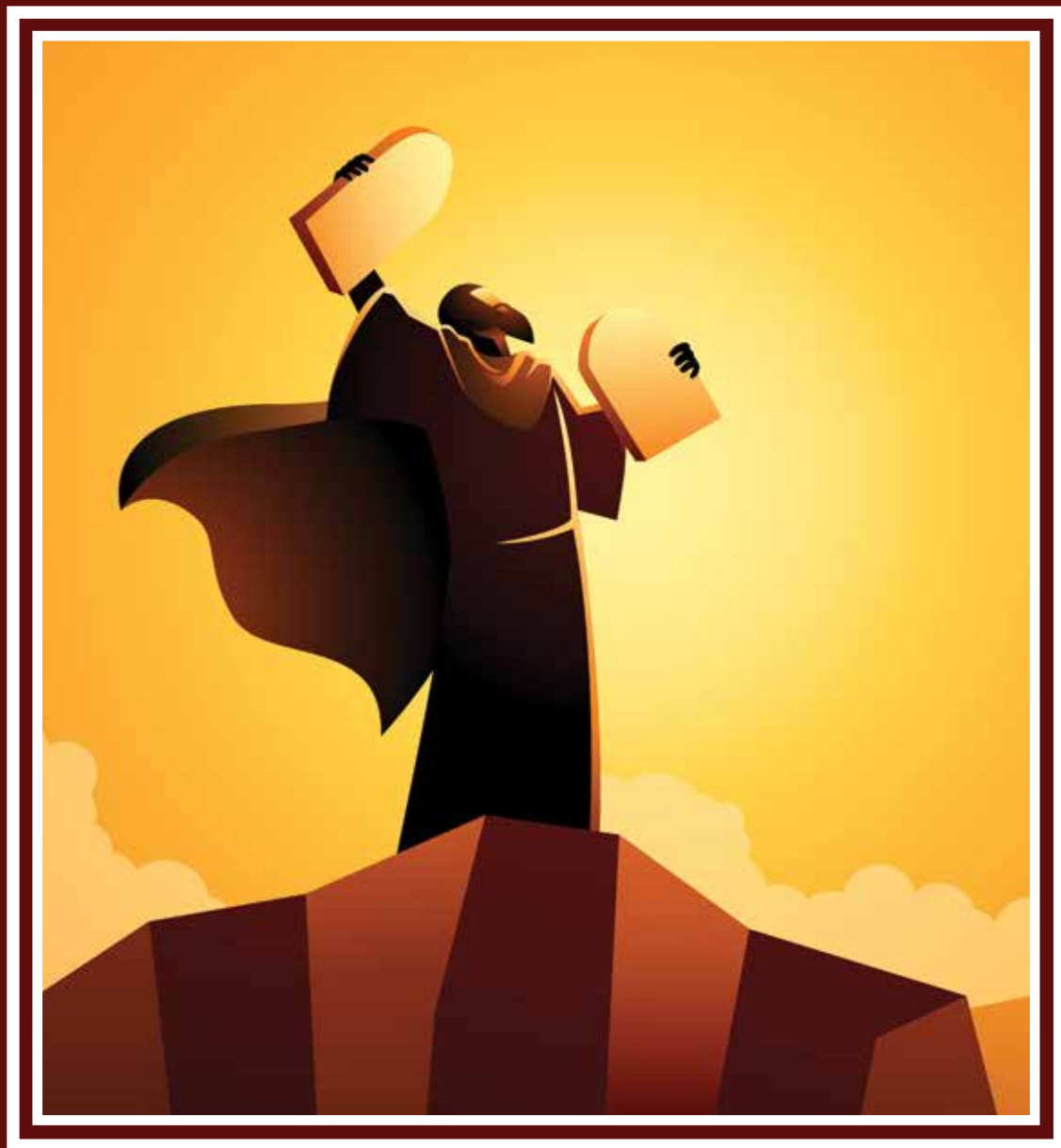


FALL 2023

Access[®] LEADER GUIDE

FOR ADULTS WITH
SPECIAL LEARNING NEEDS



Stories from the Wilderness

Access LEADER GUIDE

*A guide for teaching Bible stories
to adults and older youth who have special learning needs*

*Volume 18, Number 1
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Sharing Your Faith

Your ultimate purpose as a Bible study leader is to share your faith with the men and women who attend your class—to help them understand how they can live for Jesus every day. Use the ABCs to help your learners understand God's plan of salvation.

A—ADMIT

Admit to God that you are a sinner. Repent, turning away from your sin. Read Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; Acts 3:19.

B—BELIEVE

By faith receive Jesus Christ as God's Son and accept Jesus's gift of forgiveness from sin. Read John 3:16; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 5:8; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 1:11-13.

C—CONFESS

Confess your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Read 1 John 1:9; Romans 10:9-10,13.

If you are choosing right now to believe Jesus died for your sins and to receive new life through Him, pray to God, calling upon Him alone to be your Savior and Lord.

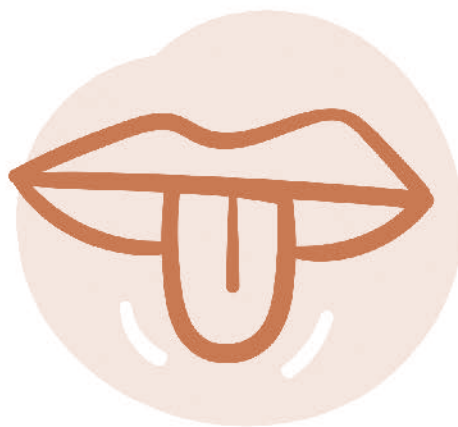
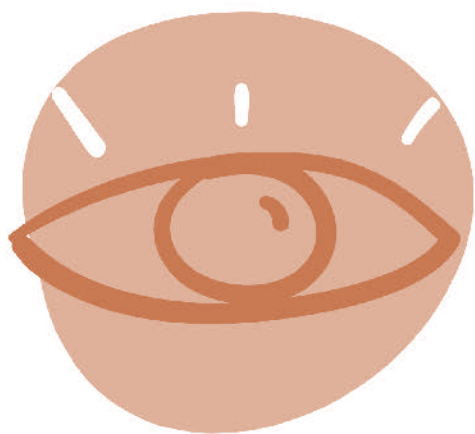
After you have received Jesus Christ into your life, share your decision with another person and, following Christ's example, ask for baptism by immersion in your local church as a public expression of your faith (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:6).

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See It, Hear It, Feel It

Every person has an individual learning style, a unique combination of ways he gathers, processes, and uses information. When we teach Bible truths, we take on a great responsibility to use the best teaching methods available to reach a diverse group of learners in a limited amount of time.

A multisensory teaching approach is very effective. Multisensory teaching provides information through all the pathways to the brain. It enhances learning by encouraging the active involvement of learners. It creates memories that allow learners to recall information.

Multisensory teaching acknowledges students need opportunities not only to see and hear, but also to touch, taste, smell, feel, and move. Here are some ways to use multisensory teaching techniques in the way we present information and in the ways we ask students to demonstrate learning.

Vision and Hearing. Most people gather the majority of their information about the world from the senses of sight and hearing, so naturally most traditional teaching is based on those two senses. Students read information, look at pictures, and listen to what the teacher says.

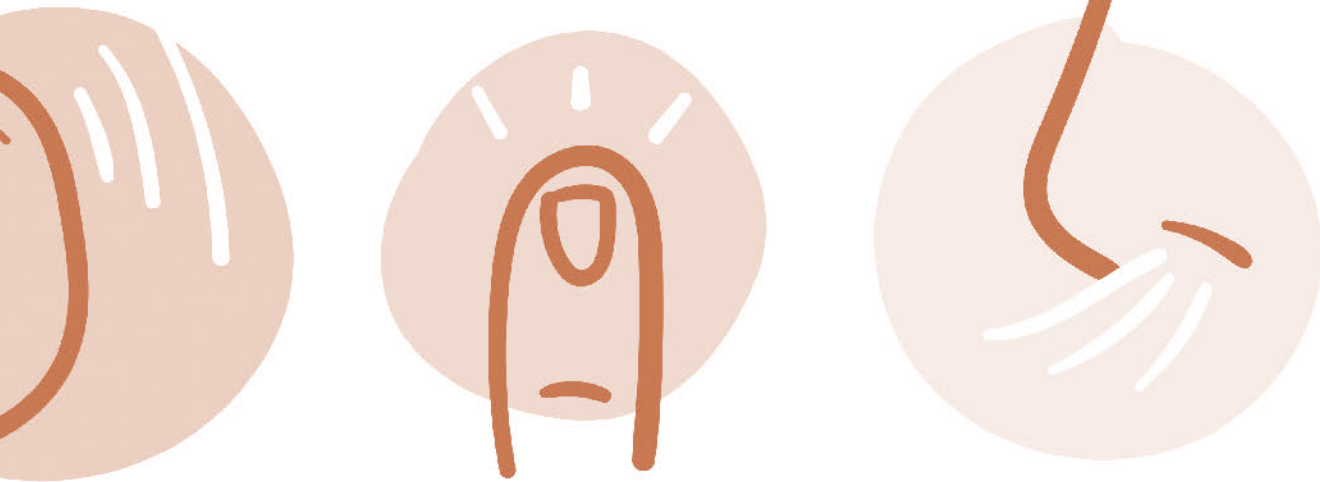
Provide lots of variety in the way you present visual and auditory information to enhance learning. Posters, handouts, and flash cards are familiar ways to add graphics to a Bible story. Dressing as one of the characters or changing the sound of your voice as you read brings life to a story.

Hearing a voice other than the teacher's adds variety, so get a simple tape player and ask someone to prerecord passages for you.

Music is a powerful teaching aid both to set a mood and to illustrate a point. All you need is a CD player or smartphone with a bluetooth speaker.

Many churches have a plethora of both high-tech and low-tech equipment. Don't be afraid to use a PowerPoint® presentation instead of the usual lecture format. Short video or movie clips can effectively illustrate a point.

Invite learners to use technology resources to demonstrate what they learn. A group can act out a story or conduct an interview as you record it with a camera or smartphone. They can use a voice recorder to recite verses or tell about a series of digital pictures.



When learners hear themselves speak on the recording or see themselves in the pictures or video, the presentation becomes more personal and meaningful.

Touch and Movement. Thomas told the other disciples he would not believe Jesus was alive until he could see and touch the nail prints on His hands. Thomas may have gained a reputation as a doubter, but he hit on a valid point. Many people learn better when they can touch something.

The sense of touch is closely tied to the kinesthetic sense or sense of movement. Make use of these important channels for learning. Move to music, make up motions for Bible verses, and act out stories to get students moving.

Combine listening and movement. Instruct students to perform a certain motion when they hear a key word or phrase. Pantomime is a great way for kinesthetic learners to move while auditory learners speak.

Pass a “hot potato” while reciting the next word of a memory verse. Toss a ball to the person who must answer a question. Both activities add movement and touch to an auditory activity.

Use real objects to illustrate and add touch to Bible stories. A smooth stone, a piece of sheepskin, a miniature of Noah’s ark, or a palm branch are just a few possibilities.

Dress in Bible costumes to act out a story. Students experience the texture and warmth of the cloth and get a chance to move around.

Copying a Bible verse, creating a poem or song, or writing a prayer are multisensory if you provide a variety of materials beyond the usual paper, crayons, pencils,

and markers. Use glue and colored sand, salt, rice, or alphabet macaroni to add tactile as well as kinesthetic components.

Drawing, writing, or painting on cloth, sandpaper, or wood instead of paper adds a different element of touch to an activity.

Making a model from cardboard, wood, clay, or paper mache uses the sense of touch and movement.

Smell and Taste. While not every lesson lends itself to the use of smell or taste, you can add them to some activities in simple ways. Add a fragrance to the classroom to set a mood or provide the appropriate atmosphere for a story.

Stories that involve a food item provide a built-in opportunity for tasting. Foods from other countries help illustrate mission stories.

Sharing a snack illustrates generosity or hospitality.

Smelling and tasting canned tuna or sardines makes the story of the loaves and fishes much more real.

The sense of smell also can enhance projects. Dried spices furnish a bit of scent to the lettering of a poster. Add fragrance or baking extracts to glue or paint.

Remember many things besides food items (leaves, wood, hay, soaps) have an aroma that can add to a lesson. The sense of smell has the power to evoke memories from long ago. Providing only the hint of a scent used in a previous lesson can help students recall what they learned.

Employing a multisensory teaching approach can bring big rewards in helping our students learn the timeless truths of God’s Word.

Access Study Plan

YEAR 1

YEAR 2

Access follows a five-year study plan for adults and older youth who have special learning needs that utilizes a storytelling approach to studying the Bible. Each quarter, learners will examine the stories of Bible events or Bible people from the beginning to the end of the story.

The stories of the Old Testament are presented in chronological order so learners can better understand how the story of Israel unfolded. This will allow adults who have intellectual disabilities to gain some sense of Bible history and recognition of Bible book order. It also will help them know why it was necessary for God to send Jesus as our Savior and Lord.

Stories from Acts are told in sequence so learners can see how the first believers obeyed Jesus's command to share the gospel message first in Jerusalem, then in Judea and Samaria, and then throughout the earth.

Each year from the Christmas season through the Easter season, learners will study Jesus's life. Years 1–4 focus on one Gospel at a time, highlighting stories unique to each Gospel account. Year 5 overviews stories about Jesus's life and ministry that the Gospels share in common.

Here's a quick glance at what you'll study each quarter.

FALL 2022

**Stories About
How the World Began**
6 stories from Genesis 1–11

Stories About Abraham
*7 stories from
Genesis 11–22*

WINTER 2022-23

Stories About Jesus's Birth
*5 stories from Isaiah 9, Luke 1,
and Matthew 1–2*

**Matthew's Stories
About Jesus's Ministry**
8 stories from Matthew 3–16

SPRING 2023

**Matthew's Stories
About Jesus's Ministry**
*7 stories from
Matthew 17–28*

**Stories About
Isaac and Jacob**
*6 stories from
Genesis 24–33*

SUMMER 2023

Stories About Life in Egypt
*13 stories from
Genesis 37—Exodus 13*

FALL 2023

**Stories from
the Wilderness**
*13 stories from Exodus 13–40;
Numbers; and Deuteronomy*

Winter 2023-24

Stories About Jesus's Birth
*4 stories from Jeremiah,
Micah, and Luke 1–2*

**Mark's Stories About
Jesus's Ministry**
9 stories from Mark 1–10

SPRING 2024

**Mark's Stories About
Jesus's Ministry**
6 stories from Mark 10–16

**Stories About Settling the
Promised Land**
7 stories from Joshua and Ruth

SUMMER 2024

Stories About the Judges
3 stories from Judges

**Stories About
Israel's First Kings**
10 stories from 1 Samuel

YEAR 3

FALL 2024

Stories About
Kings David and Solomon
13 stories from 2 Samuel;
1 Kings; 1 Chronicles;
and 2 Chronicles

WINTER 2024-25

Stories About
Jesus's Birth and Childhood
6 stories from Luke 1–2

Luke's Stories About
Jesus's Ministry
7 stories from Luke 7–15

SPRING 2025

Luke's Stories About
Jesus's Ministry
9 stories from Luke 17–24

Stories About Elijah
4 stories from 1 & 2 Kings

SUMMER 2025

Stories About the Prophets
Who Warned Israel
14 stories from 2 Kings;
Amos; Jonah; Hosea;
Isaiah; and Micah

YEAR 4

FALL 2025

Stories About
the Fall of Jerusalem
13 stories from
2 Kings; 2 Chronicles;
and Jeremiah

WINTER 2025-26

Stories About Jesus's Birth
4 stories from Matthew 1–2
and Luke 1–2

Stories About
Jesus's Ministry
8 stories from Matthew,
Mark, Luke, and John

SPRING 2026

Stories About
Jesus's Last Days on Earth
7 stories from Matthew,
Mark, Luke, and John

Stories About
the First Church
7 stories from Acts 1–8

SUMMER 2026

Stories About
the First Church
5 stories from Acts 9–12

Stories from Ezekiel
4 stories from Ezekiel

Stories from Daniel
4 stories from Daniel 1–6

YEAR 5

FALL 2026

Stories from Esther
3 stories from Esther

Stories About
Rebuilding Jerusalem
7 stories from Ezra
and Nehemiah

Songs from Psalms
3 stories from Psalms

WINTER 2026-27

Stories About Jesus's Birth
4 stories from Matthew 1
and Luke 1–2

John's Stories About
Jesus's Ministry
9 stories from John

SPRING 2027

John's Stories About
Jesus's Ministry
6 stories from John

Stories About
Paul's Journeys
7 stories from Acts 13–17

SUMMER 2027

Stories About Paul's Journeys
6 stories from Acts 18–28

Stories About Letters
7 stories from Ephesians;
Philippians; Colossians;
1 and 2 Thessalonians, James,
1 and 2 Peter; and 1 John



HOW TO USE Access

Your Access resources help you plan weekly Bible study sessions for adults with intellectual disabilities. The Personal Study Guide (for group members), works with the Leader Guide and Leader Pack to give you all you need to lead a group.

The Leader Guide includes more ideas than you can use during a one-hour session, giving you options for creating the perfect plan for your group. You know your learners better than anyone, so you need to determine what is best to do in any given Bible study session.

Read all the session plans, including the *Bonus Ideas!* at the bottom of the pages. Choose activities appropriate for your learners' skills, abilities, and chronological ages that will help learners understand the biblical truth and life application of each lesson.

Leader Guide

Your teaching plans begin at "Gather Together."

This lesson overview gives you a quick glance at the session content and your teaching goals.

Remember this lesson is for you as well as your learners!

Be sure to check out the Bonus Ideas.

You can quickly identify which Leader Pack poster and Personal Study Guide activities go with each lesson.

Bible Translation

All Bible quotations and commentary in this guide are based on the Christian Standard Bible®, available at book stores and www.lifewaystores.com.

Class Schedule

The teaching plans are written for a one-hour session. They start with all learners in one large group and then move to smaller groups for the Bible story and life application activities.

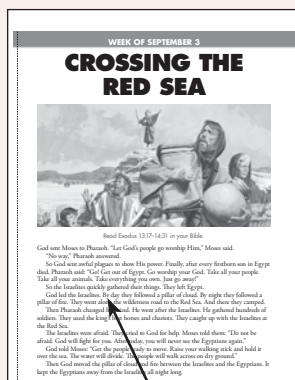
However, use whatever schedule works best for your group.

For example, you may start with learners in small groups, move to large group for the Bible story, and then return to small groups for life application.

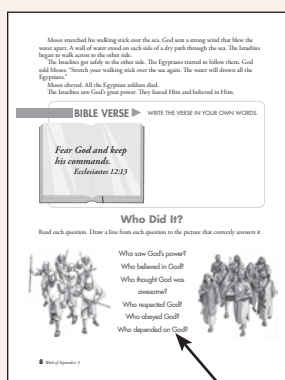
Personal Study Guide

Help learners connect the Bible truth to their daily lives.

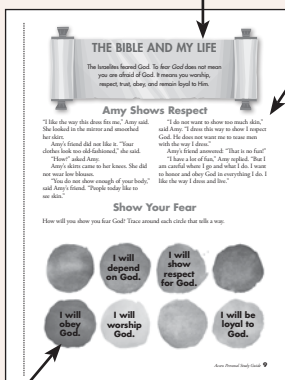
Read and discuss the real-life story in class, or recommend learners read it at home during a devotional time.



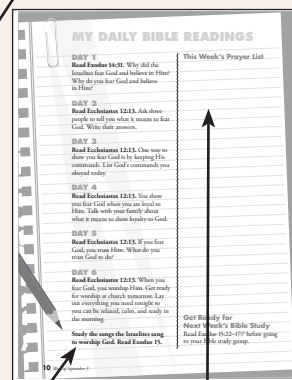
Each lesson includes a Bible story picture and a Bible story written just for adults who have intellectual disabilities.



The teaching plans in the Leader Guide explain how to use the review activity and the life application activity in the group time.



Encourage learners to read their Bibles daily.



Record class prayer requests here.

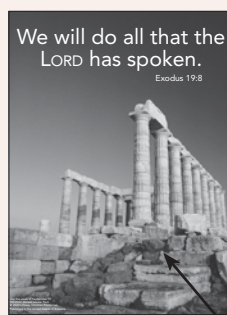
Leader Pack



Each Pack contains at least one poster for each lesson.



The Pack includes a card directing you to a digital pack on the Internet.



The digital pack includes Bible verse posters, Bible pictures, administrative forms, copies of the daily Bible readings from the Personal Study Guide, and teaching plans you can customize for your class.



Basic Classroom Supplies

- CD player or mobile device
- poster board
- newsprint
- construction paper
- large sheets of paper in various colors
- felt-tip markers
- colored pencils
- tempera paints
- colored chalk
- pens and pencils

- air-drying modeling clay
- paper towels
- dowel sticks
- scissors
- tape
- glue sticks
- rhythm instruments
- beach balls
- bandannas
- bean bags
- colored masking tape

Video Viewing

To show videos and DVDs, talk to your church leaders about securing the appropriate license from the Motion Picture Licensing Corporation (mplc.com).

Song Lyrics

To project song lyrics, talk to your church leaders about securing a license from Christian Copyright Licensing International (ccli.com).

Motivating Methods



Doctors do it. Parents do it. Teachers do it too. Motivating students with treats and trinkets is an old game, but implementing an effective positive reinforcement system in your classroom can be trickier than it looks.

Though candy is cheap and convenient, don't offer it for a job well done. Parents are rightfully concerned about obesity, diabetes, and food allergies. You endear yourself to parents when you respect their health concerns by avoiding sugary incentive plans.

So what can you use to motivate your students? Here are some effective motivators that multitask. These teacher-tested ideas reinforce good classroom

behavior, improve learning, build self-esteem, encourage teamwork, and don't cause cavities.

Pay Attention! Your students will pay more attention to you if you pay attention to them. Arrive early and stand at the door as students enter your classroom. Greet each student by name. Smile. Make eye contact. Ask questions and listen to their answers.

At the end of class, resume your post at the door to say good-bye to each student. Praise each one for something specific he did well in class. If parents are in earshot, your personal praise will be even more motivating. Paying personal attention to each student reaps positive results.

During class, catch your students being good. “Thank you for waiting patiently for your turn, Seth.” “Thanks for sharing the crayons, Cara.” “You started cleaning up before I even asked, Melody! Thanks for being so helpful.”

Pointing out the particulars of one student’s success will vicariously encourage other students to follow suit. Another big bonus—your sincere attention and approval will create a warm classroom atmosphere in which students will be more receptive to the Bible truths you teach, which is of course your ultimate objective.

Rewarding Jobs. Students like to feel useful and competent. While parents may struggle to get students to do their chores at home, earning special classroom jobs is surprisingly motivating. Students can help with attendance records, pass out papers, put away games, and straighten chairs.

Child-sized brooms, dustpans, and feather dusters are irresistible to use. Older students can be teaching assistants or earn the privilege of being a younger child’s helper. Tell students good listeners will get to choose a job at the end of class.

Walls of Fame. Remember when teachers put students’ names on the blackboard as a punishment? Try doing the opposite. Create a “Wall of Fame” on which you display students’ names for achievement and participation. Instant-developing or digital pictures work well too. Children love to see their pictures on display.

Encourage children to learn memory verses by covering a bulletin board or wall with paper. Write “Star Students” at the top. Students who say their memory verse can autograph the board with bright markers, glitter crayons, or cool gel pens. Older students can write the memory verse under their names, reinforcing what they have learned.

Team Efforts. Challenge your class to work together to earn a special activity. For example, put a marble in a jar whenever you see the class following directions the first time given. When the jar is full, take the class out for a special outing.

Toss a few popcorn kernels in a small jar whenever your students share and take turns. When the jar is full, it’s time for a popcorn party.

Put blanks on the board for each letter in a secret message. Fill in one blank with the correct letter each time you see excellent class participation. The children

will enjoy trying to figure out the secret message as their good behavior grants them new clues. If the secret message relates to the lesson, you will reinforce learning along with good behavior. Bravo!

Prized Privileges. Earning special privileges is an easy and effective motivator. Students can earn tokens or stickers on a chart to exchange for privileges such as checking out books or videos from the classroom to take for a week.

Depending on the age of your students, your sitting with them and their family during worship might be a rewarding privilege.

Earning the opportunity to retell the Bible story with a special puppet is a fun motivator that teaches too.

Watch and listen to your students to determine what privileges are meaningful to them. Then tell them how they can earn those privileges.

Treasures That Teach. Instead of randomly picking treats from your treasure box, let each student make her own small treasure box. Each week students can earn small trinkets to put in their boxes that remind them of the week’s lesson. For example, a coin reminds them of the widow’s mite, a Lego® brick reminds them of the tower of Babel, or a birthday candle reminds them Jesus is the Light of the world.

Check out craft stores for affordable paper, wood, or foam shapes that relate to your lessons. Review past lessons by inviting students to go through their treasure boxes and tell what each item represents. This is a great way to reinforce class attendance.

Making Motivators Work. Choosing effective motivators is often a process of trial and error. What motivates one child may not motivate another child. Get to know your students so you can pick motivators that interest them.

Keep in mind that effective positive reinforcement occurs during or shortly after the desired behavior. A smaller reward available immediately after a desired behavior is more motivating than a bigger reward in the distant future. A field trip scheduled in June will rarely be an effective motivator in January.

Tell your students how to earn each reward. Students love surprises, but how to earn their rewards should not be a surprise. Tailor these ideas to your class to make learning (and teaching) a real treat.



AN OUNCE OF PLANNING

Successful learning takes place in an environment prepared for learning. Preparation includes a plan to prevent problem behaviors from disrupting your class. Generally, leaders who don't prepare to prevent problem behaviors invite learners to fail in self-control.

Plan the Learning Environment. Design your classroom based on learners' abilities or needs. Where will you place resources so learners can access them without disrupting others? How will you address safety issues?

Paint the walls with a neutral or calming color to provide tranquillity. Avoid visual clutter throughout the room.

Plan what to do if session activities overstimulate or excite learners. For instance, if an activity disquiets learners, follow it with a quiet game or soothing music.

Arrange for special furniture needs. Designate large-group and small-group areas. Choose a place for one-on-one interaction and for early arrivers' activities. Allocate an area for learners to relax or for time-out.

Plan Class Rules. Develop and post a set of rules for your classroom. Keep them simple, easily understood,

and positive. Post a photo or symbol next to each rule to increase understanding.

A sense of ownership helps learners successfully follow the rules. Include learners in making the rules. List behaviors appropriate for your learners.

Sample rules might look like this:

In this class, I will

speak kindly to others.

listen quietly.

respect others' space.

ask permission to move around the room.

be a team player.

On your part, implement the rules with firmness and understanding. Many learners cannot sit still for long periods of time. Many need to express their thoughts immediately. You must enforce the rules with a fair amount of flexibility. Use silent clues such as a light touch on the shoulder to remind learners to follow the rules.

Rather than consequences, plan rewards and use them consistently. For most learners, reward the desired behavior the moment it occurs. For example, if Dianne jumps out of her chair with verbal outbursts,



draw attention to her each time she sits quietly with “Dianne, I like the way you are sitting quietly while we have the Bible story.” Verbal praise generally makes an effective reward.

Give tangible rewards immediately. Learners like to receive small prizes or special privileges. If Patty willingly participates in a group activity, give her a coupon or behavior token. Invite her to trade her tokens in for a cup of coffee at the end of the session or let her choose a small prize she can take home.

Decorate display boards that remind learners about appropriate behaviors. For fun, make the boards interactive and allow learners to manipulate the items in response to questions.

Plan an Agenda. A consistent schedule goes a long way in promoting suitable behavior. Along with the class rules, post a schedule you intend to use each session.

Class starts the moment the first learner arrives. Plan for early arrivers and keep learners occupied from the moment they walk through the door.

Arrive several minutes before the first learner, with your teaching preparation already completed. Play quiet and soothing music as learners arrive. Be aware of each learner’s emotional state or behavior as he arrives. If Jerry appears agitated, take him aside. Ask how he is feeling. Invite him to a quiet area.

This is also a good time to invite learners to enjoy individual activities or games. Activities can include listening to contemporary Christian music, doing art projects and a variety of simple crafts, reading in the “library” where learners choose books to look at and read, working puzzles based on individual skills and

abilities, and for learners with severe handicaps, playing with a favorite toy or game.

Consider making word/picture schedules. These help learners easily understand what comes next in the schedule.

For learners who need help with a schedule, point to the clock before each activity change. Say: *It is now time for us to sing. After that we will hear the Bible story.*

A little planning will go a long way toward stopping behavior problems before they start.

PLAN TO ENCOURAGE GOOD BEHAVIOR

- Design a classroom that promotes acceptable behavior.
- Always begin the Bible study on time.
- Post class rules and review them frequently.
- Openly reward appropriate behavior.
- Keep the class routine as consistent as possible.
- If the schedule must change, announce it and avoid surprises.

IT HAPPENED AT MOUNT SINAI

St. Catherine's
Monastery at the
foot of Mount
Sinai.

ILLUSTRATOR PHOTO/ BOB SCHATZ (18/4/15)

When Moses neared the burning bush at Horeb, the mountain of God (Ex. 3:1), he had no idea how important that place would become in his life and in the lives of God's people. Known more commonly as Mount Sinai, this mountain is located near the southern tip of the Sinai Peninsula between the Gulfs of Suez and Aqaba. Sinai is also used in a general way to refer to the wilderness region around the mountain (19:1). Similarly, its other name, Horeb, refers to both the mountain and the region.

Before the Exodus

Mount Sinai's importance prior to the exodus out of Egypt was as the place where God commissioned Moses to be the deliverer of the Hebrew slaves from Egyptian bondage (3:4-10). In Exodus 3:6, the Lord, speaking from a burning bush, identified Himself to Moses as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jesus used this identification some 1,400 years later to emphasize God's power to resurrect people from the dead (Matt. 22:32). Israel learned at Sinai their God was the God of the living.

From Moses's initial encounter with the Lord at Sinai, he learned God was actively aware of His people's plight. The Lord had observed their misery and heard their cries. He had come down to rescue them, to bring them from the land of oppression to a land of promise. He had heard their cries for help and had seen the Egyptians' oppressive treatment. More importantly, Moses learned God would use him to deliver His people. Further, God revealed His name to Moses during this encounter (Ex. 3:7-15). As Exodus 3-4 demonstrates, Moses was a reluctant leader who had to be convinced to go to Egypt. However, once convinced, he became the unwavering standard-bearer for God's people. At Sinai, Moses learned to trust the Lord.

During the Exodus

As they left Egyptian oppression, the massive numbers of freed slaves became anxious about what they

would eat in the wilderness of Sinai. In Exodus 16, God introduced the concept of Sabbath by instructing His people to gather manna six days a week and resting on the seventh day (16:21-26). The Lord told Moses these directives would test the people to see whether they would follow His instructions (v. 4). Unfortunately, some people did not obey (vv. 20,27-28). Later, atop Mount Sinai, the Lord codified the Sabbath Day as one of the Ten Commandments (20:8-11). The first four commandments focus on people's relationship with God; the remaining six focus on people's relationships with others.

As the Hebrews encamped around Mount Sinai, they were given the Law of the Lord, including the Ten Commandments (19:1-20:17). Thus Sinai became the place where God constituted Israel as His people. Through Moses, the Lord challenged the people to review His recent act of liberation from Egypt. He charged them to listen to Him and to keep His covenant. In so doing, they would become God's people. The Lord defined His people as a kingdom of priests and as a holy nation, a description echoed later to the church (Ex. 19:4-6; 1 Pet. 2:9-10).

Moreover, the people came to understand the concept of sacred space at Sinai. They were prohibited from casually approaching the Lord. Instead, they were to sanctify themselves for three days (Ex. 19:10-17). Because of their compliance, "Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God" and the Lord came down on Sinai in fire (vv. 17-18).

On Sinai, Moses received the ordinances by which the nation of Israel would be governed (21:1-24:18). This Sinai legislation mandated all males to appear before the Lord three times a year—at the feasts of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles (Ex. 23:17; Deut. 16:1-16). Moses wrote down these regulations and many others, then the people swore allegiance to God, promising to "do everything that the Lord has commanded" (Ex. 24:1-8). The event was solemnized with the erection of twelve pillars, an altar, and a sacrifice. Moses sprinkled the sacrificial animals' blood on the altar and the people.

Thus, the Sinai Covenant was ratified; Israel had become God's people. Significantly, the Hebrews celebrated the first Passover as freed slaves in the wilderness of Sinai (Num. 9:1-5).

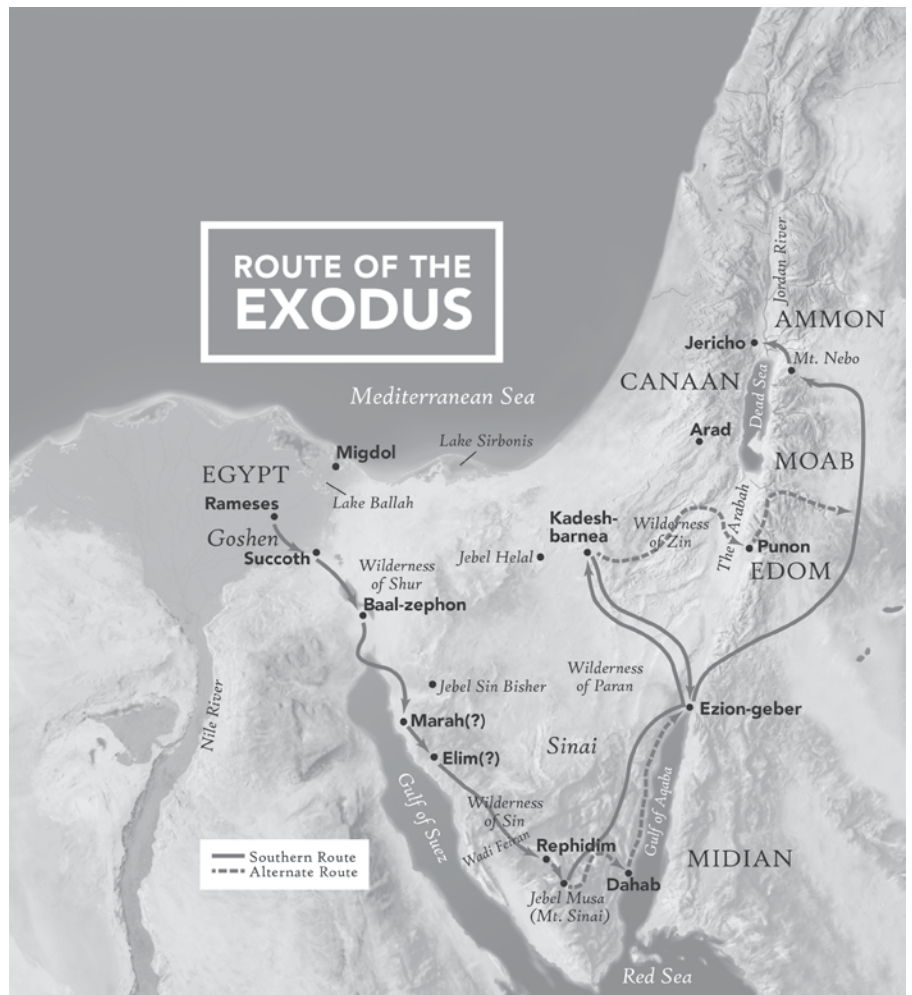
The psalmist celebrated Israel's God as the God of Sinai, equating Sinai with Lord's presence and provision (Ps. 68:8,17). Nehemiah characterized the Lord's word given on Mount Sinai as words spoken "from heaven," "impartial ordinances," "reliable instructions," and "good statutes and commands" (Neh. 9:13).

After the Exodus

Horeb, the mountain of God, was also significant in Elijah's ministry (1 Kings 19:8-18). During his stay on Horeb, Elijah dwelt in a cave. There God spoke to him. Elijah spoke of his own faithfulness, avowing that he was the only one left who honored Yahweh. At Horeb, the Lord gave Elijah three tasks to accomplish before taking him up into heaven. He was to anoint Hazael to be the next king of Aram, anoint Jehu to be the next king of Israel, and anoint Elisha to be a prophet in his place. Like Moses before him, Elijah learned God's plan for the future at Sinai.

Mount Horeb was important in this instance as a place where Elijah encountered God. To "stand on the mountain" equated to standing "in the Lord's presence" (v. 11). Additionally, the twice-repeated question, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" (vv. 9,13), indicated the Lord preferred Elijah to be ministering in His name, not fearing for his own life alone in the wilderness.

In the New Testament, Stephen, in his defense before the Sanhedrin, alluded to Moses's encounter with God at Sinai, indicating the Hebrew ancestors were unwilling to follow the Lord's word through Moses (Acts 7:30-39). Thus, Moses's experience at Sinai became a foreshadowing of Stephen's experience, wherein those claiming to be the Lord's people rejected the spokesmen God had sent to them.



ILLUSTRATOR MAP/ LINDEN ARTIST/ LONDON

Paul typologized Hagar as a symbol of the Sinai covenant, which people had corrupted by Paul's day—resulting in a type of religious slavery. In contrast, Sarah symbolized the new covenant in Christ. She bore a child according to God's promise (Gal. 4:24-31). Paul explained that believers are not children of the slave but of the free woman (v. 31).

This same freedom in Christ is available today. The rich Sinai tradition of a living God, who loves and provides for His people, guiding them by His word, has found its completion and fulfillment in Jesus Christ. All who believe in Jesus will experience an eternal relationship with the living God of Sinai.

This article is adapted from an article previously published in *Biblical Illustrator*.

STORIES FROM THE WILDERNESS

Memory Verse

I will . . . be your God, and you will be my people.

Leviticus 26:12

Abraham’s family lived as slaves in Egypt for 400 years. When God brought them out of Egypt, He turned them into a nation of people who had a right relationship with Him.

This fall, learners will study stories from Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy that tell how God provided for the Israelites, gave them rules for living, and patiently taught them to obey Him.

Shopping List

Begin gathering these items for upcoming lessons.

laptop computer	punch-out letters
tent	coat hangers
sandals	nuts, bolts, screws
walking stick	
blue paper	
electric fan	
bandana	
mannequin	
toy soldiers	
wall paper pan	
white T-shirts	
iron-on transfer sheets	
bottled water	
oyster crackers	
pie crust	
deep fryer	
shoe boxes	
white beans	
“Don’t Spill the Beans”	
game spinner	
craft sticks	
recipe card boxes	
treasure chest	
gold trinkets	
gold paper	
tent or awning	
white cotton gloves	
paper towel tubes	
purple balloons	
field glasses	
plank or rope	
map	
red, white, blue ribbons	
tabloid newspapers	
rain ponchos	
bowling pins or 2-liter bottles	
soft plastic ball	
shoulder shawls	
spray paint	

CROSSING THE RED SEA

Bible Passage

Exodus 13:17–14:31

Bible Truth

When the Israelites saw God's power, they feared Him.

Bible Verse

Fear God and keep his commands.

Ecclesiastes 12:13

Life Application

I will fear God.



KNOW THE STORY

Through God's power, Moses secured the release of the Israelites from the rule of Pharaoh. The Israelites began their long journey toward the promised land. The Lord guided them with a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. He initially led the people to wander in a circle in order to give Pharaoh the impression they were confused and without direction. Pharaoh and his officials decided Egypt needed the Israelites to serve as their slaves, so they began the pursuit to bring back the Israelites.

Pharaoh gathered 600 of his best chariots plus all the others he could muster and manned them with his officers. With a strong force, Pharaoh went after the Israelites who were on their freedom journey toward the land the Lord promised them. He finally caught up with them near the Red Sea.

The Israelites panicked when they saw Pharaoh and his army. They turned against Moses saying: "We're going to die out here in the wilderness. We would be better off as slaves in Egypt. Why did you lead us astray?" Moses assured them the Lord would fight the Egyptians.

The pillar of cloud moved behind the Israelites, thus protecting them from Pharaoh's army. God instructed Moses to move the people toward the sea. Moses raised his staff, and the sea began to part, providing a dry path through it to the other side. The Israelites crossed safely to the other side. At the Lord's command, Moses then stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to normal, drowning all of Pharaoh's army. The Israelites witnessed God's power, which caused them to fear the Lord and accept Moses as God's servant.

UNDERSTAND THE SETTING

To *consecrate* means to set apart or dedicate something or someone for a sacred purpose. This sacred purpose involved the service and worship of God. The Lord instructed Moses to “consecrate every firstborn male to Me, the firstborn from every womb among the Israelites, both man and animal; it is Mine” (Ex. 13:2). The Lord not only claimed ownership of the firstborn males, but the firstfruits of harvest as well (Lev. 23:9-11).

God made a certain requirement of the Israelites when they entered the land of Canaan. He said, “Present to the LORD every firstborn male of the womb” (Ex. 13:12). They were to offer sacrifices as acts of worship to the Lord. However, God made a provision for the donkey: “You must redeem every firstborn of a donkey with a flock animal, but if you do not redeem it, break its neck” (13:13a). Another provision avoided the pagan worship practice of child sacrifice: “However, you must redeem every firstborn among your sons” (v. 13b).

Redemption in Exodus 13 involved regaining possession of a person or animal by means of a buy-back payment. To redeem a donkey or a child, God required the sacrifice of a lamb or other flock animal.

The ritual of sacrifice for the purpose of consecration and redemption should be understood in light of the 10th plague that occurred in Egypt (the death of every Egyptian firstborn male). Israel was God’s son in need of redemption from the bondage of slavery. Redemption came through the death of Egypt’s firstborn sons: “This is what the LORD says: ‘Israel is My firstborn son. I told you: Let My son go so that he may worship Me, but you refused to let him go. Now I will kill your firstborn son!’” (4:22-23).

The Passover became an annual reminder to the Israelites of their redemption (or release) from slavery. Because the Israelites applied the blood of the sacrificed lamb to the doorposts of their houses, the death angel passed over those families, thus sparing their firstborn sons. The Lord’s Supper reminds Christians of the death of God’s only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who was sacrificed once for all for the redemption of sinners from the slavery of sin and death.



DETERMINE THE RELEVANCE

Put in words your understanding of what fearing God means.

Read Job 28:28. What does this verse mean to you?

List some practical ways you can demonstrate your fear of God.

Make an acrostic using the word FEAR.

F –
E –
A –
R –

Think of some other words and phrases that can help unbelievers understand what fearing God means.

Name things and persons you fear other than God.

EXAMINE A KEY PHRASE

you must be quiet

(Exodus 14:14)

God performed great miracles in delivering the Israelites from slavery. Yet as Pharaoh’s army closed in on them near the Red Sea, their shallow faith showed through their fearful complaints. Moses reprimanded the Israelites saying, “The LORD will fight for you, and you must be quiet.” To be quiet was to cease all grumbling and complaints and to wait on the Lord’s deliverance.

This Week's Prayer Concerns

GATHER TOGETHER

Lesson Truth

Demonstrate that you fear God.

GET READY

- ❑ Gather attendance records.
- ❑ Prepare announcements.
- ❑ Prepare to play "Holy Is the Lord," "Holy Is His Name," and "I Will Trust in the Lord."

LEAD

Greet learners at the door. Take attendance. Collect offerings. Signal time for large group and make announcements.

Lead praise and worship. Sing the songs you have prepared and include songs your learners know well and enjoy singing. Invite learners to clap in rhythm.

Say: *Let's continue our worship with prayer.* Call for prayer requests. Invite a volunteer to pray.

CREATE INTEREST

GET READY

- ❑ Prepare a length of blue paper that reaches from the door to the group area.
- ❑ Obtain an electric fan.

LEAD

Display the length of paper and the electric fan. Ask: *Who wants to help me make a model of the Red Sea?* Lead learners to stretch out the paper. Attach it firmly at all four corners. Blow air from the fan to make it appear the paper is rippling. Invite learners to step across the paper. Say: *Today we will hear the story of crossing the Red Sea. It is an awesome story that shows God's power. Are you ready for it?*

Tip! Set up chairs on each side of the paper sea. Sit on one side at the beginning of the Bible story. Cross over to the other side as you tell the story.

TELL THE STORY

GET READY

- ❑ Provide Bibles and *Access Personal Study Guide*.
- ❑ Locate **Poster 1** in the Leader Pack. Display on a focal wall.
- ❑ Gather items such as a canvas tent, sandals, and a walking stick.
- ❑ Enlist a man to portray Moses each week this month and tell the Bible stories as dramatic monologues. Provide a biblical costume and a copy of "Crossing the Red Sea."
- ❑ Print today's Bible story picture from the digital pack.

Bonus Ideas!

GATHER TOGETHER

(1) Set up a laptop computer with wireless Internet so early arrivers can watch Christian praise videos from a Christian video site.

(2) Show early arrivers a classic scary movie such as *Abbott and Costello Meet the Mummy*. Explain Abbott and Costello were afraid of the mummy. Say: *We're going to hear about fear today, but not the kind of fear where you're scared of something.* Challenge learners

to find out whom to fear and what fearing Him means.

(3) Decorate the room for the entire quarter. Set up a picnic awning at the door so learners enter through a tent each week. Scatter camping equipment around the room so learners remember the Israelites lived like campers for forty years.

CREATE INTEREST

(1) Fill a shallow pan with water. Challenge learners to separate the water by blowing into the pan. After several attempts, say: *Today we'll hear how God separated a huge body of water.*

Tip! Blow through straws.

POSTER 1



LEAD

Direct attention to **Poster 1**. Comment: *Last week we learned the Israelites left Egypt after living there more than 400 years. They started walking toward the land God promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*

Pass around the tent, sandals, and walking stick for learners to touch and examine. Discuss how the Israelites used items such as these as they walked and lived in the wilderness.

Explain: *The Israelites' first obstacle in getting to the promised land was the Red Sea. Listen to hear how they got across it.*

Help learners find Exodus 13 in their Bibles. Introduce Moses and ask him to tell everyone how the people got across the Red Sea. Hold up today's Bible story picture at the appropriate time during the story.

Cross the Red Sea

(based on Exodus 13:17–14:31)

God sent Moses to Pharaoh. "Let God's people go worship Him," Moses said.

"No way," Pharaoh answered.

So God sent awful plagues to show His power. Finally, after every firstborn son in Egypt died, Pharaoh said: "Go! Get out of Egypt. Go worship your God. Take all your people. Take all your animals. Take everything you own. Just go away!"

So the Israelites quickly gathered their things. They left Egypt.

God led the Israelites. By day they followed a pillar of cloud. By night they followed a pillar of fire. They went along the wilderness road to the Red Sea. And there they camped.

Then Pharaoh changed his mind. He went after the Israelites. He gathered hundreds of soldiers. They used the king's best horses and chariots. They caught up with the Israelites at the Red Sea.

The Israelites were afraid. They cried to God for help. Moses told them: "Do not be afraid. God will fight for you. After today, you will never see the Egyptians again."

God told Moses: "Get the people ready to move. Raise your walking stick and hold it over the sea. The water will divide. The people will walk across on dry ground."

Then God moved the pillar of cloud and fire between the Israelites and the Egyptians. It kept the Egyptians away from the Israelites all night long.

Moses stretched his walking stick over the sea. God sent a strong wind that blew the water apart. A wall of water stood on each side of a dry path through the sea. The Israelites began to walk across to the other side.

The Israelites got safely to the other side. The Egyptians started to follow them. God told Moses: "Stretch your walking stick over the sea again. The water will drown all the Egyptians."

Moses obeyed. All the Egyptian soldiers died.

The Israelites saw God's great power. They feared Him and believed in Him.

(2) Ask: *How can you go across water?* Suggest a kayak, canoe, raft, boat, swimming, and so forth. Ask someone who owns a motor boat to bring it to church today. Go to the parking lot to look at the boat. Climb aboard if possible. Ask: *How many people can fit on board? What do you have to wear on a boat? (life vest) How many trips would it take to get all of us across a lake? Today we'll hear there were hundreds of Israelites and they all had to get across a sea quickly. Listen to hear how they did it.*

Tip! Bring a kayak or inflatable raft.

TELL THE STORY

(1) Download or secure a DVD of *The Ten Commandments* (1956 version) and show the scene of the parting of the Red Sea.

Tip! Consider the 2007 animated *The Ten Commandments* or *The Prince of Egypt*.

(2) Cut apart the sea you used during "Create Interest." Pull it apart and walk across the "dry path" at the appropriate time during the Bible story.

Bonus Ideas!

REVIEW THE STORY

Ask: *How did the Israelites get across the Red Sea?* Guide learners to complete “Who Did It?” on page 8 in *Access Personal Study Guide*.

Moses stretched his walking stick over the sea. God sent a strong wind that blew the water apart. A wall of water stood on each side of a dry path through the sea. The Israelites began to walk across on the other side.

The Israelites got onto the other side. The Egyptians started to follow them. God said Moses, “Stretch your walking stick over the sea again. The water will drown all the Egyptians.”

None obeyed. All the Egyptian soldiers died.

The Israelites saw God’s great power. They feared Him and believed in Him.

BIBLE VERSE WRITE THE VERSE IN YOUR OWN WORDS.

Fear God and keep His commands.
Ecclesiastes 12:13

Who Did It?
Read each question. Draw a line from each question to the picture that correctly answers it.

Who saw God’s power?
Who believed in God?
Who thought God was awesome?
Who respected God?
Who obeyed God?
Who depended on God?

APPLY THE LESSON TO LIFE

Review: *What does it mean to fear God? The Israelites said they would fear God. How will you show you fear God?* Lead learners to complete “Show Your Fear” on page 9 in the *Personal Study Guide*.

THE BIBLE AND MY LIFE

The Israelites feared God. To fear God does not mean you are afraid of God. It means you worship, respect, trust, obey, and remain loyal to Him.

Amy Shows Respect

“I like the way this dress fits me,” Amy said. She looked in the mirror and smiled at her skin.

Amy’s friend did not like it. “Your clothes look so old-fashioned,” she said.

“Hush,” said Amy. Amy’s skirt came to her knees. She did not wear low blouses.

“You do not show enough of your body,” said Amy’s friend. “People notice like to see skin.”

“I do not want to show too much skin,” said Amy. “I dress this way to show I respect God. He does not want me to tease men with the way I dress.”

Amy’s friend answered, “That is so fair!”

“I have a lot of fun,” Amy replied. “But I am careful where I go and what I do. I wear no honor and obey God in everything I do. I like the way I dress and live.”

Show Your Fear

How will you show you fear God? Trace around each circle that tells a way.

I will depend on God.
I will show respect for God.
I will obey God.
I will worship God.
I will be loyal to God.

TEACH THE BIBLE VERSE

GET READY

- Get a bandana.
- Print today’s Bible verse poster from the digital pack.

LEAD

Remark: *The Israelites saw God’s power, believed in God, thought God was awesome, respected God, obeyed God, and depended on God. The Bible uses one word to describe all that—fear. To fear God is not to be afraid of Him. To fear God is to worship, respect, trust, obey, and remain loyal to Him. Our Bible verse for today tells us to fear God.*

Read the Bible verse from the poster, then direct learners to sit in a circle and drop the bandana on someone’s lap. That person must say the Bible verse then walk around the circle and drop the bandana on someone else. Repeat several times.

CONCLUDE THE SESSION

Recap: *God showed His great power to both the Israelites and the Egyptians, but only the Israelites feared God. Let’s show we fear God today by worshiping and paying attention during the worship service.*

FOLLOW UP

- Remind learners to complete their daily Bible readings in *Access Personal Study Guide*. Print and send home the “Daily Bible Readings” from the digital pack.
- Learn sign language for *fear God*. Teach it to learners. Use it as a secret signal when learners need a reminder to be reverent and respectful.
- When learners use objectionable language, remind them our words show others whether or not we fear God. Suggest an alternate word or phrase that will help them express themselves without being offensive or profane.

Bonus Ideas!

REVIEW THE STORY

- (1) Lead learners to dress a mannequin in biblical costume.
- (2) Find two different sets of plastic toy soldiers, one to represent the Israelites and one for the Egyptians. Use a wallpaper pan to represent the Red Sea. Walk the Israelites across the dry pan. About three-fourths of the way across, start the Egyptians. When the Israelites are out of the pan and the Egyptians are about halfway across, pour in a bucket of water to drown the Egyptians.

- (3) Print today’s “Questions” from the digital pack. Number the questions in order. Write the numbers 1-19 on ping-pong balls. Float the balls in a tub of water. Tell learners to take turns scooping out a ball with a fish net and calling out the number on the ball. Read the question with the matching number.

APPLY THE LESSON TO LIFE

Make “Show Fear” T-shirts. Before class, purchase blank iron-on transfer sheets and white T-shirts. Print the phrase “Show Fear” on the transfer sheets. Iron onto the T-shirts according to the package directions. In class, direct learners to color and decorate their shirts using washable markers.

Tip! To set colors, cover with a towel and press a hot iron for a few seconds.