Welcome to the experience of teaching from Cornerstone Connections: Real. Solid. Stories.

The following are provided for your assistance:

- A Word About What’s Ahead (student introduction) [p. 2]
- Why the Bible Story Approach? (teacher introduction) [p. 3]
- What Tools Are Provided for Teaching the Stories? [p. 4]
- Complete Scope and Sequence [p. 5]
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A WORD ABOUT WHAT’S AHEAD . . . (student introduction)

The goal of Cornerstone Connections is to lead you to the Bible to see the big story of God and people. This big story continues from the first generation in Eden to your generation today. It’s about the lives of people as the God of the universe interacts with them.

If you are looking for a word from God that is real, Cornerstone Connections captures the message of Scripture and challenges you to make the connections to your real life.

God’s Word is not only real; it is rock-solid. For the first generation to hear God’s voice in the garden to the last group standing before Christ at the Second Coming, the Word of God has been and continues to be reliable.

The word from God comes to us in the stories of people who encountered Him and made a decision to either follow Him or walk away.

Real. Solid. Stories. You will find one in Into the Story in each lesson. Out of the Story will provide you with ways to search for truth you can apply to your life. In each lesson you also will find:

- What Do You Think?—a mental activity to get your mind and heart in gear for the story to follow. Every time you approach a Bible story, you are coming to it in the context of the story in which you live every day.
- Did You Know?—a brief statistic or definition that digs a little deeper into the story or simply provides some helpful facts to bring to the lesson.
- Key Text—a verse that points out a key concept from the story. It is also a great place to find verses that you can memorize and store away for later use.
- Punch Lines—a few other verses from Scripture that punctuate key concepts of the lesson. You may see connections between them and the Bible story as well as your own life.
- Flashlight—a brief snapshot of Ellen White’s input on the story. These glimmers that shed light onto the biblical passage will also give you a glimpse of what awaits you in the suggested weekly reading from her inspired commentary on the stories—The Conflict of the Ages.*
• **Other Eyes** — a couple of quotes from various contemporary or historic sources that may open up a slightly different perspective on the central message of the lesson.

• **Making It Real** — the guide to making the truths about God in this story your very own. Begin here if you are studying this lesson on your own prior to, or after, studying it in a Sabbath School class. Each day of the week you will be directed to explore one of the sections of the lesson, to relate it to the story you live, and to make the message from God apply to you personally.

**WHY THE BIBLE STORY APPROACH? (teacher introduction)**

There is a tendency to neglect God’s Word because the Bible seems so old and the issues of life today don’t seem to automatically connect with the ancient, inspired text. Trying to read through the Bible can leave young people in a fog. But the Bible was never meant to be read. It was meant to be studied, reflected on, and integrated into life. It wasn’t written to be analyzed as much as it was to be obeyed. It takes effort. If you simply want a story to entertain you, then the Bible isn’t for you.

The Bible is not a novel that grips you, but if you get a firm hold on the message of the Bible with a teachable heart and an eye that seeks God, you will find something more than entertaining. You will discover a message just for you. “You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13, NIV). Jesus said, “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock” (Matthew 7:24, NIV).

The Bible is the tool that will be used by the promised teacher—the Holy Spirit. We, the earthly teachers, will be effective as we first let the Spirit teach us. Each of these lessons is built around a specific Bible story. You will lead the students Into the Story and help them mine truth for their lives Out of the Story. The gems of truth are not already mined for you. You and your students will have an opportunity to dig for yourselves.

“In daily study the verse-by-verse method is often most helpful. Let the student take one verse, and concentrate the mind on ascertaining the thought that God has put into that verse for him, and then dwell upon the thought until it becomes his own. One passage thus studied until its significance is clear is of more value than the perusal of many chapters with no definite purpose in view and no positive instruction gained” (Education, p. 189).

Welcome to Cornerstone Connections.

—The Editors

PS. Don’t forget to check out the reading plan.


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what tools are provided for teaching the stories?

(Bolded text helps you review the suggested steps at a glance.)

❶ With each lesson in this Teacher's Guide you will find an Explore section with topics listed that relate to this week’s story. Use these resources to create a “program” that is relevant to your group. At www.leadoutministries.com you will find a variety of resources for exploring the topic you choose—from discussion questions to illustrations, from reader’s theater scripts to learning activities.

❷ Begin the actual “lesson” time with the What Do You Think? activity (and the Did You Know? Information) in the student lesson. The activities are designed to get your students to think, respond, and share with one another. The rich discussion that can grow out of this exercise is a great entry point. The key question to ask at the end is “Why did you respond the way you did?”

❸ Your Teacher’s Guide provides an illustration, along with a short “bridge” thought that will help you lead your students into the Bible passage itself.

❹ The heart of the lesson experience is to read the Bible passage, Into the Story, together and to discuss it with the help of your Out of the Story for Teachers questions. Other passages to compare to this one for further mining in the Word are sometimes provided as well.

❺ Then share the information about context and background that will make the story become more understandable for you and your students.

❻ You are provided with a short guide to help you unpack the other sections of the student lesson with your class. (Your students are also directed to work through one section of their lesson on their own each day by following the instructions in Making It Real.) Encourage them to do this the week before or the week after you discuss the lesson in class, whichever works best for your teaching situation.

❼ Each week’s Teacher’s Guide includes a teaching tip in Rabbi 101 that will be helpful for you to keep for future reference. You are also provided an activity and a summary with which to draw the lesson together and close.

❽ In each lesson students are provided with a reference to the volume from the Conflict of the Ages Series by Ellen White that corresponds with the week’s story. Students who choose to will be able to read the entire series in four years by following the reading plan.

- Leadout Ministries is a resource created especially for those who lead out in youth ministry at the local church. It is staffed by youth pastors and young people. Leadout Ministries can also be a clearinghouse for the great illustrations, activities, study guides, or other resources that you and your young people have used successfully and are willing to share. Just contact them (troy@leadoutministries.com) with your ideas.
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April

7—Life Is Hard . . . Work! [p. 11]
Joseph works faithfully, trusting God’s control of his life, no matter in what circumstances he finds himself.

14—Could You Do It? [p. 15]
Joseph reconnects with his family, but it takes a willingness to forgive big offenses and trust that God was in control all along.

21—I See, I Hear, I Know [p. 19]
God’s call to Moses reveals to us the compassion of God, His methods of salvation, and the humility required to be a servant of His.

28—Apply the Blood! [p. 23]
The story of the Passover is a revelation of the plan of salvation acted out in symbols. It ties forever the concepts of the blood of the Lamb and righteousness by faith.

May

5—Fleeing Slaves [p. 27]
God delivers His people from bondage, but they are not sure they want to trust the Unknown for the known. God continues to try to get through to them.

12—Unhappy Campers [p. 31]
The Israelites, like modern-day Christians, complained of discontent and boredom even in the face of supernatural outpourings of God’s grace.

19—The Covenant of Love [p. 35]
The foundation of God’s relationship with Israel begins with the reality of their deliverance. They enter into another chapter of humanity’s covenant with God.

26—God Thinks Twice [p. 39]
Instead of reflecting on the way God has led them, the Israelites allow their minds to idle and become subject to disbelief. God tells Moses He’s giving up on them.

June

2—Making Rooms for God [p. 43]
God asks for a sanctuary so that He can move right into the neighborhood with His people. The people respond to the opportunity to build it.

9—What About Me? [p. 47]
There are unique challenges to the role of leadership. There are also guidelines about how we are to respond to those in positions of leadership.

16—Get Over Yourself! [p. 51]
The 12 spies report that the land of Canaan is good and filled with abundance, but almost to a person, they doubt God can deliver it to them.

23—The “Wannabes” [p. 55]
In spite of God’s miraculous interventions on behalf of the Israelites under the leadership of Moses, an undercurrent of jealousy proves disastrous.

30—Drama in the Desert [p. 59]
God’s ultimate act of grace at the cross is foreshadowed by the serpent of bronze to whom the Israelites are to look for healing.
PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

This part of the story of Joseph picks up with Joseph running Potiphar’s house. The story is so well known that detail is not necessary. However, it is important to note that Joseph always rose to the challenge of the work that was given to him. He succeeded among men because of his faithfulness to God.

After the incident with Potiphar’s wife, we see Joseph move into another function of his ministry. That is, he became a messenger of God’s interpretations of the dreams of those around him. This is important—Joseph never interpreted a dream; rather, he brought God’s interpretation to those dreaming. This point should not be lost on us! God did not give him the ability to decipher dreams. However, by continuing to be faithful, Joseph was able to be used by God with special insights into the dreams God was giving to others. Sometimes God does not gift us miraculously, but He does use those who are available to Him.

As we close this Scripture portion, we see God setting the stage for a later answer to prayer. What a great God we serve who sets in motion things that will answer prayers for us before we even pray!

Our part in all of this is significant. We are to be faithful in the littlest mundane tasks set before us in order to: (1) demonstrate God’s character being worked out in us; (2) show God’s faithfulness in response to human faithfulness.

II. TARGET

The students will:

- Know that God values faithfulness in everything, large or small. *(Know)*
- Feel the importance of doing our best for God. *(Feel)*
- Have the opportunity to respond to God’s leading in their lives. *(Respond)*

III. EXPLORE

- Faithfulness *(Character)*
- Commitment *(Courage)*
- Hard Work *(Adversity/Trials)*
- Sex

You will find material to help you explore these and other topics with your students at www.leadoutministries.com.

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity

*Refer the students to the What Do You Think? section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.*

On a whiteboard or large paper, have the students write down a list of the silliest and smallest jobs they have ever had to do. Have them create another list of the most boring jobs they have ever had to do. Once you have a good number of suggestions on each of the lists, have students vote on which job seems like the silliest, and which the most boring. Give prizes to those whose entries are chosen. Bring the winners to the front and have them answer the following questions:
1. Give one good thing that came out of this job.
2. Would you ever do it again?
3. Do you think you glorified God by the way you did what was asked of you?

**Illustration**

*Share this illustration in your own words:*

I can’t believe I have to do this! Mark was angry at his dad for making him stand next to the car his dad was working on. He wouldn’t let Mark get his hands on the engine; in fact, he wouldn’t let Mark do much of anything but hand him the tools. Mark felt helpless, useless, and very angry that his dad didn’t think he could handle any more responsibility. In fact, Mark was so mad that he kept ignoring his dad’s requests for tools. It was frustrating for Mark’s dad to continue to ask Mark for a tool more than once. Also, when Mark’s dad had lifted the engine off the motor mounts and needed Mark’s muscles to help him move the engine, Mark was so angry he couldn’t hear his dad’s urgent calls.

When the engine was put back in and the car was running, Mark’s dad came to him and said these words: “Son, I was hoping that you could show me how responsible you could be in the little things that I give you to do. It seems that if a job is not to your liking, you don’t care about doing a good job. I was going to give you this car when we were done working on it. I had even set up a job for you in town and you could have used the car to get to your new job. However, after working with you, I’m not sure I am ready to allow you to represent me in the job. I guess I’ll keep the car a bit longer . . .”

Mark was devastated, but he learned a good lesson. Every job is important. If we are faithful in the little things, we can be trusted with the big things!

**II. TEACHING THE STORY**

**Bridge to the Story**

*Share the following in your own words:*

Our story this week gives us the same sort of example as the story just told. Joseph was faithful in the smallest things, and those small things led to larger and larger things, even to ruling under the Pharaoh in Egypt. Joseph is a great example of how we are to deal with the work that comes our way in this world. Our faithfulness is a witness to the character of God, and what we do in little things, we will do in big things. God knows this about us. The story of Joseph continually reminds us that no matter what the situation is, we should honor God and His requirements of us.

**Out of the Story for Teachers**

After you read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.

- What are the exciting parts of the story?
- What did you learn that was new to you?
- Underline the texts that you found particularly important.
- What were the important decisions that Joseph made in order to remain faithful to God?
- What would his other options have been?
- How do you think this story relates to your life?
- In what way does your life parallel Joseph’s?
- What are the pivotal decisions that you have had to make in order to remain faithful to God in your life?

**Sharing Context and Background**

Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

Joseph’s story is an ageless tale. It has intrigue, betrayal, and all the things that make up a good story. It also has a main character who is continually beyond reproach. He is thrust into extraordinary circumstances and yet always seems to prevail. Even in the situation presented to him by Potiphar’s wife, we see Joseph as a man of integrity:

> “Joseph suffered for his integrity, for his tempter revenged herself by accusing him of a foul crime, and causing him to be thrust into prison. Had Potiphar believed his wife’s charge against Joseph, the young Hebrew would have lost his life; but the modesty and uprightness that had uniformly characterized his conduct were proof of his innocence; and yet, to save the reputation of his master’s house, he was abandoned to disgrace and bondage" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 218).

After being thrown into prison, Joseph continues to be a man of integrity who again rises to prominence in the responsibilities given to him there. This reminds us of another man who understood the importance of making the best of any situation given to him. Philippians 4:13 tells us: “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (NKJV). This is
Paul's response to the situation he found himself in. Much like Joseph’s experience, Paul found himself in prison, and had to learn to serve his God from there. Joseph maintained his faithfulness in the responsibilities given to him, and therefore honored God. Paul did the same, and the result was the same.

In Philippians 4 Paul tells us that he knows the “secret” to being content. Perhaps Joseph knew this same secret. While Joseph was much ahead of Paul’s time, they both were able to tap into the same secret of contentment; that is, complete faithfulness to and reliance on God.

There are many other examples of this in Scripture, but perhaps these two men, at least for a short time in prison, both understood that this whole thing called life is not about them, but rather about God. How often do we get caught up in the idea that we are the important focus of our lives, when the focus should be on faithfulness to God’s call in our lives? We too often let ego and pettiness get in the way of the larger picture. That picture is one of a God who is intimately involved in every aspect of our lives. And it continues to be a picture of a God looking to bless us with His gifts for us.

III. CLOSING

Activity

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

Give each student a card and have them put a job they have to do in the upcoming week on the card. It might be schoolwork or job-related. Have them put their names on the cards and hand them in. Let them know that next week you will take some time to go over the cards with them and ask how they did on the com-

Tips for Top-notch Teaching

The importance of being personal

We don’t know your students. How can we? But you know them, and they know you. These examples and speaking points in this teacher’s guide should be used to get your creativity flowing. Any suggestion we have pales in comparison with what you have to bring to your relationships with your students. Don’t tell our stories as yours. Tell your stories that relate to the topic and theme.

In this way the students get to know you and trust you more, and you get to be transparent about the things that mean the most to you. You too can be as transparent as Joseph in order to do the work God is calling you to do.

Last, students have an uncanny ability to discern truth from fiction in our lives. God has called you to be exactly who you are as a teacher, and the students will appreciate it and be changed by God in you!

Teaching From . . .

Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson.

- Other Eyes
  Ask them how the quotes in Other Eyes convey the point of the story in this lesson.

- Flashlight
  Read the Flashlight statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week’s story found in the book Patriarchs and Prophets. Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from Out of the Story.

- Punch Lines
  Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week’s story. Have them read the passages and ask each one to choose the verse that speaks most directly to them today. Then ask them to explain why they chose the one they did.

  Or you might assign the passages to pairs of students to read aloud and then discuss, in order to choose the most relevant one to them.
mitments they made before God. Pray with them that God will give all of us the courage to remain faithful in the little things, both to honor Him, and in order for Him to be able to give us the big things.

**Summary**

*Share the following thoughts in your own words:*

This part of the story of Joseph can teach us so many things: how to take ownership of the small things God gives us to do, how to remain faithful in times of struggle, how to be responsible with the words God gives us. The list goes on and on. But most of all, Joseph shows us how to represent God in a world that does not know Him. By the successes that Joseph had in life, he gained the respect of his employers, his captors, and even his king. This was no accident or coincidence; God placed Joseph in those situations in order to gain credibility for the larger jobs God had for him, and Joseph never failed.

As well, this story shows us that God is in preparation for the prayers we will ask but have not yet asked. This part of the story foreshadows what is upcoming: the arrival of his brothers during the famine. God had all this in mind when He put Joseph into the situations he handled so well.

God puts us where He needs us to be in order to be able to answer prayers for others. What a wonderful God we serve!

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Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages Series. The reading that goes with this lesson is *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chapter 20.

*A special adaptation of *Patriarchs and Prophets* has been created just for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and the Pacific Press Publishing Association. Get more info about it at: cornerstoneconnections.adventist.org.
PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS
This is the story of Joseph reconnecting with his family. It is a long portion of Scripture, with the crux coming in chapter 45. Joseph plays with his brothers a bit when they come to Egypt, and by doing so he learns that they are truly repentant for having sold him into slavery. Joseph then has a decision to make: should he forgive or should he punish? Punishment would be easy for him, given the power that has been placed upon his shoulders by Pharaoh. However, Joseph decides that punishment or revenge will never be as sweet as the forgiveness that God has shown him so many times.

Because Joseph has remained faithful to a forgiving God, he knows the responsibility of God’s children for forgiveness. He finds his brothers repentant, and wants to be in a relationship with them as soon as possible. He misses his family and his father in particular. He is not willing to allow his pride or lust for revenge to stop the reunion with his family.

As you teach today’s lesson, keep in mind that all of us have someone we should forgive, or someone who can forgive us for something we have done. Since we are all in this situation, the story of Joseph has universal appeal and application. What we gain from the lesson is an understanding that everyone can be as successful and strong of character as Joseph; it just takes hard work and an adherence to God’s plan.

II. TARGET
The students will:
- Know that forgiveness, whether large or small, creates freedom for those involved. (Know)
- Feel the need to forgive and be forgiven. (Feel)
- Have the opportunity to see where they can forgive or seek forgiveness in their own lives.

III. EXPLORE
- Spirituality
- Communication
- Guilt
- God (existence of a sovereign)
You will find material to help you explore these and other topics with your students at www.leadoutministries.com.

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity
Refer the students to the What Do You Think? section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.

If any of your students do not have siblings, have them fill out the activity about a good friend, or someone with whom they spend a good deal of time. Then ask the following questions:
1. Was it easy to come up with things you don’t like about the person?
2. Was it as easy to come up with things you do like about the person?
3. Do you find yourself spending most of your time being positive about the person or negative
in to buy the doughnuts, Tim and Shannon got into an argument. One thing led to another, with a great deal of “you always . . .” and “I never . . .” Eventually Shannon pushed Tim’s head and bonked it on the window, and Tim did what any little brother would have done . . . he bit her! Shannon got out of the car and ran into the doughnut shop. When Dad came out, he was angry!

When they got home, Tim went directly to his room. A few minutes later Mom came and stood in the doorway with a very disappointed look on her face. She marched Tim out into the front room, where he stood trial for what he had done. His sister was on the couch, his parents in their chairs, and he stood in the middle. He was told to say he was sorry. He did, but he didn’t really mean it! Shannon forgave him, but she didn’t really mean it! These two just couldn’t get along.

It took a great deal of time for the two siblings to finally work things out. It’s funny, when you live with someone you think you know them well. And often everything they do gets on your nerves. It’s worth it to take the time to listen carefully and really get to know them, but most important, to ask God to help you see His big picture and how that person is supposed to fit into your life.

II. TEACHING THE STORY

Bridge to the Story
Share the following in your own words:

Joseph did what Tim and Shannon couldn’t do. He listened to what was really in his brothers’ hearts. Granted, he did this in a way that might seem deceitful (listening in on their conversations), but he did it to know their hearts. We can take the same time to get to know the hearts of those around us and become better equipped to love and to forgive when the time is right for both.

Out of the Story for Teachers
After you read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.

In groups, have students read some of the other highlights of Joseph’s story from Genesis 42 to 50. Then ask:

- Have you heard this story before?
- Was there anything in these verses that you didn’t know before?
• Could you have done what Joseph did?
• What did you think of Jacob’s reaction to the sons having to take Benjamin back to Egypt?
• Did you identify with any of the characters in the story? Which ones and why?
• Identify a section from these chapters that tells the whole theme of the story in just a few words.

Sharing Context and Background

Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

This section of the story of Joseph is the payoff. We see Joseph playing with his brothers in order to learn their hearts. It may seem cruel, but it is necessary for him to understand who they are. It would have been simple for him never to reveal his identity. Pharaoh had given him an Egyptian name. And after decades people look different. However, Joseph was willing to reunite his family as he learned of his brothers’ dedication to their father, their brother Benjamin, and their God.

The background of Egypt is always interesting in the account of Joseph’s life. It sets the stage for Moses and the Exodus later on, but here, the Egyptians are not seen negatively. Rather, they are seen as intelligent people, willing to listen to someone of character (Joseph and his recounting of the dreams). As well, they seem benevolent in their dealings with the Hebrews, specifically Jacob and his family.

The theme of filial love, or brotherly love, is dealt with as well in this chapter. Joseph’s love for his brothers and family was overwhelming, despite his history with his brothers. Joseph had let God remove from his character any need to hold old grudges or to seek revenge.

Prophecy, it should be pointed out, is a theme in this story as well. God’s ability to see beyond the veil of time is showcased. In this week’s passages, we see dreams being verified. Even the earliest hints of greatness that Joseph was given a glimpse of in his boyhood dreams come to pass in these chapters. What a powerful God we serve, one who answers the prayers of Jacob when his son Joseph was yet a young, impulsive boy, willing to be truthful with the message God was giving him. Joseph never strayed from being that person of character, and his steadfastness served him well throughout his life.

III. CLOSING

Activity

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

Give your students a bit of quiet time (two to three minutes) to be alone and to review their lives to see where forgiveness could be given or sought. After this time, bring them together and pray for them as they seek forgiveness in their lives and work to be people of character. Point out that, in response to God’s abundant mercy to us, we can allow Him to make us into
the type of person Joseph became, with forgiveness and integrity of character being our guiding principles.

**Summary**

*Share the following thoughts in your own words:*

What part does forgiveness play in our lives? Especially when we deal with siblings and family members it seems hard to forgive, and to seek that forgiveness from those we love. Maybe it is because we become too familiar, or perhaps we are too self-ish at times. We sometimes hold the largest grudges against those who are closest to us. Sometimes being a brother or sister is hard, and sometimes it is a joy. We have to get to the place where we focus on the good aspects in those around us, and release ourselves from being held back by not wanting to forgive or to seek forgiveness.

Joseph’s story is powerful in that not only was Joseph willing to forgive, but he was anxious for a reunion with those who had treated him so poorly in the past. His willingness to love is a wonderful lesson for us. He wasn’t willing to look back and exact revenge, but rather looked forward, and in doing so was able to save his family from famine and even bring them to the foreign land he now called home.
I. SYNOPSIS

The story of the call of Moses and God's promise of deliverance reveals to us the compassion of God, God's methods for salvation, and the humility required to be a servant of God. Beginning with the compassion of God, we see that God is a God who can see, hear, and know the pain of His people. Many times God's people, even His heroes in the Bible, have cried out to Him, asking if He knows their troubles. But we have the assurance that God knows about everything that goes on. He even cares if a sparrow should fall from its nest (Matthew 10:29).

But God's compassion does not only notice what is wrong; the pain in His own heart often forces Him to act. The ways in which God acts are not always easy to discern. His deliverance comes in many forms. Sometimes it may not be the way we want it, but we can be assured that God is always acting in our behalf. Moses tried to give the Jews deliverance by killing a man, but that was not God's way. The only way we can help God is to do what He asks of us. But this requires humility. We are to trust God that His method of deliverance is best; we are to trust in His salvation.

II. TARGET

The students will:

- Understand the ways in which God delivers people. (Know)
- Trust in God as He does all He can to help them. (Feel)
- Talk with God as a God who knows their hearts. (Respond)

III. EXPLORE

- Anger
- Humility
- Idolatry
- Politics

You will find material to help you explore these and other topics with your students at www.leadoutministries.com.

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? section of the student lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.

Discuss with the students the reasons that they chose to answer the way they did. Also keep in mind to seek positive ways to intervene, ways in which the oppressor may be also “released.”

Below is an alternative thought and discussion starter.

Agree or Disagree

Ask the students if they agree or disagree with the following statement and why.

“Sometimes God cares; other times He does not. This is why sometimes He does miracles; other times He does not.”
Illustration

Share this illustration in your own words:

In the country of South Africa the government practiced the apartheid, a system of racial segregation, from 1948 until 1994. Under the apartheid (apartheid), the races, classified by law into White, Black, Indian, and Coloured groups, were separated, each with their own homelands and institutions. In practice this prevented non-White people, even if actually resident in White South Africa, from having a vote or influence, restricting their rights to faraway homelands of poor-quality lands that they may never have visited.

It was a period of terrible racism. Nelson Mandela, an African born in Umtata, Transkei, wanted to free South Africa from the oppression of the new White separatist government. He became a lawyer and helped begin a political party known as the ANC (African National Congress) that opposed the apartheid. During Nelson Mandela’s struggle with the apartheid the ANC and its supporters began to receive violent treatment at the hands of the government. Nelson Mandela decided that the ANC should also use physical force as well as political power to accomplish their ends. The fighting and violence began increasing, and as a result Nelson Mandela and many of his associates were jailed for attempts to use force to remove the apartheid government. Twenty-seven years later, Nelson Mandela was released from jail a different man. He again joined his political party and ran for president, and this time, in 1994, he became the first South African president elected by a nonbiased, peaceful vote.

II. TEACHING THE STORY

Bridge to the Story

Share the following in your own words:

The story of Nelson Mandela and the way he led the non-White races to liberty in South Africa is very similar in many ways to the story of Moses and his deliverance of the Jews. Do you think God knew about the oppression of the people in South Africa and was also helping them? It’s reassuring to know that God is still active today. As you listen to the story think about what it would be like to experience God’s deliverance in such an awesome way.

Out of the Story for Teachers

After you read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.

- Why do you think God had to lead Moses into the wilderness for 40 years before He could let him lead the Israelites out of Egypt?
- How do you think the Israelites felt while they had to wait for God to release them? Perhaps they suspected that God had forgotten about them.
- The Israelites had to endure many years of hardship before they were set free. Why do you think God sometimes lets people wait so long?
- Does this story remind you in any way of the Second Coming? Think about the similarities.
- When did God notice the Israelites? (While they were still slaves, obviously.) How do you think this applies to you and when God notices you?
- If you were a slave to a sin, does that mean God does not know or care about you until you stop sinning?
- Moses wanted to free the Israelites, so he killed an Egyptian. Is it ever right to break God’s law to get something that is good in the long run? Moses justified the killing of the Egyptian by the fact that the Israelites would be set free. Think of times in your life when you have tried to justify doing something bad to get something good.
- How do you think Moses felt when he ran away from Pharaoh? There is a saying that says a “bird that has had a broken pinion never flies as high again.” Think about how this applies to Moses and to you. Do you think God gives second chances to those who may have messed up the first time? How do you think the second chance compares to the first?
- The Jews were given a promise of deliverance by God, simply because He loved them.
- You have been given one too; how does that make you feel?

Sharing Context and Background

Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

The story of Moses and the promise of deliverance for the Jews is filled with deep revelation about the character of God. It’s also a story rich with Christological types. For these reasons we can look to
the example of God's dealing with the Israelites to inform our own understandings and expectations of God's dealings with us. The examples that serve our understanding best are: (1) the nature of our captivity, (2) God's knowledge of our situations and the reason for His concern, and (3) the nature of God's actions on our behalf.

1. The Israelites had been captive in Egypt for approximately 400 years. Unfortunately, a new ruler who did not know Joseph (Exodus 1:8) began the slavery of his relatives and descendants. This story is similar to the story of humanity. Adam and Eve, who were once governors over the whole world, were free and happy under God's governance. Unfortunately, there was a change in government, and this world fell under the rule of the devil. This is when the slavery of sin began. But God once again desires to release us from the slavery of the devil; that is why He sent His Son.

2. The revelation of God's character in this week's story is of a being intimately aware of the pain and suffering of men, women, and children. God's concern is raised by the cry and groan of agony of the people of Israel at the hands of their oppressors. This pain on the part of the Israelites, and cruelty on the part of the Egyptians, engages God's desire for justice. God's desire to reorder unequal relationships is evident throughout the Bible. Consider Christ's teaching on riches gained through corruption, or His sermon on the mount, or His treatment of those considered unclean, or His teaching about the relationship husbands should have to their wives. The greatest cause of pain to God is the treatment of others as less valuable than oneself. The greatest cause for compassion in God is the sight of the oppressed. Our own sorrows today are all that are needed to compel God to have compassion on us. Our oppression at the hands of the devil is the reason He wants to deliver us.

3. The nature of God's actions is the part of this story that is rich with Christological symbols. The deliverance of God's people was to be done in a manner that would pour contempt on human pride; the deliverer was to go forth as a humble shepherd (see Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 251). This method of deliverance reveals what is required of us to be delivered; we are to walk humbly with God (see Micah 6:8). This humble walk contrasts deeply with the pride Moses displayed when he killed the Egyptian. We are also to trust God's providence and His claims to be able to save all those who come to Him.

III. CLOSING

Activity

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

Teaching From . . .

Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson.

- **Other Eyes**
  Ask them how the quotes in Other Eyes convey the point of the story in this lesson.

- **Flashlight**
  Read the Flashlight statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week's story found in the book Patriarchs and Prophets. Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from Out of the Story.

- **Punch Lines**
  Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week's story. Have them read the passages and ask each one to choose the verse that speaks most directly to them today. Then ask them to explain why they chose the one they did.

  Or you might assign the passages to pairs of students to read aloud and then discuss, in order to choose the most relevant one to them.
Ask your students to make a list of three people, including their name at the bottom of the list, for whom they want to pray for God's deliverance this week. Then make another list of ways in which they can work with God to provide deliverance for the same people, themselves included.

**Summary**

*Share the following thoughts in your own words:*

God makes three promises in this story—
1. I see, I hear, I know!
2. Surely I will be with you!
3. Surely I will bring you out of Egypt; I will deliver you!

In order to activate these three promises, God makes only one requirement of us—trust and obey.

God is just the same today as He was in the days of Moses, and His promises to us, each one of us, are just the same, too. Christ repeated every one of these promises to us. Let us live thankfully, prayerfully, and expectantly as we wait upon God for deliverance.

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**cornerstone connections**

Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages Series. The reading that goes with this lesson is *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chapter 22.

*A special adaptation of *Patriarchs and Prophets* has been created just for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and the Pacific Press Publishing Association. Get more info about it at: cornerstoneconnections.adventist.org.
PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

The story of the Passover is a revelation of the plan of salvation acted out in symbols. It speaks to such topics as righteousness by faith and the blood of the Lamb. These two concepts form the basis for this week’s lesson. From the story and this lesson it is anticipated that the students will:

1. Graciously acknowledge the cost of the blood, that is, Christ’s life.
2. Understand that the blood becomes valuable to them only when, through obedience and loving acceptance, it is personally applied to their lives.
3. Know what the application of the blood to their lives will do, i.e., cleanse, forgive, and restore.

These three ideas will be illustrated from within the story by the sacrifice of the lamb, the necessity of the application of the blood, and God’s resulting action upon the demonstration of the blood on the doors. In this lesson it is possible to overstress the importance of the application of the blood. Although it is very necessary, please do not forget to emphasize the grace and love of God in His giving of the blood.

II. TARGET

The students will:

- Realize what the blood of the Lamb will do in their lives. (Know)
- Experience gratitude toward God for His giving of His blood. (Feel)
- React by applying the blood of the Lamb to their lives. (Respond)

III. EXPLORE

- Rebellion
- Great controversy*
- Festivals (biblical)

You will find material to help you explore these and other topics with your students at www.leadoutministries.com.

* Fundamental Belief No. 8.

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.

This activity is designed to frustrate the young people. Hopefully, they will come to the realization that to possess anything without it being able to be used is useless. Make the connection between receiving useless gifts and ones that actually work, and use this to illustrate the necessity of receiving and applying Christ’s blood in their lives.

Illustration

Share this illustration in your own words:

This is the story of Chris, Norman, and Busiswe, three theology students from Helderberg College, South Africa, who went on a theology campout in 2003. The theology campout was to be held up on the west coast of South Africa, about 80 kilometers south...
of Elands Bay.

Elands Bay just happens to be one of the best surfing spots in the world. So when all the other theology students were packing Bibles and sleeping bags, Chris, an avid surfer, was packing and hiding his surfboard. On Sunday morning, when all the students were being led by a teacher in a devotional in the same hall where everyone also slept at night, Chris, Norman, and Busiswe decided it was time to make a run for it.

Norman and Busi sneaked out of the meeting and went and waited in Busi’s car with the engine running, while Chris had to sneak his board out from under his bed. Unfortunately, Chris wasn’t very sneaky, and the remaining 30 students saw Chris running for the door with a surfboard that had magically appeared under his arm. Chris jumped into the waiting car, and the trio sped off down the road.

About 50 meters down the road it dawned on them that they didn’t exactly know how to get to this amazing surf break. So they continued in the direction they had chosen until they came upon a petrol station. They inquired of the attendant, who gave them directions, but the attendant didn’t seem so sure of himself. With directions in hand and their spirits lifted, they drove in what they thought was the right direction, Chris at the wheel speeding as he eagerly anticipated surfing.

Things slowed down when the road they were on turned into gravel, and gradually got worse and worse, making the BMW they were in bounce and shake in a way BMW’s are not meant to. They had to make a decision whether or not it would be worth continuing on their way. So they decided they would check the surf. If it was flat, it wouldn’t be worth continuing the journey.

How do you check the surf on the coast of South Africa when you are on a dirt road in the middle of nowhere? Well, Norman’s cousin was a surfer who lived back in Cape Town, so he gave him a ring. Norman’s cousin referred him to about three other people, and after half an hour of phone calls they still had no idea if there was even going to be salt water at Elands. Sadly they turned back. Two hours later they finally returned to the camp and the scorn of their teachers just as lunch was finishing. As they were getting out of the car, Norman reached under his seat to get his wallet and pulled out a book. It was a book Chris had purchased a month or two before. It was entitled Top Surf Spots in South Africa. They opened up to the page on Elands Bay. There was a nice map with directions on how to get there that didn’t involve a dirt road. And there was also a phone number to ring for a report on what the surf was doing!

They were so annoyed with themselves. If they had only realized that they had a book filled with everything they needed to know, it would have changed everything!

II. TEACHING THE STORY

Bridge to the Story

Share the following in your own words:
The three people in the story above would have benefited a lot if they had known about the map and used it! In the same way, the Israelites benefited, in fact were saved, because they were told about the blood of the lamb, and they used it! As you read the story about the Passover think about what you know about the blood of Christ shed for you, and what it can do for your salvation.

Out of the Story for Teachers

After you read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.

• What do you think it means to apply the blood of Christ to your door?
• What does the blood of Christ do? (See Punch Lines for texts concerning this.)
• How do you think it would have felt to sacrifice a perfect little lamb that had been living with you?
• How would you feel if you killed the lamb, then did not apply its blood?
• Even though the plague had not yet come, God’s people were to follow the directions God gave them—they obeyed by faith. In what ways does God instruct you to obey by faith?
• What would it look like today for God to lead you or me out of captivity and into the Promised Land?
• In the story the Israelites are told to eat the Passover with their clothes and shoes on, ready to leave. Why do you think God instructed them to do this and how does that apply to our rescue from slavery to sin today?
• In the story it says: “Then the people bowed down and worshiped” (Exodus 12:27, NIV). Why
did they do this? They had received only a promise; nothing had happened yet! Have you ever bowed low and worshipped God for something He has promised you? If not why not?

• This story also instructs the people to tell their children why they keep the feast when the children ask. The answer they are to give is that they keep it because God freed them from slavery in Egypt. Have you ever asked anyone why they keep the ordinances of humility and the Lord’s Supper—the continuation of the Passover? (See the Did You Know? section.) What did they tell you?

Sharing Context and Background

Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

The story of the institution of the Passover feast provides us with deep spiritual insight into the nature of salvation. Consider the following points:

1. The blood that saves comes only from the sacrificed lamb.
   The lamb’s blood on the doorposts in the story of the Passover is all that is required for the salvation of the Israelites. What must be understood is that there are no saving merits in the doorpost, or in the house, but only in the blood of the lamb. This teaches us the absolute necessity of receiving Christ’s blood for our salvation.

2. The saving blood must be applied to our lives.
   Once the lamb has been slain, we must act in faith and obey God’s directions about how we receive the saving grace of the blood. Once again, this is not to increase our merit. But, simply, to receive the benefits we must accept the gift.

3. The blood does something in our lives.
   The blood, once received into our lives, forgives, cleanses, and restores. See the Punch Lines for the biblical texts concerning this. It is only because God graciously gave us the blood that we have the ability to let it forgive, clean, and restore us.

Other Notes of Interest

Exodus 12:11—Passover
   “The English translation ‘Passover’ does not do justice to the Hebrew terminology (pesah). That the verb has to do with protection can be seen in Isaiah 31:5, where it is parallel to shielding and delivering. The Lord is not portrayed as ‘passing over’ the door but as protecting the entrance from the slaughtering angel (see 12:23). The blood on the doorposts and lintel can now be seen as purifying the doorway in preparation for the Lord’s presence.”

Exodus 12:12-30—The Tenth Plague
   “Egyptian kingship festival. There may be some echo here of the famous Egyptian Sed festival, which represented a renewal of royal authority. Its celebration
was intended for all the gods to affirm the kingship of Pharaoh, while here, as a result of the plagues, all the gods must acknowledge the kingship of Yahweh—not a new enthronement, but a recognition of His ongoing power. In the Sed festival the king asserted his dominance of the land by going throughout the land (symbolically) as he desired. Pharaoh’s kingship is being mocked even as Yahweh’s is being asserted, for God goes throughout the land to establish His dominance by the plague.”

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**Activity**

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

This story has three basic insights into salvation from which we can learn. These are the cost of the blood, what needs to happen to the blood, and what the blood does for those who apply it to their doors.

For the closing activity, separate your class into three groups. In these three groups they will write a prayer in the form of a letter.

The first group should write a letter to God to thank Him for giving His own blood for our salvation.

The second group should write a letter accepting the blood of Christ in humility and repentance.

The third group should write a letter asking and thanking God for what His blood can and will do in their lives. (To see what the blood of Christ can do in your life, see the Punch Lines.)

Once this activity is finished, combine the letters and read the prayer. If possible make copies of this prayer and distribute them for the class.

**Summary**

Share the following thoughts in your own words:

- God gave His blood in love and grace.
- We must apply His blood to our lives in thanks and repentance, because it will forgive, clean, and restore us.
- Receiving the blood of Christ will in turn make us more grace-filled people.

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**RABBI 101**

Tips for Top-notch Teaching

Sometimes it may be useful to ask the students whether they agree or disagree with a statement. This is just a simple exercise that will involve the student in the following conversation as they wish to discover what others thought. But when conducting this activity you must be cautious about requesting the students to make a public display of their opinion, in case they open themselves to ridicule. In many cases it would be enough to ask them the question without requesting a public demonstration of their answer. Here is a simple activity that relates to this lesson.

Agree or Disagree—

1. To be rich you need only to have a lot of money in your bank account.
2. To be truly rich you need to spend what you have in your bank account.

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Reminder the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages Series. The reading that goes with this lesson is *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chapters 23 and 24.

*A special adaptation of *Patriarchs and Prophets* has been created just for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and the Pacific Press Publishing Association. Get more info about it at: cornerstoneconnections.adventist.org.

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PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

The story of the Israelites crossing the Red Sea captures the human story on a number of different levels. First, it tells the story of salvation. God comes to the rescue of His people and delivers them from bondage.

This is also a story of the human propensity to waffle back and forth between faith and doubt. God’s redemption of the Jewish slaves could not have been more dramatic. The Israelites witnessed firsthand the amazing power of God to split the Red Sea to accommodate their safe crossing. God led them by a cloud during the day and a pillar of fire at night. That God was in this situation with His people was clear from the beginning. Nevertheless, in spite of God’s clear leading, the Israelites quickly slipped into doubting God and criticizing Moses and Aaron. How fickle the human spirit can be!

This story also informs our understanding of worship. The song of deliverance in Exodus 15 ranks as one of the most profound expressions of worship ever written. It really is the song of every human being, for we are all sinners in desperate need of God’s grace.

Finally, this story tells the human story of God’s undying love for His people. As God displayed patience with His people of old, so He continues to model the same longsuffering spirit toward His church. The story of the Israelites crossing the Red Sea informs our understanding of our identity as a church. Today, we are His beloved bride He died to redeem.

II. TARGET

The students will:

- Learn the story of salvation, i.e., God coming to the rescue of ungrateful, undeserving people. (Know)
- Sense the spirit of human rebellion and see the challenge that God faces in dealing with the human race. (Feel)
- Have an opportunity to decide whether or not to accept God’s provision of grace. (Respond)

III. EXPLORE

- Faith
- Worship
- Salvation (experience of)*
- Identity (as a church)

You will find material to help you explore these and other topics with your students at www.leadoutministries.com.

* Fundamental Belief No. 10.

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.

Divide the class into five groups and assign one of the five scenarios in What Do You Think? to each group. Give them a few minutes to plan a coherent
The next morning, as he was working in his study, there came a loud knock at his door. When he called “come in,” a construction foreman appeared, removing his hard hat as he entered.

“Excuse me, Pastor. I’m from Acme Construction Company over in the next county. We’re building a huge shopping mall. We need some fill dirt. Would you be willing to sell us a chunk of that mountain behind the church? We’ll pay you for the dirt we remove and pave all the exposed area free of charge—if we can have it right away. We can’t do anything else until we get the dirt in and allow it to settle properly.”

The little church was dedicated the next Sunday as originally planned, and there were far more members with “mountain-moving faith” on opening Sunday than there had been the previous week!

While this story may be an “urban legend,” greater things than this have been accomplished by faith.

II. TEACHING THE STORY

Bridge to the Story

Share the following in your own words:
Questions for consideration: Do miracles such as that produce faith? Or could it be that faith produces miracles? That is to suggest, when we step out in faith and act on the conviction that God will move a mountain, what often follows is what many would deem a “miracle.” But had we never acted on our faith, the miracle would not have occurred.

In the case of the Israelites, would God have parted the Red Sea had Moses never lifted the rod in his hand? Could it be that miracles such as the parting of the Red Sea come about because we trust God enough to take that leap of faith?

Out of the Story for Teachers

After you read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.

- What strikes you most about this story?
- How can you know God’s will? God led the Israelites out of Egypt by a cloud and a pillar of fire; consequently, it was easy for them to know the way God was leading. Do you ever wish God would make His will more obvious in your life? Although God does not usually reveal His will through clouds or fire, He is still just as interested in providing you with guidance. How
does God make His will known today?

- How would you explain Exodus 14:4 in which God says, “I will harden Pharaoh’s heart” (NIV)? Research the commentaries to see how some scholars have dealt with that sticky text.

- Reflect on Moses’ answer to the grumbling mobs in Exodus 14:13, 14. In light of this statement of faith, it should come as no surprise to find Moses in God’s Hall of Faith, as recorded in Hebrews 11. Compare the story in Exodus 14 with Moses’ legacy recorded in Hebrews 11:23-29. What would it look like today to have the faith of Moses? What risks would that involve for you?

- What are some common “armies of Pharaoh” today that seek to prevent us from following God? How can we tap into God’s power in order to bury these armies that threaten to destroy us?

Shortly after the Israelites were delivered from Pharaoh, the Bible records: “Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the Desert of Shur. For three days they traveled in the desert without finding water. . . . So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, ‘What are we to drink?’” (Exodus 15:22-24, NIV).

Have you ever had a mountaintop experience with God that was followed by a valley of despair? Why do you suppose this often happens? How could the Israelites forget so quickly how God had been so faithful in leading them out of Egypt?

Sharing Context and Background

Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

1. The method of leading the Jews by way of a cloud and fire struck a familiar chord in the ancient world. It was the common practice among the Persians and the Greeks to use fire and smoke as signals in their marches. According to one well-known papyrus, the commander of an Egyptian army is called “a flame in the darkness at the head of his soldiers.” Similarly, the Lord also used fire and clouds to manifest Himself as the leader and general of His army (see Exodus 15:3, 6).

2. Discuss the following commentary by Ellen G. White: “The great lesson here taught is for all time. Often the Christian life is beset by dangers, and duty seems hard to perform. The imagination pictures impending ruin before and bondage or death behind. Yet the voice of God speaks clearly, ‘Go forward.’ We should obey this command, even though our eyes cannot penetrate the darkness, and we feel the cold waves about our feet. The obstacles that hinder our progress will never disappear before a halting, doubting spirit. Those who defer obedience till every shadow of uncertainty disappears and there remains no risk of failure or defeat will never obey at all. Unbelief whispers, ‘Let us wait till the

Teaching From . . .

Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson.

- Other Eyes
  Ask them how the quotes in Other Eyes convey the point of the story in this lesson.

- Flashlight
  Read the Flashlight statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week’s story found in the book Patriarchs and Prophets. Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from Out of the Story.

- Punch Lines
  Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week’s story. Have them read the passages and ask each one to choose the verse that speaks most directly to them today. Then ask them to explain why they chose the one they did.

Or you might assign the passages to pairs of students to read aloud and then discuss, in order to choose the most relevant one to them.
obstructions are removed, and we can see our way clearly;’ but faith courageously urges an advance, hoping all things, believing all things” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 290).

3. Exodus 14:3 offers this interesting detail in the story: “Pharaoh will think, ‘The Israelites are wandering around the land in confusion, hemmed in by the desert’” (NIV). Originally Moses intended to go to the Promised Land through the wilderness, but God redirected him toward the south. Hearing this news, Pharaoh knew that they were completely “hemmed in,” since the waters of the Red Sea then extended to the Bitter Lakes. (In ancient times the Red Sea extended much farther north than it does today.) So Pharaoh assumed that Moses would have them trapped against the Red Sea. But God’s vision is much more encompassing than is humans’ vision. When we might not be able to see a way out of dire circumstances, God knows a million ways to deliver us.

### III. CLOSING

#### Activity

Break the students up into small groups and have each group create a list entitled “Top Ten Ways to Build Faith.” Encourage each group to brainstorm specific ways that we can build our faith. Have each group then share their list with the entire Sabbath School class. After everyone has heard all the lists, have the entire group take the best suggestions from the different lists to put together a combined top ten list.

#### Summary

Share the following thoughts in your own words:

The story of God’s deliverance of Israel highlights the messy realities of faith. It seems everyone’s spiritual journey is comprised of mountaintops and valleys. In the case of Israel, no sooner did they experience God’s miraculous escort through the Red Sea than they started complaining about how God had abandoned them. They whined, “We should have stayed in Egypt rather than come to the desert to die.” Because their story often mirrors our own, this lesson offers an ideal opportunity to explore ways that we can keep our faith strong through both the flower gardens and the deserts.

This story also offers a wonderful metaphor of salvation. Just as God intervened for His children of old, He is eager to lead His children today. Deliverance comes at the hand of a gracious God—it is unearned, undeserved, and unmistakably the greatest story of the human race.

Finally, this story provides insights into worship. Just as Moses led God’s people in the song of deliverance after crossing the Red Sea, so our worship is in response to God’s provision for us. We worship our amazing God because, in Christ, He has provided a way of escape from sin and death. What else can we do but sing and shout His praises?

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*Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages Series. The reading that goes with this lesson is *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chapter 25.*

*A special adaptation of *Patriarchs and Prophets* has been created just for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and the Pacific Press Publishing Association. Get more info about it at: cornerstoneconnections.adventist.org.*
unhappy campers

PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

The story of the Israelites wandering in the wilderness connects with our story today in different ways. First, we find a lesson about contentment. God manifested Himself in dramatic ways to the Jews. Parting the Red Sea for their safe crossing, drowning Pharaoh’s army, leading them by a cloud during the day and fire at night, supplying them with quail and manna to eat, transforming a rock into an artesian well—these are a few of the miraculous ways that God provided for His chosen nation. Nevertheless, they complained that it wasn’t enough. Still today it is easy to grumble in the face of supernatural outpourings of grace from God. When will we learn simplicity? peace? contentment?

This is also a story about trust. Time and time again God showed Himself to be trustworthy. It’s hard to comprehend why the Israelites ever doubted God. After all, He always came through for them. Always! And yet, in spite of God’s faithfulness, doubt so often taints that childlike trust in the Father.

This story also touches on the issue of boredom. If we are not careful we too can become so self-absorbed that even the Creator and Sustainer of all life gets drowned out by our pettiness. We must recognize divine encounters as such and guard against becoming overly enamored with ourselves so that we are no longer amazed by the Almighty.

All in all, this story depicts God’s grace for His children. Just as God led His people in the ancient world, He longs to mold and guide His people today. This story challenges all of us—young and old alike—to trust God and follow His leading.

II. TARGET

The students will:

- Understand that God is absolutely trustworthy. (Know)
- Be sensitized to the supernatural realities in ordinary life. (Feel)
- Be challenged to fully trust God with their lives. (Respond)

III. EXPLORE

- Contentment/Peace
- Simplicity
- Boredom
- Trust
- The Sabbath

You will find material to help you explore these and other topics with your students at www.leadoutministries.com.

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.

Additional Activities

Circle what you believe to be the top three barriers to trusting God:
II. TEACHING THE STORY

Bridge to the Story

Share the following in your own words:

Lance’s flavor of faith is nothing new. It’s at least as old as the children of Israel. When God was acting like God—pummeling the bad guys with plagues, splitting the Red Sea, renovating a rock into a water fountain, and so on—then they were game to trust. But when the perks dried up, so did their faith.

Trusting God is the same story today. There will be both miracles and misery. The key question is this: Will you trust God at all times?

Out of the Story for Teachers

After you read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.

• What jumps out at you in this story?
• Why do you suppose the Israelites were so fickle in their faith? Do you ever find yourself wavering in your trust of God?

Consider this text: “In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron” (Exodus 16:2, NIV). What do you make of the detail that “the whole community” participated in the pity party? What does this teach us about peer pressure?

“The Israelites said to them, ‘If only we had died by the Lord’s hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death’” (verse 3, NIV). Do you suppose the Israelites were overreacting a bit? Does the comment about dying in Egypt feel melodramatic to you? Explain your answer.

“But the people were thirsty for water there, and they grumbled against Moses. They said, ‘Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?’” (Exodus 17:3, NIV). How is it possible for the Israelites to complain about their thirst so soon after God took care of their hunger by providing manna? Can you think of other examples from the Bible when people complained to God? (Jonah, Jeremiah, Elijah, etc.) Identify common threads that weave through all of the stories.

Engage the students in a conversation about what it means to “trust Jesus” today. Explain that “trusting Jesus” simply means believing that Jesus was right about what He taught. If we trust Him, we then live according to His teachings. To make this idea practical,

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Busyness</th>
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<th>Ignorance</th>
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<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>Wealth</td>
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<td>Technology</td>
<td>Peer pressure</td>
<td>Pride</td>
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<td>Atheists</td>
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Now list three more possible barriers to trusting God:

________________________________________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________

Complete the following statements:

Trusting God . . .
Looks like:___________________________________
Feels like: ___________________________________
Sounds like: _________________________________

Illustration

Share this illustration in your own words:

It wasn’t that Lance didn’t trust in God. He did—so long as God behaved like God. That meant God needed to be a celestial Santa Claus and hand out heaps of health and happiness. He also expected God to keep his bank account flush with cash.

For a while there, Lance was a big believer. He aced his classes without studying (“I just trusted God and He gave me wisdom,” he’d say), got a new Mustang convertible for Christmas (“Dad’s dot-com company went public”), his acne was under control (“Lucky genes, I guess”), and he dated a girl that could stop a riot with her looks (“She’s no library upstairs—but what a staircase!”).

But then some bad breaks cracked Lance’s porcelain life. In one year his father’s business went belly-up, his girlfriend hooked up with the captain of the basketball team, and he fell asleep while driving and crashed his car into a telephone pole.

Suddenly God wasn’t behaving like Himself. At least that’s the way it appeared to Lance. How can I trust God, Lance wondered, if my life is as miserable as the next guy’s?

In the end, Lance’s faith was conditional: he’d play the part of being a Christian so long as God lived up to His end of the bargain. But when life turned sour, Lance bailed on God.

Unfortunately, lukewarm Christians like Lance are as common as a cold. They’re hot when things are cruising smoothly, but when turbulence hits they’re bad-mouthing God all through the storm.
go through the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) quizzing the young people on what it would mean in practical terms to trust Jesus in the areas of our lives that He talks about. For example, read Matthew 5:27-30, then ask what it means to trust Jesus when it comes to sexual purity; read Matthew 6:25-34 and ask what it means to trust Jesus with our worries; read Matthew 7:1-5 and discuss trusting Jesus in light of our penchant to judge others. In the end, help students to see that “trusting Jesus” means believing and behaving as if we think that Jesus knew what He was talking about. It’s that simple.

Sharing Context and Background

Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

In Exodus 16:25-28 Moses tells the Israelites that they would not find manna on Sabbath. They could gather a double portion on Friday and it would “not stink or get maggots in it” (verse 24, NIV). Notice that Sabbath observance was part of the Jewish culture before God even gave them the Ten Commandments. Still today, God calls His chosen people to remember the Sabbath. Just as it was an issue of trust for the Israelites of old, it remains an issue of trust for God’s true followers today. How so? Jon Paulien suggests three reasons:

1. The Sabbath is the ideal response to what Jesus has done for us.
The Sabbath reminds us to rest from our endless struggle to be good enough, to stop sinning, to earn our way to heaven. And in our frenzy to be good enough, God whispers a gift of the Sabbath as a reminder to rest. The work is finished in Christ on the cross. Revel in the joy of just being with Him. Rest.

“...a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience” (Hebrews 4:9-11).

2. The Sabbath is an ideal test of loyalty to God.
Even non-Christians believe you should not steal or kill or lie. Most everyone observes nine of the Ten Commandments. But only a few keep all the commandments—including the fourth commandment. Why is the command to “remember the Sabbath day” so important? It is important because it is a symbol of trusting God. It’s not logical. To rest on the Sabbath simply because God says so is an absurd notion to those who do not trust God. But because God is a personal friend in whom we can fully trust, we obey. And that’s all the logic His true followers need.

3. The Sabbath is the ideal symbol of following Jesus all the way.
Jesus kept the Sabbath. Thus He set an example for His followers.

One devout Christian woman who has impacted hundreds for the cause of Christ lives by a simple motto: “Yes, Lord!”

Such is the motto of God’s remnant. The prayer of those who fully trust in Christ will be: “If Jesus kept the Sabbath and He calls me to do the same, then, ‘Yes Lord!’”

Teaching From . . .

Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson.

- Other Eyes
  Ask them how the quotes in Other Eyes convey the point of the story in this lesson.

- Flashlight
  Read the Flashlight statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week’s story found in the book Patriarchs and Prophets. Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from Out of the Story.

- Punch Lines
  Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week’s story. Have them read the passages and ask each one to choose the verse that speaks most directly to them today. Then ask them to explain why they chose the one they did.

  Or you might assign the passages to pairs of students to read aloud and then discuss, in order to choose the most relevant one to them.
III. CLOSING

**Activity**

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

Bring a stack of magazines and have students analyze the advertisements in them. Point out that some of the brightest brains in the world devote themselves to selling us on the message that “We will be happy when we have a faster car and slower vacations, when we sport thinner thighs and bigger biceps, when we have a tanner face and whiter teeth.” Advertisers have convinced us that we need to spend money to alter every part of our body except our toenail muscles (and it’s just a matter of time before someone comes up with a machine and an infomercial to pitch that one).

Invite the students to look at the ads again but this time to see them through a “lens of God-trust.” In other words, if we fully trust God for all of our needs (as the Israelites failed to do in the wilderness), we need not buy into a commercial that claims we cannot be happy without the latest, greatest product on the market. How does trusting God change our perspective on what we need?

**Summary**

Share the following thoughts in your own words:

This lesson offers an ideal opportunity to invite students to fully trust God for all their needs. The grace God displays toward the Israelites in caring for all their needs is the same grace God longs to shower upon His children today. One of the ways in which we enter into this trusting rhythm of life is by observing the Sabbath. The result of truly trusting God is always peace and contentment.

Many people today struggle with a spirit of unrest and boredom. They buy into the bunkum that they will be happy when they get a new car or a prettier girlfriend or a better job. It is the mature follower of Christ who discovers the joy in fully trusting God. Through a life of simplicity and radical trust in Jesus, we can experience an adventure of faith that really is out of the world. Had the Israelites fully trusted God in the wilderness they could have chilled out in the assumption of knowing their God would care for them. Perhaps then they would have enjoyed the incredible miracles God blessed them with instead of complaining that God was jerking them around.
PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

The Israelites were led from a life of bondage to a place where they could begin a new life with new possibilities. But the idea of being children of God was new too. The religion of Egypt had so corrupted the children of Abraham that they had no idea what it meant to serve the God called Jehovah. And much like an awkward introduction between two strangers, the relationship between God and Israel began with the wonder of what God was like and what He wanted from them.

The very foundation of God’s relationship with Israel was based on the reality of their deliverance. “You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself” (Exodus 19:4, NIV). Free from the oppression of slavery and the influence of idolatry, the Israelites were chosen to enter into another chapter of humanity’s covenant with God (a legally binding relationship contracted between two parties)—to be a people with a purpose for the world. Ellen White claims that “God honored them by making them the guardians and keepers of His law, but it was to be held as a sacred trust for the whole world. The precepts of the Decalogue are adapted to all mankind, and they were given for the instruction and government of all” (Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 305).

In the same way that every healthy relationship has rules that shape the way two parties think and behave toward each other, so God and Israel entered a sacred covenant together. The Ten Commandments were a specific, timeless series of precepts clearly outlining the legally binding relationship contracted with God, which also affected their relationship to one another. The underlying principle of all the commandments was the plea to love God with all their “heart, soul, and strength.” Such a passionate approach to thinking and believing could potentially urge a self-absorbed, ignorant world back to their Creator. This lesson is the story of how those laws were communicated and their intent.

II. TARGET

The students will:

- Think about the nature and purpose of God’s law. (Know)
- Sense God’s earnest desire for an intimate walk with people in the commands He gives. (Feel)
- Choose to live in harmony with the God who redeemed them from sin. (Respond)

III. EXPLORE

- Great controversy
- Trustworthiness
- Law of God

You will find material to help you explore these and other topics with your students at www.leadoutministries.com.

1 Fundamental Belief No. 8.
2 Fundamental Belief No. 19.
TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity
Refer the students to the What Do You Think? section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.
- What did you rank first, second, and third and why?
- What command, if earnestly kept by people, would make the most difference in the world and why?

Illustration
Share this illustration in your own words:
Kenneth James managed a large village of apartments. The massive apartment complex had tremendous need for upkeep, care, and repair, so Ken would hire a top-notch maintenance crew for whom he had high expectations. Ken had three rules for the maintenance team:
Always be kind and respectful to the tenants—no matter what the circumstances may be.
Always be willing to do the little things to make the tenants feel comfortable and cared for.
Always promise less and deliver more.
When a sink would leak or a door would need to be fixed, Ken’s crew would faithfully obey the simple rules that were communicated to all employees. Sometimes a team member would compromise one of the three rules and Ken would take them to his office and show them pictures of himself and the people who lived in the complex. He would remind them: “These people are why we are here. I am good friends with many of them and hope to be with the rest. If you want to work here, you need to be kind, you need to do the little things, and you need to deliver more than you promise.”

Over time the maintenance team began to see the impact of such a work ethic and started to take great pride in the whole system. Working for Ken and for the tenants that lived in the apartment village became a joy, and the “rules” became a joy, and ultimately second nature.

II. TEACHING THE STORY

Bridge to the Story

Share the following in your own words:
Is it possible that getting the law of God into your heart as it states in Hebrews 10:16 and Jeremiah 31:33 occurs through a similar process to the one outlined in the illustration above?
What came first, the pride, the joy, or the obedience?

Out of the Story for Teachers
After you read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.
- Exodus 24:10 says Moses and others “saw the God of Israel. Under his feet was something like a pavement made of sapphire, clear as the sky itself” (NIV). Hebrew tradition has it that the Ten Commandments were cut from the pavement of sapphire. Compare this verse with Numbers 15:38-40. Why do you think the tassels were supposed to have a blue cord? What color is a sapphire?
- A covenant is a legally binding relationship contracted between two parties. Where in this story do you see some elements of a covenant? Check the Punch Lines as well.
- Why do you think Moses was on the mountain for 40 days and 40 nights?
- Why do you think this story of God giving His law to people is significant today?
- When the children of Israel were given God’s law to live by, they had already been delivered from Egypt and liberated from their oppressors. How would you describe the relationship between salvation (being redeemed by God’s grace) and obeying His law?

Sharing Context and Background
Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

Seeing the Face of God in the List
The law of God is often referred to as the “transcript of God’s character.” If you think of the character traits of people you know, you can also think of rules they live by. In many ways, God’s law, even in the form of a list of things to do and not do, outlines and sketches out what God is like.

Why is it so important that we “shall not murder”? Because God is the source of life, and He has deemed that life is sacred. We “don’t lie” because God is truth.
We are to remain faithful to our spouse because God is pure and faithful—always. In every command there is an enduring quality that conveys something about who God is. Examine the Ten Commandments in groups or pairs and look, not only at what God wants you to do or not do, but try to see what each command says about God’s character.

The Blue Stone, the Throne, and Christ

Hebrew tradition has it that the law of God was cut out as a solid piece of sapphire stone from a specific place on Mount Sinai. The Bible seems to support it as well:

In Exodus 24:10 the Bible says that Moses and others “saw the God of Israel. Under his feet was something like a pavement made of sapphire, clear as the sky itself” (NIV). When the prophet Ezekiel saw a vision of the throne of God, there is a significant resemblance to what Moses saw on the mountain: “Above the expanse over their heads was what looked like a throne of sapphire, and high above on the throne was a figure like that of a man” (Ezekiel 1:26, NIV). It may be that the law of God was cut from the very throne of God. Furthermore, the Israelites were commanded to remember to keep God’s law by wearing tassels on the hem of their garments with a blue cord woven in (Numbers 15:38-40).

Other passages identify a specific rock on the mountain that when struck provided water for the children of Israel (Exodus 17:6). In 1 Corinthians 10 Paul states that the Israelites “all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ” (verses 3, 4, NIV). Even the scene of God’s throne in heaven in the last chapter of the Bible makes a connection between God’s eternal throne and water flowing from it: “Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb” (Revelation 22:1, NIV). There is an interesting connection between God’s law, His throne, and His Son, Jesus Christ.

III. CLOSING

Activity

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

Have each student answer the following question on their own: If everyone in the world would fully keep one of the Ten Commandments, which command would make the greatest impact on the welfare of humanity? Have them write on a piece of paper the one they think would most change the world, and then have them pair up and compare notes. Ask the class to share which command they chose and why.

Summary

Share the following thoughts in your own words:

In Egypt, the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had forgotten who God was and who they were as well. When God delivered His children from their oppressors, they didn’t know who He was. The law...
was given to them both in a general way—Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and strength—and in the more specific “do's and don'ts” of the Ten Commandments. These commandments were not given in order for them to earn their salvation but were given to enable them to more fully understand the One who saved them.

Every enduring relationship is framed by rules. God's law was a portrait of His goodness and fairness. And in keeping God's commands we get to know Him more fully. God's command to be faithful, honest, selfless, content, respectful, and connected to God as Creator will only enrich your understanding of God. It was God's plan that as people experienced these qualities in their own life, others in the world who did not know God would be drawn by the character of the children who lived in harmony with His law. What might happen in your world if you were to allow God's law to be written in your heart and in your life?

Tips for Top-notch Teaching

Teaching young people to use a concordance to research a topic, word, or theme is an example of higher-order thinking. A concordance is an index of every word used in Scripture and where it is found.

For example, if your young people want to continue this week's study further, they can look up in a concordance the word “throne,” and they will find that “throne” is used at least 150 times in the Bible and where they can find each reference. Some passages might be irrelevant, but others might be illuminating. It is very exciting to see them make discoveries and search on their own initiative. When we empower them with the tools of study they can be “thinkers and not mere reflectors.”

Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages Series. The reading that goes with this lesson is Patriarchs and Prophets, chapters 27, 29, 32.

*A special adaptation of Patriarchs and Prophets has been created just for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and the Pacific Press Publishing Association. Get more info about it at: cornerstoneconnections.adventist.org.
I. SYNOPSIS

The story of Israel's journey to their promised life in the land of milk and honey is riddled with moments of disobedience and disbelief. Amid the many miracles of God's guiding hand and tender care, tendencies toward sin and idolatry were hard to break. The lesson this week marks a pivotal point in the leadership of Moses and portrays how hard it is to break the habits of sin.

As Moses communed with God on the mountain, the signs of God's continued presence had not left the people's sight. Some thought that something must have happened to Moses. Patriarchs and Prophets claims that although "the cloud was still in view, it seemed to many in the camp that their leader had deserted them, or that he had been consumed by the devouring fire" (p. 315). Instead of reflecting on the ways God had led them in the past and resting on their belief in God, they allowed their minds to idle. The inactive belief in God's promise bore the fruit of disbelief, and some of the Israelites pressed Aaron into making the golden calf and instituting a new festival of worship.

God informed Moses of the behavior of the Israelites and made the decision to obliterate them all and start over, making a great nation out of Moses. In fact, Moses would have been the new Abraham—the grandfather of a great nation. But Moses modeled selfless leadership and Christlike humility by suggesting another way. Moses pleaded with God to change His mind and to spare the people, even if it meant blotting his own name out of the book of life. The very prayer of Moses pushed God to relent and restore the people with another chance. Although the scene of this story is filled with disaster, it contains some powerful images of God's grace and justice as well as our human propensities and the tender humility Moses demonstrated on behalf of his people.

II. TARGET

The students will:

- Discover the way events expose the character of God, people, and leaders. (Know)
- Feel the jealous passion of God for a people who will love and obey Him. (Feel)
- Determine to align themselves on God's side whether temptation is near or far away. (Respond)

III. EXPLORE

- Worship
- Anger
- Idolatry
- Peer pressure

You will find material to help you explore these and other topics with your students at www.leadoutministries.com.

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.
**Illustration**

*Share this illustration in your own words:*

A group of researchers were studying the feeding patterns of tuna off the southern coast of Australia. A small wrinkle in the program occurred when a large great white shark jumped over an electric fence that surrounded the pen of fish in the water. Naturally, the shark initially feasted on a banquet of tuna fish for a season before the researchers even noticed it was in the area. What was amazing was the way the tuna found a way to avoid the hungry shark. The observers noticed how every time the shark would rise to the surface the tuna would huddle at the bottom, and when the shark would make its way to the bottom the tuna would swim to the top. Basically, the tuna learned to avoid being eaten by putting a safe distance between themselves and the shark at all times.

It makes sense to avoid temptation in a similar way. But how realistic is it to "avoid" temptation or always "run in the other direction" when the opportunity for dubious behavior arises? On the one hand, we need to avoid temptation by positioning ourselves far from it. On the other hand, we may not always be able to avoid circumstances that tempt us, so we need to believe so firmly in God’s Word and His leading that we can stand even when we have to face temptation head-on.

**II. TEACHING THE STORY**

**Bridge to the Story**

*Share the following in your own words:*

The tuna in the story above learned to avoid danger by distance, but what happens when temptation and sin are jumping, shouting, and dancing right before you, as it was when Moses remained on the mountain? Before they knew it, many were worshipping a golden calf claiming, “This is the god that brought us out of Egypt.” Consider how the Israelites responded and look for the lesson in this week’s Bible story.

**Out of the Story for Teachers**

*After you read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.*

- As you read this passage, what words or phrases stand out as pivotal to the story?
- Who are the main characters mentioned, and how are their character and personality reflected in this event?
- What is shocking about God’s attitude and behavior in this story?
- What is unique about Moses and his attitude and behavior in this story? (You may have to read the rest of the story to get the whole picture.) What evidence do you see in this story of Moses’ reputation of being a man of great humility?
- Why do you think it is so easy for the Israelites to slip and fall into sinful behavior? How long do the miracles God performs on behalf of the Israelites last in securing their belief? Is this true for people today? What kind of patience should be extended toward people who are new to God’s family? Are the people who led Israel into sin in this story harshly treated? What evidence of God’s mercy is revealed in regard to them? Are they given a chance to explain or do what is right?
- Let’s read the rest of the story and list four or five key verses that capture its essence.
- What do you see as the message God has for you in this story?

**Sharing Context and Background**

*Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.*

This week’s story is filled with some amazing insights into the qualities of good leaders, and into the character of God’s grace mixed with His unwavering insistence on loyalty. There are glimpses of the way our sinful habits tend to die hard and the way miracles don’t really deepen our belief the way we think they should. As you discuss this story with your class, consider the following snapshots that come out of it.

**On Moses and Meekness**

Moses has a reputation of being a man of meekness. Yet images of a staff-wielding, fire-breathing prophet of God who parted the Red Sea are also very real. Where do we see him as meek? Consider the way he reacts to God’s decision to give up on Israel and start over:

God disowns Israel—Before, God had referred to the Israelites as “My people” almost 20 times (Exodus 3:7; 3:10; 5:1; 7:4; 7:16, etc.). Yet, when the Israelites
rebel and make the golden calf, God disclaims them saying to Moses: “Go down, because your people, whom you brought up out of Egypt, have become corrupt” (Exodus 32:7, NIV). God is completely fed up with them and says, “Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation” (verse 10, NIV). Now, Moses could have been flattered by such an opportunity—a chance to start over and become the new father of the Lord’s chosen people. But Moses pleads with God to spare the disobedient throng and even says, “But now, please forgive their sin—but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written” (verse 32, NIV). Ultimately, Moses, in his selflessness, gets God to give them another chance. Have you considered the things that make great people great? Think about the Bible characters and what they really did to claim fame.

On Prayer
Another intriguing discussion concerns the nature of prayer and whether our prayers can really move God to do something other than what He would have done. Ellen White discusses this in The Great Controversy: “The same compassionate Savior lives today, and He is as willing to listen to the prayer of faith as when He walked visibly among men. The natural cooperates with the supernatural. It is a part of God’s plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which He would not bestow did we not thus ask” (p. 525; italics supplied).

Teaching From . . .
Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson.

- **Other Eyes**
  Ask them how the quotes in Other Eyes convey the point of the story in this lesson.

- **Flashlight**
  Read the Flashlight statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week’s story found in the book Patriarchs and Prophets. Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from Out of the Story.

- **Punch Lines**
  Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week’s story. Have them read the passages and ask each one to choose the verse that speaks most directly to them today. Then ask them to explain why they chose the one they did.

  Or you might assign the passages to pairs of students to read aloud and then discuss, in order to choose the most relevant one to them.

How does knowing this change the way we should pray? How does it change how often we should pray? How does it change what we should pray for?

III. CLOSING

**Activity**
Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.
Divide the students into groups of two or three for the following exercise. Ask each person to make a list of five to ten major events, starting with the Exodus, in which God had unmistakably proven His protection and care for Israel. Then, on the other side of the page, to make a similar list of ways they have seen God work in their life. Have them share their lists with the members of their group.

For debriefing ask the following question: In the heat of the moment, will your past experiences be enough to enable you to be faithful to God? If not, what else do you need in order to be able to resist the temptations that may come your way?

Summary
Share the following thoughts in your own words:
This story has so many rich lessons in it that it is hard to know which to apply to our life today. The Israelites were so quick to forget what God had done for them and slip mindlessly into sin. Do you ever forget to pay attention to what God has done for you? Do you ever forget to remember?
Furthermore, what a selfless person Moses was to stick his neck out for a bunch of people who seemed hopeless. Is it possible you have friends that seem hopeless? Do they need someone who will continue to pray for them, even when they are going in the wrong direction?

What about the way God draws a line in the sand and gives everyone a chance to repent and either confess their loyalty or stubbornly cling to their way? Maybe God is calling you to cross the line today.

Maybe you are being given an opportunity in this story to confess your need of God’s grace and commit to being loyal to God.

**Tips for Top-notch Teaching**

**Dramatic Reading.** Sometimes reading the Scripture can become redundant even if everyone is given a chance to read. Sometimes the flow of the story or details can be lost if the story is not read carefully or enthusiastically.

This week’s lesson (Exodus 32–34) is a riveting story with several characters speaking, saying some pretty amazing things. Photocopy the chapters and highlight the parts for readers to read. One part can be that of a narrator, another part—God, another—Moses, and so on. Have the students practice the reading once or twice outside or in the hallway before class so the reading can be fluid. You might ask the students in class to read the story quietly first and then read the story dramatically. This exercise can evoke more interest and therefore better listening, not to mention involve a handful of students in a creative way.

Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages Series. The reading that goes with this lesson is *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chapter 28.

*A special adaptation of *Patriarchs and Prophets* has been created just for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and the Pacific Press Publishing Association. Get more info about it at: cornerstoneconnections.adventist.org.
PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

Every time humanity stumbled in their faithfulness, God initiated reconciliation and provided a clear and effective way for recovery. God's plan to restore the fallen human race is the central subject of the tabernacle the Israelites carried with them on their journey to the Promised Land. It is clear in Scripture that God's greatest desire is to “dwell with us.” Given the unbelief and the deliberate disobedience of the Israelites, the tabernacle had to be constructed to house the presence of God.

The building of such a dwelling place would take time, resources, and great care, and would ultimately mirror a sanctuary that existed in heaven (Hebrews 9:23, 24). Every detail of the tabernacle was to be constructed with precision because every aspect of the structure was filled with meaning. This is why 15 chapters in the book of Exodus are devoted to the details of erecting a tabernacle. It is possible that when studying about the sanctuary there is so much information that the story of God’s heart to save His people can sometimes get lost.

This lesson introduces the story of the sanctuary, focusing on its ultimate purpose and how God’s people responded to the opportunity to build it. The content of this week’s study focuses on the overarching theme of God’s amazing initiative of grace in the form of the tabernacle. The central passage for this study begins with the building process and ends with a fast-forward to the point where God moves into His dwelling place. The outer court, the altar of burnt offering, the laver, the holy place, the table of showbread, and the altar of incense speak to God’s mindful plan to make all things new. The curtain that separates the holy place from the Most Holy Place stands between our sinfulness and God’s holiness with the awful reminder that we need a mediator to make things right with God. The very presence of God rested above the ark of the covenant and assumed His rightful place next to the tents of mankind. Patriarchs and Prophets unpacks the building process as well as conveying what each part symbolizes.

II. TARGET

The students will:
• Understand the purpose and meaning of the tabernacle. (Know)
• Experience a deep appreciation for God’s initiative to deal with sin and to live with people. (Feel)
• Endeavor to develop a personal understanding of and experience with God’s plan of salvation. (Respond)

III. EXPLORE

• Festivals (biblical)
• Sanctuary (Christ’s ministry in the heavenly)¹
• Christ’s life, death, and resurrection²

You will find material to help you explore these and other topics with your students at www.leadoutministries.com.

¹ Fundamental Belief No. 24.
² Fundamental Belief No. 9.
TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity
Refer the students to the What Do You Think? section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.

Illustration
Share this illustration in your own words:

When the sun goes down in many neighborhoods, there are automatic sensors to turn the streetlights on. It is possible to not even notice when they turn on or off—they are always there. While visiting a retirement home one evening with a group of young people I met Damien. Damien would sit by a window in the lobby every evening at dusk, without fail. He would take his position in full view of an ordinary street that had no real beauty or points of interest—except a streetlight. He looked out the window and pointed, “Look, it’s almost time.” Sure enough, a few seconds later the streetlight came on automatically. He smiled fondly at the technological advance and mused about his fascination with the streetlight and how it reminded him of the way he grew up.

Damien went to school during the day and worked in a sawmill in the afternoon. After work, Damien would make his way home along the familiar country roads as the sun would go down and the sky would slowly begin to darken. His house was located beyond a small gatehouse occupied by his aunt and uncle, who would read and talk by the light of the fireplace. The light from the fireplace signaled that they were home and he was welcome. The light beaming from the window was enough to enable Damien to see the path to their door and to make his way home afterward. After visiting he would leave the warmth of the gatehouse and make his final trek home.

The light was always there. They were always home. He was always welcome.

II. TEACHING THE STORY

Bridge to the Story
Share the following in your own words:

In the same way a lamp on a stand or a fire in the fireplace lights our way and lets us know that someone is home, the tabernacle was a clear, vivid indication that God was with His people. The many visual reminders were hard to miss—from pillars of fire and clouds that would house the presence of God to the Shekinah glory that filled the Most Holy Place. The story of the construction of the sanctuary is introduced in this week’s lesson. As you study the selected passages and work through the study questions, keep in mind God’s plan to be there for His people in their time of need.

Out of the Story for Teachers
After you read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.

- What are some of the key words and phrases in this passage?
- What is the ultimate purpose for building the sanctuary?
- Why do you think God instructed an individual to give to the building of the sanctuary as their heart prompted them to give? (See Exodus 25:2.) What was the response of the Israelites? (See Exodus 35:29 and 36:6, 7.)
- Why do you think God was so specific with the instructions for building the sanctuary?
- As you read through the beginning and the end of the building of the sanctuary, what part of this passage caught your attention? Why?
- Describe how you think the Israelites must have felt when the tabernacle was finished?
- Fifteen chapters in Exodus are devoted to the tabernacle and the services performed in it. Scan these chapters and see if you can identify any recurring themes that seem to be emphasized.
- If you were to choose one verse that captures the essence of the tabernacle, which would you choose and why?

Sharing Context and Background
Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

The word “tabernacle” means a place of meeting or a dwelling place. While it is possible to get lost in all the elements of the sanctuary such as: the different apartments, furniture, materials, and even the many different types of rituals that occurred within the confines of the sanctuary, it is important to not miss the
purpose of the tabernacle. It is a pointing to, and an expression of, Christ's work on behalf of humanity. Even more, all its aspects are embodied in the person of Christ. Notice:

John 1:14 declares that “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (NKJV). The very name Christ is given in Matthew 1:23 is Immanuel, which means “God with us.” Jesus continued this theme in the Gospel of Matthew when He says, “For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them” (Matthew 18:20, NIV). When Jesus commands the disciples with the gospel commission, He urges them on, saying, “Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:20, NIV). And finally, the last book of the Bible conveys the same theme: “And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God’” (Revelation 21:3, NIV). Again, the theme of the sanctuary message is about people being with God, a condition that was severed by sin’s effects.

A Better Perspective When Your World Is Falling Apart

I have often wondered, “How does the message of God’s sanctuary really help young people when they are down and discouraged or disillusioned about life?” Consider what Asaph said in Psalm 73:

In verse 1 Asaph claims, “Surely God is good to Israel” (NIV). It almost sounds as if Asaph is saying what should be said when you consider what comes next. The next 15 verses contain a scathing, even scary, description of his frustration with the way evil people prosper and good people get burned. Asaph says, “my feet . . . almost slipped” (verse 2, NIV). But when Asaph gathers all of his frustrations about what God is doing and what He is not doing, he finally gets some perspective. Where does he get it from? Verses 16, 17 say: “When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny” (NIV).

Tips for Top-notch Teaching

Creating Metaphors

A metaphor is a symbol or a figure of speech used to make a comparison. Often a metaphor will cause people to think about how two ideas are connected—what their commonalities are that might make them similar. For example: “He was drowning in money” or “Life is like a bowl of cherries.” Students can compare their experiences in life to types of weather or their personalities to styles of music. Metaphors effectively stretch the thinking process out of the normal pathways and into a more creative framework.

In this lesson, discuss some of the symbolic metaphors for Jesus that are found in the sanctuary.

Teaching From . . .

Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson.

- Other Eyes
  Ask them how the quotes in Other Eyes convey the point of the story in this lesson.

- Flashlight
  Read the Flashlight statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week’s story found in the book Patriarchs and Prophets. Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from Out of the Story.

- Punch Lines
  Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week’s story. Have them read the passages and ask each one to choose the verse that speaks most directly to them today. Then ask them to explain why they chose the one they did.

  Or you might assign the passages to pairs of students to read aloud and then discuss, in order to choose the most relevant one to them.
An understanding of the work of the sanctuary is relevant to all people, because in it we see God’s plan to deal with sin and make all things new.

III. CLOSING

Activity

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

Chapter 30 of Patriarchs and Prophets contains brief descriptions of the different elements of the sanctuary service. Divide the students into pairs and give them a section of the sanctuary descriptions to read about. There are approximately one to three paragraphs on each major aspect of the sanctuary. Instruct the groups to draw a picture of what is happening in their section of the sanctuary. One group might have the outer court and the altar and the laver. Challenge the students to be ready to describe what each part represents and how it points to Christ as you display their artwork to the rest of the class. They may not understand all of the symbolism, so be ready to say, “This tabernacle is going to show up several times in the coming weeks, and we will get to know it better as we move through the Old Testament.”

Summary

Share the following thoughts in your own words:

The beauty and the complexity of the sanctuary system cause some people to dive into the details and drive some away. Often, the problem is that they don’t see the meaning and the purpose of building the sanctuary. It was necessary. The blatant sins of Israel caused a deep wall of separation between God and His people. But God wanted desperately to commune with them. So God devised a way for them to dwell together and to communicate His great plan of salvation to them. It was genius the way God sought to tie the most important work for their salvation to everyday life so they wouldn’t forget. Maybe that is what Christians today should find a way to do: Integrate the work of Calvary into every aspect of their life. It is necessary, and it is so easy to forget.

Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages Series. The reading that goes with this lesson is Patriarchs and Prophets, chapter 30.

*A special adaptation of Patriarchs and Prophets has been created just for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and the Pacific Press Publishing Association. Get more info about it at: cornerstoneconnections.adventist.org.
PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

This lesson focuses on Numbers 12—the story of Aaron and Miriam’s jealousy of Moses, their attack on Moses’ wife, Zipporah, and God’s subsequent defense of Moses and punishment of Miriam. Students are encouraged to think about the role of leaders and how they respond to those in positions of leadership, especially if they have feelings of jealousy or resentment.

The student lesson does not focus directly on the Numbers 11 story of the Israelites’ grumbling over manna and being given quail to eat. However, this story can be brought out in the Sabbath School class as useful background to Numbers 12. It vividly illustrates the pressures Moses faced as a leader and the challenges of his role. Leaders who are doing God’s work need our encouragement and support. A closer look at Miriam’s and Aaron’s roles among the children of Israel reminds us that each of us is called by God to a special work. Rather than envying those who are in “high-profile” positions, we should be trying to find out what role God has for us to play in His work.

A corollary story about leadership can also be referenced in this lesson. Nadab and Abihu were the next closest in command to Moses and Aaron. They had enjoyed special leadership. But jealousy of Moses was not their sin; they fell in Satan’s snare of lack of discipline and reverence—topics that correlate well with Numbers 11.

Although there are way too many topics referenced this week, you, as the teacher, can let the Spirit guide you to choose among them the emphasis your students most need at this time.

II. TARGET

The students will:

• Learn why Aaron and Miriam complained about Moses, and how God responded. (Know)
• Empathize with the characters in the story and relate the characters’ feelings to their own real-life experiences as they deal with feelings of envy and jealousy. (Feel)
• Encourage those in leadership and seek their own role in God’s work. (Respond)

III. EXPLORE

• Leadership
• Jealousy
• Purpose, knowing your
• Substance abuse
• Habits, good and bad

You will find material to help you explore these and other topics with your students at www.leadoutministries.com.

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses. Ask each person to tell about a time when they
have been jealous or envious of someone and explain how they dealt with it (if you have a large class, do this activity in small groups). What about the reverse? Has anyone been the target of someone else’s jealousy? How did they handle it?

Illustration

Share this illustration in your own words:

There’s a famous story of two men who were confined to beds in a hospital room. Each day both lay on their backs with nothing to see except the four walls. One man’s bed was next to the window, and each day he was allowed to sit up for one hour. As he looked out the window, he described for the other man the sights he could see through that window.

At first the man in the other bed enjoyed hearing about the changing colors of leaves in the park below, the parades that passed on the street, the children playing in the playground. But after a while he began to resent his roommate. Why should he get to look out the window while all I get to do is lie here and stare at the ceiling? he wondered. Though the other man’s beautiful descriptions of the world outside continued, the man whose bed was away from the window no longer enjoyed listening. Envy and resentment consumed his thoughts.

One night the man by the window awoke coughing and choking. His coughing also woke the man in the next bed. He could see his neighbor vainly trying to reach for the call button to alert the nurse, but he was in such agony he couldn’t reach the button. The bitter, resentful man watched, his own button within easy reach. All he could think was, If he dies, maybe I’ll get his bed.

Sure enough, the man by the window died before he was able to call for help. The body was removed, and as soon as decently possible, the other man asked if he could be moved to the bed by the window. Finally, he would get that wonderful view of the outside world he’d been denied for so long!

He struggled to sit up and look out at long last—only to find that the window faced a blank brick wall.

II. TEACHING THE STORY

Bridge to the Story

Share the following in your own words:

God’s people, the children of Israel, were wandering in the wilderness. They weren’t an easy bunch to lead. First they complained to their leader, Moses, that they never got anything to eat but the miraculous manna God supplied—and now they were tired of that. God responded by sending quail. And the Israelites ate so much of it they got sick! Moses was hardly finished dealing with that crisis when he faced an even worse problem—criticism and resentment within his own family. His brother and sister, Aaron and Miriam, became jealous of Moses’ leadership position, and they made Moses’ wife the victim of their anger.

Out of the Story for Teachers

After you have read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.

If we look at the story that precedes this one, in Numbers 11, what kind of pressure do you think Moses was under at this point? What challenges did he face in leading the Israelites? How do you think the different characters in the story felt as these events unfolded?

Activity: Assign four students, two male and two female, to role-play the parts of Moses, Aaron, Miriam, and Zipporah. Interview each of them about how they were affected by these events. What do you think each person learned from the experience?

Use the following as another teachable passage that deals with different leadership problems other than jealousy—Leviticus 10:1-11; Patriarchs and Prophets, chapter 31.

Sharing Context and Background

Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

Since the Israelites had left Egypt, they had been nothing but trouble for Moses. They complained about being hungry and thirsty (Exodus 15; 16), and God responded by bringing water out of a rock and sending manna from heaven. Then they complained about the manna—they wanted a more exotic diet that included meat! God responded by sending quail (Numbers 11).

As soon as Moses’ back was turned, when he was up on Mount Sinai talking to God, the Israelites returned to the idolatry they had learned in Egypt, convincing Aaron to make them a golden calf to worship (Exodus 32). On many occasions they actually wished they were back in Egypt as slaves, rather than being free (Exodus 14:11, 12; 16:3; 17:3; Numbers 11:4-6; 14:1-3).
For Moses, a man who hadn’t wanted to be Israel’s leader in the first place, the stress of dealing with these people must have been intense. The discontent struck really close when it hit his own family. Yet it was at that moment that God chose to affirm Moses’ leadership (Numbers 12:5-9). Moses’ faithfulness and his ability to be humble and open to God’s leading were the qualities that set him apart from the rest of Israel and even from his own siblings. Moses wasn’t chosen because he was the smartest, the strongest, or the most articulate. He was chosen because he allowed God to lead, and as a result Moses was able to be a leader too.

The Lord sent Moses instructions to teach the people to observe and celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles (Leviticus 23:33-43). The final harvest of the year occurred in the autumn prior to the onset of the rainy season and marked the beginning of a new agricultural year (fifteenth day of the seventh month). At this time the last of the ripening grain and fruits was gathered and stored. The seven-day event was also known as the Feast of Ingathering (Exodus 23:16) and was symbolized by the construction of booths decorated with greenery for the harvesters. The festival was tied into Israelite tradition as a commemoration of the wilderness wanderings.—From Bible Background Commentary.

Whenever the harvesttime came around, the Israelites stopped to commemorate how God had always taken care of them, providing food for them to eat—even when they didn’t appreciate it.
III. CLOSING

**Activity**

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

Ask students to think again about the four main characters in this story: Moses, Aaron, Miriam, and Zipporah. Whom do they relate to most? Are they most like Moses—doing what they feel is right and getting attacked for it? Do they relate to Aaron or Miriam—jealous of those who seem to have more gifts and more privileges? Or do they feel like Zipporah—an innocent bystander who gets attacked because of someone else's jealousy and resentment?

Say: Whomever you relate to in this story, God cares about you. He has a special place for you in His work, and He will help you to find it.

**Summary**

Share the following thoughts in your own words:

Miriam and Aaron were jealous of the special gifts and position God had given Moses. In their envy and resentment, they lashed out not just at Moses himself but at his wife, Zipporah, criticizing her on the basis of her race. Neither Moses nor Zipporah responded; instead, God Himself told Aaron and Miriam that He had chosen Moses for a special task.

While we may not hear audible voices from heaven defending us, if we are Jesus' followers, then we can know that He has chosen us and we are special to Him. We don’t need to defend ourselves against anyone else’s jealousy and resentment; nor do we need to be jealous of those who seem to have a better or more special role to play. Each of us is unique in God's eyes, and He loves us each infinitely.

Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages Series. The reading that goes with this lesson is *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chapters 33 and 31.

*A special adaptation of *Patriarchs and Prophets* has been created just for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and the Pacific Press Publishing Association. Get more info about it at: cornerstoneconnections.adventist.org.
get over yourself!

PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS
   This lesson deals with the story of the 12 spies sent to explore the land of Canaan and bring back a report. While they reported the land as being a good land, filled with abundance, they were terrified by the strength of the inhabitants and their cities. Ten of the spies doubted God’s ability to lead Israel into this land. Only two spies, Caleb and Joshua, encouraged the people to put their trust in God and move forward.

   This story has a powerful lesson to teach about dealing with fear. Fear is a reality, and almost all young people experience it. But fear doesn’t have to control our lives. Faith in God is based on seeing what God is able to do in our lives and the lives of others. The more we exercise faith, the less we are captive to fear.

II. TARGET
   The students will:
   • Learn that Caleb and Joshua trusted God to help Israel conquer the land of Canaan. (Know)
   • Experience God’s power to help them cope with fear. (Feel)
   • Trust God to help them through challenging situations. (Respond)

III. EXPLORE
   • Courage
   • Fear
   • Perseverance
   You will find material to help you explore these and other topics with your students at www.leadoutministries.com.

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity
   Refer the students to the What Do You Think? section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.

   Use the following list of unusual phobias to open a discussion on fear.
   Alliumphobia—Fear of garlic
   Bibliophobia—Fear of books
   Chiraptophobia—Fear of being touched
   Ergophobia—Fear of work
   Hippophobia—Fear of horses
   Neophobia—Fear of anything new
   Ranidaphobia—Fear of frogs
   Triskaidekaphobia—Fear of the number 13

   Ask each student to share something they’re afraid of and make up a name for that “phobia.” Allow lighthearted, silly responses if that’s what students feel comfortable starting with. If someone shares a more serious fear, use that as an opportunity to shift the discussion to a more serious one on the topic of fear.

Illustration
   Share this illustration in your own words:
   Two explorers were on a jungle safari when suddenly a ferocious lion jumped in front of them. “Keep
afraid. It’s a scary world out there. But almost every time one of God’s angel messengers appears to someone in Scripture, they appear with the message: “Fear not! Don’t be afraid!” God doesn’t want us to be captives to fear. God empowers us to conquer fear and move forward in faith.

Out of the Story for Teachers

After you read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.

Divide students into groups of four or five. If you have some who know their Bibles better than others, make sure they are distributed throughout the different groups. Ask each group to find an example of a Bible story in which God helps His people win a victory in an unexpected way. (Some sample answers might be: crossing the Red Sea, breaking down the walls of Jericho, etc.) Ask each small group to come back and share their story with the whole group. For each story, ask:

• What does this tell us about God’s power?
• How could experiencing, or hearing about, this event build your faith?
• Does God help His people in this way today?

After discussing all the stories, return to the story of the 12 spies. Point out that Caleb and Joshua had faith that God could work mighty miracles to defend His people because they knew He had done so in the past. Ask:

• Out of 12 spies, why do you think only two had this kind of faith in God’s power? What might
have made Caleb and Joshua different?

- What kinds of frightening situations do we face in our lives that might make it hard to trust God?
- How can we build greater faith in God’s power in our own lives?

Sharing Context and Background

Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

At the time that Moses sent the 12 spies into Canaan, the Israelites had already witnessed many mighty demonstrations of God’s power. They had seen:

- Their miraculous deliverance from slavery, accompanied by the 10 plagues on Egypt (Exodus 5–12).
- The parting of the Red Sea (Exodus 13–15).
- Manna provided for them to eat (Exodus 16).
- Water miraculously flowing from a rock (Exodus 17).
- The defeat of the Amalekites (Exodus 17).
- The Ten Commandments given directly from God on Mount Sinai (Exodus 20).

How were people who had seen so many miracles so easily convinced to lose faith and give up? Because they allowed fear to be more powerful than faith. They focused on the threat that faced them—the fierce, warlike people of Canaan with their fortified cities—rather than on the things God had done for them.

The same thing can happen to us as we focus on our problems instead of God’s power. Like the Israelites, we can draw on evidence of what God has done in the past to assure us that He’s always going to be there for us, no matter what the future holds!

“We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history” (Ellen G. White, Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, p. 196).

III. CLOSING

Activity

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

Distribute paper and pencils to each student. Ask each person to write down a situation they’re worried about or afraid of in their own lives. Then ask them to fold the paper without showing it to anyone, and hold on to it during prayer time. As you pray, ask God to demonstrate His power in dealing with each situation the students have written about. Ask Him to build the students’ faith so that they, like Caleb and Joshua, can trust Him in difficult situations.

Summary

Share the following thoughts in your own words:

Fear is a reality we all face. It’s a normal, even healthy, reaction to frightening situations. But fear can put roadblocks in our way if we don’t learn to move
past it. The most powerful weapon we have for conquering fear is trust in God. When we know that God cares for us and is able to help us, then we can take a step of faith even in a frightening situation.

The great thing about faith is that it can be as small as a tiny seed (Matthew 17:20). If we start to use it, it will grow. Even a little courage and faith can be enough to get us started in dealing with a frightening situation. When we see how God leads us, we’ll be empowered to go further and do more!
PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

The story of Korah’s rebellion against Moses, and by extension God, is very instructive for Christians today. This episode has all the elements of a good movie: A reluctant leader attempting to lead more than 2 million people through a desert to a promised land; a mixed multitude of followers experiencing major withdrawal pangs from their former life; miraculous interventions courtesy of God Himself; an undercurrent of jealousy by several civic leaders in the group, culminating in Korah’s challenge. But this was no Hollywood creation.

Ellen White notes in “The Rebellion of Korah” (Patriarchs and Prophets, chapter 35) that Korah’s rebellion was simply the culmination of a long series of complaints leveled against God by the children of Israel. The seeds of rebellion were sown in continued discontent and faultfinding with every directive given them by God through Moses. Because the people often detested the messages that Moses and Aaron gave them from God, plans were hatched to kill the messengers who were seen as no more divinely appointed than the people.

In his desire to replace Moses, Korah infected Dathan, Abiram, and 250 leaders of the people with his unholy ambition. He promised them positions in the Temple service that were not his to give—and he did all of this firmly believing that God was with him. In what could only be described as the most stunning display of God’s power, the earth literally opened up and swallowed the rebels, their families, and their goods. This awesome display should have been enough to convince all the people that God was with Moses and Aaron, yet the people angrily grilled them for killing God’s men.

God became so angry at this that He sent a plague that killed another 14,700 people before Aaron’s intercession stayed the hand of God. As is often the case, sin indulged by one often infects many. Our influence is a talent given by God for His glory.

II. TARGET

The students will:

• Understand that God is the only being qualified to set up leaders and that we are called to respect God’s leaders and their authority. (Know)
• Realize the importance of seeking God’s guidance before making decisions that affect others’ salvation. (Feel)
• Commit to being a positive force to spiritually build up their home, church, school, and community. (Respond)

III. EXPLORE

• Authority/respect
• Confessions/repentance
• Leadership

You will find material to help you explore these and other topics with your students at www.leadoutministries.com.
of God tend to lose sight of His providential guidance, especially when He rebukes or chastises us. This was partially the problem with Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and the 250 princes. They were keeping a running record of all their trials and setbacks in the wilderness, and they had come to believe that theirs was a problem of faulty leadership—not disobedient followers. When God announced that only Caleb and Joshua would be entering the Promised Land because they were the only ones who trusted God to deliver the inhabitants of that land into their hands, Korah and many other Israelites then determined to oppose Moses and Aaron (Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 396).

Into the Story for Teachers

After you read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.

Using a chalkboard, make a list of the complaints that Israel made against God and Moses in the wilderness. Some answers may include:

1. “You brought us out here to kill us. It’s too hard out here.” (Numbers 11:1-3)
2. “We are tired of eating manna every day.” (Numbers 11:4-35)
3. Miriam and Aaron talk against Moses because they don’t like his wife. (Numbers 12:1-12)
4. “We are scared of those strong people in the Promised Land. We can’t beat them.” (Numbers 13:27-32)

You get the picture. Note that all these complaints were leveled against God prior to Korah’s open rebellion. There is a slippery slope here that bears revealing, one that is still claiming Christians today: 1. Constant complaining blinded the Israelites to God’s blessings; 2. Constant complaining infected more and more Israelites until it became an unceasing undercurrent; 3. Constant complaining led to open rebellion against God and brought on His judgments.

In each one of the instances mentioned above, God sent a specific punishment against the complainers. Ask the students to divide into groups. Give each group the passages above and ask them to read farther in their passage to find how God dealt with the people’s charges against Him. Have the groups share their answers.

Sharing Context and Background

Use the following information to shed more light
on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

1. Ellen White highlights the fact that Korah was a cousin of Moses (Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 395). Few facts in this story are more challenging than this one. Korah was a relative of Moses, albeit a somewhat distant one. On the face of it, familial ties alone should have given him pause as he plotted the overthrow of Moses and Aaron. His quest to be number one in the hierarchy of Israel made him willing to step on anyone he had to in order to have his way. For Korah, familial ties meant nothing. Perhaps Jesus captured it best when He said: “They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law” (Luke 12:53, NIV). The unregenerate heart recognizes no family ties.

2. “Korah son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and certain Reubenites—Dathan and Abiram, sons of Eliab, and On son of Peleth—became insolent and rose up against Moses. With them were 250 Israelite men, well-known community leaders who had been appointed members of the council” (Numbers 16:1, 2, NIV). It is quite striking that Korah’s rebellion was led by the “best and brightest” leaders Israel had to offer. While there was unrest among the common people, the folks who fomented the takeover were those most honored and admired in the society. It is always Satan’s goal to lead the most gifted and talented astray. In so doing, he is able to exert his evil influence over the masses who look up to them. Ask the students to name some gifted people who are popular and admired, but who also exert an evil influence.

3. “Close to the tents of Korah and the Kohathites, on the south side of the tabernacle, was the encampment of the tribe of Reuben, the tents of Dathan and Abiram, two princes of this tribe, being near that of Korah” (Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 395).

The lessons in this story are so many that one can scarcely get by the first page of Ellen White’s chapter on Korah’s rebellion. The quote above makes the point that it is dangerous to live in close proximity to those who are doing evil. Because Dathan and Abiram lived near to Korah, they often conversed with him, and he stirred their inner designs on Aaron’s priesthood. God through the wise man of Proverbs counsels us: “A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished” (Proverbs 22:3).

4. Korah was a Levite. That fact alone ought to give us pause. To the Levites God had entrusted the care of the sanctuary, particularly after they refused to participate in the building and worshipping of the golden calf (Exodus 32:25-29). Korah had an exalted position. He was a descendant of Kohath, son of Levi.

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**Teaching From . . .**

Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson.

- **Other Eyes**
  Ask them how the quotes in Other Eyes convey the point of the story in this lesson.

- **Flashlight**
  Read the Flashlight statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week’s story found in the book Patriarchs and Prophets. Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from Out of the Story.

- **Punch Lines**
  Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week’s story. Have them read the passages and ask each one to choose the verse that speaks most directly to them today. Then ask them to explain why they chose the one they did.

  Or you might assign the passages to pairs of students to read aloud and then discuss, in order to choose the most relevant one to them.
Kohathites were the descendants from whom came the priests and those who cared for the sanctuary of Israel. Aaron was from this lineage, and from his descendants came the priests. Korah was a part of the Kohathites who cared for the sanctuary.

While his position was already exalted, he craved more. He aspired to the dignity of the priesthood. He wanted Aaron’s job. This was the same spirit that manifested itself in Satan as he tried to overthrow God in heaven, and it is the same spirit that makes many in the church dissatisfied with the place God has given them (see Isaiah 14:12-14).

III. CLOSING

Activity

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

Invite an adult or young adult member of the church to share a brief testimony about the power of a positive influence on others. After this testimony, ask this person to pray a prayer of commitment asking God to help everyone be a force for good wherever they go and in all their activities.

Summary

Share the following thoughts in your own words:

Each of us is given one life to live here on earth. What we do with our lives will determine our destiny. Korah and his crew made a fateful decision, one that cost them everything. God had sent them warnings and rebukes, but none were heeded. They had already opened the door to Satan's control.

Witness these comments by God’s servant: “It is by sinful indulgence that men give Satan access to their minds, and they go from one stage of wickedness to another. The rejection of light darkens the mind and hardens the heart, so that it is easier for them to take the next step in sin and to reject still clearer light, until at last their habits of wrongdoing become fixed. Sin ceases to appear sinful to them” (Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 404).

God wants us to respect Him and those He places in authority. Leaders are not perfect; they will make mistakes. When we disagree with them, we must first take our complaints to God. We must seek His guidance as to how to address the matter. Here, Matthew 18 is very helpful. It is never wise to play God, especially when we have not consulted Him.

Tips for Top-notch Teaching

In many of these lessons there are numerous themes that warrant illumination. While it is impossible to discuss all of them thoroughly, or even touch on some, an activity can be introduced that will help the students at least open their minds to themes that you might not have time to cover thoroughly in discussion.

In this lesson, for instance, for the generation of teens you are teaching, you need to address the power of influence, both negative and positive.

Post pictures of influential people. Ask students to identify what they think is the secret to each person’s mass appeal. Why does each of these people command attention, and why do people follow or imitate them? Finally ask: What is the secret of the Christian’s influence? How should we use that influence?

Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages Series. The reading that goes with this lesson is Patriarchs and Prophets, chapter 35.

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PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

The Israelites’ trek through the wilderness took on a different shape following Korah’s rebellion. God was still smarting from this sad episode, but the thing that grieved His heart most was the constant desire of His people to return to Egypt, a place where they had been enslaved and had worked like animals. That they could choose such a fate over the freedom He offered them through faith in His care was like a slap in the face to God.

In the aftermath of the rebellion, the Passover feast had been suspended, circumcision had been stopped, and all of these pronouncements came from God. Yet if one were to conclude that after seeing how much they hurt God, the Israelites would put away their disobedience, they would be mistaken. Not only do the Israelites continue to complain, but their griping seems to affect Moses and Aaron, both of whom got very angry. When God told Moses to speak to the rock and out of it would flow water to quench the people’s thirst, Moses struck the rock in open disobedience of God, an act that cost Aaron and himself their opportunity to enter the Promised Land.

But the story doesn’t stop there. The people’s lack of faith in God when the king of Edom denied them passage through his territory meant that they had to take a circuitous route to the Promised Land, one that they didn’t want to take.

During the long journey they began again to complain about God’s failure to provide for them, and this time God allowed poisonous snakes to come among them and kill them. But in an act of ultimate grace that foreshadowed the cross, God had Moses make a bronze snake and put it on a pole, declaring that all who looked at this snake would live. There was no power in the snake on the pole. However, when faith in God looked at the snake, healing power flowed from God—and when faith looks at Jesus Christ today, this power flows from God to the humblest believer. Praise God!

II. TARGET

The students will:

- See that disobedience hurts the heart of God. *(Know)*
- Experience a desire to trust God even when times get difficult. *(Feel)*
- Ask God to show them how to use the gift of faith He has placed within them. *(Respond)*

III. EXPLORE

- Anger
- Grace
- Selfishness
- Calvary

You will find material to help you explore these and other topics with your students at www.leadoutministries.com.

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

**Activity**

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? sec-
On the road of life, disappointments will come, but success is usually right beyond the splats of our lives. Of the estimated 2 million people who left Egypt for Canaan, only two made it in to the Promised Land—the two that persevered on the journey past all the splats.

II. TEACHING THE STORY

Bridge to the Story

Share the following in your own words:

God knows that we have needs. Jesus said to His disciples: “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?” (Matthew 6:25, 26, NIV).

The great debate in the Christian life is the same as it was when Israel was headed home: Will we trust God to get us there, provide for our needs along the way, and prove Himself to us? Or will we curse God and charge Him falsely? That’s the decision of the Christian life, and it is one of faith.

Out of the Story for Teachers

After you read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.

Debrief by asking students to share their responses with the class. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.

Ask the students to share their answers with the class.

Ask them to share some of the more difficult trips they’ve had to make. After sufficient sharing time has passed, make the point that one of the challenges of any long journey is the potential for unexpected things to occur—storms delay flights, buses break down, trains lose power while you sit baking on the tracks, etc. Ask if in such moments it isn’t normal to long for home, even if home is not the greatest place on earth.

Make the point that for the Israelites, home in Egypt was not the greatest place. In fact, they were enslaved there. Faced with the unknown, it is natural to complain and long for what you know. However, there is one big point worth noting about their journey: It was not something that they just decided to do; God heard their cries in Egypt, and He delivered them. When God takes us on a journey, we have to remember to trust Him.

Illustration

Share this illustration in your own words:

There is a tale of an old master and his student. One day the student came to the master and inquired: “Master, I’m trying to find success. Where can I find it?”

The master listened quizzically, pointed to a far-off road, and declared, “Down there. Success is right down there.” The young man thanked his master and took off speedily for success.

As he traveled the road to success, however, he came to a point in the road at which a big rock fell on his head, “splat,” almost crushing him. He ran back to his master and said, “Master, I don’t see success anywhere. A rock hit me, splat, and nearly splattered my brains. Are you sure it’s there?”

“Yes, my son,” the old man intoned. “Try again.”

The young man set out on his journey again, only to come to the same spot where the same rock went splat again, crushing him. Battered and bruised, limping noticeably, the young man came back to his master.

“Master, you lied to me,” he declared. “Success is not out there.”

The master listened for a while, then put his arm around the shoulder of his pupil. “Son,” he began, “success is there, right down that street, just past splat!”

On the road of life, disappointments will come, but success is usually right beyond the splats of our lives.
experienced God’s grace much more than they did His chastisement. It is never God’s will that we should perish, but that all of us would repent and return to Him (2 Peter 3:9).

Sharing Context and Background

Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

1. “Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with his staff. Water gushed out, and the community and their livestock drank” (Numbers 20:11, NIV). For the act of striking the rock Moses was denied entry into the Promised Land. That’s quite a punishment for one act of disobedience. Many wonder why God was so harsh with Moses, given that Moses had endured so much at the hands of a stubborn people. Surely God could have cut him some slack.

   Besides the obvious point that Moses was leader of the people and more was required of him, Moses displayed a certain lack of faith in God at a crucial moment. “More than this,” writes Ellen White, “Moses and Aaron had assumed power that belongs only to God” (Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 418).

2. One of the tests of a true leader is what they do when they make a mistake, when they mess up. Moses made no effort to hide his sentence from the people. He told the people how he had pleaded for forgiveness. While God did forgive him of the sin, He did not excuse him from punishment. Moses told the people: “But because of you the Lord was angry with me and would not listen to me. ‘That is enough,’ the Lord said. ‘Do not speak to me anymore about this matter’” (Deuteronomy 3:26, NIV).

3. In Numbers 20:14-21 the Edomites are seen complicating Israel’s march to the Promised Land. They refused to allow the Israelites passage through their territory. What is strange about this story is the fact that the Edomites were descendants of Esau, the twin brother of Jacob, from whom the Israelites were descended. These two groups had much in common. They were brothers, but old hurts die hard. It was Jacob who stole his brother’s blessing, and defrauded him of his birthright. While Esau forgave him, his descendants never forgot. There was an uneasy peace between these two groups, but Ellen White notes that had the Israelites not complained in the desert, God would have made a way for them to pass through Edom to Canaan, which was a stone’s throw away (Patriarchs and Prophets, chapter 38, sixth and seventh paragraphs).

4. Too much of a good thing? Consider this passage: “In the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, Hezekiah son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign. . . . He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, just as his father David.

Teaching From . . .

Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson.

- **Other Eyes**
  Ask them how the quotes in Other Eyes convey the point of the story in this lesson.

- **Flashlight**
  Read the Flashlight statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week’s story found in the book Patriarchs and Prophets. Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from Out of the Story.

- **Punch Lines**
  Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week’s story. Have them read the passages and ask each one to choose the verse that speaks most directly to them today. Then ask them to explain why they chose the one they did.

  Or you might assign the passages to pairs of students to read aloud and then discuss, in order to choose the most relevant one to them.
had done. He removed the high places, smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah poles. He broke into pieces the bronze snake Moses had made, for up to that time the Israelites had been burning incense to it” (2 Kings 18:1-4, NIV).

What was Israel doing still worshipping the snake Moses made for them in the wilderness? They still did not get the fact that the power to heal resided in God. Instead, they made an idol of His provision. Do we do the same thing?

III. CLOSING

Activity

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

Select a favorite song, one that deals with placing one’s trust in God. Play that song for the class to close your study time together, then ask a volunteer to pray, asking God to help everyone place complete faith in Him.

Summary

Share the following thoughts in your own words:

There are those who claim that there is no grace in the Old Testament. It is the record of stubborn people being beaten down by an angry God. This week’s lesson declares unequivocally that is not so.

By all rights, God could have wiped out all the Israelites in the wilderness and no one could have argued with Him, for the penalty for sin is death (see Romans 6:23). He even offered to do it, but Moses pleaded with Him several times, and God cushioned His punishment against His people. When they were hungry, He fed them. When they were thirsty, He gave them drink.

When they refused to obey Him, He sent plagues among them, but in each instance God stopped the plagues from utterly decimating Israel. He even foreshadowed Calvary and the act of love that Jesus would perform for the sins of the world. That is the power of God’s amazing grace.

It is this grace that leads us to repentance, that should lead us to place our complete trust in Him, for He cares for us (see 1 Peter 5:7).

Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages Series. The reading that goes with this lesson is Patriarchs and Prophets, chapters 37 and 38.

*A special adaptation of Patriarchs and Prophets has been created just for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and the Pacific Press Publishing Association. Get more info about it at: cornerstoneconnections.adventist.org.