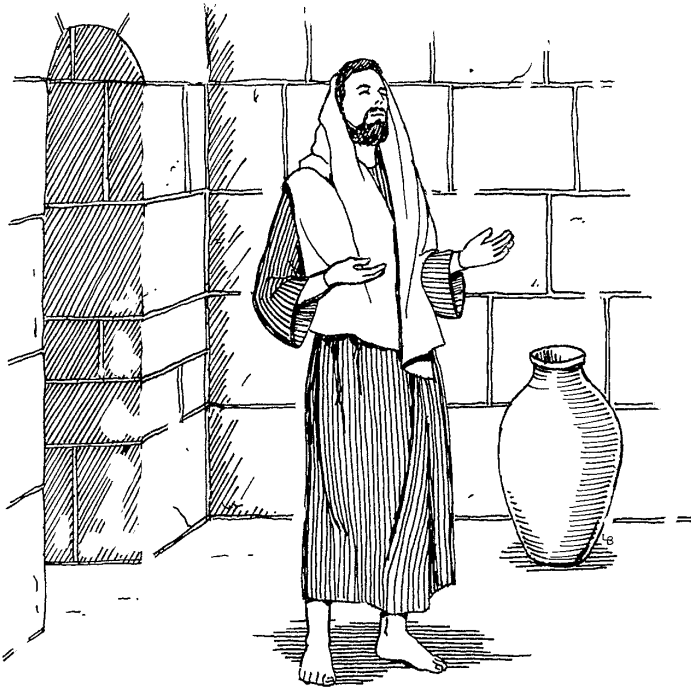


# God's Plan To Forgive Sin



“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9

The young men came to learn how to have better harvests, how to increase their herds and flocks, how to raise more fish, and to have better sanitation and health in their villages. They were taught about seeds, cultivation and harvesting, they were taught about animal husbandry and care, they were taught about fish farming and harvesting the fish, they were taught about how to have clean water in order to have good health.

*And this was good.*

But they also learned about sowing the Word of God for a harvest of souls, about the Great Shepherd who loves his sheep, nurtures them and protects them, about becoming fishers of men and casting the net to increase the harvest, and they learned about sin and unrighteousness that makes one unclean before his fellow man and before God, and how to be clean again.

*And this was best.*

Bible Stories for Workers and Trainees  
Development Service Center  
Bangladesh

## God's Plan To Forgive Sin

### *Foreword:*

These Bible stories and associated Scriptures and questions came about from an invitation to spend time at the Development Service Center in Bangladesh during 1998. The objective was to teach the staff how to use Bible stories with the agricultural trainees who came to the demonstration farm for training.

Among the trainees were Christians as well as those from Hindu and Muslim backgrounds. In addition to their regular training there was a morning Bible study time conducted by various pastors and Bible teachers. And then an evening Bible Storying time was provided after supper. It was not a formal session. Attendance at the Bible Storying sessions was not compulsory for the non-Christians. But most elected to come any way as it was entertaining, it was a group activity, and they enjoyed the stories.

The long term objective was to expose all trainees to the Gospel and to give a familiarity with God's Word so they would take home with them new spiritual insights and openness to the Gospel. The sessions were attractive to the trainees because of the love the Bengali people have for stories and for telling them. It was rewarding to see the men volunteering to tell the next story. And the listeners were all too ready to correct them if they missed any part of a story.

The Mission Administrator who had invited me and arranged for my stay came and joined in the storytelling and at times led the trainees to discuss the stories. His enthusiastic support gave credibility to the storying time.

Mornings were spent with members of the teaching staff who would instruct in the stories and lead the evening sessions. We went over the stories, telling them, discussing them and their meaning, and talking about the worldviews of the trainees and their people. The afternoons were spent crafting stories and writing them out for the staff to have as a reference. The

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### **God's Plan To Forgive Sin**

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Bible stories adapted from New International Version.

evenings were storying time during which I taught some of the stories, the staff took turns telling stories, and the trainees were invited to retell stories that had been given previously. The group entered into the activity and exercise with enthusiasm.

Later certain of the DSC staff were going to be visiting some of the areas the trainees came from and again have the opportunities to share the stories and to encourage the trainees to do so, too.

This set of stories represents a general list that we agreed on and began to use. Each of the staff were free to revise and adapt the list and how they taught it. It was a beginning point. So I share with you as a beginning point and another type of model format. You will notice there are not the usual pre-story dialog items though there are lists of discussion items called *Things to talk about* and some additional *Scriptures for your study*. The study Scriptures were given as there are no resources beyond a Bengali Bible for storyers to study. The additional Scriptures were to answer some of the questions many asked and to provide necessary background for the stories and discussion questions.

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## LIST OF BIBLE STORIES AND LESSONS

1. God Created the Spirit World.....
2. Creation of the World, Man & Woman.....
3. The First Sin and God's Judgment.....
4. Sin Spreads to the Children of Adam and Eve.....
5. Sin Spreads to All the Earth.....
6. God's Call and Promise to Abraham.....
7. The Substitute Sacrifice (Isaac).....
8. God Chooses a Deliverer—Moses.....
9. The First Passover & Blood Sacrifice to Cover Sin...
10. God's People Fall Into Sin.....
11. Worship the True God—Elijah God's Prophet.....
12. God Loves All People—Jonah.....
13. The Message of the Prophets.....
14. God Sends Good News—the Messiah is Coming...
15. The Birth of Jesus in Bethlehem.....
16. The Baptism of Jesus, John's Proclamation: Behold the Lamb!..
17. Satan Tests Jesus.....
18. You Must Be Born Again—Nicodemus.....
19. Living Water of Salvation—the Woman at the Well.
20. Jesus Forgives Sin—Paralyzed Man and Four Friends.
21. Jesus is the Living Bread From Heaven—Feeding the 5,000.
22. Jesus Calms a Storm—He is Lord of Nature.....
23. Jesus Heals a Demon Possessed Man.....
24. The Rich Man and Lazarus.....
25. A Blind Man Sees Again; Zacchaeus Repents.....
26. Jesus Is the Resurrection and the Life.....

- 27. Jesus the King; Judas the Betrayer; the Last Supper.....
- 28. Jesus Teaches He Must Return to the Father; Prayer and Betrayal in the Garden.....
- 29. Jesus is Falsely Accused, Mocked and Beaten, Crucified...
- 30. Jesus Is Alive! Jesus Appears to Mary and to His Disciples....
- 31. Jesus Returns to Heaven and Takes His Place by the Father.....
- 32. The Last Story is Your Story.....



## 1. GOD CREATED THE SPIRIT WORLD

**Read to the listeners:** Psalm 148:2, 5

### **Tell the Story:**

Before God created the heavens and the earth, He created the Spirit World—all the spirits called angels and those which later became evil spirits. In the beginning there was only God who is a spirit. God has always lived and will never die. Because God is all-powerful and all-wise He was able to give a command and all the spirits were created. They were created to serve God and to worship Him. Because God is holy and without sin, all His work is good. So the spirits were created to be just like God, holy and sinless. When God made the spirits, they were too many even to be counted.

One spirit that God created was far wiser, more powerful and more beautiful than all the rest. God blessed this spirit and was very gracious toward him. God made him to be a guardian angel (cherub) for His holy throne in heaven. But one day this very beautiful angel sometimes called Lucifer (the Shining One because of his great beauty) became filled with pride. He did not return God's kindness. He rebelled against God. He decided to take the place of God to rule heaven himself in God's place. His heart was now filled with wickedness and sin. He was no longer holy in God's sight. Many other spirits joined his rebellion. God was displeased and judged their sin. He cast them out of heaven as punishment. And God began to prepare a special place of everlasting punishment for them. One day they would be defeated and cast into a lake of burning fire for ever and ever.

So this very powerful spirit became Satan whose name means *accuser* or *adversary*. God permits him to test man and sometimes to punish man when man sins and refuses to repent. But Satan can never do anything unless God permits him. Those spirits who sinned with Satan became the evil spirits we know today. God is all

powerful and can rule over all the spirits He created whether they are good or evil.

But most of the spirits that God created continued to faithfully serve God even to this day. We know them as angels. They sing praises about God's holiness and majesty. God sometimes speaks to man through His angels. God uses angels to help people who are in trouble. God's Word tells us that the angels are to minister to those who will inherit God's salvation. God uses angels to punish the wicked. At the end of the world God will use His angels to gather the souls of all men for a time of judgment.

Angels are very powerful and wise. They are God's servants. We are not to worship angels nor should we fear evil spirits. Later we will see that the evil spirits fear the One (*don't mention Jesus by name until you come to the story of Mary and the angel Gabriel*) who came from God for the spirits knew who He was.

God created the Spirit World and He alone is powerful to rule over it.

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. Who made the Spirit World? (God)
2. What did God do to create the spirits? (He commanded)
3. What were the spirits like? (They were good and sinless just like God.)
4. What was the work of the very beautiful spirit God created? (To guard God's holy throne in heaven.)
5. What did God do when the spirits rebelled and sinned against God? (He punished them by casting them out of heaven.)
6. What is the punishment that God is preparing for Stan and the evil spirits? (God is preparing a special place of everlasting fire to punish them.)
7. What is the work of the angels who remained faithful and obedient to God? (God uses them to speak to people, help people in need, and to punish the wicked.)

### **Scriptures for your study:**

Psalm 148:2, 5	Creation of the spirits.
Psalm 103:19, 20	Angels obey God and do the work He gives them to do.
Luke 1:19, 28	The angel came with God's message.
Luke 2:13, 14	Angels praise God.
Numbers 22:22	God sent an angel to stop Balaam from sinning.
Isaiah 13:3	God uses angels to punish the wicked.
Ezekiel 28:12-17	The special angel God created who sinned against God.
Isaiah 14:12-14	Tells how Lucifer became wicked and sinful.
Revelation 12:7-12	The defeat of Satan and how he was driven from heaven.
Revelation 20:10	Satan's eternal punishment.
Hebrews 1:14	Angels are to serve those inheriting salvation.

Matthew 24:31 At the end of the world's God's angels will gather the souls of men

for judgment.

1 Corinthians 5:5 God can use Satan and the evil spirits to punish men

when they sin. (See also 1 Samuel 16:14)

Revelation 22:8, 9 Man is not to worship angels, they are God's messengers.

**Note:** There are many references in the Bible about angels and how God uses them. The purpose of this story is to show that God made all the spirits, He made them good like Himself, He punished them when they sinned, and He rules over them because He alone is Sovereign God who created them.

## 2. CREATION OF THE WORLD, MAN AND WOMAN

**Read to the listeners:** Genesis 1:1, 11, 20-21, 24-25, 26-27

### **Tell the Story:**

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them. In the beginning the earth was covered with water and was dark. God spoke and there was light. God divided the waters that were on the earth from the waters that are in the sky. God said, "Let the waters on the earth be gathered into seas and let dry land appear." And it was so, and God saw that His work was good.

Then God commanded that all kinds of plants and trees should cover the earth. They were to bear seeds and reproduce after their own kind. So trees with fruit and vegetables and all kinds of plants and shrubs appeared. And God saw that His work was good.

God placed the sun, moon and stars in the heavens to give light by day and night and to mark the seasons. God saw this, too, was good.

Then God said, "Let the waters be filled with all kinds of fishes and creatures that swim about. And let the sky be filled with birds." So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing that swims in the sea. And He created every kind of bird. God blessed the fish and birds and told them to reproduce and fill the seas and sky. And God saw that His work was good.

Next God commanded that the land should produce all kinds of living creatures, wild animals and livestock of all kinds. God gave them the green plants for their food. And He saw that His work was good.

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image." So in God's own image He created them both male and female and placed them in a garden He had prepared. God told them to be fruitful and have many children. They were to rule over the earth and all the creatures

that God had made. And God saw that His work was very good. And so all the work of creation was finished in six days and God rested from His creation.

It was from the dust of the earth that God formed the first man and breathed into him the breath of life. The man, Adam, became a living being. God gave him the work of caring for the garden. God said, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden but you must not eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die." Then the Lord said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a suitable helper for him."

So God caused Adam to fall into a deep sleep, and while he was sleeping, God opened his side and took one of Adam's bones and closed up the flesh. From the bone God made a woman and brought her to the man. God called her *woman* because she was taken out of man.

Now the man and woman were in the garden that God had prepared. They were both naked but felt no shame.

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. Who created the heavens and the earth? (God)
2. How was God able to create everything? (Because He is all-wise and all-powerful.)
3. What did God see about his work as He created? (It was all good because God is good. He always does what is right and good.)
4. What in the story tells us about God's kindness and goodness toward that which He created? (God blessed his creatures and provided for them.)
5. What special thing did God say about the man and woman He was going to create? (They were to be in God's own image.)
6. What did God say about the man and woman after He created them? (It is very good!)
7. In how many days did God create everything? (Six days)
8. What did God do on the seventh day? (He rested from His creation--not because God was tired but because His work was finished.)
9. How did God make the first man? (From the dust of the earth and breathed into him the breath of life. See Job 33:4)
10. What did God say when He saw that Adam was alone with no like him? (It is not good for the man to be alone.)
11. What instruction and warning did God give Adam about the trees in the garden? (He may eat from any of the trees but not from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil or he would die.)
12. How did God make Eve the woman? (He caused Adam to sleep and removed a bone from his side and fashioned the woman.)
13. Why do you suppose that Adam and Eve were not ashamed even when they were naked? (Because there were no evil thoughts in their minds and no sin in their hearts.)

### Scriptures for your study:

- Hebrews 11:3 The world was formed at God's command.
- Genesis 1 & 2 The creation of the world and man.
- Psalms 102:25 God created the heavens and the earth.
- Psalms 19:1-6 The heavens declare the glory of God.
- Psalms 95:3-7 God the creator of the earth and of man.
- Psalms 8:3-8 God made man a little lower than the angels.
- Malachi 2:10 One God created all mankind (Acts 17:26-28).
- Psalms 104:5-30 God is creator and provider for all needs.
- Nehemiah 9:6 God alone is the creator of the heavens, the earth and all that is in it.
- 1 Timothy 4:4 All God's work is good.
- Isaiah 40:26, 28 God created the heavens and the stars, the everlasting God.
- Zechariah 12:1 It is the Lord who forms the spirit of man within him.

**Note:** Do not try to teach everything from the Scripture references. These are to help your understanding and to help you to answer any questions the listeners may ask. You should add your favorite references to this list.

### 3. THE FIRST SIN AND GOD'S JUDGMENT

**Read to the listeners:** Genesis 3:1-6

#### Tell the Story:

When God made the first man and woman they were in His image without sin. God had placed them in a garden where food was plentiful. Though they were naked they felt no shame. There was peace among all of God's creation and everyday they enjoyed God's blessing. But God had warned Adam that he must not eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil or he would surely die.

The serpent was the craftiest of all the wild animals God had made. One day he said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'" The woman replied to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die'".

"You will NOT surely die," the serpent replied. "For God knows that when you eat of that tree your eyes will be opened (you will become wise), and you will be like gods, knowing good and evil."

When the woman saw that the fruit was tasty for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining great wisdom like a god, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate it.

Then the eyes of both were opened, and they realized that they were naked and became ashamed and sewed some clothing from leaves to cover themselves. Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day. They hid themselves from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. When God called out to Adam, "Where are you?" Adam replied, "I heard you in the

garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid myself.”

God said to Adam, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree I commanded you not to eat from?” The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree and I ate it.” Then the Lord said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman replied, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

So God placed a curse upon the serpent—he would now crawl upon his belly in the dust. The children of woman would be afraid of his offspring, and one day a child of woman would crush the serpent’s head, but the serpent would bite his heel.

To the woman God said that because of what she had done there would be increased pain in childbearing, and her desire would be for her husband and he would rule over her.

To Adam God said that because he had disobeyed the soil was now under a curse and would yield thorns and thistles. Man must work hard all the days of his life to grow his own food. And one day he would return to the dust from which he had been taken.

So God clothed the man and woman in the skins of animals and then put them out of the garden so they could not eat from the tree of Life and live forever in their sinful condition. God placed an angel at the entrance of the garden with a flaming sword to guard the entrance.

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. Did God provide for all Adam and Eve’s needs? (Yes)
2. Why do you think God warned Adam not to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil? (God knew that this knowledge would not be good for him to have. Also God was testing Adam to see if he would always obey God who knows what is best for man.)
3. Why do you think the serpent was willing to be used by Satan to tempt Eve? (Perhaps he was filled with pride because of his craftiness and beauty.)
4. Notice that the serpent did not tell the woman to eat the fruit, he only caused her to doubt what God had said. He caused her to think that God was withholding something very good from her.)
5. It was first appeal to the eye, then to the hunger of the body and then to the desire of the heart that led to sin. Can you think of some things which appeal to you this way? Do you think they might be sinful or against God’s warnings?
6. Did God know when Adam and Eve had sinned? (Yes, God sees and knows all things we do.)
7. What happened when Adam and Eve disobeyed God? (They became ashamed and afraid and tried to hide their sinful shame from God.)
8. When God asked Adam why he had disobeyed what did Adam do? (He blamed Eve—the woman that God had given him.)
9. When God asked Eve why she had disobeyed what did she say? (It was the serpent who deceived me, and I ate.)
10. God began by judging the sin of the serpent. There were immediate consequences and long term consequences that would affect all his offspring.
11. Was God’s judgment of Eve fair? (Yes, her sin would now cause greater pain in childbearing and she would now be subject to her husband.)
12. Was God’s judgment of Adam fair? (Yes, instead of daily enjoying God’s blessing for food, he would have to grow his own. And one day he would die and his body return to the dust.)

13. Why do you think God provided His own covering (clothing) for Adam and Eve? (Man's attempt at righteousness is insufficient. Only God can provide what is lasting and sufficient. And that required the shedding of innocent blood to cover their sinfulness.)

**Scriptures for your study:**

1. Revelation 12:9 Satan is called *that old Serpent*.
2. James 1:14-15; 2 Peter 2:18 Sin begins with appeal to the eyes and finally a desire of the heart.
3. Job 34:21 God sees everything that we do and knows when we sin.
4. Isaiah 26:21 God is faithful to judge all sin and to punish the sinner.
5. Isaiah 59:2; 64:7 Sin hides God's face from us so we lose His blessing.
6. Ezra 9:6 Man's sin results in shame before God.
7. 1 Thessalonians 1:9 Sin separates man from God.
8. Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 8:6 Sin leads to death.
9. Isaiah 64:6; Isaiah 61:10 Man's righteousness is not acceptable to God.

#### 4. SIN SPREADS TO THE CHILDREN OF ADAM & EVE

**Read to the listeners:** Genesis 4:1-5, 8, 16, 25; Genesis 5:3-5

**Tell the Story:**

Sometime after Adam and Eve were driven from the garden that God had planted for them, Adam lay with his wife Eve. She conceived and gave birth to a son and named him Cain. Eve praised God saying, "With the help of the Lord I have brought forth a man." Later she conceived again and gave birth to another son and named him Abel.

Cain was a farmer like his father Adam. Abel became a shepherd keeping the family flocks of animals. One day each brought an offering before the Lord. Cain brought *some* of the fruits and vegetables that he had grown. But Abel brought as his offering the *fat portions* from among the *firstborn* of his flock.

The Lord looked with favor upon Abel and his offering. But upon Cain and his offering the Lord did not look with favor. So Cain became very angry and it showed in his face.

Then the Lord spoke to Cain saying, "Why do you look so angry? If you do what is right, you will be accepted. But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must overcome it."

Later Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out into the field." And while they were together in the field Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

Again the Lord spoke to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?"

"I don't know, am I my brother's caretaker?" Cain replied.

The Lord said to Cain, "What have you done? Listen, your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. Now you are under a curse and will be driven from this

ground which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. From now on when you till the soil it will no longer yield its crops for you. And you will become a restless wanderer on the earth."

So Cain went out from the Lord's presence and lived in another land.

Later when Adam had lived 130 years he again lay with his wife Eve and she gave birth to another son and named him Seth, saying, "God has granted me another child in place of Abel since Cain killed him." Seth was a son in Adam's own likeness, in his own image. When Seth was grown he had a son and named him Enosh. During those days men began to call on the name of Lord in worship.

After Seth was born Adam lived another 800 years and had other sons and daughters and then he died. God had said that one day Adam would die and his body return to the dust from which it was taken.

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. What did God command Adam and Eve to do in the story of creation? (Be fruitful—have many children)
2. When were the sons of Adam and Eve born? (After God put them out of the garden.)
3. What did Eve do when Cain was born? (She praised God for helping her to have a son.)
4. Who was Cain like? (A farmer like his father Adam.)
5. What work did Abel do? (He was shepherd, keeping the family flocks.)
6. What was Cain's offering? (Fruits and vegetables from his farm.)
7. What was Abel's offering? (The fat portions from the firstborn of his flocks.)
8. Why do you think God accepted Abel's offering? (See Hebrews 11:4)
9. Why do you think God did not accept Cain's offering? (See 1 John 3:12)
10. What did Cain do when God did not accept his offering? (Became very angry and jealous of Abel.)
11. What did God warn Cain not to do? (What he was thinking in his heart—to kill his brother.)
12. Did Cain listen to the words of God? (No)
13. Did God see what Cain did to Abel? (Yes)
14. Why do you think God mentioned the blood of Abel crying out to him? (Blood represents the life of a person—Abel's life had been spilled on the ground.)
15. When God judged the sin of Cain what punishments did God say would happen? (He would be under a curse. The soil would no longer yield its produce for Cain. He would be driven away from that place where he murdered his brother. And he would become a wanderer on the earth going away from his parents and from the presence of the Lord.)
16. Was God gracious to Cain? (Yes, God warned Cain not to sin.)
17. How did God overcome the evil that Cain did? (God gave Eve another son.)
18. Was the third son wicked like Cain or godly like Abel? (Godly like Abel)
19. God was going to fulfill his promise made in the

garden (a son to crush the head of the serpent) through the descendants of Seth the godly son.

## 5. SIN SPREADS TO ALL THE EARTH THE GREAT FLOOD

### Scriptures for your study:

1. 1 John 3:12 Tells us what Cain was like—like Satan (the evil One).
2. Hebrews 11:4 Tells us what Abel was like—He offered a better sacrifice through faith in God. (His heart was right with God.)
3. 1 Peter 5:8 Warns us that Satan prowls about like a lion waiting for someone to devour.
4. Habakkuk 1:13 God does not permit sin in His presence. His eyes are too pure to look upon sin.
5. Isaiah 59:2 Sin separates us from God. A sinful man cannot stand in the presence of God.
6. Job 42:2 God is all-powerful to fulfill His promises. He overcame the evil that Cain did and gave another son to Adam and Eve who was faithful.
7. Exodus 23:19 Cain may not have brought his best firstfruits to the Lord.
8. Leviticus 7:3-4 Fat portion to be offered as sacrifice.
9. Exodus 13:12 Firstborn of the flock is holy to God.

**Read to the listeners:** Genesis 6:1, 5-6, 8-9, 13-14

### Tell the Story:

After the days of Adam and Eve and their children and their descendants, the people on the earth increased in number. But the sin that had first begun when Adam and Eve disobeyed God had spread to their children (remember Cain?) and to their children's children. Now God saw that man's heart was always filled with wickedness and violence and man only thought about doing evil things. So God's heart was filled with great pain because of what He saw happening to his creation. God said, "I will give man some time to repent and turn from his sin, then I will send my judgment upon the earth." For the Lord was saying, "I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth—men and animals, all creatures that move along the ground and the birds, too."

But the Lord saw that a man named Noah was a righteous man, blameless among all the people of his day, for he walked with God (lived a life that was pleasing to God). God saw how corrupt the earth had become and all the people had corrupted their ways. So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all people, for the people are wicked and the earth is filled with violence and sin. So make yourself an ark (boat) with rooms in it for your family and the animals that I will bring to you. For I will bring a male and female of all creatures for you to keep alive." Of certain kinds of animals that could later be used for food or sacrifice God would bring seven pairs. So Noah did all that God commanded him to do. One day after a long time had passed and the ark was finished God told Noah to take his wife, his three sons and their wives, and all the animals and birds, and to go into the ark. Again Noah

did what God commanded him to do. When all were safe inside, God shut the door.

Seven days passed without anything happening. Then it began to rain for forty days and forty nights. Not only was there rain, but the great springs of water under the earth and even the floodgates in heaven burst open. Soon the whole earth was flooded so deep that even the mountains were covered with water. Everything that had the breath of life in it perished, except for those who were safe with Noah in the ark. The water remained on the earth a long time. Nothing had escaped the judgment of God except those with Noah in the ark.

Then God remembered Noah and those in the ark with him. So God sent a wind to blow upon the water to dry it up. After some time passed Noah sent out a raven bird but it did not return. Later Noah sent out a dove. At first it came back. Still later Noah sent it out again and it returned with a leaf in its beak. Then Noah knew the earth was dry again. God told Noah to come out of the ark with his family and all the animals. Noah offered a sacrifice to God to thank Him for saving their lives. God was pleased with Noah's sacrifice and promised never to destroy the earth by water again. God gave the rainbow as a sign of His promise.

Then God blessed Noah and his sons and told them to have many children and fill up the earth with people. God told Noah to be careful always to drain the blood from meat before eating it. God had a very special purpose for blood. For God said that the blood in an animal represented its life.

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. What happened after the days of Adam and Eve and their children? (Many people were born.)
2. What happened in the hearts of the people in those days? (Their hearts were filled with wickedness and violence.)
3. Did God know what was happening in their hearts? (Yes, God knows everything.)
4. What act of kindness did God show to the wicked people? (He gave them a time to repent and turn from their wickedness.)
5. Did the people turn from their sin? (No)
6. What did God like about Noah? (He was a righteous man who tried to live a life pleasing to God—he walked with God.)
7. What did God reveal to Noah? (That he was about to destroy all the people and animals on the earth.)
8. What did God tell Noah to do? (Build an ark—boat.)
9. Did Noah do what God commanded him to do? (Yes)
10. How many sons did Noah have? (Three)
11. Why do you think God brought a pair—a male and female of all animals—to Noah? (So that afterward they could produce more animals to fill up the earth with their kinds.)
12. Did Noah close the door to the ark? (No, God did.)
13. How long did it rain? (Forty days and nights.)
14. Did God forget about Noah and the animals in the ark? (No, God remembered them.)
15. What did Noah do when he came out of the ark? (Offered a sacrifice to God.)
16. What did God do to Noah and his sons? (God blessed them.)
17. What three things did God say to Noah and his sons? (1. That God would never again destroy the earth by water, 2. That they were to have many children and fill up the earth, and 3. That they were to be careful about eating meat with the lifeblood still in it.)
18. What sign did God give to show that He would keep His promise never to destroy the earth by water again? (The rainbow in the sky.)
19. What can we say about the sin of the people in this

story? (God brought His judgment upon them to punish them.)

20. What can we say about God in what He did for Noah? (God is gracious to those who do what is right and who obey what He tells them to do.)

### **Scriptures for your study:**

1. Jeremiah 32:19 God's eyes are open to all the ways of man.
2. Psalm 34:15 The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous.
3. Psalm 45:7 God loves righteousness and hates wickedness.
4. Amos 3:7 God reveals His plans to the prophets (like Noah).
5. Luke 17:26 God's judgment may come suddenly without warning. (See also Matthew 24:37-39)
6. 1 Peter 3:20 God was patient while waiting for the people to repent.
7. 2 Peter 2:5 Noah preached righteousness in his day to warn the people.
8. Jeremiah 11:11 The wicked cannot escape God's judgment.)

## **6. GOD'S CALL AND PROMISE TO ABRAHAM**

**Read to the listeners:** Genesis 12:1-7

### **Tell the Story:**

Many generations had passed since the great flood when God judged the wicked people in Noah's day. One of the sons of Noah was named Shem. He had a descendant named Terah who lived in a far away land. Terah had a son named Abraham. Terah lived in a land where people worshiped idols instead of the God who created the heavens and the earth. One day God spoke to his son Abraham and told him to leave that land, the land of his people and his father's household, and go to a land that God would show him.

So Abraham obeyed God and took his wife Sarah and a nephew named Lot to go to the land that God promised to give him and his descendants. God made promises to Abraham that one day he would become a great nation. God would bless him and make his name great. And God said, "Through you, Abraham, all the peoples on earth will be blessed." Abraham was then 75 years old but he and his wife Sarah had no children.

God told Abraham to travel throughout the land for it would be given to Abraham's descendants. Abraham built an altar and worshiped the Lord. Many years passed but still there was no son as God had promised. One day when Abraham again asked God about the promised son, God said, "You will indeed have a son coming from your own body. And," God said, "look up at the stars and try to count them if you can because you will have many descendants like the stars." Abraham believed the promises of God. Because of his faith, God considered Abraham to be righteous.

One day Abraham happened to see three visitors coming near his tent. He invited them to take rest while some water was brought to wash their feet, and some food prepared for them to eat. After they had eaten, one of the men, who was the angel of the Lord, said to

Abraham, "Where is your wife Sarah?" "There in the tent," Abraham said for Sarah was listening as the men talked. Then the angel said, "I will return to you about this time next year and Sarah your wife will have a son." When Sarah heard the angel's words, she laughed to herself saying, "I am so old and worn out and now I will have this pleasure of a child." For Abraham was nearly 100 years old and Sarah about 90 years.

The angel heard Sarah and demanded, "Why did you laugh?" Sarah became afraid and said, "I didn't laugh." "Yes, you did," the angel said, "I heard you. Why did you question the words of the Lord? Is anything too difficult for the Lord to do?" Again the angel said, "I will return next year and you will have a son."

It happened just as the angel said. The Lord was gracious to Sarah. She conceived and gave birth to a son for Abraham in his old age. They named him Isaac which means *laughter*. When Isaac was eight days old Abraham circumcised him as God had commanded all the household of Abraham. Sarah said, "God has brought me laughter and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me. Who would have thought that Sarah would nurse a child in her old age?"

And so God had begun to fulfill His promise to Abraham to one day give Abraham many descendants and one would bless all the people on earth.

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. Which of Noah's sons was Abraham descended from? (Shem)
2. Who was Abraham's father? (Terah)
3. Did Terah worship Creator God? (No, he worshiped idols.)
4. What did God tell Abraham to do? (Leave your people and go to a land that God would show him.)
5. What else did God promise Abraham? (God would give him many descendants, make his name great, bless him, and through his descendant one day bless all people on earth.)
6. What did Abraham do after traveling through the land God was giving him? (Built an altar and worshiped God.)
7. Why did God consider Abraham to be a righteous man? (Abraham believed the promise of God.)
8. Did God immediately fulfill His promise to Abraham? (No, many years passed before God chose to fulfill the promise of a son.)
9. How did God announce the coming birth of a son? (He sent a special angel, the angel of the Lord.)
10. What did the angel promise Abraham and Sarah? (He would return about the same time the next year and they would have a son.)
11. What did Sarah do when she heard the angel's words? (She doubted and laughed.)
12. What did the angel say about Sarah's having a baby in her old age? ("Is anything too difficult for the Lord to do?")
13. Did God keep His promise to Abraham and Sarah? (Yes, soon Sarah conceived and at the appointed time gave birth to a son.)
14. What did Abraham and Sarah name their son? (Isaac which means laughter.)
15. What did God command Abraham to do to all the males in his household? (That they be circumcised as a sign of God's covenant with Abraham.)
16. What does this story teach us today? (We should believe the promises of God for He is faithful to keep His promises.)

## Scriptures for your study:

1. Genesis 3:15 God promised that one day a Godly Descendant of Eve would crush the serpent's head (The Evil One).
2. Genesis 4:25 God gave a godly son (Seth) to replace Abel. It would be through Seth's descendants that God would fulfill His promise.
3. Genesis 12:2, 3 God promised to give Abraham many descendants and through one of them all people would be blessed.
4. Genesis 17:21 God would establish His covenant with Isaac (to bless all people).
5. Job 42:2 No plan of God can be stopped by man. God is all-powerful.
6. Romans 4:21 God has power to do what He had promised.
7. Romans 4:3 Abraham believed God and it was credited as righteousness.
8. Romans 4:1-21 This chapter recalls the story of Abraham and his faith.
9. Hebrews 11:8-13 These verses remind us of Abraham's faith.
10. Genesis 15:13-16 One day Abraham's descendants would go to live in a foreign land, become slaves and be mistreated, but God would again bring them to this land God was giving to Abraham's descendants.

## 7. THE SUBSTITUTE SACRIFICE (ISAAC)

**Read to the listeners:** Genesis 22:1-5

### Tell the Story:

Some years had passed since the birth of Isaac. One day God tested Abraham by calling to him, "Abraham!" "Here I am," Abraham answered. Then God said, "Abraham, take your son, your only son Isaac, the one you love, and go to the place I will show you, and offer him as a burnt offering."

Early the next morning Abraham went out to cut some wood for a fire on the altar. Then Abraham took two of his servants, saddled his donkey, took his son Isaac and set out for the place God had told him about. On the third day of the journey Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. He said to his servants, "Stay here with my donkey while Isaac and I go there to worship. After we have worshiped the two of us will return."

So Abraham took the wood from the servants and placed it upon his son Isaac. Abraham carried a pot of coals to light the fire and the knife for making the sacrifice. As the two of them walked together, Isaac spoke up and asked his father Abraham, "Father?" "Yes, my son," Abraham replied. "Father, the wood and fire are here," Isaac said, "but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"

Abraham answered, "My son, God Himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering." And the two of them continued toward the place of sacrifice.

When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar of stones. He took the wood from Isaac and arranged it upon the altar. Then Abraham took his own son Isaac and bound him and placed him on the altar upon the wood. Then Abraham took the knife in his hand and was about to kill his son.

But suddenly the angel of the Lord called out from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!" "Here I am," Abraham answered. "Do not lay a hand upon your son," the angel said. "Do not harm him in any way. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not kept from me your son, your only son."

Then Abraham happened to look and see a ram (male sheep) behind him with its horns caught in a bush. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it in place of his son Isaac. So Abraham called that place "The Lord will Provide."

The angel of the Lord called to Abraham from heaven a second time saying, "Because of your faith in me and because you did not withhold your son, I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and the sand along the seashore. And through your descendant all nations on earth will be blessed because you have obeyed me."

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. What did Abraham do when God told him to offer his son as a sacrifice? (He began to obey immediately.)
2. What was needed for a sacrifice? (Some wood, some fire, and a lamb.)
3. Did Abraham take a lamb with him? (No)
4. What did Abraham take in place of a lamb? (His son Isaac)
5. What did Abraham say to his servants when he saw the place of sacrifice in the distance? (Stay here, Isaac and I will go worship and then both of us will return.)
6. What do you think Abraham believed that God would do? (God would provide the lamb for the sacrifice.)
7. What did Isaac ask his father? (Where is the lamb for the sacrifice?)
8. What did Abraham reassure his son? (God himself will provide the lamb.)
9. What happened when Abraham and Isaac reached the place for the sacrifice? (Abraham built an altar, placed the wood on it, and then tied his own son and placed him on the altar.)
10. What was Abraham about to do when the angel called to him? (Kill his son.)
11. What did the angel say to Abraham? (Don't harm your son. God is pleased because you did not keep back your son, but were willing to give him up as a sacrifice.)
12. What did Abraham see nearby? (A ram (male sheep) caught by its horns in a bush.)
13. Did God provide the substitute sacrifice as He promised? (Yes)
14. What did God promise to do for Abraham? (Give him many descendants and one day through one of those descendants bless all nations.)
15. Do you think God kept his promise???
16. Does God want us to sacrifice our children? (No. God only did that to test the faith of Abraham. God knew that Abraham would obey and that his faith in God would be strengthened by his obedience.)
17. Later we will see that God was not pleased when

parents killed their children as sacrifices in their worship. (Lesson 10 God's People Fall Into Sin)

## 8. GOD CHOOSES A DELIVERER (MOSES)

### Scriptures for your study:

1. Hebrews 11:17-19 Abraham was found faithful when God tested him.
2. James 2:21-23 Abraham was considered righteous for his obedience.
3. Romans 4:17-18 Abraham became the father of many nations.
4. Galatians 3:6-9 God announced the gospel in advance to Abraham.

**Read to the listeners:** Exodus 3:1-6

### Tell the Story:

During Abraham's lifetime God spoke in a dream one night and said that one day Abraham's descendants would live in a land not their own, there they would become slaves and be mistreated. But God would deliver them and punish the people in that land. It began to happen during the days of Jacob who was the grandson of Abraham. One of Jacob's sons was named Joseph. He often had dreams that one day his family would bow before him. His brothers were jealous and took opportunity to sell Joseph into slavery and he was carried into Egypt. There God was with Joseph and one day Joseph was placed in charge of all the food in Egypt. During a famine Jacob and his sons came to live in Egypt where there was plenty of food. God blessed the sons of Jacob and Abraham's descendants greatly increased in number. But the Egyptians became afraid of them and decided to use Abraham's descendants as slaves. They mistreated them, beating them and making them work very hard.

One day a baby boy was born to a family. God spared the baby's life when the king of Egypt decreed that all boy babies should be put to death. This baby was kept by the daughter of the king and grew up as one of the sons of the king. But God did not intend for him to remain there. One day, when in a moment of intense anger, Moses saw an Egyptian beating one of his own people. Moses killed the Egyptian but then had to flee from Egypt when the king heard what happened.

Moses lived far away from Egypt where he married and had sons and worked for his father-in-law as a shepherd. One day while Moses was tending his sheep he saw a strange sight. There was a small tree burning but not being consumed by the flames. Moses went near

to see what was happening. Suddenly a voice spoke to him from the fire. "Do not come any closer. Remove your shoes. Where you stand is holy ground," the voice said. "Who are you?" Moses asked. The voice said, "I am the God of your father Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." Moses was afraid and hid his face from the voice. Then the voice said, "I have seen the misery of my people in Egypt, I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them and to bring them to a good land of plentiful food. So now, go, I am sending you to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, to say 'Let my people go.'" Then the voice who was God said, "I will be with you for I am the One sending you. When you come out of Egypt you will bring the people to this place to worship me."

When Moses asked God what was His name, God said, "I am Jehovah God, the One who has always lived. This is my name forever by which I am to be remembered." So God told Moses to go to the descendants of Abraham and tell them what He had said. God told Moses that his older brother Aaron could be his spokesman before Pharaoh. But God said, "Pharaoh will harden his heart and not let the people go. But I will gain glory from Pharaoh because I will compel him by my mighty hand. I will stretch out my hand against the Egyptians to perform wonders among them. After that, Pharaoh will let you go."

So Moses returned to Egypt, told his people what God had said, and then went before Pharaoh with his brother Aaron. It happened like God said, Pharaoh would not listen and he hardened his heart. Through Moses God sent plagues on Egypt to punish them. Stubbornly Pharaoh refused again and again. Soon it would end.

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. Did God know what was going to happen to Abraham's descendants? (Yes)
2. When did the prophecy begin to come true? (During the days of Jacob.)
3. Can God overcome what is intended as evil with that which is good? (Yes, the brothers of Joseph intended evil in selling Joseph. But God used their evil to accomplish His purpose.)
4. What happened while Joseph was in Egypt? (There was a famine and his family had to come to Egypt to buy food.)
5. What did God do for Abraham's descendants in Egypt? (He blessed them and caused them to grow into many people.)
6. What did the Egyptians do to the descendants of Abraham? (They became afraid of them and mistreated them, making them slaves.)
7. Did God know what was happening to Abraham's descendants? (Yes)
8. Who did God choose to deliver the people from Egypt? (Moses)
9. When Moses asked, "Who are you?" What did God say? ("I am the God of your father Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.")
10. Where was God sending Moses? (Back to Egypt to tell Pharaoh to let the people go.)
11. When Moses asked God for his name, what did God tell him? (I am Jehovah, the everliving God.)
12. What did God say about Pharaoh? (He would harden his heart and not let the people go.)
13. What would God do to Pharaoh to make him let the people go? (He would work wonders in Egypt by sending plagues upon the land until Pharaoh listened and obeyed.)
14. Do you think that God knew what was going to happen to the Egyptians? (Yes)

## 9. THE FIRST PASSOVER & BLOOD SACRIFICE TO COVER SIN

### Scriptures for your study:

1. Isaiah 48:5 God knows what will happen in the future.
2. Amos 3:7 God reveals His plans to His prophets.
3. Isaiah 43:13 When God acts no one can escape from His hand.
4. Nehemiah 9:9-10 God sees the suffering of His people.
5. Hebrews 11:23-26 By faith Moses chose to be counted among his people.
6. Isaiah 41:13 God promises His help to those He calls to serve Him.
7. Exodus 7:13 Pharaoh's heart became hard just as God said.
8. Numbers 26:59 Amram was Moses' father, a descendant of Levi, son of Jacob.
9. Exodus 6:20 Jochebed was Moses' mother.
10. Exodus 2:21 Zipporah, daughter of Jethro, became Moses' wife.
11. Exodus 2:22 Moses' first son was Gershom born during his days as a shepherd. (Gershom means *an alien there*)  
Exodus 18:2-4 Moses' second son was Eliezer (God is my helper).
12. Exodus 7:7 Aaron was three years older than Moses.
13. Exodus 15:20 Miriam was Moses' and Aaron's sister older sister.

**Read to the listeners:** Genesis 12:3, 6-13; Leviticus 4:27-31

### Tell the Story:

The Lord had chosen Moses to free His people from slavery in Egypt. He said that Pharaoh the king of Egypt would harden his heart and not listen to Moses. This is exactly what Pharaoh did. Nine times Moses and his brother Aaron stood before Pharaoh asking him to permit the Israelites to go a three day journey into the desert to worship their God. When Pharaoh refused, God sent plagues upon the land of Egypt to affect their water, their food, their animals and even their bodies. Finally God told Moses that he would send one last judgment upon the land to claim the lives of the firstborn among the Egyptians. For God said that He was bringing judgment upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh and all the Egyptian gods. To escape the judgment the Israelites, as they were now called, had carefully to obey what God told them to do.

They were to kill a sheep or goat and sprinkle some of its blood on the sides and over the doorway of their homes. On the night they did this they were to remain inside all night fully clothed and ready to travel. God would send an angel through the land of Egypt at midnight to kill the firstborn wherever there was no sign of blood on the doorway.

The animal that was killed was to be skinned, then roasted whole—head, legs and inner parts—without breaking any of its bones. They were to eat it with bread baked without any yeast. A sauce of salty water to remind them of their tears and some bitter herbs were to be prepared also.

On the appointed night it happened just as God said. The angel moved throughout the land of Egypt at midnight. In every Egyptian home the firstborn male

died including Pharaoh's own home. God commanded the Israelites that every year they were to celebrate with a feast to remember the time when God's death angel "passed over" their homes.

After his firstborn son died, Pharaoh finally told Moses to take the people and leave Egypt. The Egyptian people also wanted the Israelites to leave because they were afraid of the God of the Israelites.

Later after Moses led the people out of Egypt God spoke to Moses and told him how the people were to worship. God told them what they were to do whenever they sinned against Him. They were to take an animal to the priest that God had appointed. Then they were to lay their hand upon the head of the animal and confess their sin. The priest would then kill the animal and sprinkle some of its blood on the sides of the altar. The fat portions from the insides were to be burned on the altar as an aroma pleasing to the Lord. In this way the priest would make atonement (that is, to cover over the sin with blood) for the sin the person has committed, and so God would forgive him.

This was to remind the people that sin must be confessed and then atoned for by blood. This was going to be a picture for the people that one day in a very special way God would provide a substitute sacrifice whose blood would cover all sin so all people could be forgiven for their sin against God. And it was to remind the people that sin was costly. For each time a person sinned it would require another animal sacrifice and more blood to be shed.

The Passover was also a picture of a Promised Descendant of Abraham that one day would be the Passover Lamb for all the people.

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. What did Pharaoh do whenever Moses and Aaron asked him to let the people go. (He refused and hardened his heart.)
2. Why did God bring plagues upon the land of Egypt. (To demonstrate the Jehovah God was the true God and more powerful than all the gods of Egypt.)
3. What did the plagues do to the land of Egypt? (The plagues ruined the land.)
4. What did God tell Moses that He was going to do? (He said that he was going to send his angel to kill all the firstborn of the Egyptians.)
5. What did God tell Moses about how to escape the judgment on the firstborn? (The people were to kill a lamb and sprinkle its blood on the sides of their doors and over the top. The angel would see the blood and *pass over* that house.)
6. How was the Passover lamb to be cooked and eaten? (It was to be roasted whole and eaten quickly with unleavened bread.)
7. Did any of the Israelites die that night when the angel came? (No)
8. What happened in all the Egyptian homes? (The firstborn died.)
9. How often were the people to remember this Passover time? (Every year at the same time.)
10. What were the people to do whenever they sinned against God? (Bring an animal as a blood sacrifice.)
11. What were the people to do with the animal? (Lay their hands on its head and confess their sin.)
12. Who was to kill the animal? (The priest)
13. What did the priest do with the blood of the animal? (He sprinkled it on the sides of the altar.)
14. What part of the animal was burned on the altar? (The fat insides as a pleasing aroma to the Lord.)
15. When the worshiper followed these steps what did God do? (He forgave their sin.)
16. How often did the sacrifice have to be repeated? (Every time there was sin.)

### Scriptures for your study:

1. Exodus 13:2 Every firstborn male among the Israelites belonged to God.
2. Exodus 13:3, 9-10 Observance of the Passover each year was to remind the people how God had delivered them from Egypt.
3. Exodus 28:1-2 Aaron and his sons were to be priests before the Lord.
4. Exodus 27:1-8 The Altar of Burnt Offering
5. Leviticus 4:27-35 The sin offering for an individual.
6. Leviticus 7:26-27 Blood was forbidden to the Israelites for God had holy purpose for it.
7. Leviticus 22:19-22 The animal used for sacrifice had to be without sickness or blemish—a perfect animal (One day God's special sacrifice for sin would be perfect—without any sin.)
8. Deuteronomy 4:1-2 The people were to obey what God told them to do.
9. Numbers 18:15-16 The firstborn son was to be redeemed by paying a tax.
10. Leviticus 17:11 It is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.

### 10. GOD'S PEOPLE FALL INTO SIN

**Read to the listeners:** Joshua 23:6-8; Judges 2:7, 10-13

#### Tell the Story:

God had delivered the Israelites from their bondage in Egypt just as He had promised to Abraham and to Moses. Because most of the people really did not know God, it was necessary for God to meet them and to give them His Holy Law so they would know how to live. At a place called Sinai God spoke to the Israelite people from fire, smoke and earthquake on the mountain. Then Moses went up into the mountain to get the Holy Law, a part of which we know as the Ten Commandments. (Review the Ten Commandments—See Exodus 20:1-17)

Later the people became afraid to go in and possess the land that God was giving them. Instead they wanted to go back to Egypt and be slaves. God was displeased and left them wandering in the desert until that generation had died. Moses died, too, and Joshua became the new leader. It was Joshua who led the Israelites into the land where Abraham had once lived. He led the people to possess the land for God was giving it to them. The people who lived in that land were very wicked. It was because of this wickedness that God had sent His people away to live in Egypt until they were great enough to possess the land.

God told Joshua and the leaders to destroy the wicked people then living in the land. They worshiped idols, had male and female prostitutes in their temples as part of their worship, they disfigured the bodies with knives in their worship, and they killed their children and burned them on their altars. God did not want his people doing those things. So He warned them to be careful.

But after Joshua and the leaders in that day had died, the people soon fell into sin forgetting Jehovah God, and doing the detestable things the people of the land did. God was not pleased and He sent punishment

upon the Israelites to make them turn from their sin. Their enemies would come and take away all their food. When the people cried out to God and confessed their sin, God would send someone to deliver them from their enemies. But soon they would fall into sin again. And again God would bring judgment upon them until they repented.

Later when the people demanded a king like all the other nations had, God gave them a king. But really the people were rejecting God as their true king. At first the kings like David were godly men who worshiped the Lord and even wrote many worship songs like the Psalms. Solomon his son in the beginning prayed a beautiful prayer to God asking that God would forgive the sins of the people and bless them. But later in his life Solomon married many foreign wives who brought their false gods with them. Even Solomon's heart was turned away from Jehovah. After Solomon died his son made a foolish decision because of bad counsel and the kingdom was split into two kingdoms. The man who became king of the larger part did not want his people going to Jerusalem to worship God at the Temple. So he set up two golden calf idols in his kingdom for the people to worship. Other kings did even worse things to lead their people into committing terrible sins. One king married a foreign wife who brought 850 false prophets with her. The holy Temple was defiled by the leaders who no longer cared to worship God. The people had begun to worship at their own places and not according to God's instruction.

During the days of the kings when the people turned their hearts from Jehovah it was then that God sent men called prophets to warn the people to turn back. The message of the prophets was to turn from sin while there was still time.

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. Did God do for the Israelites what He promised to do? (Yes, He delivered them from Egypt and led them back to the land of Abraham.)
2. Did the Israelite people really know God? (No, they did not really know Him and trust Him as their God.)
3. How did God speak to the people? (God first spoke to the people from the fire on the mountain.)
4. How did God give His Holy Law to the people? (God gave it to Moses to bring to the people.)
5. Did the Israelite people fully trust God to help them possess the land? (No)
6. How did God punish the people when they rebelled in the desert? (He permitted them to die in the desert and not to go into the land of promise.)
7. What were the people living in the land of promise doing? (They were wicked people who worshiped idols, worshiped with prostitutes and sacrificed their children on the altar.)
8. What did God warn the Israelite people not to do? (Not to follow the practices of the wicked people.)
9. What happened after Joshua died? (The people forgot their promise and turned away from Jehovah God.)
10. How did God punish the people when they forgot Him? (He allowed their enemies to come and take away their food.)
11. When the Israelite people repented of their sin what did God do? (He sent someone to deliver the people from their enemies.)
12. Was God pleased when the people demanded a king? (No)
13. What did the kings begin to do? (They led the people into sin.)
14. What did God do during the days of the kings when the people sinned? (He sent prophets to warn the people to turn back from their sin while there was still time.)

### Scriptures for your study:

1. Exodus 19:4-6 God had a special purpose for the Israelite people.
2. Exodus 20:3-4 God will not permit any other gods to be worshiped.
3. Isaiah 42:8 God does not share His glory with idols.
4. Psalm 78:10-11, 56-58 The people forgot God and rebelled against Him.
5. Psalm 106:36-43 Some of the sins of the people.
6. Psalm 78:70-72 God chose David to be a faithful king.
7. 2 Chronicles 7:14 God's promise to Solomon.
8. 1 Kings 11:4-6, 9 Solomon fell into sin because of foreign wives.
9. 1 Kings 12:26-30 Rehoboam made two idols and led the people to sin.
10. 1 Kings 16:30-33 Ahab married a foreign wife who brought her false religion.
11. Jeremiah 25:4-6 God sent His prophets to warn the people to turn from sin.
12. Malachi 2:1-2 Even the priests had failed to honor God and were warned.

Next we will hear two stories of prophets that God sent to the people. One prophet (Elijah) was sent to the Israelites when the people and their king had turned away from God. The other prophet (Jonah) was sent to some people who were enemies of Israel for God loves all people and wants all people to turn from their sin and worship Him.

## 11. WORSHIP THE TRUE GOD ELIJAH, GOD'S PROPHET

**Read to the listeners:** 1 Kings 18:21-24

### Tell the Story:

The Israelite people had asked for a king so they would be like all the other nations. God gave them a king. In the beginning the kings obeyed God and even led the people to worship Jehovah God. But as time passed and new kings ruled, those men turned further and further away from God. King Jereboam was the king who set up two golden calf idols for the people to worship. Later King Ahab had married a foreign princess who worshiped the false god Baal. She brought her false god and prophets with her when she came to Israel. Her husband the king set up a temple for Baal and also set up a sacred Asherah pole for the people to worship that false goddess, too. King Ahab did more to provoke the Lord, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings before him.

So the prophet Elijah was sent to bring word there would be no rain or dew for the next few years except at his word. God was sending judgment upon the nation. In the third year of the drought there was a severe famine in all the land of Samaria where the king lived. The Lord said to Elijah, "Go, present yourself to King Ahab, and I will then send rain upon the land." When Ahab saw Elijah he accused him of bringing trouble upon the land. "No, it is not I, but you, who have brought all this trouble on the land," Elijah said. "For you and your father's family have abandoned the Lord's commands and have followed the false god Baal. Now summon all the people of Israel to meet me on Mount Carmel. and bring the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah who eat at Queen Jezebel's table." So King Ahab summoned all the people to gather on Mount Carmel. Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two

opinions? If Baal is god, follow him; but if the Lord is God, then follow Him." The people said nothing.

Then Elijah said to prepare two sacrifices with wood and the animals. But no fire would be put under either. Then the false prophets were to call on their god to send fire and Elijah would call upon his God to send fire. The one who answered with fire was the true God. The people agreed that it was good. So Elijah told the prophets of Baal to go first. When their sacrifice was prepared and no fire set to it, they began to call out to their god from morning till midday. "Oh, Baal, answer us!" And they danced around the altar. But no fire came. At midday Elijah began to mock them saying, "Call louder, perhaps you god is away traveling, or he is sleeping!" So the prophets of Baal shouted louder and louder, dancing and cutting their bodies so that blood flowed. But there was no fire.

Finally at the time for the evening sacrifice, Elijah prepared his altar. After placing the wood upon it, and the animal, he asked that it be drenched with water three times until even a trench about the altar was filled.

Then Elijah stepped forward and began to pray, "O Lord. God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, answer me so that these people will know that you, O Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again." Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones of the altar and licked up the water all about the altar. The people fell on their faces and began to say, "The Lord—He is God! The Lord—He is God!" Then Elijah commanded, "Seize the prophets of Baal. Don't let them get away!" That day the Israelites hearts were turned back to the true and living God. And soon rain came upon the land.

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. Why did the Israelites ask for a king? (To be like all other nations.)
2. Were all the kings evil? (No, in the beginning the kings led the people to worship God.)
3. Then what did the kings begin to do? (They led the

people to worship false gods and idols.)

4. Was God pleased when the people did this? (No)
5. What happened when King Ahab brought in the false god Baal and prophets? God sent the prophet Elijah to warn the people and to command that no rain should fall until at his command.)
6. Did the king repent of his sin? (No, he blamed Elijah for making trouble.)
7. What choice did Elijah say that the people must make? (Choose who is the true God and worship Him only.)
8. How would Elijah prove who was the true God? (By two sacrifices and the true God would send down fire to burn the sacrifice to Him.)
9. What happened when the prophets of Baal prayed to their god? (Nothing)
10. What did Elijah say to the false prophets? (He mocked them saying to call louder to their god because he might be sleeping.)
11. What unusual thing did Elijah do for his sacrifice? (Asked that water be poured over it three times.)
12. How did Elijah address God when he began to pray? (O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.)
13. Did God answer Elijah's prayer? (Yes, by sending fire to burn up the sacrifice, the altar and the water.)
14. What did the people do? (They fell on their faces to worship and cried out, "The Lord—He is God!")
15. Then did God send rain to break the drought? (Yes, because the people had turned back to Him.)

### **Scriptures for your study:**

1. Deuteronomy 4:32-39 There is only one God.
2. Deuteronomy 4:16-19 Idolatry or images of God were prohibited.
3. Deuteronomy 5:32-33 The people were warned not to turn away from God.
4. Deuteronomy 11:13-15 Rain was promised if the people kept God's commands.
5. Deuteronomy 13:1-4 Beware of following false prophets.

6. Judges 2:10-13      The people soon forgot God and turned to other gods.
7. 1 Kings 11:4        King Solomon's foreign wives turned his heart from God in his old age.
8. 1 Kings 12:28-30    King Jereboam led his people to worship golden idols.
9. 1 Kings 16:25-26    King Omri, Ahab's father, led Israel to sin with idols.
10. 1 Kings 16:30-33    King Ahab did even more evil than the kings before him.
11. 1 Kings 18:1        God spoke to Elijah His true prophet.
12. 1 Kings 18:4        Not only did Jezebel have false prophets which ate at her table, but she also killed off the Lord's true prophets.

Baal was the storm god (the rain god) of the Canaanite people. He was represented as a bull. Asherah was the leading goddess of the Canaanite people who was worshiped by prostitution. Her symbol was a wooden pole shaped like a male sex organ. (See Isaiah 27:9).

## 12. GOD LOVES ALL PEOPLE JONAH

**Read to the listeners:** Jonah 1:1-4, 12, 17; 3:1-2, 5

### **Tell the Story:**

Back in the days after the great flood in the days of Noah, some of the descendants of Noah's sons settled near a great river. There they built a strong city. Their people became very fierce and warlike. Over the years they began to invade other peoples and steal from them. The people of Nineveh were very cruel, too, for when they invaded a land they would cut off the noses of the men and rip open the stomachs of pregnant women. So the surrounding nations did not like them and even feared them. One of their kings named Sennacherib boasted, "Has the god of any nation ever delivered his land from the King of Assyria's hand?"

One day the word of the Lord came to a prophet named Jonah, "Go to the great city Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me." But Jonah ran away from the Lord and headed for Joppa, the seaport, and boarded a ship. When the ship sailed the Lord sent a great wind on the sea and a violent storm arose that threatened to sink the ship. All the sailors were afraid and each began to cry out to his own god. They began to throw the cargo into the sea to lighten the ship. Jonah was down in the ship fast asleep. The captain of the ship found him and woke him, "How can you sleep? Get up and call on your God! Maybe he will take notice of us and save us."

Then the sailors cast lots to see who was responsible for the storm. The lot fell on Jonah. They asked him, "What have you done?" Jonah said, "I am running away from my God. I am a Hebrew and I worship the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the land."

The wind and waves were becoming stronger and stronger. So the sailors asked Jonah, "What should we do to you to make the sea calm again?" "Pick me up and

throw me into the sea," Jonah said, "and the sea will become calm." The sailors did not want to do this but they could not save the ship. They cried to the Lord to forgive them for taking Jonah's life, then they threw Jonah into the sea. Immediately the storm ended. When the sailors saw this, they greatly feared the Lord. Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah.

From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the Lord his God. "In my trouble," he said to God, "I am calling to you. I am sinking down surrounded by water. I have remembered you, O Lord. What I have vowed I will make good, for salvation comes from you." The Lord commanded the fish to vomit Jonah onto dry land.

Again the word of the Lord came to Jonah, "Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I am giving you." This time Jonah obeyed the word of the Lord and went to Nineveh. For three days Jonah walked all through the city proclaiming, "Forty more days and Nineveh will be destroyed." When the people heard Jonah's words, they believed God, and declared a fast from the greatest to the least person in the city. When the king heard the news, he took off his royal robes and put on coarse clothing as a sign of humility and mourning. The king said, "Let everyone urgently call upon God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence. Perhaps God will have compassion on us and turn his fierce anger from us."

When God saw what the people of Nineveh did, and how they turned from their evil ways, He had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction He had threatened. God said to Jonah, "Should I not be concerned about that great city?"

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. Who were the people of Nineveh descended from? (From Noah's son)
2. What were the people of Nineveh like? (Fierce, warlike, cruel)
3. What did the king of Nineveh believe? (That he was greater than any nation's gods.)
4. What did God tell Jonah to do? (Go to Nineveh and preach against it.)
5. Did Jonah obey the Lord's command? (No, he ran away.)
6. What did the Lord do to stop Jonah from fleeing? (He sent a storm on the sea.)
7. Did Jonah confess that he was not obeying the Lord? (Yes)
8. What did Jonah tell the sailors to do? (Throw him into the sea.)
9. Did the sailors want to throw Jonah into the sea? (No, but they had no other choice to save their ship.)
10. Did the storm end like Jonah said it would? (Yes)
11. What had God prepared to swallow Jonah? (A great fish)
12. Inside the fish what did Jonah begin to do? (He began to pray and confess his sin and call upon the Lord to save him. He promised to do what God told him to do.)
13. When God spoke to Jonah a second time, did Jonah obey? (Yes)
14. When the people of Nineveh heard the message of Jonah, what did they do? (They believed God and began to fast and put on sackcloth as a sign of mourning.)
15. When the king of Nineveh heard the news what did he do? (He took off his royal robes—humbled himself—and told everyone to urgently call upon God and to give up their evil ways and wickedness.)
16. What did God do when He saw the people of Nineveh repenting? (He spared them from destruction.)
17. Was God concerned about the people of Nineveh? (Yes. God loves all people.)

### Scriptures for your study:

1. Genesis 10:6-12 The beginning of Nineveh after the days of Noah.
2. 2 Kings 18:33-35 The king of Assyria believed he was greater than any nation's gods. (Isaiah 13:11)
3. Nahum 1:14;  
3:1-7 Prophecies against Nineveh for her sins.
4. Matthew 12:40-41 Jesus referred to the story of Jonah and Nineveh.
5. Isaiah 46:10 God is powerful to always carry out His purpose and plan.
6. Isaiah 45:22-23 God alone has the power to save. Before Him every knee will bow.
7. 2 Kings 14:25 Jonah was son of Amittai and was from Gath Hepher in Galilee near Nazareth.

The Lord used Assyria (Nineveh was the capital city) to punish the kingdom of Israel when they continued to sin. The king of Assyria invaded and conquered Israel and carried the people away and resettled them in other lands. Later another king of Assyria came against the kingdom of Judah in the days of Hezekiah, but his army was destroyed by an angel, and the king returned to his land and his sons killed him. After God spared Nineveh in the days of Jonah, they again fell into sin, and God sent the Babylonian army to destroy Nineveh as the prophet Nahum had prophesied God would do. Nineveh never again became great.

### 13. THE MESSAGE OF THE PROPHETS

**Read to the listeners:** Isaiah 61:1-3

#### **Tell the Story:**

God had first sent the prophets to warn the people about sin and to turn their hearts back to the Lord, the God of heaven and earth. Sometimes the people listened to the prophets, but many times they did not. Finally God sent punishment upon the land first to the kingdom of Israel where their kings had led the people to sin, and then to the kingdom of Judah where the people also turned away from the Lord and sinned greatly. Soon the time of judgment would be over and God was going to send His Anointed One who would take upon himself the sins of the people. He would be the acceptable sacrifice before God. His blood would be shed to cover (atone for) man's sin.

Again and again in the stories we see that men cannot escape God's judgment for their sin. The blood sacrifices had to be repeated over and over. A better sacrifice was needed. It had to be a perfect (sinless) sacrifice to be acceptable, one provided by God Himself.

In the days of Abraham and his descendants God had said that one day their descendant would bless all people. God had promised to David that the coming king would be his descendant. But the kings had fallen into great sin and even led their people into sin. What was needed was new and different King.

So the prophets began to tell about the coming King. The prophet Isaiah said that he would rule on the throne of his father David. He would be the King of Kings. He would be Mighty God, the Prince of Peace. He was to be born of a virgin and called "Immanuel—God with us". He would be born in Bethlehem, the home of David's family.

His origins would be from of olden times—he was eternal having no beginning.

The Spirit of the Lord would be upon him. His anointing would be from God—to be called *The Anointed One* or *Messiah*. His ministry was to be in Galilee among the Gentiles (non-Jews), for he would be a light to them, and also for the glory of his own people, Israel. Another prophet named Zechariah said he would be both a priest and a king and the two would be in harmony. Isaiah said that he would be rejected by his own people.

A time would come when the Anointed One would become the Suffering Servant who would bear his suffering like a lamb being slaughtered without opening his mouth. He would suffer and carry our sorrows. He would have his hands and side pierced for our transgressions. By his wounds we would be healed. He would be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver by a friend who shared his bread, falsely accused, put to death among sinners, and buried among the rich. He would be struck, beaten and spit upon. People would gamble for his clothing. None of his bones would be broken (like the Passover lamb). He would pray for his enemies.

His body would not decay in the grave. He would be raised to life again. And he would return to the Father from whom he had come. The prophet Daniel said all this would happen at a certain time in the future. But before he came there would be a herald that God would send to prepare the way who would be like the mighty prophet Elijah.

Then the prophets stopped their speaking and many years passed. Some people were still waiting for the Anointed One to come. Others had forgotten.

### Some things to talk about:

1. In the beginning what was God's message through the prophets? (Turn from your sin and return to the Lord or face God's judgment.)
2. What was the new message of the prophets? (God was sending His Anointed One who would suffer for man's sin and his blood shed to atone for sin.)
3. What had God promised Abraham and those who followed him? (That one day their descendant would bless all people.)
4. What did God promise David? (The coming King would be his descendant.)
5. What would be unusual about the Anointed One's birth? (Born of a virgin. Remember God's words in the Garden of Eden—One born of woman would one day crush the head of the serpent.)
6. One of his names was *Immanuel*. What does that mean? (God with us.)
7. Where was the Anointed One to be born? (In Bethlehem, David's home.)
8. He was to be *Mighty God*. What does that mean? (He was one with God the Father.)
9. Where was his main ministry to be? (In Galilee of the Gentiles.)
10. How would he bear his suffering? (Quietly, like a lamb being killed.)
11. What would happen to his hands and side? (They would be pierced.)
12. Who would betray him? (A friend who was sharing his bread—eating with him. He would do it for thirty pieces of silver.)
13. Would his own people accept him or reject him? (They would reject him.)
14. Why would the Anointed One suffer? (For our sins and transgressions.)
15. Where would he die? (Among sinners.)

16. What would happen while he was dying? (People would gamble for his clothing.)
17. What would he do for his enemies while dying? (He would pray for them.)
18. Where would he be buried? (Among the rich.)
19. Would his body decay in the grave? (No, for he would be raised to life again.)
20. After accomplishing his work, what would the Anointed One do? (Return to the Father in Heaven.)

For more prophecies see the prophecy chart. Do not read all these to the listeners. These are for your study and understanding to see their fulfillment.

### Scriptures for your study:

1. Genesis 3:15            He would be born of woman (no earthly father).
2. Genesis 12:3            Abraham's descendant who would bless all people.
3. Genesis 26:4            Isaac's offspring would be the one to bless all people.
4. Genesis 28:14           Through Jacob's offspring all people would be blessed.
5. Genesis 49:10           The Promised King would be descended from Judah, son of Jacob.
6. 2 Samuel 7:12-14       The King was to be a descendant of David, and God would be his Father.
7. Isaiah 9:7               He would rule on David's throne, an everlasting kingdom.
8. Isaiah 40:3-4; Malachi 3:1; 4:5-6    The herald who would prepare the way for the coming of the Lord. A mighty prophet like Elijah would come.
9. Isaiah 11:2              The Spirit of the Lord would rest on the Anointed One.
10. Psalm 22:16             His hands and feet would be pierced. (Zechariah 12:10)
11. Isaiah 53:4-5           He would be punished for our sins to give us peace with God.

## 14. GOD SENDS GOOD NEWS—THE MESSIAH IS COMING

**Read to the listeners:** Luke 1:26-33

### **Tell the Story:**

The time had come for God to fulfill His promise to send His Anointed One. God had already sent his angel Gabriel to an aged priest named Zechariah who was in the temple worshipping when the angel appeared. Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth were righteous and always obeyed the Lord's commandments without fail. Zechariah was afraid when he saw the angel.

But the angel said, "Do not be afraid. Your prayer has been heard and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son. You are to name him John. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit from his birth. He will go before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the people back to God. He is to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." When Zechariah finished his work as a priest at the temple and returned home, his wife Elizabeth soon conceived and in her time gave birth to a son and named him John.

One day the same angel appeared to a young woman named Mary who lived in Nazareth, a small town in Galilee. She was a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph who was a descendant of David. The angel greeted Mary, "You are highly favored by the Lord. The Lord is with you!" Mary was troubled by the greeting.

But the angel said, "Do not be afraid. You are going to give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High. For the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, his kingdom will never end."

"How can this be," Mary asked, "since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even your relative Elizabeth is going to have a son in her old age. For with God nothing is impossible!"

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary replied. "May it happen just as you have said." Then the angel left her.

When Joseph who was a righteous man found that his wife was already with child by the Holy Spirit, he thought to quietly divorce her so there would be no public shame. But while he was considering to do this an angel appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife. What is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus because he will save his people from their sins." When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home to be his wife. But he did not sleep with her until after she gave birth to her son.

It was going to happen just as the prophets said.

## Some things to talk about:

1. What was going to happen before the Anointed One came? (God would send a messenger or herald to prepare the way.)
2. Was John the promised Anointed One? (No, he was the promised herald.)
3. To whom did God send His angel the second time? (To Mary, a young virgin in Nazareth.)
4. To whom was Mary pledged to be married? (To Joseph, a descendant of David.)
5. What did Mary ask the angel? (How could she, a virgin, conceive a child?)
6. What did the angel tell Mary? (God would cause it to happen by the Holy Spirit—Creator God who made the first man and woman could cause anything to happen—even a virgin to conceive a child.)
7. Whom would Mary's child be the Son of? (The Son of Most High God.)
8. Is anything too difficult for the Lord to do? (No, nothing, He is all-powerful.)
9. What did Mary tell the angel after he had explained God's message? (I am the Lord's servant. May it happen just as you have said.)
10. What did Joseph decide to do when he found that Mary was with child? (He decided to quietly divorce Mary to prevent public shame.)
11. What did the angel tell Joseph to do? (Do not be afraid to take Mary home as his wife.)
12. Did Joseph do what the angel commanded? (Yes, he took Mary home to be his wife.)
13. What did Joseph not do until after the baby was born? (He did not sleep with—have union with—his wife until after the child was born.)
14. Was Joseph a righteous man? Yes, God had chosen him because he was righteous carefully obeying the commandments of God just as he followed the angel's

command.)

## Scriptures for your study:

1. Luke 1:5-25      The angel visited Zechariah announcing the birth of John.
2. Malachi 4:5-6      John was to be a mighty prophet in the spirit of Elijah.  
(Luke 1:17)
3. Daniel 9:21-23      Gabriel was the angel who was sent from God to Daniel.
4. Luke 1:19, 26      Gabriel was the angel who was sent from the presence of God to deliver the good news to Zechariah and Mary.
5. Genesis 3:15      God said that the Promised One would be the son of woman and not the son of man (a father) as other male children are called.
6. Genesis 18:14      God told Abraham that nothing was too hard for the Lord.
7. Genesis 6:9      God chooses righteous people to accomplish His work.

Why was it necessary for the Promised One to have God as his Father? Because if he had an earthly father, he would have inherited the sinful nature of Adam. (Romans 5:12, 19) Instead he would inherit the sinless nature of his Heavenly Father. The Promised One had to be born of woman in order to have a body of flesh and blood—like man, because he was going to be the substitute sacrifice for sinful man. That sacrifice had to be perfect—without blemish (or sin). So it was God who provided the Promised One by giving him the Spirit of God. As sin entered the world through one man bringing death to all, so would forgiveness of sin or life come to the world through one man—the Promised One. (Hebrews 7:26)

## 15. THE BIRTH OF JESUS IN BETHLEHEM

### Read to the listeners:

### Tell the Story:

Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth, a town in Galilee. The prophet had said the Anointed One was to be born in Bethlehem of David which was in another part of the country. So it happened during those days that the Roman ruler gave an order that a census should be taken. Everyone went to his own town to register. Joseph took Mary his wife and journeyed to Bethlehem. While they were there the time came for Mary to give birth to her firstborn son. There was no room for them in the inn, so the baby was born where the animals were kept. Mary wrapped the baby in cloths and laid him in a manger where the animals were fed.

It was the time of year when shepherds lived out in the fields with their sheep. That night suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds. God's glory was shining brightly all around them. The shepherds were terrified. The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you. He is the Messiah, the Anointed One, the Lord. This is the sign for you: You will find the baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Suddenly the sky was filled with a great many angels who were praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests."

Then when the angels had gone away into heaven, the shepherds said, "Let us go into Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has told us about." So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and the baby, who was lying in a manger just as the angel had said.

The shepherds went and told many people what they had seen and heard.

On the eighth day when it was time to circumcise their firstborn son, they named him Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived.

When the time of Mary's purification was completed they took Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem to pay the redemption tax for the firstborn son, and for Mary to offer her sacrifice for sin and for cleansing after giving birth. In the temple that day a righteous old man named Simeon who had been told by the Holy Spirit that he would not die until he had seen the Lord's Anointed One. Taking the baby Jesus in his arms he declared, "My eyes have seen the Lord's salvation which is a light for the Gentiles and for the glory of your people Israel."

Some time later there came wise men from an eastern country seeking the one born king of the Jews. First they went to Jerusalem to inquire where he might be. Jewish King Herod was troubled when he heard this. He asked the religious leaders to look into the ancient prophecies and they found the words of the prophet Micah that said the would be born in Bethlehem. So King Herod sent the wise men on their way telling them to report back to him when they found the new king. A star guided them to Bethlehem to the house where Mary and Jesus were. Entering they worshiped presenting their gifts of gold, incense and myrrh. An angel warned them to return to their home by a different way. King Herod became angry and gave an order that all boy babies in Bethlehem two years of age or younger should be put to death. An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him to take Mary and the baby to Egypt and stay there until it was safe to return. Soon King Herod died and the angel told Joseph to leave Egypt. So Joseph returned to Nazareth in Galilee where Jesus as a boy grew and God blessed him.

### Some things to talk about:

1. Did Joseph obey the angel's command and take Mary to be his wife? (Yes)
2. Where did Mary and Joseph live? (In Nazareth in Galilee)
3. Where was the Anointed One to be born? (In Bethlehem in Judea)
4. Why Joseph take Mary to Bethlehem? (All people were required to return to their ancestral home for a census.)
5. Where was the baby born? (In a place where animals were kept because there was no room in the inn.)
6. Who were the first people that God announced the birth to? (Shepherds)
7. What was the angel's message? (Good news of great joy for all people, a Saviour was born in Bethlehem who was the Anointed One of the Lord.)
8. Did the shepherds believe the angel's words? (Yes. They went to see and found it was just like the angel had said.)
9. When was Jesus circumcised and given his name? (On the eighth day.)
10. What did Mary and Joseph do when the time of Mary's purification was completed? (They went to the temple in Jerusalem for Mary to offer her sacrifices. This shows they were righteous and obeyed God's commands.)
11. What did the old man Simeon have to say about Jesus? (He was the Lord's salvation, a light for the Gentiles and for the glory of Israel's people.)
12. Where did the wise men come from? (Far away in an eastern country.)
13. Who were the wise men seeking? (The one born King of the Jews.)
14. What gifts did they bring? (Gold, incense and myrrh)
15. What did King Herod order when the wise men did not return to him? (To kill all the boy babies in Bethlehem

two years of age and under.)

16. What did the angel tell Joseph to do? (Go to Egypt and stay there until it was safe to return.)
17. When Joseph and Mary left Egypt where did they go? (They returned to Nazareth in Galilee.)

### Scriptures for your study:

1. Isaiah 48:3                      God foretold what was going to happen, and it came to pass.
2. Micah 5:2                        The Anointed One was to be born in Bethlehem.
3. Luke 1:31                        The boy was to be named Jesus (same as Joshua=Jehovah is salvation.)
4. Luke 2:32                        The Anointed One would be a light for the Gentiles. (Isaiah 49:6)
5. Genesis 17:10                    All male descendants of Abraham were to be circumcised.
6. Leviticus 12:3                    The boy was to be circumcised on the eighth day after birth.
7. Numbers 18:15-16                Firstborn sons were to be redeemed by paying a tax of five shekels. God considered the firstborn son to be His and the parents had to redeem or *purchase* him back from God.
8. Leviticus 12:1-4, 6-8            The requirements for a woman's purification after giving birth to a son. A sacrifice for her sin and for her cleansing.
5. Hosea 11:1                      The prophet said that God would call His Son out of Egypt.
6. Isaiah 9:2                        The Anointed One would have a ministry in Galilee.

The wise men may have known of the prophecies of the coming King from the time of Daniel. The gifts were prophetic: Gold was for a king, incense was for one who was a priest, and myrrh was an ointment used to anoint the body of one who died.

## **16. THE BAPTISM OF JESUS, JOHN'S PROCLAMATION**

**Read to the listeners:** Matthew 3:13-17; John 1:29

### **Tell the Story:**

The prophet Isaiah said that there would be a voice in the desert calling the people to repent and prepare the way for the Lord. When the angel came to Zechariah, John's father, he said that their son would go before the Lord to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. He was to be filled with the Holy Spirit from his birth. John had lived most of his life in the desert eating wild foods and honey. His clothes were made of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist. The word of the Lord came to John. So he went into all the country around the Jordan River preaching repentance and baptism for sins. John urged the people to produce fruit in keeping with repentance.

The people were all waiting expectantly and wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Anointed One. They were asking John, "Why do you baptize if you are not the Christ or Elijah or some mighty prophet?" John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, one you do not know, and I am not worthy to untie the thongs of his sandals. He will baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire."

And so John preached the good news to all who would listen. People went out to him from Jerusalem and surrounding towns. They confessed their sins and John baptized them in the Jordan River.

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to refuse him saying, "I should be baptized by you. Why do you come to me?" Jesus replied, "Let it be so, it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." For Jesus wanted to identify with the baptism of John. So John agreed and baptized Jesus in the river.

As Jesus was coming up out of the water, at that very moment, the heavens were opened and a voice spoke saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." And John saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on Jesus.

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I was talking about. I did not know him. But God who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Holy Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit. I testify that this is the Son of God.'"

### Some things to talk about:

1. What did Isaiah say the voice crying in the desert would say? (Repent and prepare the way for the Lord.)
2. What did the angel tell Zechariah, John's father? (Their son would go before the Lord to prepare the people for the Lord.)
3. Where did John live? (In the desert.)
4. What was John doing near the Jordan River? (Preaching repentance and baptism for sins.)
5. Who did the people think John was? (The Anointed One)
6. What did the people ask John? (Why are you baptizing if you are not the Christ or Elijah or some mighty prophet?)
7. What did John say about the one who was coming? (He is more powerful than I am. And I am not worthy to untie his shoe laces. He will baptize with the Holy Spirit.)
8. When the people confessed their sins what did John do? (He baptized them in the river.)
9. Why did Jesus ask John to baptize him? (To fulfill all righteousness. So Jesus could identify with the call to repentance and baptism of John.)
10. When Jesus was coming up out of the water what happened in the heavens? (A voice spoke saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.")
11. Then what did John see? (The Holy Spirit coming down like a dove and lighting on Jesus.)
12. The next day when John saw Jesus coming what did he exclaim? ("Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! I testify that he is the Son of God.")

### Scriptures for your study:

1. Isaiah 40:3-4; Malachi 3:1 The promise of one to prepare the way for the coming Lord.
2. Luke 1:16-17 John would turn the people back to the Lord and he would go before the Lord.
3. John 3:28-34 John's continuing testimony about who Jesus was.
4. Matthew 11:7-14 Jesus honored John. (Luke 7:24-30)
5. Mark 9:7; John 12:28-29 Two more times when God spoke from heaven about Jesus.
6. Isaiah 53:7 The one who was to suffer would be like a lamb for the slaughter.
7. Revelation 17:1 Jesus is called the Lamb who will overcome because he is the Lord of lords and King of kings.
8. 1 John 5:9 God has given greater testimony about His Son.
9. 2 Samuel 7:14 God told David that the Promised One would be His Son.

There are many testimonies about who Jesus was. The prophets said who he would be. The angel Gabriel said he would be the Son of God. Old Simeon said he was the long awaited Anointed One. The shepherds saw and believed and told the people what they heard and saw. The wise men came to worship the one born King of the Jews and brought prophetic gifts. Now John has added his testimony that to that of the Father in Heaven who said, "This is my Son."

## 17. SATAN TESTS JESUS

**Read to the listeners:** Luke 4:1-4

### **Tell the Story:**

After Jesus was baptized by John, the Holy Spirit sent him out into a desert place to be tested by Satan. He was fasting and praying for forty days. He was with the wild animals and angels attended him. At the end of forty days Jesus was very hungry and tired. Then Satan came to him.

Satan said to Jesus, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread."

Jesus answered him saying, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.'"

Then Satan led Jesus up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And Satan said to Jesus, "I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. So if you worship me, it will all be yours."

Jesus again answered Satan saying, "It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve Him only.'"

Next Satan led Jesus to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down from here. For it is written:

'He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'"

(Psalm 91:11,12)

Jesus answered, "It says: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

When Satan had finished all this tempting, he left Jesus until another opportune time. Again angels came and

attended Jesus. Afterward Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit.

**Note:** *This was not the only time that Satan tempted (or tested) Jesus. Again and again Satan sent various of the religious leaders to test Jesus. One of the times was when the Pharisees brought the woman taken in the act of adultery and threw her down before Jesus to judge her (John 8:1-6). Another time was when the religious leaders asked Jesus whether it was right to pay taxes to Caesar (Luke 20:21-26). Jesus always gave the right answer because he only spoke what he heard the Father in heaven saying (John 7:16).*

*The answers that Jesus gave Satan are from the Old Testament. Jesus quoted Scripture to answer Satan. But notice that Satan himself also quoted Scripture from Psalm 91:11-12. That Scripture passage is about Jesus. But Jesus did not choose to draw people's attention by doing such a foolish thing. The three Scriptures Jesus quoted are listed on the next page under Scriptures for your study. One time Satan even urged the disciple Peter to say something that he should not say (Matthew 16:22-23). Jesus' brothers (who did not believe in Jesus) also tried to get Jesus to go to Jerusalem and declare himself in public. For they said, "No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world." So here Satan was using Jesus' own brothers to tempt him. Finally Satan was able to use of Jesus' own disciples to betray him. (Luke 22:3)*

*This information is for your understanding. You are free to add it if needed.*

## Some things to talk about:

1. After Jesus was baptized who led him into the desert to be tempted? (The Holy Spirit)
2. What did Jesus do while in the desert? (He fasted and prayed.)
3. When did Satan come to Jesus to tempt him? (When Jesus was very tired and hungry.)
4. Satan began by saying, “If you are the Son of God...”. Did Satan know who Jesus really was? (Yes, he was asking Jesus to foolishly prove that he really was God’s Son.)
5. What did Jesus answer Satan’s suggestion about turning the stone into bread? (Man does not live by bread alone. In Deuteronomy it continues to say: ‘...but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’)
6. Then where did Satan take Jesus? (To a very high place to show him all the kingdoms of the world in an instant by some miraculous means .)
7. Was Jesus willing to bow down to Satan in order to get Satan’s gift? (No)
8. Where was the third place Satan took Jesus? (To the high point of the temple in Jerusalem. It was a place where everyone could see what happened.)
9. What did Satan do while they were on top of the temple? (He quoted from one of the Psalms—it was actually a scripture about Jesus.)
10. What did Jesus tell Satan? (Do not put the Lord your God to the test. That is, don’t foolishly test God.)
11. Was this the only time that Satan tempted Jesus? (No, it was the first time. Satan came many times and used many people to test Jesus to try to get him to sin by answering their questions foolishly.)
12. Why do you think that Jesus did not yield to Satan’s tempting? (Because he was filled with the Holy Spirit. Later we will see that Jesus spoke only what he heard

the Father in heaven speaking.)

## Scriptures for your study:

1. Deuteronomy 8:3 “...Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.”
2. Deuteronomy 6:13 “Fear the Lord your God, serve him only...”
3. Deuteronomy 6:16 “Do not test the Lord your God...”
4. Hebrews 2:17-18 Why God tested Jesus.
5. Hebrews 4:15 Jesus was tested in every way yet did not sin.
6. John 8:44 Satan is a liar, lying is his language!
7. 1 Peter 5:8 Satan is like a lion prowling about looking for someone to tempt.
8. Matthew 28:18 Before returning to heaven Jesus said: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”
9. Colossians 1:16 Who really owned everything? The one who created it! Jesus!)
10. James 1:13-14 It is not God who tempts us.
11. 1 Corinthians 10:13 God will not let us be tempted beyond what we can bear. He always provides a way out of temptation.
12. James 1:12 Blessed is the man who is tested and who perseveres (stands strong and does not give in to the testing.)

## 18. YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN—NICODEMUS

**Read to the listeners:** John 3:1-3

### **Tell the Story:**

In the beginning the Pharisees were righteous people who diligently studied God's commandments and tried very carefully to observe them all. They were well educated men who in time held high social positions. But as the years passed many of the Pharisees began to consider themselves as better, that is, more righteous than other people. To help them observe the commandments they had many rules and customs which they followed very carefully. Anyone who did not follow these same rules and customs they considered to be sinners. Many had gone to hear John preach about repentance. But John called them snakes for even though they acted pious, on the inside they had hard hearts. But not all Pharisees were bad as we shall see.

There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus. He was a member of the Jewish ruling council and so a very influential man. It happened that he came to see Jesus one night. He spoke to Jesus in a very polite way calling him Rabbi, Teacher. "Rabbi," Nicodemus said, "we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs if God were not with him."

But Jesus plainly declared to Nicodemus, "I tell you the truth, unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Nicodemus was puzzled by the words of Jesus. "How can a man be born again when he is already old? Surely he cannot enter into his mother's womb to be born a second time!"

Again Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, unless a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. For flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' The Spirit is like the wind, you hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it is coming from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

Now Nicodemus was really confused. "How can this be?" he asked.

"Well, you are Israel's teacher," Jesus replied, "and you don't know these things? We speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how will you then believe if I speak of heavenly things?"

Jesus continued to explain to Nicodemus, "No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. For God so loved the world that He gave his one and only Son, that whosoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life. Whoever does not believe in the name of God's one and only Son is already under God's judgment. This is what has happened, Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness because their deeds were evil. They hate the light because they fear their evil deeds will be exposed."

Sometime later Nicodemus defended Jesus when some of the Pharisees were accusing him. For Nicodemus said, "Does our law condemn a man without first hearing him to find out what he is doing?" But the other Pharisees said, "What! Are you his follower, too?" Nicodemus had become a secret follower of Jesus.

## Some things to talk about:

1. Who were the Pharisees? (They had originally been people who tried to be righteous and live a life pleasing to God.)
2. What had happened to the Pharisees as the years passed? (They had begun to think they were better than other people whom they considered to be sinners.)
3. How did Nicodemus address Jesus? (He called Jesus *Teacher*. This meant that he had respect for Jesus.)
4. What did Nicodemus say about Jesus because of his miracles? (We know you are a teacher come from God because you could not perform these miracles if God were not with you.)
5. What did Jesus reply to Nicodemus? (You must be born again in order to see the kingdom of God.)
6. Did Nicodemus understand what Jesus was saying? (No, he was thinking how he could enter into his mother a second time and be born again.)
7. What two births are necessary in order to enter the kingdom of God? (First there is the birth of water, or natural birth, by which we enter this world. Then there is the birth by Spirit, or supernatural birth, by which we enter the kingdom of God.)
8. Did Nicodemus understand this teaching of Jesus? (No, he asked how could such a thing happen.)
9. What did Jesus accuse the Pharisees of doing? (They did not accept the truth that Jesus was teaching, the heavenly things that Jesus knew about.)
10. Who did Jesus say was the only one who had ever gone up into heaven? (It was the one called the Son of Man, a name that Jesus called himself.)
11. What was the requirement to have everlasting life? (Believe on the one and only Son of God—the one God sent because He loved the world.)
12. Who is already under God's judgment? (Those who have never believed in the one and only Son of God.)

13. What did Jesus say had come into the world? (Light had come into the world, but men hated it because they feared it would expose their evil deeds.)

## Scriptures for your study:

1. Matthew 3:7-8 John called the Pharisees *snakes* who came to hear him.
2. Matthew 15:1-2 The Pharisees carefully observed many rules and asked why the disciples of Jesus did not obey the same rules.
3. Matthew 16:1 The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus to test him by asking for a sign from heaven.
4. Matthew 23:2-3 Jesus said to do what the Pharisees said to do, but don't do what they do! Everything they do is for men to see.
5. John 1:12-13 Those who receive Jesus are children born of God.
6. 2 Corinthians 5:17 If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.
7. Titus 3:5 We are saved through the washing of the rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.
8. 1 Peter 1:23 We have been born again of imperishable seed through the word of God.
9. 1 John 2:29 Those born of Jesus know what is right, because he is righteous.
10. Matthew 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit (broken, humble in heart), for theirs is the kingdom of God.

## 19. LIVING WATER OF SALVATION—THE WOMAN AT THE WELL

**Read to the Listeners:** John 4:7-14

**Tell the Story:**

The Pharisees created a disturbance when they heard that Jesus was gaining more disciples than John. When Jesus heard about this, he left Judea and went back to Galilee. Now he had to pass through Samaria along the way. About midday he came to a town called Sychar. There was well dug in the days of Jacob, grandson of Abraham. Jesus was tired from the journey and it was hot so he sat down by the well to rest. His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.

Soon a Samaritan woman came with her water pot and rope to draw water. When she came near, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" The woman was surprised and said, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink." You see the Jews considered the Samaritans to be low caste and therefore unclean.

Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

"But sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw water with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water?" And she mocked Jesus saying, "Are you greater than our father Jacob who gave us the well and who drank from it himself?"

Jesus replied, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again. But whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water that I give will become in him a spring of water bubbling up to eternal life."

The woman said to Jesus, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming to this well to draw water."

"Very well," Jesus told her, "go call your husband and come back." "I have no husband," she replied. Looking at her, Jesus said, "You are right when you say you have no

husband. The fact is, you've had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband! So what you have just said is quite true."

"Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet." Again she turned on Jesus to justify herself, "Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the only place of worship is in Jerusalem."

Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will not worship God on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. A time is coming when true worship of the Father will be in spirit and truth, for God is a Spirit. This is the kind of worshipers God is seeking."

The woman then said, "I know that the Anointed One (the Messiah) is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." Then Jesus plainly said to her, "I am the Anointed One."

The woman left her water pot and ran back to the town. There she told the people, "Come see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" When the Samaritans came to see Jesus they urged him to stay with them and he stayed two days. Many of the people had believed because of the woman's words. Many others believed when they heard the words of Jesus. They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Saviour of the world."

### Some things to talk about:

1. Why did Jesus begin a journey toward Galilee? (The Pharisees had created a disturbance of whether John or Jesus had more disciples.)
2. To go to Galilee which way did Jesus have to pass? (Through Samaria)
3. What did the Jews think about the Samaritans? (They were low caste, unclean.)
4. What did Jesus ask the woman to do? (Give him a drink of water.)
5. Was she surprised when Jesus made this request? (Yes)
6. What did she say when Jesus mentioned having living water? (Where can you get this water? You have no means of drawing it from the well.)
7. What comparison did Jesus make between the well water and his living water? (Drinking the well water one would get thirsty again. With living water there would be no thirst.)
8. Did the woman want some of this living water? (Yes, so she would not need to keep coming to the well for more water.)
9. What did Jesus tell the woman to do? (Go call her husband and come back.)
10. Was the woman surprised when Jesus knew about her life? (Yes. She thought he must be a prophet.)
11. What accusation did the woman make against the Jews? (They said the only true place to worship was in Jerusalem. He fathers had worshiped on a nearby mountain.)
12. What did the woman confess about the Messiah? (She said that she knew he was coming and that he would explain everything.)
13. What did Jesus tell her? (I am the Messiah.)
14. Did the Samaritans believe when the woman went to tell them about Jesus? (Yes, some did.)
15. Why did many more Samaritans believe in Jesus?

(Because they heard his words for themselves.)

### Scriptures for your study:

1. 2 Kings 17:22-34 Tells how the Samaritans came to be when Assyria resettled the land after the Israelites were carried away as captives.
2. Ezra 4:2, 3 The Samaritans sought to form an alliance with the Jews but were rejected. (Later they mocked the Jews. Nehemiah 4:1, 2)
3. Luke 10:30 Jesus told a story in which the good person was a Samaritan.
4. Luke 17:12-18 When Jesus healed ten lepers only one returned to thank Jesus and he was a Samaritan.
5. Luke 9:51-56 Near the end of Jesus' ministry the Samaritans opposed Jesus and would not welcome him because he was heading for Jerusalem.
6. John 6:35 Whoever believes in Jesus will never be thirsty.
7. John 7:37-38 Those who are thirsty should come to Jesus to drink.

**Note:** Jesus used an interesting approach to the Samaritan woman. He knew that people preferred to drink water that was *alive*, that is, bubbling from a spring and flowing. It happened that at the bottom of Jacob's well there was just such a spring of bubbling, flowing *alive water*. So Jesus asked her if she would like some living (*alive*) water. She said she would, but how could Jesus get it from the well? So Jesus used this picture and comparison to capture the woman's interest and to teach spiritual truth. That well is still in the Holy Land today though people have nearly filled it with stones to see how deep it is. Originally it was 30 meters deep.

## 20. JESUS FORGIVES SIN—PARALYZED MAN AND FOUR FRIENDS

**Read to the Listeners:** Mark 2:1-5

### **Tell the Story:**

Jesus had returned to Galilee and was moving from place to place. Along the way a man with leprosy came to Jesus and fell on his knees begging Jesus, “If you are willing, you can make me clean.”

Jesus was filled with compassion for the man. He reached out his hand and touched the man (for lepers were considered unclean). “I am willing,” Jesus said, “Be clean!” Immediately the leprosy left the man and he was cured of the disease. Jesus sent the man away with a strong warning: “See to it that you don’t tell this to anyone. But go, show yourself to the priest, and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to everyone.”

Instead the man went out and began to talk freely, spreading the news. As a result, Jesus could no longer enter a town openly, but stayed outside in lonely places. Yet many people still came to him from everywhere.

A few days later, when Jesus again entered the city, the people heard that he had come home. So many gathered in a house that there was no room remaining, not even outside the door. Jesus was preaching the word of God to the people.

Four men came, bringing to Jesus a paralyzed man on a mat. Since they could not get to Jesus because of the many people in the room, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus. After digging the hole in the roof, they lowered the paralyzed man on his mat right before Jesus. When Jesus looked up he saw the faith on the faces of the four men. So he said to the paralyzed man, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”

Now some of the religious teachers were sitting there, thinking to themselves, “Why does this fellow talk like that? He’s blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit what they were thinking in their hearts. So he said to them, “Why are you thinking such things? Which is easier to say to this man: ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take up your mat, and walk.’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins...” So Jesus said to the paralyzed man, “I tell you, get up, take your mat, and go home!”

The man stood up in front of the people, rolled up the mat he had been lying on, and walked out in full view of everyone while praising God. The people were amazed and they praised God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this before!”

**Some things to talk about:**

1. What did the leper want Jesus to do for him? (Make his clean.)
2. What did the leper ask Jesus? (Are you willing to do this for me?)
3. How did Jesus feel about the leper? (He had compassion toward him.)
4. What did Jesus say to the leper? (I am willing, be clean.)
5. Did Jesus reach out and touch the unclean man? (Yes)
6. What did Jesus tell the man after he was healed? (Don't tell anyone what I did for you. Go show yourself to the priest and offer your sacrifice.)
7. What did the man do instead of obeying Jesus' words? (He began to go everywhere and tell everyone what Jesus had done.)
8. When the people heard that Jesus was again in the city what did they do? (They came to hear Jesus teach.)
9. Where was Jesus teaching? (Inside a house with many people crowded into the room.)
10. Who did the four men bring to see Jesus? (A paralyzed man.)
11. What did they do when they could not enter the room? (Went up on the roof and opened a hole to lower the paralyzed man down to Jesus.)
12. When Jesus looked up what did he see? (Faith on the faces of the four men.)
13. What did Jesus say to the paralyzed man? (Son, your sins are forgiven.)
14. Do you think this is what the man expected to hear from Jesus???
15. When the religious teachers heard Jesus' words, what did they think in their hearts? (Why is Jesus saying such words? He is blaspheming—saying bad things about God. Only God can forgive sins.)

16. Did Jesus know what they were thinking? (Yes, in his spirit, he knew.)
17. Why did Jesus say what he did? (So the people would know that the Son of Man—Jesus—had authority to forgive sin on earth.)
18. Then what did Jesus say to the man? (Get up, take up your mat and go home!)
19. Did the man obey the words of Jesus? (Yes, he was instantly healed and able to stand up. So he rolled up his mat, and went out praising God.)
20. What did the people begin to do as the man went out? (They, too, began to praise God and exclaim they had never seen anything like that before.)

**Scriptures for your study:**

1. Leviticus 13:45-46 People with skin diseases were to dress a certain way and cover part of their face and call out 'Unclean! Unclean!' They must live apart from everyone.
2. Leviticus 14:1-32 These were the laws regarding sacrifices for cleansing from leprosy. The healed person had to show himself to the priest as a testimony of his cleansing.
3. Mark 2:3 Faith is necessary for healing, even by Jesus' mighty power.
4. Matthew 13:58 Tells about a place where Jesus could not heal many because there was little faith in him. (Mark 6:5-6)
5. Matthew 28:18 All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Jesus.
6. Mathew 26:28 Jesus' blood was poured out for the forgiveness of sins.
7. Leviticus 24:11-14 Blasphemy was a serious offence leading to stoning.

8. John 14:10-11

Jesus could forgive sin because he and God the Father are one. If the people accused Jesus of blaspheming, who were they really accusing of blaspheming—God! So it was the religious teachers who were blaspheming!

## **21. JESUS IS THE LIVING BREAD FROM HEAVEN—FEEDING THE 5,000**

**Read to the Listeners:** John 6:4-10, 32-33

### **Tell the Story:**

Jesus continued his ministry in Galilee around the Sea of Galilee. A great crowd of people were following Jesus because they saw the miracles he performed on the sick. Then Jesus went up on a hillside and sat down with his disciples. It was the time of year when the Jewish Passover Feast of Unleavened Bread was near. Jesus looked up and saw the great crowd coming toward him. He had compassion on them, because they were like sheep having no shepherd. So he began teaching them many things. It was near evening and a very remote place. The disciples said to Jesus, “It is late. Send the people away so they go to the surrounding towns and buy themselves some food and find lodging.”

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “You give them something to eat!” And to Philip one of the disciples Jesus said, “Where can we buy bread for these people to eat?” Jesus asked this only to test Philip, for he already had in mind what he was going to do.

Philip answered, “Eight months’ wages would only buy enough bread for each to have only one bite!” Then Jesus asked, “How many loaves of bread can you find? Go and see.” Another of the disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, spoke up, “Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish. But how far will that go among so many people?”

Jesus said, “Have the people to sit down in groups.” There was plenty of grass in that place, and the men sat down, about five thousand of them. Jesus took the loaves and gave thanks to God. Then he broke the loaves and

distributed them to the disciples to give to those who were seated, as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish.

When they all had enough to eat and were satisfied, Jesus said to the disciples, "Gather the pieces that remain. Let nothing be wasted." So they gathered the uneaten scraps and filled twelve baskets with pieces of the five barley loaves and fish.

After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world." Jesus withdrew again into the hills by himself.

When the people found him later Jesus said, "You are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life which the Son of Man will give you. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven. It is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." The people said, "Sir, give us this bread." Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry."

The Jews began to grumble about Jesus because he said "I am the bread that came down from heaven." But Jesus said, "Stop grumbling. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate the manna bread during their days when they came out of Egypt, yet they died. I am the living bread, if a man eats of this bread, he will live forever."

Another time a large crowd had been with Jesus three days and had nothing to eat. He fed them with seven loaves of bread and a few small fish.

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. Why were the people following Jesus? (Because of his healing miracles.)
2. When Jesus saw the people coming toward him, what did he feel? (He felt compassion for the people who were like sheep with no shepherd.)
3. When the people arrived what did Jesus begin to do? (He began teaching them.)
4. What did the disciples say to Jesus? (It is late. Send the people away so they can buy food.)
5. What did Jesus tell the disciples to do? (Feed the people.)
6. How much food did the disciples find among the people? (Five small barley loaves and two small fish.)
7. What did Jesus ask the people to do? (Sit down in groups on the grass.)
8. What did Jesus do with the loaves and fish? (He gave thanks to God and then distributed the food to the disciples to give to the people.)
9. Did the people get enough to eat? (Yes, they were all satisfied.)
10. What did Jesus ask the disciples to do? (Gather all the scraps of food remaining after the people had eaten.)
11. How much food remained? (Twelve basketfuls)
12. Who did the people say that Jesus was? (The Prophet they were expecting to come.)
13. What kind of food did Jesus tell the disciples to work for? (Food that endures to eternal life which the Son of Man will give, not food that spoils.)
14. Where did the bread of life come from? (He came from heaven.)
15. Who is the true bread that came down from heaven? (Jesus)
16. What kind of bread is the true bread from heaven? (Living bread)

## Scriptures for your study:

1. Isaiah 55:2            Come to God for the bread that satisfies.
2. 2 Kings 4:42-44       Elisha fed 100 people with 20 loaves of bread.
3. Exodus 16:15           The Lord provided bread for the Israelites.(Psalm 78:23-25)
4. Mark 8:1-9            When Jesus fed 4,000. The disciples still had not learned to have faith in Jesus because they asked again where could they find enough bread to feed such a large group.
5. Deuteronomy 18:15      Moses said that God would raise up a prophet like himself.
6. Matthew 16:13-14      The people thought Jesus might be Elijah, Jeremiah or even John the Baptist who had already been killed by King Herod.
7. Luke 22:19            Jesus said that the broken bread represented his body given for believers.

**Note:** Bread was the main food of the people and represented that which made life possible. Without bread the people would die of hunger. To have bread was to have life. To have Jesus is to have life.

## 22. JESUS CALMS A STORM—HE IS LORD OF NATURE

**Read to the Listeners:** Mark 4:35-39

### Tell the Story:

When Jesus saw another crowd gathering around him, he gave an order to his disciples to get into a boat and cross to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. Before he could leave, a religious teacher came to him and said, “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.” Jesus replied, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.” Another man, one of Jesus’ followers, said to him, “Lord, let me go and bury my father (stay with my father until he dies).” But Jesus told him, “Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead.”

Then Jesus got into the boat and his disciples left the crowd and followed him. They sailed off along with several other small boats. As they sailed, a violent windstorm swept down across the water. Waves began breaking over the boat, filling it with water, and placing them in grave danger. Jesus himself was in the back of the boat fast asleep on a cushion. His disciples woke Jesus saying, “Master! Master! We are about to die! Lord, save us! Don’t you care that we are about to die?”

Jesus woke up and said, “Why are you so afraid, you have so little faith.” Then Jesus stood up and rebuked the winds and the stormy waves and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” Immediately the storm died away and it became completely calm.

“Where is your faith,” Jesus said to the disciples. “How is it you have no faith?”

The disciples were terrified and began asking each other, “What kind of man is this? Who is he, that even the wind and waves obey his command?”

Another time when the disciples had boarded a boat to return to the city, it was already dark. Jesus had not joined them, after he sent the disciples off he went up into the hills to pray. During the night a strong wind began blowing, and the sea became rough. Back on the land Jesus saw the disciples struggling to row the boat. For the boat was now in the middle of the sea and being pounded by waves. In the early morning hours before dawn Jesus came walking on the sea and getting closer to the boat. When the disciples saw him, they were terrified and cried out, "It is a ghost!"

"Take courage!" Jesus called out to them. "It is I. Don't be afraid."

Then the disciple called Peter said, "Lord, if it is really you, tell me to join you on the water." "Come," Jesus said.

Peter climbed out of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind and the dark waves, he became afraid. He began to sink into the water. "Lord, save me!" he shouted.

Jesus reached out his hand and caught Peter. "You have so little faith. What made you doubt?" he said to Peter.

The wind stopped after they climbed into the boat. The disciples were astonished. They began to worship Jesus saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

**Note:** In this story as in the story of the feeding of the 5,000 we see that Jesus is the Lord of nature. Jesus healed the sick and crippled, forgave sin, fed the multitude by a miracle, and now he speaks and the wind and waves obey him. Jesus truly is Lord.

### Some things to talk about:

1. Why did Jesus give an order for the disciples to get into a boat? (To get away from the gathering crowd.)
2. Before he could leave what happened? (Two people came to Jesus, one to say he wanted to follow Jesus, and the other to take leave from following Jesus to be with his father.)
3. After Jesus and his disciples sailed in their boat what happened? (A severe storm arose on the water.)
4. What was Jesus doing when the storm broke? (He was asleep on a cushion in the back of the boat.)
5. Why were the disciples afraid? (They were afraid the boat was going to sink in the wind and waves.)
6. What did the disciples do when they saw that Jesus was asleep? (Woke him shouting, "We are about to die! Don't you care?")
7. What did Jesus ask them when he woke up? ("Where is your faith?")
8. What did Jesus do about the storm? (He stood up and commanded the wind and waves to be still.)
9. Did the wind and waves obey Jesus' command? (Yes)
10. What did the disciples say about Jesus? (Who is he that even the wind and waves obey his command?)
11. Another time when the disciples were in the boat without Jesus, what happened? (Another storm arose on the water.)
12. When Jesus saw the disciples in trouble, what did he do? (Went walking on the water toward them.)
13. When the disciples saw Jesus, what did they think he was? (A ghost)
14. What did Peter say to Jesus? (If it is really Jesus, tell me to join you on the water.)
15. What happened when Peter began walking on the water? (He became afraid and began to sink into the water.)
16. After Jesus rescued Peter and joined the disciples in the

boat, what did they do? (They began to worship Jesus saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”)

### Scriptures for your study:

1. Colossians 1:16-17 All things were created by Jesus. All things hold together in him. He is Lord of nature.
2. John 14:27 Jesus is the source of peace.
3. Colossians 3:15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.
4. Psalm 89:9 God rules over the sea, He stills the waves. (Psalm 107:29)
5. Proverbs 30:4 Who has gathered up the wind in the hollow of his hands? What is his name, and the name of his son?
6. John 6:28-29 What must we do to do the works of God? Believe in (have faith in) the one God sent.
7. Hebrews 11:1 Faith is being sure of what we hope for, certain of what we do not see.
8. Luke 17:5 The apostles said to Jesus, “Increase our faith!”
9. Romans 10:17 Faith comes by hearing the message through the word of Christ.
10. 1 John 5:4 The victory that overcomes the world is our faith.

## 23. JESUS HEALS A DEMON-POSSESSED MAN

**Read to the Listeners:** Mark 5:2-8

### Tell the Story:

When Jesus first returned to Galilee after his baptism, he had entered a worship hall on the Sabbath. While he was teaching, a man who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out, “What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!”

“Be quiet!” Jesus commanded the evil spirit, “Come out of him!” The evil spirit shook the man and then came out. Later Jesus drove out many demons from people, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was. Whenever evil spirits saw Jesus, they fell down before him and cried out, “You are the Son of God.” But Jesus always gave them strict orders not to tell who he was.

It was after Jesus had calmed the storm on the sea when the wind and waves obeyed his command to be still. The next day Jesus and the disciples arrived on the other side of the Sea of Galilee near the Ten Cities. When Jesus stepped out of the boat, a man with an evil spirit came from the tombs to meet him. This man lived among the tombs. No one could bind him, even when bound hand and feet with chains he could break them. No one was strong enough to overcome him. He ran about naked crying out day and night and cutting himself with sharp stones.

When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. He was shouting at the top of his voice, “What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Swear to God that you won’t torture me!” Now Jesus was saying to the spirit, “Come out of this man, you evil spirit!”

Then Jesus asked him, “What is your name?” “My name is Legion,” he replied, “for we are many.” The spirits were begging Jesus again and again not to send them away from that place. A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. The demons begged Jesus, “Send us among the pigs, allow us to go into them.” So Jesus gave them permission, and the evil spirits came out of the man and went into the pigs. The herd of about two thousand pigs rushed down the steep bank into the water and drowned.

The pig keepers ran off to report this in the nearby towns and countryside. People came out to see what had happened. When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed in some clothing and in his right mind. When the people saw this, they became afraid. Those who had seen what happened told everything about the man and the pigs. Then the people, being afraid, began to plead with Jesus to leave their place.

As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with Jesus. But Jesus did not let him. He said to the man, “Go home and tell your family how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.”

So the man went away and began to tell in the Ten Cities how much Jesus had done for him. And all who heard him were amazed at what he said.

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. Did the evil spirit in the worship hall know who Jesus was? (Yes. He said, “I know who you are. You are Jesus of Nazareth. You are the Holy One of God.”)
2. What did Jesus command the evil spirit to do? (“Be quiet! And come out of the man.”)
3. Did the evil spirit obey Jesus’ command? (Yes)
4. What did the evil spirits cry whenever they saw Jesus? (You are the Son of God.)
5. Why do you think Jesus told the evil spirits not to tell who he was???
6. When Jesus stepped out of the boat who came running toward him? (A demon-possessed man.)
7. What had the evil spirit done to the man? (He was unnaturally strong, he was naked and out of his mind, running around shouting and cutting himself with stones.)
8. What was the evil spirit in the man shouting to Jesus? (What do you want with me, Son of the Most High God?)
9. Was the evil spirit afraid of Jesus? (Yes, he was begging Jesus not to torture him.)
10. When Jesus asked the spirit what was his name, what did he say? (Our name is Legion—which means many.)
11. When the spirits begged Jesus not to send them away, what did they request him to do? (Give us permission to enter into the pigs.)
12. Did Jesus grant the evil spirits’ request? (Yes)
13. What happened when the evil spirits left the man and entered the pigs? (The pigs became crazy and rushed down into the sea and drowned.)
14. When the people heard what happened what did they ask Jesus to do? (Leave that place, for they were afraid of him.)
15. What did the healed man ask Jesus? (Let me go with

## 24. THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

- you.)
16. What did Jesus tell the man to do? (Go instead to his family and tell them how the Lord had mercy on him.)
  17. What did the man do after Jesus departed? (He went into all the surrounding cities to tell the people how much Jesus had done for him. The people were amazed.)

### Scriptures for your study:

1. Mark 1:21-26      The evil spirit knew who Jesus was. (Luke 4:33-34)
2. Mark 1:34      Jesus would not let the demons speak. They knew who he was.
3. Mark 3:11-12      Jesus gave strict orders for the evil spirits not to tell who he was.
4. John 5:18      The religious leaders wanted to kill Jesus because he called God his Father. This is why Jesus told the spirits to keep quiet.
5. Colossians 1:16      God created all things through Jesus—both the visible and the invisible (spirit world).
6. Matthew 12:43-45      Evil spirits look for a body to possess whenever they are driven out. And they bring along other evil spirits.
7. Matthew 25:41      There is eternal fire (punishment) prepared for the devil and his angels (evil spirits).
8. Acts 19:13-16      We should not foolishly deal with evil spirits.
9. Ephesians 6:10-13      We can withstand evil spirits by trusting in the Lord.

**Read to the Listeners:** Luke 16:19-24

### Tell the Story:

The Pharisees in Jesus' day were wealthy and loved money. They were often stingy with their money and would even declare their money as *corban* or dedicated to the Lord so they wouldn't have to share it with their parents. They quoted from Moses as their authority. They considered Moses to be their prophet. But Jesus said that the Pharisees do not practice what they preach.

One day when Jesus was teaching his disciples he told a story about a shrewd manager who had cheated his master and who cleverly made other people indebted to him. (Luke 16:1-9) The Pharisees heard what Jesus said and they were mocking him because they, too, loved money. Jesus said, "You make yourself look holy in the eyes of men, but God knows your heart. The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John the Baptist. Now the kingdom of God is being preached and people are finding their way into it." Then Jesus told this story:

There was a certain rich man who was dressed in the finest clothes and who lived in great luxury every day. At his gate each day was laid a pitiful beggar named Lazarus who was covered with sores. He longed to eat even the scraps that fell from the rich man's table. Dogs came and licked his sores.

The time came when the beggar died and the angels came and carried him to where Abraham was. The rich man also died and was buried. In flames of torment he looked up and saw Abraham far away. And there was Lazarus standing by his side. So the rich man called out, "Father Abraham! Have pity on me and send Lazarus to

dip the tip of his finger in water to cool my tongue. I am in great agony in this place.”

But Abraham replied, “Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things. Now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us a great separation has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.”

Then the rich man again begged Abraham, “Father Abraham, I beg you to send Lazarus to my father’s house, for I have five brothers. Let Lazarus warn them, so they will not come to this terrible place of torment.”

Abraham replied, “They have Moses and the Prophets. Let your brothers listen to them.”

“No, father Abraham,” he pleaded, “if someone from the dead goes to them, then they will listen.”

“No, my son,” Abraham said, “if they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead to tell them.”

In this way Jesus warned the Pharisees they had better pay attention to what Moses and the Prophets had to say about Jesus. Their wealth would not save them. For Jesus said it was easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter heaven!

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. What the Pharisees do to keep from having to give money to their parents? (They declared it *corban* or dedicated to God. So they broke the commandment to honor their parents.)
2. Who did the Pharisees look to as their authority for their religion? (To Moses)
3. Did the Pharisees practice what they preached? (No)
4. When Jesus told the story about the shrewd manager who had cheated his master, what did the Pharisees do? (They laughed at Jesus’ words.)
5. What did Jesus say about the Law and the Prophets? (They were proclaimed until the time of John the Baptist. John had been martyred. Now Jesus was preaching the kingdom of God.)
6. How did Jesus describe the rich man’s life? (He lived in the finest luxury and comfort, wearing beautiful clothes and eating the finest foods.)
7. How did Jesus describe the Lazarus the beggar’s life? (He was a beggar, so he was poor, he was perhaps crippled as someone laid him at the rich man’s gate every day, he was hungry and covered with sores.)
8. What happened to both men? (Both died.)
9. Where did Lazarus go after he died? (To the place where Abraham was.)
10. Where did the rich man go after he died? (To a place of torment and flames.)
11. Who did the rich see when he looked up? (He saw Abraham with Lazarus standing at his side.)
12. What did the rich man call to Abraham? (Send Lazarus over to dip his finger in some water to cool my tongue.)
13. What did Abraham remind the rich man? (In his life he received many good things and Lazarus only bad things. Now Lazarus was comforted and the rich man was in great torment.)
14. Then who did the rich man think about? (He remembered his five brothers and wanted Abraham to send Lazarus to warn them so they wouldn’t come to that place of torment.)

15. What fact did Abraham tell the rich man? (His brothers had Moses and the Prophets to listen to. They had better pay attention to what these said.)
16. What was the rich man's final request? (If someone would rise from the dead to warn his brothers, then they would listen.)
17. What was Abraham's final word? (No, your brothers would not listen, even if someone should rise from the dead to tell them.)
18. Who do you think has risen from the dead to warn us???

**Scriptures for your study:**

1. Luke 16:14           The Pharisees loved money.
2. Mark 7:11-12        The Pharisees declared their money *corban* so they would not have to share it with their mother and father.
3. John 9:29            The Pharisees admitted that God spoke to Moses, so Moses' words were important.
4. Matthew 23:2        Jesus said that Pharisees sit in the seat of Moses, that is, they often quote from Moses as their authority.
5. Zechariah 9:11      The grave was called the *waterless pit*.
6. John 5:45-47        Moses was the accuser of the Pharisees and religious leaders.
7. Romans 1:2-4        The prophets told about the Son of God, Jesus Christ.
8. 2 Peter 2:9          The place where God holds the unbeliever while awaiting the day of punishment.

**25. A BLIND MAN SEES AGAIN; ZACCHAEUS REPENTS**

**Read to the Listeners:** Mark 10:46-52; Luke 19:1-10

**Tell the Story:**

Here are two stories about Jesus and two men whose lives were changed because they met Jesus and believed in him. Both stories happened in Jericho when Jesus was returning to Jerusalem near the time Jesus was to die.

Jesus and his disciples came to Jericho. Along with a large crowd of people they were passing through the city. There was a blind man named Bartimaeus (Bar=son of, Timaeus his father) who sat along the roadside begging alms from those who happened to pass by.

When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth who was passing by, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Many of those standing nearby told Bartimaeus, "Be quiet! Hold your peace."

But Bartimaeus began to shout even louder, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" Jesus heard him and stopped. "Call him," Jesus told his disciples. So they called to the blind man, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you."

Bartimaeus threw aside his cloak, jumped to his feet, and came to Jesus.

"What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked.

The blind man said, "Rabbi (Teacher), I want to see."

"Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." Then Jesus touched the man's eyes. Immediately Bartimaeus received his sight and followed Jesus along the road giving glory to God. Everyone who saw what happened also praised God.

When Jesus had entered Jericho and was passing through, a rich man lived there named Zacchaeus. He was one of the chief tax collectors and was very wealthy. He wanted to see who Jesus was but could not because he was a short man, and there was a large crowd following Jesus. So Zacchaeus ran ahead and climbed up a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

When Jesus reached the tree, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” So Zacchaeus came down at once and gladly welcomed Jesus into his house.

All the people saw this and began to mutter to themselves, “He has gone to be a guest in the house of a sinner!”

But Zacchaeus stood up and said to Jesus, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor. And if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”

Then Jesus said to Zacchaeus, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. Where did these two stories take place? (In Jericho, on the road to Jerusalem.)
2. Who was with Jesus? (His disciples and a large crowd of people who followed him.)
3. Who was sitting by the roadside begging alms? (Bartimaeus)
4. What did Bartimaeus hear? (That it was Jesus of Nazareth passing by.)
5. What did Bartimaeus begin to shout? (Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!)
6. What did the people standing nearby tell Bartimaeus? (Be quiet!)
7. Then what did Bartimaeus begin to do? (He shouted even louder, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”)
8. Did Jesus hear him? (Yes)
9. What did Jesus say to his disciples? (Call him.)
10. What did the disciples say to Bartimaeus? (“Cheer up! He’s calling for you.”)
11. What did Jesus ask Bartimaeus? (What can I do for you?)
12. What did Bartimaeus reply? (Rabbi, I want to see.)
13. When Jesus touched Bartimaeus’ eyes what did he tell him? (Your faith has healed you.)
14. What kind of work did Zacchaeus do? (He was a tax collector and wealthy.)
15. What did Zacchaeus want to do? (He wanted to see Jesus.)
16. What was his problem? (He was short and could not see because of the crowd around Jesus.)
17. What did Jesus say to Zacchaeus when he saw him in the tree? (Come down, I want to go to your house today.)
18. What did the people say when Jesus went to the house of Zacchaeus? (Look, he is going into the house of a sinner!)

19. What did Zacchaeus say to Jesus? (Look, I am giving half my possessions to the poor. And if I have cheated anyone I will repay four times the amount.)
20. What did Jesus say about this? (Today salvation has come to this house.)

**Scriptures for your study:**

1. Matthew 21:14      Jesus healed the blind wherever he found them.
2. John 9:1-38        A very interesting story about a man born blind that Jesus healed.
3. John 9:39-41      Jesus' judgment upon those spiritually blind, unbelieving.
4. Matthew 13:58     Without faith by the people Jesus could do few miracles.
5. Mark 8:22-26      Another blind man that Jesus completely healed.
6. Matthew 9:10-13   When Jesus went to eat with sinners and tax collectors.
7. Matthew 21:31-32 Even tax collectors can enter heaven if they repent and believe.
8. Exodus 22:1        If a man stole a sheep he had to repay four sheep. In the story of David and Bathsheba David said that the rich man in Nathan's little story should repay four times what he took.
9. Romans 5:8        God demonstrates his love us, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

**Note:** The tax collectors were hired by the Romans to collect the taxes. They often collected from the people more than was owed and kept the extra for themselves. People believed that all tax collectors were thieves and *sinners*.

**26. JESUS IS THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE**

**Read to the Listeners:** John 11:1-6

**Tell the Story:**

Jesus was a good friend of Martha, Mary and Lazarus. Many times he had stopped by their home with his disciples on his way to Jerusalem. For they lived in a small village only a few kilometers away. Jesus had been in Jerusalem where the Jews were asking him if he were the Anointed One. He told them that he and the Father are one. This made the Jews angry and they took up stones to kill Jesus. "Which miracle don't you like?" Jesus asked them. "We are not stoning you for your miracles, but for blasphemy, because you claim to be God," they said.

So Jesus left there and crossed the Jordan River near where John used to baptize. In that place many believed in Jesus.

One day Mary and Martha sent word to Jesus to come quickly because Lazarus was sick. Jesus said to his disciples, "Lazarus' sickness will not end in death. No, it is happening so that God's Son may be glorified." Jesus loved the two sisters and their brother. But he stayed where he was for two more days. Then he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea." They reminded him the Jews were there waiting to stone him.

Then Jesus said, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep. I am going there to wake him up." The disciples said, "Lord, if he is sleeping that means he will get better." "No," Jesus said plainly, "Lazarus is dead. Now let us go to him."

When Jesus arrived he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Many friends of Mary and Martha had come from Jerusalem to mourn and comfort the sisters. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming she went out to meet him and said, "If only you had been here,

my brother would not have died. But I know that God will give you whatever you ask.”

Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” Martha replied, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies. And whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” “Yes, Lord,” Martha confessed, “I believe that you are the Anointed One, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.” And she went back inside to call her sister. “The Teacher is here and is asking for you,” she said to Mary. Mary got up quickly and went to meet Jesus. Her friends followed her thinking she was going to the tomb to mourn.

When Mary reached the place where Jesus was waiting, she said, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” When Jesus saw her weeping and her friends weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit, and he wept for them. “Where have you laid him?” Jesus asked.

“Come and see, Lord,” they replied.

The Jews who saw Jesus weeping said, “See how he loved Lazarus.” Others mocked Jesus saying, “Could the one who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”

Jesus said, “Take away the stone that covers the tomb.” Martha objected saying, “But, Lord, by this time there will be a bad smell, he’s been dead four days.” “Didn’t I tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?” Jesus stated. So they took away the stone. Jesus looked up and began to pray: “Father, thank you for hearing me. You always hear me when I pray. I am saying this for the benefit of the people standing here, so they will believe that you have sent me.”

Then he called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” The dead man came out, his hands and feet still wrapped in

the strips of burial cloth, and a towel around his face. Jesus said to them, “Take off the grave clothes and set him free.”

Many of the friends of Mary and Martha, when they saw what Jesus did, put their faith in him. But some others went to the Pharisees and reported what Jesus had done. The religious leaders called a meeting and plotted how they might kill Jesus.

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. How did Mary and Martha know Jesus? (He had stopped at their home in Bethany.)
2. Why had Jesus left that place and crossed the river? (Because the Jews were wanting to stone him for saying that he and the Father are one.)
3. How did the people receive Jesus in that place? (Many believed in him.)
4. What message did Mary and Martha send to Jesus? (Please come, Lazarus is sick.)
5. Why did Jesus say this was happening? (That God’s Son might be glorified.)
6. Did Jesus leave immediately? (No, he waited two more days.)
7. When Jesus told the disciples he was going back to Judea, what did they say? (Don’t you remember? The Jews are waiting there to stone you.)
8. When Jesus said that Lazarus was sleeping, what did the disciples think? (They thought that Lazarus was actually asleep and, therefore, he was getting better.)
9. What did Jesus tell them plainly? (Lazarus is dead.)
10. When Jesus arrived at Bethany village what did Martha say to him? (Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died.)
11. Did Martha have faith in Jesus? (Yes, she said that she knew that God would give Jesus whatever he asked.)
12. When Martha said that she believed her brother would rise again in the resurrection, what did Jesus tell her? (He was the resurrection. Whoever believed in him will

live even though he dies. And whoever lives and believes will never die.)

13. Did Martha believe in Jesus? (Yes, she confessed that Jesus was the Anointed One, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.)
14. What did Mary say to Jesus when he called for her? (Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.)
15. Why did Jesus become sad and weep? (He was saddened to see their sadness and mourning. Jesus knew that Lazarus would live again.)
16. When Jesus asked that the stone covering be removed what did Martha say? (There will be a bad odor. Lazarus has been dead four days.)
17. What did Jesus remind Martha? (Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?)
18. Why did Jesus pray? (So the people would know that God sent him.)
19. What happened when Jesus called to Lazarus? (Lazarus came out.)
20. What response did the people have when Jesus raised Lazarus? (Some believed in Jesus, others went to report Jesus to the Pharisees.)
21. What did the Pharisees and religious leaders decide to do? (Kill Jesus.)

#### **Scriptures for your study:**

1. Luke 10:38-42 When Jesus was in the home of Mary and Martha.
2. Luke 7:11-17 A time when Jesus raised to life a widow's son.
3. Luke 8:49-56 A time when Jesus raised to life a young girl.
4. John 5:28 A time is coming when those in graves will hear Jesus' voice.
5. Isaiah 53:4 The Suffering Servant would carry our sorrows.

**Note:** The Jews believed that when a person died his spirit stayed near his body until it began to decay. Then it left. So after four days a person was really dead.

## 27. JESUS THE KING, JUDAS THE BETRAYER, THE LAST SUPPER

**Read to the Listeners:** Mark 11:7-10; 14:10-11, 22, 24

### **Tell the Story:**

The prophets had said the Anointed One would be a king, ruling on David's throne. The Wise Men came seeking the one born king of the Jews and brought gifts for a king. After Jesus fed the 5,000 many wanted to make him king but he slipped away. The prophet Zechariah had written many years before: "See your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey." Jesus told a story about a king whose people rejected him. The Jewish people were looking for a Messiah who would be their great king and who would drive out the foreigners who then ruled their country. They had local kings who were permitted to rule under the Romans.

When the time drew near for Jesus to die he was approaching Jerusalem. He sent his disciples ahead into a village to look for a donkey and her colt who were tied up. "Untie the colt and bring it to me," Jesus said, "and if anyone should ask, tell them the Lord has need of it." The disciples went and found the donkey colt just as Jesus had said. They brought it to him and put their cloaks upon the donkey for Jesus to ride. There was a great crowd coming to Jerusalem for the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread. When they saw Jesus they began to spread their cloaks in the road and to cut palm branches and went out to meet Jesus shouting "Hosanna! Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the King coming in the name of the Lord!" The people rejoiced and praised God as Jesus rode into Jerusalem as the prophet said would happen.

The Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread was only two days away. At that time the chief priests and other religious leaders had gathered to discuss how they might

arrest Jesus secretly when there was no crowd and danger of riot, and kill him. Then Satan entered into Judas Iscariot, one of the disciples. He went to consult with the chief priests about how he might betray Jesus to them. He said, "What will you give me if I hand him over to you?" They were delighted to hear this and agreed to pay thirty pieces of silver. From then on Judas looked for an opportunity to betray Jesus, at a time when he was alone and not surrounded by people.

Jesus sent his disciples ahead to prepare the Passover meal in an upper guest room. When everything was ready and evening had come, Jesus and his disciples ate the Passover meal together, the roasted lamb, the unleavened bread, the bitter herbs and salt water dip, and their drink. After they had eaten, Jesus took a piece of bread, gave thanks to God and broke it, giving pieces to the disciples and saying, "This is my body given for you; do this to remember me."

Then Jesus took the cup and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood which is poured out on behalf of many people for the forgiveness of sin."

Afterward Jesus got up and took a towel and basin of water and began to wash the feet of the disciples. Peter objected and saying, "I will never let you wash my feet." But Jesus said, "If you don't let me wash your feet, then I have nothing to do with you. I have done this to teach you that he who would be greatest must be servant of all." Later Jesus told the disciples that the one who dipped his bread in the bowl with Jesus would betray him. He told Judas, "Go and do quickly what you plan to do." Judas left the meal and went out into the night.

Then Jesus taught the disciples that he must go away to prepare a place for them. But he would come again to receive them unto himself. They asked where he was going and the way. He said, "I am the way the truth and the life, no man comes to the Father but by me." Another asked him to show them the Father. Jesus said, "You have seen

me, you have seen the Father.” He promised to send his Spirit to comfort them. Judas had gone to the chief priests to betray Jesus.

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. Who did the prophets say the Anointed One would be? (A king)
2. What kind of a king were the Jewish people looking for? (a soldier king who would drive out those who occupied their land.)
3. What did the prophet Zechariah say about the coming king? (He would enter Jerusalem riding on the colt of a donkey.)
4. Why did Jesus send his disciples ahead to a village near Jerusalem? (To get the colt of a donkey tied there and to bring it to him.)
5. When Jesus sat on the donkey and began riding toward Jerusalem, what did the people do? (They spread their cloaks on the road, cut palm branches, and began to shout Hosanna to the Son of David!)
6. Why were the people celebrating? (They thought Jesus was finally going to be declared as their king.)
7. What were the chief priests and religious leaders planning to do to Jesus? (Kill him.)
8. Who went to the religious leaders to betray Jesus? (Judas Iscariot, one of the disciples)
9. What was Judas paid for betraying Jesus? (Thirty pieces of silver)
10. Why did Jesus and the disciples gather in the upper guest room? (To eat the Passover meal together.)
11. What foods were in the Passover meal? (Roasted lamb, unleavened bread, some bitter herbs and salt water to dip the bread in, and their drink.)
12. What did Jesus say the broken bread represented? (His body given for believers)
13. What did the cup symbolize? (Jesus’ blood of the new covenant being poured out.)
14. Why did Jesus say his blood was being poured out? (The forgiveness of sin.)
15. Why did Jesus say to eat the bread? (To help

remember him and his death.)

16. Why did Jesus wash the feet of the disciples? (To teach them humility.)
17. Who was going to betray Jesus? (The one he shared his bread with.)
18. What did Jesus teach the disciples? (That he must go away to prepare a place for them and then come again to receive them unto himself. Also he taught that he was the way, the truth and the life. And that he and the Father are one.)
19. Where had Judas gone? (To the religious leaders to betray Jesus--tell where they could find him alone with no people around to cause a disturbance.)

### Scriptures for your study:

1. Isaiah 8:7                He will reign on David's throne.
2. Zechariah 9:9           See your king comes gentle and riding on a donkey.
3. John 6:15                The people wanted to make Jesus king by force.
4. Zechariah 11:12-13    A prophecy of the thirty pieces of silver to betray Jesus.
5. Psalm 41:9              He would be betrayed by a friend who shared his bread.
6. 1 Corinthians 11:23-29   The purpose of the Lord's Supper for believers.
7. Hebrews 9:22            Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness (for sin).
8. Leviticus 23:5-8        The Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread was one of the major religious celebrations each year.
9. Deuteronomy 16:1-8     Rules for celebrating the Passover and Feast.
10. Exodus 13:3-10        The people must keep the Passover as a memorial of their release from Egypt.

## 28. JESUS TEACHES HE MUST RETURN TO THE FATHER, PRAYER AND BETRAYAL IN THE GARDEN

**Read to the Listeners:** Luke 22:39-46

### Tell the Story:

After eating the Passover meal with his disciples Jesus began to teach them. This was his last time with them before he was to die the next day. Even at this time Judas was telling the religious leaders where they might capture Jesus.

Jesus called the disciples "my little children" and said that he would be with them only a little longer. Simon Peter, one of the disciples asked, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus said that they could not go with him now but that they could follow later. Then Jesus said, "Don't be troubled in your hearts. Trust in God and trust in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And afterward I will come again to take you unto myself. You know the way to the place where I am going." Another disciple named Thomas said, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

Jesus answered, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on you know the Father and you have seen him." The disciple named Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

Again Jesus answered him, "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been with you a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! How can you say, 'Show us the Father?' Don't you believe that I am in the Father and he is in me? The words I say to you are not my own.

Rather, it is the Father living in me, who is doing his work.”

Jesus then promised to send his Spirit, the Holy Spirit, who would comfort believers. And he taught that if anyone loved him, they would obey his commandments and the Father would love that person, too. After he had finished teaching them and praying for them, Jesus led the disciples out of Jerusalem across the valley to a quiet garden on the Mount of Olives.

When they reached the garden, Jesus asked the disciples to remain apart from him and to watch and pray so they would not fall into temptation. Then Jesus went about a stone's throw farther and knelt down to pray. “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me. Yet not my will, but yours be done.” Three times Jesus prayed this prayer. While he prayed drops of blood fell like sweat from his head. When he returned to the disciples he found them asleep for the hour was late.

While Jesus was still speaking to the disciples a crowd of temple guards was coming with Judas leading them. Now Judas had told them, “It's the one I kiss. Seize him and lead him away.” As soon as Judas arrived he approached Jesus to kiss him. Jesus said, “My friend, why have you come?” “Greetings, Master,” Judas said as he kissed Jesus. And Jesus asked him, “Are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?”

When the guards seized Jesus he said, “Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come with swords and clubs? Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me. This has happened to fulfill the words of the prophets.” So they led Jesus away and took him to the house of the high priest. Then all the disciples abandoned Jesus and ran away; Simon Peter followed at a distance.

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. What did Jesus do after eating with the disciples? (He began to teach them.)
2. What had Judas gone to do? (To betray Jesus to the religious leaders.)
3. What did Simon Peter ask Jesus? (Lord, where are you going?)
4. What did Jesus reply to Simon Peter? (You can't follow me now, but later you can.)
5. What did Jesus teach about his Father's house? (In it are many rooms--dwelling places, and Jesus was going there to prepare a place for believers.)
6. What did the disciple named Thomas ask Jesus? (We don't know where you are going and we don't know the way.)
7. What did Jesus say about himself? (I am the way, the truth and the life, no man comes to the Father except through me.)
8. What did Philip want Jesus to do? (Show the disciples the Father.)
9. What did Jesus say about himself and the Father? (I am in the Father and He is in me. The Father lives and works in me.)
10. Who did Jesus promise to send after he departed? (The Holy Spirit)
11. How did Jesus say we could show our love for him? (Obey his commandments.)
12. What did Jesus ask the disciples to when they reached the garden? (To stay back and watch and pray.)
13. What did Jesus pray? (“Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me?”)
14. What do you think Jesus meant by his request of the Father? (Jesus knew that he was going to take on himself the sin of all people and so would suffer a broken fellowship with the Father and the suffer death of a sinner in our place.)

15. How did Judas say he would point out Jesus? (By kissing him.)
16. When the guards seized Jesus what did he tell them? (Why are you coming against me with clubs and swords? I was with you every day in the temple courts and you didn't lay a hand on me then.)
17. What did the disciples do when Jesus was arrested and led away? (They fled.)

**Scriptures for your study:**

1. 1 Peter 3:19-20      After his death on the cross Jesus preached to the spirits in prison-- those who had died and were in the place of the dead awaiting God's forgiveness for their sins-- Perhaps this is why Jesus said that Peter could not follow him right then. Later Jesus would ascend into heaven, then Peter could follow.
2. John 7:32-36      Some would not be able to follow Jesus because of their unbelief in him. He was going where they could not go.
3. John 10:7-9      Jesus is the gate to the sheepfold, nothing can enter except through the gate.
4. Hebrews 10:20      Jesus has opened for us a new and living way.
5. Acts 9:1-2      The followers of Jesus were those who belonged to the *Way*.
6. 1 John 5:12      Only the Son has life, without the Son is no life. John 5:21
7. Colossians 1:15; 2:9      Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God. In Christ all the

8. John 10:30; 5:19-20; 8:28      I and the Father are one. I do what I see the Father doing. I only speak what I hear the Father speaking.
9. Psalm 22:16      A band of evil men would encircle Jesus. And they did!

fullness of God lives in bodily form.

## **29. JESUS IS FALSELY ACCUSED, MOCKED AND BEATEN, CRUCIFIED**

**Read to the Listeners:** Mark 14:55-64

### **Tell the Story:**

When the guards arrested Jesus in the garden they tied his hands and led him before the high priest and religious leaders. They were looking for evidence against Jesus so they could put him to death, but they didn't find any. Many false witnesses were brought and they gave their testimony. But no two of them were in agreement. Then some stood up and gave this false testimony against Jesus, "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this man-made temple in three days and will build another not made by man!'" Yet even their testimony did not agree. The high priest stood up and asked Jesus, "What is this testimony these men are bringing against you? But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer. Then the high priest asked, "Are you the Christ, the Son of God?" "I am," Jesus replied, "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Father and coming on the clouds of heaven."

The high priest became angry and tore his clothes. "Why do we need any more witnesses?" he demanded. "You've heard his blasphemy. What do you think?" Then they all condemned Jesus to death. Some began to spit at him, they blindfolded him and struck him and said, "Prophecy! Tell us who hit you!"

Then they led Jesus still bound and handed him over to Pilate, the Roman governor. The chief priests and religious leaders remained outside so they would not be polluted by a Gentile's house. They said to Pilate, "We have found this man guilty of insurrection and disturbing our nation. He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar and claims to be Christ, a king." Pilate questioned Jesus, "Are

you the king of the Jews?" "Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied, "but my kingdom is not of this world." Then Pilate announced to the chief priests and the crowd, "I find no reason for a charge against this man." But the people insisted, "He stirs up trouble among the people. He started in Galilee and has now come here." Again Pilate said to the people, "You brought me this man accused of inciting the people to rebellion. I have examined him in your presence and find no reason to charge him. Therefore I will have him punished as a troublemaker and released."

Then the people began to shout, "Crucify him! Crucify him! Let his blood be upon us and our children. If you release him you are no friend of Caesar!" When Pilate heard this he became afraid. Again and again he tried to release Jesus but the crowd demanded that he be crucified. So Pilate granted their demand.

Jesus was led away to be stripped of his clothing and flogged. Afterward the soldiers put a robe upon him, a crown of thorns on his head and a reed in his hand. Laughing and mocking they bowed before Jesus saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" Again and again they struck him on the head and spit on him. Then they put his robe back on him and led Jesus out to be crucified.

At the place of crucifixion Jesus was again stripped of his clothing and nailed by his hands and feet to a cross and crucified between two thieves. The religious leaders stood there mocking him saying, "He said he was the Son of God, let's see if God saves him."

At the foot of the cross the soldiers were casting lots for Jesus' clothing. Jesus prayed for the people saying, "Father, forgive them, they don't know what they are doing." One of the thieves mocked Jesus saying, "Aren't

you the Christ? Save yourself and save us!” But the other thief rebuked him saying, “Don’t you fear God? We are justly punished for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.” Then he said, “Jesus, when you come into your kingdom, remember me.” Jesus answered him, “Truly, today you will be with me in paradise.”

It was about noon when the sun stopped shining and it became very dark until about 3 p.m. During this time Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “My God, why have you forsaken me?” When the people heard Jesus speaking they thought he was calling for the prophet Elijah to come and help him. They said, “Let’s see if anyone comes to help him.”

Finally, knowing that all his work was completed and to fulfill Scripture, Jesus said, “I thirst!” After given a taste of vinegar on a sponge, Jesus said, “It is finished!” And then he said, “Father, into your hands I give my spirit.” When he had said this, he died.

Because the next day was a holy day, the religious leaders did not want the bodies to remain on the cross overnight. So they asked the soldiers to break the legs so those on the crosses would die sooner. The soldiers broke the legs of the two thieves. But when they came to Jesus they saw he was already dead. One of the soldiers pierced the side of Jesus with his spear so that blood and water gushed out. The captain of the soldiers heard Jesus’ words and saw how Jesus died, exclaimed, “Surely this man was the Son of God!”

The Pharisee named Nicodemus and a wealthy man named Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate to ask for the body of Jesus. Pilate was surprised that Jesus had died so soon. After they took his body from the cross they wrapped it in linen and buried Jesus in Joseph’s new tomb. Now it was near sundown when the new day began. So the followers of Jesus saw where he was buried, then they went to their homes very sad. Their Teacher had died. They did not understand how this had happened.

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. Did the religious leaders find anyone to give testimony against Jesus? (Yes, but their testimony did not agree as the Law of Moses required.)
2. When the high priest began to question Jesus, what did Jesus answer? (Nothing, he remained silent.)
3. When the high priest asked Jesus if he were the Christ, the Son of God, what did he reply? (I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Father and coming on the clouds of heaven.)
4. What did the high priest do when he heard Jesus’ answer? (He became angry and tore his clothing.)
5. What did the high priest say to the others? (Why do we need any more witnesses. You heard his blasphemy.)
6. What did the religious leaders agree to do? (They condemned Jesus to death.)
7. Of what did the religious leaders accuse Jesus before Pilate? (Of leading an insurrection or rebellion among the people.)
8. What did the leaders say that Jesus was saying? (Don’t pay taxes to Caesar and that Jesus was Christ, a king.) Luke 20:22-26 What Jesus really said.
9. What did Pilate ask Jesus? (Are you then king of the Jews?)
10. What did Jesus answer? (Yes, it is as you say, but my kingdom is not of this world.)
11. Did Pilate find Jesus guilty and deserving the punishment of death? (No, he said I have examined him and find no reason that he should be put to death.)
12. What did Pilate propose to do with Jesus? (Have him beaten as a troublemaker and then released.)
13. What did the people begin to shout? (Crucify him! Crucify him!)
14. When Pilate again declared that Jesus was not guilty and not deserving death, what did the people accuse Pilate of doing? (He was not acting like a friend of Caesar, the Roman ruler.)

15. When Pilate heard their accusation, what did he do? (Pilate became afraid and agreed to what the people demanded.)
16. What did the soldiers do to Jesus? (They stripped off his clothes and flogged him--40 lashes with a whip having metal and glass in the thongs.)
17. After beating Jesus what did the soldiers do? (They put a robe on Jesus, a crown of thorns on his head and mocked him as a king. They also spit on him and beat him again and again.)
18. Where was Jesus crucified? (Between two thieves.)
19. How was Jesus crucified? (He was stripped of his clothing and fastened to a cross with nails through his hands and feet.)
20. What did the religious leaders begin to do? (They mocked Jesus saying that if he was the Christ, then God should save him.)
21. What were the Roman soldiers doing at the foot of the cross? (They gambled for Jesus' clothing.)
22. What was Jesus doing for those who crucified him? (He prayed for them asking God to forgive them for they did not know what they were doing.)
23. What did the first thief on the cross say to Jesus? (If you are the Christ, save yourself and save us.)
24. What did the second thief say when he rebuked the first? (Don't you fear God? We are being justly punished for our deeds.)
25. Then what did the second thief say to Jesus? (Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.)
26. What did Jesus reply? (Today you will be with me in paradise.)
27. What happened at mid day? (It became very dark, the sun stopped shining.)
28. What did Jesus cry out? (My God, why have you forsaken me?)
29. Later, after Jesus said he was thirsty, what did he say? (It is finished. And, Father, into your hands I give my spirit.)
30. When the captain of the soldiers saw that Jesus had died, what did he exclaim? (Surely this man was the Son of God.)
31. Did the soldiers break the legs of Jesus? (No, he was already dead.)
32. What did the soldiers do to see if Jesus was still alive? (One stuck his spear into Jesus' side so that water and blood gushed out.)
33. Who asked for the body of Jesus? (Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea)
34. Where was Jesus buried? (In the tomb of wealthy Joseph of Arimathea.)
35. What did the followers of Jesus do after he was buried? (They all went home very sad because their Teacher was dead.)

**Scriptures for your study:**

1. Deuteronomy 17:6 Two or more witnesses whose testimony had to agree for necessary for putting someone to death. Exodus 20:16
2. Psalm 27:12 False witnesses rise up against me. Psalm 35:11
3. Isaiah 53:7 The Anointed One would be silent when accused.
4. Leviticus 24:16 Whoever blasphemes the name of the Lord is to die. This was the charge against Jesus--saying he was God or Son of the Father.
5. John 11:49-50 The high priest had prophesied that it was better for one man to perish than for the whole nation. (He was afraid of the Romans and that Jesus might lead a rebellion against Rome and bring down their wrath on the nation.)

6. Isaiah 9:7  
Psalm 2:6-8 Jesus was born to be a king.
7. John 18:36  
world. Jesus' kingdom is not of this world.
8. Leviticus 4:3 The sacrifice for sin had to be perfect, without blemish. Pilate found that Jesus was without blame, therefore he was *perfect* for the sin sacrifice. Exodus 12:5 Lamb without defect to be chosen.
9. Isaiah 53:3  
by his own people. Jesus was to despised and rejected
10. Isaiah 53:4-5 The punishment on the Anointed One would bring us peace.
11. Isaiah 50:6 He was spit upon.
12. Isaiah 53:12 He was to be crucified among sinners.
13. Psalm 22:16; Zechariah 12:10 His hands and feet would be pierced.
14. Psalm 22:6-8 He was despised and mocked saying, "Let the Lord rescue him.")
15. Psalm 109:4 He would pray for his enemies.
16. Psalm 22:1 The psalmist wrote "My God, why have you forsaken me?"
17. John 10:18 Jesus said that no one would take his life from him, he would lay it down of his own accord. John 19:50 He bowed his head and died.
18. Zechariah 12:10 His side was to be pierced.
19. Deuteronomy 21:23 Don't leave a body hung on a tree overnight.
19. Psalm 34:20  
broken. Exodus 12:46 None of his bones were to be broken.
21. Isaiah 53:9 He was to be buried with the rich.

22. 1 Corinthians 2:8 Satan did not understand what he was doing when he caused Jesus to be crucified. Revelation 13:8 Lamb slain from beginning.

**Note:** All the prophecies about the Anointed One were coming true just as the prophets had said. Only Jesus fulfilled all the prophecies. He was the Messiah.

### **30. JESUS IS ALIVE! JESUS APPEARS TO MARY AND TO HIS DISCIPLES**

**Read to the Listeners:** John 20:1-9

#### **Tell the Story:**

Jesus had taught his disciples that he must be rejected by the religious leaders, that he must be killed and after three days raised to life again. He said that he would lay down his life and then take it up again. One time when the leaders were accusing Jesus he said, “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.” They thought he was talking about the temple in Jerusalem. But he was talking about his body as a temple and that it were killed it would be raised again in three days.

But now Jesus was dead and buried. No one had remembered what he said. Some of the women who saw Jesus die and watched as he was buried were thinking to come to the tomb the day after the Sabbath to anoint his body. That would be the third day. Early on the first day of the week after the Sabbath had ended Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome brought spices intending to anoint the Jesus’ body. Suddenly there was a powerful earthquake. An angel of the Lord descended from heaven, came and rolled the stone away from the door and sat on it. When the women saw the tomb standing open, they went inside but did not find the body of Jesus. Suddenly two men in white gleaming clothing stood beside them. The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground. The men said, “Why do you look for the living here among the dead? He is not here; He has risen! Remember what he told you, ‘The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified, and on the third day raised again.’” Then the women remembered his words.

Mary Magdalene ran to tell the disciples, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don’t know where they have put him!” The disciples did not believe the words of the women which seemed like nonsense. So Simon Peter and John ran to the tomb to see for themselves. John arrived first but did not go inside. When Peter arrived he went into the tomb and saw the strips of linen burial cloth and the napkin which had covered the face of Jesus. When John went inside and saw the cloths, he believed.

Outside the tomb Mary Magdalene stood crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw the two angels sitting where Jesus’ body had been, one at the head and one at the foot. They asked her, “Why are you crying?” “They have taken my Lord away,” she said, “and I don’t know where they have put him.” As she said this she turned around and saw Jesus standing there but did not realize it was Jesus because of her tears. “Woman,” Jesus said to Mary, “Why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?” Mary thought it was the gardener, so she said, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you put him, and I will get him.”

Then Jesus said, “Mary.” She turned toward him and cried out “Dear Teacher!” Jesus said to her, “You don’t need to hold on to me, I am not yet returning to the Father. Go tell my brothers that I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.”

Later that day Jesus appeared to two of the disciples as they walked along the road. At first they did not recognize him until that evening when he was breaking bread for their meal. Then Jesus appeared to the other disciples gathered in a closed room. They were afraid thinking he was a ghost. Jesus asked for some broiled fish to eat. One of the disciples named Thomas was not present and said that he would only believe if he put his fingers into the nail holes in the hands and the wound in Jesus’ side. The following week when the disciples were gathered Thomas was present. Jesus again appeared among them and beckoned

for Thomas to come to him. “Here, Thomas,” he said, “put your finger into the nail holes and your hand into my side.” Thomas fell on his knees before Jesus saying, “My Lord and my God! Now I believe!” Jesus said, “You believe because you have seen. More blessed are those who believe who have never seen!” Jesus appeared to his disciples at other times and to as many as 500 at one time. Yes, it was the same Jesus, and he was alive! He had risen from the dead as he said he would do.

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. What did Jesus teach his disciples was going to happen to him? (He would be rejected by the religious leaders, be put to death, and raised to life on the third day.)
2. Did his disciples remember what he told them? (No, they did not understand.)
3. On what day were the women going to the tomb of Jesus? (The third day.)
4. What did they plan to do at the tomb? (Anoint the body of Jesus with fragrant spices.)
5. What had happened early that morning? (A powerful earthquake shook the ground and an angel of the Lord came and rolled away the stone covering the tomb.)
6. Did the women see the body of Jesus in the tomb? (No, it was gone.)
7. What did the women see in the tomb? (Two angels in gleaming white clothing standing by them.)
8. What did the men (angels) say to the women? (Why do you look for the living here among the dead? He is not here but risen!)
9. What did Mary Magdalene tell the disciples? (“They have taken the Lord away, and we don’t know where they have put him!”)
10. Who came running to the tomb to see what happened? (Peter and John)
11. What did they see in the tomb? (The burial cloths and napkin that had covered the face of Jesus. But he was gone.)

12. Did John believe? (Yes)
13. Who did Mary see in the tomb? (Two angels sitting where Jesus’ body had been.)
14. What did the angels tell Mary? (The one seek is not here but is risen.)
15. Did Mary recognize Jesus standing there? (No)
16. What did Jesus tell Mary? (Don’t hold on to me, I am not yet going to the Father. God tell my brothers that I am returning to my Father and your Father, my God and your God.)
17. What did Thomas want to do before he believed? (Touch the wounds in the body of Jesus.)
18. When Jesus called Thomas and he touched the wounds what did Thomas say? (My Lord and my God! Now I believe.)
19. Who did Jesus say was more blessed? (Those who believe who have never seen the wounds or touched them.)
20. Do you believe that Jesus rose from the dead on the third day as he said???

### **Scriptures for your study:**

1. Mark 8:31                      The Son of man must be rejected, killed and raised again.
2. Matthew 20:18-19          On the third day the Son of Man will be raised to life.
3. John 2:19-20                Destroy this temple and I’ll raise it again in three days.
4. John 11:25                    Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life.”
5. 1 Corinthians 15:20        Christ was raised as the firstfruit of the resurrection.
6. 1 Corinthians 15:3-8      Christ appeared to many people after he was raised.
7. 2 Corinthians 4:14        The who one raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus.

8. John 5:28-29            A time is coming when the dead will hear his (Jesus') voice and come out for judgment.
9. 1 Thessalonians 4:14 We believe that Jesus died and rose again.

### **31. JESUS RETURNS TO HEAVEN AND TAKES HIS PLACE BY THE FATHER**

**Read to the Listeners:** Luke 24:45-53

**Tell the Story:**

After God raised Jesus from the dead he appeared to Mary Magdalene, to two disciples along the Emmaus road, to Peter, to the disciples and Thomas gathered in a room, again to the disciples along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, to more than 500 of the brothers at the same time, and to James, one of the brothers of Jesus. Judas was filled with remorse after betraying Jesus and killed himself. In Galilee Jesus told the eleven disciples, that all authority in heaven and on earth was given to him. They were to be his witnesses and to go and make disciples of all peoples and baptize them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and to teach the people all that Jesus had commanded. Jesus promised to be with his followers, even to the very end of the age. He said, "As you go into the world and preach the good news, all who believe and are baptized will be saved. Those who do not will be condemned."

He said to the disciples, "Everything must be fulfilled that was written about me in the Law of Moses (Taurat), the Prophets, and the Psalms (Zabur)." Then Jesus opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.

After forty days had passed since Jesus rose from the dead he led the disciples to a hillside near the village of Bethany. He lifted up his hands and blessed them as he was taken up into heaven. While the disciples stood intently looking up into the sky worshiping Jesus, two angels in white clothing appeared standing by them and said, "Men of Galilee, "Why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you

into heaven, will come back the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

And so Jesus returned to the Father and took his place at the right hand of the Father in heaven and there he makes daily intercession for all believers.

The Scriptures say that Jesus as our high priest entered into the Holy Place in Heaven and offered his own blood. He was the perfect sacrifice that God demanded as atonement for sin. Man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment. Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; but he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

The Scriptures tell that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

The wages or payment for sin is death--eternal separation from God and everlasting punishment. Christ died for us while we were still sinners. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us and we make God to be a liar. We must believe in the Lord Jesus in order to have salvation. Salvation is God's gift, it cannot be earned or purchased by man. All who confess that Jesus is Lord with their mouth and believe in their heart that God raised him from the dead will be saved. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and will purify us from all unrighteousness. Sin and death came into the world through Adam. But Christ has brought forgiveness of sin and life into the world. God has given us eternal life, and this life is his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son does not have life. This is your invitation to have eternal life in Jesus Christ. He wants to forgive your sin. He wants to give you his peace. And he wants to give you his LIFE which lasts forever!

### **Some things to talk about:**

1. Did Jesus appear to many people after he was raised from the dead? (Yes)
2. What happened to Judas after he betrayed Jesus? (He became sorry for what he did and tried to return the money he had received. Then he went out and hanged himself.)
3. What did Jesus ask his followers to do? (Be his witness and to go make disciples of all peoples and baptize them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.)
4. What did Jesus promise his followers? (He would be with them, even to the end of the age.)
5. What will happen to those people who do not believe? (They will be condemned.)
6. How many days passed after Jesus rose from the dead before he ascended into heaven? (Forty days)
7. Where did Jesus go when he returned to heaven? (To the right hand of the Father and sat down--his work on earth was finished.)
8. As our high priest what did Jesus do for us? (He sprinkled his own blood on the altar to make atonement for our sins.)
9. Was Jesus the perfect--sinless--sacrifice that God demanded for sin? (Yes)
10. According to the Scriptures who has sinned? (All people)
11. What is the wages of sin? (Death)
12. Can we purchase or earn salvation? (No, it is God's gift of grace.)
13. What happens if we confess that Jesus is Lord and believe in our hearts that God raised him from the dead? (We will be saved.)
14. What came into the world through Adam? (Sin and death)
15. What did Christ bring into the world? (Forgiveness of

sin and eternal life.)  
16. Who has the promised life? (The one who has the Son.)

16. Acts 16:31  
will be saved.

Believe in the Lord Jesus and you

17. I John 5:11-12

Whoever has the Son has life.

### Scriptures for your study:

1. Matthew 28:19-20 All authority belongs to Jesus, he commands us to be his witnesses in all the world.
2. Mark 16:16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved.
3. Luke 24:44-45 Everything about Christ in the Scripture must be fulfilled.
4. Luke 24:50-51 Jesus was taken up into heaven as he blessed the disciples.
5. Acts 1:10-11 Two angels appeared to say that Jesus would return one day.
6. Hebrews 8:1 Jesus is our high priest who sat down at the right hand of the Father in heaven.
7. Romans 8:34 Seated at the right hand of God, Jesus is interceding for us.  
Hebrews 7:25
8. Romans 8:3 God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be the sin offering.
9. Hebrews 9:14 Christ was the unblemished—sinless—sacrifice for sin.
10. Hebrews 9:26-28 Christ was sacrificed once to take away sin.
11. Romans 3:23 All have sinned.
12. Romans 6:23 The wages of sin is death.
13. Romans 5:8 While we were still sinners Christ died for us.
14. 1 John 1:8 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves.
15. Ephesians 2:8 Salvation is the gift of God.

## 32. THE LAST STORY IS YOUR STORY

**Read for the Listeners:** Hebrews 2:3

### **Tell the Story:**

This story is your story and my story. The ending of the story is up to you and your choice. You've heard many stories from the Bible. These are stories about real people—people like you and me. You saw how God chose a people, the descendants of Abraham, to do a special work for him. One day God would send his Son to be born a descendant of Abraham, to be the one to bless all people. But in the days of Jesus, many of his own people, the descendants of Abraham, rejected him. But many other people did believe that Jesus was God's Son sent to live among us and to reveal to us the Father.

Not only did God choose the descendants of Abraham for a special work, but God has also chosen us. That's right, God has chosen you for his salvation. King David who wrote many of the psalms said, "You knew me while I was still in my mother's womb." God knows all our days before we are ever born. What God did in the death of Jesus, he did for you and for me. How can we escape if we neglect the salvation that God has provided as his gift to us?

In the beginning when God made Adam, God made us. For we are all descended from Adam who was created in God's image and given the breath of life by God. Today we inherit our flesh from our father Adam. But when Adam and Eve sinned by choosing to listen to Satan rather than to obey the words of God, sin entered their life. And father Adam has passed along to every generation his seed of sin. As a father you pass this seed of sin along to your children, and your sons will pass it along to their children. We are born with a nature to sin. We need a new nature.

With sin came death—physical death, the death of our bodies of flesh. But with sin came an even worse death—spiritual death, the eternal separation of our spirit from God our Creator. This is the living death that is waiting for Satan and all the evil spirits. But sadly it is also waiting for all those who do not choose to believe God and accept what He has provided in Jesus the Anointed One.

Remember, Jesus said, "I am the life." He also said, "I am the resurrection. Whoever lives and believes in me will never die. And he who dies will live again." When Jesus came from the Father he brought with him the seed of life. Jesus had a human mother so that he would have a body of flesh like us. But Jesus had a spirit that was sinless because his Father is sinless. We need that kind of a spirit. We need that kind of a new nature.

God's holy law requires that all sin be judged and punished. But God's holy law provides for a substitute to receive the punishment. In the old days the blood of the animal sacrifice provided a temporary payment for sin. God's plan was to provide a permanent payment for sin, for all people, for all time. The sacrifice had to be without blemish or perfect. Jesus was obedient to his heavenly Father even unto death. He lived a life without sin because God's spirit was in him. So God accepted Jesus' sacrifice when his blood was poured out on the cross. The penalty for sin was paid in Jesus' own blood. He took on himself our sins when he cried out to God from the

cross, “My God, why have you forsaken (turned away from) me?” God’s holy eyes are too pure to look upon sin. And when His own Son became sin in our place, God the Father had to turn away from His Son. This loss of fellowship with the Father is a picture of the eternal consequences of sin.

What remains is for us to accept what God has freely provided. Remember in the story of the rich man and Lazarus, the rich man tried to change his circumstances after his death, but it was too late. He should have paid more attention to the words of Moses and the prophets during his lifetime. Today we have the words of Jesus and the story of how God has provided a lasting sacrifice for sin. You’ve heard this story. Now you have no excuse. One day you will stand before a holy and just God in heaven in a time of judgment and have to answer for your life. Jesus said the judgment would be like a shepherd separating the sheep and goats. Those who have believed in Jesus will be his sheep and he will tell the Father, “These are my mine.” But to those who do not believe, Jesus will say, “Depart from me, I don’t know you.” And they will depart to everlasting punishment for their sin and unbelief.

Before Jesus returned to the Father, he promised to come again one day. Just as Jesus called Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha from the grave, he will one day call us from the grave. Jesus is the resurrection. But following that resurrection is the judgment.

Not only has God provided forgiveness of sin for all who will accept it, but he also wants to bless us. Remember, God told Abraham, “Through your descendant I will bless all people on earth.” Who was that descendant? It was Jesus! Jesus told his followers, “If you pray

believing in my name, the Father will hear and will answer.”

God loves all people. Today he provides the rain and sunshine so that our food will grow. He has given us the fields for us to grow our food, the forests and grasslands for our animals, and the rivers so that we might have fish. Every day God is blessing you. All this is part of God’s love which he gives to all.

God knows all things. He knows you. Jesus said that God even knows the number of hairs on your head! He knows the thoughts deep in your heart. God knows every word you have ever spoken. God also has seen every sin in your life. Sometimes he sends judgment to stop you from sinning more and to turn you to the right path. You are hearing these stories as part of God’s plan for you. He loves you and wants to forgive your sin.

One day it will be too late for you to decide whether to believe God or not. No man knows the hour when he might die. So it is best not to put off your decision. The Bible tells about the Lamb’s Book of Life. If your name is written in that Book then you will have eternal life. Jesus is that Lamb who was sacrificed. There is another Book in which all your words and deeds are recorded. If your sins are not forgiven, this Book will be used in judging you. And you will receive eternal punishment in the lake of fire reserved for Satan and his angels.

So the choice is yours. How will your story end? Those of us who are sharing the stories from the Bible have chosen to believe in Jesus as God’s Son. We have accepted his death on behalf of our sins. We have received forgiveness of sin. We are confessing our sins and asking God to keep us from sinning. And we want to share with you this wonderful gift that God have given us, and that He wants to give you.

We know that you already have a religion. Religion is man’s attempt to reach out to God. So we are not talking about your religion. We are talking about your

relationship. Your eternal destiny depends upon who you are related to. Those who believe in Jesus are called the Sons of God and joint heirs with Jesus. It is the Sons of God who will inherit eternal life with God the Father and God the Son. We are given a new nature in Jesus. The old nature of sin is taken away and a new nature like Jesus is ours. He gives us his Holy Spirit to live in us and to help us live a sinless life pleasing to God. There are many things we cannot understand in this life. We must simply have faith in what God has told us and to believe. Today begin reaching out to the God who has been reaching out to you. He sent His angels in the old days. He sent his prophets in later days. Then he sent His own Son Jesus. And now He reaches out to us through His written Word the Bible and through the Living Word Jesus.

It's your choice. May God have mercy on you if you fail to make the right choice.

### **Some Things to Talk About:**

1. What did God promise Abraham? (God promised to bless him and through his descendant to bless all people on earth.)
2. Who rejected Abraham's descendant Jesus? (Jesus' own people, the descendants of Abraham.)
3. Has God chosen us for salvation? (Yes, He has provided salvation for all who will accept it.)
4. Does God know each one of us? (Yes, he knows everything about us. Remember the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well. Jesus knew all about her life. Remember the story about the paralyzed man and his four friends? Jesus knew what was in the hearts of the people when they accused him of blasphemy.)
5. What came into the world when Adam and Eve disobeyed God? (Sin and then death.)
6. What is even worse than physical death? (Spiritual death—eternal separation from the love and blessing of God.)
7. Who is this living death waiting for? (For those who choose not to believe God and to accept the salvation that God provided in Jesus.)
8. Who did Jesus say was "the life"? (Jesus said, "I am the life.")
9. Who is the resurrection? (Jesus said, "I am the resurrection. Whoever believes in me will never die.")
10. Why did Jesus have a human mother? (So that he might have a body of flesh like our body.)
11. Why did Jesus need a spirit from the Father in heaven? (So that he would have a sinless spirit within him, not like the seed of sin we inherit from our father Adam.)
12. What does God's holy law require? (That all sin be judged and punished.)
13. What provision does God make for punishment of sin? (A substitute may be punished in our place.)
14. Were the animal blood sacrifices sufficient to cover sin

permanently? (No, they were only temporary, a picture of the better sacrifice that was to come.)

15. How was Jesus able to live a sinless life? (Because God's Spirit was in him.)
16. When did God accept Jesus' sacrifice? (When Jesus' blood was poured out on the cross.)
17. What happened when Jesus cried out "My God, why have you forsaken me?" (God the Father had turned away from—broke fellowship with—God the Son. God's eyes are too pure to look upon sin. When Jesus took upon himself our sins, God the Father turned away.)
18. What must we do to inherit God's salvation? (We must accept what God has done for us in Jesus.)
19. What will the judgment be like? (Jesus said it would be like a shepherd separating sheep from goats. Jesus would claim those who belong to him and reject those who do not know him.)
20. Who will call us from the grave one day? (Jesus will call us from the grave.)
21. Does God know everything about us? (Yes, nothing is hidden from God.)
22. Whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life? (Those who will inherit eternal life.)
23. What is written in the other Book? (All the words and deeds of all people. Those who do not believe will be judged according to their words and deeds.)
24. Does our religion save us? (No)
25. What saves us? (It is our relationship with God the Father through God the Son.)
26. Do we need a new nature? (Yes, the old nature of sin must be taken away and new nature like Jesus given to us.)
27. Who did God send to man in the old days? (He sent his angels and prophets.)
28. Who has God sent to reveal Himself and His salvation

to us? (Jesus the Living Word and the Bible, God's written Word.)

29. Who must make the choice of whether to believe God or not? (You)
30. What is your choice???

### Scriptures for your study:

1. Corinthians 15:21-22, 45-49; Romans 5:12 Sin entered the world through one man, Adam. And life entered the world through the second Adam, that is, Jesus.
2. Hebrews 9:27 It is appointed unto man once to die, after that the judgment.
3. Revelation 20:14; Matthew 22:11-13; 25:41, 46 The second death is eternal separation from God in darkness and eternal punishment in the lake of fire.
4. Philippians 2:7-8 Christ took our appearance and was obedient even unto death on the cross. Romans 8:3 Christ a likeness of sinful man.
5. Isaiah 59:2 Our sins have hidden God's face from us.
6. Habakkuk 1:13 God's eyes are too pure to look upon evil.
7. Hebrews 4:12-13 Nothing is hidden from God to whom we must give account of our lives.
8. Psalm 139:13-16 God knows us even in our mother's womb. All our days are known to him.
9. John 3:16 God loves all people and has sent His Son so that all might have .

10. John 3:18 Those who do not believe are already under God's condemnation because of their unbelief.
11. John 1:12 To all who believed in his name he gave the right to become children of God.
12. 2 Corinthians 2:18; Galatians 3:26 Sons of God through our faith in Christ Jesus.
13. Galatians 4:6 God puts his Spirit in his sons.
14. 2 Corinthians 5:17 If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, the old has gone, the new has come!
15. Galatians 6:15 What counts is not your circumcision (religion), what counts is that you are a new creation.
16. Galatians 5:16-17 Those who live by God's Spirit do not gratify the sinful nature.  
Romans 8:5-7
17. Hebrews 1:1-2 Now God has spoken to us through his Son who is like God.
18. Hebrews 12:24-25 See to it that we do not refuse him who speaks from heaven.
19. 1 Timothy 1:12-16 Christ came to save even the worst blasphemers and sinners.  
He has shown mercy to us.
20. 1 Timothy 2:4 God wants all men to be saved.
21. 1 Timothy 2:5-6 There is only one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.