

— POSSESSING —
THE LAND

Possessing the Land – Teacher's Manual

First Edition by Cherie Noel

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Introduction

The Old Testament offers us countless examples of God's power and love. The histories, laws, psalms, and prophecies all reflect a Creator both righteous and merciful. He is our Strength and Redeemer, the Eternal King who dwells with His people.

These lessons survey the major events and themes of the Old Testament. Through a mixture of independent study and group discussion, students will explore the following:

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Lessons 1–7 | God's care for Abraham and his family—as well as early foreshadowing of our redemption through Christ |
| Lessons 8–17 | The journey of the Israelites from Egypt through the wilderness, as well as their first struggles in Canaan |
| Lessons 18–26 | The early kings of Israel, the division of the kingdom, and the Babylonian Exile |
| Lessons 27–35 | God's wisdom and righteousness, as revealed in the Poetic and Prophetic books |

Lesson Components

Content Objectives

These summarize the primary biblical doctrines or points supported by the lesson.

Learning Objectives

These are expected student outcomes. By the end of the lesson, students should be able to recall, explain, or discuss these points. Most of these objectives will be assessed in the lesson's quiz.

Vocabulary

On the first page of each lesson—in both the Teacher's Manual and Student Manual—is a list of new vocabulary terms. Students may first encounter these words in the Student Manual or in Scripture. Occasionally, the word may only appear in the Teacher's Manual Session Notes.

Session Notes

Each weekly lesson includes three sessions (A, B, and C). The Session Notes suggest ways to explain, discuss, and illustrate the lesson content. The notes generally follow a three-part sequence:

- **Introduction** – Preview foundational ideas and terms.
- **Student Exercises** – Give students time to read Scripture and answer questions from the Student Manual.
- **Development** – Review the exercises and explore the topics further.

You will probably not use all of the suggested discussion questions or activities. Most sessions should last only a single class period, but you may choose to spend more time developing and discussing the material. You may also want to give your students more time to complete the Possessing the Land sections in the Student Manual.

Target Truths

At the end of each session is a short devotional takeaway. You may choose to develop this thought throughout the session or simply offer it as a concluding point.

Character Trait Activities

Excluding Lessons 1, 17, and 35, each lesson includes at least one activity designed to help students practice a character trait relevant to the lesson topic. Most of these activities require little preparation, but you may choose to expand on the core ideas. These can greatly expand the social or kinesthetic dimensions of your lesson.

Student Manual Facsimiles

You can find these pages at the end of each lesson in this Teacher's Manual. The facsimiles are near-exact copies of the pages in the Student Manual with suggested answers. In places where students might record different terms from different Bible translations, you will find multiple answers separated by forward slashes (/).

Quizzes

Excluding Lessons 17 and 35, each lesson includes a ten-point quiz. These assess the students' grasp of the Learning and Content Objectives.

Students can study for these quizzes solely by reviewing the Student Manual exercises. The quizzes do not assess material discussed exclusively in the Teacher's Manual.

Optional Components

Music Curriculum

Near the back of this Teacher's Manual, beginning on page 358, are the lyrics for nine classic hymns and one Christmas carol. You may wish to read the explanatory notes to introduce one song for each month of the school year.

- And Can It Be
- Amazing Grace
- We Gather Together
- Savior Like a Shepherd Lead Us
- Holy, Holy, Holy
- When I Survey the Wondrous Cross
- Be Still My Soul
- My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less
- A Mighty Fortress Is Our God
- The First Noël

Students can find the lyrics beginning on page 182 of the Student Manual.

Scripture Memory

Each lesson includes a passage of Scripture that reinforces the topics of this study. Consider introducing the passage at the beginning of the week and then review the passage each day. At the end of the week, students could write the passage on the back of their weekly quiz, or you could ask parents and guardians to sign a sheet when their child recites the passage correctly at home.

A list of passages is also included on the last page of the Student Manual, along with signature blanks for a parent or guardian.

| | | | |
|-----------|------------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------|
| Lesson 1 | Psalm 111:1 | Lesson 21 | Psalm 37:5–6 |
| Lesson 2 | Psalm 111:2 | Lesson 22 | Psalm 37:7 |
| Lesson 3 | Psalm 111:3 | Lesson 23 | Review Psalm 37:5–7 |
| Lesson 4 | Review Psalm 111:1–3 | Lesson 24 | James 3:13 |
| Lesson 5 | Psalm 111:4 | Lesson 25 | James 3:14–15 |
| Lesson 6 | Psalm 111:5 | Lesson 26 | Review James 3:13–15 |
| Lesson 7 | Psalm 111:6 | Lesson 27 | James 3:16 |
| Lesson 8 | Review Psalm 111:4–6 | Lesson 28 | James 3:17–18 |
| Lesson 9 | Exodus 20:1–3 | Lesson 29 | Review James 3:16–18 |
| Lesson 10 | Exodus 20:4 | Lesson 30 | Jeremiah 31:33 |
| Lesson 11 | Review Exodus 20:1–4 | Lesson 31 | Jeremiah 31:34 |
| Lesson 12 | Exodus 20:7–8 | Lesson 32 | Review Jeremiah 31:33–34 |
| Lesson 13 | Exodus 20:12–13 | Lesson 33 | Jeremiah 31:35 |
| Lesson 14 | Review Exodus 20:7–8, 12–13 | Lesson 34 | Jeremiah 31:36 |
| Lesson 15 | Exodus 20:14–16 | Lesson 35 | Review Jeremiah 31:35–36 |
| Lesson 16 | Exodus 20:17 | | |
| Lesson 17 | Review Exodus 20:14–17 | | |
| Lesson 18 | Psalm 37:1–2 | | |
| Lesson 19 | Psalm 37:3–4 | | |
| Lesson 20 | Review Psalm 37:1–4 | | |

Extra Resources

You can purchase a packet of downloadable resources from the *Possessing the Land* product page at **positiveaction.org**.

Answer Slides (PDF)

These presentations allow you to review the Student Manual exercises question by question, with answers appearing as you progress.

Editable Quizzes (DOC)

Edit and print your own versions of the quizzes in this Teacher's Manual.

Piano Accompaniments (MP3)

Sing along to these piano arrangements of hymns in the music curriculum.

Image Pack (PNG)

Copy and print over 50 illustrations from this study—for use in handouts, bulletin boards, and presentations.

K4–6 Curriculum Sequence

K4 Exploring God's Love

Students find countless examples of God's love—from Creation through the life and ministry of Christ.

K5 Learning About God

Students learn basic truths about God's character by studying the lives of major figures throughout Scripture.

1st Grade Enjoying God's Gifts

Students explore God's grace, as revealed in Creation, various Old Testament figures, and the work of Christ.

2nd Grade Finding God's Promises

By following the life of Moses, students see God's compassion, holiness, and faithfulness.

3rd Grade Growing with God

Students examine the tools that God used to sustain and grow figures like Abraham, Sarah, Jacob, Joseph, Ruth, and Daniel.

4th Grade Building Life Castles

Starting with the life of Christ and continuing with the journeys of Paul, students discover the impact of the gospel.

5th Grade Possessing the Land

Students survey the structure, themes, and figures of the Old Testament, noting especially God's sovereign care.

6th Grade Winning the Race

Students review doctrines from all of Scripture, with special emphasis on life principles from the New Testament.

Suggested Weekly Schedules

Five-Day Option

Day 1 Session A

Day 2 Session B

Day 3 Session C
Possessing the Land Section

Day 4 Character Trait Activity

Day 5 Review and Quiz

Four-Day Option

Day 1 Session A

Day 2 Session B

Day 3 Session C
Possessing the Land Section

Day 4 Review and Quiz
Character Trait Activity

Three-Day Option

Day 1 Session A

Day 2 Session B

Session C

Day 3 Review and Quiz
Assign Possessing the Land Section as Homework

Feedback

As a non-profit publishing ministry, we consider teachers our co-laborers in the faith. Each curriculum remains a work in progress, and the people who teach these studies have a great impact on the scope and format of every new edition. If you have any comments, questions, or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us—we'd love to hear from you.

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A Final Word

We pray that this study will help you and your students know God's glory, grow in that knowledge, and share it with others. To benefit the most from this study, consider the following:

- Spend time each day in the Word. Use the material in this study to guide your devotional reading so that you can present God's truth and love from the heart. Spend time marking and adjusting the session notes to suit your students' needs.
- Pray for your students, and ask God to grow you.
- Be vulnerable to your students, expressing questions and confidence in equal measure. Encourage them to explore Scripture with you.
- Be the love and truth that you want to see from your students.
- Depend on God's strength and grace, even in your weakness.

LESSON 1

The Word of God

Scripture Memory – Psalm 111:1

For the Teacher

This lesson introduces the scope and importance of the Bible. Depending on your students' familiarity with Scripture, you may wish to spend time reviewing the basics—how to look up references, how to find books of the Bible, and other tips on reading Scripture.

Note that throughout this study, many student exercises include fill-in-the-blank summaries of Scripture. These more modern phrases do not necessarily correspond with any specific version or translation, but they can scaffold a student's exploration of unfamiliar vocabulary and usage. As students read Scripture, consider its meaning, and then write key words in a simplified context, they can better understand their Bible on their own.

If you choose to do the sorting activity at the end of Session 1-B, you could prepare by writing the names of every Old Testament book on index cards.

Content Objectives

- 1-A** The Bible, though written by many people over a long time, was inspired by one, divine Author.
- 1-B** Scripture follows a unified story that begins in Genesis and ends in Revelation.
- 1-C** The Spirit helps us grow and learn from Scripture.

Learning Objectives

Students should be able to . . .

- Navigate the Old Testament by book or reference
- Summarize the complementary themes of Genesis and Revelation
- Explain key benefits of Scripture to believers

Vocabulary

- **The Bible** – The collection of 66 books inspired by God
- **Scripture** – Sacred writings; another name for the Bible
- **Prophet** – Someone who shares a spiritual message, often from God
- **Prophecy** – A truth said by a prophet; often about future events
- **Inspiration** – The way God worked through human writers to record Scripture; “God-breathed”
- **Testament** – A promise or set of promises; an agreement or covenant

Session 1-A God's Miracle Book

Explain: Our Bible curriculum this year is a study called *Possessing the Land* that surveys the Old Testament. We'll start at the beginning in the Book of Genesis, and then we'll follow the ways God reached out to the people of Israel. We'll look at some stories you may or may not already know, and we'll see how God showed love and justice to His people.

Discuss: What are the two major divisions of the Bible? What does the word *testament* mean?

Testament

A promise or set of promises; a covenant or agreement

- The *Old Testament* refers to a set of promises God gave to His people, the Israelites. All of these promises pointed to the coming of one person—Jesus Christ.
- In the *New Testament*, we find promises for everyone, not just Israel. These promises are possible because of what Jesus did.

Verse Look-Up

Ask volunteers to look up and read the following passages about Old Testament promises. As needed, explain how to locate the book, chapter, and verse.

- **Genesis 15:5–6** – God promised Abraham that he would have many descendants, and that they'd inherit a land (v. 7) to call home.
- **Numbers 10:29** – Hundreds of years later, after Israel had become many people, they tried to claim their home.
- **Joshua 23:14** – The Israelites often turned away from God, but God always kept His promises. Israel would face bad consequences for sin, but God never let them be destroyed.

Explain: Each week, you'll work through exercises in the Student Manual, while we discuss some big ideas as a class.

- Each lesson is divided into A, B, and C sections.
- You should be able to answer most questions by looking up a passage or just by thinking. Some questions will ask you to think about parts of your life. Sometimes there's no right or wrong answer—just think about the questions carefully and honestly.
- If you find words you don't know, check the Vocabulary section at the beginning of the lesson—or ask for help. Some passages in Scripture are difficult to understand, so we'll try to go through many together.

Consider previewing the vocabulary (SM p. 5) before students begin the exercises.

Prompt: Complete the exercises in section 1-A of your Student Manual.

Discuss: How would you describe *inspiration* in your own words?

Inspiration

The way God worked through human writers to record Scripture; “God-breathed”

- **Do you think the human writers knew the whole story God planned to tell?**
- **Do you think the human writers understood everything they wrote about?** Many prophets recorded visions and messages that wouldn't be revealed until centuries later.
- **If no human is perfect, how can we trust Scripture to be true?** Note **Numbers 23:19** and **2 Peter 1:20–21**. We trust God, who always speaks the truth.

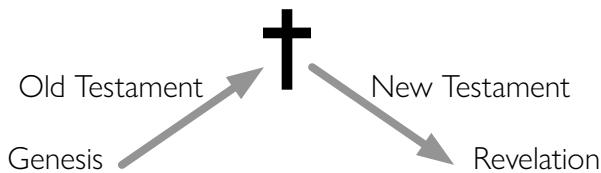
Target Truth

The Bible is the Word of God, and we can trust His promises.

Session 1-B The Beginning and the End

Prompt: Complete the exercises in section 1-B of your Student Manual. The questions point us to the beginning and end of Scripture so we can better understand the big ideas in the middle.

Illustrate: We could picture the history within Scripture like this:



- In the Book of Genesis, we read about the perfect world God made. Humans turned from God and fell into sin, and then everything became painful and deadly.
- But God had a plan to rescue us through His Son, Jesus. All of the Old Testament points forward to the time He would come.
- The New Testament describes the new relationship we can have with God. This is only possible because Jesus died for our sins and rose again. Now we can accept His gift and follow Him.
- The Book of Revelation describes the end of all God's plans. In heaven, He will live face to face with His people; He'll wipe away every tear; and He'll answer every doubt. There will be no pain, suffering, or death. Everything bad will become good like He first designed it.

Explain: This year we'll focus on studying the first part of this timeline—the Old Testament. We can divide the Old Testament books into four big sections, as shown in the picture on page 6 of your Student Manual.

- **The Law** (Genesis–Deuteronomy), which describes the beginning of the world, the beginning of Israel, and the laws God gave to them
- **History** (Joshua–Esther), which describes the history of Israel after they reached the land God had promised them

- **Poetry** (Job–The Song of Solomon), five poetic books that include stories and praise songs, along with wise thoughts about God and His gifts

- **The Prophets** (Isaiah–Malachi), which record the truths God shared with His people through prophets

Sorting Activity

- Write the four categories on the board, and then list Old Testament books at random, asking students to use their Bibles to guess the appropriate category.
- Alternatively, write the name of each book on an index card and distribute the cards evenly among the students. Ask students to find the appropriate category for their books and place the cards in the correct spots. Review the categories as a class.

Target Truth

God controls all of history, and Scripture gives us the best view to His work.

Session 1-C Exploring the Word

Illustrate: Briefly preview the Old Testament Timeline (SM p. 4). If needed, note the difference between BC and AD.

- The timeline begins with Genesis, which describes the beginning of the world, the fall of humanity, and God's relationship with the founders of Israel.
- The rest of the timeline is a history of Israel, which we'll study throughout the year.
- The Old Testament writings ended about 400 years before the coming of Jesus.

Discuss: If you're not an Israelite—if you're not Jewish or a member of the nation of Israel—what value does the Old Testament have for you? What can you learn from it?

Prompt: Complete the exercises in section 1-C of your Student Manual.

Explain: From the Old Testament we learn a great deal about God. We may be New Testament believers, but we cannot forget God's work through this time.

- Read **Romans 15:4**. By studying the difficult things faced by people in the Old Testament, we can find hope in God for difficult times today.
- Read **Galatians 3:24**. Even the old laws and rituals help us understand our need for Jesus. It's impossible for any of us to be perfect or righteous before God—we need the righteousness of Christ.

Discuss: So who is the most important teacher of God's Word?

You may wish to review the doctrine of the Trinity.

- Does the Spirit teach everyone about the Bible?
- If you have the Spirit living inside you, does that mean you automatically know everything about the Bible?

Explain: If we want to understand Scripture, we still need to read and study it carefully. But without the Spirit, we will not grow or change. Plenty of smart people study the Bible but gain nothing from it.

If we study the Bible and ask God to teach us, He will change us—sometimes quickly, often slowly—into someone that thinks and acts like Jesus.

Consider defining any unfamiliar words that students listed from 2 Timothy 3:15–17.

Prompt: Look at the Possessing the Land section on page 9 of your Student Manual. Can you already think of any tips or advice for reading the Bible?

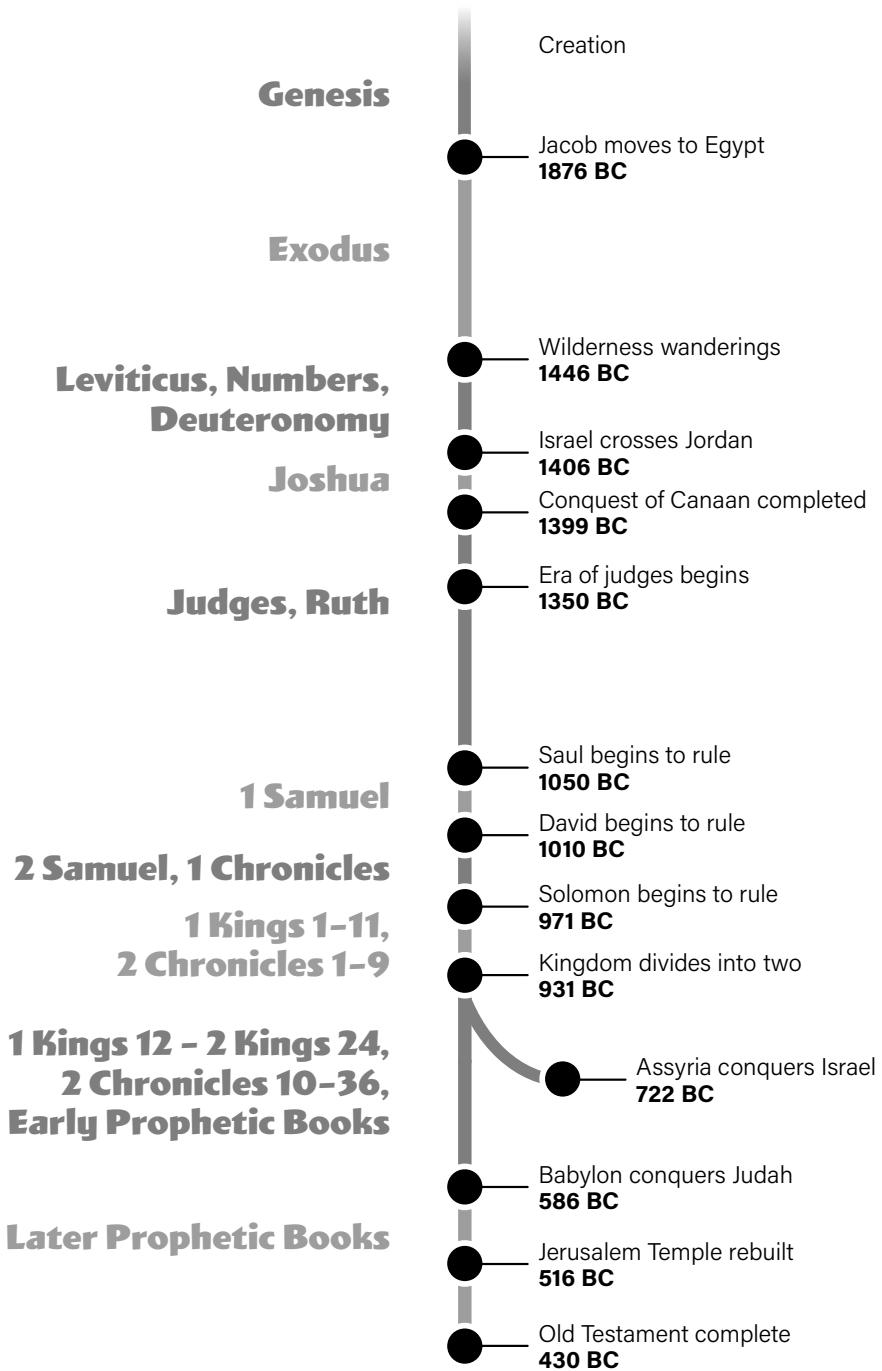
- Parents and guardians can be some of our most valuable teachers. Classes here and at church are also helpful.
- Some Bibles have notes and explanations for each passage.
- It's good to read the Bible each day on your own. Try to find a time when your brain is sharp and you don't have many distractions.
- If you're new to the Bible, try books that don't need much extra explanation, like the Gospels or Proverbs.
- Instead of reading a long passage, try spending time understanding shorter passages. Some passages make more sense after you read them 3–4 times in a row.

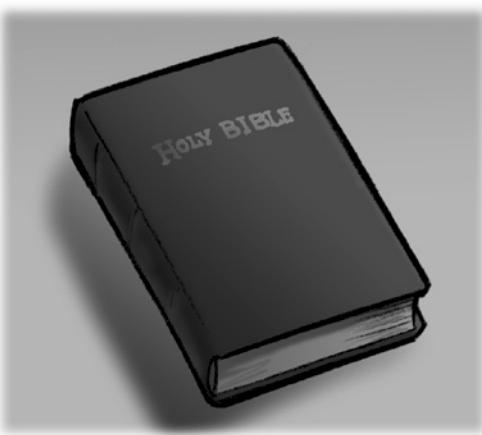
Allow students to write out some of the big questions they may have about Scripture (SM p. 9). In the next few weeks, consider following up about this section, or give students a chance to submit questions anonymously for a brief Q&A.

Target Truth

Only God can change our hearts—our core being. And His Word is the best tool to shape us.

Timeline of the Old Testament





LESSON 1

The Word of God

Vocabulary

- **The Bible** – The collection of 66 books inspired by God
- **Scripture** – Sacred writings; another name for the Bible
- **Prophet** – Someone who shares a spiritual message, often from God
- **Prophecy** – A truth said by a prophet; often about future events
- **Inspiration** – The way God worked through human writers to record Scripture; “God-breathed”
- **Testament** – A promise or set of promises; an agreement or covenant

1-A God's Miracle Book

Pick a book off your bookshelf, flip to the title page, and you probably won’t see more than one or two authors. Most books are written within a few years by only a few authors.

But when you open your **Bible**, you’re looking into a library of **Scripture**—a wealth of books, passages, and poems written by many different authors over 1,600 years. The people who wrote these words were shepherds, rulers, poets, priests, teachers, fishers, and soldiers. Some were educated, and some were not.

Despite so many authors, the Bible is unified. The books fit together well, and we find that a few important ideas come up again and again. In book after book, the Bible tells the same story—God is amazing, and He wants to build a relationship with us.

► So how did such a great library fall into our hands? Read **2 Peter 1:20-21**.

- In verse 20, Peter writes that no one made up the prophecies in Scripture.
- Instead, according to verse 21, how did the writers of Scripture speak?

They spoke from God as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

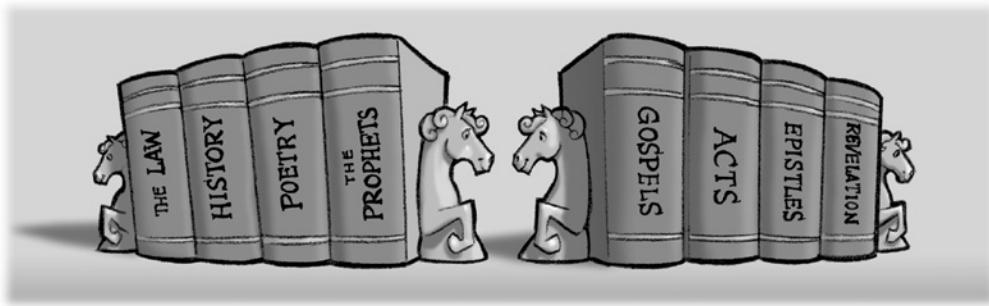
STUDENT MANUAL PAGES

The Bible seems like one story because it has one Author. Before humans wrote anything, God knew it all from the beginning. His Spirit worked through human writers to leave us these books. We call this idea **inspiration**.

► God's words are as reliable as God Himself. Complete the following table.

| Verse | What does the verse say about God's Word? |
|---|--|
| Isaiah 40:8 | <u>God's word will stand forever.</u> _____ |
| Matthew 24:35 | <u>Heaven and earth could pass away, but God's words will not.</u> _____ |
| 1 Peter 1:23 | <u>The word of God is living and abiding.</u> _____ |
| After reading these verses, what do you think they say about Scripture? | |
| <u>It will last forever.</u> _____ | |

1-B The Beginning and the End



Few things spoil a book more than skipping to the end before you've read the middle. But with the Bible, it helps to know where the story is going. This library of Scripture spreads out like a vast landscape, and sometimes we need a good map.

STUDENT MANUAL PAGES

All of Scripture follows the same big story—how humans turn from God, but God reaches out to us anyway. At the end of time, God will make all things right. So as you read through the ups and downs of the Old Testament, don’t forget that there’s a good ending.

- Look near the beginning of your Bible for the table of contents, which lists all 66 books.

| What is the name of the first book? | | What is the name of the last book? | |
|--|---|---|---|
| Genesis | | Revelation | |
| A book of beginnings | | A book about how God will reveal Himself at the end of time | |
| Look up these verses in the first book and complete the sentences. | | Look up these verses in the last book and complete the sentences. | |
| In the beginning ... | | In the end ... | |
| 1:1 | God creates the heavens and the earth . | 21:1 | The writer John sees a new heaven and earth . |
| 1:5 | God calls the light " day " and He calls the darkness " night " . | 21:25 | The new city of God has no more night . |
| 1:16 | God makes the sun and the moon so we would have light. He also makes the other stars . | 21:23 | The new city does not need the sun or moon because God Himself shines there. |
| 3:1 | The tricky serpent lies to Eve. We learn later that this was Satan, the devil. | 20:10 | The devil who deceived people is thrown into a lake of fire . God defeats him forever. |
| 3:19 | Because Adam and Eve sinned, people now suffer and die. We all return to dust/ground . | 21:4 | There is no more death, sorrow / mourning / crying, or pain . |
| 3:23 | God sends the first people away from Him, out from the Garden of Eden. | 22:4 | The people in heaven finally get to see His/God's face . |

1-C Exploring the Word

The Teacher of Our Hearts

The Bible is sometimes confusing. The books are long, and they use a lot of words we have to look up. But with patience, hard work, and some help from others, we can learn so much from Scripture.

- Thankfully, Christians have plenty of help. We have teachers, family, and leaders from our church, but there's also someone else. Read **John 14:25–26**.
 - Jesus explains that when He is gone, the Father will send the ***Comforter/Helper/Advocate*** who is the Holy Spirit. (v. 26)
 - The Spirit will teach Jesus' followers ***all things*** and help them remember what Jesus said to them. (v. 26)
- Read **1 Corinthians 2:9–13**, which explains more about the Holy Spirit.
 - Paul explains that the Spirit helped him understand things about God that no one could ever imagine. God's Spirit sees everything, even the ***depths深深 things*** of God. (v. 10)
 - Can anyone understand spiritual things without first receiving the Spirit? Yes No
- Read **1 Corinthians 3:16** and **Romans 8:9**. If we trust in Christ and receive the Spirit, where does the Spirit live? ***Inside us***

The Value of Scripture

- What kinds of things do Christians learn from the Spirit? Look up the following passages and complete the table.

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Psalm 119:11 | We can remember God's Word so we do not <i>sin</i> against God. |
| Proverbs 1:1–3 | What are some of the things we can learn from the Book of Proverbs? <i>Answers will vary. Wisdom, instruction, understanding, fairness</i> |
| John 20:30–31 | Why did John record Jesus' teachings and miracles? So readers would believe that Jesus is the <i>Christ/Messiah</i> , the Son of God—and therefore have life through Him. |

► In 2 Timothy 3:15-17, the writer Paul explains the value of Scripture. Using these verses, list at least four of the ways that the Bible can help us grow.

Answers will vary. Scripture can give wisdom that leads to salvation through faith in Christ. Scripture is profitable for doctrine/teaching, rebuke/reproof, correction, and instruction/training, all to prepare us completely for every good work.

Possessing the Land

► Think of one or two big questions you have about the Bible. Write them below, and make time in the next few weeks to research them or ask your teacher.



► Ask your teacher or another Christian adult about any advice for studying the Bible. Write your notes below.

LESSON 2

Sin and Redemption

Scripture Memory – Psalm 111:2

For the Teacher

In this lesson, students will explore the fall of humanity and some of the consequences of the first sin. We will not understand the beauty of Christ until we appreciate our need for Him.

Noah and his contemporaries are mentioned only briefly, but if your students haven't completed previous studies in this series, you may wish to review some of the major figures and narratives in Genesis 4–10.

Depending on how you choose to present the character trait activity, you may wish to prepare ahead of time by copying the given statements onto index cards.

Content Objectives

- 2-A** Humanity fell when Adam and Eve disobeyed God's command and ate the forbidden fruit.
- 2-B** Sin has terrible consequences that affect us even today.
- 2-C** God continued working even after the Fall. He planned to send His Son to pay the price for our sin.

Learning Objectives

Students should be able to . . .

- Summarize key events of the Fall narrative in Genesis 3
- List major results of the Fall
- Recognize significant figures from Genesis 1–10

Vocabulary

- **Creation** – Everything God brought into being; the universe
- **Sin** – The decision to break God's law; turning away from God
- **The Fall** – Humanity's turn from God toward sin and death; the results of the first sin
- **Redeem** – To buy back what was lost

Session 2-A Creation and the Fall

Discuss: What is *sin*?

Sin

The decision to break God's law; turning away from God

What kinds of things are sin? Can you give any examples?

- We sin whenever we choose to do something that God does not want us to do.
- Some sins are lying, stealing, hurting others, and disrespecting our mother or father.
- Sins are not accidents, mistakes, or failures. If you trip and fall, or if you put a wrong answer on a test, that doesn't mean you've rebelled against God.

Explain: When God first created the world, everything was good. There was no sin or suffering, and the first people were free to walk and talk with God. But this perfect relationship did not last.

Prompt: Complete the exercises in section 2-A of your Student Manual.

Discuss: Look again at **Genesis 1:26–31**. Before sin came into the world, what were some of the good things God gave humanity?

- **Verse 26** – Some power and responsibility over nature
- **Verse 27** – The image of God—the unique way humans can think a little like God and talk with Him
- **Verses 27–28** – The form of male and female—the differences between men and women that allow them to grow and support each other
- **Verses 29–30** – Plants for food

Explain: All these good things were corrupted by the Fall, but thanks to the work of Jesus, we can enjoy them again a bit like God intended. When we trust in Christ and act like Him, we can have good relationships and enjoy His gifts.

Revisiting the Fall

Review the answers to the Fall narrative in **Genesis 3:1–8** (SM p. 11). Consider dividing students into groups to write and perform a brief play that summarizes this dialog. Before this activity, tell the students . . .

- They will need to summarize some of the text in their own words, but they should include all essential details.
- They should write a title for their play and be prepared to explain why they chose it.
- Actors might include the serpent, Eve, Adam, and a narrator.

Explain: Sin is now humanity's biggest problem. Everything bad in this world results from the Fall—and it all started because Adam and Eve did not trust God's warning. They disobeyed Him because they chose not to believe Him.

Target Truth

We will disobey God when we don't trust His Word.

Session 2-B The Results of Sin

Review: Immediately after eating the fruit God told them not to eat, what did Adam and Eve do?

- What did they do when God came to talk to them?
- Why would people hide themselves like that?

Explain: God created Adam and Eve to be close together as husband and wife. It was OK for them to be naked, and they felt no shame being together.

God also created the first people to be close to Him. They were made in His image, so they could talk with God and understand some of His thoughts.

But after the Fall, everything changed. Because of sin, we can't be perfectly close to others. Even husbands and wives sometimes fight or misunderstand each other. And we all try to hide from God or ignore Him when we do something wrong.

Prompt: Complete the exercises in section 2-B of your Student Manual.

Discuss: When God warned Adam about the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, He said that the day anyone ate from it, they would certainly die. But when Adam and Eve ate the fruit, they didn't fall over dead.

God does not lie, so what kind of death did He mean? How did Adam and Eve die that day?

Problem-Solving

Consider dividing students into groups to draft possible answers to the above question. Afterward, discuss their answers and present your own.

Explain: When Adam and Eve sinned, many things died:

- Their perfect relationship with God
- Their close relationship with each other
- Their innocent view of the world
- Their life of joy, free from suffering

Physically, Adam and Eve were not dead yet. But spiritually, they had no life. Their life with God in the Garden was over, and they would one day return to dust.

Discuss: Look again at **Genesis 3:16–24**. What would you say are the biggest consequences of the Fall?

Answers could include physical hardship, suffering, antagonism, conflict, death, and separation from God.

When reviewing student answers for the narrative about Cain and Abel (SM p. 13), you could explain that feelings are not inherently wrong. But we sin when we choose to direct feelings like anger against others. No matter how we feel, we can and should respond with love.

Explain: Read **Genesis 4:6–7**. Here God warns Cain that sin is against us—it wants to control us. Sin tears apart our relationships. When we sin against God, we often feel what Cain felt, too. People might tell us that we've done something wrong, and sometimes we hate them for making us feel bad. It's easier to blame others than to turn away from sin.

If we do not guard ourselves against hatred, we may do horrible things that we never could have imagined. But whatever we feel, we can choose to do right with God's help.

Target Truth

Sin will always hurt us and the ones we love.

Session 2-C The Hope of Redemption

Review: How did Lesson 1 define the word *prophecy*? What do you think was the first prophecy that God shared with humanity?

Before students complete the fill-in-the-blank exercise on Genesis 3:15, consider reviewing the events of **Genesis 3:14–24**. If necessary, explain that the *seed* or *offspring* refers to Adam and Eve's descendants—especially Jesus Christ.

Prompt: Complete the exercises in section 2-C of your Student Manual.

Discuss: Why is Genesis 3:15 so important?

This verse is perhaps the first and most important prophecy of the Old Testament. It was the first spark of hope for Adam and Eve. One day, someone born from their children's children's children would crush the serpent. This person was Jesus. Adam and Eve probably didn't understand this prophecy, but God would make His plan clearer and clearer in the centuries to come.

Explain: Genesis 3:21 records the first animal sacrifice. God ended the life of an animal in order to clothe Adam and Eve. Before people sinned, they did not need such things. We'll discuss sacrifices more in the next lesson.

Illustrate: Genesis is the book of beginnings, so it explains how many things first came to be:

Consider writing the following items on the board while reviewing the crossword (SM p. 14).

- **The world** (Gen. 1)
- **Humanity** (Gen. 1–2) – Adam and Eve were the first people.
- **Sin** (Gen. 3) – Evil came into the world after Satan tempted humanity to reject God.
- **The hope of a Savior** (Gen. 3:15)
- **Children and family** (Gen. 4) – The first children were Cain, Abel, and Seth, followed by many others. Some people, like Enoch, had a close relationship with God.

- **Culture and civilization** (Gen. 4–9) – Sometime after Methusaleh died, the first peoples were destroyed by the Great Flood. Noah, his family, and many animals escaped the disaster.
- **National differences** (Gen. 10–11) – Great cities were built by people like Nimrod. God separated the early peoples by giving them different languages.
- **The Hebrews** (Gen. 12–50) – Most of Genesis is about the beginnings of the Hebrew nation—the Israelites—which we'll discuss later.

Noah and the Ark

Students are likely familiar with the story of Noah, especially if they completed previous studies in this series. However, you may want to briefly review the events of Genesis 6–8.

- God planned to destroy the wicked cultures of Earth, but chose Noah to help some of creation survive (Gen. 6:5–21).
- Noah built the Ark as God commanded. His family and many animals got on the boat in time to escape the Great Flood (Gen. 7). The rest of humanity was destroyed.
- After the water lowered, Noah and his family thanked God for His protection, and God promised never to send such a flood again.
- The Ark became a picture of safety and salvation—like the kind Jesus offers us from the punishment for our sin.

Give students time to answer the questions in the Possessing the Land section.

Target Truth

Even when people sin, God offers hope and salvation through Jesus.

Character Trait Activity: Repentance

We **repent** when we turn from our sin back toward God.

Students will identify actions as either *sins* or *mistakes* by considering the intent behind the action. Copy each item below onto a separate index card or piece of paper. Do not label them as sins or mistakes yet.

Sins

- Saying you finished your homework when it is incomplete
- Refusing to clean your bedroom
- Talking back when your parent/guardian tells you to do something
- Looking at a classmate's answers during a test
- Stealing and eating someone else's lunch
- Borrowing a classmate's jacket without asking
- Repeating a dirty joke
- When no one's looking, throwing away the vegetables you were supposed to eat
- Allowing your classmate to get blamed for something you did
- Getting to school late because you didn't get out of bed when your parent/guardian told you to

Mistakes

- Becoming distracted while getting ready for bed
- Forgetting to do one of your chores
- Marking the wrong answer on a test
- Saying a word you later find out is bad
- Missing your ride to school because you thought it was Saturday
- Throwing a ball during recess and a classmate steps in the way and gets hurt
- Slipping and falling down the stairs

Shuffle the items and distribute them to the class, one per student. Ask students to read their item silently and decide if the action is a sin or a mistake. Instruct those with "sins" to move to the left side of the classroom—and those with "mistakes" to move to the right side. Have each student read their paper aloud and let the rest of the class discuss if the student's answer is correct.

Alternatively, read each item aloud at random, asking students to vote if it is a sin by standing or a mistake by sitting.

- Ask students how they know if an action is a sin or a mistake. Note the importance of intent.
- Discuss some of the mistakes from the list. What might be a mature response to each one? How could each have been avoided? How can carelessness be helped or prevented?
- Ask students how they should respond when they realize they've sinned. What do they need to tell God? What if they've hurt someone by their actions? Note **1 John 1:9, Psalm 51:1–2**, and **Matthew 5:23–24**.



LESSON 2

Sin and Redemption

Vocabulary

- **Creation** – Everything God brought into being; the universe
- **Sin** – The decision to break God's law; turning away from God
- **The Fall** – Humanity's turn from God toward sin and death; the results of the first sin
- **Redeem** – To buy back what was lost

2-A Creation and the Fall

Scripture tells the story of its Author, God Himself. The Bible explains how God revealed Himself to the world—most importantly, through the person of Jesus Christ. Everything in Scripture points us to Jesus in some way.

- Read **Genesis 1:26–31** and complete the following.
 - After God finishes creating the rest of the world and all the animals, who does God make? (v. 26) **Man/mankind/humanity**
 - God makes Adam and Eve in His own image, as **male** and **female**. (v. 27)
 - What does God bless them to do? (v. 28) **Multiply and rule/subdue the earth**

 - God gives them all of **creation** to enjoy, and He knows that everything He made is very **good**. (v. 31) Adam, Eve, and God live in peace and happiness together for a time, but this does not last.
- Read **Genesis 2:16–17**. What does God say would happen if Adam ate fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? **Adam would die.**

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► Before long, Satan appears as a serpent and tempts Eve to eat the fruit. Read **Genesis 3:1–8** and complete the following table.

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Verse 1 | The tricky serpent asks the woman if God _____ really said she should not eat from every tree in the garden. |
| Verses 2–3 | Eve says that she can eat from every tree except the one in the middle of the garden. She says that if she eats the fruit or even touches it, she will die _____. |
| Verses 4–5 | The serpent tells her that she will not <u>surely/certainly die</u> _____. He says that God doesn't want Adam and Eve to understand good and evil. |
| Verse 6 | So Eve looks at the fruit and chooses to eat it. She then gives some of the fruit to <u>her husband/Adam</u> _____, and he eats it, as well. |
| Verses 7–8 | Adam and Eve are ashamed, and they cover themselves with clothing made of <u>fig leaves</u> _____. They hide when the Lord God comes to talk with them. |

Adam and Eve chose to break God's rule. Instead of trusting God's word, they listened to Satan's lies. Instead of enjoying God's gifts, they wanted the one thing they shouldn't have. Because of this decision, they would face the terrible consequences of **sin**. We call this moment **the Fall**, when people first turned away from God.

2-B The Results of Sin

Adam and Eve did not just hurt themselves. Every person throughout history has suffered because of sin—from Adam and Eve’s first children all the way down to us today. In Genesis 3 and 4, we read about some of these awful results.

► Read **Genesis 3:6–13** and mark the correct ending to the following sentences.

When God walks through the garden, Adam and Eve . . .

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> rush to meet Him, happy that He has come to speak with them. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> hide behind some trees, out of guilt and fear. | <input type="checkbox"/> prove to Him that they are just as smart and powerful as He is. |
|---|--|--|

When God asks Adam if he ate fruit from the forbidden tree, Adam . . .

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> explains that the fruit helped him become a better husband. | <input type="checkbox"/> says that he's sorry for disobeying God's command. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> blames the woman God gave him. |
|--|---|--|

When God asks Eve to explain what she did, Eve . . .

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> blames the serpent for lying to her. | <input type="checkbox"/> says that she's happier now that she understands ideas like good and evil. | <input type="checkbox"/> says that she's sorry for ignoring God's warning about the fruit. |
|--|---|--|

► Look ahead to **Genesis 3:16–24**. Here God explains to Adam and Eve the results of their sin. In the table below, match the verses to the results they describe.

| Verse 16 | Verses 17–18 | Verse 19 | Verses 23–24 |
|----------|--------------|----------|--------------|
|----------|--------------|----------|--------------|

| Verses | Results of Sin |
|-------------------|---|
| 23–24 | People could no longer live in the Garden of Eden. |
| 17–18 (19) | Adam would need to work very hard to grow plants or crops. |
| 16 | Eve would bear children only through pain and suffering. Men and women would try to control each other. |
| 19 | People would die and return to dust one day. |

► Because of their sin, Adam and Eve felt things they never had before. Based on what you've read, how do you think they felt as they talked with God?

○ Feelings toward God: **Answers will vary; fear, guilt, shame, sorrow**

○ Feelings toward each other: **Anger, blame**

► Read the story of Cain and Abel in **Genesis 4:1-12**.

○ Cain doesn't make the right kind of offering to God, and God refuses it. How does Cain feel about that? (v. 5) **He is angry/ashamed.**

○ So God tells Cain to control himself and guard against sin (vv. 6-7). But what does Cain do instead? (v. 8) **He kills his brother.**



► But this doesn't end Adam and Eve's story.

According to **Genesis 4:25**, Adam and Eve have another son named **Seth**. His children would learn to pray to God.

2-C The Hope of Redemption

Even though God cast Adam and Eve out of the Garden, He had a plan to bring people back to Himself. Humanity was trapped in sin, and no one could do enough good things to earn a way back into the Garden. So God planned to **redeem** His children. He would pay the price of their sin so they could know Him and walk with Him again.

► Turn back to **Genesis 3:15**. Here God curses the serpent that lied to Eve.

○ The snake and the woman would be enemies. Their **offspring / seed** would also be enemies. Someone would injure the serpent's head, and the serpent would only bruise Him on His **heel**.

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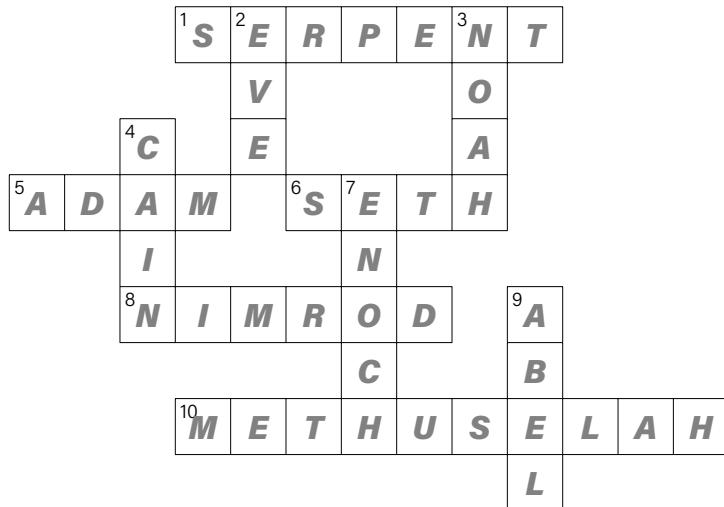
At first, Genesis 3:15 sounds like a promise that a lot of people won't like snakes. But this is not about snakes and people—this is a prophecy about Satan and Jesus.

One day, Jesus Christ would be born to a human mother and grow up to destroy Satan's power. Satan might be allowed to hurt Him a bit, but the serpent would not win.

People from Genesis 1–10

- Look up each verse below and write the name of the person described.

| Across | Down |
|---|--|
| 1. Genesis 3:1 The creature who lied to the first woman | 2. Genesis 3:20 The first woman and therefore the mother of everyone born since |
| 5. Genesis 2:7, 20 The first man, made by God from dust | 3. Genesis 6:13 The man God told to build an ark and help save people and animals from the Great Flood |
| 6. Genesis 4:25–26 Adam and Eve's third son, whose children followed God | 4. Genesis 4:1, 8 The first son and the first murderer |
| 8. Genesis 10:8–9 A mighty hunter who built many cities after the Great Flood | 7. Genesis 5:24 A man that walked with God before being taken away |
| 10. Genesis 5:27 A man who lived 969 years—longer than anyone else in history | 9. Genesis 4:2 A shepherd and the second son of Adam and Eve |



Possessing the Land

If you have trusted Jesus to forgive you for your sins, you don't need to be controlled by anger, guilt, or fear. God has redeemed you back to Himself. If you do something bad, you can run to God, ask His forgiveness, and live like His child again.

- ▶ Is there ever a good reason to blame others for something we've done wrong? Yes No
- ▶ Is there ever a good reason to hurt others with our anger? Yes No
- ▶ What should you do when someone tells you that you've done something bad?
 - If I believe that I've done wrong, I should **Answers will vary.**

 - If I don't believe I've done something wrong, I should _____

LESSON 3

Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac

Scripture Memory – Psalm 111:3

For the Teacher

This lesson provides a brief overview of the life of Abraham and Sarah, paying special attention to the Abrahamic covenant and the faith such a promise demanded. The second session introduces some geography of the Middle East, which can help contextualize the narratives in Genesis 11–22.

Content Objectives

- 3-A** The nation of Israel began with a promise God made to Abraham.
- 3-B** While waiting for God to fulfill His promise, Abraham and Sarah traveled the land that would one day belong to their descendants.
- 3-C** God gave Abraham, Isaac, and others the opportunity to show faith in Him.

Learning Objectives

Students should be able to . . .

- Recognize common terms for the people of Israel
- Recall the basic parts of the Abrahamic covenant
- Identify significant locations in the life of Abraham
- Explain the events surrounding Abraham and Isaac's trip to Mount Moriah
- Define *faith* as trust in the unseen promises of God

Vocabulary

- **Hebrews** – God's chosen people; later known as Israelites or Jews
- **Faith** – A belief in something we cannot see or prove; trust in God
- **Covenant** – A binding agreement between two or more people; a promise
- **Famine** – A time when many people have very little food
- **Sacrifice** – To give up something, often to serve or worship God
- **Altar** – A place to offer sacrifices; often a stone mound or table

Session 3-A The Call of Abraham

Review: Do you remember the two major divisions of the Bible? Another word for *testament* is *covenant*.

Covenant

A binding agreement between two or more people; a promise

Explain: The Old Testament explains how God kept His covenants with Israel. In this lesson, we'll look at the very beginning of this nation.

If needed, you may also want to review the common names for the people of Israel in the Old Testament:

- **Hebrews** – The first term used for Abraham and his descendants; perhaps related to their culture or region
- **Israelites / Children of Israel** – After God called Jacob *Israel* (“Prince/Struggling with God”), the most common name for God’s chosen people
- **Jews** – First used in 2 Kings 25:25 and popularized during Israel’s exile; perhaps a shorter form of “Judean”

Illustrate: Write *Abraham* and *Sarah* on the board, and then write *Abram* and *Sarai* nearby.

Explain: Israel began with one couple, whose children and grand children married others and had more children until, after hundreds of years, they became a huge nation with many people. The couple’s names were Abram and Sarai. But God called them Abraham and Sarah after He explained their part in His plan.

Their family came from the city of Ur.

- The people of Ur were very advanced. They built cities, had complex writing, and studied mathematics.
- Some of these people may have known about God just like Abraham did. But most of them probably followed other religions.

Prompt: Complete the exercises in section 3-A of your Student Manual.

Consider reviewing the answers to this exercise as a class, perhaps re-reading **Genesis 12:1–3; 15:2–6; and 15:18** together.

Discuss: What would you say were the big parts to God’s covenant with Abraham?

- **A Nation** – Abraham and Sarah would have many descendants
- **A Land** – The descendants would have a land they could call home.
- **A Blessing** – Through this people, God would somehow bless the rest of the world.

Discuss: Note **Genesis 12:3** again. How did God eventually bless the peoples of the world through Israel? God revealed Himself to all of us by using this nation. God’s most important blessing was one Person—Jesus Christ.

Explain: God would fulfill His part of the covenant no matter what. But God also expected Abraham’s family to do something. God wanted His people to do good and obey Him. They needed to set themselves apart from the wicked people who lived around them. They needed to follow God and not do the bad things that were popular.

The people of Israel didn’t always do the right things. In fact, they sinned a lot, and even turned away from God many times. But God continued to work through them, and when they asked for forgiveness, He forgave them and blessed them even more.

Target Truth

God asks us to trust Him even when we don’t understand His plans.

Session 3-B Journeys of Abraham and Sarah

Explain: Read **Genesis 15:4–6** again. Abraham had faith here. Even though Abraham sinned many times, God counted his faith as righteousness.

Discuss: So what is *faith*?

Read **Hebrews 11:1–2**. When we have faith, it means we trust God for things we can't see yet. God asks us to believe in some things we can't yet prove, and that is faith.

As a class or in groups, read and discuss **Hebrews 11:8–16**. Consider asking students to write or present answers to the following:

- **Verses 8–9** – Imagine you were Abraham. Why would it be difficult to trust God?
- **Verse 11** – Imagine you were Sarah. Why would it be difficult to believe God's promise?
- **Verse 13** – Did Abraham and Sarah get to see God fulfill all His promises before they died?
- **Verses 10, 16** – What did Abraham and Sarah look for? What was their hope?

Explain: Abraham was 75 years old when God called him to leave his home. Abraham and Sarah were too old to have children together, but God kept reminding them that they would have a son. But before God fulfilled His promise, they traveled around for about 25 years.

If needed, review the four cardinal directions prior to asking students to complete the map activity (SM pp. 17–18).

Prompt: Complete the exercises in section 3-B of your Student Manual.

Illustrate: Consider using a world map to show the position of the Middle East relative to your students' home area. Review answers to the map activity and note the following.

Explain: This map (SM p. 18) gives us a good idea of Abraham's path, but remember that over thousands of years, the land and rivers and seas changed a great deal. For example, the Persian Gulf (in the southeast corner of the map) was probably much smaller in Abraham's day.

- Mesopotamia, Canaan, and Egypt were in the "Fertile Crescent." This a big area that starts in Egypt's Nile River delta, goes northeast through Haran, and then stretches down along the Tigris and Euphrates. It's called fertile because the land is well-watered and fruitful—it's not desert like the other lands nearby.
- We don't know the exact location of the city of Ur.
- Note **Genesis 11:31–32**. Abraham's father Terah planned to go from Ur to Canaan, but he stopped in Haran. Why do you think he traveled northwest instead of due west? Because the desert between Ur and Canaan is very difficult to cross. It's easier to move people and flocks along rivers.
- Genesis 13:1–3 mentions the *Negev*. This is a drier, desert region, northeast of Egypt between the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea.
- Mt. Moriah is important for reasons you'll learn in section 3-C. It's also the place where the city of Jerusalem stands today.

Review student answers to the last question of this section (SM p. 18). Consider reading **Genesis 13:14–17** and **15:18** as a class and noting the part of the map that God promised to Abraham's descendants. This promise must have seemed incredible.

Target Truth

Faith requires patience and hope in God.

Session 3-C God Provides for Isaac

Explain: Even though Abraham and Sarah trusted God overall, sometimes they did not act like it.

Failures in Abraham's Family

As desired, briefly read or summarize some of the following narratives as a class.

- Abraham and Sarah lied about their marriage in Egypt (Gen. 12:10–20).
- Abraham's nephew Lot chose to live among the wicked people of Canaan and Sodom. When God decided to destroy Sodom, He sent two angels to drag Lot and his family out of the city. Lot's wife died, and his daughters rejected God, as well (Gen. 13–14, 19).
- Abraham and Sarah did not believe that God would give them a son through their own marriage, so Abraham had a son with his slave, Hagar. This was wrong in many ways, but God took care of Hagar and her son. God also told Abraham and Sarah that they would have a child together (Gen. 18:9–15).

Discuss: Read **Genesis 18:9–15** and **21:6–7**. The name *Isaac* means “laughter.” Why would Abraham and Sarah call their son this?

At first, Sarah thought it incredible that she would bear a child in her old age. But later, she and Abraham found joy in God's fulfilled promise.

Prompt: Complete the exercises in section 3-C of your Student Manual.

Discuss the narrative in Genesis 22:1–19. Ask students if they found anything confusing or troubling about the passage.

Explain: God asked Abraham to do something that seemed to go against everything Abraham knew God wanted. Murder and human sacrifice are wrong, and Abraham needed a son for God's promise to be true.

Through this test, Abraham proved that he trusted God. When Isaac asked Abraham where they would find a lamb, Abraham said that he believed God would provide a lamb for Himself (Gen. 22:8). In the end, Isaac did not need to die.

- God stopped Abraham and provided a ram to offer on the altar.
- Isaac did not die on the altar, but he and his descendants still belonged to God. Israel would exist to glorify God.

As time permits, read **Romans 12:1–2** and note that to follow Christ, we must serve as living sacrifices to Him.

Give students time to answer the question in the Possessing the Land section (SM p. 20).

Target Truth

God has blessed us greatly, and we should be willing to give up anything He asks.

Character Trait Activity: Faith

We have **faith** when we trust God for things we don't understand.

In a cooperative activity, students will consider plausible future scenarios in which they need to trust God.

Divide students into five groups, assigning each group one of the following scenarios. Each group will write a response of 3–5 sentences that shows godly faith put into action.

- How would you feel in this situation?
- How could you respond in a way that shows faith in Christ?

Each group can choose a representative to read the group's scenario and response. Alternatively, allow each group to act out their scenario and response for the class.

Scenarios

- Some of the kids in your neighborhood make fun of you for going to church each Sunday.
- The doctor tells you that you are very sick and can't go on the field trip with your class.
- Your parents or guardians tell you that you'll be moving to a different state in a month.
- You saved your money for a new bike, but when you go to buy it, you discover it's already been purchased by someone else.
- You have to leave your house during a bad storm. When you and your family get back, you find that it's been flooded and seriously damaged.
- You read the Bible and pray every day, but you still struggle with the temptation to sin.

Discuss ways to show trust in God when we feel like life is out of control. What are some promises that God has given us that we can remember during difficult times?

As time permits, read each verse below and discuss the promises.

- **Hebrews 13:5** – God will not leave or forsake us.
- **Philippians 4:19** – God will take care of our needs.
- **Psalm 18:2** – God will protect us.
- **1 John 1:9** – God will forgive our sins when we ask Him.
- **Isaiah 55:10–11** – God will accomplish what He wants through His word.
- **2 Peter 1:4–8** – If we practice what we learn in God's Word, we won't be useless or unfruitful.



LESSON 3

Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac

Vocabulary

- **Hebrews** – God's chosen people; later known as Israelites or Jews
- **Faith** – A belief in something we cannot see or prove; trust in God
- **Covenant** – A binding agreement between two or more people; a promise
- **Famine** – A time when many people have very little food
- **Sacrifice** – To give up something, often to serve or worship God
- **Altar** – A place to offer sacrifices; often a stone mound or table

Humanity fell into sin, but God had a plan to redeem people back to Himself. He chose to send Jesus into the world through one special nation. These chosen people were called **Hebrews**. Later on, they were known as *Israelites* or *Jews*.

Early in the Book of Genesis, this nation did not exist yet. God would build them up through just a few people who were willing to trust Him.

3-A The Call of Abraham

► God chose a man named Abraham to be the father of this new nation. Read **Genesis 12:1-7** and fill in the blanks below.

◎ Abraham was a wealthy man. He was 75 years old and had many servants and animals. What does God tell him to do? (v. 1) **Leave his country and father's house to go to a land that God would show him**

◎ Does God tell Abraham right away where he needed to go? Yes No

To follow God, Abraham needed to have **faith**. He needed to trust God for something he couldn't see or feel yet. He had to jump before he knew where he would land.

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► God offered Abraham a **covenant**—that is, a promise or agreement. God told Abraham that he and his children would be blessed in great ways. Complete the parts of the covenant below.

| Verse | The Promise |
|-----------------------|---|
| Genesis 12:1 | God will show Abraham a land _____. |
| Genesis 12:2 | God will make from Abraham a great nation _____. |
| Genesis 12:3 | God will bless those who bless _____ Abraham, and also curse those who curse _____ Abraham. |
| Genesis 12:3 | Because of Abraham and his descendants, all the peoples of Earth will be blessed _____. |
| And later . . . | |
| Genesis 15:4-5 | Through Abraham's own son, God will give him many descendants—just like the stars _____ in the sky. |
| Genesis 15:18 | God will give Abraham's descendants a land between Egypt's river and the great river called Euphrates _____. |

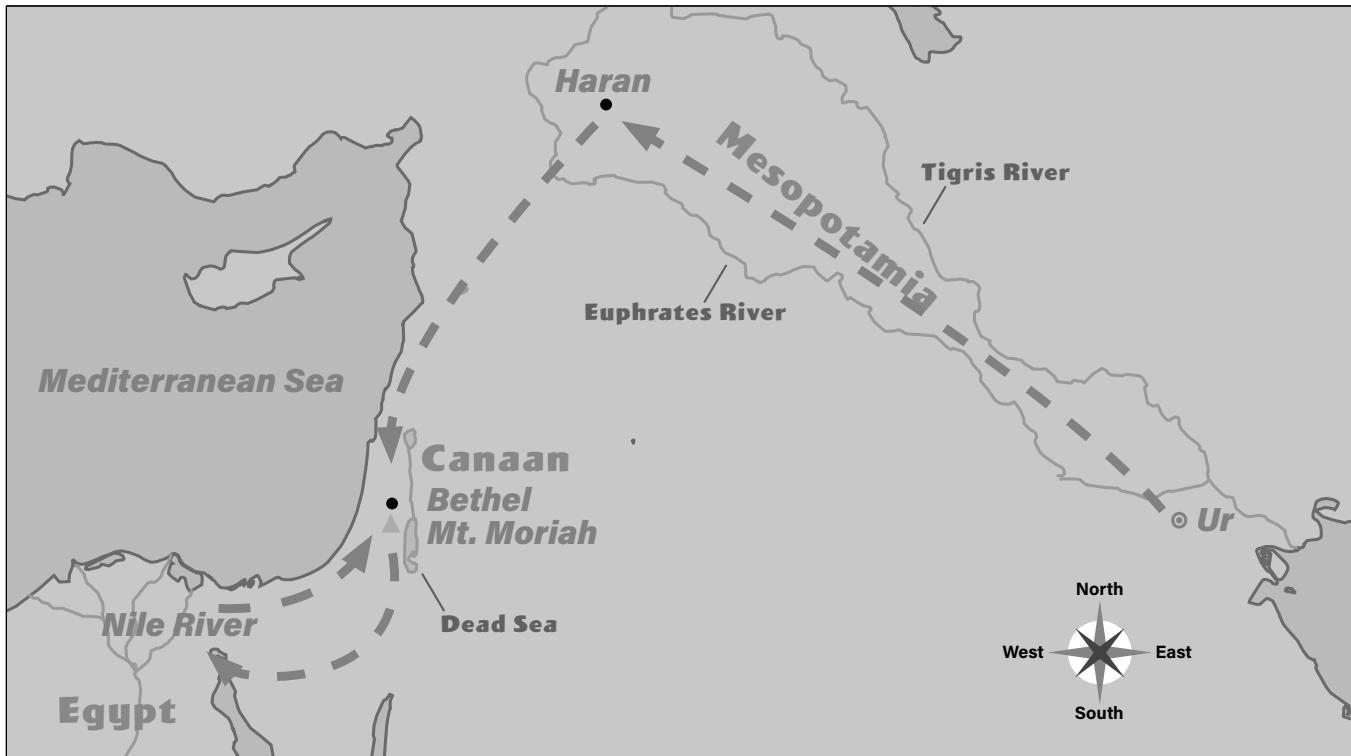
► Look at **Genesis 15:6**. Why did the Lord call Abraham righteous? **Abraham believed in the Lord. He trusted what God said.**

3-B Journeys of Abraham and Sarah

► On the next page is a map of the Middle East. This shows some of the places that Abraham and Sarah went during their lifetime. Complete the map by following these instructions:

1. On the western side of the map is the largest body of water, **colored blue**. Label this the **Mediterranean Sea**.
2. There is a **large river** flowing into the Mediterranean Sea from the south, in the country of Egypt. Label this the **Nile River**.
3. The **black dots** mark the location of cities. Look for the city that is farthest north and label it **Haran**.
4. Near Haran are the two rivers called the Tigris and the Euphrates. Follow them both southeast until they meet and flow into each other. Draw a dot near this area to mark a city and label it **Ur**.
5. The **green triangle** near the Mediterranean Sea is a mountain. Label it **Mt. Moriah**.
6. There is one city a little north of Mt. Moriah. Label it **Bethel**.

STUDENT MANUAL PAGES



► Read the verses below and fill in the blanks. Then draw four lines on the map to show the routes taken by Abraham and Sarah.

| Verse | Route |
|-----------------------|--|
| Genesis 11:31 | Abraham's father took the family from Ur to Haran _____. |
| Genesis 12:7-8 | After hearing God's call, Abraham and Sarah journeyed southwest toward Canaan. God said that He would give this land to Abraham's descendants. So Abraham camped east of the city of Bethel _____. |
| Genesis 12:10 | During a famine , Abraham decided to stay in Egypt _____. |
| Genesis 13:1-3 | Later, Abraham and Sarah left Egypt to travel through the Negev region. Once again, they set their tents near Bethel _____. |

► After a while, Abraham and his nephew Lot separated their flocks and went different directions. Abraham chose to remain in Canaan, and God appeared to him again. Read **Genesis 13:14-17** and summarize God's promise to Abraham.

God would give Abraham's many descendants everything that Abraham could see to the north, south, east, and west.

3-C God Provides for Isaac

Abraham and Sarah waited a long time before God fulfilled His promise of a son. When Sarah was about 90 years old, she gave birth to a baby boy. Abraham named him *Isaac*, which means "laughter."

- Even though God had finally given Abraham and Sarah a son, He had not finished testing their faith. Read **Genesis 22:1-19** and use the words below to complete the story.



| | | | | | | | | |
|---------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|--------|-----|------|
| Abraham | altar | angel | Isaac | knife | lamb | Moriah | ram | wood |
|---------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|--------|-----|------|

God chose to test Abraham 's trust in Him. God told Abraham to take his son Isaac to the land of Moriah and offer him as a sacrifice on one of the mountains there. Killing your children is wrong, so Abraham may have been confused. But he chose to obey anyway.

Abraham and Isaac traveled for three days before reaching the mountain. They started to walk up, leaving behind their donkey with the servants. Isaac carried wood, while Abraham held the fire and the knife. Isaac asked his father where they would find a lamb to offer. Abraham replied that God would provide one.

When they reached the place, Abraham bound Isaac and laid him on the altar and the wood. Even though Isaac was his very own son, Abraham picked up the knife to kill him. But an angel of the Lord called out to Abraham and stopped him. Abraham had proven that he feared God and would give up anything for Him.

Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught in a nearby thicket. God had provided His own sacrifice to take Isaac's place.

► Many years later, Abraham sent a servant back to his homeland to find a wife for Isaac. The servant promised to do everything he could to bring a woman back, so long as she was willing. Read **Genesis 24:10-22** and answer the questions.

- ◎ The servant wanted God to show him which woman would be a good wife for Isaac. What did the servant hope this woman would do? (vv. 13-14)

Offer water to the servant as well as his camels

- ◎ Who showed kindness to the servant? (v. 15) **Rebekah**

- ◎ What did the servant give her as thanks? (v. 22) **A large gold ring and two bracelets**



- ◎ Look ahead to **verse 58**. Did Rebekah decide to go and marry Isaac? Yes No
- ◎ Read **verses 62-67**. Was Isaac happy to meet Rebekah? Yes No

Possessing the Land

Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, and the servant all showed great faith to do what God wanted them to do. Like everyone else, they sinned and made mistakes, but they trusted God to fulfill what He promised.

► Write one way your faith is being tested right now. How can you show that you trust God?

Answers will vary.
