to the religious embalmers to avoid the magic and mysticism of the priests and magicians. The embalming took 40 days, and all of Egypt mourned him for 70 days. Then Joseph asked permission of Pharaoh to take Israel to Canaan for burial in the cave of Machpelah. Out of deep respect for Israel, a great company of family and Egyptians went with him.

Joseph's brothers were afraid that Joseph would repay them for the evil they had done to him since their father was gone. When Joseph saw their fear and understood that they had suffered for 17 years after their reconciliation with Joseph, he wept. He told them that he was not in the place of God, and even though they meant it for evil, God meant it for good to save the lives of many people. Joseph assured his brothers that he would take care of them and their families. And so, Joseph lived peacefully with his brothers and the whole family of Israel. And Joseph had the blessing of seeing Ephraim's third generation and Manasseh's grandchildren.

When Joseph knew that he was dying, he repeated God's promise to his brothers that God would bring them out of Egypt and give them the land of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob for a possession. And he made them swear that when they left Egypt, they would take his bones with them. So it was that with all the honors Joseph had received in Egypt, that he disowned Egypt with his dying breath. He identified himself with the children of Israel — with the family, his family — with their God, his God — with the covenant that God made with Abraham and his descendants — with their future, ***I will make of you a great nation.*** He embraced as his own whatever the future might bring for Israel, **God's chosen people**. Some years later, the people came to be in bondage and suffered contempt, poverty, hard labor and a continuing pilgrimage (they did not have a land of their own). Joseph's belief in the promises of God to make of the Israelites a great nation and to give them a land of their own was an act of great **faith** and showed his **humility** toward God.

So Joseph died at the age of 110 years old and was embalmed. His body was put into a wooden coffin shaped like a human body. And while the Israelites waited through centuries for God to fulfill His promise to them, the coffin of Joseph was a reminder that they were only temporary sojourners in Egypt. But it was necessary for them to wait for the time when God would remember them and His covenant and bring them out of Egypt and into the land of promise.

Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. Ex 12:40

The Death of Israel — The Death of Joseph

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

- ***Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, To your descendants I will give this land.*** Gen 12:7
- ***I am the God of your father — the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.*** Ex 3:6
- ***God Almighty … blessed me, and said to me, Behold, I will make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will make of you a multitude of people, and give this land to your descendants after you as an everlasting possession.*** Gen 48:3-4

1. How did Joseph react to his father's death?
2. Is the body of a dead person important?
3. Why did Israel insist that his body would not be buried in Egypt?
4. Where did Joseph promise to bury Israel?
5. When Israel died, how was his body treated?
6. Describe the company of people who went to bury Israel in Canaan.
7. After Israel died, Joseph's brothers came to talk with him about what they had done to him when he was 17 years old. They were afraid that Joseph would now seek revenge. What did Joseph say to them?
8. Joseph lived peaceably with the family of Israel for 54 more years. Of what did he remind his brothers as he was nearing death?
9. What did he make his brothers swear to concerning his bones?
10. When Joseph died, how was his body treated?
11. Of what did the presence of the body of Joseph in a casket remind the people?
12. God provides things for us to remember so that we will not forget that He is God – He has proven this many times in the past – He will remember His covenant and do what He has promised. But we must wait on the Lord. What has God given to us to help us remember what He has done previously? What has He given to us to help us remember what He has promised to do for us in the future?
13. What has God given to Christians as a ***remembrance*** of how we were saved?

Suggestions - As we consider the death of a person, we often reflect on his life. Think about the life of Jacob (**Israel**) – Who was he? Why is he important? Why was he so important to the people of Israel? The people of Egypt? The people in Canaan? The greatness of Israel is seen in the mourning of the people at his death and at his burial. Consider the same questions and observations about **Joseph**. <u>He served God faithfully</u>. Do you think that Joseph lived a happy and fulfilled life? What do you think was his primary joy?

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 17 books of the Bible.

— Joseph, An Example for Life and Living 39

Joseph was a man of **integrity**, which has to do with his steadfast adherence to a strict moral and ethical code of conduct. He lived a wholesome life and remained pure in the face of terrible consequences. As believers in God, what are we to do in our own lives? We can look at Joseph as an example of behavior and attitude.

Looking at Joseph as a young man of 17, we see that he **obeyed his father** when he went to Shechem to report on the welfare of his brothers. He probably knew that his brothers would not be happy to see him, but he persisted in his duty to his father. And he gave bad reports about his brothers when he might have been better served by not telling the truth. Joseph was hated by his brothers for telling the truth. Did it cost Joseph to tell the truth? Yes, he was sold into slavery by his brothers! So why be truthful and honest? Because **telling the truth pleases God.** Life has a way of turning against you when you lie. People who know that you lie, will not believe you, even if you are telling the truth. And they will lie to you because they know you are not honest. God has shown through his servant, Joseph, that even though you may sometimes pay for being truthful, **it is best for you and everyone around you to be truthful and honest** in your dealings with each other.

Joseph served Potiphar with **faithfulness** and **uprightness**. When Potiphar's wife tempted him to lie with her, he refused her for three reasons. (1) He would not betray the man who had entrusted him with everything he owned (he had **integrity**). (2) He reminded her that she already belonged to his master (his **moral goodness**). (3) He would not displease God (shows his **righteousness**). But the wife, who had power over Joseph's life, only grew angry at him. Did it cost Joseph to do the right thing? Yes, he was thrown into prison for about ten years! So why do the right thing? Because **it puts you on the right path with God.** The wrong path takes you to the wrong place in your life on earth and also for eternity. If you care about your own life and the lives of your family, Joseph is an example of making the right choices.

In prison, Joseph was favored by the keeper of the prison and put in charge of everyone and everything. His compassionate and generous heart caused him to help the chief butler and the chief baker. Later, Pharaoh had troubling dreams which Joseph interpreted by God's power. Was Joseph rewarded for serving God? Yes! He was rewarded with wealth and a high position. He was rewarded when he saved Egypt, his own family and perhaps all of the then-known world, from starving to death. But most important of all, Joseph was rewarded because **God was with him!** In his time and place, Joseph was a savior (physical) of mankind. His belief in the one true God served him in his life and will serve you in yours.

Joseph, the righteous one, is truly an example for life and living.

Joseph, An Example for Life and Living

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

- ***And his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord made all he did to prosper in his hand.*** Gen 39:3
- ***Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom is the Spirit of God?*** Gen 41:38
- ***And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.*** Gen 45:7

1. How would you define integrity?
2. How did Joseph show that he had **integrity**?
3. Behavior and attitude are two very important things which affect life and living.
   What word best describes the basic attitude that we should have concerning God?
   What word best describes the behavior that we should have towards God?
4. The Bible tells us that children should obey their parents. Did Joseph?
5. Why is it important to tell the truth? What is the result if I choose not to do so?
6. Joseph was a slave, but he served Potiphar with **faithfulness** and **uprightness**.
   Discuss how we should be faithful and upright in living our lives today.
7. Joseph showed that he had **integrity**, **moral goodness** and **righteousness**. Discuss how these ideas should be a part of who I am.
8. **Are you on the right path with God**?
9. If not, how can you get on the right path?
10. Joseph had a compassionate and generous heart. How did these help Joseph?
11. Do you think that these two characteristics can be helpful to you today?
12. What was the most important reality in Joseph's life?
13. What attitude served Joseph well in his life? Is the same true for you today?
14. With regards to life and living, should not Joseph be an example for you?

Suggestions - Throughout the Bible, God demonstrates His power and graciousness, especially in His relationship with people with whom He has a covenant relationship. God also provides examples of people of faith who are willing to believe in God and trust in God for their wellbeing. In these examples, we are able to see the particulars in various circumstances and how the man of faith dealt with them. Joseph is one such example. Some young people believe that they have the right to behave badly. The Bible nowhere says this. In fact, the opposite is true. Bad behavior has bad results. Bad behavior begins with bad thinking and the formation of bad attitudes. We should have good thinking in our youth and form good attitudes and good behavior. To do so shows wisdom and will bring reward from God. To do otherwise is foolish and will have a result which displeases God and will not be profitable to the person.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 22 books of the Bible.

— Summary of the book of Genesis 40

The word genesis means ***beginning***. We see the beginning of the physical universe and everything in it, including Mankind, brought into being by the creation of God. The emphasis of the book of Genesis is on Mankind, the people. We are given information about the nature of Mankind — he was created in the image of God. Physically, the distinctive characteristic (**male and female**) continues to be of great importance. The distinctive spiritual characteristic (**in the image of God**) continues to be of the greatest importance. The focus of the historical story in Genesis continues today to be the foundation of our understanding of who we are, what we are, and where we came from. It is also the foundation of understanding our continuing relationship with God our Creator — the focus of The Story of the Bible.

The Creation of the Universe and Mankind (Gen 1 & 2) is a significant fact that affects every person. The next most significant event is the beginning of **SIN** on the earth (Gen 3). Sin brought physical death to Mankind. Sin also brought spiritual death to Mankind. Death is the wages of sin (Rom 6:23). God wants us to have **LIFE**. The positive effect of **righteousness** is seen in Abel and Seth and Seth's son (Gen 4):

Then men began to call on the name of the Lord.

The Story of the Bible is the story of how God brought about what was necessary for us to obtain forgiveness of sin through Jesus Christ. The negative effects of **sin** on Mankind is seen in the story of the flood. God saved Noah and his family (8 people) from the destruction of the flood because they were righteous and obedient. After the flood, God made a covenant with Mankind which looked to the future continuing relationship between God and Mankind. (Gen chapters 6–9) The people attempted to exalt themselves which displeased God; so He made the language of the people to be different. The people were divided in the earth according to where their families lived (the families of the 3 sons of Noah). (Gen 10 & 11)

Then God chose Abram. He made a covenant with him and his descendents which led to the family becoming a people and then a great nation. A primary purpose of this covenant and the law given to ***God's chosen people*** (Israel) was to bring us to Christ (Gal 3:16,24). Forgiveness is available only in Christ (Eph 1:7). Abraham is said to be ***the father of all those who believe*** (Rom 4:11). Abraham and Sarah were the parents of Isaac who was the father of Jacob. Jacob (also called Israel) was the father of 12 sons who became the fathers of the 12 tribes of Israel or the people of Israel. The covenant was the basis for God having a continual relationship with His people Israel (Ex 6:3-5). The book of Genesis tells us many things about how God dealt with Israel and other nations as well. (Gen chapters 12 – 50) This information is a foundation of our understanding of how God deals with Mankind.

Summary of the book of Genesis

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

- ***In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*** Gen 1:1
- ***Then men began to call on the name of the Lord.*** Gen 4:26
- ***But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.*** Gen 6:8
- ***And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*** Gen 12:3
- ***The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between His feet, until Shiloh comes.*** Gen 49:10

1. What does the word genesis mean?
2. Why is the Bible story of Creation important for us to know?
3. Every human being is created in the image of God. What does this mean?
4. Why was it a sin for Adam and Eve to eat of the forbidden fruit?
5. Why did God destroy the earth with a flood of waters?
6. Why did Noah find grace in the eyes of the Lord?
7. With whom did God make a covenant that benefits us today?
8. Abraham and Sarah had a son who was promised by God. What was his name?
9. Isaac and Rebekah had twin sons. What were their names?
10. Who received the blessing from Isaac?
11. God gave Jacob another name. What was it?
12. How many sons did Jacob have? How many daughters?
13. What was the name of the people and nation who descended from Jacob?
14. What was the name of Jacob's son who became the ruler of Egypt?
15. What did Joseph do that eventually saved his family from starvation?

Suggestions - This lesson centers around the foundation of understanding many things about God and Mankind as presented in the book of Genesis. It is important for us to understand that God had a **PURPOSE** and a **PLAN** which is visible as we look at the story presented in Genesis. **God and I** – relationship – God wants it. ***God is holy***. When Mankind sinned, God could no longer have a close relationship with him. SIN SEPARATES MAN FROM GOD! God wanted to restore that close relationship. To do so, it was necessary for man's sins to be forgiven. God's plan is seen in God's promise to Abraham. It is fulfilled in Jesus Christ ***("Shiloh")***. We receive the benefit.

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 22 books of the Bible.

— Review Lessons 31 - 40 R 4

This group of lessons tells us about Jacob and his family, Israel, from when they came to Canaan from Padan Aram to the death of Joseph while they were living in Egypt. The family of 70 souls who went down into Egypt came to be a people and then a great nation. God was with them and blessed them during this time frame.

31 – Tells about Joseph when he was 17 years old and living at home with his family. Joseph's father, Jacob, gave him a tunic (coat) of many colors. Joseph had 2 dreams which suggested that Joseph would rule over his brothers, his father and mother. The brothers were jealous and decided to kill Joseph; but Reuben convinced them not to do so. They sold Joseph as a slave to some Midianites who were on their way to Egypt. They killed a goat, dipped Joseph's tunic in the blood and showed it to Jacob. Jacob assumed that Joseph had been killed by a wild beast. **Joseph goes to Egypt.**

32 – Joseph was a slave **in the house of Potiphar**, who soon put **Joseph in charge of everything** that he has. Joseph served Potiphar faithfully. Potiphar saw that the Lord was with Joseph and caused everything that he did to prosper. Potiphar's wife tried to seduce Joseph; but he refused. She falsely accused him. He was put into prison.

33 – Joseph pleased the prison keeper and was soon **put in charge of everyone and everything in the prison.** The king's butler and baker were put into prison. In one night, each had a dream — God gave Joseph the interpretation. Each was fulfilled.

34 – Pharaoh has 2 dreams. His butler remembers Joseph and his interpretation of 2 dreams 2 years previously. Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dreams: **there will be 7 years of plenty followed by 7 years of famine**. Joseph gives some advice. **Pharaoh** makes **Joseph the ruler over all of Egypt** – over everything and everyone except Pharaoh.

35 – The famine affects many lands. Jacob sends 10 of his sons to buy grain in Egypt. They must have approval from the person in charge – Joseph. They bow before Joseph and tell who they are and where they are from. Joseph recognizes them, but they do not recognize him. Joseph works everything to understand their attitude toward him and the events of the past. **Joseph and his brothers** are reconciled.

36 – Pharaoh invites, Joseph urges, and God tells Jacob to go to Egypt. So **the family of Israel goes to live in Egypt.** Joseph allocates the land of Goshen for their use.

37 – Jacob realizes that he is near death. He talks to Joseph and blesses his children. Jacob gives Joseph a double portion and a special blessing for Ephraim. He then calls all of his children together. **Jacob blesses his children** or foretells their future.

38 – Jacob dies. A period of mourning is declared. A great entourage goes to Canaan to bury Jacob. Joseph continues to rule in Egypt. A few years later, **Joseph dies.**

39 – Joseph was an example for life and living. He was faithful to God all of his life. He was a righteous person who lived in a way which we should emulate.

40 – A summary of significant events which are recorded in **the book of Genesis.**

Review Lessons 31 – 40

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

- ***The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a successful man.*** Gen 39:2
- ***You shall be over my house, and all my people shall be ruled according to your word; only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you.*** Gen 41:40
- ***And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.*** Gen 45:7
- ***The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between His feet, until Shiloh comes.*** Gen 49:10

1. When this story begins (Gen 37:1), in what land does Jacob and his family live?
2. Jacob had 4 wives. What were their names?
3. Jacob had 12 sons and 1 daughter. Who was the mother of Joseph and Benjamin?
4. Ten brothers of Joseph were so jealous of him that they wanted to kill him. Why?
5. Reuben convinced them to sell Joseph as a slave to whom? Where did they go?
6. Joseph was a slave but the master of whose household?
7. Why was he put into prison?
8. Soon Joseph was in charge of everything and everyone in the prison. What 2 important people were put into the prison by Pharaoh?
9. Each of these 2 men had a dream in one night. Who gave them the interpretation?
10. Later, Pharaoh had 2 dreams. The butler remembered Joseph. What happened?
11. Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's dreams. Describe the dreams. What did they mean?
12. Then he gave Pharaoh some advice. Did Pharaoh follow it? What was the result?
13. What did the slave Joseph do soon after he was made ruler over all of Egypt?
14. What did Joseph do during the 7 years of plenty?
15. What did Joseph do during the 7 years of famine? With what result?
16. Two years into the famine, why did Joseph's 10 oldest brothers come to Egypt?
17. From whom did they need permission to buy grain? How did he treat them?
18. Joseph and his brothers are reconciled. What did Joseph ask his family to do?
19. Jacob and his family come to live in Egypt. What was the name of the land?
20. Who provided for them during the famine?
21. As Jacob nears death, he blesses the 2 sons of Joseph. Describe this blessing.
22. Then Jacob speaks concerning the future of all of his sons. In Judah's blessing is a prophecy concerning the Messiah (Christ). We are able to see in this story that God was with Jacob and his family. Name some ways we can see this.
23. Did God continue to honor His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?
24. Describe what God did for Jacob and his family through these years.
25. What did Joseph make his brothers swear to do when they left Egypt?

- Books of the Bible – Be able to repeat from memory the first 22 books of the Bible.

— Review Series Lessons 1 - 40 S 4

The Bible Is the Word of God is where we began ***The Story of the Bible***. This group of lessons tells us about many important fundamental principles that pertain to our understanding of God and His relationship to Mankind. Anyone who rejects these principles has no foundation for life and living. Only the Bible tells us who and what we are, where we came from, and where we are going after our life on earth is over. It is easy to see that the most important aspect of our existence is our personal relationship with God, because it affects us every day that we live and throughout eternity as well. These lessons allow us to have a grasp of who God is and what our relationship with God should be. Please consider these things very carefully.

❖ **The Bible Is the Word of God** is a concept which we must understand. God is God. God is spirit. The physical man cannot see God. But any man can see the evidence of God all around him. Every man who has taken it upon himself to explain why things are the way they are fails miserably if he ignores the Bible. He must rely upon his own experience or upon "science", which has supposedly answered the questions. But no true scientist can accept the answers which many "scientists" offer because they do not pass the test of Scientific or Proven Fact. There is no conflict between true science (what has been proven to be true) and the information found in the Bible. Only Mankind has a spirit which is like God's spirit. That spirit is what makes Mankind unique among all of God's creatures. It is the part of Man that thinks and reasons, that loves and hates, that believes or disbelieves, that sins or obeys God, that will exist forever in eternity in heaven or in hell. This is the part of Mankind that the Bible deals with primarily. There are many evidences of God in what was created — ***the heavens declare the glory of God*** — but the main evidence of God is the wonderful effect that ***God*** and His ***way of life*** has on the lives of people. There are many internal evidences also which show that the Bible is the word of God. God is God, and the Bible is the word of God; therefore, we should believe and obey God through the information revealed to us by God in the Bible.

❖ **The Books of the Bible** are described briefly so that we can see the character of information that is available to us in the Bible and where it may be found. Some books give us information about history. The prophets tell us about events that will occur in the future and why. The books of the New Testament together compose ***the gospel of Jesus Christ*** and are the Law of God for us today.

It is significant to note that, from the time of Moses, there were prophets which revealed God's message to Mankind until the New Testament was completed (about 96 A.D.). But there was a period of about 400 years (after the book of Malachi) when God did not speak through the prophets which we call "The Period of Silence". But what is remarkable about this period is God's prophecies that were being fulfilled.

❖ **The Timeline of the Bible** graphically shows the time relationship of events from the Creation through the end of the Bible. Since the books of the Bible are not all in chronological order, this helps us very much to put the historical events into a proper perspective.

The purpose of these lessons about **The Contents of the Bible** is to give some information that may be helpful for anyone who may not have access to some of the important information about the Bible which should be helpful in studying the Bible.

❖ **The lessons in Group 2** tell us about the Creation of the physical realm, including all living things. "The Laws of Nature" are really the laws which God established for the physical realm. Mankind was created in the image of God. Mankind sinned. God set in motion His plan for the salvation of Mankind which would be accomplished in Jesus Christ — through His blood (His death on the cross). We see many lessons about God's attitude toward sin and people who sin as well as His attitude toward righteousness and those who practice it. The story of the flood illustrates this. We have the history of Mankind after the flood: God divided the peoples of the earth by causing them to speak different languages (they could not understand each other).

❖ **The lessons in Group 3** tell us about the promises which God made to Abram (later called Abraham). These promises are stated (Gen 12) and expanded. Based on these promises, God made a covenant with Abraham which applied to God and Abraham and all of his descendants through Isaac, specifically, the people of Israel, who later came to be called "the Jews". These are described as ***God's chosen people***. God foretold through His prophets that the Messiah or ***Christ*** would be of these people and specifically, a descendant of King David. It was this Messiah that the Jews were expecting and looking for when Jesus was born — it was the right time, the right place and the right person — of this fact, there is no doubt.

❖ **The lessons in Group 4** show us how God provided salvation for the family of Israel, of whom He made a great nation. God demonstrated His attitudes, attributes and power through His dealings with Israel. **God's spiritual covenant with Abraham began the basis for how God deals with Mankind throughout history.**

- Memory Verses – Discuss meaning. Be able to repeat from memory.

➢ ***In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*** Gen 1:1

➢ ***Then men began to call on the name of the Lord.*** Gen 4:26

➢ ***But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.*** Gen 6:8

➢ ***And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*** Gen 12:3

➢ ***The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a successful man.*** Gen 39:2

➢ ***The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between His feet, until Shiloh comes.*** Gen 49:10

Suggestions - This lesson summarizes the first 40 lessons of this series.

WE HAVE COVERED IN THE BIBLE

4004 BC CREATION 0 AM

THE CREATION OF ALL THINGS IN THE PHYSICAL UNIVERSE.
SIN ENTERED THE WORLD WHEN ADAM AND EVE SINNED.
GOD'S ETERNAL PURPOSE AND GOD'S PLAN FOR
THE SALVATION OF MANKIND BEGAN TO UNFOLD.

2348 BC FLOOD 1656 AM

GOD DESTROYED THE EARTH AND THE PEOPLE ON THE EARTH WITH A FLOOD OF WATERS BECAUSE OF THE SINFULNESS OF MANKIND.
BUT GOD SAVED NOAH AND HIS FAMILY BECAUSE THEY WERE RIGHTEOUS—8 SOULS.

1921 BC PROMISES 2083 AM

GOD MADE SOME PROMISES TO ABRAHAM:
NATION - SEED - LAND

ABRAHAM'S GRANDSON JACOB WAS BLESSED BY GOD. HE WAS THE FATHER OF 12 SONS WHOSE FAMILIES BECAME THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL. GOD MADE A COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM WHICH WAS CONTINUED WITH ISAAC, JACOB AND THE NATION OF ISRAEL. JACOB'S SON JOSEPH WAS SOLD INTO SLAVERY. HE WAS IN EGYPT AND GOD BLESSED HIM. WHEN HE TOLD PHARAOH HIS DREAM AND WHAT IT MEANT, HE WAS MADE RULER OVER ALL EGYPT. THIS WAS THE MEANS BY WHICH JOSEPH'S FAMILY WAS SAVED FROM DEATH BY STARVATION DUE TO A FAMINE IN CANAAN. JOSEPH'S FAMILY CAME TO LIVE IN EGYPT. EVENTUALLY JACOB DIED AND THEN JOSEPH DIED. SOON THE EGYPTIANS BECAME AFRAID OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL AND ENSLAVED THEM.