

Leader's Guide

for *The Message of Hope* Bible Studies

1 In the first words of the Holy Scriptures, Almighty God affirms that He has always existed... and that He is the Creator of all things.

The Eternal God
Genesis 1:1

a. Why is it reasonable to assume that the Creator has always existed?
b. Read the first phrase of Genesis 1:1. Which of the following is true?
□ The Holy Scriptures begin with an attempt to prove the existence of God.
□ The Holy Scriptures begin with the assumption that God exists.
c. Read Psalm 90:2. What does it mean that God is "from everlasting to everlasting"?
d. As we read through the events of Holy Scrip-

In the beginning God...

ture, we learn more and more about God—Who He is and what He is like. At the bottom of each double-page spread, place a mark beside truths about God you find in the four events on the two pages.
e. What would we know about the infinite God and His will if He did not disclose it to us in human language?

3 Then God created a man and a woman and commissioned them to rule over His earthly creation, but told them not to eat the fruit of one particular tree.

Creation of Mankind
Genesis 1:26-31; Genesis 2:7-25

a. Read Genesis 1:26-27. Compared to other creatures God made, what was unique and special about the creation of man and woman? Why did He make them last?
b. Read Genesis 1:28-31. What special role did God give to them that was not given to other creatures that God made?
c. Read Genesis 2:7. What additional facts do we learn here regarding the creation of the man?
d. Read Genesis 2:8-9. What indications do we see in these verses that the Garden of Eden

was a beautiful and fruitful paradise?
e. Read Genesis 2:15-17. What one thing did God tell Adam not to do and what did God say would happen if this command was disobeyed?
f. Read Genesis 2:18-25. True or false? At this time, the man and woman were living in a condition of innocence. What indication in this verse leads to your conclusion?

2 The Holy Scriptures continue by saying that God created the universe including our earth and its heavens, as well as its living organisms—plants and animals of all kinds.

Creation of the Earth
Genesis 1:1-25

a. First day of creation—Read verses 1-5.
• In its initial state of creation (verse 2), what was the earth like?
• What did God do in verses 3-5?
b. Second day of creation—Read verses 6-8. What did God divide on this day?
c. Third day of creation—Read verses 9-13.
• What happened first on the third day?
• What happened next on this same day?
d. Fourth day of creation—Read verses 14-19. What were some of God's earth-related purposes for the lights that He set in the earth's heavens?
e. Fifth day of creation—Read verses 20-25. What animals were created on this day?
f. Sixth day of creation, part 1—Read verses 24-25. What animals were created next?
g. What did God say after His creation on days 3-6?

Beginning of Human Sin
Genesis 2:1-6

a. Keep in mind this phrase from the Holy Scriptures: "The dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan..." (Revelation 20:2).
b. Read Genesis 3:1-5. Satan appeared to the woman in the form of a serpent.
□ How does Satan misquote God? How does this make God appear? (compare Genesis 2:16-17 with 3:1)
□ What does Satan deny? (see verse 4)
□ Did God give a warning to the man and woman because He is selfish and jealous, or good and loving? (see verse 5)

c. True or false? Satan wanted the woman to doubt that God is good, true to His promises, and holy.
d. Read Genesis 3:6. What three factors motivated the woman to eat the fruit that God had forbidden?
e. Any act of disobedience against what God has commanded is called sin.

4 In defiance against God, Satan enticed the first woman to eat of the forbidden tree, who then influenced the man to do the same, in spite of God's clear and loving warning.

Put a mark beside each of the ways that God is portrayed in the events on these pages:
□ Almighty Creator □ Supreme Authority □ Just Judge □ Righteous One □ Holy One □ Faithful One □ Eternal One
□ Merciful Protector □ All-Knowing One □ The Loving One □ The Laughier □ The Forgiver □ The True One/The Revealer □



Leader's Guide for Individual or Small Group Studies



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**Sow &
Harvest**
INTERNATIONAL

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General Information

We are excited that you have the opportunity to lead your Muslim friend through a chronological study of God's Word, *The Message of Hope* (TMOH). It is our hope that your inquiring friend will see the truths of God's Word and the redemption that God has prepared for him/her. It is our desire to help you as you lead this study in the progressive revelation of truth in the Scriptures.



Design of the TMOH Leader's Guide:

- A teaching aid, providing answers to each question, and helps on each lesson.
- A reference tool, providing extensive additional information on Islam to help with background and questions that may arise.
- A section introducing each lesson of "Major Teaching Points" is designed to help the leader realize the flow of the redemptive story of Scripture and how each event/lesson addresses points of Islamic belief and doctrine. This section is for the leader's knowledge and not designed to be a part of the lesson that is being taught and begins with "Teaching Notes."

As a leader, do what is useful for your student, and do not feel compelled to use all the information in every lesson. There is more than you will need provided for every lesson.

Regarding Islam, the Qur'an and Islamic culture:

- It is a central part of the Muslim faith to believe in the four holy books which they believe were given by revelation of God through His prophets: the Holy Taurat, the Holy Zabur, the Holy Injil, and the Qur'an. (Surahs Yunus 10:94; Al Baqarah 2:136).
- Muslims know these Scriptures we are focusing on as the Holy Taurat (the Torah), the Holy Zabur (Psalms) and the Holy Injil (the Gospel) – together, these are compiled in what is known today as the Kitab Al-Muqaddas (in English – the Holy Bible).
- The Qur'an refers to the People of the Book (Christians) and instructs the inquirer to go to them and ask questions regarding their Scriptures. The People of the Book are those who know and understand the Scriptures given prior to Muhammad.
- In other places, the Qur'an warns of listening to those who don't obey their Scriptures. Your inquiring friend may have reservations about studying these books in his own language due to previous religious teaching or prejudice.
- Most Muslims come from societies with a strong sense of community and a weak sense of individuality in contrast to western societies with a strong sense of individuality and a weak sense of community. Consequently, many Muslims do not sense the freedom to make decisions regarding themselves without the approval of their family or group. Family ties are strong and controlling. Your friend may even feel the need to bring your ideas to his religious teachers before making a final decision. How you share should take this into consideration. You should supply him with information in a sensitive way that will help him to share in the least confrontational way possible.

Please allow us to point out a number of considerations, potential pitfalls, and matters of etiquette as you study with your Muslim friend:

- **Renew your commitment to be a person of the Book.** It will be important for the inquirer to see your humble submission to God, teachable spirit, and patient love for him or her as he or she works through issues that shake him or her at the core. Be a person of obvious devotion to God, one who gives God first place, and to be one who lives by His Book. Let your speech, dress, and behavior be such that it is viewed as reverent by those you lead in study.
- **Pray with and for the one who has given you the privilege** of leading him or her through this study. Allow the participant to prepare himself for prayer and handling of the Word of God.
- **Be consciously aware of how you handle your copy of the Scriptures.** Muslims are very respectful of sacred books. Never set your copy of the Scriptures on the floor or place other books above them. Writing in the Scriptures or even highlighting verses is considered by most disrespectful and as desecrating the Scriptures.
- **Be alert to the need for the inquirer to have privacy and exercise caution** as he/she studies with you. Do not betray his/her trust by revealing his interest to others without his/her permission, even using discretion within his/her most trusted circle of friends. Allow your inquiring friend to decide these questions. However, if you would like to study with a minor, follow cultural rules regarding asking permission of their parents or guardian.
- **Non-confrontational dialogue is the best approach.** Although many Muslims gravitate toward debate, you will not win their souls by winning arguments. Make it a point to not criticize Islam, the Qur'an, or Muhammad as you study. Often, Muslims are inclined to ask pointed questions about the differences between Islam and Christianity. Even though it may be difficult to avoid the trap of comparing Islam with Christianity, the Qur'an with the Bible, and Muhammad with Jesus, remember that a sensitive and positive Biblical presentation of Christ will go much further than confrontation. II Timothy 2:23-26 offers excellent advice for the one who will win Muslims.
- **Avoid controversial topics not essential to the central theme of this redemptive chronological study of the Scriptures.** Guide the focus back to what God is progressively revealing in the big picture of the Scriptures. If an issue arises that is not being dealt with in the course of the study, ask the participant to record their questions and bring them up once *The Message of Hope* study is completed.
- **Avoid the temptation to reveal answers to the mysteries before the Scriptures unveil them.** Allow the events to unfold chronologically and explain themselves and their fulfillments as you go along – truth will be progressively revealed. Emphasize that, as we read through the Scriptures, we progressively learn about God and His wonderful plan for mankind.

Using *The Message of Hope*:

TMOH is designed for different levels of study. Each involves a different degree of time commitment. Obviously, the more time and attention you give to the Holy Scriptures, the greater the benefit you will receive. However, there are other options that can be beneficial for the person who is unable to get together as frequently with his or her guide.

- **The 15 to 60 minute scenario:** Beginning with the first event and continuing to the last, point to each event and read the summary statements associated with each of the 40 events. You may summarize these in your own words. Give the participant a copy of *The Message of Hope* along with your contact information.
- **The 2 to 6 hour scenario:** *Plan for several sessions together.* Go through the 40 events, but only read and explain a few passages that are most important to explain the central theme that ties the events together. After completing the last lesson in TMOH, be ready to lead your friend through the companion study, *The Chronological Bridge to Life*.
- **The 14 or more hour scenario:** *This is the most rewarding approach!* Go through the 40 events using the discussion questions associated with each. Read and study each passage of Scripture with your participant. As the participant discovers answers to the questions from God's Word, interact as necessary to help him or her fully understand the Big Picture. The participant should schedule several hours per week with their guide and expect to cover no more than 2 to 4 events per session. After completing the last lesson in TMOH, be ready to lead your friend through the companion study, *The Chronological Bridge to Life*.
- **Hybrid Options:** Use a combination of the above options, focusing on the events, passages, and questions most pertinent to the core of the redemptive message.

Employ TMOH booklet to its fullest by using the information at the bottom of each double-page spread to help the participant focus on what he/she learned about God. Use the maps located at the end of the book to help with geographical references.

At the end of your study:

- If your friend is ready to respond to the gospel after studying with you, *The Message of Hope Leader's Guide* has a section after event 40 that can assist you to lead your friend in a personal faith response.
- If, after concluding the 40 lessons of *The Message of Hope*, your friend is still tentative, some suggestions at the end of the Leader's Guide may be of help. You will want to give him/her the opportunity to give feedback which could help identify where he/she is having difficulty. *The Chronological Bridge to Life* (a separate publication) takes TMOH further with a propositional presentation of the big picture of Scripture while summarizing the eight essential "Gospel truths" which grow out of TMOH. It concludes with a creedal statement of faith that might also help your friend in his or her personal faith response. Here is the direct link to this resource which can be used with the *Chronological Bridge to Life Cards*: <https://www.goodsoil.com/resources/the-chronological-bridge-to-life-cards-revised/>.



The Message of Hope (TMOH) study booklets have been prepared in 2 different versions designed for different audiences. For the North American English version, we discovered, in testing TMOH, that Arabic speakers in English contexts do not use many of the Arabic names and titles; therefore, we prepared a special booklet for this language and cultural group.

- one booklet without event pictures (for orthodox Muslims), and
- one booklet with event pictures (for popular Islam).

A small and incomplete word on Orthodox and Popular Islam to explain why we have different versions for each:

Orthodox Islam is more conservative than Popular Islam, and is offended with the use of pictures in any text. Orthodox Islam (30% of Muslims) for the most part encompasses the Arabic speaking world of the Middle East, but is expanding to other languages and cultures.

Popular Islam (70% of Muslims) is found in the rest of the Muslim world (outside the Middle East), and generally most of these cultures prefer to have pictures and will benefit from the use of pictures to illustrate the lessons.

It is best to ask the person you are engaging in study which version (pictures or without pictures) they prefer.

The Message of Hope (TMOH) Leader's Guide has been written following the North American English version text and does not use Arabic words and terms. The Leader's Guide has been designed for use with all of the versions, but will need to be translated according to the version chosen for your language group.

Regarding the use of Arabic terms:

It is natural for non-Arabic speakers to associate the Arabic term/word for God - "Allah" - with Islam and the Qur'an; that is, to give it the meaning Islam gives it. However, the use of the Arabic term "Allah" has a long history of use in Christian Arabic Bibles and among Arabic speaking Christians around the world and actually predates Islam. Although we use Arabic terms/words, we do not give them the meaning that Islam does, but simply use the word. We do this to better engage Arabic speakers and Muslims in general.

The Chronological Bible Story:

A Narrative Presentation of God's Good News of Hope

Pages 6-25 in *The Message of Hope*

1 The Eternal God

In the first words of the Holy Scriptures, Almighty God affirms that He has always existed... and that He is the Creator of all things. *Genesis 1:1*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

Muslims believe that God is the eternal Creator. They have no difficulty believing He has always existed. They may feel this booklet is safe, since it supports their belief in a Creator. This will be an important start. Emphasize the common faith in a Creator. Let this affirm them as they think about coming back for Event 2.

- They may at first be nervous about the God of the Taurat. Could God be the same as Elohim? It is best to avoid controversy and let the Holy Scriptures inform them of the truth about the Creator gradually through each event in this study, rather than to try to give conclusive answers at the time of the first lesson. Therefore, it is best to use the name for God used in your inquiring friend's language. At this early point in TMOH, it is best to not mention the Hebrew name of God. If your friend asks about the Hebrew name, "Elohim," it might suffice to say that God comes from Arabic but Elohim comes from Hebrew.
- Begin to whet the appetite of the inquirer with the idea that God is not only transcendent, He is also immanent. God is involved with His creation. He cares about the people He created. He wants us to know Him. He communicates to us (all people) in ways we can understand.

Keep in mind that a Muslim is very respectful of sacred books. To write in the Scriptures, is considered by most, to disrespect or desecrate them. A less strict Muslim might not feel so bad about highlighting text in the Scriptures, but most would feel uncomfortable about writing in ink or pencil. If you are unsure, ask him or her if, for the sake of better study, they would ever highlight a verse (ayat) in his or her copy of the Qur'an. If this is not an issue, he or she may be willing to highlight significant things in the course of their study.

Teaching Notes:

a. Why is it reasonable to assume that the Creator has always existed?

Please Note: Here is an example of the concern expressed at the top of this page. If your TMOH study participants don't have any difficulties with this question, then move on in the study. Don't feel compelled to elaborate using the material that follows. But if you do, keep it short and simple.

It does not make sense to think that at some previous time absolutely nothing existed, and out of nothing and for no cause the universe began to exist, and then later living beings spontaneously originated out of non-living matter. It takes an incredible amount of faith to believe this!

It makes more sense to think that something or someone has always existed, either a living Being or non-living matter. To believe in the eternity of either of these requires faith.



It makes even better sense to think that what has always existed is a living God Who has the ability to create both non-living matter and other living beings. The opening verse of the Scriptures asserts that this indeed is the reality of how the universe and life began. Yes, it does require faith to believe this. But, as we study *The Message of Hope*, this faith will be confirmed by observable evidence.

In order for this study to proceed with any meaning and value, participants who might be skeptical of God's existence will need to be intellectually honest and open to the possibility that God exists. This does not mean that they need to abandon their unbelief at this point, but they should be willing to suspend or neutralize it temporarily in order to give the Scriptures a fair hearing. Encourage them to approach this study with an open mind and let God's Word speak for itself.

b. Read the first phrase of Genesis 1:1. Which of the following is true?

Explain the reasoning behind your choice.

The Holy Scriptures begin with an attempt to prove the existence of God.

The Holy Scriptures begin with the assumption that God exists.

"In the beginning, God..." (Follow the wording used in the Bible your student is reading from) is a simple phrase that assumes God's existence. There is no attempt made to prove His existence with arguments and evidences. Apparently, the Prophet Moses, or Moses, (who was writing by God's inspiration) sensed no need to defend God's existence, so he simply stated it as a reality that will confirm itself as open-minded readers continue to study the remainder of the Scriptures.

c. Read Psalm 90:2. What does it mean that God is "from everlasting to everlasting"?

This is another way of saying that God has always existed and will always continue to exist. In other words, He is eternal—with no beginning and no end. This is a clear expression of the biblical view (mentioned above) that an eternal living God preceded the physical universe. The verse says even more about God and the universe—that this eternal God created the earth and the world—which will be addressed in the next event in this study.

d. As we read through the events of the Holy Scriptures we learn more and more about God—Who He is and what He is like. At the bottom of each double-page spread, place a mark beside the ways God reveals Himself in the four events on the two pages.

Direct participants to the bottom of the page, and read the instruction and response options found there. Explain that the Scriptures reveal much truth about God to us. They were given to us so that we could know about God—Who He is and what He is like. Sometimes this information about God comes to us in the Scriptures through direct statements (such as Psalm 90:2); but often we learn about Him just by reading the narratives of the Scriptures, to see what He has done, how He did it, and especially how He relates to men and women.

Encourage your inquiring friend to be thinking of the ways in which God is portrayed as they study the events in TMOH. At the end of each double-page spread, stop and ask participants to indicate (with the check boxes at the bottom of the pages) the truths they learned about God in the events just studied. Discuss these observations before moving on to the next events.



e. What would we know about the infinite God and His will if He did not disclose it to us in human language?

How could finite man ever comprehend infinite God? God introduces Himself. He doesn't wait for created man to request an introduction. The God Who creates doesn't stop there. God doesn't just leave creation to run by itself. He involves Himself with His creation, taking a special interest in the man and woman He created (more later during the lesson on the creation of man). The God Who creates, also reveals Himself. He has a purpose for it all and He wants us to know Him and His marvelous will!

Without God's revelation in human language, we would know, by looking at creation, that there must be a Creator. That Creator is great. That Creator is good. We are accountable to that Creator. (If appropriate at this point to look into the Holy Injil, you may direct your inquiring friend to a confirmation of this - Romans 1:18-20.)

But God doesn't leave people to guess or find the truth out on their own. From the beginning, He shows His love for all people. He wants us to know Him and His great love for us. We will see several significant things from the beginning:

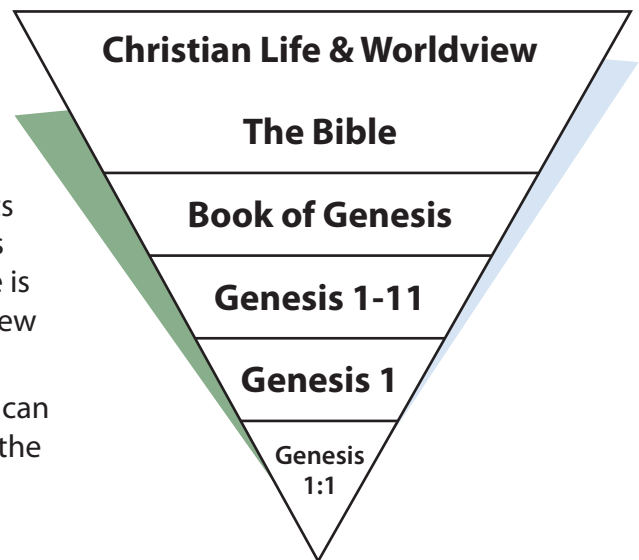
- Infinite God revealed His Word in human language that finite man and woman could understand.
- Infinite God revealed His truth (what people needed to know), little by little and step by step, in segments humans could grasp and be held accountable for.
- God started at the beginning and revealed Himself progressively.

Supplemental Information

The Crucial Nature of Genesis 1:1:

The Christian life and worldview is founded upon the Bible. The foundational book of the Bible is Genesis. The foundation of Genesis is laid down in its first 11 chapters and the foundation of this section is chapter one. The foundation of Genesis chapter one is verse one. Thus, the entire Christian life and worldview rests on Genesis 1:1.

If a person can accept Genesis 1:1 by faith, he or she can approach the rest of Scripture and hopefully accept the truths that are progressively revealed.



Recommended Book: Genesis in Space and Time by Francis A. Schaeffer (InterVarsity Press, 1972)

This little book provides an excellent apologetical commentary on Genesis chapters 1- 11. Thus, it provides information that is helpful in teaching the first 10 events in *The Message of Hope* to people who may be skeptical concerning the early chapters of Genesis.

2 Creation of the Earth

The Holy Scriptures continue by saying that God created the universe including our earth and its heavens, as well as its living organisms—plants and animals of all kinds.

Genesis 1:1-25



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- The Creator created everything out of nothing. (Hebrews 11:3)
- He created with purpose and design.
- He was preparing a beautiful place for the people He would create.
- His creation demonstrates His wisdom, power, goodness, and love.
- He is not dependent on anything He created.

Teaching Notes:

Islam also teaches that God created the universe in 6 days, as Surah 7:54 clearly lays out:

Your Lord is God, who created the heavens and the earth in six days, then he established himself on the throne: he draws the night as a veil over the day, each seeking the other in rapid succession: he created the sun, the moon, and the stars, all governed by laws under his command. Is it not his to create and to govern? Blessed be God, Lord of the universe!

Even though the Qur'an speaks like this, Muslims hold various opinions about the manner of creation, and whether evolution was used by God as a mechanism to facilitate creation. Opinions about creation are as varied among Muslims as they are among those who would call themselves Christians. Your student may or may not be aware of the Qur'an's statement that the heavens and earth were created in six days. Unfortunately, the situation becomes a little unclear because of another passage in Surah 41:9-12

⁹ Say: Is it that you deny him who created the earth in two days? And do you join equals with him? He is the Lord of the universe.

¹⁰ He set on the earth, mountains standing firm, high above it, and bestowed blessings on the earth, and measured in it all things to give them nourishment in due proportion, in four days, in accordance with the needs of those who seek sustenance.

¹¹ Moreover he comprehended in his design the sky, and it had been smoke: he said to it and to the earth: Come together, willingly or unwillingly. They said: We come in willing obedience.

¹² So he completed them as seven sections in two days, and he assigned to each heaven its duty and command. And we adorned the lower heaven with lights, and provided it with guard. Such is the decree of the exalted in might, full of knowledge.

a. First day of creation—Read verses 1-5.

• In its initial state of creation (verse 2), what was the earth like?

1. It was without form—the basic elements of the universe were created in an incomplete or unformed state.

2. It was void (empty)—God had not yet caused it to be inhabited with living creatures—plants, animals, and human beings.
3. It was dark—darkness is the absence of light, and God had not yet created light.

Note: Apparently, in its initial state of creation, the space around the earth was filled with some kind of pervasive unformed watery substance that is referred to here as “the deep.”

- **What did God do in verses 3-5?**

God called light into existence and then established times of light (day) and darkness (night) for the earth. This would seem to indicate that the earth now was rotating on its axis and that some stationary light source on one side of the earth was providing light for the day.

b. Second day of creation—Read verses 6-8. What did God divide on this day?

God created a “firmament” (literally = “expanse” or “spread-out-thinness”) to separate the pervasive watery substance that then surrounded the earth. He called that expanse “Heaven”—an atmospheric heaven, not to be confused with another “Heaven” mentioned later in the Scriptures.

The waters above that firmament probably became the vaporous clouds of water droplets that now float in the earth’s atmosphere. On the next day of creation, we see what God did with the waters that God placed under the firmament.

c. Third day of creation—Read verses 9-13.

- **What happened first on the third day (verses 9-10)?**

God gathered the waters under the firmament (on the surface of the earth) together in such a way as to allow dry land to appear. God then called the waters “Seas” and the dry land “Earth.”

- **What happened next on this same day (verses 11-13)?**

God then called various types of vegetation into existence and provided a way for them to perpetuate themselves through seeds.

d. Fourth day of creation—Read verses 14-19. What were some of God’s earth-related purposes for the lights that He set in the earth’s heavens?

The term “lights” literally means “light-givers.”

God created the earth’s sun to provide light for daytime. It replaced the temporary light source that God provided on the first day (verses 3-5). God created the earth’s moon to provide light for nighttime. These “lights” also were intended to provide a way of marking seasons and years.

e. Fifth day of creation—Read verses 20-23. What animals were created on this day?

Flying birds & creatures that live in the water.

f. Sixth day of creation, part 1—Read verses 24-25. What animals were created next?

Land animals, such as cattle, creeping things, and beasts.

g. What did God say after His creations on days 3-6?

“And God saw that it was good” (Genesis 1:9, 12, 18, 21, 25), and in Genesis 1:31. “And God saw everything He had made, and behold, it was very good.”

There are some foundational truths to be stressed about God in these comments.

- A good creation comes from a good source.
- God is good, and good comes from God.

These are the basis for God’s ongoing relationship and interaction with His creation and the relationship He will have with mankind.

Supplemental Information

Were the creation days periods of 24 hours? It is very possible that your student will ask, “What kind of days were these?” “Were they literal 24 hour days or so-called “days” that were actually long ages?”

If so, point out that the phrase “evening and morning” that is used to describe each day seems to indicate that these were literal periods of 24 hours. Also, since God is powerful enough to bring the universe into existence out of nothing, it would not have been a problem for Him to have created the day-by-day things described here within the time frames of 24 hours.

Some people have asked us how to deal with these kinds of issues that can be unnecessarily controversial. Consider these guidelines for this and other potentially story-stopping issues:

1. *If the student appears to be emotionally attached to and/or pre-inclined toward a certain view that is not essential to understanding the overall Big Story of the Bible, ask him/her to make a note of his question and make plans to address it after you have completed this series of studies in **The Message of Hope**. Be sure to do as you promise.*
2. *If the student is clearly sincere, wanting to know what the Bible teaches on a subject such as this, you may want to spend more time than normal on the subject. But don’t get too bogged down on one of the many topics in **The Message of Hope**, unless the topic is absolutely crucial to the integrity of the story.*
3. *Above all, keep the big picture of this “Message of Hope” study in view. Be alert to topics and discussions that will tend to de-focus the study from where it is intended to go.*

For your own resource and session preparation for events 1-12 (stories and teachings that are found in the book of Genesis), we recommend this helpful Bible commentary:

The Genesis Record: A Scientific and Devotional Commentary on the Book of Beginnings by Henry M. Morris (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1976).

This book is particularly helpful for preparation in teaching these earlier events found in Genesis.

How is God Portrayed in Events ? (page 6)

Review with the student the instructions in point d. of Event 1 –“The Eternal God” (on top of page 6 in *The Message of Hope*).

Since this is the first time that you have come to this kind of activity in the study, we recommend that you do this activity with the student. As you do, help the student to think of the answers as much as possible. This first time, you may need to provide more direction in determining the answer than will be necessary later in the study.

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Don't think that you (and the student) need to find all 14 characteristics in the four events on any of the double-page spreads.

Remember the purpose of these “bottom of the double-page spread” activities—to help the student learn about God, who He is, and what He has done and still does, as the student reads and studies the Bible.

For example, ask:

“Did we see God portrayed as the Almighty Creator in any of these events?”

Obviously, the answer should be “Yes.” That was evident in events one, two, and three. Allow the student to share his thoughts, and then you can share some additional ones.

“Did we see God portrayed as the Supreme Authority in any of these events?”

Discuss.

“Did we see God portrayed as a Just Judge in any of these events?”

Discuss.

Etc...until all 14 characteristics of God have been covered.

Almighty Creator (See *Psalm 90:2*; *Genesis 1:1*)

3 Creation of Mankind

Then God created a man and a woman and commissioned them to rule over His earthly creation, but told them not to eat the fruit of one particular tree. *Genesis 1:26-31, 2:7-25*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

Describe the special way that God made man and woman. It is helpful to inform your inquiring friend that Genesis 1:1 – 2:3 was a day by day look at the six days of creation. Genesis 2:4-6 is a summary that zeros in from the cosmos to God's special creation of humans – male and female.

As many Muslim countries progress in their relationships in the international community, they are trying to demonstrate that they are concerned about **the human rights of women**. Progressive thinkers and women will be attracted to the fact that God created women in the image of God as well. This lesson could capitalize on this felt need. On the other hand, be sensitive to not over emphasize this if your particular inquirer is chauvinistic. Let the Word of God speak for itself while you stay focused on your main objective. It is not important to correct every misguided belief along the way.

Show **God's special purpose for man and woman**. Many Muslims have a fatalistic view of history. This is largely because they believe that "what is written is written." What God has willed, no one can change. Many attribute this to personal human behavior as well. Though they would not want to blame God for bad choices or actions, many feel that, in the final outcome, people do what they were predestined to do. "We are powerless to change what God has willed."

Show **the special relationship God made for man and woman**. In Islam, God is transcendent but his immanence is rarely felt. The idea that God is interested in a personal relationship with an individual is hard to imagine. To know that one is loved by God is a very basic felt need. In every heart is a God-shaped vacuum. This event, in a very special way, shows what God longs for, and what most people long for, but never knew they could have. Paul Bramsen writes: "The most wonderful thing that took place in Eden, is that God Himself would come to the garden in the cool of the evening so that He might talk with the man whom He had created in His own image (Genesis 3:8). Why did God come visit Adam? He visited Adam, because ... God created man for fellowship. God's intention was that He and humans might fellowship together, talk together, rejoice together, and spend eternity together with unified minds and hearts. Yes, God wanted humans to grow in a deep and wonderful relationship with Him forever."

Note the supplemental info below about **the image of God in man**. Many Muslims believe that Adam did not really sin, since it was the will of God for him to disobey. The rationale is that God wanted Adam to move from Paradise to earth, and, therefore, led Satan to tempt him. The image of God in man counters that reasoning by showing the great dignity God gave to man as a moral creature. In order to be a moral creature, man needs a test – hence the one forbidden tree. God would not force the man to choose the right. God would love him and bless him beyond belief with every other good thing. Naturally, the man and woman would sense the love and goodness of their Creator and Friend, and would never want to disappoint Him. But there would have to be a choice – a way they could do otherwise. God would not make them like robots that just do whatever He wants.

This last point is also **the basis for freedom of conscience**. God shows the truth. He loves them, and makes every provision for them to walk in it. But he will not force them to obey. It would have to be their own choice. In the end, they are accountable to Him. They experience the consequences in this life, His blessings and fellowship, or the lonely consequences of unbelief and pain of the sin that follows. Likewise, they experience the consequences in eternity enjoying eternal blessing with God in heaven, or the eternal curse of isolation and torment in hell with Satan, his demons, and the unbelieving of all time. Therefore, God is not pleased when someone is forced against their own will to follow a particular religious belief, when in their heart of hearts a person is beginning to understand that God's Word is saying something other than what the main voices of religion have been saying all along. Torture to force someone to comply against their conscience can never please God. It violates basic human rights which spring out of the image of God in man, and does not produce in people the joyful faith and willful obedience God desires. God will deal severely with the person or authorities who abuse their religious or political power in this way.

Don't get ahead of yourself with your inquiring friend with references from the Injil – let the Holy Scriptures reveal itself as you study together.

Teaching Notes:

Adam, the first of the prophets of Islam

Islam teaches that Adam is the first prophet. He was given 10 small written revelations, part of 100 lost revelations given to mankind besides the four still-existing books sent by God. These four books are of course, the Torah of Moses (Taurat of Prophet Moses), the Psalms of David (Zabur of Prophet Dawud), the Gospel of Jesus (Injil of Prophet Isa), and the Qur'an.

Adam is only the first of many biblical characters respected as prophets by Islam. The Qur'an mentions the following Bible characters by name as prophets:

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 1. Adam | 14. David (Dawud) |
| 2. Enoch (Idris) | 15. Solomon (Sulayman) |
| 3. Noah (Nuh) | 16. Elijah (Ilyas) |
| 4. Abraham (Ibrahîm) | 17. Elisha (Al-Yasa) |
| 5. Lot (Lut) | 18. Ezra (Uzair) |
| 6. Ishmael (Ismail) | 19. Job (Ayub) |
| 7. Isaac (Ishaq) | 20. Ezekiel (Dhul-kifl) |
| 8. Jacob (Yaqub) | 21. Jonah (Yunus) |
| 9. Joseph (Yusuf) | 22. Zechariah, father of John the Baptist (Zakaria) |
| 10. Jethro (Shuaib) | 23. John the Baptist (Yahya) |
| 11. Moses (Musa) | 24. Jesus (Isa) |
| 12. Aaron (Harun) | |
| 13. Saul (Talot) | |

Other Bible characters, though not mentioned in the Qur'an, are considered prophets, and you can find their stories in the History of Al-Tabari and numerous "Stories of the Prophets" series found throughout the Muslim world. In addition to the above list, you can often find the following "prophets" mentioned on next page:



1. Seth (to whom God revealed 50 portions of scripture)
2. Joshua
3. Samson
4. Samuel
5. Isaiah
6. Jeremiah
7. Daniel

This is not exhaustive. Their stories bear striking similarities to the biblical accounts as well as that of Jewish and Christian traditions.

A point to consider as you go through the lessons of *The Message of Hope* is that **there are more Bible characters who can be considered prophets than you might have previously believed.**

The first mention of a prophet in the Bible is Abraham in Gen. 20:7. Jesus includes Abel as a prophet in Luke 11:50-51, and then Peter calls King David a prophet in Acts 2:29-30. None of these Bible characters are people whom Bible-believing Christians normally designate as “prophets.” Often, we limit the use of that designation to Moses, Elijah, Elisha, the Major and Minor Prophets, and a few other scattered individuals. Perhaps this will be a help as you consider whether you can, in good conscience, speak of Bible characters like Isaac, Joseph, Solomon, and many others, as prophets.

Good Etiquette when speaking of the Prophets:

Islam teaches that it is proper for Muslims to offer salutations/greetings when mentioning the name of a prophet, usually using the formula “alaihislam”, or in English, “peace be upon him.” It is a variation on the greeting all Muslims use, “as salamu alaikum” (peace be upon you). So, it is proper etiquette for Muslims to say “alaihislam” after the name of a prophet is uttered. It is related to the Hebrew phrase “alav ha-shalom”, which is used to this day to show respect for the dead.

Because Muslims use “alaihislam” exclusively for prophets, it is an easy way to identify the specific biblical character, as opposed to the thousands of other people who may share the same name. There are 1000s of Abrahams living today in the Muslim world, but there is only one Abraham (alaihislam).

Islam’s last prophet, Muhammad, receives additional respect by the use of a salutation unique to him, that is, “sallallahu alayhi wa sallam” (God bless him and give him peace). Like the above salutation for other prophets, this one is also technically a prayer, but practically-speaking, no more of a prayer than when Muslims greet each other with a salam.

The published English-language *Message of Hope* attempts to show respect to prophets, by using the title “Prophet” before their names, rather than using just the bare name. You should make yourself aware of how local Muslims practice this matter of referring to the prophets. You can quickly find out in conversation regarding prophets, or by checking in Islamic books published in the mother tongue. Each region of the Muslim world has slight variations on how this etiquette is practiced, but they all have this in common--they all avoid using the bare name of a prophet. To say simply “Moses” or “Isa” with no titles of respect and/or salutation is considered very disrespectful and ignorant.

In the case of this lesson on Adam and Eve, the writers have chosen to avoid using the name of Adam in the actual lesson, preferring instead “the first man.” This is an attempt to show sensitivity in two directions: 1. to Christians who might have a problem calling Adam a prophet, and 2. to Muslims who might balk at seeing the bare name “Adam” being used for someone they respect as a holy prophet of God.

It is quite possible that Adam’s name will be uttered by the student, and, if he/she adds “alaihislam”, “peace be upon him”, or some other respectful title like “prophet” or the Arabic



“nabi”, you can be sure it is important to the student. How important? Think of the people in authority to whom you believe some special respect is due, such as, the Queen of England, a judge presiding in a courtroom, or even a pastor. Even if you don’t acknowledge Elizabeth as your queen, you would never say in her presence, “Hi Liz, how’s it going?” It would be very rude, crude, and a sign of a lack of manners. Instead, you would say, “Your Highness” or “Your Majesty”, or you wouldn’t speak at all. The same principle is at work with prophets of Islam. They are deemed worthy of respect due to their honored position in Islam. You don’t have to accept Islam to show respect to someone honored as a prophet.

You must make your own decision as to whether you are comfortable with speaking about prophets in the exact same way Muslims do, or whether you will use some modified form of respect. Christians of good character have a variety of positions on this issue.

a. Read Genesis 1:26-27. Compared to the other creatures God made, what was unique and special about the creation of man and woman?

They were made in God’s own image. It is possible that the student will question the wording “image of God.” Orthodox Islam denies the idea that man is made in “God’s image,” thinking that it comes perilously close to committing shirk, making mankind somehow a sharer in God’s glory. But there is a hadith recognized as ‘sound’ and trustworthy which affirms that man was made in God’s image.

Ibn `Ajibah writes in the explanation of this hadith [al-Mabahith al-Asliyyah, line 22: “And the reality of the human has a pattern in the Divine.”]

The meaning of the Hadith “**Indeed God created Adam in His image.**” [Sahih Muslim, righteousness, joining blood ties, and manners; prohibition from striking the face, hadith #4731] is that God gave Adam attributes that in a way resemble His own attributes. And these attributes are the [seven] attributes of meaning [e.g., life, power, knowledge, will over his actions, hearing, seeing, and speech]. Also, He has made Adam a storehouse for many of His names... So, some people have the name “al-Karim” (the Generous) and thus they engage in acts of generosity. Some people have the name “Al-Rahim” (the Merciful) and thus they show mercy to the creation of God.

The image of God spoken of here does not suggest some kind of physical image or appearance. God is a spirit (a non-material) being. God favored mankind with some important non-material characteristics that God Himself possesses to a much greater degree than man—the ability to choose, the ability to love, the ability to reason, the ability to communicate, the ability to be righteous, the ability to exercise authority, etc. Although animals may possess some of these characteristics to some degree, man is unique in the degree to which he possesses them. This is probably what the text means when it says that mankind was created in God’s image*. It’s a nonmaterial image, not a material or physical image.

The significance of woman created in the image of God should not be over looked. The language device God uses in the original language states a point three ways to emphasize a single point – God made man in His own image. Following is a simple paraphrase a professor of theology used to illustrate Genesis 1:27:

So God created man in His own image; **Let me say it another way.**

In the image of God He created him; **Let me say it another way.**

Male and female He created them.

Why did He make them last?

They were not created last because they were unimportant to God. Instead, the entire creation was finished and prepared for the man and the woman. God wanted them to have everything they needed to live before He created them. This implies God's goodness and His love for them.

b. Read Genesis 1:28-31. What special role did God give to the man and the woman that was not given to other creatures that God made?

God gave mankind the authority and the ability to rule over God's creation, and commanded them to do so. The "image of God" characteristics of man made this possible.

c. Read Genesis 2:7. What additional facts do we learn here regarding the creation of the man?

God formed the man's body from the dust of the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, which resulted in him becoming a living being.

d. Read Genesis 2:8-9. What indications do we see in these verses that the Garden of Eden was a beautiful and fruitful paradise?

God placed all kinds of trees to grow there—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. It must have been a beautiful place, as well as a place where delicious food was readily available.

e. Read Genesis 2:15-17. What one thing did God tell the man not to do and what did God say would happen if this command was disobeyed?

God commanded Adam not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He told him that he would die if and when he disobeyed this command.

f. Read Genesis 2:18-25. True or False? At this time, the man and the woman were living in a condition of innocence. What indication in this verse leads to your conclusion?

They were both naked, and they felt no shame. The first man and woman pre-fall (before sin) had no negative body images – this is not true today even between married couples. It appears that they were as innocent as babies with regard to their nakedness. Event 8 will shed some additional light on this subject.

Supplemental Information

* Additional note on image – not necessarily to be shared because it gets into the plurality of the Godhead. Image of God is more than man's non-material characteristics. Image reflects moral relationships within the Godhead and with creation. There is a tri-fold moral relationship within the Godhead. The image of God in man is seen in three relationships: man to God, man to man/woman, and man to nature (earth and its creatures). The following was a presentation to a high school ethics class in S. Asia. It was received by the Muslim students almost with a sense of longing.



According to the Word of God through the Prophet Moses: **Humanity “Crown of Creation” Male & Female – both man and woman in the Image of God:**

Special Capacities: These correspond to God, but on a finite level – only He is infinite.

- Intellect – the ability to reason and make decisions beyond instinct.
- Creativity – the ability to create beauty (aesthetics) and from the created materials to engineer things that improve the quality of life.
- Speech – The ability to connect symbols and produce meaning, to know how to articulate thoughts, and arrange words to produce precise ideas, and understand those of others.
- Emotions – the ability to empathize with others and feel beyond instinct.
- Will (volition) – the ability to choose or determine over instinct.
- Morality – the ability to discern between right and wrong and to be held accountable for one’s actions (ethics).
- Soul – a personal life that continues after death.

Ethical Implication: Man and woman are held to a higher standard of responsibility than the animals. We will answer to God. What we do influences the people and environment around us. We should always ask ourselves, “How will my decision, action, or words affect others?”

Special Relationships:

- With God – He is God, we are not. This places us in a subordinate relationship to Him since He is our Maker. Our understanding of everything else includes God – this results in worship and willful obedience.
- To Fellow Image – coordination. Within marriage it was a unity in diversity, a two becoming one. With others, it affects the kind of community we all experience.
- To Creation order – Vice Regent (representative ruler on behalf of God).

Implications of being made in the image of God in the perfect world:

- To have dominion (ruling with care in an ethical manner) in His stead over the created order.
- To live in a perfect world – to culture it (improve or make it better). See Genesis 2:15.
- To fill the earth with the image of God.
- To turn the whole world into the garden of God.
- Everywhere that humans would go, their works would display the glory of their Creator.

Implications of being made in the image of God in a fallen world:

- Humans have value. To strike out at the image of God is to strike out at God. See Genesis 6 (Relationship #1 – God and Man).
- The image of God is the basis for human government. See Genesis 9:5-7.
- The image of God in man is the basis for human rights. (Supported in the 10 commandments – Exodus 20:1-17). (Relationship #2: Person to Person)
- The image of God is the basis for freedom of conscience. (Relationship #3: Mankind and earth)

God created us as individuals – We will stand before Him as an individual. God created us for community – How exciting to walk with God and others – now as well as in eternity! But to enjoy the good, man must trust God and obey Him!

4 Beginning of Human Sin

In defiance against God, Satan enticed the first woman to eat of the forbidden tree, who then influenced the man to do the same, in spite of God's clear and loving warning. *Genesis 3:1-6*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- A description of how sin entered human experience.
- This lesson can alert the inquirer how Satan still deceives us by leading us to doubt God's goodness and truth. This is a good point of contact, since many devout Muslims want to do good.
- Satan hates God. Realizing he can't directly defeat God, Satan strikes out at the people God loves. If he can lead them into disbelief and disobedience he thinks he can thwart God's purposes and strike back at God.
- Satan's method is to raise suspicions about God and God's Word, and pretend that he has a more sincere interest in people's happiness and wellbeing. If he can lead people to doubt God, their choices will lead to their own destruction.
- This event shows the importance of paying close attention to what God actually said. If we rely on what others say about God, rather than what He has recorded in Scripture, we also run the risk of being deceived or led away from God's truth.
- Muslims do not believe in original sin. Most believe that the first sin had no effect on the rest of the human race. It is believed that every baby is born innocent, pure, and free and remains so until he/she does a guilty deed. While the Qur'an recognizes a sin problem (Surahs 12:53; 70:19-21; 14:34; 4:28; 16:4; 96:6; and especially 16:61) Muslims often think of sin as human feebleness and forgetfulness.

It is important to understand the two complementary viewpoints that Muslims and Christians have of sin: defilement and depravity:

- Muslims have more regard for the issue of defilement – to make foul, dirty or unclean. An example of this is the need for ablutions (washings) before prayer, and the need for nothing to defile them after that washing so they can present themselves to God. Defilement is an "outer" issue.
- Christians understand that man is depraved – corrupt or wicked in his heart. Each man has inherited this sin from Adam, and each man is a sinner (practices sin). This is much more serious than defilement. Sin is an "inner" issue, an issue of the heart.

There is another set of complementary viewpoints of Muslims and Christians regarding sin: misunderstanding/mistake that is not an affront to God, and disobedience/missing the mark/wrongdoing that is an affront to God:

- Generally, Muslims believe that men do wrong or sin because they made a mistake or don't fully understand. The only thing they need is education so they can do it right the next time. They did not sin against or wrong God by this action.



- Christians believe that sin is disobedience/missing the mark or target that God has set for us. We are not just mistaken, but disobedient and wrong. This is an offense to God. Our sin offense separates us from Him.

It will be important to help your inquiring friend to understand how the Holy God views sin. How, as omniscient Judge, He must punish every sin. God's holiness must deal with sin. No sin will be allowed entrance into heaven.

Be aware of the differences between the account of Adam's fall in the Taurat and the Qur'an. But don't allow yourself and your inquirer to get distracted by making comparisons.

The account is found in the Qur'an in Surah 7:11-31. The sin of Satan (Iblis) is that he wouldn't bow down in obedience to Adam when God brought all the angels before His new creature. Iblis felt he was superior since God made him from fire, but only made man from clay. So God cast him out, saying that if any people followed him they would share his lot in hell. Verse 19 reiterates God's blessing on Adam and Eve in the garden. They can enjoy the good things there but must not eat from one tree. Satan begins to whisper suggestions to get them to realize the shame of their nakedness. He tells them that God only forbade this tree because He didn't want them to become like the angels, who live forever. Swearing to be their sincerest adviser he deceives them. As they realize their shame (nakedness) they sew leaves together for clothing. Adam and Eve state "Our Lord! We have wronged our own souls; if Thou forgive us not and bestow not upon us thy mercy, we shall certainly be lost." (Sura 7:23)

God expels them from the garden (Paradise) down to the earth where they will live for a short time and die. He provides raiment to cover their shame, but advises that the adornment of righteousness is best. The section progresses with a lesson emphasizing that Satan and his angels attempt to seduce people by stripping them of their raiment and exposing their shame. Satan and his tribe are watching from a position where they can't be seen, and are friends to those without faith. The section concludes with an admonition about wearing beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer, and to eat and drink but not be wasteful through excess.

Care will need to be used to honor Adam, whom Muslims regard as the first prophet, while properly communicating the truth about the origin of sin and its effects. Muslims may concede that Adam disobeyed and was banished from the Garden, but they will not readily accept that Adam committed a "major" sin (one that would have an effect on his nature or that would affect those who came after him). He was a prophet of God. Prophets would not engage in major sin. Instead, they would say, "Adam made a mistake, for he had forgotten God's command not to eat of the tree. He erred, but then he repented, and all was well." Eve is known to Muslims as Hawa, a name which is related to the Hebrew for the name Eve, "Hava."

It has been said that a weak view of sin will lead to a weak view of salvation. Likewise, not recognizing the seriousness of the human sin problem will generally minimize any need for atonement.

Teaching Notes:

Prologue: As we begin discussing this event, most of us are aware of Satan and his evil schemes, however, one may wonder how he arrived so quickly on such a beautiful and perfect world. The Scriptures (Isaiah 14:12-15) reveal that Lucifer was once a beautiful and gifted angel, who as the anointed cherub that most probably covered the throne of God (as depicted in the ark of the covenant event 17) had one of the highest honors in heaven. (Ezekiel 28:14-15) As his heart was filled with pride he wanted to be like or equal with God.



The moment that sin (pride in this case) arose within him he and the angels loyal to him were cast out of heaven (Matthew 25:41). Such is the reaction of God's holiness to the presence of sin. Jesus described his expulsion out of heaven like a bolt of lightning which shoots from the sky down to the earth (Luke 10:18).

It appears that, shortly after his arrival on earth, he noticed the special love God had for man and woman, and began hatching his evil scheme to strike back at God.

a. Keep in mind this phrase from the Holy Scripture: "The dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan" (Revelation 20:2).

This statement clearly identifies Satan and the Devil as one and the same evil being. It also connects Satan/the Devil to "the serpent of old," which most likely is referring to the serpent that Lucifer (Satan/the Devil) embodied in order to tempt Eve in the Garden of Eden. In Islam, Satan is known as "Shaitan" by many, and also as "Iblis", the Arabic equivalent of "the devil."

b. Read Genesis 3:1-5. Satan appeared to the woman in the form of a serpent:

- **How does Satan misquote God?** How does this make God appear? (compare Genesis 2:16-17 with 3:1)

God's statement in Genesis 2:16-17: "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat..."

Satan's question in Genesis 3:1: "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'"

Satan implied that God prohibited Adam and Hawa from eating from any of the trees of the garden—that all of them were prohibited.

God is made to look small, mean and unloving.

- **What does Satan deny? (see verse 4)**

"You shall not surely die." In other words, "God would not and maybe even could not cause you to die."

- **Did God give a warning to the man and the woman because He is selfish and jealous, or good and loving? (see verse 5)**

Satan says ... "For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God..." In other words, "God is just trying to scare you because He doesn't want you to become like Him." God, however, has real concern and care for the man and woman He has just created in His image.

c. True or false? Satan wanted the woman to doubt that God is good, true to His promises, and holy. True.

d. Read Genesis 3:6. What three factors motivated the woman to eat the fruit that God had forbidden?

1. The tree was good for food, which appealed to the desires of her flesh. So, in order to enjoy the taste of this delicious food, she disobeyed God and ate the forbidden fruit.
2. The tree was pleasant to the eyes, which appealed to the desires of her eyes. In order to possess this beautiful object, she disobeyed God and took the forbidden fruit and then ate it.



3. The tree was desirable to her because it would make her wise* (see Supplemental Information) in an earthly sort of way. In a prideful desire to gain what she thought was God-like wisdom, she disobeyed God and ate the forbidden fruit.

e. Any act of disobedience against what God has commanded is called sin.

To this point, in the first four events of *The Message of Hope*, the term “sin” has not been used other than in the title for this lesson. It is important now to introduce the term and to define it properly (see Major teaching point of this lesson).

Supplemental Information

You will need to judge if additional information will be a help to your inquiring friend at this point or will be inflammatory.

Information from the Scriptures stating that all men are sinful could be presented by going through the following verses: Psalm 51:5; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Isaiah 64:6; Romans 5:12.

It may be helpful to introduce this with a question: Since the Qur’an admits man has a serious sin problem (Surah 16:61 “If God were to punish men for their wrongdoing, He would not leave, on the earth, a single living creature...”), would you mind if I shared what the Taurat, Zabur, and Injil say about this?

Use the following information only if you think that you need to help the student understand the essential truths of this event. As always, avoid getting off track on secondary issues.

Knowing Good and Evil:

*Yes, in a sense her eyes would be opened to know good and evil if she disobeyed God because she would know evil by her personal experience. But what the serpent did not tell her is that she would have been better off not to know/experience evil (through disobedience). She would have been better off to have remained in the innocent state in which God made her.

God knows good and evil, as the serpent stated. However, God’s knowledge of evil did not come by experience. He is perfectly holy and sinless. God knows evil intellectually, but not experientially. So, when Eve disobeyed God, in one sense she did become like God (she knew evil). But, in another very important sense she became even more unlike God (she experienced evil and was permanently tainted by its many undesirable effects).

You may want to mention (but not dwell on the idea for long) that, if we continue to study the Scriptures carefully, we’ll see that these are three of the major ways in which men and women are tempted throughout the remainder of the Scriptures. And even now, in our generation, we are commonly tempted by the desires of our flesh, the desires of our eyes, and our pride which entices us to want what we think will make us superior to others.

1 John 2:16: “For all that is in the world — the lust [desire] of the flesh, the lust [desire] of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world.”

How is God Portrayed in Events ? (page 7)

If necessary, review with the student the instructions in point d. of Event 1 –“The Eternal God” (on top of page 6 in *The Message of Hope*).

Remember the purpose of these “bottom of the double-page spread” activities—to help the student learn about God, who He is and what He has done and still does, as the student reads and studies the Bible.

5 Origin of Death

Because God is a holy and just judge, the man and woman suffered the consequences of their disobedience; they immediately died spiritually, and eventually experienced physical death. *Genesis 3:7-13, 5:5*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- The consequences of sin came upon the human race and creation. Now all have an inclination toward sin from birth. We see the effects on creation all around: sickness, pain, broken relationships, selfishness, lack of love, jealousies, hatred, many forms of corruption, oppression, evil of every kind, environmental disasters, disease, tragedies, death, etc.
- Adam and Eve felt guilt. They didn't think of their actions as an innocent mistake. This is why they were afraid to be with God (in their sin) and hid themselves. They knew He was coming to fellowship with them in the cool of the day, as was their custom (Genesis 3:8), and were terrified. They understood they were naked and felt ashamed. Therefore they felt the need to cover themselves.
- God did not call to them, asking "Where are you?" because He didn't know where they were (Genesis 3:9). He is omniscient, and knows everything. He was giving them an opportunity to come forward and confess their sin.
- Their iniquities had separated them from God (Isaiah 59:2; Habakkuk 1:13; Colossians 1:21). They knew that God's holy hatred of sin was going to result in consequences. Later revelation informs us of the details with clarity: Ezekiel 18:20 "The soul that sins; it shall die."; Ephesians 5:6, the alienation between the sinner and God; Romans 8:2, the law of sin and death; Ephesians 2 indicates we are dead in trespasses and sins, but God can give us spiritual life.
- A brief explanation of the three kinds of death will help. It explains why Adam and Eve did not physically die immediately, and shows the significance of spiritual death. The permanence of the second death (eternal death) will also need to be understood.

Muslims often think of death in stages. First, the actual physical death event; then an interim period that allows them over time to suffer for sin (thus the need for the living to pray for their departed souls), until God finally receives them into heaven.

Those without faith and whose good deeds will never come close to tipping the scales away from their evil works (Surah 23:102-103), and on whose behalf Muhammad would never speak, will go to hell with Satan and other evil doers.

People often sense that it is risky to trust one's own merit. Therefore, many generally believe they stand the best chance of salvation through copying the sayings and actions of Muhammad, who they believe was one of the greatest humans and surely pleasing to God. This explains why tradition is so important to Muslims: it is in the traditions (Hadiths) that one learns what Muhammad said and did in certain circumstances. Muhammad would also appreciate that they tried to follow his example. Also, many Muslims believe that Muhammad can intercede for them before God (Sahih Bukhari Volume 009, Book 093, Hadith Number 507).

Because many Muslims fear they might fall short on Judgment Day, they engage in extra good works: reciting extra prayers, keeping extra fasts, giving more than is required to charity, repeating the 99 names of God, going on additional pilgrimages both to Mecca and other places with significant purpose, etc. Through these they hope to increase the chance of tipping the scales in their favor.

- Distinguishing between the three meanings of death (physical, spiritual and eternal [additional information is given in Event 39 – Supplemental Information]) will show the importance of being prepared in this life before the physical death, so that one might not experience death in eternity. Hebrews 9:27 says "...It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment."

Their disobedience had consequences for humanity and creation. Our first parents experienced guilt and shame. Their disobedience fundamentally altered their relationship with God and the three realms of death were introduced into their experience. The plant and animal kingdoms also experienced sin's grave effects (Romans 8:19-22).

Teaching Notes:

a. The essence of death is separation. Three kinds of death result from sin: spiritual death, physical death, and an eternal death.

New students of the Scriptures will think only of one thing when they hear the word "death." Physical death will immediately come to their minds. It is important at this point to explain that the essence of death is separation and that there are three kinds of death mentioned in the Scriptures.

- Physical death: when a person dies physically
- Spiritual death: separation from God because of sin, but still physically alive; a dead heart; inherited from Adam
- Eternal death: if sins are never paid for, when a person dies physically he is then condemned to be eternally separated from God in hell.

b. Read Genesis 3:7-13. What indications do you see here that the man and woman's sin resulted in the following:

- Spiritual death (separation from God), which caused a...**
- Deep sense of guilt, shame, and fear, which led to...**
- Problems in their relationship with each other.**

They immediately became shamefully aware of their nakedness and devised a way to cover their bodies. (Verses 7 & 11) Verse 7 seems to imply that they began to cover their nakedness, even while they were alone together as man and wife, before they thought about God coming to them. Compare that with Genesis 2:25 in Lesson 3, page 7. In their pre-disobedient innocence, they were oblivious to their nakedness, just as babies are in their innocence.

They attempted to hide from God when they heard Him approach them in the garden. (Verse 8) God's coming to them in the garden for intimate Creator-human fellowship had probably been a regular highlight in Adam and Eve's daily schedule. But what had been treasured was now feared. They did not just hide from God because they were naked, but also because they sensed the guilt of their disobedience. Most of us can remember dreading to meet our parents, guardians, or other people in authority over us after we disobeyed them but knew that they had discovered it. It also appears that Adam and Eve also feared their Creator God in a negative way for the first time, not knowing what He might do in response to their disobedience.



Then, they began to make alibis for their disobedience and began to shift the blame to others. Eve blamed the serpent and Adam blamed Eve and God. (Verses 12-13)

c. Read Genesis 3:17-19 and 5:5. Other than pain and the struggle for survival, what other penalty did the man eventually have to experience for his sin?

“So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died.” (Genesis 5:5) It was God’s holy justice that effected (brought about or caused to happen) the physical part of the “death” penalty that He had previously prescribed for disobedience. But it was God’s grace (favor that was undeserved) that permitted Adam to live for hundreds of years after his initial disobedience against God’s law.

d. Read Genesis 5:8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 27, and 31.

Verse 8: Seth (Adam’s son) died.

Verse 11: Enosh (Seth’s son) died.

Verse 14: Cainan (Enosh’s son) died.

Verse 17: Mahalalel (Cainan’s son) died.

Verse 20: Jared (Mahalalel’s son) died.

Verse 27: Methuselah (Enoch’s son) died.

Verse 31: Lamech (Methuselah’s son) died.

Note: If someone asks why these people lived such long lives, simply explain that some of the dreadful effects of sin took many years to begin to become painfully and widely obvious throughout the human race. For example, the diseases that threaten our health are the result of Adam and Eve’s sin. These diseases probably emerged slowly and spread gradually. And as they did, human lives were shortened.

Then, read Romans 5:12. In what two ways are we all affected by the first man’s disobedience in Genesis 3?

1. Adam’s sinful nature has been passed down to us, his human descendants. We have all inherited it. Acts 17:26 makes it clear that all people descended from Adam. This means every human person (except the second Adam – more later- Romans 5:17-21) has inherited this fallen nature.
2. Sin’s penalty of death (spiritual, physical, and eternal*) is something that all humans (descendants of Adam and Eve) will experience, because we have all sinned. *We’ll talk about eternal death at a later more appropriate place in the study, so postpone a discussion of eternal death until then.

6 Promise of a Satan Conqueror

God then promised that a special offspring of the woman would someday conquer Satan because of Satan's evil participation in the actions of the man and woman. *Genesis 3:14-15*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- Wow! What a surprise to Satan! He knew about God's omniscience that knew everything (even the pride of his heart), and God's holiness that must punish sin. That holy rejection of sin jettisoned him out of heaven like a lightning bolt! He must have expected God's holiness in this case to simply consume the physical bodies of the man and woman (Deuteronomy 4:24; 9:3; Hebrews 12:29). What a surprise it must have been to discover God's grace which offers hope to the believing sinner!
- From the time of the first sin, God communicates how the first man and woman can be saved from their sin. God cares about the people He made in His image. He provided the revelation they needed right then, and they were able to pass it on to their children! It should not surprise us that we will find this theme throughout the revelation of God. He will redeem the sinner! He is sending a deliverer to save people from the power of sin and Satan!
- A new attribute of God is discovered in this incident. It was already known that God is infinite in His holiness and must punish sin. Also known was the tremendous capacity that God has to love! He is infinite in His goodness and love. Now it becomes evident that He is also merciful and gracious. His love would not be limited to those who are perfect and always please Him. He would make a way whereby His infinite righteousness and justice would stand, and yet at the same time He would be true to His mercy, grace, kindness, and love.

Paul Bramsen identifies 4 truths from this promise (*The Way of Righteousness: Good News for Muslims*, CMLL: New Jersey, 1998, p.p.55-56):

1. God was announcing how this redeemer would be born of a woman only, that is, a virgin.
2. God began to announce how Satan would torment the Savior that God would send from heaven.
3. God told Satan, "He (the redeemer) would crush his (Satan's) head."
4. God began to announce that there would be two lines (groups) of people in the world: the people of Satan, and the people of God.

Teaching Notes:

a. Read Genesis 3:14. What changes did God impose upon the serpent-animal?

We assume from reading this story that Satan either took on the form of a serpent or that he entered into the body of an existing serpent. Since the serpent was cursed by God for what happened in the Garden of Eden, it would seem that Satan entered into the body of one particular compliant serpent. We use the term "serpent-animal" here to distinguish between Satan and the animal (serpent) that Satan entered to accomplish this evil deed.



Many scholars of the Holy Scriptures think that prior to this time the serpent was a beautiful and charming animal that possessed legs and walked. From verse one in this chapter, we know that serpents were the most cunning of the animals God made. God's curse on the serpent reduced it (and all serpents to come later) to a lowly creature that slithered on its belly in the dust of the earth.

b. Read Genesis 3:15.

The "serpent" mentioned in verse 14 is undoubtedly a reference to the serpent-animal, a literal snake. However, it seems that there is a change in verse 15. Scholars of the Scriptures generally think that when God addresses the "serpent" in this verse He is speaking to Satan, the evil archenemy of God who entered into the serpent. Keep this in mind as you read and study verse 15.

Choose one interpretation:

- God was simply establishing hostility between people and snakes.**
- No, something more significant was happening here.**

"Enmity" is a deep-seated mutual hatred. While it is true that many people say they "hate snakes" (serpents), there is no reason to believe that snakes hate people. When snakes strike humans, they generally do so out of fear and for self-protection rather than because they hate people.

In your explanation of this verse, avoid:

1. Going into too much detail at this point.
2. Interpreting the specific prophetic significance of the verse. That information will come later in the study.

Here are some observations that would be appropriate to make at this point:

1. There will be some enduring animosity that will exist between the woman's descendants (human beings) and the offspring of the serpent.
2. Most scholars of the Holy Scriptures believe that the "seed" (offspring) of the serpent mentioned here is not the offspring of serpent-animals (more snakes) but the evil spirit beings that Satan controls—perhaps the angels (now called "demons") that followed Lucifer in his rebellion against God (see Event 4).
3. This would explain the ongoing struggle between humans and Satan-controlled evil spirits that can be seen over and over as one studies the Scripture.
4. There seems to be one singular male descendant of Eve that will be uniquely involved in "bruising" (or "crush," as in some translations) the head of the serpent-Satan.

c. The seed (offspring) of the woman would: (check all that are true)

- Damage one of the most critical parts of the serpent's body.**

The head is one of the most critical parts of any animal's body. That is the reason why helmets are vital pieces of protective armor for people in battle. Thus, when God pronounced that Satan's head would someday be crushed (or bruised), He was declaring that Satan would ultimately be defeated.



Suffer some lesser harm in administering this blow.

The heel of this Satan-Conqueror would be wounded, but generally a blow to the heel is only a temporary inconvenience. It is far less severe than a crushing blow to the head.

Be a representative of the human race.

In the last two phrases of verse 15, most translations of the Scriptures suggest that there will be one male descendant of Adam and Eve who will conquer Satan.* (see Supplemental Information)

d. Keep this in mind: This person would be the seed (offspring) of the woman—no mention was made that he would be the seed or offspring of man!

Most of the time when the Scriptures speak of the “seed” in terms of human reproduction or offspring, it is used in reference to a man. It seems a bit odd here that Adam (or “the man”) isn’t mentioned. God only mentions the woman’s seed (or offspring). Note: Don’t make too much, especially at this point, of this statement. Just point it out and move on. Make the statement and let sink in, but don’t try to resolve its mystery.

Supplemental Information

The Seed (offspring) of the Woman: *The original (Hebrew) language from which this verse was translated would allow for this “seed” to be collective (a group of offspring) and the pronoun could be translated “it” and not necessarily “he” (a masculine person).

However, the way the verse is typically translated is the way that believers have traditionally interpreted it.

The Chronological Bible Story

How is God Portrayed in Events ? (page 8)

If necessary, review with the student the instructions in point d. of Event 1 –“The Eternal God” (on top of page 6 in *The Message of Hope*).

Remember the purpose of these “bottom of the double-page spread” activities—to help the student learn about God, who He is and what He has done and still does, as the student reads and studies the Bible.

7 Provision of Coverings

After the man and woman attempted to cover their guilt and shame with fig leaves, the merciful God graciously replaced the leaves with clothing He made from animal skins.

Genesis 3:7, 21



Major teaching points of this lesson:

The last two events revealed something about the attributes of God. To be completely just, God must enforce the penalty for sin. The just payment for the sin-debt is death. But because God is loving, He has no desire to destroy us. Both qualities of His character are equal. God is not more loving than He is just.

- How can God maintain justice and still be loving? Although God allows our physical bodies to die, He lovingly provides a way whereby we can escape the eternal aspects of the death penalty. At the same time, God makes it possible for us to live in His presence again.
- How does God judge sin and rescue us at the same time? How does God punish sin without condemning us?
- He covers our sin. This is only possible through the atonement He would provide.

The principle of atonement is foreshadowed in this lesson with a provision of coverings for our first parents. However, the object lesson here is death. The death of innocent animals would have been a stark object lesson to remind Adam and Hava of the seriousness of their sin, and of how their sin affected God's other creatures.

The faithful would believe God's Word. Their belief would result in their obedience. Observe what is expected from Adam and Eve's sons in Event 9.

Teaching Notes:

a. Read Genesis 3:7 and then read Genesis 3:21.

At this point, you simply want the students to see the two kinds of coverings (clothing) that Adam and Eve wore after they sinned and became aware of their nakedness. Just identify the two types of garments now. You will discuss the differences in just a few minutes.

b. Look for at least two differences between the manner in which the man and woman were clothed in verse 7 and the way they were clothed in verse 21. Hints: Who prepared the coverings? What kinds of coverings were used?

1. They (Adam & Eve) prepared their initial coverings (verse 7). God prepared the garments in verse 21.
2. The coverings that Adam and Eve prepared were fig leaves that were sewed together. These would have been very fragile and temporary. God provided garments of skin, which would have been much less fragile and would have lasted for a much longer time.

c. True or False? Based upon what we know of what God did for them, it seems that Adam and Eve's loss of innocence was permanent.



Notice that God did not reprimand Adam and Eve for clothing themselves after they sinned against Him. To the contrary, He affirmed their decision to cover their nakedness by providing them with even more enduring garments. God knew that their loss of innocence would continue as long as they lived.

d. It appears that the sin of the man and woman made it necessary for one or more animals to be killed to provide these coverings. Who made the first sacrifice for sin?

The simple answer is God did. Though an alert reader will note that the text does not specifically say that God killed one or more animals to provide the skins needed for the man and the woman's clothing, God could have created animal skin garments the same way He created animals—"poof" out of nothing. But there are some good reasons to believe that animals died in this process:

1. It was the man and the woman's sin that created their need for coverings. Their loss of innocence was a result of their sin.
2. God had warned them that the penalty for disobedience to His command would be death.
3. The death of animals would have been a stark object lesson to remind Adam and Eve of how their sin affected God's other creatures. Can you imagine how appropriately traumatic this experience was to Adam and Eve—to see the blood of innocent animals that died as a result of the evil choices they made? The guilt and shame that resulted from their sin was covered by the skins of innocent animals that died for them!

8 Banishment from Eden

Because their disobedience caused our first parents to forfeit their privilege to live in the paradise garden where God had placed them, God drove them out of it. *Genesis 3:22-24*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- This event is a reminder that while God can forgive sin, consequences will remain. God is just an equitable and does not arbitrarily give some special treatment and enforce “the rules” on others. He must always be consistent with His holy unchanging character.
- God in grace sometimes does things that are hard for us to understand at the time. If Adam and Eve remained in the Garden of Eden they might have eaten from the Tree of Life, and lived forever in their present state of sin. To protect their future good, God banishes them from the garden to preserve the more incredible future He has in store for them after their redemption and resurrection.
- By putting man outside the garden, God is allowing the consequences of sin to take their natural toll in physical death. God is thinking beyond the grave. He already has in mind a plan to deliver man from the second death – the eternal lake of fire.

Teaching Notes:

a. Read the first statement in Genesis 3:22.

Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil...”

Note: This will be a review of what was stated in the Supplemental Information section of Event 4 as optional information, so the student may not have been exposed to it at that time. Please re-read that section. Even if it has been explained to the student, it is important enough to go over it again with the student.

True or False? Because they had eaten fruit from the forbidden tree, the man and woman now had knowledge of evil from personal experience.

True. Prior to eating the forbidden fruit, the man and the woman only knew “good.” They did not know “evil”... But after disobeying God, they not only had a personal and intellectual knowledge of good (from their past) but they also had two kinds of knowledge of evil—experiential knowledge as well as a newly acquired intellectual knowledge.

If so, how is this different from God’s knowledge of evil?

God is not capable of evil; He is perfectly holy and sinless. But, as an all-knowing God, He knows all about it.

b. Read the second half of verse 22 in Genesis 3 and on through 3:24.

- Fact 1: Verses 23-24 tell us that God expelled Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden.** Notice that Adam’s vocation did not change, but his location did change.



□ Fact 2: The second part of verse 22 reveals God’s reason for expelling them.

Read the second part of verse 22 and then transition to the next point (point “c” below) because it is there that you will deal with verse 22b.

c. Questions regarding the banishment of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden:

• Was this an act of God’s judgment? Explain.

Yes, in a sense. Explain: The Torah (Holy Taurat) doesn’t say specifically that God drove them out of the garden because they sinned, but their banishment from the special garden was definitely a consequence of their sin, a blessing forfeited—a consequence enforced by God. And, in that sense, God judged them by banishing them from the garden.

• Was this also in some way a gracious act by God? Explain.

Yes. Go back to the second part of verse 22 and re-read: “...And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever—” The specifically stated reason that God banished Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden was a gracious blessing to them.

1. Remember that there were two “special trees” in the Garden of Eden—the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life.
2. Not much is said about the tree of life, but verse 22 seems to indicate that if Adam and Eve had touched (eaten) the tree of life, they would have lived forever.
3. Why would that have been bad? It would have been devastating because they would have lived forever in their sinful condition. In heaven, we will be sinless.
4. By protecting them from touching the tree of life as sinners, God drove them from the garden to protect them—for their eternal benefit.
5. Even though death is a dreadful curse that the man and the woman had to bear, it was better for them to die than to live forever in their sinful condition.

Now read verse 24 of this chapter (Genesis 3:24) with that in mind.

Later, as we get deeper into *The Message of Hope* we’ll learn that the real hope for mankind lies beyond the grave—after death.

d. How does God reveal Himself in the events on pages 8-9?

If necessary, review with the student the instructions in Event 1, point d (“God, the Eternal”). Remember the purpose of this “bottom of the double-page spread.” As the student reads and studies the Scriptures this activity helps the student learn about God, Who He is, what He has done, and what He still will do.

The Chronological Bible Story

How is God Portrayed in Events ? (page 9)

If necessary, review with the student the instructions in point d. of Event 1 –“The Eternal God” (on top of page 6 in *The Message of Hope*).

Remember the purpose of these “bottom of the double-page spread” activities—to help the student learn about God, who He is and what He has done and still does, as the student reads and studies the Bible.

9 Cain and Abel

In the course of time, two sons were born to the man and woman and brought offerings to God, but one was so jealous of his brother that he killed him, making himself the first murderer in history. *Genesis 4:1-16*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- The consequences of the fall and of the entrance of sin and death continue in the descendants of Adam and Eve with the first act of murder.
- Sacrificial offerings are introduced, and the fact that God expects the first and best, not the throw-offs, as will be later seen as we study the Holy Scriptures (and begins to lay a foundation for the sacrifice of Christ himself, “a lamb without spot or blemish” – not to be mentioned now but for the leader’s knowledge). Muslims are familiar with sacrifice through the Feast of Sacrifice (Eid-al-Adha); however the word “offering” is less familiar to many Muslims.
- Prophets and righteous people suffer for serving God, even to the point of death. This is an important point to be understood because one of the common Islamic objections to the crucifixion of Christ is that God would never allow this (suffering, shame and death) to happen to His holy prophet.
- God is sovereign, even over suffering and injustice. God’s purposes in allowing suffering and injustice may not be immediately understood, but in the end, it will all be worth it.

Teaching Notes:

In Islamic tradition, Abel’s name is always mentioned as the first of the two rhyming names (Abel and Cain), hence the order of the names in the title of this lesson in the Arabic or Muslim friendly version booklets. The story of Abel and Cain is well known and has some similarities to the biblical account.

The Quran’s account in Surah 5:27-31 is as follows:

²⁷ Recite to them the truth of the story of the two sons of Adam. Behold they each presented a sacrifice to God: it was accepted from one, but not from the other. The latter said: Be sure I will slay you. Surely, said the former, God accepts the sacrifice of those who are righteous.

²⁸ If you stretch your hand against me, to slay me, it is not for me to stretch my hand against you to slay you: for I fear God, Lord of the universe.

²⁹ For me, I intend to let you draw on yourself my sin as well as yours, for you will be among the companions of the fire, and that is the reward of those who do wrong,

³⁰ The soul of the other led him to the murder of his brother: he murdered him, and became one of the lost ones.

³¹ Then God sent a raven, which scratched the ground, to show him how to hide the shame of his brother. Woe is me said he; was I not even able to be as this raven, and to hide the shame of my brother? Then he became full of regrets.



Islamic tradition embellishes the story with additional details including a twin sister for each of the two sons of Adam. Both brothers wanted to marry Cain's twin sister, who was intended for Abel. Adam decided that it would be settled by each son offering a sacrifice.

Whoever's sacrifice was burned by fire from heaven would be able to take the wife of his choice. Abel's sacrifice was burned by fire, and that became the source of Cain's murderous rage. Since Abel's death was the first human death, Cain didn't know what to do with the corpse, so he carried it on his back. Then he saw a raven digging in the ground with its beak and talons to bury another raven, so he decided to do the same.

a. Read Genesis 4:1-7. According to verse 2, what were the occupations of Cain and Abel?

Abel was a shepherd ("kept flocks") and Cain was a farmer/gardener.

b. Cain and Abel each brought an offering to worship the Lord. God was pleased with Abel's offering, but not with Cain's. Can you think of any ways in which Abel's offering was better than Cain's? (Hint: see verse 4, "fat portions" and "firstborn").

Genesis 4 contains the first mention of sacrificial offerings in the Scriptures. There is nothing remarkable about Cain's offering, whereas Abel's offering constitutes the "fat portions", that is, the best part. In addition, Abel gave the firstborn, that is, he gave God the first portion of his wealth, not the last.

Also, in Hebrews 11:4, there is the evidence of Abel's faith. It is significant that we see faith early in the redemptive meta-narrative of the Bible. (This verse may or may not be appropriate to share depending on your student's acceptance of the Bible; the book of Hebrews is not technically a portion of the Holy Injil (Gospel) that Muslims regard as revealed by God.)

c. Read Genesis 4:8-16. The Gospel teaches that Abel was the first in a long line of prophets who died at the hands of wicked men because of his message and life (Matthew 23:34-35; Luke 11:50-51).

In the verses cited from the Gospel (Holy Injil), Jesus includes Abel in the line of prophets who suffered and died for God's will. It is important for the student to see that prophets and righteous people suffered and even gave their lives in service to God.

The Qur'an also speaks of those who slay the prophets (Surah 2:61, 91; 3:21, 112, 181; 5:70). Yet it is commonly believed by Muslims that God did not allow men to crucify Jesus because it wouldn't be fitting for this to happen to God's holy prophet.

Do not address the crucifixion of Jesus at this point. Just allow the general concept of the mistreatment of the prophets/martyred prophets sink in and lay a foundation which God can use later.

- **Do you think God could have prevented Cain from murdering Abel?**
- **Do you think God will reward Abel for his loss?**

These questions are intended to help the student see that suffering and death may be part of God's plan, and that it is still worth following God. This may help to make the crucifixion of Jesus more acceptable when it is studied in later lessons. It may also help the student when challenged to make his own faith decision.

Obviously, God allowed Cain to kill Abel but could have prevented it. Abel's death was not in vain because his faith in God is still remembered and "he still speaks, even though he is dead" (Hebrews 11:4). Abel will have a reward.

10 Prophet Noah and The Great Flood

Throughout the years to follow, the human race grew and became so sinful that God destroyed the earth and its inhabitants with a great flood, except for God-fearing Noah and his family. *Genesis 6:5—8:22*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- Man is not naturally good. When people are not restrained they naturally tend towards greater evil. Every intent of the thoughts of man's heart is evil continually. Only God can change that. Man cannot save himself from his own tendencies. He will usually hide the evil intents of his or her heart and try to look pious outwardly (Genesis 6:5, Jeremiah 17:9-10). Man's only hope can be found where Noah found it. Read Jeremiah 29:11-13 to understand the heart of the Lord — God wants to be found by every one of us.
- God was long suffering. He warned the people of the coming disaster through the Prophet Noah for 120 years. He showed them the way of salvation. If they would just believe His word and repent they would enter the ark and be saved. But they would not believe. In their pride, they rejected their only hope of salvation.
- Only those who believed God's Word and entered the ark were saved. Every other human being died in the devastation.
- This is another opportunity to talk about the different understanding of sin that Muslims and Christians have. Please see Lesson 4's "Major Teaching Points" for a discussion of defilement and depravity, and mistake/misunderstanding and disobedience/wrongdoing.

Teaching Notes:

When Cain did not humble himself before the Lord to give the sacrifice that God required, the Scriptures say, he went out from the presence of the Lord (Genesis 4:16). The account that follows shows us the main characteristic of the civilization he established – a place where people could be comfortable without God. They had many advances in science and technology and developed many wonderful things of utility, beauty, and comfort.

Within four generations, one of his descendants, Lamech (see Genesis 4:17-24), decided that he would be happier with two wives, ignoring what God had said about God's plan for marriage (**one man and one woman being separate from others and united to each other - Genesis 2:24**). When someone wounded him, he retaliated with a vengeance and murdered his opponent. If that weren't enough, he wrote poetry to boast of it! This tendency continued to get worse.

When people no longer follow God's law, they do whatever is right in their own eyes. In the same way, when people don't worship God, they don't simply worship nothing; they worship anything – starting with themselves! Before long, they were killing men and taking their wives into their harems. As they envied what others had, they simply took it by force.

They did whatever they felt like until someone stronger came along. The oppressor got stronger and the weak were dealt with in treacherous ways. They also corrupted themselves in their perversions. Romans 1:21-32 could probably describe the attitudes of the people by this time. God in grace intervenes.



Noah is respected as a prophet by Muslims, and goes by the name Nuh (often pronounced “new”, but check local pronunciation). His story is very well-known and mentioned frequently in the Qur’an:

- He received revelation, though not written (Surah 11:36, 37).
- God made a covenant with Noah, as with Abraham, Moses, and Jesus (Surah 33:7).
- Noah’s wife and one son were unbelievers (Surah 11:42-46; 66:10).
- The purpose and circumstances of the Flood in Islam is very similar to the Bible’s teaching. Mankind becomes corrupt as Seth’s godly line and Cain’s ungodly line intermix. God finally judges mankind and plans to start over with Noah.
- Noah had four sons: Ham, Shem, Japheth and Canaan. (In the Bible, Canaan is the son of Ham, who was cursed by Noah in Gen. 9:18-27).
- Canaan perished in the Flood, thinking he could survive on a mountaintop.
- Sometimes it is said that an additional 80 people or so found refuge in the ark. However, after leaving the ark and settling in the new world, they perished under God’s judgment for sin. In the end, only Noah and his three sons and their families remained.

a. Read Genesis 6:5-7 and 11-12. What influenced God to send such a devastating flood?

With the exception of one family, the entire human race (mankind) turned away from God and began to pursue their own sinful desires. God, whose very nature is holy and repulsed by sin, was deeply grieved by these actions and lifestyles.

As the Creator of all mankind, God certainly had the authority to stop this wickedness and violence and to punish those who participated in it. God did exactly what was right and what was fair as the righteous and just Judge of the world He created. People flagrantly defied Him and broke His laws, so after years of restraint, God pronounced and executed judgment upon this wicked generation.

How serious was this problem that caused the flood?

Here are some typical responses that would be accurate:

- “how great man’s wickedness on the earth had become”
- “every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time”
- “the earth was corrupt”
- “the earth...was full of violence”
- “all the people of the earth had corrupted their ways”

b. Read Genesis 6:8-10 and 7:1. How did Noah the prophet differ from the other people of his generation?

Prophet Noah was a “righteous” man, which means that he generally tried to do what was right.

He was “blameless among the people of his time.” This doesn’t mean that he was perfect. It simply means that, when he did wrong, he always tried to take responsibility for what he had done and correct it.

What do you think it meant that “Noah walked with God”?

Noah tried to live the way that God wanted men and women to live. Walking with God means obedience to God (this allows us to stay beside Him). Walking with God also means

maintaining a close personal relationship with Him and talking with Him regularly through prayer. It appears that Noah led a life like this. These behaviors indicate that his life was characterized by faith in and obedience to God.

c. Read Genesis 6:5—8:22. If we take this account at face value (literally), does it appear that this flood was:

- A local flood**
 A worldwide flood

Whether or not this great flood was a local flood or a worldwide (universal) flood is not an absolutely crucial issue in the overall study of *The Message of Hope*.

Although the evidence for a worldwide flood does appear to be obvious to us, it is important to realize that some Bible-believing scholars have interpreted this flood as a local event that only covered one large valley where the human race was concentrated at that time.

Do not let this issue become a “story stopper.” If the student is particularly interested, you could:

- Give the student a sheet of paper with two columns: Local Flood/Worldwide Flood.
- Ask the student to read and study Genesis 6-8 and make notes of evidences in the scriptural text that would seem to indicate that the flood was contained to one local valley, as well as the evidence that seems to suggest that the flood covered the face of the entire earth.

d. Read Genesis 6:15. How large was the ark?

The ark was 300 cubits (450 feet or 138 meters) long by 50 cubits (75 feet or 23 meters) wide by 30 cubits (45 feet or 13.5 meters) high. It probably had a capacity of about 1,400,000 cubic feet (40,000 cubic meters), which was about equal to 522 standard livestock railroad cars.

This information may be helpful, particularly if the student is skeptical about the ability of Noah’s ark to contain the animals that were taken onto the ark. You may also point out that only two or seven of every “kind” of animal was taken on the ark and that “kind” was probably a broader classification than “specie.” Also, explain that some (or all) of the animals may have been very young and, thus, not fully grown.

e. From this event, what do we learn about:

• **Mankind?**

Men and women are sinful and naturally inclined to all kinds of wicked behaviors. They are naturally rebellious against God and His laws. They often refuse to heed God’s warnings of judgment and His gracious provision of forgiveness and blessings.

But, they also have the capacity (with God’s help) to choose to love and serve God, as illustrated in the life of Noah.

• **God?**

God is holy; He was moved to punish mankind’s sin.

God was just in His judgment.

God was not partial in His judgment.

God was patient and gracious to restrain His judgment for so long.

God was saddened and grieved by man’s choices (Genesis 6:6).



God was the one who saved them from perishing. He was the One who warned Prophet Noah of the flood to come, who gave Noah the instructions for building the ark, and the One who closed the door of the ark prior to the beginning of the flood.

We also learn that His animal creatures obey Him as their master. He brought them to the ark 2 by 2 (male and female). Lions, sheep, tigers, gazelles, giraffes, hyenas, crocodiles, rabbits, dinosaurs, etc. in an orderly line coming from their natural habitats to enter the ark. It must have been an amazing sight! It was the kind of thing that only God could do.

What a shame that men and women have such difficulty choosing God. While God won't violate the image of God in man by forcing him to do what is right, man will be held accountable for his choices. Ezekiel 18:20

Additional question not in the workbook:

How many doors were there on the ark? The ark had only one door. There was only one way to enter into salvation from the flood – only one entrance and not multiple ways of safety from the flood. God made just one way of salvation.

The Chronological Bible Story

How is God Portrayed in Events ? (page 10)

If necessary, review with the student the instructions in point d. of Event 1 –“The Eternal God” (on top of page 6 in *The Message of Hope*).

Remember the purpose of these “bottom of the double-page spread” activities—to help the student learn about God, who He is and what He has done and still does, as the student reads and studies the Bible.

The Tower of Babel and the Origin of Languages

As the earth was being repopulated, mighty leaders attempted to bring the people together under their own dominion, but God graciously intervened and scattered the people by dividing their languages. *Genesis 11:1-9*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- As the earth was being repopulated, mighty leaders attempted to bring the people together under their own dominion.
- Power corrupts. Absolute power corrupts absolutely. Corruption has developed wherever authorities have not been held accountable.
- When religion controls people's understanding through a language that is not their own, people have been used for political interests of the religious leaders. Examples: The Spanish Inquisition, the Papacy prior to the Reformation, the crusades from the leadership on both sides, etc.
- God judged and scattered the people by dividing their languages. Regarding the corrupting influence mentioned above, this was a gracious intervention.
- God the Creator, who loves His creatures, gave revelation so we might know Him. He did this to reveal, not to obscure. Revelation was given through language.

Teaching Notes:

In just a few generations after the earth was cleansed of violent, wicked, and unbelieving people, we are introduced to Nimrod and the civilizations he established. Significant among these are Babel and Nineveh.

a. Read Genesis 10:8-12 & 11:1-4. How would you describe the intent of the leaders of this civilization?

You could give the student a number of choices:

- To keep the people from spreading out.
- To bring people under his dominion.
- To help the people to be loyal to their Creator.
- To make a name for themselves.

The first, second and fourth intents are quite obvious from the text. The leaders wanted to usurp the people's loyalty to God. They would get them to come to their center of the world and give them a significant city there. People would be enamored by this civilization's greatness; and their own religion would further keep them under their dominion.

b. Read Genesis 9:1, 6-7. What intention for man did God reveal to Noah the Prophet after the earth had been cleansed of violent, wicked, & unbelieving people?



You could again give a couple of choices to the student:

- For people to gather together in one place, and for the great ones to make a name for themselves as they brought others into their kingdoms and under their dominion.
- For people to scatter, be fruitful, prosperous, and represent Him as they filled the earth with those made in the image of God.

This second intention was revealed by God at the creation of man, and reinforced when God started all over with Prophet Noah and his sons and their families. Also see Genesis 1:27-28; 2:15.

c. Read Genesis 11:5-9. What was the result of God’s intervention?

God intervened by God confusing their language. This resulted in dispersing the people over the face of the earth.

The division of languages kept them from fulfilling their self-centered plans. He used the language differences He created to divide the people. As they spread out the earth was filled with diversity of language, culture, and races.

d. Who is the originator of the many languages in the world today?

God is the originator of the many languages in the world today.

e. Read Isaiah 45:21-24; 61:11; 66:18; Revelation 7:9-10. Would you agree with the following statement? “God promises that one day every language will praise Him in unity.” Circle your answer: yes/no

Yes. Take time to help the inquirer find each passage. Have him or her read each one. If there are any questions, be prepared to give simple answers that show God’s plan is wonderful and involves every language and people group.

These passages may whet your students’ appetite for the consummation of this, but do not spend time on this, or rush ahead in the story.

Supplemental Information

This section is intended to educate and inform the Leader – it may be appropriate to share with some students.

Since God, in grace, originated the languages in the world today, it makes sense to believe He would also choose to reveal Himself and His Word through those same languages. The idea that God would force a person to learn a language and culture that is not their own in order to know Him doesn’t seem reasonable.

The language of revelation is not an absolutely crucial issue in the overall study of *The Message of Hope*, but it is important to understand to give logical support to the Holy Scriptures being available in all languages so that men can personally read and hear God’s revelation to them.

Around the Islamic world, people are required to learn Qur’anic Arabic “the heavenly language” in order to read the Qur’an or recite their prayers. Children spend hours every week with their instructors (hujurs) learning Arabic for the sole purpose of prayer and being able to read the Qur’an. Muslims are taught that any translation of the Qur’an in any other language is no longer the “Word of God.”

Even after years of study and proper recitation however, most Muslims whose mother tongue is not Arabic do not understand the meaning in the Arabic Qur'an they read. They go to the mosque or madrasas where the readings and recitations are done in Arabic but instruction for their lives is given in the local dialect. Many intelligent and educated Muslims get frustrated with this process. When they read from the Qur'an in their own language, they begin to discover things contrary to what they have always been taught.

Some have inquired with their instructors regarding certain statements in the Qur'an – particularly those that show the reliability of the Holy Injil (the Gospel), or other aspects related to the significance of Isa (Jesus).

A personal friend was stunned when his instructor told him, "You don't have to understand. The Qur'an is only God's Word in Arabic. I know what it means. I will tell you what it means. You just do what I say. The Injil of the past was corrupted and lost, and anything claiming to be the Injil today is obviously a lie." This friend found it incredibly frustrating when his teacher would always dismiss any conversation about the Injil with a statement that it no longer exists. The subject of Isa was likewise always immediately dismissed or opposed.

Under these sorts of constraints, the average inquirer would never find a way to justify his pursuit of truth from the Taurat, Zabur, or the Holy Injil. The account of Babel and the origin of languages give logical support for the idea that God wants to communicate His truth to all people in their heart language.

This understanding might be the key that unlocks his/her own conscience to freely pursue personal study in the Scriptures. Later he/she may be able to get family members to ask crucial questions of the Qur'an in language they understand. From there, they might understand that the Injil should not be opposed. This may get him/her the permission they need to read the Holy Scriptures and invite other family members or friends to do likewise.

12 Promises to Abraham the Prophet

In the course of time, God called Abraham the Prophet to be the father of a very large nation through whom all peoples of the earth would receive a special spiritual blessing.

Genesis 11:31—12:7



Major teaching points of this lesson:

Abraham is a great prophet of God.

- Abraham is known as Ibrahim by Muslims.
- He is one of Islam's greatest prophets, even being given the unique title "Khalilullah" or "friend of God." *"Who can be better in religion than one who submits his whole self to Allah, does good, and follows the way of Abraham the true in faith? For Allah did take Abraham for a friend."* (Surah 4:125) Compare 2 Chronicles 20:7, Isaiah. 41:8 and James 2:23, which all affirm that Abraham was God's friend and probably form the basis for this Qur'anic assertion.
- He is well-known for his faith in the one true God and his obedience to the command of God (especially when it came to being willing to sacrifice his own son).
- The Bible also teaches that Abraham is a prophet. In Genesis 20:7, God warns Abimelek in a dream to give Sarah back to Abraham, because as God says, "he is a prophet."

God has a plan to bless all people through the promises made to Abraham. This will likely be a new concept to a Muslim.

God's plan to bless people through Abraham reaches far into the future. This shows that God ordains the future and is able to bring his plans to completion.

Teaching notes:

You may want to prevent any confusion in the mind of the student by explaining the seeming discrepancy between the names "Abram" and "Abraham." He was originally called "Abram," but God later changed his name to "Abraham" (Genesis 17:5). Abram means "Exalted Father" and Abraham means "Father of a Multitude or Father of Many Nations."

a. Read Genesis 11:31-32 and locate Ur, Haran, and Canaan on the map on pages 26 and 27.

1. Some Muslims believe that the name of Abraham's father is Azar, because of Surah 6:74: *"Lo, Abraham said to his father Azar: Do you take idols for gods? For see, you and your people are in clear error."* However, some commentators think Azar should be understood as Abraham's uncle, not his literal father. Others have suggested that Azar is an alternate name for Terah in the same way that Jacob's alternate name is Israel. It is quite possible that Azar and Terah are just corruptions of the same name, occurring over time and through crossing language barriers. The root common to both names would be the syllable "Ter" or "Zar", as in (A)ZAR / TER(AH).
2. Explain why Terah followed this route. The section of the area marked by green on the map has often been called the Fertile Crescent. The Fertile Crescent was a route followed by travelers because it provided water, vegetation for animals, and towns and civilization

instead of desert. It is about 600 miles from where Ur was located to where Haran was located. This is a good place in the study to compare this map on pages 26-27 with a modern map. Point out the modern countries that now exist in this Fertile Crescent area.

3. Both the city of Ur and the city of Haran were known for the idolatrous practice of moon worship. Terah, Abram's father, was most likely a moon worshipper (Joshua 24:2-3).

b. Read Genesis 12:1-3. At the end of verse 3 there is one special promise to keep in mind. Obviously, the promise that all families of the earth would be blessed through Abraham is important because it is repeated several times in the Holy Scriptures.

- **In what sense could this promise be realized?**
- **To learn the answer to this question you will need to wait and see how *The Message of Hope* eventually develops.**

Do not explain all that you may know about this promise, at this point. Just be sure to point it out and emphasize it strongly enough that the student will remember this promise when it comes up in future events.

c. Read Genesis 12:4-7. What additional promise did God give the prophet Abraham in verse 7?

In verse 7, God made this promise to Abram: "To your offspring I will give this land [Canaan]." But there was one major problem—the land was already inhabited by other people, the Canaanites. Explain that we will learn later how this all turns out.

The issue of Palestine and who has the right to occupy it can be very emotive. Don't bring it up if the student doesn't. If it does come up, gently remind the student that the Prophet Moses first led the children of Israel to occupy Canaan/Palestine under the command of God (even according to Islam). The Qur'an teaches this in Surah 7:137 "And we made the people, considered weak, inheritors of lands in both east and west, lands on which we sent down our blessings. The fair promise of your Lord was fulfilled for the Children of Israel, because they had patience and constancy, and we leveled to the ground the great works and fine buildings which Pharaoh and his people erected."

Whether the nation Israel has a right to exist in the land today is a separate issue, and you don't need to address it.

Perhaps the question will arise: Which offspring of Prophet Abraham should inherit the land? Is it Ishmael (Ismail) or Isaac (Ishaq), Arabs or Jews? Point out that God loves ALL the children of Prophet Abraham, including Ishmael (whom Muslims consider to be a prophet, as they do Isaac). God made a special promise to Prophet Abraham about Ismail in Genesis 17:20 "And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation."

d. How does God reveal Himself in the events on pages 10 and 11?

If necessary, review with the student the instructions in Event 1, point d ("The Eternal God"). Remember the purpose of this "bottom of the double-page spread." As the student reads and studies the Scriptures this activity helps the student learn about God, Who He is, what He has done, and what He still will do.

Additional information for the Leader re: background on Abraham and Babel:

Connection to Babel:

Abram is called from a location not far from the influence of the infamous Nimrod and the civilization that he established in Babel and Nineveh. Both locations were very fertile and were influenced by the luxuries of Nimrod's civilization. Both locations were also heavily influenced by the worship of false gods, and have temples to the gods and goddesses of the moon. God's word itself attests to the fact that Abram's family worshipped false gods before God intervened in his life. Joshua 24:2,3 "Joshua said to all the people, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Long ago your forefathers, including Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the River(the Euphrates) and worshiped other gods. But I took your father Abraham from the land beyond the River and led him throughout Canaan and gave him many descendants.'" (Later, in Genesis 31:19-35, we will see that Rachel stole an idol from her father Laban).

The call of Abraham to Canaan was accompanied by a promise:

- A promise to make of him a great nation (12:2)
- A promise to make his name great (12:2) Observation: Nimrod wanted to make a name for himself. Abram humbles himself to simple obedience of God, and God promises to make his name great.
- A promise to give him and his descendants the land of Canaan (12:7)
- A promise to bless all the families of the earth through him (12:3). An observation: "In calling Abram, God did not reject other men; in making his name great, He did not degrade other names; in blessing him, He did not hand others over to a curse." G. Campbell Morgan.

Acts 7:2-8: God clarifies some of these details:

To this he replied: "Brothers and fathers, listen to me! The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham while he was still in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran."

'Leave your country and your people,' God said, 'and go to the land I will show you.'

"So he left the land of the Chaldeans and settled in Haran. After the death of his father, God sent him to this land where you are now living. He gave him no inheritance here, not even a foot of ground. But God promised him that he and his descendants after him would possess the land, even though, at that time, Abraham had no child. God spoke to him in this way: 'Your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years. But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves,' God said, 'and afterward they will come out of that country and worship me in this place.' Then he gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision. And Abraham became the father of Isaac and circumcised him eight days after his birth. Later Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob became the father of the twelve patriarchs."

The Obedience of Abram (Genesis 12:4-8) was:

- Immediate: Abram's obedience was only possible because of his faith. If he did not believe God, he would not have obeyed (he was able to disobey). As a result of his faith, Abraham becomes an example to all who will live by faith and an example of the faith which saves. (Galatians 3:6) Consider Abraham: "He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." There are many references throughout the New Testament which repeat this.

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- Without complaint: Even though he didn't know anything about the land he was to go to, he obeyed. "By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith he made his home in the Promised Land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God." (Hebrews 11: 8-10)

The Chronological Bible Story

How is God Portrayed in Events   ? *(page 11)*

13 Prophet Abraham's Sacrifice

God tested Abraham the Prophet's faith by asking him to sacrifice his son, but at the last moment God provided a substitute sacrifice.

Genesis 22:1-18



Major teaching points of this lesson:

God tests Abraham's faith by commanding him to sacrifice his son.

- This story forms the basis for the greatest annual religious festival of Islam, Eid-al-Adha or the Feast of Sacrifice.
- The account of the story in Islam is similar to the Biblical account.

He said: I will go to my Lord he will surely guide me. O my Lord grant me a righteous son. So we gave him the good news of a boy ready to suffer and forbear. Then, when the son reached the age of serious work with him he said: O my son I see in vision that I offer you in sacrifice. Now see what is your view? The son said: O my father do as you are commanded: you will find me, if God so wills one practicing patience and constancy. So when they had both submitted their wills, and he had laid him prostrate on his forehead, We called out to him, O Abraham! You have already fulfilled the vision. Thus indeed do we reward those who do right. For this was obviously a trial. And we ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice. (Surah 37:99-107)

- The Qur'an does not explicitly say the name of the son. The traditional Muslim belief is that it was Ishmael, but there have been respected Islamic teachers and commentators who believed it was Isaac. There is a hadith to this effect...

*Muhammad bin al-Muntashir told of a man who vowed to sacrifice himself if God rescued him from his enemy. He consulted Ibn 'Abbas who told him to consult Masruq, and when he consulted him he replied, "Do not sacrifice yourself, for if you are a believer you will kill a believing soul, and if you are an infidel you will hasten to hell; but buy a ram and sacrifice it for the poor, for **Isaac** was better than you and he **was ransomed with a ram.**" He told Ibn 'Abbas and he replied, "This is the decision I wanted to give you." Razin transmitted it. (Mishkat al-Masabih, vol. 1, Book XIV Emancipation, p. 733, translated by James Robson) Also see the tafsir/commentary quotation in the point below on substitute sacrifice.*

- The testing of Abraham's faith meant a difficult and costly sacrifice. Trusting in God may mean a difficult and costly sacrifice for us today.
- God rewarded Abraham's willingness to sacrifice, and God will reward our sacrifices as well.

God provides a substitute sacrifice, thereby saving the life of the son of Abraham. The Qur'an explicitly states that shedding the blood of an animal does not make one right with God. "It is not their meat nor their blood, that reaches God: it is your piety that reaches him" (Surah 22:37a). However, the Qur'an does say that the son of Abraham was "ransomed" with "a momentous sacrifice." This is accepted by Muslims as referring to the ram offered by Abraham, as the following Quran commentators state:

- *Then We ransomed him, the one whom he had been commanded to sacrifice, namely, Ishmael or Isaac — two different opinions — with a mighty sacrifice, [a mighty] ram from Paradise, the same one that Abel had offered as sacrifice: Gabriel, peace be upon him, brought it and the lord Abraham sacrificed it as he cried, Allāhu Akbar, "God is Great." (http://www.altafsir.com -- Tafsir al-Jalalayn on Surah 37:107)*



- Then We ransomed him with a tremendous victim. (We ransomed him with a fat ram.) (<http://www.altafsir.com> -- Tafsir Ibn 'Abbas on Surah 37:107)

The words “God himself will provide the lamb” are prophetic, since a ram, not a lamb was provided at the time. The lamb was yet to be provided in the person of Jesus Christ (John 1:29, 1 Peter 1:19).

Teaching notes:

Muslims generally believe that Abraham tried to sacrifice Ishmael, not Isaac. Rather than get bogged down on this point now, this lesson is written in such a way as to try to avoid naming the son, saving the identity of the son to a later time.

Try to avoid mentioning Isaac by name by referring to him as “Abraham’s son.” If your student simply assumes it is Ishmael, there is no need to correct him now. If the student brings up the fact that Muslims say it is Ishmael while Christians believe it is Isaac, you can try the following:

- Some Muslims believe the son was Isaac (see above references in the Major Teaching Points),
- but God knows the truth of it, and most important of all,
- no matter which son was offered, the main lesson here is about Abraham’s devotion and trust in God.

a. On the way to the place of sacrifice, the prophet Abraham’s son asked him, “The fire and wood are here, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?” (Genesis 22:7). Prophet Abraham answered, “God Himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.” (Genesis 22:8). Both the prophet Abraham and his son mention that a lamb is to be sacrificed.

At this point, we are not reading from the Biblical text itself, but quoting only parts of verses within the lesson. The full Bible verses state explicitly that the son is Isaac. We want to get past the issue of the son’s identity to the mention of God specifically providing a LAMB.

This is perhaps a new idea to the student because the Islamic version of the story does not mention a lamb. If this is questioned, you can remind the student that this is the original story containing full details not necessarily found in later versions of the story.

b. In verses 10-13, did Abraham the prophet sacrifice a lamb in place of his son, or something else?

Now the student reads from the actual biblical text, but only starting at verse 10 through to 13. These verses do not mention the son by name.

You want the student to notice from verse 13 that God did not provide a lamb, but a RAM. (Muslim commentators also believe that Prophet Abraham offered a ram in place of his son). Point out the substantial differences between a lamb and a ram. For example, a lamb is a baby sheep, but a ram is full-grown. A lamb has no horns, but the ram was caught by its horns (verse 13).

Now ask rhetorically, “Was the prophet Abraham mistaken when he said God will provide a LAMB?” The student probably has no idea what to say.

Say, “No, the prophet Abraham spoke the truth. He was not wrong to say God will provide a lamb. Abraham was a holy prophet of God, and he was speaking a prophecy about things that would happen in the future. Abraham was correct. God was going to provide a lamb for sacrifice, but the time was not yet.



c. Since God could have provided any animal he wished, Abraham the prophet's words "God himself will provide the lamb," are significant. The meaning of Abraham the prophet's assertion will become clear in later events.

Resist the temptation to jump ahead to the words of John the Baptist, "Behold, the Lamb of God," found in a later event (event 22). Your student is most likely not yet ready to accept it. Allow the Bible to speak for itself chronologically. We will get to these lessons in the New Testament after the foundation of the Old Testament and its promises are laid. **You want to lay a good foundation** for Jesus as the fulfillment of all God's promises because the student has no concept of this.

d. **Read Genesis 22:14-18. Because of the prophet Abraham's obedience in being willing to offer his son, God now promises to bless all people through the "offspring" of the prophet Abraham. The meaning of this promise will become clearer in later events.**

Remind the student of the promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:3 (event 11). The promise is similar except that in Genesis 12:3 God promises to bless all people through Abraham. But, in the later promise of Genesis 22:18, God indicates that the blessing that would come to all nations/people would come through his "offspring."

Discuss: Don't you imagine that the prophet Abraham was curious regarding what this special blessing would be and how it would become a reality?

Further optional discussion you could read some Bible passages that relate to the lives of: **Ishmael/Ismail** (Genesis 16-17; Genesis 25:12-17).

- As Ishmael is considered a prophet by Muslims, it is important that you speak respectfully about him for the sake of the gospel's impact in your student's heart. The fact that Ishmael is not the son of promise does not mean Ishmael is bad in some way. Generally, the Bible speaks well of Ishmael and the promises God made regarding him. Notice this often overlooked reference to Ishmael from Genesis 21:20, "God was with the boy as he grew up."
- Genesis 17 tells how the practice of circumcision among Jews and Muslims originated when the prophet Abraham and Ishmael were circumcised. This may be of interest to your student because, if male, he is almost certainly circumcised. If female, she may well be circumcised. **Circumcision is universally practiced by Muslims but is nowhere mentioned in the Qur'an.**
- You could ask your student, "Have you ever wondered where circumcision came from?" and then read the passage.
- You can say, "Isn't it amazing that the Holy Scripture explains why millions of people today circumcise their babies?" Islam also accepts that the practice started with the prophet Abraham.
- This little diversion may reinforce the idea that the Bible is trustworthy. Your student needs this kind of help.

Genesis 25:12-17 names the immediate descendants of Ishmael. Muslims believe that Muhammad is descended from Ishmael through either his oldest son Nebaioth (called Nabit in Ibn Ishaq's *Sirat Rasul* God translated by A. Guillaume; this is generally accepted by Muslims as an authoritative sourcebook on Muhammad's life), or one of the other sons of Ishmael.

Isaac/Ishaq (Genesis 21; Genesis 24-27). Isaac is considered a prophet in Islam.

Jacob/Yaqub (Genesis 25:19-34; Genesis. 27-34) is also a prophet in Islam. However, Esau is not well-known and not considered a prophet. All this extra material will provide a bridge to Joseph, the subject of the next event (14).

Prophet Joseph Saves His People

Prophet Abraham's great-grandson was hated and sold him into slavery by his brothers, but God raised the Prophet Joseph, to a high position of authority and used him to rescue the very people who sought to do him harm.

Genesis 50:15-26



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- God is sovereign over the affairs of men.
- The wickedness of evil men cannot stop God's purposes from being fulfilled.
- God uses the suffering of his servants to bring about good results. As Joseph said in Genesis 50:20 "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good." This is not a prophetic statement from Joseph, but a theological parallel - this teaching is necessary preparation for a Muslim to understand how God could allow Jesus to suffer and die on the cross and it not be some kind of defeat. The crowds intended to harm Christ, but God intended it for the salvation of many: This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. (Acts 2:23)

Teaching Notes:

Joseph, or Yusuf, is a well-known prophet in Islam. The entire 12th surah of the Quran (called Joseph) is devoted to telling his story in great detail. He is the great-grandson of Prophet Abraham.

Despite all the detail and its general similarity to the Biblical story, the great lesson of the life of Joseph as found in Genesis 50:20 ("... you intended to harm me, but God intended it for good ...") is absent from the Islamic account.

The Pharaoh is referred to in the lesson as "the king" because Islam reserves the name Pharaoh (or Firaun) for the Pharaoh with whom Moses interacted. If it becomes necessary to clear up confusion in the scripture text, you can mention that "Pharaoh" is not a name, but a title for the king of Egypt, in much the same as "Caesar" became identified with the Roman emperor and "Czar" for the Russian king.

Potiphar is well-known as "Aziz" in the Islamic version of the story of Joseph. It may be that Aziz was not originally a name, but a title, meaning "powerful one." His wife, who tried to seduce Joseph, is called Zulayka and is also well-known.

a. Read Genesis 37. Why did the prophet Joseph's brothers hate him?

Answers include:

- Joseph brought a bad report about the brothers to his father (v.2)
- He was Jacob's favorite (v.4)
- His dream of being most important of all the family (v.5)
- And his brothers were jealous (v.11)

Did he do anything to deserve being sold into slavery? No.

b. Read Genesis 39. Did Joseph the prophet do anything to deserve being put in prison? No.

How was God with him in his trouble? (See verses 2 to 5 and verses 21 to 23)

God prospered Joseph and gave him favor in the eyes of his master. Joseph was put in charge of everything when he was with Potiphar (Aziz) and when he was with the prison warden.

c. Joseph the prophet endured unjust suffering for a long time, but then God promoted him to become ruler of Egypt, second only to the king (Genesis 41:41). God used Joseph the prophet to prepare Egypt for a great famine by stockpiling food during years of good harvest. Then one day Joseph the prophet was reunited with his brothers who came to buy food for their families.

The above paragraph summarizes Genesis 40 to 45. The student can be encouraged to read the whole Biblical story if so desired.

d. Read Genesis 45:4-8 and 50:20. Why did God allow the prophet Joseph to be sold into Egypt?

Prophet Joseph was sent ahead by God to save Prophet Yaqub's (Jacob's) family from harm.

Additional question (not in booklet): How did God use Prophet Joseph in the lives of his brothers?

Through a number of visits to buy food and Joseph's insistence, repentance and restoration was brought about in the hearts of his brothers (Genesis 42-45):

- Joseph's brothers admitted to one another that they had wronged him. (Genesis 42:21-23)
- Judah is moved to do right on behalf of all the brothers. (Genesis 44:32-34)
- Restoration between Joseph and his brothers (Genesis 45:1-15, especially verses 14-15)
- Restoration is confirmed in Genesis 50:15-21.
- Joseph had truly forgiven his brothers and relationship between them was restored.

Is it ever possible for the evil deeds of men to inadvertently bring about God's will?

Yes, Genesis 50:20 clearly says that even though the brothers intended to harm Joseph, God intended Joseph's suffering to be the means of saving many people.

This is an idea which may need to be **revisited (not stated now)** when discussing the crucifixion of Christ in a later lesson.

The Chronological Bible Story

How is God Portrayed in Events   ? (page 12)

15 Moses the Prophet and Pharaoh

Over time, God's people became slaves in Egypt, so God sent a series of plagues to cause Pharaoh to let the people leave under the leadership of Prophet Moses and settle in the land earlier promised to their father Prophet Abraham. *Exodus 12:1-13, 21-23*



Major Teaching Points:

- God powerfully delivered Israel from bondage in Egypt through his servant Moses.
- God saved his people from death when, in trust and obedience to this Word, they shed the blood of an innocent victim in the Death of the Firstborn plague.

About the Jews and the people of Israel (Bani-Israil): (from event 21)

It is from the name "Judah", the name of the ruling tribe, that the name "Jew" finds its origin. In time, all the descendants of Jacob/Israel, or Bani-Israil (literally the sons/children of Israel), became known as the Jewish people. So, the name "Bani-Israil" and the name "Jews" (Yahudi) refer to the same people.

This may be an important point for your student because there is much confusion about this among Muslims. In future events, there will be more reference to the "Jews" since that is usually how the New Testament speaks about the Israelites. But there may be a disconnect here in your student's mind partly because of Islamic teaching.

On one hand, the Qur'an usually speaks of "Bani-Israil" as an ancient people before Muhammad's time who were led by Moses out of bondage, and some of whom conspired against Jesus, but who are a mix of believer and unbeliever.

On the other hand, the Qur'an speaks of the "Jews" in a more negative light. They are contemporaries of Muhammad who listen to any lie (Surah 5:41), believe that God is impotent (5:64), claim to be children of God (5:18), are not to be befriended (5:51), are the greatest opponents of the Muslims (5:82) [unlike Christians who are termed the "nearest in love" to the Muslims], and they claim Ezra is the son of God (9:30). It is not surprising that Muslims might think that Bani-Israil and the Jews are two entirely different people.

The Qur'an goes so far as to question that the 12 tribes of Israel were Jews at all:

Or do you say that Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and the tribes were Jews or Christians? Say: Do you know better than God? Ah! Who is more unjust than those who conceal the testimony they have from God? But God is not unmindful of what you do! (Surah 2:140)

Teaching Notes:

Moses is a famous prophet in Islam, known by the name Musa. Pharaoh is also well-known in connection with Moses, however, "Pharaoh" (Firaun) is assumed to be the name of the king of Egypt, not a title. Much of the biblical story of Moses, Pharaoh, and the exodus from Egypt is related in the Qur'an and Islamic tradition, with some alterations.

a. Over their many years in Egypt, the descendants of Joseph the prophet and his eleven brothers grew so large that they became a nation known as the people of Israel.

This statement provides a link with the previous lesson on Joseph. It also introduces the widely known term “children of Israel” or Bani-Israil, which will be used frequently in subsequent lessons. The people of Israel often have fewer negative connotations to Muslims than the alternative term “Jews” (Yahudi).

b. The new king of Egypt did not know about the prophet Joseph and forced the people of Israel to do slave labor.

You may wish to explain that “Pharaoh” is the title of the king of Egypt, not a name. That is why hundreds of years earlier, Joseph also knew a Pharaoh/Firaun.

But the Pharaoh who exalted Joseph to second-in-command has been long dead by this time. The present Pharaoh never knew Joseph and might not even have heard of him. Because of the large numbers of the people of Israel, the Egyptians now see them as a potential threat and feel they must keep them subjugated and controlled.

God called Moses the prophet to warn Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go. Pharaoh did not listen so God sent 10 dreadful plagues upon Egypt. The final plague involved the death of firstborn children and animals.

Summarize the interactions between Moses and Pharaoh and the first nine plagues that resulted from Pharaoh’s refusal to release the people of Israel from their bondage in Egypt. Explain how this was really a battle between the false pagan gods of the Egyptians and the one true God of Moses and the people of Israel.

c. Read Exodus 12:1-13, 21-23.

• What were the required characteristics of the animal to be sacrificed?

“Your (1) lamb shall be (2) without blemish, a (3) male of (4) the first year. You may take it (5) from the sheep or from the goats.” (Verse 5)

• What were the people of Israel supposed to do with the blood of this animal?

They were supposed to take some of the blood and apply it (using a bunch of hyssop as a brush) to three places around the door: (1) on the left door post, (2) on the right door post, and (3) on the lintel—the horizontal beam or header over the top of the door of the house where they ate the roasted sacrificial lamb.

For some TMOH study leaders, there will be a temptation to explain that these three points of blood application form a crude outline of a cross. Don’t do this at this time, but allow the Bible to speak for itself and come back to this when studying the crucifixion.

• What sign would cause God to pass over a home without killing the firstborn?

When God passed through the land of Egypt that night, if He saw the blood of the slain lamb applied to the door of a house, He passed over that house—He did not execute judgment on that household.

The application of the blood, as God prescribed, was an exercise of faith in the one true God by the head of the household.

A good discussion question here would be: “When a person applied the blood of the sacrificial lamb as God prescribed, specifically what did he believe to be true of God?”

Some of the several correct responses:

1. That there is no God but the one true God.

2. That He provides people with the opportunity to avoid His judgment.
3. That He will be true to His promises and His word can be trusted.
4. That He will protect those who exercise the proper faith in Him.
5. That He is an all-powerful God and more powerful than the so-called gods of Egypt.
6. That people are redeemed by the blood of the sacrifices God prescribes.

d. Finally Pharaoh agreed to let the people of Israel go. Moses the prophet led the people to the mountain where God would reveal his laws to them.

This leads us to the next lesson which focuses on the message of the Law of Moses, known as the Holy Taurat.

Supplemental Information

Yahweh vs. the gods of Egypt

In these chapters of Exodus, the God Who is confronts all which men call “gods” but which are not. God shows that He is Victor over all.

In the plagues, God would reveal Himself, and He announced, “I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt” (12:12).

Religion played a central role in the life of Egypt. Each of the many gods was seen as having control over vital aspects of Egyptian existence. Together, the structure focused on insuring a safe passage beyond this life into the next.

Now, in a series of 10 judgments, the gods of the pagan pantheon were challenged by the Lord and defeated. The Pharaoh had asked, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey Him?” Through the subsequent judgments, God announced, “The Egyptians will know that I am the Lord” (Ex. 7:5). They would see His power, and His fame would spread throughout the earth (9:16). What’s more, the Jews would come to “know that I am the Lord your God” (6:7).

The first plague, the turning to blood of the floodwaters of the Nile, set the pattern for the others. To the Egyptians, the Nile itself was sacred. In its annual flood, the river enriched Egypt’s farmlands. The water from the Nile irrigated those narrow strips of fertile land on each bank which held and fed Egypt’s population. No wonder this people of many gods dedicated hymns like this one, from the Middle Kingdom Period, to the Nile: “Hail to thee, O Nile that issues from the earth and comes to keep Egypt alive. He that waters the meadows which recreate, in order to keep the kid alive. He that makes to drink the desert and places distant, that is his dew coming down from heaven.”

God turned the Nile rotten: polluted and stinking as spilled blood (7:14–24). The source of Egypt’s life died, and brought death. The gods of Egypt were powerless before the God of Egypt’s slaves.

The frog god of fertility, *Heka*, was represented in rotting piles of dead frogs.

The god of the earth, *Seth*, was infested with lice, speaking to the Egyptians of ceremonial pollution.

Isis and *Serapis*, gods of fire and water, were unable to protect Egypt from hail or locusts.

Ra, the sun god, lost all power to overcome the blanket of darkness God threw over the land.

In each encounter, the gods of Egypt were judged, and found wanting. They went down in defeat before God, the Creator.

16 The Torah of Prophet Moses

Through the Prophet Moses, God gave his Word to teach the people right from wrong, instruct them on how to worship God appropriately, and prepare them for the coming of a special chosen servant of God.

Exodus 20:1-17



Major teaching points of this lesson:

Brief introduction to the Pentateuch of Moses

- Generally speaking, Islam teaches that there are four extant books sent from God to mankind: the Taurat (Torah), the Zabur (Psalms), the Injil (Gospel), and the Qur'an.
- Islam also teaches that the scriptures previous to the Qur'an have been corrupted by the Jews and Christians, and so some people go as far as saying that the actual Taurat is lost (see Supplemental Information). However, you've gotten this far with the student so this would appear to be a moot point. The word Taurat is basically an Arabic rendering of the Hebrew term Torah, traditionally translated "the Law" (of Moses) in English. Although the word "torah" is found numerous times in the Torah itself (as well as the rest of the Hebrew scriptures), it is always translated using words like "law", "instruction", or "teaching." For example, "torah" (hence Taurat) is found five times in Deuteronomy 31, but it is always translated according to the meaning of the word "torah":

Verse 9 - So Moses wrote down this law (torah) and gave it to the Levitical priests, who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel.

Verse 11 - when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God at the place he will choose, you shall read this law (torah) before them in their hearing.

Verse 12 - Assemble the people—men, women and children, and the foreigners residing in your towns—so they can listen and learn to fear the LORD your God and follow carefully all the words of this law (torah).

Verse 24 - After Moses finished writing in a book the words of this law (torah) from beginning to end,

Verse 26 - Take this Book of the Law (torah) and place it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God. There it will remain as a witness against you.

- The 10 Commandments and the nature of sin (see event 4, "Teaching points for this lesson" for additional information.)

Prophecies of the Messiah in the Pentateuch

We have opted to speak of the coming of "a special chosen servant of God" which, in subsequent events, will simply be referred to as "God's Chosen One." Finally, in the study of Jesus in event 21, He will be introduced as "the Messiah."

There are two reasons for this way of developing teaching about Jesus as Messiah:

- First, Muslims generally do not know what "Messiah/Masih" means. See event 21 for additional information on what this term means to scholarly Islam.
- Second, if a Muslim IS familiar with the term, he also probably knows it refers to Jesus.

- Using “Messiah” now would “let the cat out of the bag” for some students before you get a chance to lay the crucial foundation needed to lead them to the Jesus of the Scriptures. **So, refrain from speaking of the “Messiah” and use “chosen one” instead.**

Teaching notes:

a. The Torah contains five parts or books: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. Every event you have studied has been taken from the Torah.

In this lesson, you will introduce the 10 commandments and a few Messianic prophecies from the Pentateuch not already mentioned in previous events.

b. In the Torah, God gave an extensive system of laws to the people of Israel, but the core of that legal system is often called the Ten Commandments.

A good thing to do with your students would be to read Exodus 20:1-17 and identify these ten foundational laws.

The Ten Commandments:

First (verse 3): Don’t put any other gods before God.

Because God is our Creator, He owns us and only He is worthy of our reverence and allegiance. Nothing in our lives should take precedence over God. That is particularly true of the false “gods” because they are not true gods at all. If we put anything in our life above God, we have broken the first commandment. We do this in modern day societies by not worshipping the true God, but also by making idols/putting things above God like wealth, beauty, sex, etc.

Second (verses 4-6): Don’t worship idols.

The second commandment is somewhat similar to the first one, but it is not the same. Based upon the first commandment, we know that it is wrong to make some kind of a material image (idol) and to worship a false god through it. But, this commandment is broader than that. It is wrong to make an idol (material image) even if we might use it in an attempt to worship the true God. God is a spirit being who cannot be reduced to a material image. We have broken the second commandment if we make any physical image and through it attempt to worship a false god or even the true God.

Third (verse 7): Don’t misuse the name of the LORD God.

To “take the name of the LORD God in vain” would be to use His holy name lightly or in jest, in a way that does not truly reverence Him or His name. If we do that, we have broken the third commandment.

Fourth (verses 8-11): Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

At the end of the creation week (event two on page 6), the Holy Torah tells us that God rested on the seventh day (Genesis 2:1-3). God didn’t rest because He was tired, because our all-powerful God never tires. God “rested” on that day in order to set a precedent for men and women. God made us in such a way that we have a human need for regular periodic times of rest. God instituted a plan for the Israelites that required them to rest and focus uniquely on Him on the seventh day—called the “Sabbath.” The observance of the Sabbath, as opposed to any other day, was established as a special sign between God and the children of Israel. “The Israelites are to observe the Sabbath, celebrating it for the generations to come as a lasting covenant.” (Exodus 31:16)

Special note as needed for your inquiring friend: God desires for us to not abuse ourselves by failing to rest regularly and periodically. If we ignore God's "rest" principle for our lives, we have neglected an important routine that God has intended for our lives.

Fifth (verse 12) = Honor your father and your mother.

The God-established authority of parents over their children is a foundational principle of family life that has existed since the time of the first man and woman. Because of the sinful nature that children inherit from their parents, and ultimately from the first man and woman, all children (to one degree or another) sometimes resist this authority and dishonor their parents in the process. When (as children) we dishonor our parents, we break the fifth commandment.

Sixth (verse 13) = Don't commit murder.

The Hebrew word in this passage from which our English words "kill" or "murder" are translated suggests "premeditated murder," and does not prohibit killing in honest self-defense. The seriousness of murder is easy to understand when we recall that God made man and woman "in His own image." Thus, an act of murder is, in a sense, an attack on God Himself.

In a later section of the Bible, we learn that even deep-seated hatred for other people is like murder. When humans, acting on their own selfish impulses, take the life of another human being, they break the sixth commandment.

Note: It is probably wise here to avoid discussions about war, capital punishment, and etc. Those are good questions that you should make note of and deal with later. But, at this point, these discussions may derail the main focus of the study.

Seventh (verse 14) = Don't commit adultery.

There are several sexual sins mentioned in the Scriptures, all of which are clearly defined as breaking God's holy law. In this commandment, God focuses on the sin of adultery—sexual relations involving a married person with someone who is not his/her spouse.

In a later section of the Scriptures, we learn that it is a violation of God's law to deeply desire to have sex with someone who is not your marriage partner even if the physical act is not consummated.

When humans enter into sexual relations with someone who is not his/her marriage partner, they break the seventh commandment.

Eighth (verse 15) = Don't steal.

God makes it clear in the Bible that personal property should be respected by others. When we take things to be our own that do not belong to us, we break the eighth commandment.

Ninth (verse 16) = Don't bear false witness against others.

The principle in this commandment is simple—don't be dishonest, don't lie. Anytime we speak dishonestly, in "big ways" or with "little white lies," we break the ninth commandment.

Tenth (verse 17) = Don't covet things that belong to others.

The tenth commandment extends the eighth commandment. Not only is it wrong to steal, it's also wrong to strongly desire for ourselves the possessions of others. Anytime we covet what others have, we break the tenth commandment.

• **What do these laws reveal about God?**

These laws reveal to us that God is holy, just, and fair. At the time that these laws were given by the LORD God to the Israelites, they were unique. The religious systems of the people who lived around the people of Israel at that time did not have such a high set of moral laws to govern the people. Thus, the immorality in those societies was completely unrestrained. Sexual sins, rebellion of children, dishonesty, theft, idol worship, murder and other forms of violence, were rampant. All of this tends to be typical of societies that fail to recognize, revere, and obey God our Creator and Master.

• **What do these laws reveal about people?**

These Ten Commandments serve as a kind of measuring rod for humankind in general, and for us (as individuals) in particular. When we honestly evaluate our lives in light of these moral standards, everyone falls short to one degree or another.

Sin is disobedience to what God has commanded. It is an offense against a Holy God. God hates sin. Sin is not just a “mistake,” but something far deeper, and breaks our relationship with God.

• **How many of God’s laws would need to be broken for a person to be guilty of doing wrong—to have sinned?**

To answer this, it may help your students to think about the first man and woman. See event 4.

When Adam and Eve disobeyed the one law that God gave them, they died spiritually (became separated from their close relationship with God their Creator). Because God is perfectly holy and sinless, it only took one act of disobedience for them to be out-of-sync with God’s holy character.

c. The Torah predicts the coming of a special chosen servant of God in various verses:

• **Genesis 49:10 - a king who will arise from the tribe of Judah**

“The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his.” (Genesis 49:10)

On his deathbed, Jacob/Yaqub speaking as a prophet announced that the scepter (symbol of kingly authority) would reside in or among the offspring of his son Judah and that a lawgiver (another indication of a ruler) would descend from Judah. In the last phrase, the prophet Jacob seems to predict that “the people” or “nations” would be ruled by this king and lawgiver. Don’t comment much more about this, but encourage the student to remember this promise. It will come up again in some of the later events.

• **Numbers 24:17 - the king will come from the people of Israel**

“I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near. A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel. He will crush the foreheads of Moab, the skulls of all the sons of Sheth.” (Num. 24:17)

This prophecy is spoken by Balaam, a non-Jew who came from Aram Naharaim, i.e. Mesopotamia (Deut. 23:7). It speaks of a coming king using the figures “star” and “scepter.” That these two figures would occur together falls in line with “the belief of the ancient world, that the birth and accession of great kings was announced by the appearance of stars.” (Keil & Delitsch on Numbers 24:17).

This is not for discussion now, but it's no wonder that the Magi later said, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him." (Matt. 2:2). It is quite possible that the Magi (also from "the east"), who visited Jesus, were aware of Balaam and his prophecy. You may want to recall these things when you discuss the birth of Jesus in event 21.

Both of the above prophecies make clear that the coming king would arise from within the children of Israel (Bani-Israil). This is a good time to emphasize that God said only an Israelite could reign over the children of Israel. Have the student read Deuteronomy 17:15 -- "be sure to appoint over you the king the LORD your God chooses. He must be from among your own brothers. Do not place a foreigner over you, one who is not a brother Israelite." This verse will help prepare the ground for a good understanding of the next verse.

• **Deuteronomy 18:15,18 - a prophet like Moses from the people of Israel**

"The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him."

"I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him." (Dt. 18:15, 18)

These verses say that another prophet like Moses will one day arise for the children of Israel "from among your own brothers." The meaning of the phrase is made clear by the verse about a king quoted above from Deuteronomy 17:15 which uses the same phrase but then follows it up with an explanation--"Do not place a foreigner over you, one who is not a brother Israelite." The verses are by the same author and part of the same context so you can confidently affirm that "from your own brothers" means "from among the children of Israel."

Don't discuss the identity of the prophet yet--it is enough if the student understands that the prophet like Moses will be part of the children of Israel. The Injil (New Testament) teaches that this prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus (Acts 3:22; 7:37), but that's for another time.

Special note as needed:

It is often claimed by Muslims that the above verses predict the coming of their prophet, Muhammad. The phrases "from among your own brothers" and "from among their brothers" are taken to refer to the brothers of the Jewish people, i.e. the Arabs.

- Muslims believe that Muhammad's coming MUST be mentioned by the Torah and the Gospel because the Qur'an says such predictions are there:

"Those who follow the messenger, the unlettered Prophet, whom they find mentioned in their own (scriptures), - in the law and the Gospel; - for he commands them what is just and forbids them what is evil; he allows them as lawful what is good (and pure) and prohibits them from what is bad (and impure); He releases them from their heavy burdens and from the yokes that are upon them. So it is those who believe in him, honor him, help him, and follow the light which is sent down with him, - it is they who will prosper." (7:157)

- Islam teaches that Muhammad is a prophet like Moses and that makes the Deuteronomy prophecy attractive:

"We have sent to you, (O men!) a messenger, to be a witness concerning you, even as We sent a messenger to Pharaoh." (Surah 73:15).

But, as seen above, **the verses in context do now allow for an interpretation that makes the coming prophet anything but an Israelite.** Later revelation confirms that Jesus Christ fulfilled the prophecy.



Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” (John 1:45)

“If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me.” (John 5:46).

The Chronological Bible Story

How is God Portrayed in Events ? (page 13)

Remember to ask your students, “How does God reveal Himself in these events?” Remember the purpose of this “bottom of the double-page spread.” As the student reads and studies the Scriptures, this activity helps the student learn about God, Who He is, what He has done, and what He still will do.

Supplemental Information

“The Bible is corrupted” is a common Islamic argument. It is easily defended – the Holy Scriptures we have were present in Muhammad’s day, and Muhammad does not refer to them as corrupted. Even with that said, some will continue to argue. If that is the case, you may be able to continue to study (we want Muslims to study the Holy Scripture and be transformed by God’s Word) by stating “Let’s see, as we study, if you can find areas that are corrupted,” and continue on in your study.

17 Worship and Sacrifice

In the Holy Torah, God gave to the people of Israel specific instructions on building a place of worship, how to worship God through sacrifice, and how to seek forgiveness of sins.

Exodus 25:1-2, 8-9; 2 Samuel 7:1-6; 1 Kings 6:1-2; Leviticus 1:1-4, 10-14



Major teaching points of this lesson:

The tabernacle was the God-ordained place of worship and sacrifice for the Jewish people. Muslims will be unfamiliar with the tabernacle.

The concept of substitutionary atonement is introduced through the sacrifice of the burnt offering in Leviticus 1.

- Atonement is the recompense (amend/payment/expiation/satisfaction) made for an injury or wrong.
- Substitutionary atonement: another/substitute makes atonement or recompense for sin. It is the transfer of responsibility for sin to another party (in the Old Testament an animal sacrifice) who then makes recompense/payment for the sin in behalf of the first party. The sin of the person offering the sacrifice is transferred to the innocent animal that would then die as a substitute for the offerer's sins.
- This will be explained in greater detail in events 31, 33, and 35.
- David's desire to build the temple and the actual temple of Solomon are introduced. Many Muslims have heard of David and Solomon as prophets, and may also have heard of the famous temple of Solomon in Jerusalem.

Teaching notes:

a. Read Exodus 25:1-2, 8-9. The tabernacle was a portable place for worship and sacrifice for the people of Israel. Whose idea was it to build the tabernacle?

¹The LORD said to Moses, ²"Tell the Israelites to bring me an offering. You are to receive the offering for me from each man whose heart prompts him to give.

⁸"Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them. ⁹ Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you.

It was God's idea to build the tabernacle. You can mention that it was the appointed place to offer sacrifices in worship, just as Abraham had offered his sacrifice many years before on an altar he built. Do not feel that you need to explain all the details and functions of the tabernacle, however, if the student seems interested in it, go ahead. All of the information that you need in order to be equipped to explain the tabernacle can be found on the following website. There are pictures there you can download and print as desired. You could even purchase The Tabernacle pamphlet and the Tabernacle Model Kit that are available on this site. <http://www.the-tabernacle-place.com/>

b. Sacrifices were offered at the tabernacle not only for worship, but also as a way to seek forgiveness of sins. The sacrificial animal would die as a substitute to atone for the person's sin. Read Leviticus 1:1-4 and 1:10-14. Summarize the procedure that was followed.

Islam officially teaches that an animal sacrifice cannot procure forgiveness of sins, but “on the street,” Muslims can have an innate feeling that there is a connection between sacrifice and forgiveness. However, it might be thought of more as a good work that you can do to earn forgiveness.

If, from this lesson, the student gets the idea that forgiveness comes through a substitute sacrifice, you will be doing well.

¹ The LORD called to Moses and spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting. He said, ² “Speak to the Israelites and say to them: ‘When any of you brings an offering to the LORD, bring as your offering an animal from either the herd or the flock. ³ “If the offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he is to offer a male without defect. He must present it at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting so that it will be acceptable to the LORD. ⁴ He is to lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him.

¹⁰ “If the offering is a burnt offering from the flock, from either the sheep or the goats, he is to offer a male without defect. ¹¹ He is to slaughter it at the north side of the altar before the LORD, and Aaron’s sons the priests shall sprinkle its blood against the altar on all sides. ¹² He is to cut it into pieces, and the priest shall arrange them, including the head and the fat, on the burning wood that is on the altar. ¹³ He is to wash the inner parts and the legs with water, and the priest is to bring all of it and burn it on the altar. It is a burnt offering, an offering made by fire, an aroma pleasing to the LORD. ¹⁴ If the offering to the LORD is a burnt offering of birds, he is to offer a dove or a young pigeon.”

Focus on verses 1-4 and ask the student to summarize the procedure stated in these verses. Emphasize the placement of the person’s hand on the head of the innocent animal and explain what was happening at that point—in God’s sight, **the sin of the person offering the sacrifice was being transferred to the innocent animal that would then die as a substitute for the offerer’s sins.** See notes on substitutionary atonement in the “Major teaching points for this lesson” section.

c. What similarities do you see between what was done here and what happened in event 7?

The most obvious similarity is that innocent animals died because of the sin of human beings. In both cases, the plan was directed by God so that human beings could receive a very special benefit.

d. Read 2 Samuel 7:1-16 and 1 Kings 6:1-2. David the prophet wanted to build a temple for God in Jerusalem as a permanent structure to replace the portable tabernacle. David’s son Solomon the prophet actually built the Holy House to which people came to offer prayers and sacrifice to God.

The purpose in adding this reading with details is to connect this lesson with the next AND to connect the new material we studied already in this lesson with something the student may already know about. It is possible the student will have heard of both David and Solomon as famous prophets, although Solomon is also known as a great king who had wisdom, wealth, and power. The student also may know that Jerusalem (or al-Quds) is the third holiest place on Earth in Islam after Mecca and Medina. This is because of Solomon’s fabled temple, usually referred to as “the Holy House” or “the House of the One Who is the Holy One” (Bait-ul-Muqaddas).

18 The Psalms of David the Prophet

Prophet David was a great king and prophet through whom God gave to mankind the inspiring words of the Psalms, containing prophecies of the coming Chosen One of God.

Acts 13:21-22; Psalm 23; Psalm 2:1-6



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- David (Dawud) was a great king of Israel chosen by God himself. He was also a prophet who wrote the wonderful poetry of praise and prophecies we find in the Psalms/Zabur.
- The Psalms/Zabur of David is introduced and connected with the famous temple of Solomon for its use in temple worship.
- Psalm 23 is a famous chapter from the Holy Scriptures, well worth reading and pondering.
- Psalm 2 is one of many psalms which predict the coming of God's Chosen One/Messiah.

Teaching notes:

a. Read Acts 13:21-22. The prophet David was chosen to be king of the people of Israel by God Himself. Why did God choose David the prophet to be king instead of someone else?

²¹ Then the people asked for a king, and he gave them Saul son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, who ruled forty years. ²² After removing Saul, he made David their king. He testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.'

David was a man after God's own heart, and he was obedient to God (verse 22). Discussing the meaning of "a man after God's own heart" could make for an interesting talk. The full account of the choice of David is found in I Samuel 16:1-13 (with special note of verse 7).

You could also mention that David was from the tribe of Judah. Remind the student that Prophet Abraham's grandson, Prophet Jacob, had twelve sons. When Jacob's descendants were formed into a nation, each of his sons became the head of a tribe. Just before Jacob died, he made a prediction regarding each of his sons and their tribes. Genesis 49:10 records the prediction that Israel made concerning the tribe named after his son Judah. (See event 16.)

b. The Psalms of David the prophet is a collection of ancient hymns and spiritual songs. They were originally written to be sung, not just to be recited or read. The Psalms was the worship book used in Solomon the prophet's Holy House in Jerusalem.

The Psalms or Zabur is known to Muslims as one of the four heavenly books revealed by God (along with the Torah, Gospel, and Qur'an), although they do not know the content of the book itself. The term "Zabur" is the Arabic equivalent of the Hebrew "zimra," translated in the KJV as "psalm" in Psalm 81:2 and 98:5 (NIV renders it "music"). The Hebrew word has the meaning "song, music," as in Exodus 15:2, "The Lord is my strength and song." Along with "zimir" (song) and "mizmor" (psalm), "zimra" is a derivative of "zamar," meaning "sing, sing praise, make music." (Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, vol. 1, pg. 245)

The Zabur is mentioned in the Quran:

*And it is your Lord that knoweth best all beings that are in the heavens and on earth: We did bestow on some prophets more (and other) gifts than on others: and **We gave to David (the gift of) the Psalms.** (17:55)*

*We have sent thee inspiration, as We sent it to Noah and the Messengers after him: we sent inspiration to Abraham, Isma'il, Isaac, Jacob and the Tribes, to Jesus, Job, Jonah, Aaron, and Solomon, and **to David We gave the Psalms.** (4:163)*

*Before this We wrote in the **Psalms**, after the Message (given to Moses): My servants the righteous, shall inherit the earth." (21:105)*

The last verse may be the closest thing to a quotation of the Bible in the Qur'an. Compare Psalm 37:29--"the righteous will inherit the land and dwell in it forever."

Making reference to the use of the Psalms in Solomon's temple gives a bit of connection to the previous lesson.

c. Read Psalm 23 from the Holy Scriptures. This is a very famous and beloved piece of literature. Is there anything you particularly like about what it says?

Have an open discussion asking what the student liked and why. You could ask other leading questions such as, "Why do you suppose this chapter is so loved? Do you think David felt that God was close to him, or far away?" etc.

d. Read Psalm 2:1-6 from the Holy Scriptures. The whole chapter predicts the coming of God's Chosen One who will become a great and victorious king.

The student is being asked only to read verses 1 to 6 since, in verse 7, God says, "You are my son, today I have become your Father." It may be premature to introduce this difficult subject. The main thing we want to see in the first 6 verses is that the Chosen One will be a great king chosen by God.

In Psalm 2:2, "Anointed One" is a translation of the Hebrew word "mashiach," which, in turn, made its way into English as "Messiah," into Greek as "Christ (os)," and into Arabic as "Masih." Up until now, we have used "chosen one" to describe the coming Messiah. Jesus will be introduced as Messiah in just 2 more lessons (event 21) at his birth. If you think it is helpful, you might wish to introduce the word/title Messiah now, but do not go into depth at this point.

You can mention that there are many places in the Psalms containing prophecies of the Chosen One (such as Psalm 16, 22, 35, 41, 68, 69, 110, 118). This is just the first of them.

According to these verses, does the Chosen One have enemies? Who are they? Who will be victorious in the end?

Yes, "nations;" "peoples;" "kings of the earth," "the rulers" are Messiah's enemies.

God and his chosen king will be victorious.

The Chronological Bible Story

How is God Portrayed in Events   ? (page 14)

19 Jonah The Prophet

Through Jonah the Prophet, Almighty God revealed His concern for people of all nations, and that He shows mercy even to the wicked if they will humble themselves and trust completely in Him. *Jonah 1-4*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

Jonah was a great prophet through whom God saved an entire community of unbelievers who repented. The story of Jonah (Prophet Yunus) being swallowed by the fish is known to Muslims, but details and reasons why things happened differ from the biblical account, as will be seen in the teaching notes.

God desires to show grace and mercy to people of all backgrounds. He shows mercy even to very wicked people who repent and turn to him in faith. **This is an area of great uncertainty and confusion for Muslims.**

On one hand, Islam clearly proclaims that God is “gracious and compassionate” (al-rahman, al-rahim; translated various ways including “merciful and compassionate”, “most gracious, most merciful”, “beneficent and merciful”, etc.).

- Every single surah of the Quran, except one, begins with the formula, “In the name of God, the gracious, the compassionate” (bismillah-ir rahman-ir rahim). This formula is called the Bismillah (or Basmalah) and is to be used regularly in daily life--when you begin a journey, when you dedicate a new building or business, when you eat a meal, and generally when you undertake any new activity of significance.
- Related to God as gracious and compassionate, is the idea that God is forgiving (al-ghafar; one of the 99 names of God).
- ...God blots out sins and forgives again and again. (Surah 4:43)
- He is the one that accepts repentance from his servants and forgives sins... (Surah 42:25)
- The couplet asserting that God is “oft-forgiving, most merciful” (al-ghafar, al-rahim) occurs no less than 70 times throughout the Quran.
- So, Muslims give mental assent to the concepts of God’s grace, mercy, compassion, and forgiveness.

On the other hand, Muslims don’t sense or have an experience of God’s forgiveness of sins in the here and now.

- Repenting of sins and fulfilling solemn obligations of Muslim life including prayers, fasting, and almsgiving, do not result in assurance of God’s acceptance and forgiveness. On the contrary, part of being a good Muslim includes continually seeking God’s forgiveness. As Surah 3:15-17 says,

...For in God’s sight his servants are those who say: “Our Lord! We have indeed believed: forgive us, then, our sins, and save us from the agony of the fire.” They are those who show patience, firmness and self-control; who are true and worship devoutly; who give and pray for forgiveness in the early hours of the morning.

The prophet Muhammad himself is set forth as the example for the believers in this matter.

Narrated Abu Huraira: I heard God's Messenger saying. "By God! I ask for forgiveness from God and turn to Him in repentance more than seventy times a day." (Sahih Bukhari, Hadith 5832)

Add to that the Islamic teaching that there are situations in which repentance and seeking forgiveness will not be accepted. One is during the End Times, specifically when the sun will rise from the west. Various Hadiths state that the door of repentance will be closed in that day. Another time when repentance is no longer accepted is when a person knows that death is near.

Of no effect is the repentance of those who continue to do evil, until death faces one of them, and he says, now have I repented indeed; nor of those who die rejecting faith: for them have we prepared a punishment most grievous. (Surah 4:18)

- Contrast these Islamic beliefs with the story of the thief on the cross who, knowing he was about to die, asked Jesus to remember him. Jesus replied, "Today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43).
- Hopefully, this lesson from the life of Jonah will cast a light on God's mercy in a new way for your student, and build a foundation for the birth of Jesus as "Savior" in two more events.
- Use care when talking about Jonah's reaction of anger, and be respectful. You may get some reaction because most Muslims believe that all the prophets were sinless.

Teaching notes:

Jonah in Islam

Jonah (Yunus) is a famous prophet in Islam. Almost all Muslims know that Jonah was the prophet swallowed by a fish. Generally, the story is thought to go like this:

Jonah preached God's Word to the people of Nineveh for a long time, but they were unresponsive. Finally, Jonah gave up trying and left the city. Then, dark and ominous clouds covered Nineveh. Intense thunder and lightning frightened everyone, and so they began to search for Jonah their prophet. Not finding him, the people repented and asked God to safely return Jonah to them. Meanwhile, Jonah boarded a ship to finally leave the region. A terrible storm arose and other passengers began to ask if there was anyone running from his master. Jonah confessed that he had left Nineveh without God's permission. In the end, Jonah saw there was nothing to do but jump into the sea, after which he was swallowed by a large fish. Inside the fish, he began to pray a prayer, which he repeated many times over:

La illah ila anta subhannaka inni kuntu min al thaalimeen

There is no god but you. Glory be to you. I was indeed wrong. (Surah 21:87)

At the end of that time, God said,

So We listened to him: and delivered him from distress: and thus do We deliver those who have faith. (Surah 21:88)

After being released from the fish, Jonah returned to Nineveh to find a people now worshipping God.

The short Arabic phrase above in Surah 21:87 is called the "Dua of Yunus" or Prayer of Jonah. Your student might have heard of it or even prayed it. It is a favorite prayer to recite when confronted by any sort of danger. It is also said to be effective in obtaining hopes and desires. Someone has said that if you repeat it 100 times daily for 12 days, your wish will be granted whatever it may be.

The tenth surah of the Quran is named after Jonah. In this surah, the people of Nineveh are singled out as the only ancient community to avert judgment by believing the word of the messenger sent to warn them. The only clear reference to Jonah in that surah is in verse 98:

Why was there not a single township which believed, so its faith could have profited it, except the people of Jonah? When they believed, we removed from them the penalty of ignominy in the life of the present, and permitted them to enjoy for a while.

The moral of the Islamic version of Jonah's story is the need to patiently endure in doing the will of God, and to not give up prematurely as Jonah did.

The biblical story of Jonah teaches that God desires to be merciful to even the most wicked person who repents, rather than bring judgment. God could easily have asked this question to Jonah, "Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked?" declares the Sovereign LORD. Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live?" (Ezekiel 18:23)

a. Read Jonah 1:1-2. What did God command the prophet Jonah to do? Why?

Look for simple answers from the verses. God commanded the prophet Jonah to go to Nineveh and preach against it, or warn it of coming judgment, etc. The reason why God commanded Jonah to do this was because of the wickedness of that place.

It should be noted that Jonah was a prophet of the people of Israel/Bani-Israil (circa 800-750 B.C., from Gath-Hepher [2 Kings 14:25] in the territory of Zebulun), and not a native to Nineveh, as Islam seems to assume. Jonah was commanded to "go" to Nineveh. Nineveh was an important city of the Assyrian Empire, later becoming its capital city. Nineveh/Assyria constituted a credible threat to Israel's security and safety. By 734 B.C., not long after Jonah's time, Assyria controlled much of Israel. Finally, 722 B.C. brought the demise of the Northern Kingdom of Israel at the hands of the Assyrians.

b. Read Jonah 1:3-17. Instead of going to Nineveh, the prophet Jonah boarded a ship bound for Tarshish. Then a violent storm arose which threatened to sink the ship. Why did the storm come? What caused the storm to subside?

The storm was so violent and intense even for the experienced sailors that they cried out to their gods to save them, and concluded that somebody on board had incurred divine wrath. They cast lots, trusting that the gods would reveal the guilty party. Jonah drew "the short straw." In verse 2, we read that, before boarding the ship, it is said of Jonah that he "ran away from the Lord."

The sailors tried everything they could think of, both physical and spiritual, to improve their situation. It became clear from Jonah's own admission of guilt and suggested course of action that the only thing to do was to throw him overboard. Once they did so, the storm immediately subsided. Seeing that, the sailors all believed in Jonah's God and worshipped.

c. God caused a large fish to swallow the prophet Jonah alive. There inside the fish, the prophet Jonah prayed to God. Why do you suppose God had caused the large fish to swallow the prophet Jonah?

This item mentions Jonah 2 (Jonah's prayer), but the reading of it is optional.

The question itself is more for discussion with no clear indications of a right answer in the text itself. Some possible answers include: God had the fish swallow Jonah to punish Jonah for disobedience, or to show the sailors that he is the true God, or to save Jonah from drowning.

d. What did the prophet Jonah say to the people of Nineveh?

"Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown."

How did they respond?

They believed God and repented with fasting, as ordered by the king. They had been idolaters but after Jonah's preaching, they acknowledged Jonah's God as right and true. Furthermore, they hoped that if they changed their ways, God would change his mind about destroying them.

How did God show mercy to Nineveh?

Forty days came and went and Nineveh was not destroyed. God did not do as he had threatened. He withheld the judgment they deserved for their wickedness.

e. Read Jonah 4:1-3. Why did the prophet Jonah become angry?

Jonah became angry because God showed mercy to the wicked people of Nineveh.

Even when he first received the "call" to go to Nineveh, Jonah thought this might be the outcome, and so he ran away. As he said in Jonah 4:2, "Isn't this what I said, LORD, when I was still at home? That is what I tried to forestall by fleeing to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity."

Jonah wanted the enemy of his people destroyed without mercy, and so he ran away, hoping that Nineveh would just be destroyed without warning. To put it bluntly, Jonah hated Nineveh and felt it was wrong to show mercy to that wicked city.

If necessary, review the point on God's grace in the Major Teaching Points for this lesson.

f. Read Jonah 4:4-11. Was the prophet Jonah right to be angry?

Hopefully, the student will understand that in this section God is intimating that Jonah is not right to be angry that Nineveh was spared.

It's not surprising that the prophet Jonah was angry, because

- He loved his own people and wanted them to be safe from all enemies, and
- The wickedness of Nineveh deserved punishment just as God had said earlier.

God asks Jonah if he has a right to be angry, and Jonah doesn't seem to understand the bigger picture.

So God provides Jonah with a leafy plant that shades him while he sits out in the hot sun waiting to see if God will yet destroy the city. Then the plant dies and Jonah is angry over that. God asks again if Jonah has a right to be angry. Jonah believes he does.

Now God turns the leafy plant into a lesson for Jonah. Jonah cared so much for a leafy plant that he became angry when it died. How much more should God be concerned about the 120,000 citizens of Nineveh (and the livestock)? The Ninevites had humbled themselves before God and were spiritually like small children needing fatherly compassion.

Jonah obeyed God after he was forced to. His attitude for his important ministry did not change even though he preached repentance. But God had other plans for what he would do with Nineveh. How unfortunate that Jonah never changed his attitude towards the enemies of his people, and agree with God.

Why do you think God spared Nineveh?

This question is not so much asking what the Bible says, but what the student has understood. The student might say, "because they repented," or "because God cared about them," or something else entirely. Accept the answer as an indication of the student's understanding of God's love and mercy to people.

Think of one thing that has impressed you about God's mercy in this event.

Encourage the student to express what the story has taught him/her about God's mercy.

If that is difficult, you could have the student complete the sentence, "God's mercy to the people of Nineveh was _____."

There are many possible ways to describe the mercy God showed in the story of Jonah--surprising, undeserved, boundless, wonderful, etc., etc. Not only did He show mercy to the people of Nineveh, but also to the sailors, and Jonah himself, by saving him from drowning and giving him a second chance to obey.

If the student has difficulty accepting the generosity of God's mercy, be understanding. In some ways, it can be described as "unbelievable." God is not a man that he should hold a grudge, and often, as humans, we can't get past casting God in the image of our own emotional makeup.

May the story of Jonah instill in the heart of your student, a desire like that of David who prayed, "Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions." (Psalm 51:1)

20 Prophets Speak of God's Chosen One

Throughout the centuries, God inspired various prophets to foretell many details concerning a special Chosen One who would save his people from Satan's power and one day rule as a mighty king. *Isaiah 7:14; 9:1-2, 6-7; 52:13—53:12*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

Prophecies from Isaiah, Micah, and the Psalms foretell many details about the coming Messiah.

Isaiah and Micah, whose writings are referenced here, are virtually unknown to Muslims.

- However, it is accepted that there have been as many as 124,000 prophets sent to mankind through the ages, most of whom have names that are not known.
- Islam teaches that, in addition to the 4 heavenly books (Taurat, Zabur, Injil, Qur'an), there are 100 other "sahifa" (plural is "suhuf") or pamphlets/papers written by other prophets, now lost.
- Islamic scholars generally attribute the 100 pamphlets to Adam (10), Seth (50), Enoch (30), and Abraham (10). Many Muslims are aware of the supposed existence of these "sahifa," but do not know who wrote them.
- Some people could easily accept/assume that Isaiah and Micah (and other Major and Minor Prophets) are in the company of the prophets who wrote these "sahifa."
- In some countries, a title such as "suhuf-un nabiyin" (pamphlets of the prophets) would be a suitable and recognizable designation for these scriptures that fall outside of the Taurat, Zabur, and Injil.
- Biblical prophets not part of the Torah/Taurat, Psalms/Zabur, and Gospel/Injil, and yet mentioned in the Qur'an include Job (4:163), Elijah (6:86), Elisha (6:87), Solomon (2:102), Jonah (4:163), Ezekiel (21:85), and Ezra (9:30). The very fact that these names are in the Qur'an are an apologetic for the legitimacy of such Bible books as Job, 1 & 2 Kings, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Jonah, Ezekiel, Ezra, Nehemiah.

Teaching notes:

a. His birth: Read Isaiah 7:14.

¹⁴ Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

Recall that the promised conqueror of Satan was said to be the offspring of the woman, but no mention was made of a father. See Event 6.

Re-read Genesis 3:15:

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

What possible connection do you see between Genesis 3:15 and Isaiah 7:14?

There are some difficult interpretive issues related to both of these passages, so don't press this possible connection too strongly.



It would be accurate to say:

1. The Satan-Conqueror promised in Genesis 3:15 would be the “Seed” (or offspring) of the woman. No mention is made of a father. Perhaps this was a hint that this Satan-Conqueror would be born through a miraculous virgin birth.
2. In Isaiah 7:14, God’s prophet Isaiah promised a sign to the children of Israel—a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son. The name of this virgin-born Son would be “Immanuel” which literally means “God with us.”
3. These two prophetic promises were possibly referring to one and the same person. Many evangelical Bible scholars do believe that there is a connection between these two verses.

b. His birthplace: Read Micah 5:2.

²“ But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.”

Explain to the student that “Bethlehem Ephrathah” was a small town located in the area of Palestine that was possessed by the Israelite tribe of Judah. Locate it (Bethlehem) on the map on page 28.

How does this verse relate to the scepter promise that Jacob made to his son Judah in Genesis 49:10? See event 16.

Near the time of his death, Prophet Jacob predicted that a kingly ruler and lawgiver would come from the descendants of Judah and that “the people” or “nations” would obey this king.

Prophet David was from the tribe of Judah and from the town of Bethlehem, but the prophet Micah is writing about 300 years after the time of David. He seems to predict that another king descended from the people of Israel that would come from Bethlehem. But then Micah adds something unique about this future Ruler—His “goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.”

What could that mean? Hold that thought to discuss later as Jesus is revealed more fully in further lessons!

It may also help to refer back to event 16, point c. and the prophecy of Numbers 24:17 and the “star” – another prophecy having to do with Jesus’ birth.

c. His ministry in Galilee: Read Isaiah 9:1-2, 6. Note that this area was near the Sea of Galilee.

Locate this area on the map on page 28. Notice that it includes the towns of Capernaum, Bethesda, and Nazareth.

Explain that the area around Galilee was repeatedly oppressed by the enemies of the Israelites a couple of hundred years or so after David died. Many of them were taken away as captives. Non-Israelites (“Gentiles”) were brought into the area to replace the Israelites who were removed as captives. Thus, the area had a long dark history of oppression. A child would be born (“a son given”) who would bring light to this area.

d. His death: Read Isaiah 52:13-53:12. What bad things would be done to the man described here...?



Here are a few of them:

- 52:14 -- His visage (appearance) and form would be marred more than any man had experienced.
- 53:2 – He would have no form or comeliness (attractive features) or beauty that would cause people to be attracted to Him.
- 53:3 – He would be despised and rejected; people would hide their faces from Him.
- 53:4 – He would be smitten by God and afflicted.
- 53:5 – He would be wounded and bruised.
- 53:7 – He would be oppressed and afflicted; He would be led like a lamb to the slaughter.
- 53:8 – He would be cut off from the land of the living (killed!).

... and what good things would result from His sufferings?

Here are a few of them:

- 52:15 – He would “sprinkle many nations” (Just ask rhetorically—What could that mean?)
- 53:5 – His wounds and bruises would be for us—He would take the punishment that we deserve.
- 53:6 – God would place our sin (iniquity) on Him, in a similar way to what was described in event 17.
- 53:11 – Through Him (here called “God’s [My] Righteous Servant”) many would be “justified” because he bore (carried) their sins.
- 53:12 – God would count Him as “great” because of the noble thing He would do—die for the sins of many sinners (transgressors).

e. His resurrection from death: Read Psalm 16:8-10. What does verse 10 indicate?

The first part of the verse (“For you will not leave my soul in Sheol (the grave)”) seems to be referring to the immaterial part of this man (his spirit or soul).

The second part of the verse (“Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.”) seems to indicate that this man’s body would not decay in the grave.

f. His eternal kingdom: Read Isaiah 9:6-7.

Verse 7 indicates that the chosen king will sit upon the throne of Prophet Dawud and rule over his kingdom. He will establish His kingdom with judgment and justice, forever!

Remember to ask your students “How does God reveal Himself in the events on pages 14 and 15?” Remember the purpose of this “bottom of the double-page spread.” As the student reads and studies the Scriptures, this activity helps the student learn about God, Who He is, what He has done, and what He still will do.

As we move from the Old Testament lessons to the New Testament lessons, please remember the considerations and potential pitfalls as you study with your Muslim friend that we pointed out at the beginning of the TMOH Leader’s Guide. Please take some time now and go back to pages 1 and 2 and review this advice.

The Chronological Bible Story

How is God Portrayed in Events   ? (page 15)

21 Birth of Messiah Jesus, The Prophet

At God's appointed time, He sent His Chosen One to Earth, born of a virgin named Mary, as the special King and Savior that He had promised for centuries. *Matthew 1:1-2, 18-25; Luke 2:1-14*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- Jesus is the prophesied "Chosen One" or Messiah in the Taurat/Torah and the writings of the Prophets. Muslims know Him by the name "Isa", pronounced "Eesa."
- Jesus was born of the virgin Mary (Maryam) in fulfillment of prophecy. One of the most common Qur'anic ways of referring to Jesus is calling Him "Isa ibn (son of) Maryam."
- Jesus was born to save His people and to be their king and master.
- Jesus' name Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:23) means "God with us." The meaning of His name points to Jesus' deity. Because this can be an inflammatory issue with Muslims, this should not be discussed now, but will be introduced gradually beginning with event 22.

Teaching notes:

a. Read the beginning of the genealogy of Jesus the prophet in Matthew 1:1-2. What special things do you remember about these ancestors of Jesus the prophet?

Abraham > Isaac/Ishaq > Jacob/Yaqub > Judah

Prophet Abraham: See Event 12. God called Abraham from Ur of Chaldea. He went with his father (Terah) to Haran, where they stopped to live. Abraham moved on into Canaan, the land that God promised to give to his descendants. God tested Abraham's faith by asking him to offer his son as a sacrifice. God stopped Abraham from doing this and provided a substitute sacrifice (a ram) to die instead. God promised Abraham that all of the families of the earth would be blessed through him and his descendants.

Isaac was a special miracle son that God gave to Abraham and his wife Sarah in their old age. One of Isaac's sons was Jacob, whose name was changed to "Israel" (prince of God) after he committed his life to God. Prophet Jacob/Israel had twelve sons. God worked things out so that Prophet Yusuf/Joseph, a special son of Jacob, would become a ruler in the country of Egypt. It was in Egypt that Jacob's family grew into a very large clan which became known as the people of Israel/Bani-Israil because they were the descendants of Jacob whose other name was "Israel."

As he neared death, Jacob made predictions regarding all of his sons and the tribes that would descend through them. To one of Israel's sons, Judah, the LORD God predicted that a "scepter" (rod used by a king) would not depart from Judah's tribe and that nations would obey the ruler who carried that scepter (Genesis 49:10; see event 16).

About the Jews and Bani-Israil:

It is from the name "Judah," the name of the ruling tribe, that the name "Jew" finds its origin. In time, all the descendants of Prophet Yaqub/Israel, or Bani-Israil, became known as the Jewish

people. So the name “Bani-Israil” (literally the sons/children of Israel) and the name “Jews” (Yahudi), refer to the same people. This may be an important point for your student because there is much confusion about this among Muslims. In previous lessons, there has been much talk about “Bani-Israil”, the children of Israel or Israelites. In future lessons, there will be more reference to the “Jews” since that is usually how the New Testament speaks about the Israelites. But there may be a disconnect here in your student’s mind partly because of Islamic teaching.

On one hand, the Qur’an usually speaks of “Bani-Israil” as an ancient people before Muhammad’s time who were led by Moses out of bondage, and some of whom conspired against Jesus, but who are a mix of believer and disbeliever. On the other hand, the Qur’an speaks of the “Jews” in a more negative light. They are contemporaries of Muhammad who listen to any lie (Surah 5:41), believe that God is impotent (5:64), claim to be children of God (5:18), are not to be befriended (5:51), are the greatest opponents of the Muslims (5:82) [unlike Christians who are termed the “nearest in love” to the Muslims], and they claim Ezra is the son of God (9:30). It is not surprising that Muslims might think that Bani-Israil and the Jews are two entirely different people (see Event 15 also).

The Qur’an goes as far to question that the 12 tribes of Israel were Jews at all:

Or do you say that Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and the tribes were Jews or Christians? Say: Do you know better than God? Ah! Who is more unjust than those who conceal the testimony they have from God? But God is not unmindful of what you do! (Surah 2:140)

b. Read Matthew 1:18-25. What indications do we see here that Jesus the prophet was a unique child? Hints: the way He was conceived and His names Isa and Immanuel.

The way Jesus was conceived:

- Jesus was not conceived in Mary/Maryam by a human husband. She was a virgin when Jesus the prophet was conceived in her; it was a supernatural work of God.
- Islam also teaches that Jesus was born of a virgin. (Surah 3:45-47, and 19:16-22)
- In fact, Jesus the prophet is the only person to ever be born of a virgin.
- This makes him unique, but Islam does not see the virgin birth as an indication of Jesus’ deity. Rather, it is a proof of God’s creative power, like that which resulted in the creation of Adam with neither mother nor father.

Surely the likeness of Isa is with God as the likeness of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him, Be, and he was. (Surah 3:59)

- Despite this, Jesus the prophet remains unique as the only virgin-born person ever to walk this earth. Surely this is an indication that God has a special plan and place for Jesus the prophet.

Jesus’ names:

- God sent an angel to Joseph/Yusuf (to whom Mary was engaged) and told him that the child that Mary would give birth to would be called “Jesus,” which means “the LORD is Savior.” Other children, at this time, were named “Jesus,” but the angel told Joseph that this child born to Mary would be true to His name—“He will save His people from their sins.”
- This scripture also teaches that this child would be called “Immanuel” which means “God with us.” The meaning of His name points to Jesus’ deity. Because this can be an inflammatory issue with Muslims, this should not be discussed now, but will be introduced gradually beginning with event 22.

c. Read Luke 2:1-7 and compare these events to the prophecy of Micah 5:2. See event 20.

Mary, the mother of Jesus the prophet and the man to whom she was engaged (Joseph) lived in Nazareth. Locate Nazareth on the map on page 28.

Even though they lived in Nazareth at the time, Joseph and Mary were both from the tribe of Judah and were both descendants of David. For that reason, they were required to go to Bethlehem (where David was born and grew up), in the area of Palestine set aside for the tribe of Judah, in order to report for the census that the Roman Caesar Augustus issued at this time. The journey from Nazareth was about 70 miles (113 kilometers). Locate Bethlehem on the map on page 28.

Review point b. of event 20.

In Micah 5:2, about 700 years before the birth of Jesus, God's prophet Micah predicted that a special future Ruler would come from Bethlehem, (even though this was a small town in the land of Judah) and that this Ruler would be "from of old, from everlasting."

Don't comment in detail on this. Just let the thought sink in for now because it will be clarified later in the study.

d. Read Luke 2:8-14. Identify the 3 titles given to the newborn baby in verse 11, and discuss their possible significance.

Savior = one who saves could be used for various types of "saving," physically or spiritually.

- In light of what we have already studied in Matthew 1:18-25 above, it is clear that Jesus the prophet would be the One Who saves His people from their sins.
- Islam seldom speaks of "salvation" or "savior", so this may be unfamiliar territory for your student. Even the Quran uses the word "salvation" (najat) only once (Surah 40:41).
- What it means for Jesus to be Savior will be made clear in future lessons.

Christ = Anointed One.

- The Arabic word "masih" (Christ/Messiah) is used of Jesus the prophet 11 times in the Qur'an. Unfortunately, Muslims are not taught what the term means.
- Even without the benefit of biblical teaching to fill out the meaning of "Christ", there are at least two significant truths that can be gleaned from the Qur'anic use of the title:

Only Jesus is the Christ (al-Masih). There are many prophets mentioned in the Qur'an, but only one person in the Qur'an is called by the title "Christ/Messiah" (al-Masih). Quotations below are taken from the Shakir translation at Quran.com because of its inclusion of the definite article ("the") in translating "al- masih" as "the Messiah."

1. 3:45 *When the angels said: O Marium, surely God gives you good news with a Word from Him (of one) whose name is the **Messiah**, Isa son of Marium, worthy of regard in this world and the hereafter and of those who are made near (to God).*
2. 4:157 *And their saying: Surely we have killed the **Messiah**, Isa son of Marium, the messenger of God; and they did not kill him nor did they crucify him, but it appeared to them so (like Isa) and most surely those who differ therein are only in a doubt about it; they have no knowledge respecting it, but only follow a conjecture, and they killed him not for sure.*
3. 4:171 *O followers of the Book! do not exceed the limits in your religion, and do not speak (lies) against God, but (speak) the truth; the **Messiah**, Isa son of Marium is only a messenger of God and His Word which He communicated to Marium and a spirit from Him; believe therefore in God and His messengers, and say not, Three. Desist, it is better for you; God is only one God; far*

be It from His glory that He should have a son, whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His, and God is sufficient for a Protector.

4. 4:172 The **Messiah** does by no means disdain that he should be a servant of God, nor do the angels who are near to Him, and whoever disdains His service and is proud, He will gather them all together to Himself.
5. 5:17 Certainly they disbelieve who say: Surely, God-- He is the **Messiah**, son of Marium. Say: Who then could control anything as against God when He wished to destroy the **Messiah** son of Marium and his mother and all those on the earth? And God's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and what is between them; He creates what He pleases; and God has power over all things...
6. 5:72 Certainly they disbelieve who say: Surely God, He is the **Messiah**, son of Marium; and the **Messiah** said: O Children of Israel! serve God, my Lord and your Lord. Surely whoever associates (others) with God, then God has forbidden to him the garden, and his abode is the fire; and there shall be no helpers for the unjust.
7. 5:75 The **Messiah**, son of Marium is but a messenger; messengers before him have indeed passed away; and his mother was a truthful woman; they both used to eat food. See how We make the communications clear to them, then behold, how they are turned away.
8. 9:30 And the Jews say: Uzair is the son of God; and the Christians say: The **Messiah** is the son of God; these are the words of their mouths; they imitate the saying of those who disbelieved before; may God destroy them; how they are turned away!
9. 9:31 They have taken their doctors of law and their monks for lords besides God, and (also) the **Messiah** son of Marium and they were enjoined that they should serve one God only, there is no god but He; far from His glory be what they set up (with Him).

There must be something very special and unique to be known about Jesus the prophet from the title Messiah. Muslims know that Prophet Abraham was honored with the title "Khalilullah" (friend of God; compare 2 Chronicles. 20:7 and James 2:23), and that other prophets received similar meaningful titles. Surely then there is something significant to be discovered about Jesus the prophet by researching the meaning of this title Christ/Messiah.

In the Luke 2 passage, "Christ" is translated from the Greek "christos", which literally means "anointed (one)." In the Hebrew language, the word "masiah" (Messiah), bears the same meaning of anointed. The word is derived from the practice of anointing with oil those who were chosen by God to serve in a special position. For example:

- Aaron and his sons were anointed as PRIESTS. After you put these clothes on your brother Aaron and his sons, anoint and ordain them. Consecrate them so they may serve me as priests. (Exodus 28:41) Take the anointing oil and anoint him by pouring it on his head. (Exodus 29:7)
- Saul, David, and others were anointed with oil to serve as KINGS of Israel. Then Samuel took a flask of olive oil and poured it on Saul's head and kissed him, saying, "Has not the LORD anointed you ruler over his inheritance? (1 Samuel 10:1; for David's anointing see 1 Samuel 16:13). By the way, in the Qur'an, Saul is known as Talut, and his story is told in Surah 2:247-251. Samuel is also in the story but remains unnamed. Their prophet [i.e. Samuel] said to them: God has appointed Talut as king over you. How they said: how can he exercise authority over us when we are better fitted than he to exercise authority, and he is not even gifted with wealth in abundance? He said: God has chosen him above you, and has gifted him abundantly with knowledge and bodily prowess: God grants his authority to whom he pleases. God cares for all, and he knows all things. (2:247)

- The term “anointed” came to refer to God’s chosen king, priests, prophets, etc., whether or not they were anointed with oil. For example, Psalm 105:15 speaks of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in this way, “Do not touch my anointed ones; do my prophets no harm” (this verse also affirms that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are prophets, as Muslims believe). Even after his own anointing as king by Samuel, David always spoke of King Saul as “the Lord’s anointed” (1 Samuel 24:6,10; 26:9,11,16,23; 2 Samuel 1:14,16). David himself is spoken of in the same way repeatedly (2 Samuel 19:21; 22:51; Psalm 89:20; 132:17).
- Gradually, “anointed one” came to refer to that promised Chosen One who will redeem and rule His people, that is, the Messiah. Recall the prophecy of Psalm 2 in event 18.

Psalm 2:2 “The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the LORD and against his **anointed**, saying ...” See Acts 4:26 where this verse is quoted as fulfilled in Jesus.

Isaiah 61:1 “The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has **anointed** me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives, and release from darkness for the prisoners ...”

Jesus the prophet publicly read this verse near the beginning of His ministry in Luke 4:18. He followed the reading by saying “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing” (Luke 4:21).

Daniel 9:25, 26 “Know and understand this: From the time the word goes out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the **Anointed** One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven “sevens,” and sixty-two “sevens.” It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. After the sixty-two “sevens,” the **Anointed** One will be put to death and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed ...”

This passage may raise many questions in the minds of readers, but one thing stated very clearly is that “the Anointed One will be put to death.”

All together, these words indicate that Mary’s son would be very special—He would be the Messiah (Anointed King) of His people, the Israelites, sent to give them freedom and release them from darkness.

e. At the bottom of each of the double-page on pages 16-25, put a mark beside the ways Jesus the prophet is portrayed in the four events on the two pages.

Notice the change of characteristics at the bottom of this double-page spread from the ones of events 1-20. Previously, we looked for characteristics (attributes) of God that we saw displayed in the events that we had just previously studied. For the next 20 events, we want to look for characteristics of Jesus the prophet al-Masih.

22 Temptations by Satan

At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus the Prophet was personally tested by Satan but resisted Satan's temptations with statements from God's Word. *Matthew 4:1-11*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- Jesus fasted for 40 days and nights just as Moses (and Elijah) did before Him.
- Jesus was tested by Satan but passed the test, and proved to be without sin.
- Jesus and Eve are contrasted in relation to their response to Satan's temptations.
- Jesus is referred to as Son of God by Satan, giving an initial opportunity to introduce this title with the student. It is difficult for Muslims to accept this; some of this rejection is misunderstanding. We will have more comments in the next event, and it will be dealt with in fuller measure in Events 28 and 29.
- Jesus quoted God's Word from the Torah and Zabur as part of His strategy in resisting temptation.

Teaching notes:

At this point in the study, the student has already learned something about the Torah, the Psalms, and the writings of the prophets. At the time that Jesus lived on this earth, all these scriptures had already been given, and Jesus knew them very, very well.

a. In order to verify that the prophet Jesus was truly a unique person, God's Spirit led Him into the desert where He faced a grueling series of temptations by the ultimate tempter—Satan.

Remind the student how persuasive Satan was when he tempted Eve/Hawwa in the Garden of Eden. Introduce the study of this event by saying, "Let's compare how Jesus responded to Satan's temptations with the way in which, the first woman, Eve, responded many centuries earlier."

b. Read Matthew 4:1-4. How would you summarize the nature of Jesus the prophet's first temptation?

Jesus was very hungry because He had fasted for 40 days and nights. Explain what the spiritual discipline of "fasting" is—abstaining from eating in order to devote oneself to focusing on communion with God.

Unlike the fast of Ramadan, where fasting from food and drink is done only during daylight hours, Jesus fasted day and night throughout the 40 days. Prophet Musa and Prophet Ilyas also fasted for 40 days and nights (Exodus 34:28; 1 Kings 19:8).

Satan tempted Jesus to create bread out of stones and to break his fast by satisfying the hunger of his body.

Satan's first two temptations begin with "If you are the Son of God." This is the first time we

have encountered this phrase. The Gospel uses this wording in many occasions to describe Jesus. It is very difficult for Muslims to understand. Most Muslims have been taught a simplistic literal meaning, and believe that the Gospel states that God had sexual relations with Mary and had a son. This idea is repugnant to all Christians and is not what the Gospel claims. **Instead of confronting this now, say something like “Let’s agree to use this term for now, and let the Holy Scriptures explain it as we study.”** We’ll encounter this term again in the next event.

How did He respond?

Jesus quoted a verse from the Torah (Deuteronomy 8:3) to inform Satan that there are things that are more important than the food that satisfies our physical hunger—the words from God recorded in the Scriptures that satisfy our spiritual needs.

c. Read Matthew 4:5-7. How would you summarize the nature of Jesus the prophet’s second temptation?

Satan took Jesus to the top of the temple in Jerusalem and challenged Him to prove that He was the Son of God by leaping off the temple so that God’s angels would rush to catch Him.

How did He respond?

Again, Jesus quoted from God’s Word (Psalm 91:11, 12 and Deuteronomy 6:16). He rebuked Satan for trying to tempt “the LORD your God”—for trying to force God to respond to Satan’s demands.

d. Read Matthew 4:8-11. How would you summarize the nature of Jesus the prophet’s third temptation?

Satan took Jesus up on an exceedingly high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. He promised Jesus that he (Satan) would give Him (Jesus) all of those kingdoms if Jesus would fall down and worship Him.

How did He respond?

This time He rebuked Satan strongly and told him to “get away!” Jesus then quoted from a verse in the Torah where Moses said to the children of Israel, “Worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.” (Deuteronomy 6:13)

e. How does Jesus’ response to Satan’s temptations differ from that of Eve, the first woman? See event 4.

1. Eve yielded; Jesus resisted.
2. Eve was led to doubt God’s Word, and also misquoted it; Jesus cited it with confidence.
3. Eve’s disobedience to God showed her weakness; Jesus’ obedience to God revealed His spiritual strength.

f. What words come to mind when you read about the way the prophet Jesus resisted Satan’s temptations?

Ask for the student to share the words that come to his/her mind.

There are many possible good responses to this question. Here are a few:

Strong – bold – resistant – courageous – faithful – determined – etc.

How is Jesus Portrayed in Events ? (page 16)

If necessary, review with the student the instructions in point e. of event 21 (“Birth of Jesus of Nazareth” on top of page 16 in *The Message of Hope*).

• • •

Don’t think that you (and the student) need to find all 14 characteristics in the four events on any of the double-page spreads.

Remember the purpose of these “bottom of the double-page spread” activities—to help the student learn about Jesus, who He is and what He did, as the student reads and studies the Bible.

For example, ask:

“Did we see Jesus portrayed as a Humble Human Being in any of these events?”

Allow the student to share his thoughts and then you can share some additional ones.

“Did we see Jesus portrayed as a Sinless Man in any of these events?”

Discuss.

“Did we see Jesus portrayed as God in Human Flesh in any of these events?”

Discuss.

Etc...until all 14 characteristics of Jesus have been covered.

23 The Proclamation of the Prophet John

The Prophet John announced to his generation that Prophet Jesus is God's Chosen One sent into the world for the benefit of all mankind. *John 1:29-34*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- John the Baptist proclaimed that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Jesus came to save people from their sins. Jesus is for all people.
- Jesus, as the Lamb of God, completed and gave full meaning to Abraham's sacrifice, the deliverance of Israel in the Passover, and the whole Jewish sacrificial system.
- God revealed to John that Jesus is the Son of God. It is difficult for Muslims to accept this, some of which is because of misunderstanding. In this event, this revelation is examined in more detail, but we will not deal with it fully until Events 28 and 29 – this will give time for us to see what the Gospel says about Jesus in Events 24-27.
- Jesus' existence predates his birth.
- Jesus is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. Through this, believers can experience a relationship with God in their daily lives.

Teaching notes:

a. At about the age of 30, the prophet Jesus began his public ministry. At that time, the prophet John was telling people to prepare for the coming of God's Chosen One.

John the Baptist is a fairly well-known prophet of Islam, known simply by the name Yahya (John), a name also found commonly in the Muslim world.

When the Bible says "John the Baptist," it helps the reader distinguish this John from the apostle John and others like John Mark, but such help is not needed by Muslims. John the Baptist is the only John known as John to them. Apostle John and John Mark are not well-known, and even if known, are generally identified by a variant form of the name John, such as Yuhanna.

Referring to John as "the Baptist" may confuse the student, because it is an unknown term. Calling him Prophet John may be sufficient to identify him.

b. Read John 1:29. Remember what we studied about sacrificial lambs in event 17? Why were the lambs sacrificed?

Turn back to event 17 and ask the student to review with you what he/she remembers about the sacrifices that took place at the bronze altar near the front gate of the tabernacle.

Fill in any gaps in his/her memory, especially related to the characteristics of the animals that were offered and the process through which the sins of the offerer were transferred to the sacrificial animal. Review and re-explain how the animal took the place of the offerer on the altar and how the offerer's sin penalty was paid.



c. We also saw a lamb used when God delivered the people of Israel from Egypt through the prophet Moses. See event 15. Death came to all the firstborn of Egypt, but what happened in homes where the blood was applied?

Turn back to event 15 and ask the student to review with you what he/she remembers about the last of the 10 plagues, the death of the firstborn, and how God “passed over” the house of anyone who had put the lamb’s blood on the doorposts.

d. See event 13. Remember the words of the prophet Abraham to his son at the place of sacrifice, “God himself will provide the lamb?”

Turn back to event 13 and review how Abraham said a lamb would be provided, but that a ram is what he actually sacrificed. Review the differences between a lamb and ram (baby vs. adult male; no horns vs. horns). Remind the student that in no way can a ram be called a lamb, and that therefore Abraham must be speaking as a prophet.

Both the prophet Abraham and the prophet John speak of the lamb from God, but what new information is given through the prophet John?

This is a very important point in the study of *The Message of Hope*. Give the student time to answer the question. Answers you are hoping for include--

- The prophet John says that the Lamb of God is the **Prophet Jesus**
- The Lamb of God **TAKES AWAY SINS**

This idea could be new and challenging for the student.

That anyone can take away sins except God is blasphemous. Muslims can have the same strong idea about this as the Jews did when Jesus forgave the sins of the paralytic (Event 28). The subject of Prophet Jesus’ authority to forgive sins will be examined in that event.

Wait until Event 28 to discuss this in depth.

- The Lamb of God is for **ALL PEOPLE** (“of the world”).

This might be a new concept. Even though Muslims embrace Jesus as one of their prophets, they often think the message of Jesus as having been limited to Jews and/or Christians and not worldwide in scope.

The subject will be visited again in later events.

e. Read John 1:30-34. What other special things do we learn about Jesus the prophet?

There are several controversial issues in these verses, but the most difficult by far is John’s declaration that Jesus is the Son of God in verse 34. **If you sense that this is going to be too difficult for your student at this time, you may do well to skip this for now.** Instead, you could go directly to Event 24 “Miracles of Jesus” and promise to come back later, but be sure to study this lesson before studying Event 28.



Verse 30: This is the one I meant when I said, “A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.”

- Even though John was a great prophet sent from God, he declared that Jesus “has surpassed me” [John].”
- Even though John was a few months older than Jesus, he declared that “He [Jesus] was before me.”

What could that mean? Briefly discuss.

It suggests that, in some sense, Jesus existed before John existed.

Verse 31: “I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.”

- John mentions that he came baptizing with water. The meaning of baptism may be unknown to your student, or not well understood.
- Explain that, when people accepted John’s message, they were publicly immersed in water as a sign that they repent of their sins and choose to follow God’s way.
- Ceremonial washing is not unknown to the student since washing with water (wudu) is required to make a Muslim ceremonially clean for prayers (salat).
- One difference is that washing before prayer is repeated if you do something that makes you ceremonially unclean, whereas baptism happens only once as an initiation/identification rite.

Verse 32: “Then John gave this testimony: I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him.”

- There is a good possibility that the student will wonder what is happening in this verse.
- First, he doesn’t know who “the Spirit” is.

Since Islam does not accept the doctrine of the Trinity, the notion of the Holy Spirit as God the Holy Spirit is unknown to most Muslims.

Islam uses the phrase “Holy Spirit” as an alternate designation for the Angel Gabriel/Jibril.

Two verses below from the Qur’an illustrate this. The first uses the name Gabriel, and the second verse is said to refer to Gabriel, even though it says the Holy Spirit:

Say: Whoever is an enemy to Gabriel -- for he brings down the revelation to the heart by God's will, a confirmation of what went before, and guidance and glad tidings for those who believe — (Surah 2:97)

Say: The Holy Spirit has brought the revelation from your Lord in truth, in order to strengthen those who believe, and as a guide and glad tidings to those who submit. (Surah 16:102)

Your student may or may not be familiar with the idea of Gabriel being called the Holy Spirit.

- Second, the idea of the dove coming down from heaven will be new and strange to a Muslim reader. A simple explanation is probably better than a deep theological answer.

You can say that the dove was given as a visible sign from God to show John that Jesus was the Chosen One of God and that God was with Jesus in a very special way.

You could further explain that “the Spirit” and “the Holy Spirit” are just other ways of referring to God in the Scriptures.

See “Supplemental Information” at the end of this lesson for further information on the Holy Spirit.

Verse 33: “I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’”

- There is a good possibility that the student will not understand this verse on first reading.
- Ask the student if he understands it and can say it in different words. John recognized Jesus as God’s Chosen One because God (“the One who sent me to baptize”) told him it is the one on whom the Spirit descends as a dove.
- Jesus is “he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.” Tell the student that one of the special benefits Jesus bestows on his followers is that God, through the Holy Spirit, comes into their lives, and they begin a living relationship with God. God is no longer distant. They come to know God personally.

Verse 34: “I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God.”

- John testified that Jesus was “the Son of God.”
- Some prophets in Islam have special honorary titles which describe something about them.
Adam is Safi ullah, the chosen of God.
Noah is Naji ullah, the saved of God.
Abraham is Khalil ullah, the friend of God.
Moses is Kalim ullah, the one who talked with God.
Jesus is Ruh ullah, the spirit of God.

It is fitting that the one who taught a great deal about what God is like would be called “Son of God.”

It is too much to attempt to prove and defend Jesus’ deity at this point. Let’s approach this cautiously and with prayer in the following way.

“Son of God” means that Jesus has a special and unique spiritual relationship with God.

There are two problems to the Muslim with the title “Son of God:”

1. “Son of God” is taken very literally. That is, they think it must mean that Prophet Jesus is the fruit of a sexual union between God and Mary. The Qur’an teaches that:

God has never taken a wife.

To him is due the primal origin of the heavens and the earth: how can he have a son when he has no consort? He created all things, and he has full knowledge of all things. (Surah 6:101)

It would be inappropriate for God to have a son.



It is not befitting to (the majesty of) God that He should beget a son. Glory be to Him! when He determines a matter, He only says to it, "Be", and it is. (Surah 19:35)

2. The other part of the problem with "Son of God" for Muslims is that it strikes at the very heart of Islamic monotheism (Tawhid) as described in Surah 112:1-4:

1 Say: He is God, the one and only;

2 God, the eternal, absolute;

3 **He begets not, nor is he begotten;**

4 And there is none like unto him.

In the Muslim mindset, to say that God has a son is equivalent to saying there is more than one God—that God has elevated one of his creations to become another God. This is the worst possible sin and will never be forgiven. This sin is often called "ascribing partners to God" (in Arabic "shirk").

Muslims have mistaken Christian belief:

Christians do NOT believe in more than one God: that is polytheism.

Christians do NOT believe that God has taken a wife; it would be inappropriate for Him to physically father a son.

Nor do Christians believe that God elevated Jesus from being a mere creature to become another God. That would be adoptionism, sometimes called dynamic monarchianism; a minority Christian belief that Jesus was born a man then became divine, i.e. adopted as God's son, at His baptism.

It is not appropriate to relate the following truths at this time because we have just introduced the term "Son of God" to our inquiring friend, but these will become clearer as we study in the Holy Scriptures about Jesus:

- The orthodox Christian belief is that Jesus existed, not only before his birth as a baby, but before creation itself. Simply put, the one true God chose to be born as a baby.
- We believe that Jesus is the literal Son of God, not in the sense of biological son, but in the sense that He is fully and literally divine.

This will be taught in Events 28 and 29, and will be better addressed in events that show clearly His deity and Sonship.

It is probably better to answer simply at this point, if there is disagreement: "Let's continue to study and see if the Gospel will prove its claim to this title."

Supplemental Information

Do not enter into the following discussion unless it seems necessary, because it is a "rabbit trail" which might divert you from the important discussion about what John the Baptist says about Jesus. The following information is here to prepare you just in case you need it.



The “Paraclete” of John’s Gospel: The mention of the Holy Spirit in John 1:32-33 might cause an astute student to bring up the Islamic claim that John 14:16 predicts the coming of Muhammad.

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever (John 14:16)

According to Islamic teaching, the Greek word “paracletos” (counselor/advocate/comforter—literally “one who comes alongside”) is a corruption of the original reading, “periklutos.” “Periklutos” means “praised one” just as the Arabic name “Ahmad” does. “Ahmad” is an alternate name for Muhammad in Surah 61:6--

And remember, Jesus, the son of Mary, said: “O Children of Israel! I am the messenger of God (sent) to you, confirming the Law (which came) before me, and giving Glad Tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad.” But when he came to them with Clear Signs, they said, “this is evident sorcery!”

Islamic teachers say that the above Qur’anic verse is referring to John 14:16 which they say originally predicted that, after Jesus, there will come another messenger, Muhammad.

- This idea is widely promoted and propagated in part because the integrity of the Qur’an itself is at stake.
- Along this line, Surah 7:157 claims that Muhammad, “the unlettered (or illiterate) Prophet” is mentioned in both the Law of Moses (the Taurat) and the Gospel of Christ (the Injil).

“Those who follow the messenger, the unlettered Prophet, whom they find mentioned in their own (scriptures), - in the law and the Gospel; - for he commands them what is just and forbids them what is evil; he allows them as lawful what is good (and pure) and prohibits them from what is bad (and impure); He releases them from their heavy burdens and from the yokes that are upon them. So it is those who believe in him, honor him, help him, and follow the light which is sent down with him, - it is they who will prosper.”

Islamic scholars feel they must find Muhammad in the Bible; otherwise the Qur’an makes an empty claim when it says that Muhammad is mentioned in the Bible.

- See also the Event 16, c. discussion on Deuteronomy 18:15, 18 for insights into these claims regarding Muhammad.

But what about John 14:16? Is there any possibility that it actually does predict the coming of Muhammad? The answer is NO, and here are some reasons why...

1. The claim that “paracletos” was originally “periklutos” is made with no textual evidence whatsoever. There are over 5,600 ancient Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, all of which read “paracletos” (counselor/advocate), while not even one reads “periklutos.”
2. The immediate context does not allow such an interpretation. The statement begun in John 14:16 is completed in John 14:17.

(v.16) “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever,

(v.17) the Spirit of truth: The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.”

- The Counselor is the “Spirit of truth” which we learn was not visible with human eyes, was living with the disciples Jesus was speaking to, would later actually be “in” them, and will be with them forever.

- This, of course, is the Holy Spirit who filled and empowered Jesus to do miracles and healing (Acts 10:38), and who would later descend on the Day of Pentecost to begin his work of dwelling within each follower of Jesus Christ right up to this very day (Acts 2:4; 1 Cor. 12:13).

3. The wider context of John's Gospel does not allow such an interpretation.

- "Paracletos" is found in several other places in John's Gospel and they must all be considered in context.
- John 14:26 "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."

We see here that the Counselor or Holy Spirit will be sent in Jesus' name to his disciples to teach them and remind them of all that Jesus said.

This was fulfilled at Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came, enabling the disciples to remember, speak, and write the truth about Jesus in the written gospels and other New Testament writings.

- John 15:26 "When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about Me."

Jesus will send the Spirit of truth to his disciples, and the Spirit will in some way testify about Jesus.

When the Holy Spirit came on Pentecost, the disciples received power to testify about Jesus, beginning at Jerusalem and ultimately, throughout the world (Acts 1:8).

- John 16:7 "But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you."

Ten days after Jesus ascended bodily to heaven, the Holy Spirit or Counselor was sent down to the disciples on the Day of Pentecost just as Jesus had said (Acts 1:5).

4. If it is admitted that the Counselor is Muhammad, then the following must also be accepted that:

- Muhammad is the Holy Spirit in John 14:26, contradicting Muslim belief that the Holy Spirit is the angel Gabriel.
- Jesus sends Muhammad in John 15:26 and 16:7.
- Jesus sends Muhammad in Jesus' name.
- Muhammad dwells with the disciples forever (John 14:16-17):

Not only is Muhammad too late by 600 years, he can't dwell with them forever.

The argument that the truth/law given by Muhammad will be with them forever is spurious since they (Jesus' disciples) never received it.

- The disciples of Jesus know Muhammad. (John 14:16-17)
- **Reason #4 is quoted from answering-islam.org website.**

Encounter with a Samaritan Woman

On another occasion, Prophet Jesus explained to a woman from Samaria how God could permanently satisfy her spiritual thirst.

John 4:1-42



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- Jesus is meeting with the low and despised: God is interested in all people, not just those from a specific people or ethnic group.
- Jesus shows He was able to deliver the gift of eternal life/living water because He has knowledge only God could have. This continues to build upon the truth that Jesus is the Son of God, as we have seen in the previous lessons.
- Jesus states that place is not important in worship. It is unimportant to worship at a specific place or toward a specific place or city because God is Spirit — He is to be worshipped in spirit and truth. Inner attitude is more important than outer form.
- Jesus is taking worship and belief as the Messiah, “the Anointed One,” not directing belief to God.

Teaching notes:

a. In the prophet Jesus’ day, people from Samaria were looked down upon and even hated by most people of Israel. They were forbidden by their religious leaders to even talk with Samaritans. They were considered to be religiously unclean. With that in mind, read John 4:1-9.

Locate Samaria on the map on page 28. Sychar is present day Nablus in Palestine. It is near the ancient city of Shechem (destroyed one hundred years before Prophet Jesus was born), between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim.

Explain that the Samaritans had a mixed racial background—they were partly descended from the children of Israel and partly not. Several centuries earlier, the foreign political powers who ruled over that area at the time brought many foreigners into Samaria, where the children of Israel lived, in order to produce a mixed race of people. They were looked down upon by the children of Israel.

On the map on page 28, trace the route that Jesus and His disciples probably followed as they went from Judah to Galilee, passing through Samaria. Explain that most Jews (or people of Israel) completely by-passed Samaria by travelling along the east banks of the Jordan River.

Explain what a “radical” thing Jesus did as viewed by the Jews of that time.

Jesus is meeting a common woman of Samaria in a public setting. Even though He would be spiritually defiled (ceremonially unclean) for taking a drink from her, and she has no status as a woman and a Samaritan, He is interested in her and her spiritual condition. Jesus is interested in all people, not just people of status or of a certain country. By doing so, Jesus was demonstrating that He loved all people of all racial backgrounds and ethnic groups.



b. From John 4:10-15, what kind of water was the woman thinking of and how did that differ from the “water” that Jesus the prophet was talking about?

Jesus spoke about “spiritual water” that would quench the woman’s spiritual thirst forever. The woman thought that Jesus was speaking about the literal water that was in the well in front of them. When Jesus spoke of things that were spiritual, she immediately thought of physical things. Many people today do the same thing, not even thinking about the spiritual aspects of life. Jesus, no doubt, did this intentionally to get her attention so that He could have a spiritual conversation with her.

Jesus is offering a gift. In terms of definition, a payment or debt is something owed to us for something one has done; a gift is not based on anything one has done. Jesus is offering a gift for a debt we owe and can’t pay. The gift Jesus offers is life everlasting, fullness of life with God that lasts forever.

c. What do we learn here about this woman’s life from John 4:16-18?

This Samaritan woman had been married five times and was living out of wedlock with another man. Apparently, her life had been characterized by numerous dysfunctional relationships with men.

Jesus proves His ability to give the gift of “living water”/“everlasting life” because Jesus knows something that no mere person could know. Jesus knows the Samaritan woman’s life history. And, even though her life doesn’t match up to what God demands (she is living in adultery), He still offers her everlasting life — Jesus did not condemn her, even though His teachings in other places make it clear that He did not condone her lifestyle.

You may have students in this study whose lifestyles are similar to this woman’s. If so, just let the story speak for itself and don’t condemn them. Love them just as Jesus did.

d. What information about Himself did the prophet Jesus reveal to her in John 4:19-26?

Jesus revealed to her that He was the Messiah (Christ, al-Masih, the Chosen One) that the prophets of the children of Israel had been writing about for centuries.

As a Samaritan, one of mixed Jewish and non-Jewish heritage, the woman had enough Jewish tradition in her background to be aware of some of the teachings of the Torah.

e. Read John 4:28-29. How could the prophet Jesus know so much about this woman’s life since He had never met her before?

Depending upon the student’s background knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, this may or may not be a difficult question. But let the student wrestle with it. If he/she does not yet realize that Prophet Jesus is God, avoid the temptation to answer this question at this point. It may be possible to address again the title “Son of God.”

- Muslims have a hard time with this concept, and **we are teaching about it gradually.**
- Many of the arguments Muslims pose can be reviewed (see Event 23):
God could not have a literal son: an idea abhorrent to Christians as well.
That this can be viewed figuratively: “son” as in son of a country.
- **However, the best answer may be to state, “The Holy Scriptures say that Jesus is God in the flesh. Let’s wait to see if Jesus fulfills the marks of deity as we continue to study about His life.”**



f. How did other Samaritans respond to the prophet Jesus and what did they conclude in John 4:28-30, 39-42?

Many of them believed in Him, that He was indeed “the Christ, the Savior of the world.”

The people respond with belief that Jesus is the Messiah, the Chosen One. Jesus accepts this belief that “He is the Savior of the world,” knowing that He is “God with us” (Jesus’ name Immanuel in Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:23 means “God with us”).

According to John 1:10-13, by believing in Him as they did, these Samaritans were probably born again* (see Supplemental Information) at this time—born spiritually into God’s family.

Remember to ask your students “How does Jesus reveal Himself in the events on pages 16 and 17?” We have changed these to now concentrate on Jesus, and so the titles and descriptions refer to Him. Remember the purpose of this “bottom of the double-page spread.” As the student reads and studies the Scriptures, this activity helps the student learn about God, Who He is, what He has done, and what He still will do.

Supplemental Information

* For the leader’s knowledge: Born again is a Biblical term meaning “born from above” and is found in Jesus’ discussion with a religious leader, Nicodemus, in John 3:1-14. It is belief that Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of the world, and that belief in His substitutionary death in a person’s behalf satisfies God’s wrath against each person’s sin. We are “born again” when we accept this by faith.

The metaphor of “water” (spiritual or living water) is used several times in the Bible. Apart from God, we find ourselves having a spiritual thirst, a realization that something important is missing from our lives. When we, by faith, invite Jesus the Messiah/al-Masih, the Son of God, into our lives, He quenches that spiritual thirst; He gives us a sense of peace and personal satisfaction that was missing prior to this important faith response.

Your inquiring friend probably does not have enough understanding to have this faith response yet, but you need to pray that this will happen as you continue to study with him/her, and be open to the Holy Spirit’s direction of when to discuss this with your student.

The Chronological Bible Story

How is Jesus Portrayed in Events ? (page 17)

If necessary, review with the student the instructions in point e. of event 21 (“Birth of Messiah Jesus, The Prophet” on top of page 16 in *The Message of Hope*).

Remember the purpose of these “bottom of the double-page spread” activities—to help the student learn about Jesus, who He is and what He did, as the student reads and studies the Bible.

The Miracles of Jesus the Messiah

Jesus the Prophet powerfully healed the sick, cast out evil spirits, and miraculously fed thousands of hungry people, in order to show the work that God requires. *Matthew 4:23, 24; 14:15-21; Mark 6:31-44; Luke 9:7-17; John 6:1-15*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- At a few key periods in human history, God gave certain people the ability to perform miracles. In order to validate the God-appointed leadership of Moses and to demonstrate the LORD God's power over the false gods of Egypt, God gave Moses miraculous powers. Only a few others of God's prophets in the Holy Scriptures had these kinds of miracle working powers. Those who did were God's spokesmen who ministered in some unusually desperate times of spiritual darkness or key transitional points in human history.
- **In order to demonstrate His unique relationship to God, Jesus performed many miracles during his ministry on earth.** Jesus began His ministry at about age 30. From before His birth, the angel of God announced that He was "Immanuel," which means "God with us." John the Baptist/Prophet John proclaimed publicly that Jesus was "the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world" and that He is "the Son of God." (See Event 23 for additional information on "Son of God." More complete information will be taught on this in events 28 and 29.)
- Though Jesus did many miracles that were not recorded (Jn. 20:30), the feeding of the 5,000 is the one miracle recorded by all four Gospel writers. It had a profound effect on the Gospel writers, and they all felt it helped them to present the gospel of Jesus to their target audiences. Jesus performs this miracle on at least 2 occasions. The other was at a 3-day teaching conference where 4,000 men plus the women and children were fed (Mt. 15:29-39; 16:8-10). Jesus required people to give what they had; then multiplied it to meet every one's needs.
- **Miracles show Jesus' compassion and provision for people in need, allow us to see the real Jesus, and to see how much He loves and cares for us.** Perhaps this miracle will impress our inquiring friends regarding the greatness of Messiah, and they will see similarities in what motivated the people in Jesus' day and what motivates them today.
- **Jesus responded to popularity and redirected the people's attention to God's purposes, so that we might learn of the great priority of faith in the Messiah.** Jesus wasn't interested in an earthly kingdom. His priority was for people to accept the rule of God on His terms, and be saved and blessed for eternity. Jesus showed that the only work God required was for sinners to believe on Him (John 6:28-29, 47).
- Jesus showed some people that their motivations for coming to Him were wrong (John 6:26-27), and while being concerned for and meeting people's physical needs, Jesus is more concerned about people's spiritual needs.
- The people Jesus ministered to are beginning to see the parallels between Jesus and Moses and are wondering if he is the Prophet like Moses who was to come (Deuteronomy 18:15-19). Jesus shows that those who believe in Him will find food that satisfies forever instead of manna satisfying for only a day (John 6:32-40, 47).



Teaching Notes:

a. Read Matthew 4:23-24. What specific types of miracles did Jesus the Messiah perform in Galilee early in His public ministry?

In Matthew 4:23-25, Jesus is demonstrating great power, healing “every disease and every affliction among the people,” not just the most simple.

- He is healing diseases of the body, mind, and spirit (verse 24b): “various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, epileptics and paralytics ...”
- These are things not curable even by modern medicine (modern medicine can control some of these by a lifetime of medications, but not cure them).

Locate the area of Galilee on the map on page 28.

Jesus started His ministry in Galilee of the Gentiles (non-Jews). This was a cosmopolitan district that was approximately half Jewish and half Gentile. It was also largely inhabited by Arabs, as seen in the people who followed Jesus (Matthew 4:23-25: Syria, Decapolis, and beyond the Jordan). Jesus spent time in His initial ministry teaching, preaching the kingdom of God, and healing the sick. His most well-known sermon (Matthew 5-7) was spoken to Jews and Gentiles, many of whom were Arabs.

For a number of reasons, Jesus crosses the Sea of Galilee and goes to a remote area with His disciples.

- The Matthew account shows that the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 occurred right after Jesus withdrew from public when John the Baptist was beheaded (Mt 14:12-13). Perhaps Jesus needed to be alone to mourn the loss of his cousin and one of God’s great servants.
- Jesus and His disciples had just completed a very aggressive ministry schedule. They needed some rest to recover (Mk 6:29-31).

In His earthly ministry, Jesus showed compassion and provided for people in need. John 6:2 informs that the multitude walked on foot around the lake (Mt 14:13) and brought their sick to Him to be healed.

b. Read Mk 6:30-31, 34, and 37. From this event in his life, how do we know that Jesus the Messiah cared about physical needs of people?

He made provision for the rest his disciples needed.

He saw the masses as sheep without a shepherd in need of healing and had compassion on them and healed the sick.

Rather than send the people away to get their own food, Jesus provided for their immediate need.

c. Why couldn’t the disciples just go and buy the food that was needed according to John 6:5-7, and what did Jesus the Prophet use to provide for this need (John 6:8-11)?

They didn’t have that kind of money. Philip estimated that it would cost 200 denarii (about 6 month’s wages) so that each person could eat just a little.



Jesus uses the 5 barley loaves (about the size of buns) and 2 small fish of a boy in the crowd. Jesus multiplies five barley loaves and two fish into enough food to feed 5000 men plus the women and children. We don't know how many women and children were present. If there were one woman and one child for each man present the number would have been 15,000. This might give a better sense of the magnitude of this miracle.

d. Read John 6:12-13. How much food was taken up after the crowd was completely satisfied?

Twelve baskets full of bread were taken up after all had eaten and were satisfied.

e. According to John 6:14-15, what were the masses about to do after seeing the miracle?

Some identified Him as the Prophet who is to come into the world. This is probably a reference to the prophet like unto the prophet Moses – prophesied in Dt. 18:15-19. As Moses gave bread and water in the desert, they expected that the prophet like Him would do likewise.

They were ready to make Him their king by force. So, He withdrew from them because this was not God's purpose at this time.

f. Read John 6:25-27. What wrong motivation did Jesus the Messiah expose?

When they found Him again, Jesus showed them that their reason for coming to Him was to get temporal food. He urged them to be motivated by what He can offer them for eternity (later He expounds in v.v. 32-40, 47).

People often want to receive Jesus on their terms. "Be our King to free us of oppression. Be our King and always provide for us, etc." Jesus shows the priority of seeking and serving rather than ruling and reigning at this time. The earthly kingdom would come in God's time. His priority was for people to accept the rule of God on His terms, and be saved and blessed for eternity.

Even though people were impressed by Jesus' miracles and want to make Him king, He would not accept political authority.

g. Read John 6:28-29. What did Jesus the Messiah say was the one work that God requires?

Jesus shows that the work God requires is faith in the Messiah.

26 Lost and Found

One day the Jewish religious leaders criticized Jesus the Prophet because He was spending time with disreputable people, so Jesus the Prophet told them stories to illustrate God's love for all people. *Luke 15:1-32*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- Jesus welcomed sinners and was willing to be seen with them, even if religious people were unhappy about that.
- The self-righteous religious elite opposed Jesus' open-hearted acceptance of all people. They might be much the same as the religious elite of today's world.
- God is very pleased and accepting when we repent of our sins and return to Him.
- Jesus still accepts anyone who comes to Him today. The unconditional acceptance of the wayward son by the waiting father is foreign to Islam. On the contrary, the Quran's teaching is just the opposite:

*He it is Who produceth gardens trellised and untrellised, and the date-palm, and crops of diverse flavour, and the olive and the pomegranate, like and unlike. Eat ye of the fruit thereof when it fruiteth, and pay the due thereof upon the harvest day, and **be not prodigal. Lo! Allah loveth not the prodigals.*** (6:141, Pickthall's translation)

*O Children of Adam! Look to your adornment at every place of worship, and eat and drink, but **be not prodigal. Lo! He loveth not the prodigals.*** (7:31, Pickthall's translation)

Teaching notes:

The Jewish religious leaders were "Pharisees and teachers of the law." The Pharisees were a legalistic and separatistic group who strictly, but often hypocritically, kept the Law contained in the Torah of the prophet Moses and the unwritten "tradition of the elders." Their name, meaning "separated ones," numbered about 6,000 and were spread over the whole of Palestine. They were teachers in the synagogues, religious examples in the eyes of the people, and self-appointed guardians of the Torah and its proper observance. They considered the interpretations and regulations handed down by tradition to be virtually as authoritative as Scripture (notes on Matthew 3:7 and Luke 5:17 in the NIV Study Bible).

The teachers of the law were the Jewish scholars of the day, professionally trained in the development, teaching and application of Old Testament law. In this sense, the Jewish teachers of the law correspond to the "ulama" in Islam (singular, "alim", scholar), the educated class of Muslim legal scholars best known as the arbiters of shari'a law. The majority of the teachers of the law (or "scribes") belonged to the party of the Pharisees (notes on Matthew 2:4 and Luke 5:17 in the NIV Study Bible).

Throughout Jesus' ministry, the Pharisees and teachers of the law looked for ways to discredit Jesus (Luke 6:7; 11:53, 54), and then, later, to put Him to death (Matthew 12:14). Prophet John had earlier called them "a brood of vipers" (Matthew 3:7). Jesus later spoke against them publicly, charging them with hypocrisy (Luke 12:1), greed, and wickedness (Luke 11:37-52).



The Jewish religious leaders could just as easily be some of today's religious leaders because their thoughts about legal rectitude would be similar.

The Jewish religious leaders' criticism of Jesus and the company He keeps prompts him to tell the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the famous story of the prodigal son.

a. Read Luke 15:1-2. What were the religious leaders (Pharisees and teachers of the law) upset about?

The leaders were upset that Jesus was associating with people who had bad reputations and who were not trying to be righteous in accordance with their teachings. They believed that part of being righteous means separating oneself from people who are thought to be "sinners." The same kind of mindset may exist today in religious teachers who tell their congregation not to mix with the "kuffar", i.e. unbelievers.

Do you think they were right to think this way?

The answer you get here may reveal something to you about your student.

- Many people will side with Jesus against the religious leaders. Perhaps they see hypocrisy in Muslim religious leaders today and do not like it any more than the common people of Jesus' day.
- It's possible that the student is a little confused about how to answer. If they have been trained to be devout, it might be difficult to imagine associating with "bad" people. If so, leave it at that and go on to Jesus' reply.

b. Jesus the Prophet replies to their criticism by telling three short stories as follows:

• **The Lost Sheep: What is the main lesson of the story?**

The parables had a spiritual point to them, and were not just interesting stories. In the first two parables of Luke 15; Jesus makes sure His listeners are aware of the spiritual meaning.

The main point is in verse 7: "I tell you that in the same way there will be more **rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents** than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent."

• **The Lost Coin: What is the main lesson of this story?**

The main point is in verse 10: "In the same way, I tell you, there is **rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.**"

• **The Lost Son: Read Luke 15:11-32.**

c. Now discuss the meaning of the third story.

• **The lost son represents people such as the tax collectors and sinners Jesus the Prophet was spending time with in verse 1. Who do you think is represented by the older brother?**

The **Pharisees and teachers of the law** are those who criticized Jesus for eating and drinking with the tax collectors and "sinners."

• **Who might the father in the story represent?**

Depending on how the student puts this passage together in his mind, the student might think that the father represents Jesus Himself, who accepted the bad people and was criticized by the good (although it is difficult to see in which sense Jesus can be regarded "father" of the religious leaders).



Or, the student might tie the father's joy at his son's return to verses 7 and 10 where there is joy in heaven in God's presence, and see the father as representing God. Either response will do for now.

d. In all three stories, there is celebration at the end. Why?

There is joy over the return of something which was lost.

There is joy over sinners who repent (spiritually do what is right).

e. Do you think Jesus the Prophet is trying to teach something about God? If so, what?

Give your students time to think this through.

Possible answers include: God loves people, God is like a father in His acceptance and compassion, God loves it when people return to Him, God is merciful and loving, etc.

It would be sad for this lesson to strike the student in such a way that they decide to become a better Muslim than before. Hopefully, the student has learned something about God's great patience and unconditional love not found in Islam, and is longing to have God's acceptance and forgiveness.

To reinforce God's unconditional love, it may be helpful to refer back to the story of Jonah in event 19, and how God demonstrated his grace and compassion upon all people by being willing to spare the wicked people of Nineveh.

This additional question is not included in *The Message of Hope* booklet:

The prophet Jesus accepted tax collectors and sinners. If Jesus were here today, do you think he would accept you? Why? (For help, see Matthew 11:28-30).

This question brings the subject back to Jesus as the one who really demonstrates God's unconditional love and acceptance. Jesus accepts anyone who comes to Him "*and whoever comes to me I will never drive away*" (John 6:37).

²⁸ *Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.* ²⁹ *Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*

³⁰ *For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.* (Matthew 11:28-30)

The Trinity: You want to avoid getting too technical about the trinity, at this point. It's probably best that you not even mention the word "trinity" because that may raise more questions than time would allow to answer.

However, for your own clarity in understanding, we have included (see below) the diagram that has been used for centuries to visualize the realities associated with the trinity.

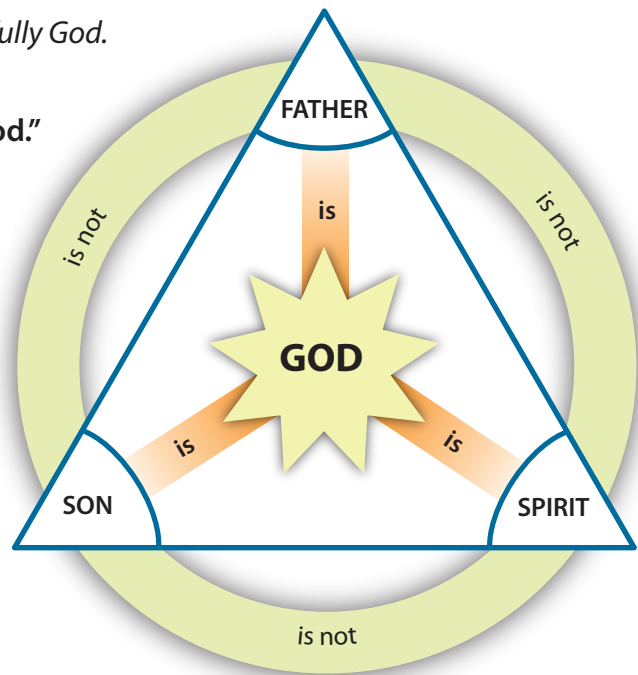
The main concepts to understand are these:

- **There is only ONE God, the LORD God of the Bible who created heaven & earth.**
- **There are three distinct persons in what Bible teachers call the "Godhead."**
 1. *God the Father – and He is fully God.*
 2. *Jesus Christ ("the Son of God") – and He is fully God.*
 3. *The Holy Spirit – and He is fully God.*
- **Thus, Jesus is both "the Son of God" and "God."**

Jesus, the Son of God: When the Bible refers to Jesus as "the Son of God," it means that Jesus has a very intimate and unified relationship with God the Father. Even though they are distinct persons, they are ONE.

This title for Jesus does not imply that there was a time when God's Son did not exist and that, out of some union with some other "god," He (Jesus) was born into existence. Jesus, God's Son, has existed eternally with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.

So, what happened in event 21 on page 32? The "Birth of Jesus of Nazareth" was the time in human history when God's Son (who had always existed) entered into human flesh and was born of a woman, a virgin named Mary. He became a human being so that He could identify with us and demonstrate His uniqueness by living a perfect, sinless life. In doing so, He was qualified to die as the substitute offering to pay for our sins. "Incarnation" is the theological term used for the act of God's Son becoming embodied in human flesh.



The Chronological Bible Story

How is Jesus Portrayed in Events ? (page 18)

If necessary, review with the student the instructions in point e. of event 21 ("Birth of Jesus of Nazareth" on top of page 16 in *The Message of Hope*).

Remember the purpose of these "bottom of the double-page spread" activities—to help the student learn about Jesus, who He is and what He did, as the student reads and studies the Bible.

The Woman Caught in Adultery

When religious leaders tried to trap Jesus the Prophet in his words, He showed mercy to a woman who had sinned, but exposed the hypocrisy of those who believed they were righteous. *John 7:43 – 8:11*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- Jesus is compassionate and righteous, yet His compassion does not compromise His holiness.
- The motivation of religious practitioners who use religion to enhance their own influence stands in stark contrast to the one who faithfully delivers God's truth. **While the religious practitioners use religion to control people and build themselves up, Jesus uses God's Word to free people and fulfill God's purpose.**
- Jesus is not intimidated by religious leaders who don't properly represent God. Jesus is more concerned about God's assessment than that of the religious leaders. While the Pharisees were exploiting others and drawing attention to the outward sins of others, they were concealing the unbelief, deception, hatred, and murder that was in their own hearts.
- Jesus is concerned about saving sinners and demonstrates in His own words and actions, the mercy, grace, and love of God.
- God is not impressed with external righteousness or religiosity, but rather, desires to see repentance and true faith and holiness in the heart. God revealed this clearly in the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14).
- Only God's truth can set people free from the many forms of bondage in which they live.
- God's Word speaks to those who will listen. The voice of God will work powerfully to reveal Who Jesus is and the salvation that can only be found through faith in the Messiah.

Teaching Notes:

In His earthly ministry, Jesus showed compassion and justice. Yet He never compromised either attribute. He knew God's laws and obeyed them in spirit and truth. In contrast, the religious leaders of His day used external religious observance to elevate themselves and condemn others. They put more emphasis on their religious traditions than on the Word God had given. In our text today, they are envious of Jesus' influence with the people and want to destroy Him.

Background of the events of the previous days:

7:10 Jesus went to the Temple during the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles, one of three annual feasts that required attendance of all Jewish men. He went secretly trying not to draw the attention of the Jews. About half-way through the Feast, which lasted 8 days, He entered the Temple courts and began to teach.

7:15 The people are amazed at His teaching but also noted that He had not been schooled with their religious leaders (see also Mark 1:22). Jesus informed them that His teaching and authority came from God.

7:21-24 Jesus also used this opportunity to defend His healing on the Sabbath. He showed them that the religious rulers support the surgical procedure of circumcision on the Sabbath because it was to happen on the eighth day, yet they became hostile when He made a person completely whole on the Sabbath. Jesus called for them to stop making superficial judgments about Him and make righteous and objective evaluations of His work.

Jesus challenged the religious authorities on other occasions as well:

- See Matthew 12:11-12; Mark 2:27; 3:4: on that occasion, He showed that God gave the Sabbath as a grace gift to mankind, and also noted that they would rescue their animal if it fell in a ditch on the Sabbath.
- The real issue was that they had lost the intent of God's Word as they gave more emphasis to their traditions (Mark 7:6-9, 13, 14-16, 20-22).
- In Matthew 23, God gave His Word through Jesus in the form of 7 prophetic woes. Through these woes, God clearly reveals how He feels about those who claim to speak in the name of God but who do not properly represent God and His message.

7:25-31 The people are confused about the conflict the religious rulers have with Jesus and begin asking questions about His true identity. Some began considering the possibility that He could be the Messiah. Many were beginning to believe in Him.

7:32 This concerned the Pharisees and chief priests. So, they sent officers (Temple guards) to arrest Jesus. This alliance between Sadducees and Pharisees is significant. The high priesthood and chief priests at this time were comprised mostly of Sadducees and held most of the political control of the ruling council (the Sanhedrin). The Pharisees were more highly esteemed by the masses since they appeared to be more pious in their observance of the oral "law." The aristocratic Sanhedrin did not like to bring Pharisees into their council, but needed them to obtain the favor and respect of the people. There were strong doctrinal differences between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and they often opposed one another. Yet, when it came to getting rid of Jesus, they were ready and willing to work together.

a. The people were beginning to believe that the prophet Jesus was the fulfillment of a promised prophet. Who was that promised prophet? (John 7:40; Deuteronomy 18:15-19)

The prophet like unto the prophet Moses from among the Jews ("from among your brothers" – see Event 16) who will have God's words in his mouth.

b. The chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers to arrest the prophet Jesus (John 7:45). Did they succeed in their mission? Why or why not?

No. They can find no cause to bring Him in, and are amazed at His teaching. They fear the reaction of the people, and reply, "No man ever spoke like this Man!"

c. From John. 8:2-3 describe what the prophet Jesus is doing next, where He is doing it, and the interruption that occurs there.

The scene itself shows the contrast between Jesus and the religious rulers of His day. Jesus, in the Temple courts, is teaching people who wanted to know the Word of God. The religious leaders raise the commotion. Distracting the purposes of God for this sacred place, they come in dragging a woman with her clothes in disarray, her hair all disheveled, and possibly inflicting injury in the process. She is probably protesting their actions and resisting them.

They make a public spectacle of this woman in the presence of the “devout” with no concern for her personal rights or dignity. The crowd naturally looks on with curiosity over the tumult, which further adds to her humiliation. Bringing her right into the center of the people Jesus is teaching, they make their crass indictment. Most leer at her in disgust.

d. Was the woman guilty?

Yes. She was “caught in the act” and Jesus later tells her, “Go and sin no more.”

Were the Pharisees correct in seeking punishment by stoning?

Yes. The law prescribed that both the adulterer and adulteress were to be stoned at the gate of the city (where legal judgments were made) Lev. 20:10; Dt.22:22-24.

The Pharisees were more interested in destroying Jesus than in saving a woman. We know this because, if she was “caught in the very act,” then two were present at the time of her capture. Why didn’t they bring the man? If they were really interested in upholding the law, they would have brought the man as well – as the law prescribed. And they would have brought them to the place of judgment rather than to the Temple where Jesus was teaching.

The Test: If Jesus refused to confirm the death penalty, He could be charged with contradicting the law of God and would Himself be liable to condemnation. If, on the other hand, he confirmed the verdict of the Pharisees, he would lose his reputation for compassion and could have been reported to the Romans as inciting the Sanhedrin to independent exercise of the death penalty.

e. What was the motive of the Pharisees? Upholding righteousness or trapping the prophet Jesus?

Verse 6 gives the clear answer that they were trying to trap Jesus.

Jesus did not reply. Instead, He stooped down and began writing on the ground with His finger. His not looking at the woman and acting as if He didn’t hear may have been a way to save the woman from further embarrassment.

Incidentally, this is the only record of Jesus writing. We do not know what He wrote. Some have conjectured that Jesus may have been writing the names of the woman’s accusers along with personal sins they were guilty of. (See Psalm 90:8; John 2:25.)

When they persisted in asking Him for an answer, He stood up and said to them, “He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.” He again stooped down and continued His writing on the ground.

We don’t know the hearts of the men, but two options present themselves:

1. Jesus’ reply put the question back on his questioners. In this particular offense, there would normally be no witnesses since its nature would demand privacy. Either the witnesses became such by accident which would be unusual; or they were present purposely to create the trap for Jesus, in which case they themselves were guilty; or they condoned the deed, and this would make them partners in it.”

Jesus’ answer might have been implying one of three things:

- They were guilty of condoning the act (since they did not bring the man).
- Someone in their party may have committed adultery with her.
- They were guilty of personal past guilt.

In any case, each accuser would have to admit he was guilty or else refrain from demanding the woman's death.

The accusers began to leave one at a time – the older ones first. Either they were guilty of more than the others, or they had the sense to realize the pointlessness of insisting on their own righteousness in these circumstances. The others left quietly behind them. (John 8:9)

Or, the other option:

2. Jesus' reply put the question back on his questioners. It was a challenge for them to consider. None of us is without our own sin. And, Jesus may have just advertised to the crowd the sin of each accuser (in what He had written on the ground).

Each man was convicted by Jesus' words. The accusers began to leave one at a time – the older ones first. More mature, they may have sensed their own guilt more deeply, or realized the pointlessness of insisting on their own righteousness in these circumstances. The others left quietly behind them. (John 8:9)

Jesus respectfully addresses the woman. Jesus asked if anyone has condemned her. "No one, sir" she replied. (John 8:10-11)

Whichever option it was, the accusers left leaving Jesus with a guilty woman.

f. Do you think the prophet Jesus' interest in saving and forgiving this woman rather than exploiting and condemning her had a motivating effect on her life? What, in the prophet Jesus' words, shows that forgiveness demands a clean break with sin?

Jesus shows mercy to the woman caught in sin and answers the Scribes and Pharisees.

Jesus shows mercy. Jesus, the One Who could condemn, said, "Neither do I. Go and sin no more." In this answer, He acknowledges her sin, and states she should sin no more.

Jesus is more concerned about God's assessment than that of the religious leaders. Jesus avoids their trap and publicly delivers God's message without fear.

Supplemental Information

If your student has not yet wrestled with the issue of Jesus' deity and Jesus as the Son of God, this information should not be covered at this time. Wait until this is covered in events 28/29.

Give some evidences that Jesus is not intimidated by the Pharisees from his teaching in the Temple that follows this event. (John 8:12-59)

Jesus makes a number of amazing statements. Be aware that the statements Jesus makes are further evidence of Jesus' deity.

Jesus ends with a confrontation that has his listeners ready to stone Him.

Here is the list of the startling statements He made to them in this public place:

- "I am the light of the World. He who follows me shall not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

- The truth about Me is established by at least two true witnesses: God and Myself – Who know and speak the truth. (John 8:14-18)

In an earlier context (John 5:31-47), Jesus showed that there were more witnesses than required by the law. These were John the Baptist/Prophet John (who lived in their time), God (Whose testimony they were ignoring), Jesus' miraculous works (that authenticated His claims), and the Scriptures given through the prophets.

In one powerful statement, Jesus said, "Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you— Moses, in whom you trust. If you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me."

- "If you had known Me, you would have known my Father also." (John 8:19c) A statement of deity in claiming this relationship with God (compare John 5:18).
- "I am from above ...I am not of this world." (John 8:23) He is different than other men.
- "If you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." (John 8:24b) The Chosen One, the Messiah.
- "I speak to the world those things which I heard from Him." (John 8:26c)
- "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself." (John 8:28)
- "And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him. (John 8:29)
- "Those who continue in My Word are true disciples; they will know the truth and it will set them free." (John 8:31-32)
- "If the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed." (John 8:36)
- "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me." (John 8:42) A statement of deity in claiming this relationship with God (compare John 5:18)
- "He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God." (John 8:47)
- "If anyone keeps My Word he shall never see death." (John 8:51)
- "If I honor myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father, who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God. ... I do know Him and keep His Word." (John 8:54-55)
- "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad." (John 8:56)
- "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM." (John 8:58) "I AM" was known by the Jews to be the unspoken name of God (YHWH)

Jesus the Messiah Heals a Paralytic

In His earthly work, Jesus the Messiah showed His miraculous power over physical illness and His authority to forgive sins. *Luke 5:17-26*



In this lesson and the next, we will deal with Jesus as the “Son of God.” “Son of God” is offensive to most Muslims, and your care for your inquiring friend, as well as your words, must be taken as this material is presented. Your inquiring friend needs to know this Scriptural truth as he/she seeks to understand the Bible and how to have a relationship with God.

The best answer may be to state, “Let’s see if Jesus fulfills the characteristics of deity as we continue to study about His life.” Let the Holy Scripture speak for itself on this issue.

Pray as you go into this lesson, and care for your inquiring friend and your words as you present this material.

Further discussion of Jesus’ deity culminates in Event 34.

Major teaching points of this lesson:

- Miracles authenticate the prophet and the message: Muslims believe this just as Christians do.
- Jesus’ miracles are attested in the Bible and the Qur’an (Sura 2:87; 3:46, 49).
- Muslims have only what they call the “miracle of the Qur’an” to authenticate Muhammad’s message in the Qur’an. Muhammad claimed the Qur’an was his miracle, but had no other miracles to quote when asked. There are no accounts of Muhammad’s miracles in the Qur’an or the Bible. One must turn to the Hadith to find any accounts of Muhammad’s miracles leaving one to wonder why God did not verify Muhammad’s prophethood with miracles.
- Jesus demonstrates His authority in multiple ways in the Gospel. In the context of Luke, we find Jesus’: authority to teach (4:18-21), authority over physical illness (4:38-41), authority over the spiritual realm (4:31-37), authority over the ceremonially unclean (5:12-16), and authority over sin (5:17-26).
- Jesus the Messiah is called “the Word of God” (John 1:14) in the Gospel.
- Jesus’ deity is shown by His authority over sin. By pronouncing a man’s sins forgiven, and then showing His ability to heal, He showed that He has the authority to forgive sins, something only God can do. Forgiving sins is a mark of Jesus’ deity; Jesus’ real nature is confirmed early in His ministry.
- Because Jesus has the same marks/characteristics of deity as God, He is God.
- Christians understand Jesus to be “God the Son,” not conceived by God physically, but God’s exact image for men to see, know, and follow (Hebrews 1:1-4).
- The title “Son of Man” is used here by Jesus. It is Jesus’ favorite title for Himself. Daniel used this title to refer to the Messiah (Daniel 7:13, 18). It identifies Him with those He came to save (Luke 19:10). “The Son of Man” also has claims to announcing Jesus’ deity: see Jesus’ trial before the Sanhedrin (Matthew 26:63-66; Mark 14:61-64; Luke 22:67-71). The High Priest,

Caiaphas, draws a parallel between “Son of God” and “Son of Man,” equating the two. Christ’s statement that they would see “the Son of Man seated at the right hand of power” was a claim to deity that the Council recognized and was the basis for His death sentence.

Teaching notes:

a. Describe what Jesus the Messiah is doing and the interruption that others bring Him.

Jesus began His earthly ministry in Luke 4, going first to Galilee and then proclaiming the Scripture prophecy concerning the Messiah and His ministry. He is rejected, and we soon find Him casting out a demon, healing many, preaching in synagogues, calling His disciples, and cleaning the ceremonially unclean (Luke 5:12-16).

In these verses, Jesus is teaching with the Pharisees present. They are here as official religious leaders from Jerusalem to investigate what Jesus is doing. Pharisee comes from a Hebrew word meaning to “divide or separate,” and their origin probably goes back to Ezra’s time. Unfortunately, they soon became legalistic and hypocritical.

The power of the Lord is with Jesus to heal, and soon an opportunity comes to Him. Four men (Mark 2:3) bring a man on a stretcher who is paralyzed, and unable to approach through the door, they lower him through the roof. Jesus saw their faith (presumably the men and the paralytic) and tells the man his sins are forgiven. Without mistake, this is the man’s (and our) greatest need.

b. How do the Pharisees interpret Jesus the Messiah’s first statement to the paralytic? Were the Pharisees correct to associate this with blasphemy?

The scribes and the Pharisees immediately begin to question Jesus’ outrageous statement. They charge Jesus with speaking blasphemy. Their reasoning is clear and Scriptural: “Who can forgive sins but God alone?” They do this again in Luke 7:49.

Yes, the Pharisees were correct to associate this statement with blasphemy. Only God can forgive sin because:

- He is the authority over men (Creator), the lawgiver, the Sovereign of the Universe, and therefore only He has the authority to judge men and forgive their sin. This is a divine prerogative. He alone is without sin.
- Compare verses: Isaiah 43:25-26, 59:1-2, Psalm 130:4, Hebrews 9:22, I John 1:9
- The Pharisees correctly state “Who can forgive sins but God alone?”
- Muslims also believe that only God can forgive sins: Surah 3:135

‘And those who, having done something to be ashamed of, or wronged their own souls, earnestly bring God to mind, and ask forgiveness for their sins – And Who can forgive sins but God? ...’ (Translation by Abdulah Joseph ‘Ali)

It is interesting to note that prophecy points to Jesus as not just the sin forgiver, but the sin bearer: Matthew 1:21

c. What miracle is performed, and what do miracles tell us about the person who performs them?

Jesus the Messiah heals a paralyzed man. In the healing, Jesus tells him to pick up his bed and go home – something that, a few seconds before, was impossible for this man to do. The man immediately obeys and leaves, glorifying God on his way home. All there are “seized by amazement,” filled with awe, and glorify God. The man acts on the miracle, and the crowd testifies of the miracle.

Miracles authenticate the prophet and the message he is carrying to the people. We see this with other prophets in the Bible: the prophet Musa (Moses), the prophet Ilyas (Elijah), and in the first generation of followers of Jesus the Messiah. People recognize the truth of the prophet's message as they see the corresponding evidence of God's blessing on the ministry of the prophet. The times of many miracles in the Scripture correspond with the writing of Scripture.

d. What proof does Jesus the Messiah offer that He has the authority to forgive sins? What does Jesus the Messiah actually claim in showing His authority to forgive sins?

Jesus the Messiah had not yet performed the miracle when He pointed to what He was going to do to show that He had the authority to forgive sins. Jesus offers the miracle He performs as proof that He has authority to forgive sins. **All would know immediately that Jesus had no authority if the man did not get up and walk.**

This leaves us with the real question: What does the authority to forgive sins mean? Or, stated another way, Who has the authority to forgive sins? Forgiving sins is the prerogative of God Himself. Muslims also believe that forgiveness of sins is a divine prerogative. The Qur'an questions rhetorically in Surah 3:135 that *'...And Who can forgive sins but God?'*

As stated above in question b., God is man's owner (Creator), and, as such, has sovereign control over man. God set the rules (laws), and God judges men according to those laws. Therefore, it is God who condemns or forgives men according to His standards.

In this event, Jesus the Messiah makes the claim that He is God. He takes on the prerogative of God and proves that He has this prerogative by healing the paralyzed man. Jesus the Messiah is God because He has the authority to forgive sins.

This was not a mistake by Jesus the Messiah. "Jesus pointed out that the religious leaders were absolutely right – His healing of the man was proof that He did have the authority to forgive sins and therefore should be accepted as God." (J Walvoord, R Zuck)

Jesus is making clear statements, and His listeners understand what He is claiming. Compare other instances of this: John 5:1-18 (especially verse 18 where the Jews understood that Jesus was claiming deity – equality with God); John 8:48-59 (especially verses 58-59; John 10:22-42 (especially verses 30-31, and 33 where Jesus makes the same claim).

Jesus the Messiah also backs up these claims with marks of deity: forgiveness of sin, miracles, and fulfillment of prophecy of the Chosen One. Other instances where Jesus forgave sin include Luke 7:36-49 and John 8:1-11 (Event 27: The Woman Caught in Adultery). In our next lesson, Jesus raises a dead man.

e. Why do you think Jesus the Messiah chose to forgive this man's sins first?

Jesus has something that he wants the crowd and the Pharisees to understand. Jesus had the crowds' and the Pharisees' attention by His amazing statement "Your sins are forgiven you." Jesus then asks them why they are questioning in their hearts and then does the miracle. It is a proposition that they would know immediately one way or the other – that He has the same prerogative as God, or not. He puts Himself in a risky situation with no way out but to prove His claim.

He wants us to come to the correct conclusion – that He is the image of the invisible God (God has unlimited power to do these good miracles and forgive sins) – and He is willing to prove that statement for all to see.



Remember to ask your students “How does Jesus the Messiah reveal Himself in the events on pages 18 and 19?” Remember the purpose of this “bottom of the double-page spread.” As the student reads and studies the Scriptures, this activity helps the student learn about God, Who He is, what He has done, and what He still will do.

The Chronological Bible Story

How is Jesus Portrayed in Events ? (page 19)

If necessary, review with the student the instructions in point e. of event 21 (“Birth of Messiah Jesus, The Prophet” on top of page 16 in *The Message of Hope*).

Remember the purpose of these “bottom of the double-page spread” activities—to help the student learn about Jesus, who He is and what He did, as the student reads and studies the Bible.

Jesus the Messiah Raises the Dead

Out of compassion for hurting people and to demonstrate divine power, Jesus the Prophet even raised people from the dead. *John 11:1-53*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- Jesus is the exact representation of God. We have already introduced Jesus as the Son of God (Lessons 22, 23 and 28). In this lesson, we will continue to point out Jesus' deity by looking at the power of an amazing miracle.
- Jesus, as the image of the invisible God, demonstrated God's power in miracles and in raising a person from the dead.
- The concept of God's immanence: God manifested in our material world, His closeness. We will draw the parallel that, as Jesus cares about people, God cares about people, and comes close to people. God's immanence, as shown throughout the Bible, may be hard for your inquiring friend to grasp as it is in contrast to what he/she has heard in Islam which holds only God's transcendence (God's "otherness" lying beyond the range of ordinary perception), so, be careful and respectful as you point this out.
- It may be possible to draw out the prophecy from a Jewish leader that "Jesus would die for the nation," a substitute. The concept of a perfect substitute is important so those studying can see that Jesus, a mighty prophet of God, went willingly to death. Most Muslims do not believe that God would allow prophets to die horrible deaths or to be shamed in such a manner. **Hold these thoughts for Events 30/31.**

Teaching notes:

At a few key periods in human history, God gave certain people the ability to perform miracles. In order to validate the God-appointed leadership of the prophet Moses and to demonstrate God's power over the false gods of Egypt, God gave Moses miraculous powers. Only a few others of God's prophets in the Holy Scriptures had these kinds of miracle working powers. Those who did were God's spokesmen who ministered in some unusually desperate times of spiritual darkness or key transitional points in human history. See Event 25 for further information on this.

From before Jesus' birth, the angel of God announced that He was "Immanuel," which means "God with us." Prophet John proclaimed publicly that Jesus the Messiah was "the Lamb of God" and "the Son of God." (See Events 22, 23 and 28 for additional information on "Son of God") In order to demonstrate His unique relationship to God, Jesus performed many miracles during his ministry on earth.

a. Read John 11:1-4. According to the prophet Jesus, what was the ultimate purpose for Lazarus' sickness?

"This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." (Verse 4)

Jesus the Messiah knows the mind of God and has knowledge that His followers do not have.

b. Read John 11:5-16. What did the prophet Jesus know that His disciples did not know?

Until Jesus the Messiah told them otherwise, the disciples thought that Lazarus was only sleeping in the sense of temporarily resting. They did not know that Lazarus was dead.

c. Read John 11:17-27. What did Jesus the Messiah ask Martha regarding her belief in Him?

Jesus the Messiah told her that He was the “resurrection and the life” and that those who believe in Him may die (physically) but that they will live again. He added that those who believe in Him will never die (spiritually). See verses 25-26. Jesus was promising eternal life to those who genuinely believe (put their trust) in Him. **What was Martha’s response?**

“Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.” (Verse 27) By this statement, Martha was saying that she believed that Jesus the Messiah was the special King of the people of Israel that had been promised for many centuries (the Messiah, the Chosen One, and the Savior) and that He was “the Son of God.”

Martha addresses Jesus with belief in His real nature (God). Jesus does ask Martha for a faith response. (Verse 26)

This section can also be used as a teaching point on the resurrection of life, emphasizing eternal life, not just heaven.

d. Read John 11:28-46 and pay special attention to verses 40-45. In what positive way did many of the Jews, who witnessed this miracle, respond?

But “many of the Jews who...had seen the things that Jesus did, believed in Him.” (Verse 45) Many of the Jews have a faith response: they connect that Jesus is the promised, coming Messiah.

In what other way did some of the Jews respond?

Verses 46-48: Some go to the Pharisees (Jewish religious leaders) and report the miracle. The Pharisees do not respond with belief, but fear ... they are afraid that Jesus will be looked upon as Messiah, and that the Jewish nation and religious system will perish.

How do you understand the High Priest’s response to the news regarding Jesus the Messiah?

Verses 49-53: The Jewish High Priest makes a prophecy that comes from God, not him. It may be possible to draw out the concept of perfect substitution: Jesus would die as a perfect substitute, punished so that His followers would not be.

e. What does Jesus the Messiah’s demonstration of miracles and power say about Who He was? Allow your student’s to wrestle with this question.

Muslims have a difficult time with the concept and reality of Jesus the Messiah as “Son of God.” This is another opportunity to reinforce what has been studied in Events 22, 23, and 28 as you bring your inquiring friend to what the Scripture is saying about Jesus the Messiah. In Event 28 and now in Event 29, we are concentrating on Jesus as the Son of God literally – God in the flesh (Matthew 1:21).

Be careful in how you present these important truths, and allow your students to consider this and think it through without argument. Remember to allow the Bible to speak for itself.

And remember, the best answer may be to state, “The Holy Scriptures say that Jesus the Messiah is the Son of God, the Word of God (John 1:14), the image of the invisible God. Does what you have studied show this? Does Jesus the Messiah fulfill the marks of deity as you have studied about His life?”

Jesus the Messiah knew all of the prophecies regarding Himself in the Torah, Psalms and the writings of the Prophets telling of the shameful death Messiah would suffer in behalf of mankind for their salvation. *Luke 18:31-34, Matthew 16:21-23*



Event 30 begins a four lesson series on the crucifixion. These four events are crucial lessons to deal with the Islamic understanding of the crucifixion. Islamic misunderstanding of the crucifixion is a major stumbling block for them in understanding the Gospel. This lesson begins an opportunity to open the door of understanding in an area that is often a “closed door.” Enter it with prayer.

Major teaching points of this lesson:

- Muslims believe that Jesus was a prophet of God. As a prophet of God, Jesus was free from any major sin. Prophets are considered by many Muslims to be “sinless.” Most Muslims do not believe that God would ever allow a prophet to be punished or mistreated ... because prophets are righteous, God would come to their aid. It is beneath a prophet’s dignity to die a shameful death.
- Many Muslims believe that the New Testament accounts have been corrupted and that Jesus was not crucified, i.e., did not die on the cross. Strict interpretation of verses from the Qur’an state that Jesus was not crucified (although these Qur’anic verses are open to interpretation). Many Muslims believe that God provided a way out for Jesus by substituting another man, most likely Judas, to die in His place.
- Islamic teaching makes no room for substitutionary atonement. The entire efficacy of God’s plan for Jesus as a Savior for sin is removed from Christianity with the removal of Jesus’ substitutionary death, burial, resurrection, and ascension.
- We will be teaching in this and the following lessons that:
 - The death of Jesus was in God’s plan for Him and mankind (Event 30).
 - Jesus willingly agreed to God’s plan (Event 31).
 - Jesus was actually crucified and died (Events 32, 33).
 - Jesus died in our place and for our sins.
 - The crucifixion was not shame (as Muslims view this event) but provides us a look into the true heart of God.
- We must trust and believe the Old Testament and New Testament prophets – and show that Jesus knew and believed these prophecies as well.

Teaching notes:

a. What were the shameful treatments that would be visited upon the Messiah?

In the midst of Jesus’ ministry, on their way to Jerusalem, Jesus had a conversation with His disciples concerning the Son of Man (a title used by Daniel as Messianic - obviously taken here as Jesus Himself by the disciples) and what He was going to suffer. He will be:

- Delivered to the Gentiles
- Mocked
- Shamefully treated and spit upon
- Flogged
- Be killed
- Raised the 3rd day (resurrection)

b. Where did Jesus the Messiah get these facts?

These were well known Messianic prophecies. Jesus the Messiah states these prophecies were “written about the Son of Man by the prophets” (Luke 18:31). We studied many of these in event 20. One of the best known prophetic sections of Scripture is Isaiah 53. A more extensive list of prophecies is included at the end of the teaching notes for this lesson in the Supplemental Information section.

How did He know these things were going to happen to Him?

Jesus the Messiah knew how to apply the Scriptures because:

- He was a student of Scripture. He learned, analyzed, and obeyed it fully.
- He knew the prophecies concerning the Messiah, and He would fulfill each of them.
- He knew what His name meant (Matthew 1:21).
- He was Immanuel, “God with us” (Matthew 1:21) and knew much more than men knew (compare the young Jesus in the temple talking with the teachers – Luke 2:41-52).

Jesus also knew why He had come (John 12:27). It’s probably a bit too early to use that information unless pushed by your inquiring friend, but it will be introduced in the next section.

c. Why do you think the disciples did not understand what was going to happen to Jesus the Messiah?

Luke 18:34 states clearly that “they understood none of these things,” and that even Jesus’ sayings were “hidden from them, and they did not grasp them.” Is this because God hid the meaning from them until a more appropriate time, or that they just did not understand or were able to grasp these amazing ideas and facts?

It is important to note that men do not naturally think that God will unleash punishment and shame on one of His holy prophets. It is ingrained in most religious minds, especially Jews and Muslims, that God blesses those He has sent; or, to state it another way, those who are close to God will be blessed, not treated poorly. How could the Messiah, the Chosen One, be treated in such a way?

Honor and shame are huge cultural concepts to the Jews and Muslims and to think that God would not honor His prophets almost defies all religious logic. This point is especially important to communicate to your student/s. We often misunderstand the God of the universe, who doesn’t think like we think. God obviously had a different plan in mind to reveal His glory and deliver mankind from the grasp of sin.

d. What does Jesus the Messiah show us in His interchange with Peter in Matthew 16:21-23?

This is an account of a similar conversation that Jesus had with His disciples a little earlier in His ministry (cp. Luke 9:21-36 and Matthew 16:21-17:13). Here, we find more information about the reaction of at least one of the disciples and what Jesus the Messiah thought of that reaction.

What does Peter believe? He agrees that Jesus is the Messiah (Matthew 16:16). He rebukes Jesus for thinking that He would be killed (Matthew 16:22). Was this protective on Peter's part, or just misunderstanding of the divine plan?

Jesus takes Peter's statements very seriously, and rebukes Peter severely, likening Peter to Satan. Peter's thinking was a hindrance to Jesus, and a mind set on the "things of men," not God. This appears to have been a Satanic lure/temptation to move Jesus away from his purpose to suffer for man's sin.

e. What is the radical thought that Jesus the Messiah knows that was prophesied in the Old Testament concerning Himself, but that men don't believe?

Jesus, prophet and Messiah, the Chosen One, would die a "shameful" and painful death to pay for the sins of man.

Supplemental Information

The sign of the prophet Jonah (Yunus):

Jesus the Messiah showed other instances when it was clear that He knew he was going to die. You may want to spend a little extra time and look at the "sign of Jonah." We have covered Jonah/Yunus, a favorite prophet of many Muslims, in Event 19. You can briefly study Matthew 12:38-42. In this passage, Jesus the Messiah is responding to a question from the scribes and Pharisees. It does not appear that they are sincerely questioning, but trying to pester Him. He responds that "an evil and adulterous generation seeks a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah." Jesus uses this as a reference to the three days and nights that He will spend "in the heart of the earth" after His crucifixion and death and before His resurrection.

Other examples of shame heaped on Jesus:

Jesus was betrayed by one of His followers, Judas. We did not cover that in this lesson, but it is another instance of shame that was heaped on Jesus.

Jesus is shamed by the religious council that tried Him as well – an unfair trial that included verbal abuse and physical beating.

A collection of the prophecies concerning Jesus:

Prophecies of Jesus:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. That He would be born of a woman | Gen. 3:15; Gal. 4:4 |
| 2. That He would be from the line of Abraham | Gen. 12:3, 7; 17:7; Rom. 9:5; Gal. 3:16 |
| 3. That He would be from the tribe of Judah | Gen. 49:10; Heb. 7:14; Rev. 5:5 |
| 4. That He would be from the house of David | 2 Sam. 7:12-13; Luke 1:31-33; Rom. 1:3 |
| 5. That He would be born of a virgin | Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:22-23 |
| 6. That He would be given the throne of David | 2 Sam. 7:11-12; Ps. 132:11; Isa. 9:6-7; 16:5; Jer. 23:5; Luke 1:31-32 |
| 7. That this throne would be an eternal throne | Dan. 2:44; 7:14, 27; Micah 4:7; Luke 1:33 |
| 8. That He would be called Emmanuel | Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:23 |

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|--|---|
| 9. That He would have a forerunner | Isa. 40:3-5; Mal. 3:1; Matt. 3:1-3;
Luke 1:76-78; 3:3-6 |
| 10. That He would be born in Bethlehem | Micah 5:2; Matt. 2:5-6; Luke 2:4-6 |
| 11. That He would be worshiped by wise men
and presented with gifts | Ps. 72:10; Isa. 60:3, 6, 9; Matt. 2:11 |
| 12. That He would be in Egypt for a season | Num. 24:8; Hos. 11:1; Matt. 2:15 |
| 13. That His birthplace would suffer a massacre of infants | Jer. 31:15; Matt. 2:17-18 |
| 14. That He would be called a Nazarene | Isa. 11:1; Matt. 2:23 |
| 15. That He would be zealous for the Father | Ps. 69:9; 119:139; John 6:37-40 |
| 16. That He would be filled with God's Spirit | Ps. 45:7; Isa. 11:2; 61:1-2; Luke 4:18-19 |
| 17. That He would heal many | Isa. 53:4; Matt. 8:16-17 |
| 18. That He would deal gently with the Gentiles | Isa. 9:1-2; 42:1-3; Matt. 4:13-16; 12:17-21 |
| 19. That He would speak in parables | Isa. 6:9-10; Matt. 13:10-15 |
| 20. That He would be rejected by His own | Ps. 69:8; Isa. 53:3; John 1:11; 7:5 |
| 21. That He would make a triumphal entry into Jerusalem | Zech. 9:9; Matt. 21:4-5 |
| 22. That He would be praised by little children | Ps. 8:2; Matt. 21:16 |
| 23. That He would be the rejected cornerstone | Ps. 118:22-23; Matt. 21:42 |
| 24. That His miracles would not be believed | Isa. 53:1; John 12:37-38 |
| 25. That His friend would betray Him for
30 pieces of silver | Ps. 41:9; 55:12-14; Zech. 11:12-13;
Matt. 26:14-16, 21-25 |
| 26. That He would be a man of sorrows | Isa. 53:3; Matt. 26:37-38 |
| 27. That He would be forsaken by His disciples | Zech. 13:7; Matt. 26:31, 56 |
| 28. That he would be scourged and spat upon | Isa. 50:6; Matt. 26:67; 27:26 |
| 29. That His price money would be used to buy
a potter's field | Jer. 18:1-4; 19:1-4; Zech. 11:12-13;
Matt. 27:9-10 |
| 30. That He would be crucified between two
thieves | Isa. 53:12; Matt. 27:38; Mark 15:27-28;
Luke 22:37 |
| 31. That He would be given vinegar to drink | Ps. 69:21; Matt. 27:34, 48; John 19:28-30 |
| 32. That He would suffer the piercing of His hands
and feet | Ps. 22:16; Zech. 12:10; Mark 15:25;
John 19:34, 37; 20:25-27 |
| 33. That His garments would be parted and
gambled for | Ps. 22:18; Luke 23:34; John 19:23-24 |
| 34. That He would be surrounded and ridiculed
by His enemies | Ps. 22:7-8; Matt. 27:39-44; Mark 15:29-32 |
| 35. That He would thirst | Ps. 22:15; John 19:28 |



- | | |
|---|--|
| 36. That He would commend His spirit to the Father | Ps. 31:5; Luke 23:46 |
| 37. That His bones would not be broken | Exod. 12:46; Num.9:12; Ps. 34:20;
John 19:33-36 |
| 38. That He would be stared at in death | Zech. 12:10; Matt. 27:36; John 19:37 |
| 39. That He would be buried with the rich | Isa. 53:9; Matt. 27:57-60 |
| 40. That He would be raised from the dead | Ps. 16:10; Matt. 28:2-7 |
| 41. That He would ascend | Ps. 24:7-10; Mark 16:19; Luke 24:51 |
| 42. That He would then become a greater
high priest than Aaron | Ps. 110:4; Heb. 5:4-6, 10; 7:11-28 |
| 43. That He would be seated at God’s right hand | Ps. 110:1; Matt. 22:44; Heb. 10:12-13 |
| 44. That He would become a smiting scepter | Num. 24:17; Dan. 2:44-45; Rev. 19:15 |
| 45. That He would rule the heathen | Ps. 2:8; Rev. 2:27 |

(Willmington, H.L.: *Willmington’s Book of Bible Lists*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1987, S. 260)

The Chronological Bible Story

How is Jesus Portrayed in Events ? (page 20)

If necessary, review with the student the instructions in point e. of event 21 (“Birth of Jesus of Nazareth” on top of page 16 in *The Message of Hope*).

Remember the purpose of these “bottom of the double-page spread” activities—to help the student learn about Jesus, who He is and what He did, as the student reads and studies the Bible.

31 The Last Supper

Jesus the Messiah was determined to obey God and willing to see all the prophecies fulfilled concerning Messiah's suffering and death. *Luke 22:7-23*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

Please reread the major points for Event 30 and this series of lessons. In addition, we will see that:

- Jesus knows He is going to die.
- Jesus is willing to act on this knowledge and is determined to fulfill God's plan.
- Jesus acts out of love (John 12:31-32) and, in fact, death was the real reason He came to earth.

God's love, and desire/delight in relationship with man are seen in these passages. The love of God and relationship with God are two things many Muslims do not understand or believe to be characteristic of God.

Jesus came to earth to fulfill God's plan. God's plan was driven by His love for man. God is acting to restore a relationship broken by man that man could not repair. God makes it all right – this is the good news, fulfilled by God's own design and suffering so that men would not have to.

Substitutionary atonement, or a substitute sacrifice for sin, is seen in the Passover sacrifice, and in Jesus' sacrifice.

A powerful argument is able to be made from this account of the Last Supper for Jesus' knowledge of His death. Why would He have said what He said and instituted a memorial for Himself unless He knew He would be mankind's Passover lamb (point c)?

Teaching notes:

a. Recount the events that led up to the Last Supper.

Jesus the Messiah sends Peter and John to prepare a place for the disciples to celebrate the day of Unleavened Bread (the Passover). Jesus has some explicit instructions for them when they ask where it should be held. It is interesting to see the way Jesus leads the disciples to the room He has chosen: meet a man carrying a water jug, follow him, follow him into the house he enters, tell the master of the house this message, and see the place Jesus has chosen. Why the complicated instructions? Possibilities include another miracle Jesus has arranged, or most likely a way to insure secrecy in the preparations and the meal because of the Jewish authorities.

Disciples Peter and John prepare the Passover celebration, and, that evening at the prescribed hour, all the apostles are reclining with Jesus to eat.

b. What was the Jewish holiday that was being celebrated and what was its significance?

The day of Unleavened Bread or the Feast of Unleavened Bread followed the Passover, but the two quickly became one and the same holiday. The Passover lamb was eaten on the evening of the day of Passover.

The first Passover was celebrated in Egypt the night of the 10th plague (death of the firstborn). An unblemished lamb or goat was to be set apart 4 days in advance of the day of Passover and then sacrificed the night of the Passover meal. On the first Passover, blood, applied to the door posts by faith, saved the family in that house from the death of the firstborn (both humans and livestock).

God commanded a yearly celebration to commemorate His actions in delivering the Israelites from Egypt. It centered on the sacrifice of an unblemished lamb whose blood was to be applied to the doors of their homes. Application of the blood showed faith that God would keep His word and promise and deliver those with blood on the door posts.

A substitutionary sacrifice (the shedding of blood), and by faith applying the blood, are the essence of this celebration.

c. What do you think Jesus the Messiah is foreshadowing in the celebration? Do the disciples understand it?

An understanding of the Passover meal is necessary to answer this question.

- The Passover lamb would have been sacrificed that afternoon and the meal eaten that evening.
- In the disciples' initial preparation, they would have most likely included a search for any leaven that may have been left behind in the home. God had commanded they eat no leaven (Exodus 12:15; 13:3b, 7), and the Jews not only took out all leaven, but did a final check as part of the Passover feast preparations. Leaven symbolizes sin. (See also I Corinthians 5:7-8.)
- Included in the celebration of the meal are unleavened bread, a sacrificed lamb with no bones broken (Exodus 12:46), and bitter herbs. Wine was a traditional part of the feast. The meal was eaten as a memorial to commemorate what God did on the day of the Passover in Egypt (Exodus 13:8-9, 14-15).

The parallels between the Passover feast and Jesus the Messiah:

- The bitter herbs: the difficulty that will mark the suffering Jesus the Messiah will bear on our behalf.
- The unleavened bread: the sinless life of Jesus the Messiah. Leaven symbolizes sin.
- The unblemished lamb with no broken bones is Jesus the Messiah Himself: it was unblemished (without sin), and **offered as a substitute sacrifice in place of another. In the original Passover, a sacrifice was offered instead of the firstborn, and, now in Jesus' sacrifice, the perfect Lamb of God for all mankind.**

The parallels that Jesus the Messiah showed us:

- The broken bread that Jesus gave to His disciples: Jesus' body that would soon be "broken" that is killed.
- The wine that Jesus gave to His disciples: Jesus the Messiah's blood that would be poured out in death.

- The new meal/covenant that Jesus offered was a memorial - this was to be a remembrance of Jesus (Luke 22:19): Jesus the Messiah would fulfill the substitutionary sacrifice of redemption remembered in the Passover celebration on this very night.

Understanding these details makes the passage come alive as Jesus the Messiah points toward Himself in the Passover meal.

In addition, the foreshadowing of Jesus' death is seen by two other statements. "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." (Luke 22:15b) And, "For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined ..." (Luke 22:22).

It is clear, from these two statements, that Jesus knew His death was soon to be fulfilled. He inaugurates a new covenant with mankind: **belief in Jesus the Messiah's sacrificial death in their behalf would free men from the penalty of sin and the power of sin.**

The disciples certainly knew that something was up, but probably did not understand the full significance of the symbolism (see Luke 22:24 for a dispute that quickly arises over the disciples' status).

At this point, it is easy to see that Jesus knew of and submitted to His coming death. Why say and do these things unless He was going to suffer and die as the Passover substitution? Why would Jesus have done this if He did not know He was going to suffer and die the following day?

d. In the week prior to the Last Supper, Jesus the Messiah spoke regarding coming events: What do you think Jesus the Messiah meant by His answer in John 12:23-33?

Jesus' parable is significant: If a grain of wheat doesn't die, it remains alone; if it dies it bears much fruit. This is seen to represent a life: "whoever loves his life loses it ..." (John 12:25). Jesus connects these two thoughts in questions and statements in John 12:27. This death is the very reason He came.

One last connection to the two statements is in John 12:32: Jesus will bear fruit like the grain of wheat that dies – He will "draw all people to Himself" when He is "lifted up from the earth" (John tells us plainly that this was to show by what kind of death He would die – John 12:33).

e. From these verses, do you think that Jesus the Messiah was willing or unwilling to do all that God asked and had planned regarding death by crucifixion?

It is clear, by examining these verses, that Jesus the Messiah knew and was willing to die.

Supplemental Information

In the story of the shepherd of the sheep in John 10:10-18, Jesus points out that He is the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep (v.11) and that "no one takes it" from Him, but that He lays it down voluntarily.

This was God's plan laid out from Genesis 3:15 and seen in fulfillment in Galatians 4:4-5 and Hebrews 2:14-15.

32 The Crucifixion of Jesus the Messiah

The crucifixion was a real historical event that shows Jesus the Messiah's compassion for people and His willingness to die in answer to God's plan. *Luke: 23:1-43*



Major teaching points of events 32/33:

- Lessons 32/33 are crucial lessons to deal with the Islamic understanding of the death of Jesus by crucifixion, as lessons 30/31 dealt with Jesus' willingness to follow God's plan and go to the cross.
- Please review the Major Teaching Points of Event 30 regarding the general Islamic understanding of the crucifixion.

Teaching notes:

In preparation for leading this study, read the Supplemental Information regarding crucifixion. Give a copy of the supplemental information to the students at the end of this lesson. The more the student understands about the process of crucifixion, the more he/she will be able to grasp the significance of the death of Jesus Christ.

a. After reading Luke 23:1-25, think through and make a list of the events and people that took part in Pilate's decision to deliver Jesus the Messiah into the will of the Jewish leaders and people.

The council of Jewish leaders brought Jesus to Pilate and made a formal accusation. Pilate's judgment is to proclaim that he found no guilt in Jesus. Because of continued pressure, Pilate sends him to King Herod noting that Jesus is in Herod's jurisdiction.

Herod is frustrated by Jesus' silence despite his and the Jewish leader's repeated attempts to get Jesus to talk. Herod sends Jesus back to Pilate after treating Him poorly. Pilate and Herod made friends that day over the issue of Jesus the Messiah.

Pilate explains to the Jewish leaders that, since both he and Herod did not find Jesus guilty, he (Pilate) would punish and release Jesus. Pilate comes under increasing pressure to crucify Jesus and states again that Jesus is innocent and will be released after punishment.

Finally, the crowd and their desires prevail and Jesus the Messiah is "delivered over to their will." Pilate and Herod are historical figures as are these trials with the Jewish leaders.

b. In your opinion, does it appear that the trials followed a just pattern and reached a logical conclusion?

The Jewish leaders set up Jesus the Messiah's betrayal, arrest, and trial. The Jewish council had decided Jesus' guilt based on their own "trials" (compare Luke 22:1-2, Mark 14:1-2, 10-11, 53-65). Pilate declared Jesus innocent three times (Luke 23:4, 14, and 22).

Herod, likewise, found Jesus innocent and sent Him back to Pilate without any comment (Luke 23:11).



Why do you think that Jesus the Messiah was crucified?

The Jewish leaders feared the people (Luke 22:1-2), hated Jesus and all He stood for, and were jealous of His power (John 11:45-53, Luke 19:47-48, Matthew 26:3-5). Jesus was more popular with the crowds.

Pilate and Herod feared the Jewish leaders and people and wanted to keep peace and their positions.

c. Read Luke 23:26-43, and describe the events that took place after Pilate handed Jesus the Messiah over for crucifixion.

Jesus was scourged/flogged (Matthew 27:26).

Simon of Cyrene was seized and made to carry Jesus the Messiah's cross because Jesus was so weakened by floggings and beatings.

Jesus interacts with concern and warnings to those who are mourning and lamenting over Him.

The soldiers, after crucifying Jesus, divided His belongings for themselves.

Two criminals were crucified with Jesus: one of these brought abuse on Jesus, the other accepted His forgiveness.

d. How did Jesus the Messiah act during His trial and subsequent crucifixion?

Jesus shows compassion on the crowd (verses 28-31), on a criminal crucified with Him (verse 43), and on those who crucified Him (verse 34).

Jesus offered no attempt at retaliation, although he had power to do it (Matthew 26:52-54). Jesus was self-controlled and uttered no blasphemy or threats throughout the trials and crucifixion.

Does Jesus the Messiah live up to your expectations of a godly man during His last hours and subsequent death?

Even the centurion in charge of the crucifixion states that He was innocent and the Son of God (Luke 23:47, Mark 15:38-39).

e. Is the Gospel clear that the crucifixion was a real, historical event?

Stress the public witness of people (Pilate, Herod, etc.), public events (trials, crucifixion), and subsequent Jewish historical writers who testify to this real historical event.

Remember to ask your students "How does Jesus the Messiah reveal Himself in the events on pages 20 and 21?" Remember the purpose of this "bottom of the double-page spread." As the student reads and studies the Scriptures, this activity helps the student learn about God, who He is, what He has done, and what He still will do.

The Chronological Bible Story

How is Jesus Portrayed in Events   ? (page 21)

The Jewish historian, Josephus, described crucifixion as “the most wretched of deaths.” First, a prisoner was scourged mercilessly with a short, heavy whip. Then he was nailed to a cross where he suffered excruciating pain for hours before the rigors of crucifixion finally ended his life.

Crucifixion: Crucifixion provided a death that was particularly painful (hence the term excruciating, literally “out of crucifying”), gruesome (hence dissuading against the crimes punishable by it), and public (hence the metaphorical expression “to nail to the cross”) using whatever means were most expedient for that goal. Crucifixion methods varied considerably with location and time period.

The Greek and Latin words corresponding to “crucifixion” applied to many different forms of painful execution, from impaling on a stake to affixing to a tree, to an upright pole or to a combination of an upright and a crossbeam. If a crossbeam was used, the condemned man or woman was forced to carry it on his or her shoulders, which would have been torn open by flagellation, to the place of execution. A whole cross would weigh well over 300 pounds (135 kilograms), but the crossbeam would weigh only 75-125 pounds (35-60 kilograms).

The person executed may sometimes have been attached to the cross by ropes, but nails are mentioned in a passage of Josephus, where he states that, at the Siege of Jerusalem, “the soldiers out of rage and hatred, nailed those they caught, one after one way, and another after another, to the crosses, by way of jest.” Josephus describes multiple tortures and positions of crucifixion during the siege of Jerusalem as Titus crucified the rebels; and Seneca the Younger recounts: “I see crosses there, not just of one kind but made in many different ways: some have their victims with head down to the ground; some impale their private parts; others stretch out their arms on the gibbet.”

At times, the gibbet was only one vertical stake. This was the simplest available construction for torturing and killing the criminals. Frequently, however, there was a cross-piece attached either at the top to give the shape of a T or just below the top, as in the form most familiar in Christian symbolism. Other forms were in the shape of the letters X and Y.

The earliest writings that speak specifically of the shape of the cross on which Jesus died describe it as shaped like the letter T (the Greek letter tau), or composed of an upright and a transverse beam, together with a small peg in the upright. In popular depictions of crucifixion, the condemned would most likely have nails in his or her wrists, as the hands do not have the structure nor the strength to carry the weight of the full body. The length of time required to reach death could range from a matter of hours to a number of days, depending on exact methods, the health of the crucified person, and environmental circumstances.

One theory suggests that the typical cause of death was asphyxiation. It is conjectured that, when the whole body weight was supported by the stretched arms, the condemned would have severe difficulty inhaling, due to hyper-expansion of the lungs. The condemned would therefore have to draw himself up by his arms, or have his feet supported by tying or by a wood block. Indeed, Roman executioners could be asked to break the condemned’s legs, after he had hung for some time, in order to hasten his death. Once deprived of support and unable to lift himself, the condemned would die within a few minutes. If death did not come from asphyxiation, it could result from a number of other causes including physical shock caused by the scourging that preceded the crucifixion, the nailing itself, dehydration, and exhaustion.

Some experiments have revealed that, when suspended with arms at 60° to 70° from the vertical, test subjects had no difficulty breathing, only rapidly-increasing discomfort and pain. This would correspond to the Roman use of crucifixion as a prolonged, agonizing, humiliating death.

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crucifixion>.

33 The Crucifixion of Jesus the Messiah

Jesus the Messiah died on the cross as the perfect sacrificial lamb for our sins and dealt the crushing blow to Satan that God had promised to the first man and woman.

Luke: 23:44-56, Matthew 27:45-66



Major teaching points of events 32/33:

- Lessons 32/33 are crucial lessons to deal with the Islamic understanding of the death of Jesus by crucifixion, as lessons 30/31 dealt with Jesus' willingness to follow God's plan and go to the cross.
- The crucifixion of Jesus was a real event. Jesus actually died on the cross. The Romans certified His death (Mark 44-45), and He was buried.
- Jesus' death was in fulfillment to the prophecy of Genesis 3.
- Jesus died in our place as a substitute sacrifice in our behalf (the concept of substitutionary atonement). We deserved the death He died; Jesus was completely innocent and sinless. Jesus died as the Lamb of God, a sacrificial lamb, atoning for the sins of those who believe in Him.
- It is important to understand that the death of Jesus was in God's plan for Him and mankind: Jesus willingly agreed to God's plan and died in our place and for our sins.

Teaching notes:

** Answer any questions on the supplemental information given at the end of Lesson 32.*

a. Read Luke 23:44-49 and Matthew 27:45-56. What do these two writers record as the actual events surrounding the death of Jesus the Messiah?

An unnatural darkness covered the whole land for 3 hours.

Jesus cries out to God "why have You forsaken Me."

Explain that God the Father had to turn His back on Jesus, His Son, because Jesus the Messiah, at this point, had taken our sins upon Himself.

One of those standing close offers Jesus a drink.

The curtain of the temple was torn in two. This is the curtain that separated the Holy Place (where priests regularly ministered) from the Most Holy Place or the Holy of Holies (a room that the High Priest only entered once a year with the blood of a sacrifice) where the presence of God dwelt. This signified that access to God had been opened to all who come by way of Jesus the Messiah's sacrifice.

Explain that, because Jesus the Messiah died to pay the penalty for our sins, we can now approach God through what Jesus has done for us. Jesus' death made it possible for us to be restored to a confident and intimate relationship with God.



Jesus the Messiah cries out to God, gives up His spirit, breathes His last breath, and dies.

The tombs were opened and “saints” were raised.

The centurion in charge of the crucifixion, one familiar with execution, proclaims Jesus the Messiah innocent, saying “truly this man was the Son of God.” He was truly impressed with Jesus and praised God as he made this statement. *Note: A centurion was a Roman soldier who commanded 100 men. This centurion may have been the Roman soldier who was in charge of carrying out the crucifixion of Jesus. As a Roman centurion, no doubt he had observed and participated in many crucifixions including crucifixions of men who made messianic claims.

The crowds, knowing Jesus has died, go home “beating their breasts” obviously touched and saddened by the event.

Jesus the Messiah’s acquaintances watch from a distance.

b. Read Luke 23:50-56, Matthew 27:57-66, and Mark 15:42-47. After Jesus the Messiah died, what further events are recorded?

Joseph of Arimathea secured the body of Jesus from Pilate.

Pilate ascertained, from the centurion, that Jesus was indeed dead.

Joseph prepared the body of Jesus for burial (with 75 pounds of ointments and spices) and buried Jesus in a new tomb. Joseph rolled a great stone over the entrance of the tomb.

Women, who had followed Jesus, saw the preparations and the tomb and went home to prepare more spices and ointments (i.e. they wanted to do more for the body – not doubting Jesus was dead).

The chief priests and Jewish leaders went to Pilate and asked for a guard for the tomb. They made the tomb secure by sealing the entrance. They would have first made sure that all inside the tomb was as it should be.

c. Read Psalm 22:1-18. The prophet David wrote this psalm about God’s Chosen One approximately 1,000 years before Jesus the Messiah was born. Look for indications that the man described here (the Messiah) would be dying by crucifixion.

Explain that the prophet David was not describing something that he had personally observed. He was writing through the inspiration of God’s Holy Spirit and may not have understood all that he was writing. This was hundreds of years before crucifixion was used as a death penalty in Canaan.

Indications that may suggest the person described here would be dying by crucifixion:

Verses 6-7: People were ridiculing him publicly.

Verse 8: He needed to be delivered or rescued, so he was in a dire situation.

Verses 12-13: He was surrounded by enemies who were harassing him.

Verse 14: His life was “poured out like water” and all of his bones were out of joint.

Verse 15: His strength was dried up, and he was suffering intense dehydration and thirst.



Verse 16: His feet had been pierced.

Verse 17: His bones were exposed (probably from under his tightly stretched flesh).

Verse 18: Someone was gambling to take possession of his garments (so he was naked at this time).

d. Read Luke 23:26-38. What does Jesus the Messiah's prayer in verse 34 tell us about Him?

Jesus was at peace with Himself, at peace with God, and at peace with His enemies during this entire ordeal. He was more concerned about others than Himself and was able to forgive those who were carrying out His crucifixion, even though He had done nothing worthy of death, much less such a horrible and humiliating death.

e. Read I Peter 3:18 and Revelation 5:6-14. Who is this "Lamb of God" and what did He do?

Jesus is identified as the lamb, worthy to open the scroll because "You were slain, and by Your blood You ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation." Jesus suffered for sins, "the righteous for the unrighteous," to bring us to God.

Think of the similarities between the Passover lambs that were killed in Egypt and Jesus the Messiah's death on the cross. (See event 15 on page 13.)

Here are some of the similarities that the student should be able to understand at this point in the study. There are other similarities that will become obvious as we continue in the study, but don't present those yet.

1. The Passover lamb was to be a male and without blemish. (Exodus 12:5)
2. The lamb did not die because of anything it had done.
3. The innocent lamb shed its blood and died in order to save others.

f. Remembering the prophecy of Genesis 3, what is the significance of Jesus the Messiah's death?

Jesus the Messiah is the Satan conqueror promised by God in Genesis 3 after our parents, Adam and Eve, sinned and brought death on themselves and the human race. Jesus the Messiah, Lamb of God, in dying on the cross, brought life to us by paying for our sin and restoring our relationship with God as it was in the Garden of Eden. Jesus the Messiah's death was the death-blow to Satan (Colossians 2:13-15).

You may want to revisit Event 14, point d; there is a parallel here. Even though men intended to harm Jesus, God intended Jesus' suffering as a means to save many people. What men meant for harm, God turned to good, fashioning salvation from the substitutionary death of Jesus the Messiah!

The Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah

On the third day after Jesus the Messiah died and was buried, God supernaturally raised Him from the dead to demonstrate His power over sin, death, and Hell. *Luke 24:1-43*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

In the previous four lessons, we have stressed Jesus' willingness to die and His actual death by crucifixion to counter the belief of many Muslims that Jesus was not crucified and did not die. This lesson continues that same emphasis with Jesus now appearing alive after His resurrection from the dead.

God's plan, and Jesus' obedience to that plan, was to have Jesus die as a perfect sacrifice, fully fulfilling God's demands of perfection and righteousness, and apply that atonement to His creatures who will believe His way of providing righteousness.

The Scriptures are emphasized in this event as being authoritative and useful to see God's plan and to recognize the fulfillment of that plan.

Teaching notes:

Because this passage of Scripture (Luke 24) will be included again in the next event with a different emphasis, cover just the information in these questions.

a. Read Luke 24:1-12. Look for evidences that Jesus the Messiah was no longer in the tomb.

Verse 2 -- The stone that sealed the tomb was rolled away.

Verse 3 – The women who entered the tomb did not find the body of Jesus.

Verses 4-6 – Two men (angels) informed the women that Jesus was “not here, but is risen!”

Verse 6-7 – The angels reminded the women that Jesus had told them that He would rise again on the third day.

Verse 12 – Peter ran to the tomb to look for himself but found nothing there other than the burial cloths in which the body of Jesus had been wrapped.

b. Read Luke 24:13-35. What were these two looking for? Who was this stranger and what was His message?

Two people, a long way from Jerusalem, met a stranger who appeared to know nothing of the recent events in Jerusalem. Jesus drew near and walked with these two disciples on the road to Emmaus. They were surprised this stranger appeared to know nothing of the events of the crucifixion, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

They were disappointed because they expected that Jesus the Messiah would be “the one to redeem Israel;” they were expecting a political deliverer and a literal on-earth kingdom.

Jesus remarked that they are foolish not to believe the Scriptures which predicted these events. The Holy Scriptures had shown how God brought His chosen leaders first through suffering and then to glory; the Messiah follows the same pattern with His birth, sufferings, and death all interpreted to them by Jesus Himself. The same Scriptures that Jesus the Messiah explained to these two disciples are still in use today, and, collectively, are often called the Old Testament of the Bible.

c. Read Luke 24:36-43. What did Jesus the Messiah do to prove that He was not just a spirit?

Jesus showed them His hands and feet (which had been pierced with the nails of crucifixion) and invited them to touch Him and see that He wasn't just a ghost (verses 36-40).

Jesus asked for and ate food in their presence (verses 41-43).

Jesus reminds them that He spoke the words of Scripture (prophecies) that were written about Him and then opened their minds to understand the Scriptures (verses 44-49).

Jesus shows, by these things, that His physical body had been raised from the dead.

d. Because God raised Jesus the Messiah from the dead...

- **True or False? *We can have confidence that the things Jesus the Messiah said about Himself were true.***

True. In light of what we have learned about God (that He is holy and just and right), we can be sure that God would not have raised Jesus the Messiah from the dead if Jesus the Messiah had been delusional or dishonest in His claims regarding His unique relationship with God.

- **True or False? *We can have confidence that God was satisfied with Jesus the Messiah's death as a payment for our sins.***

True. It is very important that the student understand the connection between the resurrection of Messiah and God's satisfaction with Jesus the Messiah's death as a payment for our sins. You may want to read the following paragraphs and be prepared to explain this reality in your own words.

When God raised Jesus the Messiah from the grave, God was expressing His complete satisfaction with the life and death of Jesus the Messiah—He had accomplished exactly what God, His Father, sent Him to earth to do. **(For a discussion of God the Father, look ahead to the "Major teaching Points" of Event 35).**

Jesus had lived a perfectly sinless life and died for human sins. But unlike the innocent sacrificial lambs that had died down through the ages, Jesus the Messiah took all of the sins of the whole world upon Himself on the cross. As Jesus died, for the first and only time, God the Father withdrew from Jesus, "Son of God." At that moment, Jesus the Messiah (who never had experienced sin) was taking the judgment of our sins. The Gospel says it this way: "God made him who had no sin to be sin* for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (2 Corinthians 5:21) *Note: This probably means "a sin offering."

The account of Jesus the Messiah's death recorded by John, a companion and disciple of Jesus, tells us that in his final moments Jesus spoke these words: "It is finished!" (John 19:30) Even though Jesus probably spoke Aramaic routinely, here, He uttered one Greek word—"tetelestai." This word was a common marketplace term meaning "paid in full." When



a debt was fully paid, “tetelestai” (pronounced “tuh-tell-uh-sty”) would be written on a loan document, will, or letter. In the first century, when people had paid their debt in full, they would shout out the word “tetelestai.” It was a shout of triumph...a shout of victory. When Jesus said, “It is finished,” He was declaring victory. The sin debt of the entire world had been paid. The resurrection of Jesus was kind of a receipt that God has given us—a certified proof that our sin debt has indeed been paid. But whether or not we will choose to acknowledge that payment for our sins is another matter.

e. Read Hebrews 2:14-15. What purpose for Jesus the Messiah’s death do we see in verses 14 and 15?

Verse 14: Destroy the devil, the one who had the power of death. You may want to tie this back to Genesis 3:15 (event 6, page 8).

Verse 15: Release those who have been bound/enslaved by the fear of death.

f. As you think back over what we have studied, how would you personally answer this question: “Who is Jesus the Messiah?”

With His claims of Oneness with God in mind, we have only three options:

1. We can conclude that Jesus the Messiah was a **lunatic**—a deranged man with empty delusions of grandeur.
2. We can conclude that Jesus the Messiah was an intentional **liar**—a man who repeatedly fabricated statements about Himself but knew exactly what He was doing.
3. We can conclude that Jesus the Messiah was who He claimed to be—the **true Messiah** who has the power to forgive us of our sins and give us everlasting life.

In preparation for the closing discussion for this event, read the article in the supplemental information section below. It will prepare you to lead the discussion about what some have called the “trilemma”—one crucial choice from three options. You may want to copy the following supplemental page for the student to take with him if that is appropriate in your context.

The Chronological Bible Story

How is Jesus Portrayed in Events   ? (page 22)

Lunatic, Liar, or Lord? Source: www.Existence-of-God.com (March 8, 2008)

Even those who are not persuaded by Christianity often have great respect for Jesus. Among those who reject the idea that Jesus was God incarnate, there are many who are still followers of him to some degree. "Jesus was a great moral teacher", some say, "but he wasn't God." According to this view, Jesus is to be followed as a great human being, but not as a divine one.

This idea that Jesus was merely a great human being, i.e. a great human being but nothing more, is, as C.S. Lewis argued in Part 2 of *Mere Christianity*, indefensible.

Jesus made the most astonishing claims, not only about God, society and ethics, but also about himself. He claimed to have the authority to forgive sins, to be the representative of all humanity come to die in order to reconcile man to God, and to be the only way for people to attain salvation.

Faced with the fact that Jesus made these claims about himself, there are three things that we might say about him: Either Jesus' claims were false and he knew it, or his claims were false and he didn't know it, or his claims were true. None of these suggests that Jesus was a great, but merely human, teacher. Anyone who has that view needs to think again.

The first thing that we might say about Jesus is that his claims were false and he knew it, in which case he was a liar. If Jesus did not believe that his claims about himself were true, then when he made those claims he was lying.

Jesus' claims about himself were so central to his teachings, though, that if they were lies then he can hardly be deemed a great teacher. If Jesus set out to systematically deceive people about who he was and how their sins were to be dealt with, then he was among the worst teachers that have ever walked the earth.

The second thing that we might say about Jesus is that his claims were false and he didn't know it, in which case he was a lunatic. If Jesus believed that his claims about himself were true, and they weren't, then he was a delusional egomaniac. If an ordinary person believes himself to be God incarnate, then that person is, put quite simply, insane.

Again, if this were the case, if Jesus taught that this is who he was and was mistaken, then he was as bad a teacher as there has ever been.

The third thing that we might say about Jesus is that his claims were true, in which case he was, and is, Lord. If Jesus believed that his claims about himself were true and they were, then Jesus was not only a great human being, but was also God (God incarnate, God's image, God's Word) on Earth.

If we take Jesus seriously, then we must take Jesus' claims about himself seriously. We cannot say that Jesus was a great teacher whom we admire and look up to, but that the most fundamental element of his teachings was a monumental error. Jesus was not a great, but merely human, teacher; he was either much less than this, or much more.

Those who respond to this argument by writing Jesus off as either a liar or a lunatic are, for all that has been said so far, just as reasonable as those who respond by accepting Jesus as Lord. This argument is an attack only on the view that Jesus was a great teacher but not God; there is nothing in it that counts against the view that Jesus was a terrible teacher. In order to show that it is better to view Jesus as Lord than as either a liar or a lunatic, it would have to be demonstrated that there is some reason to take Jesus' claims seriously.

Do we have any reason, though, to take Jesus' claims seriously? Many have argued that we do, that we have the strongest possible evidence that Jesus knew what he was talking about when it came to the supernatural. There is, it is argued, substantial historical evidence that Jesus was raised from the dead, endorsing his claims to religious authority.

The Resurrection, it is said, was a divine endorsement of Jesus' teachings, God's confirmation that Jesus' teachings were true. If this is correct, then there can be no doubt as to which of the three positions concerning Jesus outlined above is the correct one. If there is significant evidence for the resurrection, then we have to take Jesus seriously.

35

Ascension of Jesus the Messiah

After His resurrection, Jesus the Messiah made numerous earthly appearances to His disciples and then ascended to Heaven to be with God.

Luke 24:13-49; Acts 1:6-11



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- Jesus is alive and cares for us in ways beyond our understanding.
- Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection were necessary (had to happen) for Him to fulfill all that was written of the Chosen One, the Messiah (Christ):

These were a fulfillment of Scripture prophecies concerning the Messiah (Christ).

The Messiah's suffering and death was a provision of the perfect sacrifice that pleased God, not a dishonor or shame to Messiah as Muslims perceive it (see Events 30 and 31 for the full teaching on this subject).

Acceptance by God, the Father of Jesus' perfect life as a sacrifice, is seen in Jesus' resurrection from the dead.

- The question of the Trinity could be discussed at this point *if helpful* to your inquiring friend. Be careful and do your homework. This doctrine is hard to explain to Christians who believe it.

"The word **trinity** is never found in the Bible, though the idea represented by the word is taught in many places. The word **trinity** means 'tri-unity' or 'three-in-oneness.' It is used to summarize the teaching of Scripture that God is three persons yet one God." (Systematic Theology, Wayne Grudem, p.226-7)

Stress the oneness of God if there is discussion on this point:

- God is one, **complex** in His person and being – He is unity, not just a mathematical "one" (as Islam teaches).
- God, as God, has attributes that no other being has.
- God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit all possess the attributes of deity that no other being possesses. That is, they are each divine by definition but claim to be One Being.
- God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are One Being and not three Gods.
- Each of the Godhead (One Being – God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit) have distinct roles (for example, Jesus is Immanuel, "God with us" in the flesh), but each is fully God.

Teaching notes:

The same text (Luke 24) is used in this event as the last event. There is some overlap in the questions from the last event but with different emphasis. Review of this passage will help to cement this important information.



a. Explain the details (who, what, where) of the event recorded in Luke 24:13-35.

Two men (Cleopas and another unnamed man), who were followers of Jesus the Messiah, were walking to the village of Emmaus, a village about 7 miles northwest of Jerusalem. Jesus met them while they were talking. It appears that Jesus either came up from behind them or was waiting alongside the road and “drew near” to the men. The day was the very same day (Sunday) that Jesus’ tomb was discovered to be empty by His followers.

What were the men’s emotions while they walked on the road, and why did they feel this way?

The men were sad. They were most likely in a state of shock or numbness after the trauma of the last weekend in which Jesus was taken, tried, and crucified. See their report to Jesus in verses 19-24 of the events of the weekend.

The men were confused; they had expected and hoped that Jesus was the Chosen One, the Messiah. As the Messiah, they assumed that Jesus was going to rule Israel. Instead, Jesus was killed and apparently defeated.

In addition, they had just heard the reports that Jesus’ tomb was empty, that the women had talked with angels and were told that Jesus must rise from the dead, and that He was alive (24:22-24). **They were honestly wondering if it was all true.**

b. How does Jesus the Messiah answer their explanation of the recent events in Jerusalem and the way they feel?

Jesus tells them directly that they were foolish not to believe all that the Scriptures had told them about the Messiah. He then goes on to explain the Scriptures to them – He does not leave them in ignorance of the Bible’s message of redemption.

What do you suppose He explained to them (Luke 24:27)?

See events 20 and 30 for a recounting of all the prophecies of the Messiah.

In short, Jesus explained to them that it was God’s plan, from the beginning, that God would provide a Savior for mankind. He then went over all the details in Scripture of the prophecies of the Messiah. God had written these so that men would be able to recognize God’s plan of redemption and the person of the Messiah.

The Savior (Messiah) would be born of a virgin so that He was without sin, live a sinless life, heal many, proclaim the Kingdom of God and freedom from bondage, be rejected by the religious authorities of the day, be tried, be crucified, and then rise from the dead. The Messiah would provide a perfect sinless sacrifice for our sin by His death on the cross that would satisfy God so that all, who believed in Him, would have an eternal relationship with God.

Note: Jesus the Messiah’s interaction with these two men was extremely caring and compassionate. It was Jesus who came up to them, engaged them in conversation, listened to the way they felt, taught and explained the Scriptures of the Messiah, and then revealed Himself to them. Amazing!

c. Why was it necessary for the Messiah to suffer and die (compare Luke 24:25-26 and 24:44)?

The words “necessary,” “have to,” “ought to” and “must” appear in the major translations of the Bible in Luke 24:25-26, 44.



The Messiah needed to fulfill God's plan for Him (all the prophecies concerning Him). Much of what was written of Messiah was of His suffering and death. The Torah, Psalms, and the writings of the prophets are true, and all the prophecies and promises will be fulfilled.

It was necessary that God's Satan conqueror (Genesis 3:15) provide a perfect sacrifice for sin – this would be by suffering and death. God, long ago, instituted the sacrificial laws for the forgiveness of sin because He is holy and cannot live with sin. Sin must be paid for by death (compare Romans 6:23). In the Old Testament, God, in His mercy, provided that forgiveness could come by the placing of the punishment for sin on a perfect animal (God's requirement) so that man could live (a substitute sacrifice, or substitutionary atonement). The Messiah would provide a perfect, once and for all sacrifice surpassing all the animal sacrifices (see Hebrews 10:1-14), by which God could then impute (give) forgiveness to all who believed (Hebrews 9:22 – "... without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.")

The Messiah provided a perfect sacrifice for sin allowing our holy God to forgive all that come to Him by faith in Messiah's sacrifice on their behalf.

d. In what ways does Jesus the Messiah interact with the disciples that were gathered together (verses 33-49)?

Jesus comes to His followers when they are gathered together and discussing Him.

Jesus answers their fears and doubts with His physical presence, showing them His wounds to prove it is He. He has a real physical body, and He comes to see and interact with them.

Jesus showed Himself to be real and alive by eating with His followers.

Jesus reviews with all the disciples what He had told them regarding His fulfillment of all the prophecies concerning Himself in the Scriptures. He also opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.

And Jesus the Messiah clearly states that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in His name to all nations. God loves all men in all nations and has made a way for all to have a relationship with Him – through faith in the Savior's (the Chosen One's, the Messiah's, Christ's) sacrifice in their behalf.

e. Read Acts 1:6-11.

This event occurred 40 days after the resurrection of Jesus the Messiah. Give a brief summary of what happened during those days: meetings of Jesus with His disciples in various places (e.g. I Corinthians 15:3-9). Explain that Jesus probably did much more during those days than was recorded in the Bible.

Explain the "kingdom question" that followers of Jesus the Messiah asked Him. Their expectation was that He would set up a literal on-earth kingdom at this point. The kingdom is a future event, and Jesus tells them that when this will happen is not important at this time. Their expectation was right, but their timing was premature. We will learn more about the earthly kingdom that they were expecting in Event 38.

Acts 1:8 records the last words Jesus the Messiah spoke on earth. Summarize the final statement of Jesus to His followers.

Jesus the Messiah promised that the “Holy Spirit” would come upon His followers. Explain that the Holy Spirit is also a person of the Godhead—He (the Holy Spirit) has all the attributes of deity just as Jesus and God the Father have. The Holy Spirit is the person of the Godhead who comes into and upon believers to give them the supernatural power that they need to serve God.

How does this compare with Luke 24:48?

After Jesus states that forgiveness of sins through Him should be proclaimed to all nations, He says to them “You are witnesses of these things.” They had seen it all, understood it, believed it, and they now have the responsibility to tell others. He is saying this again in Acts 1:8.

f. What promise did the two men in white apparel (angels) give to the followers of Jesus the Messiah?

They asserted that Jesus the Messiah would return to the earth. Two details from their promise are important:

1. “This same Jesus”—the very same person who had lived among them, died for them, and had been raised from the dead.
2. “Come in like manner as you saw Him go”—a literal, visible, physical ascension would mean a literal, visible, physical return of Jesus the Messiah.

Remember to ask your students “How does Jesus the Messiah reveal Himself in the events on pages 22 and 23?” Remember the purpose of this “bottom of the double-page spread.” As the student reads and studies the Scriptures, this activity helps the student learn about God, Who He is, what He has done, and what He still will do.

Supplemental Information

What is Jesus the Messiah now doing in Heaven? Read Hebrews 7:24-25.

- *He and Him* (in the New King James Version and many other versions) refer to Jesus the Messiah.
- Jesus the Messiah “always lives” to make intercession for people who come to God through Him.
- You might be able to explain to your inquiring friend that Jesus the Messiah wants him or her to come to God through Him. As your Savior, Jesus the Messiah has paid the sacrifice, and as your ‘attorney’, He will intercede with God for you. The King James Version word “uttermost” means “completely” or “forever.”

Soon after Jesus the Messiah ascended, His disciples began to proclaim the good news about Who Jesus the Messiah was, what He did, and why people should trust in Him as their Savior. *Acts 2:1-41*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- A response (belief) is necessary to enter into a relationship with God. The good deeds that Muslims, or other people, perform in hope that God will forgive them will not be enough to save them. No human being will be justified in God's sight by works of the law (Romans 3:20).
- This message is for all people, even ancestors of the Muslims who were chosen by God to hear this proclaimed. This is emphasized by the majority of the people groups present (not only Arabians, but Persians, Turks, North Africans, and Egyptians – see Acts 2:9-11), and by the phrase “and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to Himself.”

Teaching notes:

a. Read Acts 2:1-13. Ten days after Jesus the Messiah ascended to Heaven, the Holy Spirit of God came upon the followers of Jesus the Messiah just as He had promised. How would you describe this event? Who were the devout men of every nation who came to see this event?

Give an overview of what had happened since the ascension of Jesus the Messiah: The assembly of the 120 gathered in the upper room in Jerusalem until the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came upon them to empower them (Acts 1:8).

The Holy Spirit indwells believers, and they speak in tongues or languages that can be understood by speakers of those languages. The Holy Spirit miraculously gave the followers of Jesus the ability to communicate in the languages of the people who had come to Jerusalem for the annual Pentecost feast.

Jews and proselytes (new converts to Judaism) from 15 areas/people groups of the world came together to investigate this strange occurrence and stay to listen to the disciple Peter's explanation. These 15 represent the known world (“devout men of every nation”), and include the following peoples: Persians, Arabs, Egyptians, North Africans, and residents of what is modern day Turkey.

This message of challenge and salvation was meant to be taken back to these countries and lands.

b. Read Acts 2:14-21. What explanation did the disciple Peter give for this strange behavior?

Peter quoted the prophet Joel (Joel 2:28-32) in explanation of this unusual occurrence. He explained that these were signs of the days when God “will pour out His Spirit on all flesh,” that is, send the Holy Spirit in a similar way to what has just taken place. “In those days it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (verse 21).



c. Read Acts 2:22-35. On this occasion, Peter presented his first message about Jesus the Messiah. Based upon what he had personally seen and heard, what did Peter say about Jesus the Messiah's life, death, resurrection, and ascension?

His Life (verse 22)

Verse 22: "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know" —

1. God attested (certified as being genuine) by the miracles He did through Jesus the Messiah, that Jesus was who He said He was—the Word of God, the image of the invisible God, Immanuel ('God with us').
2. "As you yourselves also know"—many of these people had observed the miracles that Jesus the Messiah performed. They could not claim ignorance as an excuse to disbelieve.

His Death (verse 23)

Verse 23: "this Jesus, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death"

1. The death of Jesus the Messiah was in God's plan, long before it happened. The Gospel says in another place that it was planned before the world was created (Ephesians 1:3-7).
2. But it was "lawless hands" that took Jesus the Messiah and put Him to death by crucifixion.

His Resurrection (verses 24-32)

Then, the disciple Peter quoted from the Psalms of the prophet David—Psalm 16. Peter quoted Psalm 16:8-10 in verses 25-28. This portion of the Psalms was revealed to the prophet David about 1,000 years before the earthly life of Jesus the Messiah.

Verses 24-32: "... whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. For David says concerning Him: 'I foresaw the LORD always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Hades, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.' Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses."

His Ascension (verses 33-35)

Verses 33-35: "Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: "'The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'"



d. What was Peter's overall conclusion regarding Jesus the Messiah? Read verse 36.

Verse 36: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Keep in mind that Simon Peter knew Jesus the Messiah as well as anyone. He spent more than three years with Jesus and had personally observed His life, listened to His teachings, witnessed most or all of His miracles, watched Him die, spent many hours with Him after His resurrection, and witnessed His ascension into Heaven. Peter certainly knew what he was talking about. Peter explained the Psalms reference, stating that the prophet David was indeed dead and buried (verse 29), but was prophesying that one of his descendants would rule, foreseeing Jesus and His resurrection, which the apostles had witnessed (verses 30-32). Peter states that God raised up Jesus and exalted Him with a position at His right hand (authority and power), and that Jesus the Messiah has poured out the promise of the Holy Spirit that day.

e. Read Acts 2:37-41. Those listening to Peter were 'cut to the heart.' What did Peter tell them they must do?

"Cut to the heart" (or "pierced to the heart") means that they were greatly troubled and agitated by these remarks.

Peter stated that they must:

- Believe (verse 36): "know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ..."
- Repent (verse 38): change their minds; literally turn the opposite way
- Be baptized (verse 38): publically identify themselves with Jesus the Messiah and His followers
- Receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (verse 38): when a person truly believes the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in that person

Mention briefly that, from this time forward (even now), when a person becomes a true believer in Jesus the Messiah, the Holy Spirit of God comes to dwell within him/her immediately.

Was this message for the people of Israel only, or for all people?

This promise is for you and for all your children (the people of Israel) and for all who are far off (all people); it is God who works this promise (verse 39).

Remember to ask your students 'How does Jesus the Messiah reveal Himself in the events on pages 22 and 23?' Remember the purpose of this "bottom of the double-page spread." As the student reads and studies the Scriptures this activity helps the student learn about God, Who He is, what He has done, and what He still will do.

The Chronological Bible Story

How is Jesus Portrayed in Events   ? (page 23)

Jesus the Messiah created a worldwide worshipping community of believers, known and loved by God, and designed to be a blessing to all of the earth's peoples.

Acts 2:41-47, Ephesians 1:22-23, 2:13-22



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- The church is not a newcomer to the scene of world civilization or world history. Founded just 10 days after Jesus' ascension, for nearly 2000 years, the church has given God great delight as it worships and serves Him. The church, the worldwide community of believers in Jesus the Messiah, is much older than Islam and the Islamic community, and has received instruction and blessing from God as His instrument of blessing on the earth since Jesus' return to heaven. The English word "church" is a loaded word, which, even among believers, we continually have to define as **the people** and not the building. As well, there is the distinction to be made between the universal church and the local church. Community fits the former, whereas congregation/jamat fits the latter.
- **One of the most attractive aspects of Islam to its adherents and potential adherents is community.** The community (ummah) keeps people intertwined by its brotherhood/sisterhood, peer-pressure, and persuasiveness. It is an all-encompassing phenomenon in the daily lives of most Muslims. We have observed, from personal experience, that MBB's (Muslim Background Believers) are often disenchanted by the lack of community the church actually offers them and the small amount of friendship and fellowship they experience from believers.
- **An important function of the community is to provide identity to a Muslim.** A Muslim is a member of the community, a member of the religion of Islam. The church can solidify the **new identity of a believer** in reminding him/her of who they are in Christ and modeling that transformation in church life: son, heir, a member of a new family and member of a new kingdom.
- **The church shows off the identity of a new believer and addresses powerfully the issue of honor and shame.** Honor and shame are cultural underpinnings of Muslim worldview. **The believer in Christ has been lifted from shame to a position of honor:**
 - From a stranger and alien to adopted son
 - From a member of the kingdom of darkness to a member of the kingdom of light
 - From an orphan to heir
 - From hopeless to full of hope (hopeful)
 - From sinful to counted as righteous, etc.
- This lesson is not taken from the Gospels, but from the New Testament. The Qur'an encourages Muslims to know the Torah, Psalms and Gospel. Christians accept the entire New Testament as authoritative, and commonly think of the New Testament as the Injil. Some Muslims "accept" the entire New Testament as the Holy Injil (the Gospel). The New Testament was written by eyewitnesses of Jesus and contains an early history of the church (Acts) as well as instructions for the church on polity and living.



Teaching notes:

a. After Peter addressed the large crowd representing the known world in Acts 2,

- A few became believers and were baptized
- 100's became believers and were baptized
- 1000's became believers and were baptized

Approximately 3,000 were baptized that day, and added to the community of believers. They were most likely from all areas of the world and walks of life.

15 people groups or nations are represented in Acts 2:9-11. These peoples represented the known **world** of that day. Inform your inquiring friend that these peoples included the Persians (Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Mesopotamians), Egyptians, North Africans (Libya, Cyrene), and Arabians, and that these peoples still dwell in the world today in Muslim majority nations across North Africa and the Middle East. The ancestors of your friend may have heard the Gospel from Peter!

God had a special message for the peoples of the world: repent, be baptized, and serve God in the community of believers that Jesus the Messiah founded and will preserve (Matthew 16:18).

b. Describe the life and activities of this new believing community from Acts 2:42-47.

The believers were characterized by a number of activities and beliefs:

They devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching. The Apostles were the disciples of Jesus the Messiah and had spent time with Him. Jesus' teaching was based on the Old Testament scriptures (Torah, Psalms, and the writings of the Prophets); He passed on instruction in doctrine and by example and story.

They were devoted to fellowship or "being together" (also v. 44). They spent time with one another, listening, talking, and understanding. They had a community of relationship, interest, and companionship. They had mutual affection, mutual conversation, and were together often. They had frequent meetings.

They showed hospitality. They "broke bread," or had regular meals (also v. 46 – "day by day"): the meals often ending with a remembrance of Jesus the Messiah's sacrificial death for man (the Lord's Supper).

They worshipped regularly with prayers (regular, formal times of prayer to God as a group (v. 42), attending the temple together (v. 46), and praising God (v. 47). They also saw and performed wonders and signs (miracles).

They held things in common and distributed to those in need. They gave and were generous. They were well received by other people. The believers were glad and generous, two winsome components in their lives that others noticed.

They practiced sharing the "good news" with others. Men are dead in their sins and separated from God. Jesus the Messiah, the Chosen One, fulfilled Scripture, lived a perfect life, and died on the cross as a substitute sacrifice in our behalf. If we believe in Jesus the Messiah and His death in our place, we are counted righteous by God and have eternal life with Him. What good news!

The early believers were a true "community of believers," living worshipful obedient lives, sharing with others of their substance, greatly affecting the lives of those around them (v. 47), and showing interest in the Great Commission of reaching others with the message of salvation.

The activities practiced by this first community of believers are activities practiced by healthy churches today. This was the start of the community/church of Jesus the Messiah, His Bride.

c. Does this sound like a community that you would want to be involved with?

Allow for discussion on this point.

d. According to Ephesians 1:22-23, what is this community and who is its head?

If there is any question as to the validity of the book of Ephesians, a **short** explanation may suffice (see the last bullet point of the “Major teaching points of this lesson”). Hopefully, there will be no notice of the distinction some Muslims make regarding the Injil (literally just the Gospels) and the New Testament, and the New testament as well as the Old Testament will be accepted and on its way to being believed by your friend as inspired by God.

Verses 22-23: The church/community is the body of Jesus the Messiah, the fullness of Him who fills all in all, and Jesus the Messiah is its head.

The church/community as the body of Messiah/Christ is a metaphor that helps us to think of what the church/community is and does. The church is Jesus’ mystical and spiritual body. As the body depends on all of its parts, so does the church. This is metaphorical, not to be taken literally.

The church is not just individuals, but believers who are interdependent (compare I Cor. 12:12-27). Jesus the Messiah cares for the church as He would care for His body. Jesus the Messiah is the church’s life. He possesses everything and shares it with the church.

All things have been placed under Jesus the Messiah in the world including the church (verse 21a). God has given Jesus dominion and authority over the entire creation. “All” things refers to all things, every created thing: the universe, people, all spirit beings (angels and demons, as well as Satan), and every other visible or invisible thing. Jesus is the head, showing not only His union with the church, but also His authority over the church.

Other passages that state this same fact are: Ephesians 4:15, 5:23, and Colossians 1:18.

e. Ephesians 2:13-22 states that Jesus the Messiah made peace between Jew and Gentile (non-Jew), reconciling both to God by His death on the cross. Describe from verses 19-22 the transformation Jesus the Messiah has made of every believer in His community.

What great news. Jesus the Messiah reconciled Jews and Gentiles. He made peace between them by making peace for them with God. There is now no more hostility between Jews and Gentiles who believe in Jesus the Messiah. This is real and lasting peace between peoples who have been living in hostility and hatred, and that have been searching for lasting peace over many years.

A number of things take place in the transformation of every believer into a part of the church:

He is honored — from a stranger and alien to a fellow citizen with the saints, a member of the household of God (v. 19-20).



He experiences a new belonging to the body — new citizenship, new family. The body is built on the foundation of the apostles and Jesus the Messiah, the head as well as the cornerstone (the first of the foundation stones -verse 20). This whole structure is being joined together into a holy temple in the Lord (verse 21). Believers are the “living stones” being built up into a spiritual house or temple (I Peter 2:5).

He is one with those who are being built together into a holy temple, a dwelling place for God by the Spirit (verse 22). We have just read that believers are Jesus the Messiah’s body (Ephesians 1:21-22), certainly the place where God dwells and is worshipped.

Jesus the Messiah, by His sacrificial death on our behalf, makes us new creatures — a part of His body, which He cares for and loves, that He is building up, a community that is indwelt and blessed by God through Jesus which is visibly seen by the world.

Jesus the Messiah's Return as King

At the end of this age, Jesus the Messiah will come back to judge his enemies, reward his people, and reign as King over the whole earth. *Revelation 19:11 – 20:6*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- Muslim eschatology differs from biblical eschatology. This lesson offers a chance to address some of those differences (as deemed important by you).
- Muslim eschatology (from the Hadith) regarding Jesus' return holds that Jesus will kill Jews (70,000) assembled with ad-Dajjal (antichrist), and Jesus will kill swine. In addition, Jesus will break the cross, abolish Christianity, and people will revert to Islam. It also holds that Jesus will marry, reign for 40 years, then die.
- In contrast, biblical eschatology teaches that Jesus will kill the beast and false prophet (antichrist), imprison Satan for 1000 years, and that Jesus will reign as king for 1000 years, not just as a prophet for 40 years. Jesus has already died and now lives forever.
- Satan is defeated as promised.

Teaching notes:

a. Be aware that the literary style of the book of Revelation is highly symbolic. But as we look beneath the symbolic wording, four major facts emerge. Read Revelation 19:11-21.

- Jesus the Messiah will return to the earth. Why do we think this is the Jesus we have studied?**

There are several symbols in these verses that can be connected to prophecies that point to the Jewish Messiah (Christ). But to keep this discussion simple, focus on the most obvious indications that this rider is Jesus the Messiah:

1. We do know that Jesus the Messiah is referred to as God's Word in John 1:14. The names "Faithful" and "True" would also be appropriate for Him.
2. Even though Jesus the Messiah is not specifically identified as the rider on this white horse, He is the only Person who could appropriately be called by the name "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS"—the ultimate King and the ultimate LORD.
3. The robe dipped in blood may symbolically speak of the blood that He shed as our sacrificial "Lamb of God."

- Jesus the Messiah will be accompanied by the armies of heaven. Who comprises these armies?**

Since these armies of heaven are not specifically identified in this passage, we must speculate about their identity. They could be angels. But the most common interpretation is that they will be the believers who have joined Jesus the Messiah in Heaven. Even though they are described as "armies" there is no indication here that they are involved in the fight. The power of the KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS is sufficient to defeat the forces of evil.

□ **Jesus the Messiah will defeat those who oppose Him at that time. Who are these enemies of Jesus? Who are the beast and the false prophet?**

In the years preceding this event, the human race will become more and more godless and wicked, similar to the condition before the Great Flood (event 10). Through the evil influence of one very powerful human leader, many kings of the world will challenge God and anyone who takes a stand for righteousness. These are the godless people who will be defeated by Jesus the Messiah when He returns to the earth.

The beast and the kings of the earth with their armies: the beast and false prophet who are captured and thrown into the lake of fire, are the antichrist or the representation of the world and religious political systems under the control of Satan (Revelation 13:4-8, 16:13).

□ **In doing so, the wrath of God will be justly bestowed. Why is this judgment just and fair?**

At the outset of this event (Revelation 19:11), the Gospel says regarding the “Faithful and True” rider of this white horse that “in righteousness He judges and makes war.” Thus, this will indeed be a righteous war! As God deals with the human race, His holiness, His mercy, and His justice are continually being tested.

1. Because God is holy, our sins offend Him more deeply than our limited human minds can imagine.
2. Because God is merciful, He refrains from giving us the immediate judgment that our sins deserve.
3. Because God is just, our sins must eventually be judged. At various times in the Holy Scriptures, such as the Great Flood of the prophet Noah’s time, God’s longsuffering mercy was pushed beyond His self-imposed limit and the just and righteous wrath of God was dramatically unleashed upon the transgressors — righteous judgment was served in due time. That’s what we see in verse 15!

b. Read Revelation 20:1-3. Who is the old serpent, and what will happen to him?

The passage makes it clear that this “dragon, that serpent of old” is none other than the Devil (Iblis), also known as Satan—the same evil being who deceived the first man and the woman and tempted Jesus the Messiah. God will send an angel to confine Satan in a pit for 1,000 years.

Discuss with the student what life on earth would be like without the evil tempting influence of Satan, even though people would still have sinful natures. That’s exactly the condition that will exist for 1,000 years at a future point in human history.

c. Read Revelation 20:4-6. What will take place on the earth for 1,000 years?

Jesus Christ will reign as king on this earth for 1,000 years. Those who have truly believed in Jesus Christ will reign with Him in places of honor and leadership.

Where in our study have we seen predictions that Jesus the Messiah would reign as King?

It is not essential to review all of the indications that have appeared throughout this study that Jesus the Messiah would eventually reign as a king. But it is important for the student to realize that this theme begins early in the Holy Scriptures and is interwoven through the Scriptures to the very end. Ask the student the above question and see how many of these predictors, that Jesus the Messiah would reign as king, he/she can recall. Here are some of the more obvious ones:

1. Many centuries before, God prophesied through the prophet Jacob that a king and lawgiver would “not depart from” the tribe of Judah. (See events 16 and 20)
2. God promised to the prophet David (ancestor of Joseph/Yusuf and Mary, earthly parents of Jesus the Messiah) that his dynasty would be established forever. (Event 30, 36)
3. When Jesus the Messiah was born, an angel declared to the shepherds that the baby was “Christ (Messiah) the Lord.” (Luke 2:11 in event 21)
Note: We didn’t study Matthew 2:1-2, but that passage indicates that God had, in some way, informed the wise men from the East that Jesus the Messiah was “born King.”
4. When asked by Pilate if He (Jesus) was the King, Jesus the Messiah did not deny it. (Luke 23:3 in event 32)
5. When Jesus the Messiah ascended to Heaven after the resurrection, His disciples were expecting Jesus to establish an earthly kingdom at that time. Jesus told them that, when this will happen, was not important at that time. Their expectation was right, but their timing was premature (event 35).

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Afterwards, unbelievers will stand before God to be judged for their sins and cast into the lake of fire where Satan will already be suffering eternal torment for his many rebellions. *Revelation 20:7-15*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- Satan's final doom.
- The dreadful destiny of unbelievers.
- The magnificence of the Judge: It is widely believed by Muslims that, in the day of Qiyamat (end of the age/judgment day), Jesus will administer judgment. Unfortunately, many also have a faulty view that He will rule for 40 years restoring true Islam. Then He will die and be buried next to Mohammed. Their view of Jesus as judge may be useful here, but, hopefully, the inquirer will see a more magnificent view of Jesus the Messiah than he/she had ever imagined.
- The role of the books: At this judgment, books will be opened. They will indisputably reveal every sin the unbeliever has committed. It is clear that the good that one has done will never erase the sins (James 2:10).
- Only the writing in another book will matter: The Book of Life. The only hope for the person who has committed any sin is to have his/her name in The Book of Life.

Teaching Notes:

Prior to his eventual final doom, Satan will be bound for a period of 1,000 years. Read Revelation 20:1-3, which was associated with event 38, in order to connect this current event to the previous one.

a. At the end of the 1,000 years, Satan will be released temporarily. What will Satan do at this time? Revelation 20:7-9.

It is difficult to interpret this prophecy precisely. For example, we don't know who "Gog and Magog" will be (called Yajuj and Majuj in Islamic eschatology). But the main idea of this passage seems clear: Satan will immediately begin to deceive again as soon as he is released from confinement. It appears that he will instigate a massive rebellion against "the saints" (followers of Jesus the Messiah) and the beloved city (probably Jerusalem). This rebellion against the earthly kingdom of Jesus will be Satan's last stand.

b. Read Isaiah 14:12-15 about Lucifer the great angel who became the devil. Read Matthew 25:41.

In Isaiah 14:15, Isaiah prophesied that Lucifer (Satan - called "the anointed cherub who covers" in Ezekiel 28:14-15) would "be brought down to Sheol*, to the lowest depths of the Pit." (*Sheol = Hebrew term for "the abode of the dead.")

It may be that this latter phrase is predicting what we'll soon read in Revelation 20:10.

In Matthew 25:41, Jesus said that God had prepared "everlasting fire" for the devil and his angels. At the time that Jesus spoke those words, Satan ("the devil") was still unconfined, but "everlasting fire" was already awaiting him.

Then read Revelation 20:10. What do we learn here about the nature of Satan's ultimate doom?

The devil (Satan) will be cast into a "lake of fire and brimstone." Note: Brimstone is elemental sulphur, which burns with an extremely hot blue flame that is nearly invisible and produces the highly unpleasantly pungent gas, sulphur dioxide.

Two evil persons precede Satan to this lake of fire—the "beast" and the "false prophet." Even though he is called "the beast," this person was the human leader of the rebellion against God that the KING OF KINGS subdued forcefully when He returned to earth (see event 38), known to Muslims as "ad Dajjal." The "false prophet" is probably a false religious leader who assisted the beast, by deceiving people into believing that the beast was some kind of god. (See Revelation 19:19-20).

The torment of Satan's punishment (as well as that of the others who are sent there) will continue "day and night forever and ever."

Note the connection with Genesis 3:15 from event 6 on page 8.

Soon after the first man and woman disobeyed God, God pronounced an act of judgment that would come upon Satan. A special male offspring of Eve would (metaphorically) inflict a crushing blow to Satan's head — God would send a Satan-Conqueror to defeat Satan.

When Jesus the Messiah died on the cross to pay for the sins of the world, Satan's judgment was sealed. God had provided a perfect way for sinners to be forgiven and thus released from Satan's powerful, evil grip. (Read Hebrews 2:14-15) Even though the ultimate personal doom of Satan did not come at that time, in God's time it will come as seen in the verses we are studying.

Then unbelievers will stand before God to be sentenced to eternal punishment for their sins. Revelation 20:11-15

c. As unbelievers stand before the Judge, what will happen to this present earth and its heaven? Read Revelation 20:11 and 2 Peter 3:10.

There will be no place for them. They flee from the face of the One who sits upon this throne.

Explain that this passing away of the current earth and its heavens is mentioned in other places in the Scriptures. It will be God's method of purging the earth of the sin and its curse. In the next event of this study, the reason for that will become clear. (2 Peter 3:10-13 explains the future fiery destruction of the current earth and its heavens in more detail, but don't study this unless the discussion requires it.)

Did you wonder who the Judge will be on this great white throne? Revelation 20:11-12a

Some versions say that the people being judged here are "standing before God." Other versions read "standing before the throne." But verse 11 makes it clear that God* is on this judgment throne. Only He has the power to cause the earth and heaven to flee away.

(*Note: We do not know for sure if this is the Father or the Son [Jesus the Messiah], who is seated on the “great white throne.” There is Scriptural evidence that seems to indicate that Jesus the Messiah will be the Judge on this throne. See John 5:26-30; Acts 17:30-31; 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10.)

d. Read Revelation 20:12-13. What will be the role of the “the books”?

Books will play important roles in this Great White Throne Judgment.

Although the passage does not clearly tell us, most scholars believe that “the books” mentioned here contain records of the thoughts, decisions, and actions of everyone who has ever lived, from the first man and woman until the end of Jesus the Messiah’s earthly kingdom.

These books will not be for God’s benefit since He has perfect and complete knowledge of all that has happened on earth. The “books” will probably serve as an undeniable and indisputable record for the people who stand before God that He is just and righteous in the execution of His judgment.

Verse 12 can be confusing for some new students of the Scriptures. They sometimes think that God will evaluate their “good works” to determine whether or not they go to Heaven or Hell.

Point out that the eternal destiny of the people at this judgment will have already been determined from their belief. The degree of their judgment will be what God, the Judge, will assess from what God knows of them (what they have done).

What will be the role of the Book of Life?

The “Book of Life” is a special book and not at all like the other books. Obviously, **it is a record of everyone who has trusted in Jesus the Messiah, as his/her personal Savior.** It is not a record of “works” but a record of names—the names of all the people who have received God’s gift of eternal life (John 3:36; 6:29; 8:24, 34-36, **along with Romans 6:17-18;** John 10:27-30; 12:44-48, Romans 6:23).

This is a good place to reinforce the truth that these people’s eternal destiny (Heaven or Hell) will not be determined by their deeds which are recorded in “the books” but by whether or not their names are recorded in “The Book of Life.”

e. Read Revelation 20:14-15. Who will be cast into the lake of fire?

According to verse 14?

In verse 13, we are told that “Death and Hades” deliver up the dead that are in them. Then, in verse 14, we read that “Death and Hades” will be cast into the lake of fire.

“Death” here probably refers to the bodies of those who have died, and “Hades” (another name for “Hell”) probably refers to the spirits (“souls”) of these same people who died. So, this passage is teaching that the spirits of people who have gone to Hell will be united with resurrected bodies and will stand before God in those bodies. Then, these people (non-perishable & immortal body and spirit) will be cast into the lake of fire.

According to verse 15?

¹⁵ “And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”

What is the “first death”? If eternal existence in the lake of fire is the “second death,” what is the “first death?” The term the “first death” does not appear in the Scriptures. But the fact that the term the “second death” does appear, it is obvious that the Apostle John (who wrote the book of Revelation) had a first death in mind. The “first death” that John was thinking of may be a combination of spiritual death and physical death. They were both earthly and temporal experiences. In contrast to this “first death” the “second death” will occur in the world to come and will be eternal.

Remember that the essence of “death” is separation; it does not mean the cessation of life (conscious existence). When Adam and Eve first sinned, they began to experience spiritual death. They became separated from God, but continued to have a conscious existence. When Adam, Eve, and others died physically, their spirits departed (separated) from their bodies. But their spirits continued to have conscious existence beyond the grave. At the time that unbelievers will be cast into the lake of fire, their “second death” will begin. It will be an eternal death, an eternal conscious separation from God.

Blissful Paradise for Believers

But God’s message ends with wonderful news—everyone who has trusted Jesus the Messiah as his or her Savior will enter a beautiful, sin-free paradise and live there eternally with God. *Revelation 21:1—22:5*



Major teaching points of this lesson:

- Heaven is a real, physical place.
- God and the Lamb (Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God) are the center of heaven, not us.
- The Muslim eschatology of heaven differs from the biblical view. Muslims tend to look at heaven in a physical sense, centered on physical pleasure because heaven is described chiefly in physical terms (jewelry, food, clothing, etc.) in the Qur’an. This lesson offers a chance to discuss this if necessary for the student.

Teaching notes:

State and explain that the paradise theme runs all the way through the Holy Scriptures. That’s because God has always desired that men and women (and children too!) enjoy life in a setting that has been abundantly blessed by the creative work of God.

a. For believers to enjoy God’s eternal paradise...

- They will go up to heaven for it, or...
- God will bring it down to earth for us.

Read Revelation 21:1-3 to find the answer. If necessary, elaborate on this some more. Most people, including people who have been believers for many years, have a mental image of God’s people (believers) living forever in a non-physical, heavenly paradise with fluffy white clouds all around them. It is true that the current paradise, where believers now go when they die, may be somewhere “out there” beyond this solar system or even outside of this universe. But, the eternal paradise, where believers will live, will be on a completely renovated (literal and physical) earth surrounded by new heavens. God created Earth for man to inhabit and enjoy so it should not surprise us that God will create a new earthly paradise for mankind’s eternal home.

b. Read Revelation 21:4—22:5 to learn more about this eternal paradise.

Before you read, point out the questions below to be thinking about as you go through the passage.

Who is “the Lamb”? Hint: See verse 14.

“Lamb” is a dominant term used for Jesus the Messiah in the book of Revelation. It appears 29 times, while “Jesus the Messiah” appears only seven times, and “Christ/Messiah/Masih” appears four times. Verse 14 connects “the twelve apostles” to the Lamb, so there is no doubt that Jesus the Messiah is the Lamb in this passage.

Question for the student: “Where else did we see Jesus clearly identified as a lamb?” See event 23 on page 17.

God Almighty and the Lamb are “the temple.” God the Father and Jesus the Son are the center of heaven, and heaven revolves around them, not us.

What will not be found in the new, holy city?

The passage clearly states that there will be...

- No tears
- No death
- No sorrow
- No crying
- No pain
- No night
- Nothing that defiles or causes an abomination or a lie
- No more curse on the earth
- No sinners – cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and liars, etc.

Spend some time on this point. Ask: “Which of these (perhaps two or three of them) would you be most happy to see gone forever?”

What are some of the most striking features of this new city?

There are several good responses that could be made to this question, such as...

- Its glorious radiance
- Its massive size
- The river of water of life
- The tree of life and its fruit
- Its beauty—“as a bride adorned for her husband”
- The absence of the things mentioned above
- The presence of God the Father and the Lamb (Jesus)
- Its walls, gates, and foundations

Spend some time on this point. Ask: “Which physical characteristic of this Holy City, the New Jerusalem, impresses you the most?”

Who will be allowed to dwell in this new paradise? Read Revelation 21:27.

“... only those who are written in The Lamb’s Book of Life.” Our names are written in The Lamb’s Book of Life when we trust Jesus the Messiah as our Savior and Lord. Reflect back on The Book of Life in the previous event.

c. How long will they live there? Read Revelation 22:5.

“Forever and ever” (22:5). Remember to ask your students “How does Jesus the Messiah reveal Himself in the events on pages 24 and 25?” Remember the purpose of this “bottom of the double-page spread.” As the student reads and studies the Scriptures, this activity helps the student learn about God, who He is, what He has done, and what He still will do.

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ADDITIONAL FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS:

- **Do you think that *your name* is written in The Lamb's Book of Life?**

Present this without pressure. Allow your inquiring friend to think about this question.

- **Is there anything in *The Message of Hope* you would like to better understand?**

Allow time for thought and discussion.

- **If God has been speaking to you on this journey, is there anything you would like to say to Him?**

Allow time for thought and discussion and if you are studying with more than one person, make yourself available for private discussion.

Faith response:

In response to these last two questions, it may be possible that your inquiring friend is ready to believe in Jesus the Messiah as his or her Savior and Lord.

If so, walk him or her gently through this summary of what has been taught and what must be believed for salvation.

What do you think of all that you have studied? Have you come to know and believe the great message of the Bible? Do you believe "all that the prophets have spoken" concerning what God did so that we could have a relationship with Him? There is good news for the terrible condition we are in. On our own, we are deeply lost and dead in sin. God communicated His Word with men so that men could know Him and have an eternal relationship with Him.

Jesus the Messiah, the Savior, was born of a virgin so that He was without sin – God Himself entered humanity. Jesus the Messiah lived a sinless life, healed many, did miracles, proclaimed the Kingdom of God and freedom from bondage, was rejected by the religious authorities of the day, was tried, was crucified, and then rose from the dead.

Jesus the Messiah provided a perfect sacrifice for our sin; He was the substitute in our place, allowing God, the Holy One, to forgive all who come to Him by faith in Jesus the Messiah's sacrifice on their behalf. Those who believe become the children of God and have eternal life.

If your student believes and affirms all that is summarized here, ask him or her if they would like to affirm that belief to God. Then, welcome this new believer into the believing family and connect with him or her for further study of the Holy Scriptures. If your inquiring friend is not ready to take any step of faith, you might want to consider:

- Studying through *The Message of Hope* with him or her again
- Allowing your student to give you feedback which could help you to identify where he or she is having difficulty
- Studying the Chrono-Bridge together. The Chrono-Bridge is a separate publication that takes *The Message of Hope* further with a propositional presentation of the big picture of Scripture while summarizing the eight essential "Gospel truths" which grow out of *The Message of Hope*.