

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

A 13-Session Middle School Curriculum

Seeing Jesus Christ Throughout the Old Testament

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SESSION 1

In the Beginning

Creation, the Fall, and the First Promise of a Savior • Genesis 1–11

Teacher Guide

Big Idea: God made a perfect world, humanity broke it through sin, and — from the very first pages of the Bible — God promised a Savior who would crush the power of sin and death.

Christ Connection: In Genesis 3:15, God tells the serpent that the seed of the woman will crush his head. This is the very first gospel promise in Scripture (sometimes called the "protoevangelium"), and everything else in the Old Testament traces the family line through which that promised Savior will come.

Session Length: 45 minutes

Scripture Focus

Genesis 1:1, 26–27 • Genesis 3:1–15 • Genesis 6:5–8 • Genesis 8:20–22 • Genesis 11:1–9 (NKJV)

Session Flow (45 minutes)

- Opening Hook (5 min) — Ask: "If you could create one new animal, what would it be and why?"
Transition: Only God can create out of nothing. Today we start at the very beginning.
- Creation: Genesis 1–2 (10 min) — Walk through the six days of creation. Emphasize that humanity is made in God's image (1:26–27) — this is why every human life has worth. God rests on day seven, and everything is "very good."
- The Fall: Genesis 3 (10 min) — The serpent's temptation, Adam and Eve's sin, and the immediate consequences (shame, hiding, blame). Read Genesis 3:15 slowly and explain the first gospel promise: a future offspring of the woman will defeat the serpent, though it will cost Him greatly ("bruise His heel").
- Cain, Seth, and Noah: Genesis 4–9 (10 min) — Sin spreads quickly (Cain kills Abel), but God preserves a godly line through Seth. By Genesis 6, "every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually," yet Noah "found grace in the eyes of the LORD." God judges the world through the flood but saves Noah's family through the ark — a picture of salvation through judgment.
- The Tower of Babel: Genesis 11 (5 min) — Humanity again tries to make a name for itself apart from God. God confuses their language and scatters the nations — setting the stage for God to call one man, Abram, out of those nations in Genesis 12 (next session).
- Christ Connection Wrap-Up (5 min) — Trace the thread: the promised seed (3:15) who will one day be born through Noah's line, then Shem's line, then eventually Abraham's line. This sets up the entire Old Testament as one long unfolding promise pointing to Jesus.

Teacher Background Notes

Historical & Cultural Context

Genesis 1–11 is often called the "primeval history" — it covers a vast sweep of time before Abraham and addresses the biggest questions humanity asks: Where did we come from? Why is the world broken? Why do we die? Why are there so many nations and languages?

The Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) world Moses wrote into was full of competing creation stories (e.g., the Babylonian Enuma Elish) in which the world is formed through violent conflict between many gods, and humans

are created as an afterthought to do the gods' menial labor. Genesis 1 stands in sharp, deliberate contrast: one sovereign God speaks creation into being calmly and purposefully, and humanity is the crowning achievement of creation, made in His own image. Middle schoolers can grasp this contrast easily: the Bible says people matter because God made us like Him, on purpose, with love.

Genealogies (like Genesis 5 and 11) seem tedious to modern readers but were vital in the ANE world for establishing identity, inheritance rights, and — most importantly for our study — the unbroken line through which the promised Savior would come. Every genealogy in Genesis is a signpost pointing forward to Christ.

The flood account (Genesis 6–9) has echoes in other ANE literature (e.g., the Epic of Gilgamesh), which actually supports the idea that a real, catastrophic flood was remembered across many ancient cultures. Calvary Chapel's approach affirms the historicity of Genesis 1–11 as real, literal history, not merely symbolic myth.

Teaching Tips

- Middle schoolers respond well to the "family line" visual — consider drawing a simple line on the whiteboard from Adam → Seth → Noah → Shem, and tell them this line will keep going all the way to Jesus over the next twelve sessions.
- Be ready for hard questions (dinosaurs, the age of the earth, where Cain's wife came from). It's okay to say "That's a great question — let's talk after class" rather than derailing the session.
- Keep circling back to the Big Idea: sin breaks things, but God already had a rescue plan before Adam and Eve even left the Garden.

Visual Aid

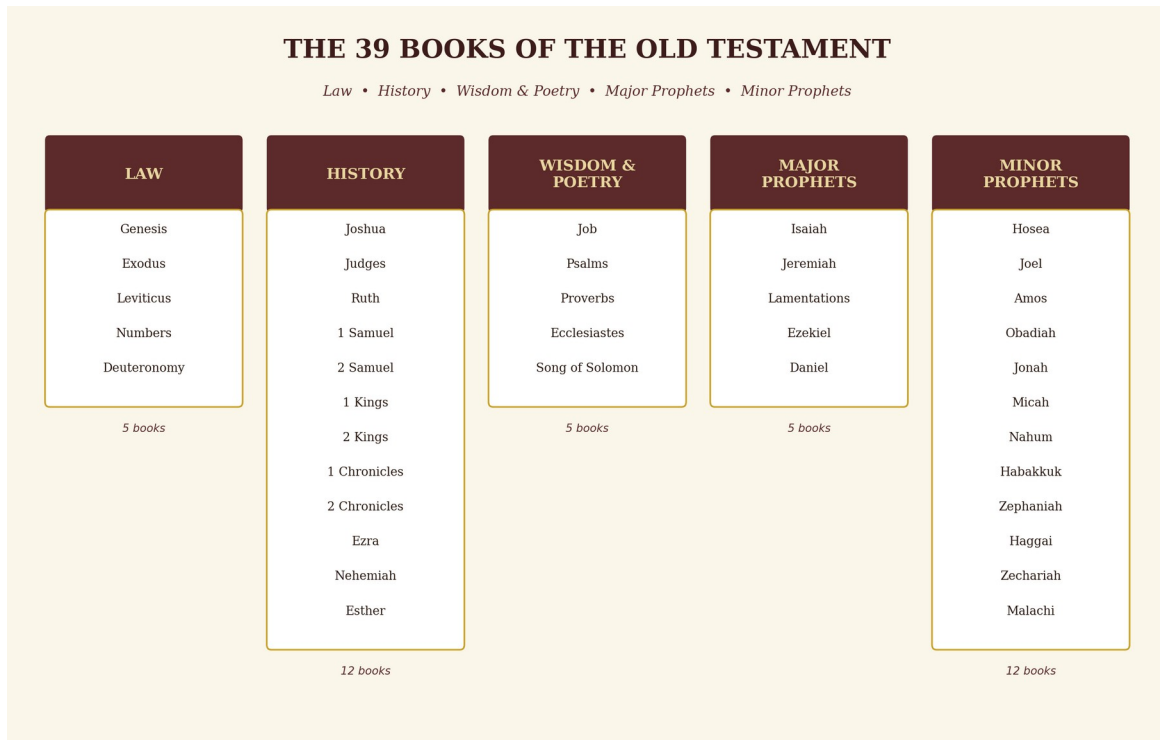


Diagram 1 — The 39 Books of the Old Testament

Youth Handout — Session 1

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY • SESSION 1

In the Beginning

Genesis 1–11

Key Verse (write it out!)

"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel." — Genesis 3:15 (NKJV)

Fill in the Blanks

1. God created human beings in His own _____ (Genesis 1:27).
2. After Adam and Eve sinned, they felt _____ and tried to hide from God.
3. In Genesis 3:15, God promised that the _____ of the woman would crush the serpent's head.
4. _____ found grace in the eyes of the LORD and built an ark to save his family.
5. At the Tower of _____, God confused humanity's language and scattered the nations.

Big Idea

God made a perfect world. Sin broke it. But even before Adam and Eve left the Garden, God had already promised a Savior who would one day defeat sin and death forever — and that Savior is Jesus.

Talk It Over

- Why do you think God chose to promise a Savior right after Adam and Eve sinned, instead of right away giving up on them?
- What does it mean to you that every person is made in the image of God?

My Response

Think — What is one new thing I learned today? _____

Feel — How does knowing God had a rescue plan from the very beginning make me feel?

Do — What is one way I can live differently this week because of this?

SESSION 2

Called Out

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob & Joseph • Genesis 12-50

Teacher Guide

Big Idea: God chooses one ordinary man, Abram, and promises to bless the whole world through his family — a promise passed down to Isaac, Jacob, and fulfilled when Joseph rescues his family from famine.

Christ Connection: Joseph is one of the clearest "types" of Christ in the Old Testament: a beloved son, hated and rejected by his own brothers, sold for silver, unjustly condemned, yet exalted to a place of authority where he saves many lives — including the very brothers who betrayed him. God's promise to Abraham that "in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 22:18) is fulfilled in Christ, the ultimate offspring of Abraham (Galatians 3:16).

Session Length: 45 minutes

Scripture Focus

Genesis 12:1-3 • Genesis 15:1-6 • Genesis 22:1-14 • Genesis 37:23-28 • Genesis 45:4-8 • Genesis 50:19-21 (NKJV)

Session Flow (45 minutes)

- Opening Hook (5 min) — Ask: "Has anyone ever had to leave everything familiar behind and move somewhere new?" Transition: God asked Abram to do exactly that.
- Abram's Call & Covenant: Genesis 12, 15 (10 min) — God calls Abram to leave his country, promising to make him a great nation and bless all the families of the earth through him. Abram believes God, "and He accounted it to him for righteousness" (15:6) — the foundation of faith, not works.
- Isaac and the Ram: Genesis 22 (10 min) — God tests Abraham by asking him to offer Isaac. Abraham obeys in faith; God stops him and provides a ram caught in a thicket. A vivid picture of substitutionary sacrifice — God Himself will one day provide "the Lamb" (John 1:29).
- Jacob's Story (5 min) — Briefly cover: Jacob receives Isaac's blessing, wrestles with God at Peniel, is renamed "Israel," and has twelve sons who become the twelve tribes of Israel.
- Joseph Sold Into Slavery: Genesis 37 (5 min) — Joseph, Jacob's favored son, has dreams of future greatness. His jealous brothers sell him into slavery in Egypt and deceive their father into thinking he is dead.
- Joseph's Exaltation & Forgiveness: Genesis 45, 50 (5 min) — Joseph rises to become second-in-command of Egypt and saves his family from famine. He forgives his brothers: "You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good" (50:20).
- Christ Connection Wrap-Up (5 min) — Trace the family line: Abraham → Isaac → Jacob → Judah (whose tribe will produce King David and, ultimately, Jesus). Joseph's rejection-then-exaltation story is a preview of Christ's own path.

Teacher Background Notes

Historical & Cultural Context

Genesis 12–50 covers the patriarchal period, roughly 2000–1800 BC, a seminomadic, tribal culture built around family, flocks, and covenant relationships. Ancient Near Eastern treaties between kings often followed a covenant pattern similar to what God uses with Abraham — a promise sealed with signs (circumcision) and land.

Birthright and blessing were not sentimental gestures — they carried real legal and economic weight, granting the firstborn a double inheritance and family leadership. This is why Jacob's deception to steal Esau's blessing (Genesis 27) created such lasting family conflict, and why Jacob later favoring Joseph with a special robe (Genesis 37:3) provoked such intense jealousy among his brothers.

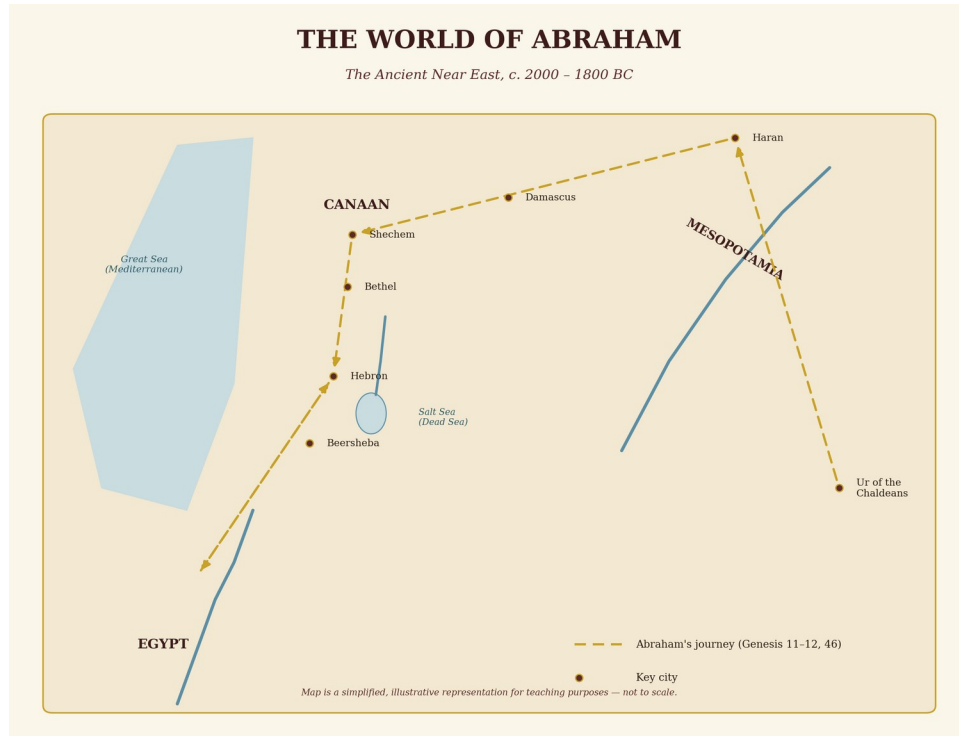
By Joseph's time, Egypt was a highly organized kingdom with royal granaries, professional administrators (viziers), and a court culture that highly valued dream interpretation — which is exactly the skill God uses to elevate Joseph from prisoner to second-in-command (Genesis 41).

Calvary Chapel's approach treats these accounts as real history, not legend — actual people whose faith (and failures) God used to build the family line that would eventually produce Israel's Messiah.

Teaching Tips

- Draw a simple family tree on the whiteboard: Abraham → Isaac → Jacob → 12 sons, and circle Judah's name — that's the line Jesus comes from (Matthew 1:2-3).
- Middle schoolers relate strongly to Joseph's story of being mistreated by his own family. Use it to open a conversation about forgiveness — not excusing what was done, but trusting God with the outcome the way Joseph did.
- Handle the sacrifice of Isaac with care: keep the focus on God's provision and Abraham's trust, not on fear. Emphasize that God never intended for Isaac to actually be harmed — He was testing and teaching, and He provided the ram Himself.

Visual Aid



Map 1 — The World of Abraham

Youth Handout — Session 2

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY • SESSION 2

Called Out

Genesis 12-50

Key Verse (write it out!)

"But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive." — Genesis 50:20 (NKJV)

Fill in the Blanks

1. God told Abram to leave his country and promised to make him a great _____ (Genesis 12:2).
2. Abram believed God, and it was accounted to him for _____ (Genesis 15:6).
3. God provided a _____ to sacrifice in Isaac's place (Genesis 22:13).
4. Joseph's jealous brothers sold him into _____ in Egypt (Genesis 37:28).
5. Joseph told his brothers, "You meant evil against me, but God meant it for _____" (Genesis 50:20).

Big Idea

God chose one family — Abraham's — to bless the whole world. Even when people did wrong, like Joseph's brothers, God used it for good to save many lives, pointing forward to Jesus.

Talk It Over

- Why do you think Abraham trusted God even when it meant leaving everything familiar behind?
- Joseph forgave his brothers even though they hurt him badly. Why do you think that was possible for him?

My Response

Think — What is one new thing I learned today? _____

Feel — How does it make me feel knowing God can bring good even out of painful situations?

Do — What is one way I can live differently this week because of this?

SESSION 3

Out of Egypt

Slavery, the Passover Lamb & the Exodus • Exodus

Teacher Guide

Big Idea: God hears the cries of His enslaved people and rescues them through a mighty deliverer, sealing their freedom through the blood of a lamb.

Christ Connection: The Passover lamb — a spotless lamb whose blood, applied to the doorposts, causes judgment to "pass over" — is one of the clearest pictures of Christ in the entire Old Testament. Paul later calls Jesus "our Passover, sacrificed for us" (1 Corinthians 5:7). Moses, who leads Israel out of slavery and mediates God's covenant, also foreshadows Christ, our greater Deliverer and Mediator.

Session Length: 45 minutes

Scripture Focus

Exodus 2:23-25 • Exodus 3:1-14 • Exodus 12:1-13 • Exodus 14:21-31 • Exodus 20:1-17 (NKJV)

Session Flow (45 minutes)

- Opening Hook (5 min) — Ask: "What's the worst kind of unfair treatment you can imagine?" Transition: the Israelites had been enslaved in Egypt for generations.
- Israel's Slavery & Moses' Call: Exodus 1-4 (10 min) — The Israelites multiply and are enslaved by a fearful Pharaoh. Moses, saved as a baby, is called by God at the burning bush, where God reveals His name: "I AM WHO I AM" (3:14).
- The Ten Plagues & Passover: Exodus 7-12 (10 min) — God sends ten plagues, each showing His power over Egypt's false gods. The final plague — death of the firstborn — is averted for Israel by the blood of a lamb placed on their doorposts (12:13).
- Crossing the Red Sea: Exodus 14 (10 min) — God parts the Red Sea, delivering Israel and judging Pharaoh's pursuing army — the defining rescue of the Old Testament.
- The Sinai Covenant: Exodus 19-20 (5 min) — God establishes His covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai and gives the Ten Commandments as a guide for holy living — grounded in the fact that He had already rescued them.
- Christ Connection Wrap-Up (5 min) — Trace the thread: the Passover Lamb whose blood saves from death points directly to Christ, our Passover Lamb; Moses the deliverer and mediator points to Christ, our greater Deliverer and Mediator.

Teacher Background Notes

Historical & Cultural Context

Israelite slavery took place in the eastern Nile Delta region (Goshen), where Semitic peoples had settled generations earlier during Joseph's time. Scholars debate the exact date of the Exodus (commonly placed either in the mid-15th or 13th century BC), but the biblical narrative treats it as concrete, datable history.

Each of the ten plagues can be understood as a direct judgment against a specific Egyptian deity — the Nile turning to blood confronts Hapi (god of the Nile), the plague of darkness confronts Ra (the sun god), and so on.

The plagues aren't random disasters; they're a systematic demonstration that the LORD, not Egypt's gods, is the true God.

The Passover meal — unleavened bread, bitter herbs, roasted lamb — became a permanent annual observance in Israel and is still celebrated by Jewish people today. Jesus' Last Supper with His disciples was itself a Passover meal (Luke 22:15), directly linking His death to this ancient rescue.

The Ten Commandments follow a literary pattern similar to Ancient Near Eastern treaties between a great king and his people — establishing who God is, what He has done (rescued them), and what He now expects in response.

Teaching Tips

- Use the picture of "blood on the doorpost" to explain substitution clearly: death "passes over" those covered by the lamb's blood — exactly what Christ's blood does for us.
- Middle schoolers enjoy the ten plagues — consider a quick matching game (plague to Egyptian god) to reinforce the point that God was directly confronting Egypt's false gods.
- Keep the Ten Commandments framed correctly: God rescues Israel first (Exodus 1–14), then gives the Law (Exodus 20) — obedience flows from having already been saved, not the other way around.

Youth Handout — Session 3

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY • SESSION 3

Out of Egypt

Exodus

Key Verse (write it out!)

"And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you." — Exodus 12:13 (NKJV)

Fill in the Blanks

1. God heard the cries of the Israelites and remembered His covenant with _____ (Exodus 2:24).
2. God appeared to Moses in a burning _____ that was not consumed (Exodus 3:2).
3. God's name revealed to Moses was "I AM WHO _____" (Exodus 3:14).
4. The blood of the Passover _____ protected the Israelites from the final plague (Exodus 12:13).
5. God gave Israel the Ten _____ at Mount Sinai (Exodus 20).

Big Idea

God heard His people's suffering and rescued them through Moses, marking their salvation with the blood of a lamb — a picture of how Jesus, the perfect Lamb, would one day save us from sin and death.

Talk It Over

- Why do you think God chose to rescue Israel through such dramatic signs — the plagues, the Red Sea?
- How is the Passover lamb's blood similar to what Jesus did for us on the cross?

My Response

Think — What is one new thing I learned today? _____

Feel — How does it make me feel to know God sees and hears when I'm going through hard times?

Do — What is one way I can live differently this week because of this?

SESSION 4

Holy and Set Apart

Leviticus & Numbers • Leviticus - Numbers

Teacher Guide

Big Idea: God teaches Israel how a holy God can dwell among a sinful people — through sacrifice, priesthood, and atonement — while Numbers shows both God's faithfulness and Israel's unbelief in the wilderness.

Christ Connection: The entire sacrificial system points forward to Christ's once-for-all sacrifice (Hebrews 10:1–14); the high priest who alone enters the Most Holy Place foreshadows Christ, our great High Priest. Most strikingly, the bronze serpent Moses lifts up in the wilderness (Numbers 21) — so that everyone who looks at it lives — is directly compared by Jesus to His own crucifixion: "as Moses lifted up the serpent... even so must the Son of Man be lifted up" (John 3:14–15).

Session Length: 45 minutes

Scripture Focus

| *Leviticus 16:15–16 • Leviticus 17:11 • Numbers 13–14 • Numbers 21:4–9 (NKJV)*

Session Flow (45 minutes)

- Opening Hook (5 min) — Ask: "Why do you think there are rules for how to approach someone really important, like a king or president?" Transition to approaching a holy God.
- The Sacrificial System: Leviticus 1–7, 17 (10 min) — Israel's offerings — burnt, grain, peace, sin, guilt — all point to the need for atonement: "the life of the flesh is in the blood" (17:11).
- The Day of Atonement & Priesthood: Leviticus 16 (10 min) — Once a year, the high priest enters the Most Holy Place with blood to make atonement for the people's sins — foreshadowing Christ, our great High Priest.
- The Wilderness Journey: Numbers 13–14 (10 min) — Twelve spies scout Canaan; ten bring back a fearful report and Israel refuses to enter the land in unbelief. Only Joshua and Caleb trust God — the whole generation is condemned to wander 40 years.
- The Bronze Serpent: Numbers 21:4–9 (5 min) — When the people grumble and are bitten by venomous snakes, God tells Moses to make a bronze serpent on a pole — whoever looks at it lives. Jesus later compares Himself directly to this (John 3:14–15).
- Christ Connection Wrap-Up (5 min) — Trace the thread: blood sacrifice → Day of Atonement → the bronze serpent lifted up → Christ lifted up on the cross, offering healing and life to all who look to Him in faith.

Teacher Background Notes

Historical & Cultural Context

Sacrificial systems existed broadly across the Ancient Near East, but Israel's Law uniquely ties sacrifice to covenant relationship and holiness rather than appeasing capricious, unpredictable gods.

The tabernacle's layout — outer court, Holy Place, Most Holy Place — reflects graduated access to God's presence. Middle schoolers can picture it as concentric circles of holiness, with only the high priest permitted into the innermost space, and only once a year.

The wilderness generation's forty years of wandering (Numbers 14:33–34) — one year for each of the forty days the spies scouted the land — meant an entire generation, except Joshua and Caleb, died before entering the Promised Land, underscoring how seriously God treats persistent unbelief.

Bronze serpent imagery was common in the Ancient Near East as a symbol of healing (later, ironically, the bronze serpent itself became an idol and had to be destroyed in 2 Kings 18:4) — but here it functions purely as a sign pointing to God's power to heal through simple faith.

Teaching Tips

- Simplify the five offerings into two categories for middle schoolers: offerings that deal with sin (sin, guilt) and offerings that celebrate relationship with God (burnt, grain, peace) — don't get lost in technical detail.
- Use "looking at the bronze snake" as an easy analogy for faith: simple trust, not effort or work, brings healing — exactly how salvation through Christ works.
- Discuss courage versus fear through Caleb and Joshua's minority report — a great discussion starter about trusting God even when the majority disagrees.

Youth Handout — Session 4

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY • SESSION 4

Holy and Set Apart

Leviticus – Numbers

Key Verse (write it out!)

"So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the serpent of bronze, he lived." — Numbers 21:9 (NKJV)

Fill in the Blanks

1. God said the life of the flesh is in the _____, which makes atonement (Leviticus 17:11).
2. Once a year, the high priest entered the _____ to make atonement for Israel's sins (Leviticus 16).
3. Twelve spies scouted Canaan, but ten brought back a bad _____ because of fear (Numbers 13-14).
4. Because of their unbelief, Israel wandered in the wilderness for _____ years (Numbers 14:33).
5. God told Moses to make a bronze _____ and put it on a pole so that whoever looked at it would live (Numbers 21:8).

Big Idea

A holy God cannot ignore sin, but He made a way for sinful people to be forgiven and draw near to Him — pointing forward to Jesus, who was lifted up to bring healing and life to all who look to Him in faith.

Talk It Over

- Why do you think God cared so much about how people approached Him in worship?
- What do you think it means to "look" to Jesus in faith, the way the Israelites looked at the bronze serpent?

My Response

Think — What is one new thing I learned today? _____

Feel — How does it feel to know God made a way for me to be forgiven, even before I was born?

Do — What is one way I can live differently this week because of this?

SESSION 5

Into the Promised Land

Deuteronomy & Joshua • Deuteronomy – Joshua

Teacher Guide

Big Idea: Moses reminds Israel to love and obey God as they prepare to enter the Promised Land, and Joshua leads them in to claim what God swore to Abraham centuries earlier.

Christ Connection: Moses promises God will "raise up for you a Prophet like me" (Deuteronomy 18:15) — a promise ultimately fulfilled in Christ. Joshua's very name (Hebrew "Yeshua," meaning "the LORD saves") is the same name as Jesus, and just as Joshua led Israel into physical rest in the land, Jesus leads His people into eternal rest (Hebrews 4:8–9). Rahab's faith, and her later place in Jesus' genealogy (Matthew 1:5), shows that salvation was always meant to reach beyond Israel's borders.

Session Length: 45 minutes

Scripture Focus

Deuteronomy 6:4–9 • Deuteronomy 18:15–19 • Joshua 1:1–9 • Joshua 2 • Joshua 6 (NKJV)

Session Flow (45 minutes)

- Opening Hook (5 min) — Ask: "What's the hardest part about following instructions from someone you trust, even when you don't understand why?"
- Remember & Love God: Deuteronomy 6 (10 min) — Moses gives Israel the Shema — "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one" — and calls them to love God with all their heart, soul, and strength, teaching it diligently to their children.
- The Promised Prophet: Deuteronomy 18 (5 min) — God promises to raise up a Prophet like Moses from among Israel — a promise the Old Testament leaves open, waiting for fulfillment.
- Joshua's Commission & Rahab: Joshua 1–2 (10 min) — God commissions Joshua after Moses' death: "Be strong and of good courage." Two spies are hidden by Rahab, a Canaanite woman who professes faith in Israel's God and is saved along with her family.
- Jericho's Walls Fall: Joshua 6 (10 min) — Israel obeys God's unusual instructions — marching around Jericho for seven days — and the walls fall through God's power, not military might.
- Christ Connection Wrap-Up (5 min) — Joshua's name means "the LORD saves" — the same name as Jesus. Rahab's faith and her place in Jesus' family line shows God's grace was always for the whole world.

Teacher Background Notes

Historical & Cultural Context

Deuteronomy is structured much like an Ancient Near Eastern suzerain-vassal treaty renewal — Moses recounts Israel's history, restates the law, and pronounces blessings and curses, a literary form that would have been immediately recognizable to the original audience as a covenant renewal ceremony.

Canaanite religion at this time included practices such as Baal worship and, in some contexts, child sacrifice — helping explain the severity of God's instructions regarding conquest, which Scripture frames as judgment on entrenched moral corruption, not ethnic hostility.

Rahab's profession, "I know that the LORD has given you the land" (Joshua 2:9), shows that news of Israel's God had already spread throughout Canaan (following the Exodus and wilderness accounts) — her faith wasn't isolated but a response to what she'd heard.

Archaeological debate continues over the site and timing of Jericho's destruction, but Calvary Chapel's approach affirms the scriptural account as reliable history, while acknowledging that faithful believers hold different views on the archaeological details.

Teaching Tips

- Emphasize obedience motivated by love and remembering God's rescue — Deuteronomy's repeated call to "remember" the Exodus is about gratitude, not fear.
- Use Rahab's story to talk about God's grace extending to anyone who trusts Him, regardless of background or past — a great, relatable point for middle schoolers.
- The seven-day silent march around Jericho is a great illustration of trusting God's timing even when His instructions don't make immediate sense.

Youth Handout — Session 5

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY • SESSION 5

Into the Promised Land

Deuteronomy – Joshua

Key Verse (write it out!)

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go." — Joshua 1:9 (NKJV)

Fill in the Blanks

1. The Shema says, "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is _____" (Deuteronomy 6:4).
2. God promised to raise up a _____ like Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15).
3. God told Joshua to be strong and of good _____ (Joshua 1:9).
4. _____ hid the Israelite spies and was saved because of her faith (Joshua 2).
5. The walls of _____ fell after Israel marched around them for seven days (Joshua 6).

Big Idea

God's people were called to remember His rescue, trust His promises, and obey Him in love as they entered the land He had prepared — and even an outsider like Rahab found a place in God's family through faith.

Talk It Over

- Why do you think God wanted Israel to keep retelling the story of how He rescued them?
- What does Rahab's story teach us about who God welcomes into His family?

My Response

Think — What is one new thing I learned today? _____

Feel — How do I feel knowing God welcomes anyone who trusts Him, no matter their past?

Do — What is one way I can live differently this week because of this?

SESSION 6

Cycles and Faithfulness

Judges & Ruth • Judges – Ruth

Teacher Guide

Big Idea: When Israel forgets God, they fall into repeating cycles of sin and suffering, but God graciously raises up rescuers — and even in the darkest times, one woman's quiet faithfulness previews the coming King.

Christ Connection: Judges ends with the haunting line, "everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (21:25) — revealing Israel's desperate need for a righteous king. Boaz, who redeems Ruth and Naomi's family as their close relative, pictures Christ our Redeemer, who buys us back at great cost. Ruth, a Moabite outsider, becomes King David's great-grandmother — placing her directly in the family line of Jesus (Matthew 1:5).

Session Length: 45 minutes

Scripture Focus

| *Judges 2:11-19 • Judges 21:25 • Ruth 1:16-17 • Ruth 4:9-10, 13-17 (NKJV)*

Session Flow (45 minutes)

- Opening Hook (5 min) — Ask: "Have you ever seen someone keep making the same mistake over and over?"
- The Judges Cycle: Judges 2 (10 min) — Sin, servitude (oppression), supplication (crying out), and salvation (a judge raised up) — this cycle repeats throughout the book. Briefly mention Deborah, Gideon, and Samson as examples of God using imperfect people.
- Israel's Need for a King: Judges 21 (5 min) — The book closes with "everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (21:25) — setting up Israel's need for a righteous king to unify and lead them rightly.
- Ruth's Loyalty: Ruth 1 (10 min) — Ruth, a Moabite widow, chooses to stay with her mother-in-law Naomi and follow the God of Israel: "your people shall be my people, and your God, my God" (1:16).
- Boaz the Kinsman-Redeemer: Ruth 2-4 (10 min) — Boaz, a close relative, redeems Ruth and Naomi's family by marrying Ruth, fulfilling the "kinsman-redeemer" role in Israelite law and restoring their future.
- Christ Connection Wrap-Up (5 min) — Boaz's redemption of Ruth pictures Christ, who redeems us at great cost. Ruth and Boaz's great-grandson is King David — placing a Moabite outsider directly in Jesus' family line.

Teacher Background Notes

Historical & Cultural Context

The period of the Judges (roughly 1200–1050 BC) was marked by tribal disunity, ongoing Canaanite religious influence, and repeated cycles of foreign oppression before Israel's monarchy began.

Kinsman-redeemer (go'el) laws in Israel required a close relative to buy back family land and, in some cases, marry a widowed relative to preserve the family line and inheritance — Boaz's actions in Ruth 4 follow this legal custom precisely, done publicly at the city gate before witnesses.

Moabites were historically hostile toward Israel (Numbers 22–25), which makes Ruth's inclusion in Israel's story — and eventually in Jesus' genealogy — a striking, deliberate picture of grace extending beyond Israel's borders.

The book of Judges names deliverers like Deborah, Gideon, and Samson, each flawed in different ways, showing that God's rescue never depended on the judges' own perfection but on His faithfulness to His people.

Teaching Tips

- Draw the "cycle" as a circle on the whiteboard: Sin → Servitude → Supplication → Salvation → (repeat). Middle schoolers can track this pattern easily through several judges.
- Contrast the chaos of Judges with the quiet, everyday faithfulness of Ruth — sometimes ordinary loyalty matters as much as dramatic rescues.
- Emphasize Ruth's declaration ("your God, my God") as a model of committed faith, not just family loyalty — she chose Israel's God, not just Naomi.

Youth Handout — Session 6

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY • SESSION 6

Cycles and Faithfulness

Judges – Ruth

Key Verse (write it out!)

"For wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God." — Ruth 1:16 (NKJV)

Fill in the Blanks

1. In Judges, the cycle repeats: sin, servitude, supplication, and _____ (Judges 2:16).
2. Judges 21:25 says everyone did what was right in his own _____.
3. Ruth told Naomi, "Your people shall be my people, and your _____ my God" (Ruth 1:16).
4. _____ was Ruth and Naomi's close relative who redeemed their family (Ruth 2-4).
5. Ruth and Boaz's great-grandson became King _____ (Ruth 4:17).

Big Idea

When God's people forgot Him, He still rescued them again and again — and even in Israel's darkest days, one loyal woman's faithfulness became part of the family line that would one day bring the perfect King, Jesus.

Talk It Over

- Why do you think Israel kept falling into the same cycle of sin over and over?
- What does Boaz's role as "kinsman-redeemer" teach us about what Jesus does for us?

My Response

Think — What is one new thing I learned today? _____

Feel — How does it make me feel that God can use ordinary faithfulness, like Ruth's, in a big way?

Do — What is one way I can live differently this week because of this?

SESSION 7

God Establishes a King

1 & 2 Samuel • 1 & 2 Samuel

Teacher Guide

Big Idea: Israel demands a king like the other nations; God gives them Saul, who fails, then raises up David, a man after God's own heart, and makes an everlasting covenant to establish David's throne forever.

Christ Connection: The Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7:12-16) — "your house and your kingdom shall be established forever" — is the theological hinge of the rest of the Old Testament, and it points directly to Jesus, the eternal Son of David (Luke 1:32-33).

Session Length: 45 minutes

Scripture Focus

| *1 Samuel 3:1-10 • 1 Samuel 16:1-13 • 1 Samuel 17 • 2 Samuel 7:12-16 (NKJV)*

Session Flow (45 minutes)

- Opening Hook (5 min) — Ask: "Why do you think people sometimes want a leader who looks strong on the outside, even if their heart isn't right?"
- Samuel the Prophet: 1 Samuel 1-3 (5 min) — Hannah's prayer is answered with Samuel's birth; as a boy in the temple, Samuel hears God's voice calling him and becomes Israel's last judge and a great prophet.
- Israel Demands a King & Saul's Failure: 1 Samuel 8-15 (10 min) — Israel rejects God as king and demands a king "like the other nations." Saul starts well but repeatedly disobeys God and is rejected as king.
- David Anointed & David vs. Goliath: 1 Samuel 16-17 (10 min) — Samuel anoints young David — "the LORD looks at the heart" (16:7) — and David defeats the giant Goliath through faith in God, not size or weapons.
- The Davidic Covenant: 2 Samuel 7 (10 min) — God promises David an eternal throne and kingdom through his descendants forever, even though David himself is not allowed to build the temple.
- Christ Connection Wrap-Up (5 min) — David, a man after God's heart yet still flawed, shows Israel's need for a perfect King. God's covenant promise of an eternal throne is fulfilled in Jesus, called "Son of David" throughout the Gospels.

Teacher Background Notes

Historical & Cultural Context

Israel's transition from a tribal confederacy (Judges) to a centralized monarchy (roughly 1050-970 BC) reflects real geopolitical pressure from the Philistines, a powerful Iron Age enemy settled along Israel's coastal border.

Anointing with oil symbolized being set apart by God for a specific role — king, priest, or prophet. The words "Messiah" and "Christ" both literally mean "Anointed One," directly tying this ritual to the coming Savior.

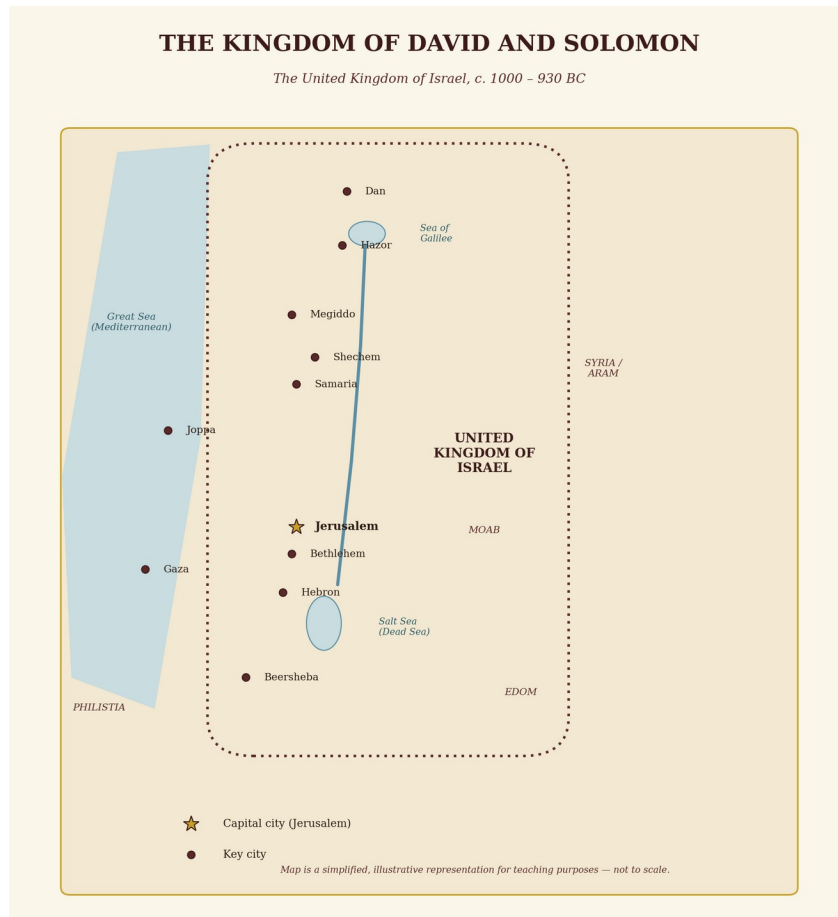
Goliath, a Philistine champion likely from the city of Gath, represented a common Ancient Near Eastern practice of settling battles through single combat between champions — making David's unexpected victory all the more shocking to both armies watching.

The Davidic Covenant given in 2 Samuel 7 becomes the theological backbone of the rest of the Old Testament — every subsequent king is measured against it, and every later prophet's hope for a coming King rests on it.

Teaching Tips

- Use 1 Samuel 16:7 ("man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart") as a recurring theme throughout the whole session.
- Middle schoolers love David and Goliath — use it, but pivot quickly to the deeper point: David's confidence was in God's reputation, not his own skill (17:45–47).
- Make sure students can restate the Davidic Covenant in their own words: "God promised David that one of his descendants would rule forever." This is the hinge on which the rest of the Old Testament turns.

Visual Aid



Map 2 — The Kingdom of David and Solomon

Youth Handout — Session 7

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY • SESSION 7

God Establishes a King

1 & 2 Samuel

Key Verse (write it out!)

"And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever." — 2 Samuel 7:16 (NKJV)

Fill in the Blanks

1. As a boy, _____ heard God's voice calling him in the temple at night (1 Samuel 3).
2. Israel demanded a king "like all the other _____" (1 Samuel 8:5).
3. God told Samuel, "man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the _____" (1 Samuel 16:7).
4. David defeated the giant _____ with a sling and a stone (1 Samuel 17).
5. God promised David that his throne would be established _____ (2 Samuel 7:16).

Big Idea

God let Israel have the king they demanded, but His real plan was always to raise up David — and through David's family, to one day give the whole world a King whose throne would never end: Jesus.

Talk It Over

- Why do you think God cares more about someone's heart than their outward appearance or strength?
- What do you think it means that Jesus' kingdom, unlike David's, will never end?

My Response

Think — What is one new thing I learned today? _____

Feel — How does it feel to know God sees my heart, not just how things look on the outside?

Do — What is one way I can live differently this week because of this?

SESSION 8

A Kingdom Divided

1 & 2 Kings • 1 & 2 Kings

Teacher Guide

Big Idea: Solomon builds the temple in glory, but the kingdom splits after his death, and most kings — north and south — fail to follow God, proving Israel's desperate need for a perfect King.

Christ Connection: Solomon's temple, God's dwelling place among His people, points forward to a greater and final dwelling of God with man. Elijah's bold ministry, confronting false worship and calling Israel back to God, anticipates the kind of "messenger" figure who would one day prepare the way for the Messiah. Above all, the repeated failure of Israel's and Judah's kings — even good ones — reveals humanity's desperate need for a King who never fails.

Session Length: 45 minutes

Scripture Focus

| *1 Kings 3:5-12 • 1 Kings 8:22-30 • 1 Kings 18:20-39 • 2 Kings 17:6-18 (NKJV)*

Session Flow (45 minutes)

- Opening Hook (5 min) — Ask: "If you could ask God for one thing right now, what would you ask for?" Transition to Solomon's request for wisdom.
- Solomon's Wisdom & Temple: 1 Kings 3, 8 (10 min) — Solomon asks for wisdom instead of riches, and God gives him both. Solomon builds the temple, and God's glory fills it — a permanent house for God's presence among His people.
- The Kingdom Divides: 1 Kings 12 (5 min) — After Solomon's death, the kingdom splits into Israel (north, ten tribes) and Judah (south, two tribes) due to Rehoboam's harshness and Jeroboam's rebellion.
- Elijah vs. the Prophets of Baal: 1 Kings 18 (10 min) — Elijah challenges 450 prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. God sends fire from heaven, proving He alone is God.
- The Kingdoms Fall: 2 Kings 17, 25 (10 min) — Despite many warnings through the prophets, both kingdoms persist in idolatry. Israel (north) falls to Assyria in 722 BC; Judah (south) falls to Babylon in 586 BC, and the temple is destroyed.
- Christ Connection Wrap-Up (5 min) — The repeated failure of Israel's kings — even Solomon, in all his wisdom — shows why Israel needed a King who would never fail. This sets up the longing for the promised Son of David that grows through the rest of the Old Testament.

Teacher Background Notes

Historical & Cultural Context

The united monarchy (Saul, David, Solomon) lasted roughly 1050–930 BC, followed by a divided kingdom: Israel in the north (capital eventually Samaria) and Judah in the south (capital Jerusalem), until their respective falls in 722 and 586 BC.

Solomon's temple, built with cedar from Tyre and skilled labor from Phoenicia, represented an extraordinary building project for its era — but Scripture makes clear that even a stunning temple couldn't fix a divided, idolatrous heart.

Baal was the primary Canaanite storm and fertility god; the contest at Mount Carmel would have been immediately understood by everyone present as a direct challenge to Baal's supposed power over rain and fire.

Assyria and later Babylon were the two dominant regional empires of the era, and their military campaigns fulfilled the prophetic warnings of judgment against Israel and Judah for persistent unfaithfulness.

Teaching Tips

- Draw a simple timeline: United Kingdom (Saul–David–Solomon) → Divided Kingdom (Israel / Judah) → Exile. Middle schoolers benefit from seeing the "shape" of Old Testament history visually.
- The Mount Carmel showdown (1 Kings 18) is dramatic and works well read aloud with energy — use it to teach that God alone deserves worship.
- Don't rush past the sobering ending (the fall of both kingdoms) — but keep pointing forward: God's covenant with David isn't cancelled, and the story isn't over.

Youth Handout — Session 8

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY • SESSION 8

A Kingdom Divided

1 & 2 Kings

Key Verse (write it out!)

"Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice... Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, 'The LORD, He is God! The LORD, He is God!'" — 1 Kings 18:38-39 (NKJV)

Fill in the Blanks

1. Solomon asked God for _____ to lead His people well (1 Kings 3:9).
2. After Solomon died, the kingdom split into Israel and _____ (1 Kings 12).
3. On Mount Carmel, Elijah challenged the prophets of _____ (1 Kings 18).
4. God proved He was the true God by sending _____ from heaven (1 Kings 18:38).
5. Because of continued idolatry, both Israel and Judah were eventually conquered and sent into _____.

Big Idea

Even Israel's best king, Solomon, could not keep God's people faithful forever — showing that only a perfect, forever King could truly save them. That King is Jesus.

Talk It Over

- Why do you think even good kings like Solomon eventually turned away from God?
- What does the contest on Mount Carmel teach us about who deserves our worship?

My Response

Think — What is one new thing I learned today? _____

Feel — How do I feel knowing that even when leaders and people fail, God's plan doesn't fail?

Do — What is one way I can live differently this week because of this?

SESSION 9

Remembering God's Faithfulness

1 & 2 Chronicles • 1 & 2 Chronicles

Teacher Guide

Big Idea: Chronicles retells Israel's history from a priestly, temple-focused perspective for the returned exiles, reminding a discouraged generation that God is still faithful to His covenant with David.

Christ Connection: Chronicles' relentless focus on the temple and the Davidic line reassures a discouraged post-exile generation that God's promises are still active. This hope-filled retelling — ending with Cyrus's decree to rebuild — keeps alive the expectation of the true King and true Temple still to come: Jesus.

Session Length: 45 minutes

Scripture Focus

1 Chronicles 17:11-14 • 1 Chronicles 29:10-13 • 2 Chronicles 7:14 • 2 Chronicles 36:22-23 (NKJV)

Session Flow (45 minutes)

- Opening Hook (5 min) — Ask: "Why do you think families sometimes retell the same stories over and over at gatherings?" Chronicles retells Israel's story for a new generation.
- Why Chronicles? (5 min) — Written after the exile for people returning to a ruined homeland, asking, "Does God still care about us? Is the covenant still valid?" Chronicles reassures them: yes.
- David & the Temple Preparations: 1 Chronicles 17, 22, 29 (10 min) — Though David isn't allowed to build the temple, God renews His covenant promise (17:11-14), and David gathers materials and organizes worship for Solomon to build it.
- Hezekiah & Josiah's Reforms: 2 Chronicles 29-31, 34-35 (10 min) — Two rare, faithful kings lead national revival, restoring temple worship and renewing the covenant — Chronicles highlights faithful kings more than Kings does.
- God's Conditional Promise: 2 Chronicles 7:14 (5 min) — "If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven."
- Christ Connection Wrap-Up (10 min) — Chronicles ends with hope (36:22-23) — Cyrus's decree allowing the exiles to return and rebuild. Chronicles' whole purpose — keeping hope alive in God's covenant to David and His dwelling among His people — anticipates Jesus, David's greater Son.

Teacher Background Notes

Historical & Cultural Context

Chronicles was likely compiled after the Babylonian exile (5th–4th century BC), retelling Israel's story from Adam through the return from exile, but with a very different emphasis than Samuel/Kings — focusing heavily on David, the temple, and proper worship, and skipping over most of the northern kingdom's history entirely.

The original audience were discouraged returnees rebuilding a small, vulnerable community — no king, a modest rebuilt temple, foreign rule. Chronicles reminded them that their identity as God's covenant people didn't depend on political power.

The genealogies that open Chronicles (chapters 1–9), often skipped by modern readers, actually served a vital purpose for the original audience: proving priestly lineage, land claims, and the unbroken line of the Davidic promise.

Teaching Tips

- Frame Chronicles as "the same story, told again, but with a purpose" — help students see why perspective and audience matter in how a story gets retold.
- Highlight Hezekiah and Josiah as examples of revival — leaders who turned a nation back to God even after years of decline.
- Use 2 Chronicles 7:14 as a memorable, personally applicable verse about humility and prayer that students can carry with them beyond this session.

Youth Handout — Session 9

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY • SESSION 9

Remembering God's Faithfulness

1 & 2 Chronicles

Key Verse (write it out!)

"If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land." — 2 Chronicles 7:14 (NKJV)

Fill in the Blanks

1. Chronicles was written to encourage the people who had returned from _____ (exile).
2. God renewed His promise to David that his throne would be established _____ (1 Chronicles 17).
3. King _____ and King Josiah led national revivals back to God (2 Chronicles 29, 34).
4. God said, "If My people ... will humble themselves and _____, I will hear from heaven" (2 Chronicles 7:14).
5. Chronicles ends with King _____ decreeing that the exiles could return home and rebuild (2 Chronicles 36).

Big Idea

Even after Israel's darkest moments, God had not forgotten His promise to David or His people — and He was already preparing the way for them to come home and rebuild.

Talk It Over

- Why do you think it mattered so much to retell Israel's history after such a hard season (exile)?
- What does 2 Chronicles 7:14 teach us about how God responds to humility and prayer?

My Response

Think — What is one new thing I learned today? _____

Feel — How does it feel to know God's promises are still true even during hard or discouraging seasons?

Do — What is one way I can live differently this week because of this?

SESSION 10

Rebuilding and Preserving

Ezra, Nehemiah & Esther • Ezra - Nehemiah - Esther

Teacher Guide

Big Idea: God brings His people home from exile to rebuild the temple and the city walls, and even when they're scattered in a foreign empire, He providentially protects them from destruction.

Christ Connection: Ezra rebuilds the temple and re-establishes God's Word at the center of the community. Nehemiah rebuilds Jerusalem's wall despite fierce opposition, showing God's continued faithfulness to restore His people. Esther reveals God's hidden providence — His name never appears in the book — preserving the Jewish people, and with them, the family line through which the Messiah would come.

Session Length: 45 minutes

Scripture Focus

| *Ezra 1:1-4 • Nehemiah 2:17-18 • Nehemiah 8:1-3, 8-10 • Esther 4:14 (NKJV)*

Session Flow (45 minutes)

- Opening Hook (5 min) — Ask: "Have you ever felt like you were in the right place at the right time for a reason?" Transition to Esther's story.
- Ezra Rebuilds the Temple: Ezra 1-3 (10 min) — Cyrus decrees the exiles may return; they rebuild the altar and temple foundation amid tears of both joy and grief. Later, Ezra leads another return trip and teaches God's Law.
- Nehemiah Rebuilds the Wall: Nehemiah 1-6 (10 min) — Nehemiah, a cupbearer to the Persian king, hears of Jerusalem's ruined walls, prays, and leads the rebuilding project despite mockery and threats — completed in just 52 days.
- Renewing God's Word: Nehemiah 8 (5 min) — Ezra reads the Law publicly; the people weep and then celebrate, renewing their commitment to God together.
- Esther Saves Her People: Esther 4-9 (10 min) — Esther, a Jewish orphan turned queen of Persia, risks her life to intervene when Haman plots to destroy all Jews — "for such a time as this" (4:14).
- Christ Connection Wrap-Up (5 min) — God's hidden hand throughout Esther's story reflects His ongoing providence in preserving the family line and people through whom Jesus would come — even when it looks like He's silent, He's still at work.

Teacher Background Notes

Historical & Cultural Context

These events occur under the Persian Empire (539–331 BC) following Cyrus's conquest of Babylon. Persian policy generally allowed conquered peoples to return home and rebuild their local religious institutions — exactly what enables Ezra and Nehemiah's missions.

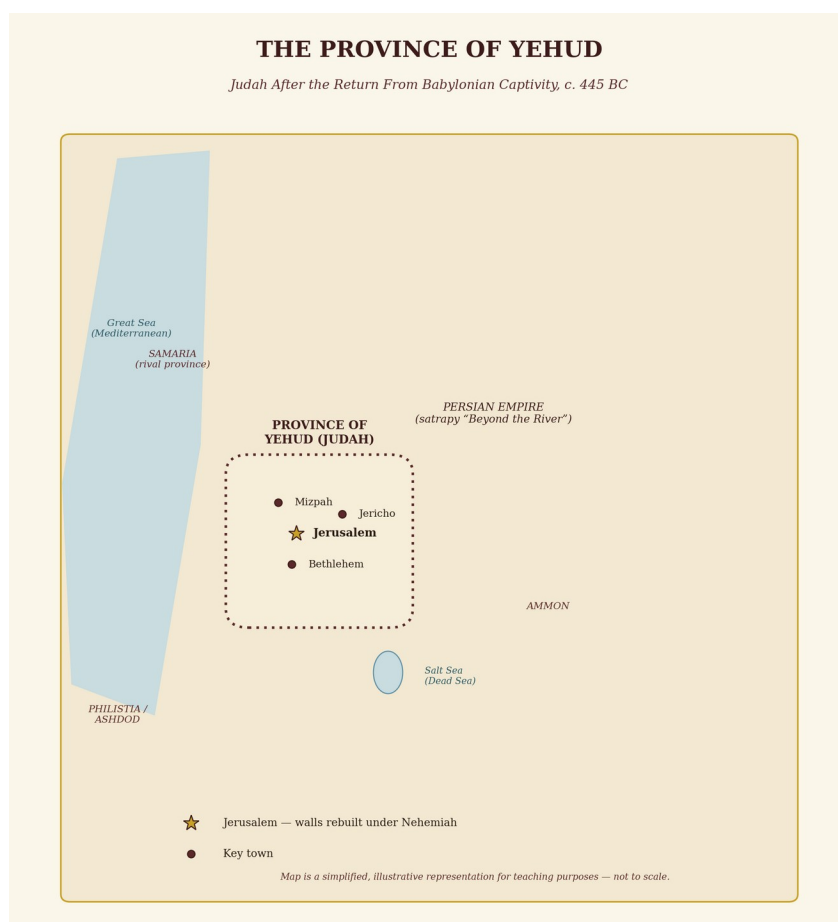
Rebuilding a city wall was both a practical and deeply symbolic act in the ancient world — walls meant safety, identity, and legitimacy as a real city, not just scattered ruins.

Esther is set in Susa, the Persian capital, and the book's complete absence of God's name is a deliberate literary choice pointing to His providential, behind-the-scenes work rather than direct miraculous intervention like the Exodus plagues.

Teaching Tips

- Contrast Ezra and Nehemiah's public, Law-centered rebuilding with Esther's hidden, providential rescue — two different ways God works, both equally real.
- Use the "52 days" detail about the wall to talk about how focused, unified effort accomplishes what seemed impossible.
- With Esther, emphasize that God is at work even when we don't see miracles or hear His name mentioned — He's present in ordinary courage and circumstances, not just dramatic signs.

Visual Aid



Map 3 — The Province of Yehud (Post-Captivity Judah)

Youth Handout — Session 10

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY • SESSION 10

Rebuilding and Preserving

Ezra – Nehemiah – Esther

Key Verse (write it out!)

"Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" —
Esther 4:14 (NKJV)

Fill in the Blanks

1. King _____ decreed that the Jewish exiles could return home and rebuild the temple (Ezra 1).
2. _____ led the people in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem in just 52 days (Nehemiah).
3. When Ezra read God's _____ aloud, the people wept and then celebrated (Nehemiah 8).
4. _____ became queen of Persia and risked her life to save her people.
5. Mordecai told Esther she may have become queen "for such a time as _____" (Esther 4:14).

Big Idea

Even when God's people were scattered far from home, God was still at work — rebuilding what was broken and protecting His people, even behind the scenes, to keep His promise of a coming Savior alive.

Talk It Over

- Why do you think rebuilding the wall mattered so much to the people of Jerusalem?
- Esther's story never mentions God's name directly, yet He is clearly at work. Where do you see God working "behind the scenes" in your own life?

My Response

Think — What is one new thing I learned today? _____

Feel — How does it feel knowing God can be at work in my life even when I don't see Him doing anything obvious? _____

Do — What is one way I can live differently this week because of this?

SESSION 11

Wisdom for Life

Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes & Song of Solomon • Job – Song of Solomon

Teacher Guide

Big Idea: The wisdom books wrestle honestly with suffering, worship, practical living, the meaning of life, and love — teaching Israel, and us, how to live well before God in every circumstance.

Christ Connection: Job's suffering and eventual vindication anticipate Christ's own suffering and vindication. Many Psalms — especially Psalm 22 — describe details of Christ's suffering and reign centuries in advance with startling precision. Ecclesiastes' search for meaning "under the sun" finds its ultimate answer in a relationship with God, fulfilled in Christ.

Session Length: 45 minutes

Scripture Focus

Job 19:25-27 • Psalm 22:1, 16-18 • Psalm 23 • Proverbs 1:7 • Ecclesiastes 12:13 (NKJV)

Session Flow (45 minutes)

- Opening Hook (5 min) — Ask: "Has anyone ever asked 'why is this happening to me?' during a hard time?" Transition to Job.
- Job: Suffering & Trust (10 min) — Job loses everything but refuses to curse God: "I know that my Redeemer lives" (19:25). After wrestling honestly with unanswered questions, Job encounters God directly and is ultimately restored.
- Psalms: Songs for Every Emotion (10 min) — Psalm 23 offers comfort; Psalm 22 gives a startlingly detailed prophecy of the crucifixion, written roughly 1,000 years before Christ. The Psalms give words for joy, grief, fear, and praise.
- Proverbs: Wisdom for Daily Life (5 min) — "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge" (1:7) — practical wisdom for relationships, work, speech, and money.
- Ecclesiastes & Song of Solomon (10 min) — Ecclesiastes explores the emptiness of life "under the sun" without God, concluding "fear God and keep His commandments" (12:13). Song of Solomon celebrates love and marriage as good gifts from God.
- Christ Connection Wrap-Up (5 min) — Job's vindication after suffering, Psalm 22's precise prophecy, and the wisdom books' search for lasting meaning all converge on Jesus — the answer to suffering, the fulfillment of prophecy, and true Wisdom Himself.

Teacher Background Notes

Historical & Cultural Context

Hebrew poetry, found throughout these books, works differently than English poetry — it relies on parallelism (restating or contrasting an idea in the next line) rather than rhyme, which is worth briefly demonstrating with an example from Psalm 1 or a favorite Proverb.

Job is considered one of the oldest books in the Bible, possibly set in the patriarchal period, and wrestles with the "problem of suffering" more directly and honestly than almost any other ancient text.

Psalm 22's description of pierced hands and feet, divided garments, and mockery — written centuries before crucifixion was even invented as a Roman execution method — is one of the most striking predictive prophecies in the entire Old Testament.

Teaching Tips

- Don't rush past Job's hard questions — middle schoolers appreciate honesty about suffering more than quick, tidy answers.
- Read Psalm 22:1, 16–18 slowly, letting students feel the weight of a prophecy written a thousand years before crucifixion existed.
- Keep Proverbs practical — pick two or three proverbs about friendship, speech, or hard work that connect directly to middle-school life.

Youth Handout — Session 11

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY • SESSION 11

Wisdom for Life

Job – Song of Solomon

Key Verse (write it out!)

"For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth." — Job 19:25 (NKJV)

Fill in the Blanks

1. Job said, "I know that my _____ lives" even in the middle of his suffering (Job 19:25).
2. Psalm 22 describes suffering that would happen to Jesus about a _____ years before crucifixion existed.
3. Proverbs 1:7 says "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of _____."
4. Ecclesiastes concludes that we should "fear God and keep His _____" (12:13).
5. Song of Solomon celebrates _____ and marriage as good gifts from God.

Big Idea

The wisdom books show us how to bring our hardest questions, deepest emotions, and everyday choices honestly to God — and even point ahead, centuries in advance, to the suffering and glory of Jesus.

Talk It Over

- Why do you think it matters that the Bible includes honest questions about suffering, like in Job?
- What stands out to you about Psalm 22 being written a thousand years before crucifixion existed?

My Response

Think — What is one new thing I learned today? _____

Feel — How does it feel to know I can bring my hardest questions and emotions honestly to God?

Do — What is one way I can live differently this week because of this?

SESSION 12

The Suffering Servant and the Son of Man

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel & Daniel • Isaiah – Daniel (Major Prophets)

Teacher Guide

Big Idea: The Major Prophets warn Judah of coming judgment for persistent sin, yet promise a New Covenant and a coming Servant-King who will suffer for His people's sins and reign forever.

Christ Connection: Isaiah 53's Suffering Servant is perhaps the clearest Messianic prophecy in the entire Old Testament, written roughly 700 years before Christ. Jeremiah's New Covenant (31:31–34) promises a relationship with God written on hearts. Ezekiel promises a new heart and new spirit. Daniel's "Son of Man" (7:13–14), given an everlasting kingdom, becomes Jesus' own favorite title for Himself.

Session Length: 45 minutes

Scripture Focus

Isaiah 9:6–7 • Isaiah 53:3–6 • Jeremiah 31:31–34 • Ezekiel 36:26–27 • Daniel 7:13–14 (NKJV)

Session Flow (45 minutes)

- Opening Hook (5 min) — Ask: "If you knew something bad was coming, but also something amazing beyond it, how would that change how you felt?"
- Isaiah: The Suffering Servant (15 min) — Isaiah 9:6–7 (a child is born, government on His shoulder); Isaiah 53 ("wounded for our transgressions") — read slowly, this is the clearest picture of the cross in the entire Old Testament, written ~700 years before Christ.
- Jeremiah & Lamentations: Judgment and a New Covenant (10 min) — Jeremiah warns Judah of coming Babylonian judgment (mostly ignored); Lamentations grieves Jerusalem's destruction; yet Jeremiah 31:31–34 promises a New Covenant with God's law written on hearts.
- Ezekiel: A New Heart & Dry Bones (10 min) — Ezekiel, prophesying among the exiles in Babylon, sees a vision of dry bones coming back to life (ch. 37), symbolizing Israel's future restoration, and promises a "new heart and a new spirit" (36:26).
- Daniel: The Son of Man (5 min) — Daniel, taken captive to Babylon as a young man, remains faithful and sees a vision of "One like the Son of Man" given an everlasting kingdom (7:13–14) — Jesus' own favorite self-title.
- Christ Connection Wrap-Up (5 min) — These five books, spanning the darkest political period in Israel's history, contain some of the most specific and beautiful Messianic prophecies in Scripture — proving that even in judgment, God was preparing hope.

Teacher Background Notes

Historical & Cultural Context

These prophets ministered across roughly 740–540 BC, spanning the Assyrian threat, the Babylonian conquest, the siege and destruction of Jerusalem (586 BC), and the early exile — genuinely one of the most traumatic periods in Israel's history.

"Suffering Servant" language in Isaiah 40–55 has been debated among readers, but the details in Isaiah 53 (silent before accusers, pierced, buried with the rich, bearing others' sin) align remarkably with the Gospel accounts of Jesus centuries later.

Daniel and Ezekiel prophesied from within Babylon itself, among the exiles — showing that God's presence and revelation weren't limited to Jerusalem or the temple.

Teaching Tips

- Read Isaiah 53:3–6 slowly and let it sit — this may be the most important passage in the entire Old Testament survey for pointing directly to Jesus.
- The Valley of Dry Bones (Ezekiel 37) is vivid and visual — consider having students close their eyes while you describe it.
- Keep Daniel's familiar stories (lion's den, fiery furnace) brief — spend the time instead on the "Son of Man" vision, which is less familiar but hugely important: it's the title Jesus uses for Himself over 80 times in the Gospels.

Youth Handout — Session 12

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY • SESSION 12

The Suffering Servant and the Son of Man

Isaiah – Daniel

Key Verse (write it out!)

"But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed." — Isaiah 53:5 (NKJV)

Fill in the Blanks

1. Isaiah said a child would be born and called "Wonderful _____, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).
2. Isaiah 53 says the Servant was "wounded for our _____" (Isaiah 53:5).
3. Jeremiah promised a New _____ where God's law would be written on hearts (Jeremiah 31:31–33).
4. Ezekiel promised God would give His people a new heart and a new _____ (Ezekiel 36:26).
5. Daniel saw "One like the Son of _____" given an everlasting kingdom (Daniel 7:13).

Big Idea

In Israel's darkest hour — facing invasion, siege, and exile — God gave His clearest promises yet of a coming Servant-King who would suffer for His people's sin and reign forever. That Servant-King is Jesus.

Talk It Over

- Why do you think God gave some of His clearest promises about Jesus during Israel's hardest, darkest times?
- What stands out to you most about Isaiah 53's description of the Suffering Servant?

My Response

Think — What is one new thing I learned today? _____

Feel — How does it feel to know Jesus was "wounded for our transgressions" so that we could be healed?

Do — What is one way I can live differently this week because of this?

SESSION 13

The Final Word Before Silence

Hosea through Malachi • Hosea - Malachi (The Minor Prophets)

Teacher Guide

Big Idea: The twelve Minor Prophets close out the Old Testament with a final, urgent call to return to God, ending with the promise of a coming Messenger and a "Sun of Righteousness" — setting the stage for 400 years of prophetic silence before the New Testament opens with Jesus.

Christ Connection: Hosea's redeeming love for unfaithful Gomer pictures God's relentless love for His people. Micah 5:2 names Bethlehem as the Messiah's birthplace 700 years in advance. Malachi promises a messenger to prepare the way — fulfilled by John the Baptist — and a "Sun of Righteousness" rising with healing. The Old Testament's final words point straight into the Gospels, and the genealogy traced across this entire survey, from Adam to Bethlehem, finds its answer in Jesus.

Session Length: 45 minutes

Scripture Focus

| *Hosea 3:1-3 • Amos 5:24 • Micah 5:2 • Malachi 3:1 • Malachi 4:2 (NKJV)*

Session Flow (45 minutes)

- Opening Hook (5 min) — Ask: "What's the last thing you'd want to say to someone if you knew you wouldn't talk to them again for 400 years?"
- Hosea: A Love Story of Redemption (10 min) — God tells Hosea to marry and later buy back an unfaithful woman, Gomer — a living picture of God's relentless, redeeming love for unfaithful Israel, and for us.
- Jonah & Amos: Mercy and Justice (10 min) — Jonah reluctantly preaches to Israel's enemies in Nineveh, who repent, showing God's mercy extends even to Israel's enemies. Amos calls for justice to "roll down like waters" (5:24), confronting empty religious ritual.
- Micah: Bethlehem Foretold (5 min) — Micah 5:2 names the specific town where the Messiah will be born — Bethlehem — roughly 700 years before Jesus' birth.
- Malachi: The Messenger and the Sun of Righteousness (10 min) — The last book of the Old Testament promises a messenger who will "prepare the way" (3:1) and a coming "Sun of Righteousness" who will rise "with healing in His wings" (4:2). Then — 400 years of prophetic silence.
- Christ Connection Wrap-Up: The Genealogy of Jesus (5 min) — Show the genealogy diagram tracing Adam all the way to Jesus' birth, through both Mary's and Joseph's lines — the culmination of every promise, every genealogy, and every prophecy covered across all 13 sessions.

Teacher Background Notes

Historical & Cultural Context

The twelve "Minor" Prophets are called "minor" only because their books are shorter than Isaiah, Jeremiah, or Ezekiel — not because their message matters less. Together they span roughly 760–430 BC, addressing both the northern and southern kingdoms, before and after the exile.

Hosea's marriage to Gomer was a real, lived object lesson — not just a metaphor — making the message of God's redeeming love impossible for Israel to ignore or misunderstand.

The 400-year period between Malachi and Matthew (the "intertestamental period") saw major historical shifts — the rise of Greek and then Roman power, the spread of Greek language and culture, and heightened Jewish expectation for the coming Messiah — all of which sets the stage for the world Jesus was born into.

Teaching Tips

- Use Hosea's story carefully and sensitively — focus on the picture of relentless redeeming love, not the details of unfaithfulness.
- Micah 5:2 is a great "wow" moment — ask students to imagine correctly predicting the exact town of a major world leader's birth 700 years in advance.
- Save real time for the final genealogy diagram — this is the capstone visual of the entire 13-session survey, so let it land with weight. Consider briefly recapping the thread from each prior session as you walk through it.

Visual Aid

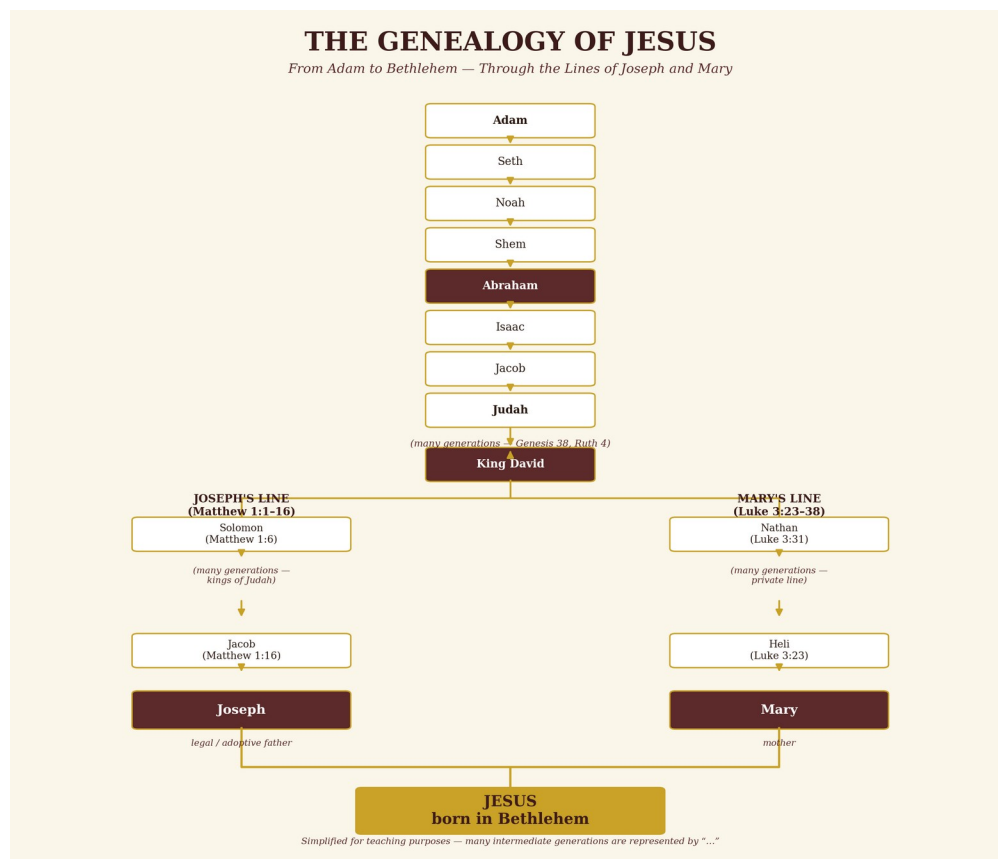


Diagram 2 — The Genealogy of Jesus, From Adam to Bethlehem

Youth Handout — Session 13

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY • SESSION 13

The Final Word Before Silence

Hosea – Malachi

Key Verse (write it out!)

"But to you who fear My name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings." — Malachi 4:2 (NKJV)

Fill in the Blanks

1. God told Hosea to marry and redeem an unfaithful woman named _____ (Hosea 1, 3).
2. Amos called for justice to "roll down like _____" (Amos 5:24).
3. Micah said the Messiah would be born in the town of _____ (Micah 5:2).
4. Malachi promised a _____ who would prepare the way before the LORD (Malachi 3:1).
5. After Malachi, there were _____ years of prophetic silence before the New Testament.

Big Idea

The Old Testament ends not with an ending, but with a promise — a coming Messenger and a "Sun of Righteousness" — setting the stage for the greatest story ever told to finally begin: the story of Jesus.

Talk It Over

- Why do you think God let 400 years pass in silence before Jesus came?
- Looking back over all 13 sessions, which Old Testament promise or picture of Jesus meant the most to you?

My Response

Think — What is one new thing I learned today? _____

Feel — How does it feel to see, after all these sessions, how the whole Old Testament was pointing to Jesus the entire time? _____

Do — What is one way I can live differently this week because of this?
