

God's Plan for Us

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PREFACE

It is exciting for me to discover God’s plan for my life. I often ask the same question over and over, “Why is life like this?” If I had never discovered God’s plan for my life, I would have remained in hopelessness. God has delivered me from sin and darkness and given me a new life. The new life I have is a life of a personal and loving relationship with God that gives me love, joy, and peace.

I hope you will also discover God’s plan for your life. This study will help you to understand God’s salvation plan for you, and how it is fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. God loves you regardless of your condition—social status, ethnicity, education, etc.—and wants you to understand his love for you. He can give you a new and beautiful life. His plan for us is surely beautiful.

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Introduction

The Bible is the written Word of God. The Bible tells us about who we are as God's special creation. It reveals God's plan of salvation for each of us. It reveals God's love for us, and his desire for us to have a personal and loving relationship with him. It tells us about history—the creation, the fall of mankind into sin, and the coming of a Savior who has redeemed mankind—the present salvation we can have, and the future restoration of the whole world.

Lesson 1 – The Creation

Read Genesis 1:1-31

Verse 1 tells us that, in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth (the universe). God created the world (the planet Earth) in six days. Some believe that a day means twenty-four hours, and some believe that it means a longer period of time. The obvious truth is that there is one God who is the Creator of the universe.

As the Creator of the universe, what would God be like?

God formed the world and filled it in six days. What did God create on each day?

Day 1 (v.3-5):

Day 4 (v.14-19):

Day 2 (v.6-8):

Day 5 (v.20-23):

Day 3 (v.9-13):

Day 6 (v.24-31):

When we read the story of creation carefully, we find what God created on the first day to the third day, he filled them on the fourth day to the sixth day respectively.

What impression did God have as he saw his creation each day (v.4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31)?

What is so special about the creation of human beings—male and female (v.26-27)?

Because we are created in God's image and likeness, we have:

(1) Personality – God has a personality and has given each of us a unique personality. This includes our intelligence, emotion, and will. (2) Spirit – God is spirit, and so we have spirits (souls). (3) Morality – God is good, and so we are capable of doing what is good and imitating God's goodness.

These three things enable us to have a personal and loving relationship with God. This is the purpose of God creating us. Animals and plants do not have this privilege.

Notice that God said, "Let us ..." (v.26). The Bible describes God as one God—singular, not plural *Gods*—but there is plurality in God. We call this the Trinity, one God in three persons. The Bible describes God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit as three distinct persons, yet they are in unity. They are one and are equal in substance, power, and glory. They exist eternally without beginning. Their perfect love for one another brings perfect joy and peace. God has created us in order that we can experience his perfect love for us. He wants us to be in his circle of love.

Why did God create human beings as the last creation?

What is the command God give to human beings (v.28)?

God wants us to be good managers of this world, taking care of nature, animals, the environment, and the overall world.

What was God's given food for human beings and animals (v.29-30)?

God saw that everything was very good at the end of creation. There is no flaw in creation. Creation reflects *the Creator*. God is good and so is his whole creation (v.31).

Read Genesis 2:1-25

God rested on the seventh day means that God stopped creating, because he had finished the work of creation. It does not mean that God was tired because he is all-mighty. It is rather that God was giving rest to his creation. He modeled the need for us. God wants us to rest one day a week from work and to spend more time with him.

How did God create man and where did God put him (v.7-8)?

What two trees were in the center of the garden (v.9)?

What did God say about the consequence of eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (v.17)?

Disobeying God's command would bring death to Adam. He would not live eternally but would age and die. Spiritually speaking, Adam would be separated from God. He would lose his personal and loving relationship with God.

Why and how did God create a woman for Adam (v.20-22)?

What did Adam say when he saw her (v.23)?

God instituted marriage for a man and a woman to be united and become one (v.24). Marriage is a personal, loving, and covenantal relationship between a husband and his wife. This marriage relationship is a reflection of our relationship with God—a relationship that is personal, loving, and covenantal.

What impresses you the most from the story of creation?

Lesson 2 – The Fall of Mankind into Sin & God’s Plan for Our Salvation

Read Genesis 3:1-13

Genesis 1 and 2 tell us how God created the universe and the first man and woman. In other places of the Bible, there are records of God creating angels. The leader of the angels was Lucifer who wanted to be like God. Lucifer led some of the angels to rebel against God. God threw them out of Heaven and now they roam the earth. Lucifer is also called Satan (meaning “enemy”) or the devil (meaning “slanderer”). His followers are called demons or evil spirits. They hate God and deceive people to reject and rebel against God. Satan and his evil spirits always try to corrupt people. Their ultimate goal is to prevent every person from being saved by God and from having a personal and loving relationship with him.

Satan entered into the serpent and tempted the woman, whose name was Eve—mentioned later in verse 20. He made Eve confused by creating doubt in God’s word.

What did he say to Eve and what was her response (v.1-3)?

What did God say originally (2:16-17)?

What did Satan say to Eve about God’s Word (v.4-5)?

Why do you think Satan mixes the truth with lies?

In the Bible, sin is disobeying or not conforming to God’s law in any way. When Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, they disobeyed and sinned against God.

What was the first result of their sin (v.7)?

They felt shame of their nakedness for the first time. They were naked without feeling shame before, just like the animals. They tried to make clothing from leaves. Then God looked for Adam and asked, “Where are you?” God surely knew where Adam was. Adam had never run from God before. God wants Adam to think about his *fallen state*—where he is now in his relationship with God. Even though Adam and Eve disobeyed God and broke their relationship with him, God still loved them. God looked for them because he wanted to save them from their sin. God did not leave them alone in their misery (v.9).

What were the further results of their sin (v.10, 12-13)?

Adam and Eve started to become self-centered in their thoughts, words, and actions. Sin had corrupted their good nature. All people, born from Adam and Eve, are born with this corrupted nature. There is always conflict in our relationship with one another. Sin has brought all sorts of self-centeredness in us—selfishness, pride, etc.

Read Genesis 3:14-24

God is a just God and must maintain justice. He must punish sin and all that is evil.

What was God's punishment to the serpent (v.14)?

What was God's punishment to Eve (v.16)?

The perfect loving relationship between Adam and Eve was broken. There would be more self-centered behaviors. Adam, because of his physical strength, would "rule over" Eve.

What was God's punishment to Adam (v.17-19)?

What did God make for Adam and Eve (v.21)?

Their self-made clothing from leaves was not good enough to cover their nakedness and shame. God had to kill an animal and make garments from the skin for Adam and Eve. God was teaching them that:

1. He still loved them, even though they had acted selfishly against him.
2. They received the new clothing from God as a gift. This is God's grace for them. Grace is an act of mercy and kindness to someone who does not deserve it.
3. He killed an animal instead of killing them. The ultimate consequence of their sin was death just as he had told them. An innocent animal was killed as a substitute for them.
4. The skin of an innocent animal covers their sinful body. This points to Jesus who sacrificed himself to die for the punishment of our sins as our substitute, so that we can be covered by his righteousness when we put our faith in him, trusting our lives to him.

Sin continues to corrupt mankind. In Genesis 4, a man murdered his own brother. Not very long after mankind increased in number, "The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5). God knew the terrible impact of sin on us and had already designed a plan to save us from sin.

What did God promise to do (v.15)?

This verse is the first revelation of the Gospel, the *Good News* about God's salvation for mankind through Jesus Christ, the male offspring of Eve would defeat Satan—"he shall bruise your head"—and free us from the curse of sin. Jesus is the promised Savior who has conquered sin and death for us. Jesus has also restored the perfect loving relationship that mankind once had with God. In Jesus, we can have a personal and loving relationship with God that brings perfect joy and peace to us.

What impresses you the most from the story of the fall of mankind into sin and God's plan for our salvation?

Lesson 3 – The Increase of Mankind & Sin in the World

Read Genesis 4:1-16

By this time, Adam and Eve had many children and grandchildren, and perhaps more generations. This particular story is about his two sons: Cain and Abel.

What was Cain's job and what was Abel's job (v.2)?

What did Cain and Abel give for their offerings to God (v.3-4)?

Unlike Cain, Abel gave God the very best he had by faith. He gave his offering to God with the right motive. Abel also followed God's instruction about animal sacrifices. God had taught Adam, Eve, and their descendants to offer animal sacrifices as an offering to him. Innocent animals needed to be sacrificed to bear the people's sin punishment and died as their substitute, so that the people could live. God taught them that these animal sacrifices were temporary performances and pointed to Jesus, the innocent *Lamb of God*, who sacrificed himself and died for our sins as our substitute.

How did God react to Cain and Abel's offerings? Why (v.4-5)?

How did Cain feel consequently (v.5)?

What did God say to teach him (v.6-7)?

God warned Cain of the danger of giving himself to sin. Sin is a very dangerous and powerful evil force that we need to be careful of. Just as God taught Cain, he teaches and wants us to learn to trust in him.

Did Cain turn away from sin and turn his heart to God?

What did he do (v.8)?

What was God's punishment for him (v.11-13)?

Cain gave himself to his sinful desire and killed his brother. Abel's blood cried to God for justice. God punished Cain and yet protected him. God put a divine mark on him—could be like a tattoo—so that other people would not kill him.

Read Genesis 6:5-22

Adam died at the age of 930 years. Many years had passed and mankind had increased in number. The good nature that Adam and Eve once had had been corrupted by sin. All descendants of Adam and Eve (all human beings) are born with a sinful nature.

What did God see about mankind (v.5, 11-12)?

What did God plan to do (v.7, 13)?

How was Noah different than other people (v.8-9)?

What did God want him to do (v.14)?

The size of the ark was 300 cubits (450 feet or about 137 meter) long, 50 cubits (75 feet or about 23 meter) wide, and 30 cubits (45 feet or about 14 meter) high.

What did God tell Noah the reason God wanted him to build an ark (v.17)?

How did God plan to save Noah and his family (v.18)?

How did God plan to save the animals (v.19-20)?

What else did God tell Noah to bring into the ark (v.21)?

Noah warned people about God's judgment; however, no one believed in him, except his own family members. The hearts of people are naturally inclined to reject God because of the sinful nature they are born with.

What impresses you the most from the story of the increase of mankind and sin in the world?

Lesson 4 – God’s Punishment for Mankind’s Sins and His Grace for Them

Read Genesis 7:1-24

How many animals were to be brought into the ark (v.2)?

The difference between clean and unclean animals was mainly on whether or not they were allowed to be consumed as food at that time—Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. God supernaturally brought the animals to Noah.

How old was Noah when the God brought the rain (v.11)?

How long did the rain fall on the earth (v.12)?

How high was the flood (v.20)?

What happened to the living creatures during the flood (v.21-23)?

How long was the earth flooded (v.24)?

Read Genesis 8:1-22

The ark landed on the mountains of Ararat, which is located in present-day Turkey.

How did Noah know the water had receded (v.8-12)?

What was God’s command to Noah (v.15-17)?

What did Noah do after coming out of the ark (v.20)?

What did God say in his heart (v.21-22)?

Noah sacrificed some of the animals as an offering to God. Noah knew that the consequence of sin was death, and he sacrificed animals to appease the wrath and justice of God for mankind’s sins. Noah was a good and righteous man. He asked God to forgive his own sin and the sin of mankind. Noah knew that mankind had rebellious hearts towards God. He had just seen how God punished mankind for their sins. God has promised that he will not send a flood to wipe out the living creatures on the earth again. Even though every person’s heart is still evil and rebellious towards God, he continues to love and reach out to us. He has a plan to free us from the enslaving power of sin and evil.

Read Genesis 9:1-2

What did God command Noah and his family members to do?

Read Genesis 11:1-9

Hundreds of years had passed since Noah and the great flood. People had increased in population and so had their sins. They spoke only one language and settled in Shinar—located in present-day Iraq.

How did the people come together to rebel against God (v.3-4)?

What do you think about their plan and motive?

What did God do to punish them and to prevent their rebellion (v.7-8)?

What is the name of the place (v.9)?

What do you think about God's judgment and mercy for them?

What impresses you the most from the story of God's punishment for mankind's sins and his grace for them?

Lesson 5 – God’s Plan for the Nations through Abraham

Read Genesis 12:1-9

We will find out later that Abram was a man of faith. God chose him to be the ancestor of the promised Savior who would come to save us.

What did God ask Abram to do (v.1)?

What promise did God give to him (v.2-3)?

God promised Abram that “all the families of the earth” would be blessed through him. God was speaking of a people of God who would be blessed through a descendant of Abram’s. Through this promised Savior, every person could have a personal and loving relationship with God and be brought into God’s family. Abram believed in God and left his home. He did not know where he would go, but he trusted God’s guidance day by day.

How old was Abram when he took on a journey with God (v.4)?

What did God say to Abram when he passed through the land of Canaan (v.7)?

Abram built an altar which means he offered a sacrifice to God (v.7-8). Abram knew that he was also a sinful man and needed God’s forgiveness for his sins.

Read Genesis 16:1-4

After many years had passed, Sarai was still barren and could not produce children.

What was her plan to have children (v.2)?

Sarai did not wait for God’s timing and tried to solve the situation in her own way. This created a great conflict later on between the descendants of her natural child and the descendants of her servant’s child.

Read Genesis 17:1-8, 15-21

How old was Abram when God confirmed his promise to him and what did God ask Abram to do (v.1)?

God changed Abram’s name to Abraham which means “father of a multitude of nations” (v.5). God established a covenant with Abraham (v.7). A covenant is a binding agreement between two parties. God was pleased to lower himself, put aside his superiority, and make an agreement with Abraham, who was an inferior being.

What was the new name that God gave to Sarai (v.15)?

How old was Sarah at that time (v.17)?

Read Genesis 21:1-7

God supernaturally enabled Sarah to conceive a child in her old age.

What was the baby boy's name and how old was Abraham when his son was born (v.3-5)?

Read Genesis 22:1-19

What did God ask Abraham to do (v.2)?

Abraham was seventy-five years old when God promised to give him a child and to make him a great nation. After waiting for twenty-five years, God gave Abraham a son, Isaac. Isaac was probably a teenager when God asked Abraham to sacrifice him. He was the love and joy of Abraham's life. Abraham might have considered that his life would be meaningless without Isaac. Therefore, God wanted Abraham to find his significance and purpose of life in God alone and not in Isaac or any other things.

What did Isaac ask Abraham about and what was Abraham's answer to him (v.7-8)?

What happened when Abraham was about to kill his son (v.10-11)?

What did the angel of the LORD say to him (v.12)?

What did God provide Abraham for the burnt offering (v.13)?

What name did Abraham give to that place (v.14)?

God confirmed his covenant promise to Abraham to bless him and to multiply his offspring. Through a particular offspring, people from all nations would be blessed. This promised offspring is the same offspring whom God had revealed in Genesis 3:15. He is Jesus Christ, the promised Savior for mankind, who sacrificed himself for the punishment of our sins and died as our substitute. If we believe and put our faith in him, trusting and surrendering our lives to him, God forgives our sins. Through Jesus, we become children of God and enjoy a personal and loving relationship with him.

What impresses you the most from the story of God's plan for the nations through Abraham?

Lesson 6 – God’s Plan through Moses and the People of Israel

One of Isaac’s sons, Jacob, had twelve sons of his own. God changed Jacob’s name to Israel and his twelve sons became the ancestors of the twelve tribes of Israel. Because there was a great famine in Canaan, they moved to Egypt. During the famine, one of Jacob’s sons, Joseph, was promoted by the king of Egypt to be the second-in-command of Egypt, because of his wise plan to save Egypt from the famine. During Joseph’s life, the sons of Israel lived well in Egypt. After Joseph died, he was no longer remembered in Egypt. The people of Israel multiplied in Egypt and the kings of Egypt made them slaves. For over 300 years, they lived as immigrants in Egypt and did whatever they could to survive.

Read Exodus 1

What did Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, order the midwives to do (v.16)?

Did the midwives obey Pharaoh? Why (v.17)?

How did the midwives give their answer to Pharaoh (v.19)?

How did God deal with the midwives (v.21)?

What did Pharaoh command all Egyptians to do (v.22)?

Read Exodus 2:1-15

A Hebrew woman had a baby and could no longer hide the baby from Pharaoh’s officers. Perhaps people heard his cry and reported to the officers. She did not want him killed, so she put him in a basket and let the basket float on the Nile River. His sister watched from a distance and observed what would happen to him.

Who saw the basket and what did she do with it (v.5-6)?

What did the child’s sister suggest Pharaoh’s daughter to do (v.7-8)?

Whom did the child’s sister get to nurse him (v.8)?

When the child grew up, Pharaoh’s daughter adopted him, and he became one of the princes of Egypt.

What was his name and the meaning of it (v.10)?

Moses was a child of Hebrew immigrants in Egypt. God saved his life and he became a prince of Egypt. He received the best education the country had to offer. When Moses grew up, he went to observe the burdens of his Hebrew people. He saw how they were treated as slaves by the Egyptians.

What did he do after he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew (v.11-12)?

What did Moses see on the next day (v.13)?

What did the Hebrews know about what Moses had done (v.14)?

What did Moses do when Pharaoh heard about it? Why (v.15)?

Moses fled and lived in another foreign land, Midian, for about 40 years and had his own family. God used this time to develop his character and spiritual maturity and prepared him to save the people of Israel. God, who had saved his life, had a special plan for him.

Read Exodus 2:23—3:12

What was Moses' job? How do you think this job might have shaped his character (v.1)?

How did God appear to Moses (v.2-3)?

How did God introduce himself to Moses in a personal way (v.6)?

God initiated a personal and loving relationship with Moses by introducing himself as the God of Moses' ancestors (fathers).

What did God plan to do for the people of Israel (v.8)?

Notice that God called the people of Israel "my people" (v.7). God had a covenant promise with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and he was pleased to call the people of Israel his own people. God had promised that through a particular male descendant of Israel, people from all nations would be blessed and become his children.

What did God want Moses to do and what was Moses' response to God (v.10-11)?

What did God say to Moses (v.12)?

What impresses you the most from the story of God's plan through Moses and the people of Israel?

Lesson 7 – The Passover and the Exodus

God sent Moses to deliver the people of Israel out of Egypt. Through Moses, God demonstrated his power in Egypt and defeated the false gods whom the Egyptians worshipped, such as the gods or the goddesses of the sun, the Nile River, fertility, and protection. The true God also defeated Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, whom the Egyptians believed was a god in human flesh. God brought ten plagues (epidemics) to the land of Egypt: water turned to blood, frogs, gnats (small flies), flies, death of their livestock, boils, hail, locusts, darkness, and death of the firstborn male of people and animals. The people of Israel were also affected by some of these plagues, but God protected them from the deadly ones. Before the tenth plague, God gave the Hebrews instructions on how to commemorate that day and how they could be saved from that plague.

Read Exodus 12:1-14

What kind of lamb did God tell the people of Israel to sacrifice (v.5)?

What did they have to do with the blood of the lamb (v.7)?

They should roast and eat the meat in haste (v.11) and with bitter herbs (v.8). This symbolizes their bitter lives in Egypt and their leaving out of the land of Egypt in haste.

What would God do when he saw the blood of the lamb on their houses (v.13)?

How did God want the people of Israel to commemorate that day (v.14)?

The sacrificed lambs were without defects. They were young and in perfect condition. Their blood was to be shed as a substitution for the people's sins. Those who obeyed God's command and trusted him would be saved from the plague. God wanted them to remember that day and instituted the Passover, the day when God passed over them and saved their lives. These sacrificed lambs point to Jesus Christ, *the Lamb of God*, who came from heaven and sacrificed himself to die for the punishment of our sins as our substitute.

Read Exodus 12:29-36

What did God do at midnight in Egypt and how did that impact the Egyptians (v.29-30)?

What did Pharaoh do afterward (v.31)?

The Egyptians were in a hurry asking the Israelites to leave Egypt. They were afraid that God would destroy them, if they kept the Israelites as their slaves any longer. As the Israelites were leaving, the Egyptians gave them silver, gold jewelry, and clothing (v.35).

Read Exodus 14:1-14

When the Bible says that God “will harden Pharaoh’s heart” (v.4), it shows that God is sovereign and able to act as he pleases according to his holiness. It also means that God gave Pharaoh over to his own pride and sinful heart. God would not help Pharaoh to soften his heart and regret his mistakes, if Pharaoh refused to do so of his own will. When people refuse to regret their mistakes and turn to God, God can give them over to their own pride.

What did Pharaoh and his officers decide to do (v.5-6)?

How did the people of Israel react when they saw Pharaoh and his army coming after them and what did Moses say to them (v.10-14)?

God, who had demonstrated his power by bringing the ten plagues to the land of Egypt, would continue to protect and deliver his people from the Egyptian army. Moses asked the people of Israel to put their faith in God. Faith is believing and trusting God completely, even though the situation seems impossible.

Read Exodus 14:15-31

What did God tell Moses to do (v.15)?

What did the angel of God do to protect the people of Israel (v.19-20)?

What did God do to the sea and what did the people of Israel do afterward (v.21-22)?

What did the Egyptians do when they saw the people of Israel went into the sea (v.23)?

What did God do to the sea in the morning (v.24-25)?

What did God tell Moses to do and what happened to the sea (v.26-28)?

What was the outcome of this event (v.29-31)?

We are all in slavery to sin. Just as God sent Moses to deliver the people of Israel from slavery, God sent Jesus Christ to deliver us from the slavery of sin. Just as God taught the people of Israel to trust in him for their salvation, God wants us to trust in him for our salvation. God wants us to be free from the enslaving power of sin by believing and putting our faith in Jesus, trusting and surrendering our lives to him alone.

What impresses you the most from the story of the Passover and the Exodus?

Lesson 8 – God’s Covenant People & the Ten Commandments

Read Exodus 19:1-6

God revealed to the people of Israel—his covenant people—that he was faithful to them. He delivered them from slavery in Egypt. He initiated a personal and loving relationship with them. He reminded them of how he had saved them. He said that he bore them on eagles’ wings and brought them to himself (v.4). God used a metaphor of an eagle who carried his children on his wings from Egypt to Mount Sinai. At Mount Sinai, God revealed himself in a personal way to the people of Israel and taught them his will for their lives.

If they obeyed God, what blessing would they receive (v.5-6)?

Just as a priest was chosen and set apart to serve God, Israel was chosen and set apart to serve God and to be a holy nation. Israel was chosen to be the instrument from which the Savior of the world would come. Israel was to be an example of a kingdom of people who served the true God. In the New Testament, God reveals that people from all nations who believe in the promised Savior, Jesus Christ, are the true people of his kingdom who have been saved from the slavery of sin. “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9).

Just as God initiated a personal and loving relationship with the people of Israel and brought them to himself, God initiates a personal and loving relationship with each of us and brings us to himself. He saves us from the slavery of sin and brings us out of darkness like an eagle carrying its children on its wings.

Read Exodus 20:1-21

At Mount Sinai, God gave the people of Israel the Ten Commandments as a summary of moral laws to guide their lives. The first four commandments describe their duties to God and the last six commandments describe their duties to one another. The Ten Commandments are the permanent law of God and apply to God’s people in the past, present, and future.

How did God introduce himself to the people of Israel (v.2)?

What is the first commandment (v.3)?

The first commandment requires us to worship God alone and to acknowledge him as the only true God.

What is the second commandment (v.4-6)?

The second commandment forbids us to worship idols—things in the world, in nature, or in the universe. Anything other than God alone, in which we try to find happiness and meaning for our lives, can be a potential idol. Because of the enslaving power of sin that blinds us, we tend to choose to worship idols rather than the one true God.

What is the third commandment (v.7)?

We need to have proper respect for God's name because his name is holy.

What is the fourth commandment (v.8)?

God wants us to rest one day a week and make that day a holy day—a day to worship him. Since the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which was on Sunday, Christians have worshiped God together on Sundays.

What is the fifth commandment (v.12)?

What is the sixth commandment (v.13)?

God wants us to preserve the life that God has given us—our lives and the life of others.

What is the seventh commandment (v.14)?

Adultery is a sexual relationship outside marriage. We can commit adultery not only in our actions but also in our minds. God wants us to be holy like him—in our thoughts and acts.

What is the eighth commandment (v.15)?

What is the ninth commandment (v.16)?

What is the tenth commandment (v.17)?

God does not want us to covet (desire wrongfully) what other people have. God judges our wrong actions as well as our wrong thoughts and words. God wants us to be content with what we have. Essentially, God is *the Giver* of all things we possess and wants us to be good managers of what he has given us.

The first four commandments teach us to love God with all our hearts, and the last six commandments teach us to love other people as we love ourselves. When we disobey God's commandments, we sin against him. It shows our sinful and rebellious nature.

What impresses you the most from the story of God's covenant people and the Ten Commandments?

Lesson 9 – The Coming of the Promised Savior

During the life of the people of Israel, God provided them with three types of leaders—prophets, priests, and kings—to guide their lives as God’s covenant people. Prophets were messengers of God who revealed God’s will for the people. Priests were mediators between the people and God. They performed sacrifices for the sins of the people and for themselves. Kings were rulers of the nation and had the responsibility of protecting the people from their enemies.

The Savior that God promised to save his people from the slavery of sin and to bring them out of darkness would fulfill all the roles of the three types of leaders. Jesus fulfills the role of prophet by revealing the will of God to us by his word and Spirit. He fulfills the role of priest by sacrificing himself for our sin, reconciling us to God, and becoming our Mediator with God. He fulfills the role of king by ruling and defending us from all of his and our enemies: the devil, demons, and death.

Read Luke 1:26-38

Whom did the angel Gabriel appear to and who was her fiancée (v.27)?

What did the angel say to her and how did she react (v.28-30)?

What did the angel say to her about her son (v.31-33)?

David was the second king of Israel and was faithful to God. God loved him and promised that through his descendent, God would bring an heir whose kingdom would last forever. This promised descendant was Jesus Christ, the Savior that God had promised to Adam and Abraham. Jesus’ kingdom has no end—a kingdom of people who put their trust in him.

What was Mary’s question for the angel and what was the angel’s answer (v.34-37)?

Read Luke 2:1-7

Israel was under the Roman Empire at that time. The Roman emperor, Caesar, required everyone in the Roman Empire to participate in the census. Bethlehem was known as the city of David—the birth place of King David. Both Joseph and Mary were descendants of King David, and so was Mary’s baby. Mary delivered the baby Jesus in Bethlehem.

In what place was Jesus born? Why (v.7)?

There was no inn available for Joseph and Mary to deliver the baby. Jesus was not born in the palace of kings but in a very humble place. He was born in the stable (an area or a room for animals) and was laid in a manger (a feeding-box or container for animal food).

Read Luke 2:8-20

Shepherds were ordinary and poor people in Israel. Jesus identified with them in his life and called himself *the Good Shepherd*. He is *the Shepherd* of God's people.

How did the shepherds feel when an angel appeared to them? What did the angel say to them (v.9-11)?

Jesus' title is "Christ the Lord". *Christ* means the Messiah, the one who is anointed or chosen. *The Lord* means the only Lord, the only and true Master for all people.

Who suddenly appeared with the angel and what did they do (v.13-14)?

What did the shepherds tell Joseph and Mary about the baby (v.17)?

How did the shepherds feel after all these things and what did the shepherds do when they returned home? What might they tell their family members and friends (v.20)?

Read John 1:1-18

"The Word" refers to the Son of God, who was with God the Father and was God. Jesus was the name given after the Son of God was born as a human being.

What was the role of the Son of God in the beginning of creation (v.2-4)?

God is the source of life and light. Spiritually speaking, the light of God shows the darkness of our sin and the right path of life with God. If we have a personal and loving relationship with God, his light will guide our lives in this dark and broken world.

Jesus, the Son of God, the Creator of the universe, and the Giver of life came to this world. He was not welcomed but was rejected and crucified. People could not receive him because of their spiritual blindness and the darkness of their sinful hearts.

What will happen to those who believe in Jesus, trusting their lives to him (v.12-13)?

God is Spirit and is invisible to us. Jesus, who is the Son of God, reveals who God is. Jesus came to the world to bring light to our hearts and to deliver us from spiritual darkness. He came to sacrifice himself and to die bearing the punishment of our sins on the cross as our substitute. When we believe and put our faith in him, trusting and surrendering our lives to him, our sins are forgiven. We are given a new life in him and God adopts us as his children. Jesus is full of grace and truth. He saves us by his grace and leads us to himself—*the Word and the Truth of God*.

What impresses you the most from the story of the coming of the promised Savior?

Lesson 10 – The Teaching & Miracles of Jesus Christ (Part I)

At the age of thirty, Jesus began his public ministry. He taught people about the kingdom of God. He performed miracles to validate his teaching and to prove his identity as the Son of God, the promised Savior. Many people believed in him and many others did not.

Read Matthew 8:23-27

After teaching people, Jesus was tired and wanted to rest and spend time alone with his disciples. They got into a boat and went across the Sea of Galilee to the other side.

What happened to them on the sea and what was Jesus doing when it happened (v.24)?

What did his disciples do and ask of him (v.25)?

What did Jesus do after he awoke and what happened to the winds and the sea (v.26)?

This was probably the first time Jesus' disciples had ever seen someone speak to nature and nature obey. Jesus was the Son of God through whom God the Father created the world and nature.

How did the disciples react? What did they say to one another (v.27)?

The disciples realized that Jesus was God, who could give a command to nature and nature obey. They also realized that Jesus allowed a great storm—great suffering—to come into their lives. He could prevent the great storm from coming and did not explain to them why he allowed it. He simply asked them to have faith in him, trusting their lives to him. He was with them in the midst of their suffering.

Read Matthew 8:28-34

Who came to meet Jesus when he went to the other side of the sea (v.28)?

What did they cry out and say to Jesus (v.29)?

The demons (evil spirits) knew the identity of Jesus. The devil and his demons were angels who rebelled against God and were banished from Heaven. They spiritually deceive people to reject God and sometimes hurt people physically too.

What did the demons ask of Jesus (v.31)?

What did Jesus say to the demons and what happened to the pigs (v.32)?

The demons begged Jesus to give them permission to go into the pigs. Here we learn that Jesus has authority over demons, and they obey him.

What did the herdsmen do after seeing what just happened (v.33)?

What did the people of the city ask of Jesus (v.34)?

The people might have asked Jesus to leave their region because they were afraid to lose more animals which were their financial resources. They seemed to be more concerned about their own well-being than knowing who Jesus truly was. Jesus, who is God himself who came down from heaven, is the true source of our well-being.

Read Matthew 9:1-8

Who was brought to Jesus when he returned to his own city (v.1-2)?

What did Jesus say to him (v.2)?

What did some of the scribes say to themselves about Jesus (v.3)?

Blasphemy was considered a serious sin and the blasphemer could be punished by being stoned to death. Only God can forgive people's sins. Therefore, Jesus was claiming to be God himself. His claim was blasphemy if he was not God and he deserved to be killed.

What did Jesus say to them (v.4-6)?

Jesus knew what was in their minds and hearts. He said to them that what they were thinking about him was evil, because they falsely accused him. Performing a miraculous healing is easier than forgiving sins. Jesus then healed the paralytic—the easier act—to prove his authority to forgive sins as God—the more difficult act.

How did Jesus heal the paralytic and what did the paralytic do after he was healed (v.6-7)?

How did the crowd react (v.8)?

The crowd was shocked, just like the disciples were after watching Jesus calm the great storm on the sea. They glorified God—giving praise to God—for what Jesus just did. They might have thought that God gave *men* the ability to heal sickness and glorified him for that reason, rather than glorifying him for who Jesus actually was. At this point, people still thought that Jesus was just a man, a great religious teacher who could heal diseases. Jesus' act of forgiving the paralytic's sins was an unseen and unobservable act by the crowd.

What impresses you the most from the story of the teaching and miracles of Jesus Christ?

Lesson 11 – The Teaching & Miracles of Jesus Christ (Part II)

Read John 11:1-16

Mary, Martha, and Lazarus were siblings and disciples of Jesus.

What happened to Lazarus and what did Jesus say regarding that (v.1-4)?

Jesus did not immediately go to heal Lazarus but waited two more days (v.6). He had a purpose to reveal his power over death, so that people might believe in him—the promised Savior, God who became man.

After two days, what did Jesus' disciples tell him before they departed (v.8)?

“The Jews” referred to the religious leaders of the community, such as the scribes and the Pharisees, and the people who followed them. These Jews thought that Jesus had blasphemed for claiming his equality with God. They wanted to stone and kill Jesus.

What did Jesus tell his disciples about Lazarus and what was their response (v.11-12)?

Read John 11:17-37

By the time Jesus and his disciples arrived, Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days. Martha believed in Jesus and in the Resurrection Day—the day that Jesus would return to resurrect God's people and to give them a new heavenly body (v.24).

What did Jesus say about himself? Did Martha believe in Jesus (v.25-27)?

Jesus grieved with Mary and the others over the death of Lazarus. Particularly, Jesus grieved for the consequence of people's sins that brings death and sorrow to their lives.

Read John 11:38-44

What did Martha say to Jesus, when he asked to remove the stone that covered the tomb, and how did Jesus respond to her (v.39-40)?

What did Jesus do after people removed the stone (v.41-42)?

What did he do next and what happened to Lazarus (v.43-44)?

The dead man heard the voice of his Creator and responded. He woke up and came out. Jesus put Lazarus' soul back into his body and healed the decayed body. Jesus resurrected Lazarus and gave him life again.

Read John 11:45-53

The religious leaders of the community (the chief priests and the Pharisees) were jealous of Jesus, because many people had turned to follow and believe in him. Instead of following and believing in Jesus, they rejected him and refused to repent from their pride.

What did they plan to do to Jesus (v.53)?

Jesus' mission was to sacrifice himself and to die for the punishment of our sins as our substitute. His mission is to gather into one all his people (the children of God) who are scattered around the world.

Read John 12:9-11

What did the chief priests plan to do to Lazarus? Why (v.10-11)?

Read John 12:44-50

What did Jesus say about himself and God the Father (v.44-45)?

As the Son of God, Jesus and God the Father are in unity. Therefore, whoever believes in Jesus, believes in God the Father, and whoever sees Jesus, sees God the Father. Jesus reveals who God is. He is God who became a man.

What did Jesus say about his purpose in coming to the world (v.46)?

What did Jesus say about those who would not believe in him (v.47-48)?

Jesus has come to the world to save us from the slavery of sin and darkness. While in the world, his purpose was to die for the punishment of our sins, so that by believing and putting our faith in him, we can be forgiven and saved. Jesus will return at the end of the world. His judgment will come upon those who refuse to believe in him. There will be no more chances to repent. Now, God is patiently giving us time to repent from our sins and to believe and put our faith in His Son, trusting and surrendering our lives to Jesus. God also wants us to tell other people about the saving grace of Jesus, and the new life they can have in him.

Jesus asked people to believe in him because his words will lead them to eternal life (v.50). He asked them seriously and urgently, because his time in the world would end quickly. He would be arrested and crucified.

What impresses you the most from the story of the teaching and miracles of Jesus Christ?

Lesson 12 – The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus

Read Luke 22:1-6

The Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were annual celebrations to remember God's redeeming work for Israel, delivering them from the slavery in Egypt.

What did the chief priests and the scribes plan to do to Jesus (v.2)?

Satan used Judas to betray Jesus. Judas was one of Jesus' twelve core group of disciples. He was disappointed that Jesus spoke about his sacrifice and death, instead of becoming the new political leader of Israel, which would have benefited him as Jesus' disciple. Judas loved money and planned to sell Jesus to the chief priests and the scribes for money. He let himself be used by Satan to betray Jesus.

Read Luke 22:7-23

Where would Jesus celebrate the Passover with his disciples (v.9-13)?

Jesus and his disciples were eating the Passover meal the night before he was betrayed and arrested. Jesus spoke to them about his death. As he passed the bread and wine to his disciples, he told them to remember his body and blood that would be sacrificed for the sins of his people. At that night, Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper of the new covenant between him and his people to replace the Passover of the old covenant. Today, the Lord's Supper is regularly celebrated in churches as a remembrance of the body and blood of Jesus that has been sacrificed for his people.

What did Jesus' disciples question one another about (v.23)?

Read Luke 22:31-34

What did Jesus say to Peter and what was his response (v.31-33)?

What else did Jesus say to Peter (v.34)?

Read Luke 22:39-46

What did Jesus ask God the Father in his prayer (v.42)?

Who appeared to strengthen Jesus (v.43)?

What were Jesus' disciples doing when he went to see them (v.46)?

Read Luke 22:47-62

Who came with a crowd to arrest Jesus (v.47)?

What did one of Jesus' disciples do to the servant of the high priest (v.50)?

What did Jesus do to the servant of the high priest (v.51)?

What did Jesus say to the people who came to arrest him (v.52-53)?

Where did they bring Jesus to (v.54)?

Who followed them at a distance (v.54)?

How did Peter deny Jesus, just as Jesus had told him (v.56-60)?

Jesus turned and looked at Peter and Peter remembered what Jesus had said to him. "He went out and wept bitterly" (v.61-62).

Read Luke 22:63-71

What did the men who held Jesus in custody do to him (v.63-65)?

They tortured Jesus all night and brought him to their council (court) in the morning (v.66).

What did they ask Jesus and what was his response to them (v.67-69)?

What did they conclude from Jesus' statement (v.70)?

What did they say to one another hearing Jesus' reply to them (v.71)?

After hearing that Jesus affirmed his identity as the Son of God—therefore claiming to be God himself—they had enough evidence to consider Jesus guilty of blasphemy and gave him the death punishment according to their religious law (v.70-71).

What impresses you the most from the story of the betrayal and arrest of Jesus?

Lesson 13 – The Suffering, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus

Read Luke 23:1-25

The Romans who occupied Israel did not allow the people of Israel to exercise the death punishment. Only the Roman government and its' court could give the death punishment. Therefore, the religious leaders brought Jesus to Pilate, who was the Roman Governor of Judea. This event happened in the city of Jerusalem in the region of Judea.

How did the religious leaders accuse Jesus before Pilate (v.2)?

What did Pilate ask Jesus and what was Jesus' answer (v.3)?

What did Pilate say to the religious leaders about Jesus and how did they respond (v.4-5)?

The religious leaders demanded Pilate to give a verdict for Jesus' case, but he was reluctant. After learning that Jesus was from the region of Galilee, he sent Jesus and the religious leaders over to Herod, who was the ruler for the region of Galilee. Herod happened to be in Jerusalem for the Passover feast.

What did Herod do to Jesus (v.11)?

What was Pilate's verdict for Jesus (v.14-16)?

What did the religious leaders and the crowd demanded Pilate to do to Jesus (v.21-23)?

Pilate was afraid that the crowd would create chaos, and thus put him at a risk of rebellion.

What did Pilate decide to do (v.24-25)?

Read Luke 23:26-43

Whom did the soldiers force to carry Jesus' cross (v.26)?

Where did the soldiers crucify Jesus and the two criminals (v.33)?

What was Jesus' prayer for the soldiers, the religious leaders, and their people (v.34)?

How did the religious leaders and the soldiers humiliate Jesus (v.35-37)?

What inscription did Pilate put for Jesus (v.38)?

One of the criminals humiliated Jesus as well, but the other one showed repentance—regret of his sins (v.39-41).

What did he ask of Jesus and what was Jesus' answer to him (v.42-43)?

Read Luke 23:44-56

Ancient Jews used the sun as their time. The first hour is 6 a.m. our time. The sixth hour is 12 p.m. There was darkness until 3 p.m. (the ninth hour). The big and heavy curtain in the temple of Jerusalem was torn in two (v.45). This curtain was the entrance to the most holy area of the temple, where only a chosen priest could enter into the area once a year to be the mediator between the people and God and to atone for the sins of the people. When God supernaturally tore the curtain in two from top to bottom, it means that now everyone has a direct access to God through Jesus, who becomes our Mediator.

What did a centurion—a Roman commander of a hundred soldiers—say about Jesus after watching him died (v.47)?

In Mark 15:39, it was recorded that he also said, “Truly this man was the Son of God.”

Who went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus? Who was he (v.50-52)?

What did he do with Jesus' body (v.53)?

Joseph had been following Jesus in secret. Now, he became a courageous follower of Jesus.

Read Luke 24:1-12

On Sunday morning, the women went to the tomb where Jesus was buried and found the stone that covered the tomb had been rolled away. They went inside the tomb and did not see Jesus' body. Suddenly, two angels appeared to them.

What did the angels say to them (v.5-7)?

The women went to tell the apostles, whose hearts were still in great grief. They could not believe it. Peter went to check the tomb and did not find Jesus' body either. He went home and marveled (v.12). Jesus had told them that he would die for the sins of his people, and on the third day he would rise and conquer death. He has finished his mission to save his people from their sins. He has begun to make all things new for them.

What impresses you the most from the story of the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus?

Lesson 14 – Jesus is Making All Things New for Us

After his resurrection, Jesus appeared several times to his disciples. One time he appeared to his disciples while they were together in a house.

Read Luke 24:36-53

How did they react when they saw Jesus (v.37)?

What did Jesus do to prove that he was not a spirit (v.41-43)?

What did Jesus do to make them understand the Scriptures (v.45)?

What did he say to them (v.46-49)?

By saying this, Jesus made them his witnesses to go and tell people in all nations about the hope and the new life they could have in him. He also promised to give them the Holy Spirit, who would empower them to be his witnesses. He brought them to a place so they could see him go up to heaven. Before he departed, he blessed them.

Read 1 Corinthians 15:20-26

Because Jesus has been resurrected, he becomes “the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep”—the first human being who is resurrected among the dead to live eternally. Jesus’ resurrection is the model and projection of his followers’ resurrection (v.20).

How is Jesus compared to Adam (v.21-22)?

Jesus has promised the resurrection of those who belong to him when he returns (v.23).

What will happen then (v.24-25)?

What is the last enemy to be destroyed (v.26)?

Jesus will judge and destroy all evils including death on the day of his return. Evil and death have an end. Jesus will end our suffering from evil and death.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

For what purpose did God the Father make Jesus to be sin (treat Jesus as a sinner) bearing the punishment of our sins and condemning him as our substitute on the cross (v.21)?

Jesus was sinless but was treated as if he was a sinner as our substitute. He sacrificed himself to bear the anger and justice of God for the punishment of our sins on the cross, so that we might receive his righteousness by believing and putting our faith in him. His righteousness is credited to us when we trust and surrender our lives to him. We become righteous before God, because we have Jesus' righteousness that covers us.

"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in (union with) Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1).

What will we become if we believe and put our faith in Jesus, trusting and surrendering our lives to him (v.17)?

God makes each of us a new person in union with Jesus. God adopts us as his children. Our old lives have passed away, and we have a new life with Jesus in God's kingdom. God does this for us because of his grace. He wants us to experience his great love for us. He wants us to be joyful in our lives by having a personal and loving relationship with him.

What is the message of the ministry of reconciliation (v.18-19)?

What is the role of followers of Jesus in this world? What is their duty accordingly (v.20)?

Jesus has told us that he will return. When he returns, he will give us a new resurrected and heavenly body and will bring us to heaven. In heaven, we will be able to worship God spiritually and physically with our new bodies. We will see Jesus face to face and be able to touch him. Jesus gave a vision of his kingdom in the future to the Apostle John, who recorded his vision in the book of Revelation.

Read Revelation 7:9-12, 21:1-8

How many people will be in heaven (the kingdom of God)? Where are they from (7:9)?

What will God do for his people in the new heaven and the new earth (21:4)?

What does Jesus say from his throne (21:5)?

This is the message of *the Gospel*, that in Jesus, God has made all things new for us. In Jesus, God has saved us from the slavery of sin and darkness and will complete our salvation at the day of Jesus' return. In Jesus, our salvation is secure. Jesus has also given a warning that those who refuse to repent from their sins and to believe in him will be thrown into hell—an eternal death, separated from God and all his goodness forever. But to those who belong to him, heaven will be their new home, where there is no more sin, suffering, and death. They will see the face of Jesus, their Savior, for eternity.

What impresses you the most from the story that Jesus is making all things new for us?

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