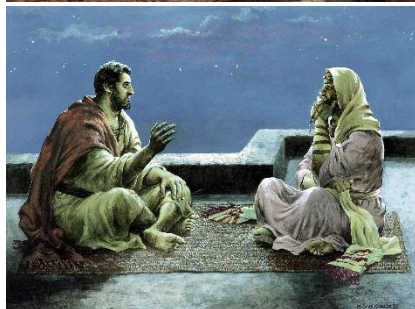
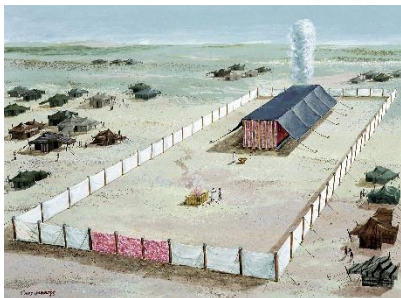


Creation to Christ Bible Study



Book 3 of 4 – NOT FOR SALE

Creation to Christ
Book 3 – Lessons 13-18

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Lesson 13 - The Ten Commandments

God Makes a Covenant

God guided the Israelites out of Egypt, across the Red Sea, to Mount Sinai, the place where God appeared to Moses in Arabia. He was going to make a covenant with the Israelites. This covenant would be a serious agreement between God and Israel.

The main point was that Israel must obey God perfectly. The people of Israel agreed to obey everything that God had said. However, they were not serious when they made that statement.

During their journey from Egypt to Mount Sinai they ran out of water and food. This was not a small problem, because there were approximately 2 million people that needed to eat and drink.

Do you think God could provide water and food, for 2 million people, in the desert? Yes, of course! But the Israelites did not think so. They complained to Moses and said they would rather go back to Egypt! They did not believe God could take care of them, but God provided water and food despite their complaining.

Do you think these people could obey God perfectly? No. Did God think these people could obey Him perfectly? No. Then why would God make an agreement with these people when He already knew they could not live up to its demands?

He wanted to show them how Holy He is and how evil they were. They were full of pride! They thought they could always obey God and keep his commandments every moment. He wanted to teach them that they could not be accepted by their own efforts. They would recognize their sin through their own failures.

God gave the Law to show them that they were sinners, so they would realize their helplessness and begin trusting God for the coming Savior. We will read a part of the covenant God made with the Israelites. This portion of scripture is often referred to as the 10 Commandments.

The Ten Commandments

The Bible says in Exodus 20:3, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.”

The very first commandment forbids us from worshipping any other gods, besides the One True God. In other words, nothing else is to take God’s place. Can you say that from a child until now you have always loved God with all your heart and with every part of your life?

There is not a person anywhere that can honestly say they have always loved God more than anyone or anything else. God must have the highest place in your thoughts, and you must give Him praise and thanks for everything. When your family, social status, work, money, recreation, retirement or anything else is more important to you than God, you have broken this commandment.

The Bible says in Exodus 20:4-5, “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them...”

Since God is a Spirit, we really do not know what He looks like. God does not want you to worship any statue or idol. Only God is worthy of our worship. He does not want you to put your affection on anything or anyone else.

The Bible says in Exodus 20:7, “Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.”

God is telling us that we should speak about Him carefully and respectfully. People frequently abuse His name today. Many even use His name as a curse word. God deserves reverence and our utmost honor.

The Bible says in Exodus 20:8-11, “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.”

God says the seventh day is day for rest and remembering Him. We should make every Sunday, a day to set aside the normal labors so we can worship and praise Him.

The Bible says in Exodus 20:12, “Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.”

God said that children must respect and obey their parents. Talking back, ignoring, arguing, pouting, and criticism are all ways being disrespectful. There is no child has obeyed this command perfectly every moment, every day, every year.

The Bible says in Exodus 20:13, “Thou shalt not kill.”

God meant more than just the action of murder. Jesus said, that if you are angry with another person in your heart, you have committed murder in your heart. If you ever have been angry with someone else, then you have broken this commandment.

The Bible says in Exodus 20:14, “Thou shalt not commit adultery.”

God was saying that the only acceptable time to have sex is after you are married, and only with your spouse. He explains that if you ever lusted after another person or even so much as thought about sex with another person who is not your spouse, then you are guilty of breaking this commandment.

The Bible says in Exodus 20:15, “Thou shalt not steal.”

God said you must never take anything belonging to someone else. God gave each person the right to keep his own property. Most people would not think they are a thief, but ask yourself, “Have I ever taken anything of even small value that did not belong to me?” If you have then you are guilty of breaking this commandment.

The Bible says in Exodus 20:16, “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.”

God condemns lying and misrepresenting the truth. Satan is the father of lies, and anyone who tells a lie is following Satan. There is not one person alive who can truthfully claim they have never broken this commandment.

The Bible says in Exodus 20:17, “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour’s.”

God does not want you to desire what other people have. He wants you to be satisfied with what you have and not become greedy and jealous over other people's money, possessions, or abilities.

What is the Purpose of the Ten Commandments?

God's law is like a mirror. A real mirror shows us what we look like on the outside, but God's commands show us what we look like on the inside. When you look into a mirror and see the dirt on your face you desire to get cleaned up.

Similarly, when God's law shows you the "dirt" (sin) in your heart, you should have a desire to be cleaned up from your sin. The only problem is that we cannot ever perfectly keep God's law or clean ourselves from our own sin. God's law teaches us that we need a Savior. Just as the mirror exposed the dirt, so God's law makes us aware of the sin in our heart.

God's law is also like a chain. How many links need to break for the whole chain to break? Only one. If we break only one command (link), then we have broken the entire law of God (James 2:10). He required Israel to keep all His commands, or they would die for their disobedience.

These commands show us how impossible it is for us to be accepted by God based on our own effort. If the Israelites understood this, they would be more inclined to look for the Savior. He wanted to show them their only hope was through the coming Savior.

God's Law silences those who say their lives are good enough to be accepted by God. No one can honestly study these ten commands without realizing their own sinfulness before God.

The Law teaches us that we are sinful, but God is holy. The Law could not bridge the gap between man and God. The Law is only given to show you that you can never be accepted with God by your own good works.

Most people would admit they are sinners. However, few will admit they are helpless sinners, and there is a big difference. Many know that they are sinners, but they also believe that they can live good enough to make themselves acceptable to God.

A person who believes that their good works can outweigh their bad works, and make them accepted with God, is deceived by Satan. Doing good works is commendable, but none of these good deeds can restore our broken relationship with God.

A helpless sinner knows there is nothing he can do to make himself acceptable to God. God wants us to admit that we have broken his Law, and we cannot save ourselves. God wants us to admit that we are helpless sinners. He wants us to look to the Savior, who alone can make us righteous and acceptable to God.

*** Answer the questions on page 39 ***

Lesson 14 - The Tabernacle and Wilderness Wanderings

In our last lesson we studied how God gave Israel His Law (10 Commandments). God agreed with Israel that, if they obeyed His laws, then He would be with them, protect them, and give them all that they needed. However, if they disobeyed His laws, then the punishment was death. God knew that the Israelites were sinners and would not be able to always obey his commands. God knew that they would disobey Him and He would have to punish them.

However, God also loved them and so He provided a way for them to escape punishment. God told them to build a special place where He would live and communicate with them.

A Place to Meet With God

God gave Moses specific instructions on how to build a tabernacle (tent) where God's presence would be shown to the Israelites. We won't take the time to study all the details about the Tabernacle. However, it is worth studying, because we learn many things about God.

When a person wanted to approach God, his first step was to bring an animal sacrifice to God. He was to place his hand on the head of the animal and then kill it. By doing this, he was admitting to God that he was a sinner and deserved to die. By placing his hands on the animal, he was identifying himself with this animal that was to die in his place.

God allowed sheep, goats, bulls, and birds as sacrifices. The animals were to be perfect males, and the blood was to be shed. The blood of animals did not cleanse their sin, but it was a reminder that death was the punishment for sin.

The sacrifice was a picture of the Savior who was promised by God to defeat sin and Satan.

The animal was then burned on an altar. God promised to hold off the punishment they deserved and to forgive their sins if they believed Him and came to Him in the way He commanded.

At the Edge of the Promised Land

After the Tabernacle was completed, God led the Israelites to the edge of the “Promised Land”. This was the land God promised to give Abraham over 430 years before.

God told Moses to choose one man from each of the twelve tribes of Israel to go out and spy out the land. When the spies returned, ten of them brought back an evil report and two of them brought a good report. The ten were telling the Israelites about the giants that were living in the land and the strong walls that surrounded the cities. They did not believe God was strong enough to overcome the people of Canaan (Promised Land) and give them the land.

Two of the spies, Joshua and Caleb, had also seen the strong walls and the size of the people, but they believed that God would keep His promise, and give them the land.

The Bible says in Numbers 14:1-3, “And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt?”

The Israelites chose to agree with the ten men and did not believe that God would give them the land. They believed God was a liar. God said he would give them the land, but they did not believe him. They were fearful because the people of Canaan were bigger and stronger than the Jews.

God became angry with the Israelites, because they did not believe Him. God told them that every person twenty years old and older who did not believe God would die in the wilderness. Joshua and Caleb were the only ones who believed God. God said that after forty years, after those people died, then he would lead their children, Joshua, and Caleb into the land and give it to them.

Wandering in the Wilderness

It is an evil thing not to believe God. God wanted to bring Israel into the land of Canaan. However, God made them wander in the wilderness for forty years because they chose not to believe Him. All those unbelieving adults from twenty years and upward died in the wilderness over the forty years.

God's Word tells us many things that happened to Israel during these forty years of wandering in the wilderness. We will cover one of those events in this lesson. As usual it did not take long for Israel to start complaining and murmuring when difficulties came.

God provided food and water for Israel after they began their journey from Egypt, but they still did not trust and depend on Him. They forgot what God did for them and began to complain, because they ran out of water once again.

The Bible says in Numbers 21:5-6, "And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is

there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread. And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.”

Many of the Israelites died because they were bitten by the snakes. From the very beginning, God said sin would lead to death – physical, and eternal. Now the truth was graphically illustrated as many people died. This was God’s judgment on them because of their sin.

Just like they were bitten by the snakes and died, so every person has been bitten by the “serpent of sin”. As a result, we are separated from God and will one day die physically. Those who die separated from God will be eternally separated from God in the Lake of Fire.

Those who are accepted by God before death, will after death, live with God forever in Heaven. You may ask yourself, “How can I be accepted by God?” That is what the message of the Bible is all about. The purpose of these lessons is to help you understand this message so that you can be accepted by God and live with God in Heaven forever.

The Jews could not escape the poisonous snakes sent by God. When God decides to punish sinners, there is no place where they can hide. In the days of Noah, after God shut the door to the ark, there was no escape for those outside the ark. The people of Sodom and Gomorrah could not escape the judgment of God when he sent fire and destroyed those cities. When God decides that it is the time to punish people, there is no place where they can go to escape.

The Bible says in Numbers 21:7, “Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the

LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people.”

God’s purpose in judgment is to bring about a change of mind for those who have sinned. The Bible describes this word as repentance. The Israelites quickly changed their attitude toward God and acknowledged their sin. They realized now that only God would save them from their punishment. They could not save themselves from the snakes.

The Bible says in Numbers 21:8-9, “And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.”

God is loving, merciful and gracious. He decided to make a way to save those who believe Him. They did not deserve God’s help, but he saves all those who trust in Him.

God did not tell the Jews to find their own way to be healed, but he told Moses to make a serpent of brass and put it on a pole. God said if any person believes Him that all they had do was look at the serpent and then they would not die. God provided a way for them to escape death, but it had to be done God’s way and not their own.

Do you think the people would have lived if they only prayed but did not look? No. What if they did not look at the serpent but offered God a gift or money instead? Would they have lived? No. They had to look, just as God said.

Written For Our Learning

This event happened about 3,400 years ago. God put this event in the Bible for us to learn that we need to listen to God and believe him.

The Israelites wandered around the wilderness for forty years, and all those people who refused to believe the God would give them the Promised Land died. This was God's punishment on them because they refused to believe God's Word.

Just as the Israelites were given God's words by Moses, so we are given God's Word (Bible). God holds us responsible for what we know about Him. God gave us His Word so that we might believe Him. If we refuse to believe God, then we like the Israelites will die in our sins.

Moses died shortly before God was ready to send Israel into the Promised Land. God appointed Joshua to be the new leader. He used Joshua to lead His people into the land of Canaan.

The people of the land fought against Israel, but God protected the army and defeated the people of the land. God promised to give Israel the land of Canaan.

Although Satan and the king of Egypt had tried to stop the Israelites from leaving Egypt and although the Israelites had doubted God many times, God still did what he had promised to do. He led them, protected them, and gave them water and food for forty years while they wandered in the wilderness. God did not fail to do any of the things he promised.

*** Answer the questions on page 40 ***

Lesson 15 - The Judges and Kings

In our last lesson, we learned that God kept His promise, and led the Israelites into the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua. But, after Joshua died, the Israelites soon forgot God. They followed the ways of the nations that did not know the true and living God.

They made idols and worshipped them instead of the One True God. God wanted to remove the people of Canaan from the Promised Land and give it to the Israelites. However, Israel refused to believe and obey God, so He allowed some of the Canaanite people to remain in the land as a stumbling block and their enemy.

The Time of the Judges

This period of time is known as the time of the Judges. The book of Judges in the Bible records for us the moral corruption of the nation of Israel. It is perhaps the saddest period in the entire history of Israel.

The Bible says in Judges 21:25, “Every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” In Joshua’s time, the nation of Israel was a victorious people, but in Judges they became a defeated people. The only thing that changed was that the nation of Israel stopped believing and worshipping the One True God.

God punished Israel, because they forgot him and worshipped the idols of the Canaanite people. There is a 4-step cycle that is repeated 13 times in the book of Judges.

First, the nation of Israel would sin through worshipping the false gods of the Canaanites. Secondly, God allowed surrounding

nations to overcome Israel and make them slaves. Thirdly, the nation of Israel would eventually repent and cry to God for deliverance. Fourth, when Israel truly repented, God chose a man to deliver them from their enemies.

The people chosen by God to deliver Israel, were called judges. After the judge died, the Israelites went back to idolatry and the same cycle repeated itself for 350 years.

The Time of the Kings

The nation of Israel was the most fortunate of all the nations, because their ruler and king was God himself. After the period of the judges, Israel rejected God and asked for a king like all the nations around them. Many kings ruled over Israel for the next 450 years. A few of these kings believed and trusted God, but many did not.

King Saul was the first king of the nation of Israel, but King David, the second king, was the greatest king of Israel. Unlike many of the other kings who ruled over Israel, David truly believed in God and wanted to obey him from his heart.

David, like all of us, was born a sinner and was separated from God. David knew that he was a sinner and that the wages of sin was death. He knew his only hope was to receive God's mercy and forgiveness. David offered blood sacrifices for his sins and God accepted him like Abel, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Joshua. God even promised David that the coming Savior would be one of his descendants!

After David's death, Solomon his son reigned. His wealth grew beyond what anyone could wish. He built a beautiful temple for God's presence to dwell in.

After Solomon's death the nation of Israel argued over who should be king, and they split into two kingdoms. The northern kingdom is referred to as Israel, and the southern kingdom is referred to as Judah.

The book of I Kings begins with the reign of Solomon, and the book of II Kings ends with the termination of the Kingdom of Israel to the Babylonian captivity, because of Israel's wicked rebellion and idolatry.

The Prophets Warn of Coming Judgment

God loves every person from every nation and culture. He wants every person to be delivered from the power of Satan, sin and death. Therefore, from the very beginning, God spoke to Israel through his messengers to teach people his ways and warn them of his judgment as a result of their sin.

God's messengers were called prophets. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel were some of the more well-known messengers of God. You will find these, and the names of some other prophets used as titles to the Old Testament books of the Bible which these men wrote.

God's prophets told the people to repent and trust only in God. Repentance means to have a change of mind which results in a change of attitude and direction in life. To repent is to agree with God about your own sin.

Many Israelites worshipped God in the temple Solomon built and also worshipped idols. The prophets told the people to choose who they were going to worship, either God or idols. They told them they could not truly worship God if they were worshipping anything else.

Most of the Israelites refused to obey the words of God. They persecuted and killed many of God's prophets. They continued to worship idols and follow the wicked ways of the surrounding nations.

Besides the prophets sent by God, Satan sent false prophets to speak lies to Israel. Satan wanted to confuse them about what was true and what was false. Satan is a liar and a deceiver. They told the people that everything would be all right and that God would not punish them. Satan is still the same today. He sends his messengers who say that God's Word is not true or that God will not punish sin.

God Destroys the Kingdom of Israel

God is patient and does not immediately punish sinners. He warned the people in Noah's time for 120 years before the flood destroyed them. For many hundreds of years, God sent his messengers to Israel. They warned them of God's coming judgment if they did not repent.

Israel did not believe God. Therefore, God eventually allowed their enemies to fight against them and conquer them, because Israel would not repent and believe. The Assyrian army conquered the northern kingdom of Israel and took them away as captives (II Kings 17).

Several years later, when the southern kingdom of Israel refused to repent, God allowed the Babylonians to take them away into Babylon (II Kings 24-25). The Babylonians smashed down the stone walls of Jerusalem and burned the temple of God which Solomon had built. God did what he had warned them he would do if they did not repent.

After 70 years, the people of Judah in Babylon repented and asked the God to take them back to their own land. God heard their cries for His help, and He brought them back to Jerusalem (Ezra and Nehemiah).

They rebuilt the city and the walls around it. They also rebuilt the temple. The Israelites who returned to their land were also given another name. They were called Jews.

The Jews continued to worship God, although the majority did not do it from their hearts. Their descendants did not believe and obey God. After many years, God judged the Jews again by allowing the Greeks to conquer and control their country and taught them to speak the Greek language.

Many years later, the Roman army conquered Greece and they took control of Jerusalem. Even though many Jews did not believe God, there was always a small number who believed God and His Word, given through his messengers. They were waiting for the coming Savior promised by God.

Prophecies About the Coming Savior

Hundreds of years before the Savior came, God, through these prophets foretold many things about the Savior. These were written down in the Bible. There are more than 300 prophecies about the Savior.

The following list has 15 of the more famous prophecies about the Savior. God gave these prophecies so no one would miss Him when He arrived. God wanted them to know who the Savior would be and when He would come.

All these prophecies were given 400-1,000 years before the Savior was even born. To make a comparison, imagine making predictions about a person who would live in 400, 700, or even a 1,000 years from now.

These predictions would include the person's birth city, mother, and family line, events in the last week of his life, and specific details about his death and burial. And they all must be 100% correct! Is this easy to do? It is not even humanly possible! The prophets said that the Savior would be:

1. A descendant of King David – Isaiah 9:6-7
2. Born of a virgin – Isaiah 7:14
3. Born in the city of Bethlehem – Micah 5:2
4. Called back from Egypt – Hosea 11:1
5. Riding on a baby donkey – Zechariah 9:9
6. Betrayed by a friend – Psalm 41:9
7. Sold for 30 pieces of silver – Zechariah 11:12, 13
8. Accused by false witnesses – Psalm 27:12
9. Hit and spit upon – Isaiah 50:6
10. No response to accusations – Isaiah 53:7
11. Rejected by the Jews (Israelites) – Isaiah 53:3
12. Hands and feet pierced – Psalm 22:16

13. Clothing was gambled for – Psalm 22:18

14. Buried among the rich – Isaiah 53:9

15. Return to Heaven – Psalm 68:18

In the remaining lessons, we will see how the all-powerful God fulfilled these prophecies in the life of the Savior. They are recorded in the next major section of the Bible called the New Testament.

*** Answer the questions on page 41 ***

Lesson 16 - God Sends the Savior

The Fulfillment of a Long-Awaited Promise

The Son of God was born into this world at precisely the perfect time in history. The Bible says in Galatians 4:4, that God sent His Son, when the ‘fulness of the time’ was come. Truly, this was the case with the birth of Jesus Christ, in every sense of the expression!

His birth was at the perfect time, because it was ordained of God eternally. His birth was at the perfect time, historically, as seen by the incredible impact He made on the world. His birth was at the perfect time, prophetically, as seen in His perfect fulfillment of numerous prophecies. His birth was at the perfect time, spiritually, for the remnant in the nation of Israel who were ready to receive the Savior, Luke 2:25.

The last prophet to speak for God, who was recorded in the Old Testament, was a man by the name of Malachi. He reminded the Jews that God’s promised Savior would come to save them. He also told them that before the Savior came, God would send another prophet.

The work of this prophet would be to teach the people so they would be ready for the coming Savior. After Malachi, however, four hundred years passed during which God did not speak through any prophet. This period of time is known as the “silent years”.

After the silent years were finished, God was ready to do what He first promised in the Garden of Eden. He was ready to send the Savior. It had now been about 4,000 years since God first promised to Adam and Eve that He would send a Savior, and God was now

finally ready to do what He said. God never forgets His promises, nor is He ever late! God always keeps His Word right on time.

We are now going to begin our study in the New Testament with an elderly Jewish couple who believed God and were waiting for the birth of the Savior.

The Message from the Angel

The Bible says in Luke 1:5-6, “There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.”

Zacharias and Elisabeth were now old, and they were never able to have children. Zacharias was one of the priests in the temple at Jerusalem. One day while he was doing his work, an angel was sent from God to tell him an important message.

God promised elderly Zacharias that he would have a son and must name him John. John was going to be the last prophet to prepare the people for the coming Savior. The angel called the coming Savior “the Lord”. In other words, the coming Savior was God himself.

A few weeks later, God sent another angel to tell a virgin named Mary that God had chosen her to be the mother of the coming Savior. His name was to be called Jesus, which means Savior. God loved the whole world and he wanted sinners to be delivered from the punishment they deserved.

The Savior had to be a human just as we are, except he must be sinless to deliver us from Satan and sin. So, in order for God’s plan

about the Savior to be fulfilled, God had to be born as a human being. God chose Mary to be the mother of the Savior. Mary's son would be both God and man in one body. Jesus would be fully God and fully man.

The Sinless Nature of Jesus Christ

The Bible says in Luke 1:34-35, "Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

Jesus would be born sinless because he would be born without a human father.

No descendant of Adam is holy and righteous. Every person in the world inherits the sin nature of Adam, at the time of conception, from their earthly father. This sin nature makes us choose sin instead of God's ways.

If Mary were not a virgin, the birth of Jesus would have just been a 'normal' birth. If Mary were not a virgin, Jesus would have inherited the sin nature of Joseph, his stepfather. If Mary were not a virgin, you and I could have no hope of redemption.

It is humanly impossible for a virgin to have a child, but with God all things are possible! God created Adam out of the dust of the ground and therefore it was not difficult for God to give this child to Mary without a human father.

The Savior for whom John was to prepare the way was to be God himself. No ordinary man could deliver us from Satan, sin, and death.

Who delivered Noah and his family from the flood? Who delivered Isaac from death and provided a ram to die in his place? Who delivered Lot from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah? Who delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt? The Lord God alone is the great Savior, who would make it possible for us to come to God.

Mary, who was to be Jesus' mother, had already been promised to be married to a man called Joseph. Joseph discovered that Mary was pregnant, and Joseph knew that he was not the father of this baby. According to Jewish law, Joseph could have Mary killed for being pregnant with a child that was not Joseph's. However, Joseph loved Mary and so he decided to break off their engagement quietly.

God was not going to allow Joseph to separate from Mary. Joseph was a good man who trusted in God. He, too, was a sinner, but he came to God in the way God had provided. God wanted Joseph to take Mary as his wife so Jesus would also have a good earthly father. God sent his angel to tell Joseph the truth about Mary. She had not been unfaithful to Joseph, but she was still a virgin

The Bible says in Isaiah 7:14, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

The prophets said the Savior would be born of a virgin. Jesus was born into this world to save sinners from God's punishment. He came to save all those who agree with God that they are sinners needing a Savior.

Immanuel means God with us. This means that God himself would come to earth to be born as a child and live with people in this world. Jesus was born in Bethlehem just as the prophets of God said many years earlier.

The Childhood of Jesus Christ

The Bible says in Matthew 2:1-3, “Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.”

Herod, just like the Egyptian Pharaoh during the time of Moses, did not want anyone to rule over him. Herod was afraid that he would lose his position as king when this baby grew up to be a man. The wise men found the baby Jesus with his mother and worshipped him and gave him presents. God warned the wise men not to return to Herod, because Herod wanted to know where he was so he could kill him.

They went back to their country a different way. God also told Joseph to take Jesus to Egypt where he would be safe from Herod’s plan to destroy him. Jesus was taken to Egypt just as the prophets said many hundreds of years before. When Herod was dead, God sent one of his angels to tell Joseph to take Mary and Jesus back into the land of Israel. They settled in the northern part of Israel in a city called Nazareth.

The Bible says in Luke 2:40, 52, “And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.”

Jesus grew from a baby into a strong and wise man. He never sinned because he was not born with a sin nature. He grew into manhood in a human body.

Even though Jesus was God, he was also a real human being. The Savior was 100% God and 100% man in one body. He was God, so that he could reveal God to us. He was a man, so that He could die in our place, as the perfect sacrifice.

*** Answer the questions on page 42 ***

Lesson 17 - The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

John the Baptist was the prophet that had been chosen by God to prepare the people of Israel for the coming of Jesus Christ. In order to prepare their hearts, John began to preach the Word of God to great crowds of people. The message that John preached was very clear and simple, but it was not very popular. His message to the people was that they must repent!

The Bible says in Matthew 3:1-2, “In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

John meant that the people must change their attitude toward God and about their sin. They needed to agree with God that they sinned against Him and they were helpless to save themselves from Satan, sin, and death in the Lake of Fire.

These are the same things which God wants every one of us to understand about ourselves and to agree with God. Remember when we studied the Ten Commandments? None of us have been able to keep these commandments perfectly. We have all broken God’s laws, and this is called sin. The punishment for our sin is death and eternal separation from God.

The Purpose of John’s Baptism

The Bible says in Matthew 3:5-6, “Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan. And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.”

Many of the Jews believed God’s Word which John told them and repented of their sins. After repenting of their sins, they went to

him to be baptized. When a person was baptized, it was a sign to everyone that the person had agreed with God that he deserved death for his own sins but was trusting in God to send the Savior to save him.

Their baptism was an outward sign which illustrated inner repentance and belief in the Savior. Baptism will not make us acceptable to God. Baptism will not wash away our sins. Baptism is just a sign to show others that a person agrees with God's message and that he is trusting only in God to save him.

Many of the religious leaders were too proud to admit they were sinners. The religious leaders were made up of three groups of people, the Scribes, the Pharisees, and the Sadducees.

The Scribes were the men who copied the words of God onto scrolls. They were the men who were supposed to know and explain the real meaning of the words of God.

The Pharisees were a group of men who tried to be accepted by God based on different rules which they had written. The Pharisees added to God's Word and did not think they were sinners like other people.

The Sadducees did not believe many things which God had written in his Word. The Pharisees added to God's Word and the Sadducees took truths away from it.

The Sadducees were also political leaders of the Jews and therefore kept in good standing with the Roman government which the Jews hated. Many of these religious leaders would not admit they were sinners. They thought they were already good enough for God to accept them. They did not like John's message of repentance.

John was becoming popular with the people and some of their followers were leaving them and joining with John. When some of the Pharisees came to be baptized by John, he refused to baptize them and told them to stop trusting in their national heritage to be right with God. They thought that God would accept them because they were Abraham's descendants.

No one is accepted by God because of his parents or religious background. No one will be accepted by God simply because they have been baptized. God judges everyone individually, and his judgment is always based on one thing. Have you repented of your sin and put your faith in Jesus Christ alone?

Why was Jesus Baptized?

Jesus came to be baptized by John when he was about thirty years old. Many have been confused about why Jesus would be baptized by John. Obviously, baptism does not wash away sin, because Jesus had no sin, and yet he submitted himself to baptism. Jesus was baptized to picture His own coming death, burial, and resurrection, which is what scriptural baptism pictures.

Secondly, Jesus was baptized to signify to the people that John's message was true, and his authority was from God.

Thirdly, Jesus was baptized to show to all that would follow Him, that baptism is an important step of publicly identifying yourself as a follower of Jesus.

The Bible says in John 1:29, "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

When John saw Jesus, he said that Jesus was the Lamb who was sent by God. John knew that Jesus was the promised Savior. Later, in another lesson, we will study exactly what John meant when he called Jesus the Lamb of God.

The Temptation of Christ

The Bible says in Matthew 4:1-2, “Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.”

After Jesus was baptized, he went into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan. God had created Lucifer (now known as Satan or the Devil) as a perfect angel, but he made a choice to rebel against God in the beginning.

Since then, Satan has been continually evil. Satan tempted Adam to rebel against God. Now he was trying to tempt Jesus to rebel against God. If Jesus would have sinned, He would not have been able to be our Savior.

Although Jesus is God, he was also a real man. After forty days without eating any food, he was very hungry.

The Bible says in Matthew 4:3-4, “And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

Satan was trying to make Jesus prove he was God. He could have turned stones into bread, but Jesus would not obey Satan. We need

food to keep our bodies alive, but God says that there is something much more important than food.

We need God's Word to show us the truth and the way to everlasting life. What benefit will food be if we have healthy bodies but die without God and suffer everlasting punishment? We need to eat food so our bodies will live, but we also need to hear and believe God's Word so we will be able to live forever with God.

The Bible says in Matthew 4:5-7, "Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

Satan tried to quote an Old Testament portion of Scripture, so that he could trick Jesus into committing sin. Satan knows the words of God in the Bible, but he uses them in the wrong way.

He was not quoting Scripture accurately. He only selects portions so he can twist God's words in order to trick people. Satan still uses this approach today. He tries to make people think they should demand that God perform miracles to prove himself to them.

The Bible says in Matthew 4:8-10, "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

Satan could offer Jesus control over all the kingdoms in the world because Satan became the god of this world when Adam sinned against God. Satan tried to get Jesus to worship him. Jesus defeated Satan and did not obey him as Adam did in the Garden of Eden.

Jesus is All-Powerful

You may have seen movies present the struggle between the forces of good and evil. Often this struggle is presented as if there were two equal forces battling against one another.

God's Word tells us that God is the supreme Creator of all things. Satan could not make Jesus sin. Satan is a strong enemy, but he is no match for the Almighty God.

Jesus willingly faced the temptation of Satan, and overcame the Devil, so that all men would know that Jesus was sinless and perfectly obedient to His Father. Jesus Christ is the Supreme Creator and He has shown His Almighty power over Satan by His sinless life and His sacrificial death and resurrection.

*** Answer the questions on page 43 ***

Lesson 18 - Jesus Begins His Ministry

John the Baptist faithfully taught God's message to prepare the people to believe that Jesus was the promised Savior. Many people changed their minds about their sin. They knew they needed a Savior to save them from the judgment for their sins.

However, many people did not like the preaching about their sins. They got angry at John for telling them that their life was filled with sin. King Herod, who was living a very sinful life, did not like the things which John said. He put John in prison and eventually killed him, because he preached the Word of God.

Jesus Preaches the Gospel

The Bible says in Mark 1:14-15, "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

John had finished his work of preparing the way for the Savior before he was killed. It was now time for Jesus to begin teaching. Jesus taught the people to agree with God that they were helpless sinners, and to believe the Gospel that he had come to tell them.

The word gospel means good news. The Gospel is the good news that Jesus came into this world to die for our sins, to be buried, and to rise again from the dead.

Satan became the ruler of this world when Adam disobeyed God and followed Satan. However, God is loving, merciful, and gracious to sinners. He sent Jesus into the world to defeat Satan and to deliver people from Satan's control.

We are all born into this world under the control of Satan. Jesus said that the only way for anyone to escape Satan's control is to agree with God and believe the Gospel. The Gospel message is the powerful truth that can save you from hell, if you will believe that Jesus died to pay for your sins, and that He is the only One who can save you.

Jesus Frees a Demon-Possessed Man

Jesus often demonstrated that He had power over all things, including the devil. The Bible says in Mark 1:23-25, "And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him."

Synagogues were places where the Jews met to worship God. Unclean spirits are demons. Demons are angels who long ago rebelled against God and followed Satan. They like to live in and control people.

Satan and the demons know that Jesus is their Creator. They also know he is perfect and hates all sin. This demon knew that someday he would be thrown into the Lake of Fire, and he knew that Jesus had the power to throw him into the fire right then.

The Bible says in Mark 1:33-34, "And all the city was gathered together at the door. And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him."

Jesus Christ is God and felt compassion for these sick and demon possessed people. He knew that all these terrible things are in the

world because of man's sin and the rule of Satan. God is also concerned for you. He has not changed. He is still the same today. The Lord desires to rescue everyone from Satan's control.

Jesus Heals a Leper

The Bible says in Mark 1:40-42, "And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed."

This man knew he could not heal himself and that no ordinary man could help him, but Jesus was different. He recognized that Jesus could help him. He came to Jesus asking for his mercy and his help.

The sickness of leprosy is like the sin in our lives. There is no way that we can rid ourselves of sin. Only Jesus Christ can help us. Lepers were outcasts in Bible times, and no one would even come near them. Jesus touched this man because he loved him. Jesus spoke and the leprosy was gone.

How is a Person Born Again?

The Bible says in John 3:1-3, "There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

The Jews, and especially the Pharisees, were very proud that they were the descendants of Abraham. They thought that they were in God's family because they were Abraham's descendants. They did not realize that every person born into the world is born under Satan's rule. No one can know, understand, love, or obey God unless they are born again.

Jesus told Nicodemus that the only way a person can be accepted by God is to be born again. Those who are born again can know, understand, love and obey God. Our good works cannot bring us out of Satan's kingdom and into God's kingdom. Only God can bring us into his kingdom. He is almighty and nothing is impossible to him. By his power, he causes people to be born again spiritually into God's family.

The Bible says in John 3:4-7, "Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

Nicodemus was very surprised to hear what Jesus said. He thought that Jesus meant people must be born a second time as a baby. Jesus was telling Nicodemus that every person needs both a physical birth AND a spiritual birth. The water of which Jesus spoke is not baptism. Baptism is not a spiritual birth, neither can it make us acceptable to God, nor can it wash away our sin.

The Bible says in John 3:14-15, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Nicodemus still could not understand how he could be born into God's family. Jesus explained by reminding him of what happened to the Jews in the wilderness. The Israelites sinned against God. He sent poisonous snakes to bite them, and many died. When they repented, God told Moses to make a brass snake and put it on a pole. God promised that whoever was bitten and looked at the brass snake would live.

Nicodemus had been trying to keep God's laws. He did not want to admit that he was NOT able to keep all of God's laws, because he was proud. No person can keep all of God's laws! He needed to do what the Israelites had done and simply believe God.

We are in the same situation as Nicodemus. All of Adam's descendants are separated from God. Unfortunately, our pride often keeps us from admitting our hopeless condition before God.

The Israelites could not save themselves from the snakes, just like we cannot save ourselves from sin and death. God delivered the Israelites, and only God can deliver us. Jesus said there is only one way we can be delivered from Satan, sin, and death and that is to be born again into God's family.

Jesus said that he must be lifted up, just as the brass snake was in the wilderness, so that whoever trusts in him will be accepted by God and live forever with God in Heaven.

No one needs to wait until he dies to know if he will be accepted or rejected by God. Those who do nothing with the Savior are condemned and rejected by God right now. Those who repent and trust in the Savior are not condemned but are accepted by God.

*** Answer the questions on page 44 ***

Lesson 13 Questions

1. A covenant is a serious _____ between God and man.
2. How many people were in the nation of Israel at the time when God led them out of Egypt?
3. God really believed that the people of Israel would be able to keep His laws. (True or False)
4. What are some false gods that people often worship, instead of the One True God?
5. Think carefully about each of the Ten Commandments. How many of the Ten Commandments have you broken?
6. It is possible, if you try hard enough and clean yourself up, to be accepted by God. (True or False)
7. God's law makes us aware of the sin in our _____.
8. The Law of God is given to make us right with God. (True or False)
9. Most people think that they can live good enough to make themselves right with God. (True or False)
10. The _____ is the only one who can make us acceptable to God.

Lesson 14 Questions

1. The Tabernacle is the place where God's _____ was shown to Israel.
2. The purpose of the animal sacrifices was
 - a. To earn the favor of God.
 - b. To wash away the sins of the one who brought the sacrifice.
 - c. To picture the coming Savior.
3. Moses sent 12 spies into the promised land, and they all came back with an evil report. (True or False)
4. God became angry with the Israelites, because they did not _____ Him.
5. Joshua and Caleb were allowed to enter the promised land because they believed God. (True or False)
6. God made Israel to wander in the wilderness for _____ years because they did not believe Him.
7. God's purpose in judging our sin is...
 - a. To bring us to a place of repentance.
 - b. God doesn't really judge sinners.
 - c. To get rid of His anger by inflicting punishment on us.
8. God will save anyone who puts their trust in Him alone to rescue them from their sin. (True or False)

Lesson 15 Questions

1. What caused the nation of Israel to be a defeated people during the time of the Judges?
2. The 4-step cycle that was repeated 13 times in the book of Judges was: Sin, Slavery, Repentance, and _____.
3. Who was the greatest King of Israel?
4. God promised King David that the coming Savior would be one of his descendants. (True or False)
5. The nation of Israel eventually split into 2 kingdoms called the _____ kingdom and the _____ kingdom.
- 6 God's prophets preached to Israel that they should...
 - a. Buy uniforms and come to the Holy City once a year
 - b. Repent of their sins and return to the One True God
 - c. Name their request to God and claim it in faith
7. Satan sent false prophets to come and preach lies to the nation of Israel. (True or False)
8. Do you think there are false prophets in our country today?
9. God ignored the idolatry of Israel and did not bring judgment upon them. (True or False)
10. There are more than _____ prophecies that were made by the prophets concerning the coming Savior.

Lesson 16 Questions

1. The birth of Jesus was at the perfect time eternally, _____, _____, and spiritually.
2. God sometimes forgets to keep His promises. True or False.
3. John the Baptist was born in order to
 - a. Prepare the people to receive Jesus Christ
 - b. Baptize people
 - c. Begin his own non-denominational religious organization
4. The name 'Jesus' means
 - a. Ruler
 - b. Baby
 - c. Savior
5. Do you need a Savior? Yes or No. If yes, please explain why you need a Savior. If no, please explain why you don't need a Savior.
6. Jesus was really born of a virgin by the miracle power of God. True or False.
7. Jesus was ...
 - a. 100% God, and 100% man
 - b. Only a man, not really God at all
 - c. 50% God, and 50% man
8. Every person in the world inherits the _____ nature of Adam, at the time of _____, from their earthly _____.
9. Herod tried to kill Jesus because he was afraid he would lose his position as _____.
10. Jesus was a real human being, so that He could _____ in our place as the perfect _____.

Lesson 17 Questions

1. The prophet who prepared the way for the ministry of Jesus Christ was _____.
2. To repent of your sin means
 - a. Try hard to stop sinning.
 - b. Be baptized
 - c. Agree with God about your sin and turn from your sin.
3. What kind of people did John baptize? ...
 - a. Those who paid their church dues.
 - b. Anyone who wanted to be baptized.
 - c. Only those who had already repented and believed on Christ to save them.
4. John the Baptist refused to baptize some religious people. True or False.
5. God judges every person by the same standard. Have you _____ of your sin and put your _____ in Jesus Christ alone?
6. Baptism can help to wash away a person's sins. True or False.
7. Jesus was baptized in order to picture His coming _____, burial, and _____. (Fill in the Blank)
8. If Jesus had sinned, He could not be the Savior of the world. True or False.
9. _____ is the one who tries to make people think that they should demand God to perform _____ to prove himself to them.

Lesson 18 Questions

1. King Herod put John the Baptist in prison and murdered him because he _____ the Word of God.
2. The word 'gospel' means _____.
3. The message of the gospel is that Jesus died for our _____, was buried, and _____.
4. Why is the Gospel good news to you?
5. You were born into this world under the control of Satan. True or False.
6. How can a person be born again?...
 - a. By getting baptized and joining a church.
 - b. By lifting your hand and having a preacher pray for you.
 - c. By repenting of your sin and believing on Jesus Christ.
7. Baptism is a spiritual birth and helps wash away sin. True or False.
8. Our _____ keeps us from admitting our hopeless condition before God.
9. The only way to be delivered from Satan, sin, and death is to be _____ into God's family.
10. You can know right now whether you have been accepted or rejected by God. True or False.

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