

TEXTBOOK IN BIBLICAL STUDIES

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By: Segundina T. Valenzona
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Published and exclusively distributed
by the Truth Seekers Assemblies & Ministries, Inc.
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Edited by: Elder Supernico Y. Valenzona, Jr.

ISBN 978-971-91822-7-6

First Published in 2007
Reprinted (Upgraded Copy) 2009
Philippines

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Scripture quotations in this publication are taken from:

Good News Bible with Deuterocanonicals in
Today's English Version TEV 1982. (American Edition)
Philippine Bible Society, Manila, Philippines

The Holy Bible, King James Version (KJV) 1970.
Thomas Nelson Inc.
Camden, New Jersey, USA
08103

The Illustrated Bible © 1989, 1990 David C. Cook Publishing Co.
Living Values Edition
Published by Chariot Family Products, a division of
David C. Cook Publishing Co.
Elgin, Illinois 60120

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Note: In some quotations, instead of Lord or God (referring to God the Father), the Authors have used Almighty Yahweh or Yahweh Elohim.

TEXTBOOK IN BIBLICAL STUDIES

Other books by Segundina T. Valenzona, published by the Truth Seekers Assemblies & Ministries, Inc.

- Visions: More Witness For Christ
- Beyond The Glorious Voice
- “Thy Kingdom Come” In Earth
- The Promise Of Eternal Life
- The Covenant Of Peace
- The Wisdom Of God
- The Great & Terrible Of The LORD And The
Good News About The Kingdom
- All About Love, Faith & Hope

Tracts:

- The Lord’s Invitation “Come Unto Me”
- The Trumpet of A Watchman
- Gift of Love & Eternal Life

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Quotation

“The Bible is not simply great literature to be admired and revered, it is Good News for all people everywhere – a message both to be understood and to be applied in daily life”

Preface

Praise, honor, majesty, and glory be to our Father and Savior whose thoughts are much wiser than man's thoughts, whose ways are much higher than man's ways!

The authors never thought and planned to write a textbook like it is, but one early morning, our Father & Savior through the Holy Spirit roused me from sleep and said, "Dina, write textbook." I rose up and prayed: Yes, Father, but what do you want me to write and how shall I do it? Instantly, a thought flashed in my mind, "Textbook in Biblical Studies." Then, in the days following the Father spoke to me again saying, "It must lead the people to holiness."

Hence, this textbook outlines and expounds the most basic and the most important Biblical truths that each person needs in order to live a victorious, meaningful, and happy life. The authors believe that after the student has successfully studied this textbook, he is already armed and equipped with Biblical knowledge concerning spiritual truths and principles that would help him live a holy life while still on this earth, until we reach our final destination, that is, the Kingdom of our Father in heaven.

Considering also that Almighty Yahweh who manifested Himself fully through His Son Yahshua the Messiah, and who continuously reveal Himself through the works of the Holy Spirit, is the source of all good things, the origin of all bright, good, and wonderful ideas, the source of the messages revealed to mankind through the prophets; recorded, printed, and circulated as the Holy Bible, the authors unanimously decided to open this textbook by introducing the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit. These topics the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit have been adapted from *The Wisdom of God*. Copyright © 2004 by Segundina T. Valenzona. Published by the Truth Seekers Assemblies & Ministries. It is the authors' prayers that while the student reads and studies this textbook, he will meet the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit personally and have an intimate and everlasting fellowship together.

This textbook is complete with all the sixty six books in the Bible with a considerably good number of topics in each book. But, in no case is this a replacement of the Holy Bible. It is rather, a systematic sharing of the authors' knowledge, understanding, insights of the Sacred Scriptures in the hope that the students will be enlightened of the Father's will, and richly blessed morally and spiritually.

This textbook is especially and prayerfully made for young people in the secondary level, college students, and adults. It is excellent for classroom or group Bible Study, personal reading and self-study of the Holy Bible. It is

therefore our hope that this book will become an inspiring and effective guide in your search for the meaning and purpose of life through the Holy Scriptures. Memory verses are especially chosen and placed at the end of the pages for convenience so that as the student memorizes at least one verse in each book of the Holy Bible, when he has finished, he already has memorized no less than sixty six Bible verses which he could use as spiritual weapons wherever he may be.

The authors are deeply grateful to the Almighty Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit whose ever-flowing grace and blessing sustained us and enabled us to work on this book joyfully. Special mention goes also to the following individuals whose support, prayers, inspiration have played a great part in the accomplishment of this book, Andrew David Valenzona Russell, his sister Sophia Rebecca, Jason Russell, and Elder Supernico Y. Valenzona, Jr.

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GOD

The Father, The Son, The Holy Spirit

Oneness or Unity of the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit

"I and my Father are one" (John 10: 30).

The author believes that the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit are one but they are three distinct holy beings. Let us meditate on the following words and gain more enlightenment from it by the help of the Holy Spirit.

"Whoever accepts my commandments and obeys them is the one who loves me. My Father will love whoever loves me; I too will love him and reveal myself to him" (John 14: 21).

"Whoever loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and my Father and I will come to him. Whoever does not love me does not obey my teaching" (John 14: 23-24).

"If you love me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father; for He is greater than I" (John 14: 28).

I reiterate that though the Father and the Son are one, they are different holy individuals. Nevertheless they are one in virtues, qualities, and purpose. They are one in that just as the Father is holy, perfect, and powerful, so is the Son, and also the Holy Spirit. In other words, each of them the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit is holy and powerful, and they have the same goal and purpose for mankind, and the whole creation. However, each of them has different important functions, working hand in hand for the fulfillment of the Father's will for His whole creation. But as far as their nature is concern-their holiness and power, their aim for the creation, they are one. That is why Yahshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ) said: "I and my Father are one." This can be illustrated and understood better with the life and relationship of a loving family. A family with the father, mother, and children who are devoted to each other and harmoniously work together for the good and success of the whole family. Take

note that the Messiah said, "My Father is greater than I." That is so because the Father is the Creator and the source of all that the Messiah (Christ) has.

"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28: 18).

Like the Father, the Son is also powerful because the Father has given Him all power and authority over His creation. What power? A divine power. The power to forgive sin and to raise the dead back to life. The power to heal the sick and to feed the hungry people miraculously. The power to heal the whole creation which has been groaning in pain because of sin. This power was manifested in the life and works of Yahshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ) on earth. We can recall that when the Messiah fed the four thousand men, and seven thousand men another occasion, with few loaves of bread and little fish, the people were all satisfied and there were still baskets of extra food. On another instance Yahshua the Messiah also raised Lazarus to life though he was four days dead and buried. Another one, is the only son of the widow in Nain who was on the way to be buried. The Son, Yahshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ), therefore, has power over life and death that is why He said: *"I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die"* (John 11: 24-25). The Father has also given the Son the power and authority to judge everyone – to justify or condemn. The reason why Yahshua the Messiah could boldly say: *"I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through me"* (John 14: 6). Therefore, the Son Yahshua the Messiah has power and authority to rule as the King of kings over everyone and everything the Father has created, and of course, His faithful followers will also reign with Him forever and ever.

Take note that the Messiah's power and authority is limited only to everyone and everything the Father has created, not over the Father Himself who is the Creator. Let us ponder upon the succeeding words of St. Paul in his letter to the Corinthians:

"Then the end will come; Christ will overcome all spiritual rulers, authorities, and powers, and will hand over the Kingdom to God the Father. For Christ must rule until God defeats all enemies and put them under His feet. The last enemy to be defeated will be death. For the scripture says: 'God put all things under his feet.' It is clear, of course, that the words "all things" do not include God Himself, who puts all things under Christ rule, then He himself, the Son, will place himself under God the Creator and Father who placed all things under him: and God will rule completely over all" (I Corinthians 15: 24-28).

Clearly, the foregoing scriptures explain the statement of Yahshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ) in John 14: 28, *"For my Father is greater than I."*

From the book of the Prophets we can also see that the Father appoints anyone He wants to hold positions or sit on throne to rule over His people. To Prophet Ezekiel for example, the Father said: "Mortal man, I am making you a watchman for the nation of Israel. You will pass on to them the warnings I give. If I announce that an evil man is going to die but you do not warn him to change his ways so that he can save his life, he will die still a sinner, but I will hold you responsible for his death. If you do warn an evil man and he does not stop sinning, he will die, still a sinner, but your life will be spared."

In the Book of Prophet Daniel, it is written:

"...So then, let all people everywhere know that the Supreme God has power over human kingdoms and that He can give them to anyone even to the least important of men" (Daniel 4: 17).

Likewise, the Son Yahshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ) has power and authority to appoint or commission anyone He wants. To the disciples the Messiah said:

"Listen, I have given you authority, so that you can walk on snakes and scorpions and overcome all the power of the enemy, and nothing will hurt you" (Luke 10: 19).

After the resurrection of the Messiah, He also appeared to the disciples who assembled together behind locked doors and said:

"Peace be with you. As the Father sent me so I send you." Then He breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive people's sins, they are forgiven: if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven" (John 20: 21-23).

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father" (John 14: 12).

The Holy Spirit

"If you love me keep my commandments."

And I pray to the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever (John 14: 15-18).

The Comforter that Yahshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ) referred to is the Holy Spirit; the Spirit of truth. The Holy Spirit is the one that the Father sent to help, guide, and lead the followers of the Messiah into all the truth after He died on the cross, buried, resurrected, and ascended to the throne in heaven.

"The Holy Spirit does not speak of Himself but He speaks only the words that He hears from the Son. He does not glorify Himself but he glorifies the Son. On the other hand, Yahshua the Messiah also upholds the Holy Spirit saying: 'Whoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, the Messiah, can be forgiven: but he that blasphemeth or speaks evil things against the Holy Spirit, will not be forgiven'" (Luke 12: 10).

The Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit love one another, have reverence for one another, and uphold each other. They work together lovingly and harmoniously as one for the good of everyone and everything the Father has created. The relationship of the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit is the perfect model of every relationship on earth especially that of a family. Every family on earth or every member in the family must love one another, and uphold each other for the good of all and for the glory of our Father and Savior.

GENESIS

Introduction:

The word Genesis means 'origin'. Genesis is also the first book of the Bible - Old Testament. It tells about the Creation of the universe, the origin of mankind and of things, the beginning of Sin and of Suffering or the Fall, and about God's Way of dealing with mankind. Most especially about the lives of the Patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and his family.

TS

The Creation of the Universe

Genesis

The Bible says that in the beginning God the Creator and Father in heaven whose name is Yahweh created the universe. At the time of creation the earth was formless and in total darkness; the raging ocean covered everything. Then Yahweh El or Yahweh the Almighty commanded, saying, "Let there be light" and light appeared. Yahweh was pleased with what He saw and He named the light "Day" and the darkness "Night." Yahweh Almighty continued His works of creation for six days. There was already the Sky, the land which He called Earth, the Sea and Ocean, filled with all good and beautiful things such as the sun, the moon, the stars, in the sky. The animals, the plants-fruit trees, and flowers on the land, the fowls in the air, the sea creatures in the ocean.

On the sixth day the last day of creation, Yahweh El created man & woman or Adam & Eve. He said: "And now we will make human beings; they will be like us and resemble us. He created them male and female, blessed them, and said: Have many children, so that your descendants will live all over the earth and bring it under their control."

"By the seventh day Yahweh El finished what He had been doing and stopped working. He blessed the seventh day and set it apart as a special day. The King James version of the Bible states: "And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it...."

Questions for Exercise:

1. Who is the Creator of the universe?
2. In the beginning what was the condition of the earth?
3. What was the first of Almighty Yahweh's creation?
4. How did Almighty Yahweh create? Did Yahweh El have a laboratory for creation or invention?
5. How many days were the works of creation and when was man & woman created?
6. What did Almighty Yahweh do on the seventh day?
7. Describe the Creator.

The Period and Growth of the Creation

Genesis

The scriptures tell us that Almighty Yahweh did the works of creation for six days. If we are to take this "six days" as the actual six days or twenty four (24) hours day that we have, then we can say that the creation existed instantaneously. But based on our actual observation and experienced, we know that every living being takes some time or period of growth and development. For example, a seed when planted, it takes some years before it becomes a tree and yield fruits of its kind. So are the animals and other creatures.

Based also on the following scriptures, the writers of this book would like to express their ideas that the "six days" that is mentioned in the creation is not the literal days that we know or we have, the twenty four hours day.

"But do not forget one thing, my dear friends! There is no difference in the Lord's sight between one day and a thousand years; to him the two are the same" (II Peter 3: 8). "A thousand years to you are like one day; they are like yesterday, already gone, like an hour in the night" (Psalm 90: 4).

Yahweh our Father in heaven is eternal, so to Him there is no difference between one day and a thousand years. To Him the two are same; a thousand years is like one day, even like an hour in the night.

In other words, the "six days" could be a period of six thousand years in which the creation grew and developed, and Yahweh El completely finished the works of creation. Then He rested from the works that He had been doing.

Questions for Exercise:

1. Do you have plants or animals at home?
2. Do you take care of them and have you observed them growing?
3. What will happen to them if no one takes care?
4. Do they produce fruits of their kind instantly? With God's power, why not instant?
5. What message is brought to us through the scriptures: II Peter 3: 8 and Psalm 90: 4?

The Purpose of Creation

Genesis

Let us take note that Almighty Yahweh said: "Let us make human beings who will be like us and resemble us." It is clear that Almighty Yahweh wanted to create someone who would show His likeness; would manifest His perfect image. However, since He knew what these man & woman would need, He first filled the earth with all good things that human beings need for their continuing existence.

Romans 1:20 declares that *Ever since God created the world, his invisible qualities, both his eternal power and his divine nature, have been clearly seen; they are perceived in the things that God has made.* So, even the world itself reveal Almighty Yahweh's qualities and divine nature. The mountains, the valleys, the rivers, the brooks, the springs, the seas and the ocean and all creatures therein reveal Yahweh's divine nature and qualities, but it is the human beings that resemble Him or clearly show His likeness.

Since man and woman or human beings have Almighty Yahweh's own qualities and divine nature such as the ability to think, to reason and to talk, human beings know that Yahweh their Creator loves them and cares for them. Therefore, as His creation - as His children we should thank Him, praise Him and worship Him only because He tolerates no rival. We should give Him the joy, the honor, and the glory that He alone deserves. We should gladly obey His commands and do His perfect will.

Questions for Exercise:

1. What is Almighty Yahweh's main purpose for creating man & woman?
2. Can you think of other purposes why Almighty Yahweh created man and woman?
3. Why did Almighty Yahweh fill the earth with all good things before creating man & woman?
4. Do other creation-creation other than man & woman reveal Almighty Yahweh's qualities and divine nature?
5. Name some of the qualities of Yahweh Almighty.
6. What should man & woman first do to Almighty Yahweh their creator?

The Beginning of Sin and Suffering

Genesis

The scripture tells us that Almighty Yahweh put the man He had formed in the garden-Eden, in the East. In the middle of the garden stood the tree that gives life, and the tree that gives knowledge of what is good and what is bad (Genesis 2: 8 & 9) . Almighty Yahweh told the man or Adam “You may eat the fruit of any tree in the garden, except the tree that gives knowledge of what is good and what is bad. You must not eat the fruit of that tree; if you do, you will die the same day.”

Then Almighty Yahweh said: “It is not good for the man to live alone. I will make a suitable companion to help him.” So, Almighty Yahweh made a woman out of man’s ribs. The man was so happy and exclaimed “At last, here is one of my own kind....” And, of course, they were together in the garden.

One moment the snake came to the woman and asked, “Did God really tell you not to eat fruit from any tree in the garden?” The woman answered: “We may eat the fruit of any tree in the garden except the tree in the middle of it. God told us not to eat ... if we do, we will die.”

But the snake was so cunning and so convincing. It said, “That’s not true; you will not die....” The woman took some of the fruit and ate it. She gave some to the man and he also ate it. As soon as they had eaten it, they realized that they were naked, sewed fig leaves and covered themselves.

Then Yahweh Almighty asked them why they did it, and the woman replied, “the snake tricked me into eating it.”

Consequently, Almighty Yahweh said to the snake, “You will be punished for this; you alone of all the animals must bear this curse. From now on you will crawl on your belly.... I will make you and the woman hate each other; her offsprings and yours will always be enemies.”

To the woman Almighty Yahweh said: “I will increase your trouble in pregnancy and your pain in giving birth....” To the man Almighty Yahweh said: “Because of what you have done, the ground will be under a curse. You will have to work hard all your life to make it produce enough food for you. You will have to work hard..., until you go back to the soil from which you were formed. You were made from soil, and you will become soil again.”

Almighty Yahweh loves His creation especially the man and woman who are to reflect His image. He gave them instruction or commandment to

obey for their good, but they disobeyed. For their disobedience, they were severely punished. Since their offspring inherited their nature [evil nature], they also bear the same punishment. Ever since the fall of the first man and woman, mankind and all of creation has been groaning in pain.

Author's Insight on the Fall

- After Almighty Yahweh put the man in the garden, the scripture tells us that in the middle of the garden there stood the tree of life, and the tree of knowledge of good and bad.
- The angels were created as Almighty Yahweh's servants (Hebrews 1: 14). Could it be that the tree of life is the man and the tree of knowledge of good and bad is the angel who was to serve the man?
- Man in the scriptures is often symbolized by a tree (Psalm 1: 1- 3; Isaiah 61: 3; Jeremiah 17: 7-8). "Appoint unto them that mourn...to give unto them beauty for ashes,...that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified" (Isaiah 61: 3).
- Angels, as Almighty Yahweh's servants have knowledge of the will of the Almighty but not immune to sin; there are fallen angels (Jude 1: 6).
- The snake came to the woman and talked to her-tempted her. The literal snake does not talk like man and woman.
- Almighty Yahweh punished the snake by cursing it and making it crawl so, at the time the snake talked to the woman, it was not crawling. The crawling in this case, could also mean a debased condition.
- Satan which means enemy is also called the devil, the dragon, the ancient serpent (Revelation 20: 2). So, the snake that tempted the woman and satan or the ancient serpent (snake) could be the same.

- When satan tempted Yahshua the Messiah to turn the stones into bread, the Messiah replied: “Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that comes out of the mouth of Almighty Yahweh” (Matthew 4:1-4).
- What the Messiah meant was that the words of Yahweh El must be accepted, believed, and obeyed-that is eating Almighty Yahweh’s words (just like eating food). But the first man and woman ate the words of the tempter.
- If the “eating” is literal eating of a fruit like apple, how is it that Almighty Yahweh said to the woman, “I will increase your trouble in pregnancy and your pain in giving birth”?
- We can therefore say that the “eating” has something to do with pregnancy and giving birth.

*The Supernatural Beings
and
The Human Women*

Genesis 6

When mankind grew in number and spread all over the land, beautiful girls were born. Some of the supernatural beings took the ones they like. As a result, these supernatural beings and human women produced offsprings who were giants, and became heroes during their time.

It was also during this time that Almighty Yahweh saw the extent and depth of the wickedness of mankind. In anger, Almighty Yahweh said: "I will not allow people to live forever.... From now on they will live no longer than one hundred twenty (120) years."

Questions for Exercise:

1. Are giants real?
2. Who was the giant that King David killed when he was just a boy?
3. Do you know of other giants?
4. How big and tall is your imagination of a giant?
5. Are you afraid of giants?
6. How did giants appear in the world?
7. What is your idea of the "supernatural beings"?
8. How did Almighty Yahweh feel when He saw the extent of Man's wickedness and what did He say?
9. What can you say of our beautiful girls today?
Do you think what happened long time ago do happen in our time?
10. If you are a parent, what would you do to keep your beautiful girls safe from such evil and temptation?

Noah and the Flood that Wiped Out Everyone Else

Genesis 7 & 8

Yahweh El saw how wicked and evil were the people on earth. He was filled with regret that He said: "I will wipe out these people I have created, and also the animals..., because I am sorry that I made any of them."

But there was one man named Noah who was a good man and lived in fellowship with Almighty Yahweh. So, Yahweh El said to Noah, "I have decided to put an end to all mankind because they filled the world of their wickedness. Build a boat for yourself, your wife, your three sons-Shem, Ham, Japheth and their wives. Go into the boat with a male and female of every kind of animal and bird."

Then Almighty Yahweh sent rain forty days and nights. The land was flooded and it became so deep that it covered the highest mountains; the water kept on rising until it was twenty five feet above the tops of the mountains. The land was deeply flooded for one hundred fifty days and every living being on earth died except those which were in the boat with Noah.

Almighty Yahweh remembered Noah and He caused the wind to blow, and the water started going down. "On the seventeenth day of the seventh month the boat came to rest on a mountain in the Ararat range."

Questions for Exercise:

1. What caused Almighty Yahweh to send rain which flooded the land and killed every living creature on earth?
2. Does Yahweh El talk to man?
3. Who was the man who lived in fellowship with Yahweh El?
4. What is the reward of sin or wickedness?
5. What is the reward of faith in Yahweh El, Yahshua the Messiah, Holy Spirit?
6. When Almighty Yahweh talks to you, what should you do?
7. Almighty Yahweh sent rain for forty days and nights, how deep or how high was the water?
8. What did Almighty Yahweh do to make the great water go down?
9. Some people think that calamities like flood are accidents, not sent by God, what is your conviction?

The Survivors of the Flood

Genesis 9 & 10

Noah and his three sons Shem, Japheth, and Ham were the ancestors of all people on earth after the flood. Noah was the first man to plant a vineyard.

One day Noah took some of his wine, got drunk and slept naked. When Ham, the youngest son saw his father, he was ashamed, told his brothers what he saw and the brothers covered their father with a robe.

When Noah woke up and learned what happened, he said: "A curse on Canaan! (Ham is the father of Canaan). He will be a slave to his brothers." Then he gave his blessing to Shem and Japheth.

The descendants of Japheth are the people in Spain, Cyprus, Rhodes.... The descendants of Ham are the people in Egypt, Lydia, Anam, Crete... from whom the Philistines descended. Also, the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Hevites... until the Canaanites spread out southward from Sidon to Gerar near Gaza; eastward, to Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah....

Shem, the older brother of Japheth was the ancestor of all the Hebrews. The sons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arpachsad, Lud, and Aram.

Blessing is the opposite of a curse. Parents' blessing to their children are important for the stability of the lives of their children and their future well being. The holy scriptures repeatedly emphasized that children should honor their parents while the parents should love their children. This teaching is really very important that the fifth of the Ten Commandments says: "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

Questions for Exercise:

1. Name the three sons of Noah.
2. What did Noah do after the flood? Or What was Noah's occupation?
3. Do our conduct, behavior, attitudes reveal what's in our hearts? Was the behavior or attitude of Ham good?
4. Are parents' blessing important? Why?
5. Memorize & recite a verse that tells children to show respect to their parents.

The Patriarchs-Abraham, Isaac, Jacob

Genesis 12

Patriarch means father. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob are the fathers of the Israelites, Almighty Yahweh's chosen people.

Abraham was one of the sons of Terah who lived in Ur, Babylonia, his brothers were Nahor and Haran. The original name of Abraham was Abram and he married his half sister Sarai who was later called Sarah. It was Almighty Yahweh Himself who changed the name of Abram to Abraham saying, "Your name will no longer be Abram, but Abraham because I am making you the ancestor of many nations. Then Yahweh El said to Abraham, "You must no longer call your wife Sarai. From now on her name is Sarah.... I will bless her and she will become the mother of nations. You and Sarah will have many descendants and there will be kings among your descendants.

Abraham's Faith & Obedience to Almighty Yahweh

- a) When Abraham was seventy five years old, Yahweh El said to him, "Leave your country, your relatives, and your father's home, and go to the land that I am going to show you. I will give you many descendants and they will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, but I will curse those who curse you. And through you I will bless all the nations."

Abraham reverently obeyed Almighty Yahweh's call. With Sarah his wife, his nephew Lot and all their possession including slaves they had acquired in Haran. Abraham started out for the land of Canaan (at that time the Canaanites were still living there). He traveled through the land until they reached Shechem. There, Almighty Yahweh appeared to Abraham and said to him, "This is the country that I am going to give to your descendants." Abraham built an Altar for Yahweh El who appeared to him, and the place is called the holy place at Shechem.

Abraham's Sacrifices And Almighty Yahweh's Mercy

There was famine in the land so Abraham and his company had to travel farther south to Egypt. Because of the possible danger that Abraham thought, he said to his wife, "You are a beautiful woman. When the Egyptians see you, they will assume that you are my wife, and so they will kill me and let you live. Tell them that you are my sister; then because of you they will let me live and treat me well."

The Egyptians did see that Sarah was beautiful. When some of the Court Officials saw her, they told the King. The King had Sarah brought to him, and

gave many gifts such as flocks of sheep and goats, cattle, donkeys, slaves, and camels to Abraham.

But Yahweh El knows everything and is merciful to those who obey Him. He sent terrible disease on the King and on the people in the palace so that none of them had touched Sarah.

When the King and his officials realized that Abraham was a prophet and they suffered on account of Sarah, they returned her to Abraham.

- b) The time when Abraham moved to the southern part of Canaan. While he was living in Gerar, Abraham said to King Abimelech of Gerar that Sarah was his sister. King Abimelech had Sarah brought to him. But before he had come near Sarah, Almighty Yahweh appeared to King Abimelech in a dream and said to him, "You are going to die, because you have taken this woman; she is already married." Abimelech answered, "Lord, I am innocent! Would you destroy me and my people?" Almighty Yahweh replied in a dream, "Yes, I know that you did it with a clear conscience. But now, give the woman back to her husband. He is a prophet, and he will pray for you, so that you will not die. If you do not give her back, I warn you that you are going to die, you and all your people."

King Abimelech returned Sarah to Abraham and gave Abraham and Sarah many gifts.

Questions for Exercise:

1. Who are the fathers of the Israelites?
2. Why are they called chosen people?
3. Who changed the names of Abram and Sarai to Abraham and Sarah? Why?
4. Does Yahweh El talk to man or woman? In what way?
5. When Almighty Yahweh called Abraham, how did he respond?
6. How did Almighty Yahweh protect Sarah from the King of Egypt?
7. What did Almighty Yahweh say to King Abimelech?
8. Describe the relationship of Abraham and Almighty Yahweh in five sentences.
9. What very important lessons have you learned from the life and experience of Abraham with Almighty Yahweh?
10. Do you wish that our Father & Savior would also talk to you as He did to Abraham? Why?

Abraham's Tithe to Melchizedek

Genesis

Tithe or the tenth of ones income was never mentioned and never heard before the time of Abraham. Even the 'Ten Commandments' was not yet in existence. But because Abraham was humble and faithful, Almighty Yahweh's Spirit guided him to do that which was right and pleasing to Yahweh the Father in heaven.

One day when Abraham walked down the street after a victorious battle against King Chedorlaomer and other kings, Melchizedek who was King of Salem and priest of Yahweh El met Abraham and gave him bread and wine. He also blessed Abraham saying, "May the Most High God, who made heaven and earth, bless Abraham! May the Most High God, who gave you victory over your enemies, be praised." Then Abraham's conscience urged him to give to Melchizedek a tenth of all the loot he had, and Abraham gladly did.

How wonderful it is to note that a man, without being commanded (verbal or written) did always what was right by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Is it not nice to follow the steps of Abraham? To gladly give a tenth of all the good things that we have to those who serve our Father & Savior? To share the good things we have to others especially to those who deserve our kindness and help?

Giving is one of the precious virtue that Almighty Yahweh's people should possess. In fact, the scripture says, "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9: 7). It is also good to remind ourselves that God the Father gave His Son Yahshua the Messiah to the world for our salvation and eternal life. One author writes: "God is a giver, and you are never more like God than when you give." Our Lord and Savior also teaches us saying, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20: 35).

Questions for Exercise:

1. Do you gladly and regularly give your tithe & offering?
2. Have you tried giving to the poor and needy? How did you feel afterwards? Give your testimony.
3. What does this mean to you? "You are never more like God than when you give."
4. Yahshua the Messiah said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Do you remember other Bible verses that teach us or encourage us to give? Share them with us.

Isaac's Birth and His Marriage to Rebecca

Genesis 21 - 24

When Abraham was a hundred years old, Isaac was born to Sarah. Sarah said, "God has brought me joy and laughter. Everyone who hears about it will laugh with me." Isaac in Hebrew means "he laughs."

Sarah died and Isaac was old enough to marry (Isaac was forty years old) so Abraham said to his oldest servant, "You must go back to the country where I was born and get a wife for my son Isaac from among my relatives."

The servant who was in charge of Abraham's property took ten of his master's camels and with some men went to the city where Nahor lived in Northern Mesopotamia. When the servant arrived, he prayed, "Lord, God of my master Abraham, give me success today and keep your promise to my master. I will say to the women at the well 'please lower your jar and let me have a drink. If she says 'Drink, and I will also bring water for your camels,' may she be the one that you have chosen for Isaac. If this happens, I will know that you have kept your promise to my master."

Before he had finished his prayer, came a beautiful young girl who was still a virgin. She was Rebecca the daughter of Bethuel, who was the son of Abraham's brother Nahor and his wife Milcah. The servant ran to meet Rebecca and said to her, "Please, give me a drink of water from your jar." She said, "Drink Sir, and I will also bring water for your camels and let them have all they want."

When Rebecca had finished giving water to the camels, the servant took the expensive gold ring and bracelets that he brought and put it on Rebecca's arms. Rebecca went home and introduced Abraham's servant to her brother Laban and to her father.

Rebecca's family welcomed Abraham's servant and gave him and his companions food. But Abraham's servant said, "I will not eat until I have said what I have to say." Laban replied: "Go on and speak."

The servant told everything about his master Abraham and his success, his son Isaac and Abraham's desire to get a wife for his son from among his relatives. Then the servant said, "Please tell me your decision." Laban and Bethuel answered: "Since this matter comes from the Lord, it is not for us to make a decision. Here is Rebecca; take her and go. They gave Rebecca their

blessing saying, "May you become the mother of millions! May your descendants conquer the cities of their enemies."

When the servant was back to Abraham and Isaac with Rebecca, Isaac was very happy; he loved Rebecca very much. They lived together happily and Rebecca gave birth to the twins-Esau and Jacob.

Questions for Exercise:

1. When in trouble and in need, What would you do first?
2. Do you believe that Almighty Yahweh answers prayer?
3. Who provided Isaac a beautiful wife?
4. Abraham's servant prayed to Almighty Yahweh. Briefly, write your own prayer.
5. When Abraham's servant prayed, he asked for a sign. Gideon also did before he led his people to battle. Do you think asking for a sign when we pray still works today?
6. Who were the parents, and brother of Rebecca?
7. Before Rebecca left with Abraham's servant, what did her parents and brother do and say to her?
8. What is the meaning of Isaac and why was he called Isaac?
9. Why do you think Abraham sent his servant far away to get a wife for Isaac? Were there no women nearby?
10. Describe Rebecca as a young woman.

EXODUS

Introduction

Exodus means departure. It refers to one of the most important events in Israel's history, the departure of the people of Israel from Egypt where they had been slaves.

This book describes what Almighty Yahweh did as He liberated His enslaved people. Most widely known parts are the miracles He performed, and the giving of the Ten Commandments.

The central human figure in the book is Moses, the man whom Yahweh Almighty chose to lead His people from Egypt.

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Lessons We Can Glean From The Life of Moses

Exodus

- Good Heart With Noble Intention Is Not Enough For A Successful Journey!

Moses who was a Hebrew or Israelite became an adopted son of the princess, so except for the time when he was being nursed by his own mother, he stayed in the palace. When he had grown up he went out to visit his own people who worked as slaves.

During that visit, Moses saw an Egyptian killed a Hebrew. "Moses looked all around, and when he saw that no one was watching, he killed the Egyptian and hid his body in the sand."

The next day he went back and saw two Hebrew men fighting. He said to the one who was in the wrong, "Why are you beating up a fellow Hebrew?" The man answered, "Who made you our ruler and judge? Are you going to kill me just as you killed that Egyptian?"

Having learned that somebody knew what he did, Moses fled to the land of Midian for fear of the King's anger and punishment.

In a race, the contestant does not only have to run fast- as fast as he can, but he must run continually and observe the rules in order to win. Almighty Yahweh's children in this world are like contestants in a race. We must be strong body, soul, spirit through faith and humble obedience or fit to join the race. Also, each must observe the rules, otherwise, the contestant will be disqualified.

- Self-Control and Patience

Obviously, Moses was angry at the injustice and oppression that his people suffered. Certainly, it is good and right to be angry at every evil but at that very moment Moses needed self-control and patience.

Almighty Yahweh brought Moses to the Palace for the purpose of releasing His people from oppression and be their ruler, but he first needed to let his people know his heart. Above all, he needed to wait upon the Lord's appointed time and guidance.

Moses had a pure heart and wonderful intention but his lack of self-control, and impatience led him to serious trouble.

The Ten Commandments

Exodus

1. Worship no god but me. Do not make for yourselves images of anything in heaven or in earth or in the water under the earth.
2. Do not bow down to any idol or worship it, because I am the Lord your God and I tolerate no rivals.
3. Do not use my name for evil purposes, for I, the Lord your God, will punish anyone who misuses my name.
4. Observe the Sabbath and keep it holy. You have six days in which to do your work, but the seventh day is a day of rest dedicated to me.
5. Respect your father and mother, so that you may live a long time in the land that I am giving you.
6. Do not commit murder.
7. Do not commit adultery.
8. Do not steal.
9. Do not accuse anyone falsely.
10. Do not desire another man's house; do not desire his wife, and anything else that he owns.

Exodus 20
TEV

Enlightenment:

1. Yahweh Almighty is Spirit and he that worships Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth (John 4: 24). He is all- powerful; the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and all natural things therein. He is the source and the giver of life. It is therefore foolish to liken Him to a lifeless image.
2. It is not only foolish to bow down to an idol or worship it, but it is also an insult to man or woman who has mind to think and reason, eyes to see, ears to hear, mouth to speak, hands to work, feet to walk, and then worship an idol that he carries and fastens it somewhere. Psalm 135: 15-21; Isaiah 44: 9-10.

Our Father in heaven wants us his people to be sensible, wise, and pure.

3. Our Father in heaven and His name YHWH (Yahweh) is holy. So, this very name must be used reverently. Anyone who misuses this holy name or anything that is holy will not escape punishment.
4. The Sabbath day is sacred. It must be spent reverently such as worship of our Father and Savior, reading and studying His words, praising, and prayers.

Do not spend the day working as you do on other days. Even when talking, avoid talking about people, about business or works. Rather, enrich yourselves-your soul, and spirit with heavenly, holy, spiritual things for spiritual growth and development, and spiritual strength. Or, read the Bible, pray, and sleep.

5. Take note that the fifth commandment is unique and beautiful. It is a commandment with promise of long life if we humbly and gladly obey it.

Be kind to your father and mother. Be eager to give them the help that they need. Live a good life; a life that gives them honor and happiness.

Constantly pray for your father and mother. The heavenly Father will be pleased and will bless you abundantly.

6. Do not kill anyone except when necessary for example, self-defense.
7. Keep yourself from sexual immorality of any form. It is filthy and destructive to the body, soul, and spirit. Our heavenly Father abhors it.
8. Stealing is against the heavenly law, and the law of the land. No country or government allows it legally. No one person wants his precious possession lost; it may cause him deep sadness, hardship and trouble.
9. Do not accuse or put anyone to shame and danger carelessly. Do not malign anyone.
10. Do not maliciously desire anything that belongs to another person. It is not proper.

Assignment:

1. Memorize the Ten Commandments and recite them.
2. Understand the meaning of each commandment and act as a Bible Teacher teaching the Ten Commandments.

*The Holy Name**

*“Thou Shalt not take the name of the Elohim or
the Lord thy God in vain.”*

Exodus

Name is very necessary and important. I supposed the first job Adam had was to name all the creatures around just as the father and mother inevitably choose a name for their new born baby. Otherwise, they would have the difficulty of calling and distinguishing him from the others. Name gives identity and distinctiveness of one person from the rest of his fellows. It also relates to ones prestige and dignity.

R. Arthur Mathews wrote: “It is the name of a person that separates him from the rest of his fellows into a category of distinctiveness that he creates for himself by his character and activity. Throughout the Bible God is very careful to point out the distinctive that are associated with His name and that separates Him from everyone else. Because God is exceedingly jealous for his name, He insists that nothing be allowed to dim its glory or cheapen its distinctiveness. Each time God speaks His name in Leviticus, He adds a reminder that His name is to be hallowed. It is the value of God’s name that satan is out to cheapen. Therefore to pray, “Hallowed be Thy Name” is right in line with the will of God and a blow to the ambition of satan.”

Indeed, our Father’s Name is glorious. He is not willing to share the glory of His Name to any other. The Father’s Name is also holy and mighty, so that when Yahshua the Messiah prayed for his disciples, He said: “Holy Father! Keep them safe by the power of Your Name, the Name you have given me, so that they may be one just as You and I are one.”

According to research and discoveries, the Name of our Father in heaven is the Tetragrammaton YHWH which is read or pronounced as YAHWEH. This Name is too holy for the Israelites to utter. Probably, they were also afraid they would unintentionally misuse the name of the Father especially that the penalty for misusing the name of the Father was death. Consequently, they substituted the name of the Father with El or Elohim, meaning the Almighty. Many others chose the Hebrew word Adonai which means LORD.

Sometimes later, these substitute names were translated in English as LORD or GOD as it is in most of our Bibles. But LORD or GOD is not a name, it is a title like the title: King. LORD or GOD is a title which the believers ascribe to the Father and Savior. But it is also a fact that these titles are commonly associated with other beings so that we have to be spiritually sensitive and careful. The only difference in the use of these titles is in writing because it is written in small letters when it is referred to beings other than our Father and Savior.

The Tetragrammaton YHWH was transliterated to JHVH from which the name Jehovah derived. Nevertheless, let us consider that the Hebrew Alphabet does not include letter J and that our Father in heaven revealed Himself first to Abraham and to his descendants the Hebrews or Israelites. It is therefore inconceivable that the original name of the Father begins with letter J. On the other hand, Yahshua the Messiah is the Hebrew Name of our Savior and King, the begotten Son of the Father. Yahshua means Yahweh is my/our salvation. Messiah means the Anointed. Therefore, the name of our Savior and King means: the Anointed of Yahweh for our salvation.

For more about the name, Revelation 13: 16-18 says, "The beast forced all people, small and great, rich and poor, slave and free, except those whose names are written in the book of the living which belongs to the Lamb, to have a mark placed on their right hands and foreheads. No one could buy or sell unless he had this mark, that is the beast's name or the number that stands for the name...the number stands for a man's name. Its number is 666." But Revelation 22: 3-5 declares: "Nothing that is under God's curse will be in the city, and his servants will worship Him. They will see His face, and His Name will be written on their foreheads...and they shall rule as kings forever and ever." HalleluYah!

Finally, the Holy Bible also reveals that Almighty Yahweh commanded Moses to tell the Priests: Aaron and his sons saying, "If they pronounce my name as a blessing upon the people of Israel, I will bless them" (Numbers 6: 27).

* Adapted from Thy Kingdom Come In Earth.

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*"I Am Who I Am"**

Exodus

Exodus 3 tells us of the account when God met and spoke with Moses through a burning bush. God told Moses that He has seen His people's sufferings, heard their groaning and has decided to rescue them by bringing them to a rich and fertile land.

"Now I am sending you to the King of Egypt so that you can lead my people out of his country." God said to Moses. It sounds nice and it feels good to hear a story that God spoke to man as He did to Moses. But hearing a story and having an actual encounter is very different. Moses did not feel good about it; he was rather terrified. In response to God, sadly, Moses quickly enumerated as many reasons as he could think of why God should send someone else instead of him.

The following are Moses' statements and God's answers:

Moses	God
1. I am nobody. How can I go to the King and bring the Israelites out?	1. I will be with you and you will worship me on this mountain.
2. Lord, don't send me I have never been a good speaker. I am a poor speaker, slow and hesitant.	2. I will help you to speak and will tell you what to say. Who gives man his mouth? Who makes him deaf and dumb? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? It is I the Lord.
3. When I go to the Israelites and say to them, "The God of your ancestors sent me to you" they will ask me what is your name? So what can I tell them?	3. God said, "I am who I Am" you must tell them; the one who is called the I Am has sent me to you."

<p>4. Suppose the Israelites do not believe me and will not listen to what I say. What shall I do if they say that you did not appear to me?</p>	<p>4. “What are you holding?” A walking stick, Moses answered. Take this walking stick with you; for with it you will perform miracles, God said.</p>
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At one time or another, I believe, like Moses we were all guilty of presenting our reasons to God for not obeying Him or not answering His call. But from the account of Moses’ personal encounter with God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God and Father of our Savior and King Yahshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ), we can learn that there is no problem that He has no solution. There is no question that our God and Father cannot answer. There is no need that God our Father cannot provide. Indeed, our God and Father is the I Am. In other words, God was saying to Moses and is also saying to us now, whatever is your problem, whatever is your need, whatever is your fear, whatever is your concern, I Am.....

Questions:

1. Do you want God to speak with you personally? Why?
2. Identify the needs of your class and lead the class to prayer.
3. Have you experienced being called by God to do something?

* Adopted from The Wisdom of God.

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LEVITICUS

Introduction:

The Book of Leviticus is named after Levi one of the twelve (12) sons of Jacob, from whom all priests of Israel came. This book was written by Moses while the Israelites wandered in the wilderness before they entered the Promise Land.

The Book of Leviticus can also be called "The Book of the Law of the Priest" as it concerns more on priestly legislation and the practice of the Law among the people. Importance is placed upon Israel's separation from all heathen influences so that the nation may retain its religious purity.

Leviticus is divided in two parts. The first part of the book (chapter 1-7) tells the priests how to offer sacrifices for their sins and for the sins of all other people. The remaining section of Leviticus gives rules about how to observe the Sabbath and about right or wrong behavior.

In Leviticus Almighty Yahweh promises to be with His people. "I will walk among you and be your Elohim, and you shall be my people". Almighty Yahweh added that keeping His commands and ceremonies are part of living as Almighty Yahweh's people.

Consecration of the Priest

Leviticus

“Priests must be holy and must not disgrace my name. The people must consider the priests holy because they present the food offerings to me. I am the Lord; I am holy and I make my people holy.”

Leviticus 21: 6 & 8

Almighty Yahweh commanded Moses saying, “Consecrate Aaron your brother and his sons Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar to be priests, to minister to me. Instruct those to whom I have given special skills as tailors to make special garments for Aaron, to indicate his separation to Almighty Yahweh – beautiful garments that will lend dignity to his work, that will set him apart from others, and they shall also make special garments for Aaron’s sons.”

The garments that were skillfully made were: a chest piece, an ephod, a robe, an embroidered shirt, a turban, and a sash, made out of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet yarn, and fine linen. “Aaron’s sacred garments will belong to his descendants so that they can be anointed and ordained in them. The priesthood is theirs by a lasting ordinance” (Exodus 28).

Almighty Yahweh made a promise that He will consecrate the Tent of Meeting and the Altar, and will consecrate Aaron and his sons to serve as priests. Then I will dwell among the Israelites and be their God. They will know that I am the Lord their God who brought them out of Egypt so that I might dwell among them. I am the Lord their God (Exodus 29).

Specific rules and regulations for worship were given to Moses by Almighty Yahweh for the people to follow, and the appointment of priests as mediators between God and man was part of the great plan in how to worship Almighty Yahweh.

The people should reverently come to Almighty Yahweh’s presence to have fellowship with Him and to worship Him in spirit and in truth because Almighty Yahweh loves to see His people gather together for worship. The priest as Almighty Yahweh’s appointed mediator has to perform all his duties and responsibilities to aide and guide the people for worship and to plead for God’s mercy and love for His people.

Questions for Exercise:

I.

1. What are the names of the four sons of Aaron?
2. What is the role of Aaron and his sons?
3. Enumerate the garments that were skillfully made for Aaron.
4. Why did Almighty Yahweh instruct the Israelites to make special garments for Aaron and his sons? What is the significance in wearing that garment?
5. What do we mean by consecration?

II. Write at least six things the Priests should do so that they would be holy.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Functions of the Priest

Leviticus

The role of the priests is very important and significant. They serve as mediators between Almighty Yahweh and man. They were the ones who performed the ritual offerings for the forgiveness of sins, total dedication, and fellowship which was done by offering a guilt and sin offering, burnt offering, and the fellowship offering.

Only the priest ordained by Almighty Yahweh has the right to perform such sacred task, and it was to be offered as a sweet smelling aroma, dedicated to Almighty Yahweh. Apart from the ordained priest no one can perform the ritual specifically assigned to them by Almighty Yahweh, or punishment of death may happen to those who disobey. Even Aaron and his sons were instructed by Almighty Yahweh through Moses saying, "When you sacrifice a thank offering, sacrifice it in such a way that it will be accepted on your behalf, keep my commands and follow them, do not profane my holy name. I must be acknowledged as holy by the Israelites" (Leviticus 22).

The priests were to lead the Israelites to have full reverence to Almighty Yahweh, to constantly obey His commands and do His will. The priests should always remind the people about purity and holiness. That first of all, they have to become pure before they approach His holy presence and most of all, they were to demonstrate Almighty Yahweh's holiness before other nations.

The priests are specially assigned to declare blessing to Almighty Yahweh's people, by saying: "The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the LORD turn His face toward you and give you peace."

Questions for Exercise:

1. What are the functions of the Priest?
2. Why do you think only the ordained Priest can perform the rituals for worship specifically assigned to them by Almighty Yahweh?
3. Why is it important to have a Priest?
4. Do we still need Priest nowadays? Why?

The Death of Nadab and Abihu

Leviticus 10

One day Aaron's two sons Nadab and Abihu entered Almighty Yahweh's tent of meeting and performed an unauthorized ritual of worship, specially assigned to the High Priest. (The High Priest is the chief religious official like Aaron, ordained to perform the most important sacrifice to Almighty Yahweh in behalf of the people.)

Nadab and Abihu took their censer, put fire in them and added incense; and they offered unauthorized fire before the LORD, contrary to His command. Because of their disobedience fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD. The LORD spoke: "Among those who approach me I will show myself holy; in the sight of all the people I will be honored" (Leviticus 10).

The Israelites were familiar with the brilliant glory of Almighty Yahweh, but they had seen it only from a distance when Almighty Yahweh descended to the top of Mount Sinai and called Moses to the top, but left Moses with an instruction that the people should not force their way through to see Almighty Yahweh or many will perish. Even those priests that will approach Almighty Yahweh must first consecrate themselves or they will be punished (Exodus 19).

Death came upon Nadab and Abihu as punishment for their actions. The LORD's glory was too bright and powerful for them to bear. The LORD said to Moses, "Tell Aaron and his sons to treat with respect the sacred offerings the Israelites consecrated to me, so they will not profane my holy name. 'Priests are to keep my requirements so that they do not become guilty and die for treating them with contempt. I am the LORD, who makes them holy'" (Leviticus 22).

Being a priest is not an ordinary position or role. The task must be taken seriously and reverently, it is a task like no other. It is Almighty Yahweh Himself who designated this task to Aaron and his descendants to serve Him with purity and sincerity in their hearts, mind, body, soul for the unification of His people through worship. As the priest answers to Almighty Yahweh for his actions, we, on the other hand, has the responsibility to acknowledge the authority assigned to them by our Elohim and to fully submit to His appointed people, to respect and honor them as they lead and guide us to the path of righteousness.

Questions for Exercise:

I.

1. What is the difference between a High Priest and a Priest?
2. What did Nadab and Abihu do that caused their death?
3. Describe the God Almighty briefly .
4. During the time of Aaron what is the consequence for disobeying Yahweh El?
5. What is the role of the people towards the anointed Priest?

- II. Why do you think Nadab and Abihu did the things that caused their death?
Write a short paragraph.

The Biblical Festivals or Sacred Feasts

Leviticus 23

Almighty Yahweh said to Moses, "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'These are my appointed feasts, which you are to proclaim sacred assemblies for bringing offerings to the LORD by fire. These offerings are in addition to those for the LORD'S Sabbaths and in addition to your gifts and whatever you have vowed and all the freewill offerings you give to the LORD.'"

The Passover and Unleavened Bread

Almighty Yahweh commanded the Israelites saying, "Commemorate the day of Passover; for the generation to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to Almighty Yahweh – a lasting ordinance. It is during this event when the LORD strikes to death all the first-born of Egypt to convince Pharaoh to release the Israelites from slavery. The firstborn of each Israelite family would be protected if the sign of the blood were on the entrance of their homes. Almighty Yahweh's angels would "Pass Over" their homes – thus the meaning of the name of their observance" (Exodus 12).

"Immediately after the Passover, comes the feast of Unleavened Bread." Almighty Yahweh instructed them to celebrate the feast of unleavened bread, because He said, "It was on this very day that I brought your tribes out of Egypt. For seven days the Israelites must eat bread without yeast, and on the first day they have to remove all the yeast from their houses; and then hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work."

First Fruits or The Harvest Festival

Almighty Yahweh mandated the Israelites, saying, "Celebrate the Feast of Harvest with the first fruits of the crops you saw in your fields. Bring the best of the first fruits of your soil to the house of the LORD. The LORD said to Moses: Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'When you enter the land I am going to give you and you reap its harvest, bring to the priest a sheaf of the first grain you harvest. He is to wave the sheaf before the LORD so it will be accepted on your behalf.'"

This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come, wherever you live (Exodus 23: 16; Exodus 34: 26; Leviticus 23: 9).

Feast of Weeks or Pentecost

“Celebrate the Feast of Weeks to the LORD your God by giving a freewill offering in proportion to the blessing the LORD has given you. And rejoice before the LORD at the place HE will choose as a dwelling for His Name.

“On that same day you are to proclaim a sacred assembly and do no regular work. When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your fields or gather the gleaning of your harvest. Leave them for the poor and the alien. Remember that you were slaves in Egypt, and follow carefully these decrees.

“On that same day you are to proclaim a sacred assembly and do no regular work. This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. I am the LORD your God” (Deuteronomy 16:9; Leviticus 23:21).

The New Year Festival/ Feast of Trumpets

The Feast of Trumpets is one of the 7 Annual Biblical Festivals which Almighty Yahweh commanded His people to observe and celebrate. This is a day of rest a sacred assembly commemorated with trumpet blast. No regular work is to be done on this day and the people is to present an offering to Almighty Yahweh by fire (Leviticus 23:23).

Day of Atonement

The Day of Atonement is a sacred assembly to deny one selves (fasting) and to present an offering to Almighty Yahweh by fire. No regular work has to be done on this day, because it is the day of atonement or the day when the annual ritual is perform to take away sins. A decree was made that anyone who does not deny himself on that day must be cut off from his people. The LORD said: “ I will destroy from among his people anyone who does any work on the day, and the people shall do no work at all.”

“This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come.”

Leviticus 23: 30

Feast of Tabernacles or Feast of Shelters

The Lord said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites that after you have gathered the crops of the land, they are to celebrate the festival for seven days; the 1st day is a day of rest and to do no regular work. For 7 days the people should present offerings made to the LORD, and on the 8th day the people should hold a sacred assembly and present an offering made to the LORD. It is a closing assembly and is a day of rest; do no regular work.

"On the 1st day you are to take choice fruits from the trees, and palm fronds, leafy branches and poplars, and rejoice before the LORD for 7 days." The festival is to be celebrated to Almighty Yahweh for 7 days each year. Almighty Yahweh declares that the Israelites should live in booths for seven days: 'All native born Israelites are to live in booths so that your descendants will know that I had the Israelites live in booths when I brought them out of Egypt.'

"This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. I am the LORD your God."

Questions for Exercise:

1. Enumerate the Biblical Feasts.
2. How important is the observance of the Feasts?
3. Have you been observing all the feasts? If not all, which feasts have you observed?
4. What lessons have you learned in the observance of the feasts?
5. Are you in the habit or practice of sharing with your friends what you have learned? Why?
6. Have you experienced being ignored or rejected while sharing what you have learned from the Bible?
7. If you had, what did you do?
8. What did Yahshua the Messiah say we should do when we are rejected because of the truth and of our faith?

Eating of Blood is Forbidden

Leviticus

The Lord said to Moses, speak to Aaron and his sons and to all the Israelites and say to them:

“Any Israelite or any alien living among you who hunt any animal or bird that may be eaten must drain out the blood and cover it with earth, because the life of every creature is its blood. That is why I have said to the Israelites, ‘You must not eat the blood of any creature, because the life of every creature is its blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is blood that makes atonement of one’s life’” (Leviticus 17: 11).

Almighty Yahweh warned the Israelites and those living among them, who would eat any blood saying, “I will set my face against that person and will cut him off from his people.” In the New Testament we can also find this same teaching in Acts 15: 20, “But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication (sexual immorality), and from things strangled, and from blood.”

The ordinance on not eating meat of animals and birds whose blood is not well drained is strongly commanded and must be strictly observed because blood represents life, a special life from Almighty Yahweh to His creatures.

Blood is so important for one’s life and so sacred for atonement or to “cover up” sins. Let us take heed that some things are for eating, some other things are for sacred purposes, some are poisonous. For reference read also Leviticus chapter eleven.

Questions for Exercise:

1. What is the reason why eating of blood is strictly forbidden?
2. What do we mean by atonement?
3. What did Almighty Yahweh warn the Israelites about eating blood?
4. Does this regulation apply to us today? Explain.

Sabbath Observance

Leviticus 23 & 25

Almighty Yahweh, our Father in heaven commanded His people through His servants the prophets to keep the Sabbath holy. For the Sabbath Day, the Sabbath Year, the Year of Jubilee He commanded as follows:

The Sabbath Day

- Observe the Sabbath and keep it holy. You have six days in which to do your work, but the seventh day is a day of rest dedicated to me....(Exodus 20: 8-10).
- By the seventh day God finished what He had been doing and stopped working. He blessed the seventh day and set it apart as a special day.... (Genesis 2: 2-3).
- I made the Keeping of the Sabbath a sign of the agreement between us, to remind them that I, the Lord, make them holy (Ezekiel 20: 12).
- I am the Lord your God. Obey my laws and commands. Make the Sabbath a holy day, so that it will be a sign of the covenant we made, and will remind you that I am the Lord your God (Ezekiel 20: 19-20).
- I will bless those who always observe the Sabbath and do not misuse it. I will bless those who do nothing evil (Isaiah 56: 2).
- In the New Testament Yahshua the Messiah said: Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of heaven. But whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5: 17-19).

The Sabbath Year or the Seventh Year

. . . You shall honor the LORD by not cultivating the land every seventh year. You shall plant your fields, prune your vineyards, and gather crops for six years. But the seventh year is to be a year of complete rest for the land, a year

dedicated to the LORD.... Although the land has not been cultivated during that year, it will provide food for you.... Everything that it produces by itself may be eaten.

The LORD will bless the land in the sixth year so that it will produce enough food for two years. When you plant your fields in the eighth year, you will still be eating what you harvested during the sixth year....

The Year of Jubilee

Count seven times seven years, a total of forty nine years. Then..., send a man to blow a trumpet throughout the whole land. In this way you shall set the fiftieth year apart and proclaim freedom to all the inhabitants of the land.... The whole year shall be sacred for you; you shall eat what the fields produce of themselves.

Your land must not be sold on a permanent basis, because you do not own it; it belongs to God, and you are like foreigners who are allowed to make use of it. So when you sell land to your fellow Israelites or buy land from him, the price is to be set according to the number of years the land can produce crops before the next Year of Restoration.... What is being sold is the Number of crops the land can produce (Leviticus 25).

Questions:

1. What is Sabbath?
2. How should one observe Sabbath?
3. Why do you think the land should observe Sabbath together with people, and animals every seventh year?
4. Write at least five things that people should do during the year of Jubilee or the Year of Restoration.

NUMBERS

Introduction:

The name of the book refers to a prominent feature of the story, that is, the census which Moses took of the Israelites at Mt. Sinai, and again about a generation later in Moab, east of the Jordan. It is also an account of a people who were often discouraged and afraid in the face of hardship, and who rebelled against God and against Moses, the man God appointed to lead them.

Above all, the book of Numbers tells us the story of God's faithful and persistent care for His people in spite of their weakness and disobedience.

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The First Census

Numbers 1

The Israelites were still in Sinai when Almighty Yahweh spoke to Moses to take a census by clans and families. The census indicate Israel's men of twenty years old or more who were able to serve in the army. The tribe of Levi, however, was not counted since they have a special responsibility. For, the Levites' duties were religious. They were to care for the Tabernacle of the testimony. Levi had three sons: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

The diagram below shows the physical order of the tribes and the Levites. In the encampment notice that the Tabernacle was at the center. That means that Almighty Yahweh was the central point or must be the central point of their lives as a group and as an individual.

Taking account of the clans and families is very important because it has its own special calling and purpose. This also shows how Almighty Yahweh takes care of His people even the details of their lives.

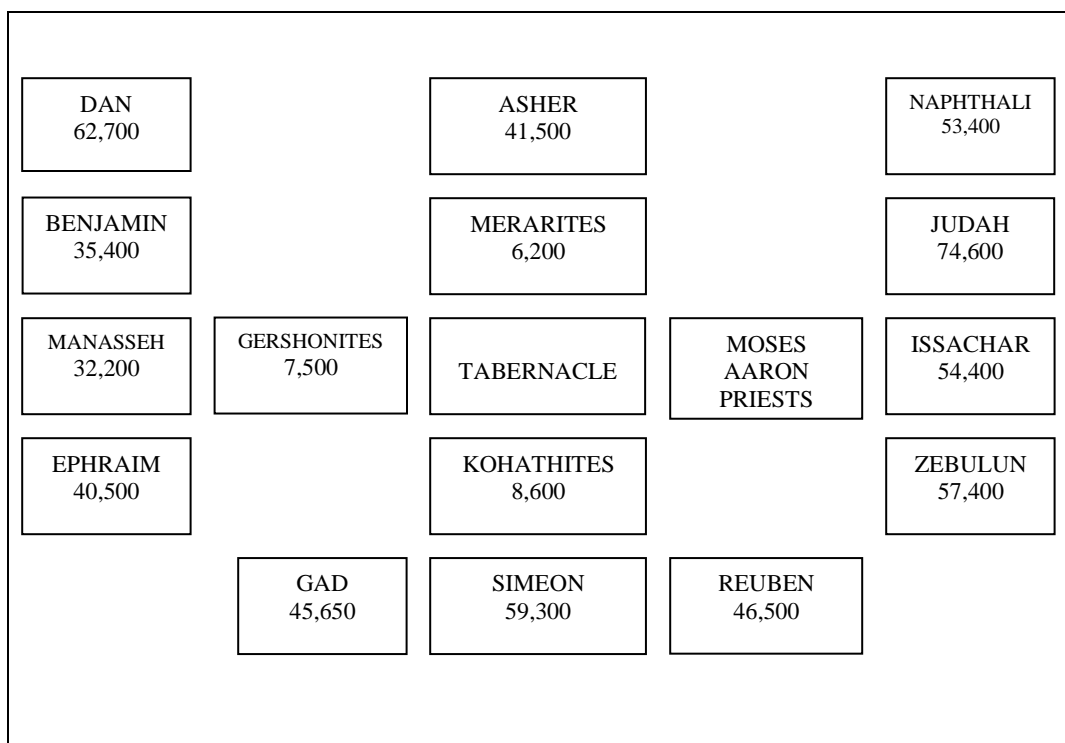


DIAGRAM 1: Physical order of the twelve tribes and the Levites.

On the day the Tabernacle was raised, the cloud covered it, and at the evening the cloud changed to the appearance of fire. As the clouds lifted, the Israelites moved but they camped whenever the cloud stayed. In this way, the Israelites journeyed at the command and guidance of Almighty Yahweh. The tribes were to march in the formation Almighty Yahweh arranged them. At the head of the march was the tribe of Judah then the rest followed and the last of them all were the tribes of Dan, Asher and Naphthali.

Exercises:

1. Make a diagram of the physical arrangement of the Israelites as they journeyed in the wilderness.

*Special Regulations
for the
Priests and the Levites*

Number 3

Not everyone in Israel were called to war but some were called to be priests and assistants or helpers, such as the Levites to perform exactly the responsibilities of carrying and keeping the Tabernacle. It was very important that the Tabernacle of Almighty Yahweh goes with the people in their journey for, without the blessing of Almighty Yahweh there could be no victory.

The sons of Aaron namely Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar were anointed as priests and were set apart to minister the Tabernacle. Such duties were sacred and must not be left performed by anyone according to mere human wisdom. Take note that Nadab and Abihu died before Almighty Yahweh in the wilderness of Sinai when they used unholy fire. And since they had no children, Almighty Yahweh summoned the tribe of Levi to be Aaron's assistants. Levi's sons were Gershon, Kohath and Merari. They were in charge of all the furnishing and maintenance of the Tabernacle. However, only Aaron and his sons must carry out the duties of the priesthood; anyone else who presumes worthy and assume this duty shall be executed.

The responsibility of the Gershon family was the care of the curtains of the Tabernacle: its covering, its entry drapes, the drapes covering the fence surrounding the courtyard, the screen at the entrance of the courtyard surrounding the Tabernacle, the altar, and all the ropes used in tying the Tabernacle together.

The Kohath family were assigned to take care of the ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, the various utensils used in the Tabernacle, the veil, and any repairs needed on any of these items.

The Merari family were responsible for the frames of the Tabernacle building; the points, the bases for the posts, and all of the equipment needed for their use; the post around the courtyard and their bases, pegs, and ropes.

On the other hand, the east of the Tabernacle was for the tents of Moses and of Aaron and his sons, who had the final responsibility for the Tabernacle on behalf of the people of Israel.

Each person is important in the work of Almighty Yahweh, no matter what tasks are assign—light or heavy. Taking care of the Tabernacle is very important for it is a matter of life and death.

Questions for Exercise:

Matching Type: Match column A with column B.

<u>Column A</u>	<u>Column B</u>
_____1. They have the final responsibility for the Tabernacle on behalf of the people of Israel.	A. Marari Family
_____2. They were responsible for the frames of the Tabernacle building.	B. Priests
_____3. They were called to be helpers of the priests in the Tabernacle.	C. Gershon Family
_____4. They were responsible for the care of the ark, the tables and the various utensils in the Tabernacle including its repairs.	D. Levites
_____5. They were responsible for the care of the curtains of the Tabernacle.	E. Kohath Family
_____6. They were Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar & Ithamar.	F. Aaron's Sons
_____7. They were Gershon, Kohath & Marari.	G. Levi's Sons

Priestly Blessing

Numbers 6

Blessing is really very important that our heavenly Father Yahweh gave a command to Moses to tell Aaron the high Priest and his sons to pronounce this blessing to the people of Israel.

*“May the LORD bless you and take care of you;
May the LORD be kind and gracious to you;
May the LORD look upon you with
favor and give you peace.”*

Parents' Blessing

Sirach 3

One of our ancestors in the faith, Sirach, has this also to say concerning respect to parents and parents' blessing to their children:

“If you respect your father, you can make up for your sins, and if you honor your mother, you are earning great wealth. ...If you obey the LORD by honoring your father and making your mother happy you will live a long life.

“Honor your father and mother in everything you do and say, so that you may receive their blessing. When parents give their blessing, they give strength to their children's homes, but when they curse their children, they destroy the very foundations.

“Son, take care of your father and mother when they grow old; give them no cause for worry as long as they live. The LORD will not forget the kindness you show to them, it will make up for your sins. ...Your sins will melt away like frost in warm sunshine.”

The Spies

Numbers 12 & 13

While the Israelites were encamped in the wilderness of Paran, Moses received instruction from Almighty Yahweh to send spies, one leader from each tribe, into the Promised Land. So Moses sent spies as Almighty Yahweh commanded.

All of the spies were instructed to go northward into the hill country of the Negeb. They were to spy out the land to see what the land is like whether fertile or not, whether people are strong or weak, many or few, and to bring samples of the crops they see planted.

So the spies explored the land for forty days from the wilderness of Zin to Rehob near Hamath then going northward through Negeb and arrived at Hebron. There they saw the families from Anak and there at Eshcol valley picked some grapes.

The spies came back to the wilderness after forty days. They reported to Moses, Aaron and all the Israelite people saying, "We arrived in the land you sent us to see, and it is indeed a magnificent country – a land flowing with milk and honey. Here are some fruits we have brought as proof. But the people living there are powerful, and their cities are fortified and very large; and what's more, we saw Anakim giants there! Hence, majority of the reports were negative. However, Caleb, one of the twelve spies, challenged the people by saying, "Let's go up at once and possess it, for we are able to conquer it."

Caleb and Joshua were men of faith who didn't worry about the size of the problem because they trusted Almighty Yahweh. Almighty Yahweh saw the Canaanites as grasshoppers but the unbelieving ten spies emphasized the obstacle rather than Almighty Yahweh's greatness and power and concluded that Israel was too weak to conquer the enemy. This report brought a chain reaction among the Israelite people. So, the people then began weeping and grumbling against Moses and Aaron all night. They wished they had died in Egypt or even in the wilderness, such reactions were evidences of unbelief. Because of their lack of faith, they wandered in the wilderness for forty years. Long enough for the grumbling men of that generation to die and a new generation to grow up.

Indeed, faith brings life but unbelief brings rebellion, defeat, and death. Faith looks ahead with courage; unbelief looks back with complaints. Moreover,

unbelief blinds the people of Almighty Yahweh's greatness and magnifies people's weaknesses.

Like Caleb and Joshua, we must stand our ground even when the people or nation will turn against us and our lives are in danger. For in the end, Almighty Yahweh will vindicate those who trust in Him. Let us not be afraid, instead we must believe in the Elohim who is in control over everything.

Review Questions:

1. How many spies were sent to see the Promised Land?
2. How many days did the spies explore the land?
3. Who were the two wise and brave men?
4. What can faith do to Almighty Yahweh's people?
5. What is the common result of lack of faith?
6. How did the Israelites show their lack of faith in Almighty Yahweh's love, mercy, and power?
7. What did Caleb say that pleased Almighty Yahweh?
8. Was the land spied out good? How did the spies describe it?
9. What did Caleb and Joshua do?
10. Give at least three adjectives that best describe Caleb and Joshua.

DEUTERONOMY

Introduction:

Deuteronomy is the fifth book in the Holy Bible. It began when the Israelites camped in the Arabah valley at Jordan River after forty years of wandering in the wilderness. They were ready to enter the Promised Land.

In this book, Moses reviewed to the Israelites their sins that caused them to spend forty years in the wilderness. He explained to them what will happen if they will obey Almighty Yahweh and the consequence if they will disobey Him. He reminded them the laws and commandments of Almighty Yahweh and never to neglect the covenant they have made.

Moses also gave instructions or guidelines for them to follow when they arrived in the Promised Land and never to forget what Almighty Yahweh had done to them and to teach it to their children and coming generations. Moses emphasized that they should worship only the Almighty Yahweh, and never to worship any other gods, any form of lifeless idols, never ever to bow down to any of them.

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Guidelines For War

Deuteronomy

Before the Israelites entered the Promised Land, they fought many battles along the way. Almighty Yahweh gave Moses signal when to attack their enemies or when to go to battles. Not one city was too strong for them, for Almighty Yahweh gave all of them to the Israelites. When Almighty Yahweh said it, no doubt, they would overcome their enemy and fought their battle victoriously. Moses reminded the people the victory they gained, reviewed the war they fought and gave the guidelines for war so that they will never forget what to do first before going to battle against their enemies. Moses said, "When you go to war and see before you vast number of horses and chariots, an army far greater than yours, don't be frightened! Yahweh is with you - the Almighty who brought you safely out of Egypt! Before you begin the battle, a priest shall stand before the Israel army and say, 'Listen to me, all you men of Israel! Don't be afraid as you go out to fight today! For Yahweh Elohim is going with you! He will fight for you against your enemies, and He will give you victory! Is anyone afraid? If you are, go home before you frighten the rest of us!'

"As you approach a city to fight against it, first offer it a truce. If it accepts the truce and opens its gate to you, then all its people shall become your servants. But if it refuses and won't make peace with you, you must besiege it. When Yahweh your Elohim has given it to you, kill every male in the city, but you may keep for yourselves all the women, children, cattle, and booty. These instructions apply only to distant cities, not to those in the Promised Land itself. For in the cities within the boundaries of the Promised Land you are to save no one; destroy every living thing. The purpose of this command is to prevent the people of the land from living and leading you into idol worship and into participation in their loathsome customs, thus sinning deeply against Yahweh our Elohim."

We may not face literally the battle that the Israelites fought long time ago but in some ways we are facing many battles in our lives. It may be spiritual, physical, mental, emotional.... We struggle to win, fighting so hard to gain the victory, shedding so many tears.... But as children of Almighty Yahweh, we should not rely on our own strength to gain victory instead, let us put our trust in Him completely. Let us not be afraid to face our battles because the eternal God in heaven is our refuge. He is so great, so strong, so mighty; there's nothing our God in heaven cannot do. "He will even give up nations to

save our lives". He will thrusts out our enemies. He is our shield and helper. "He descends from the heavens, in majestic splendor to help."

It's not easy to face any battle, it takes courage, strength and patience to endure. But we should always remember that with Almighty Yahweh nothing is impossible. "We can do all things through Yahshua the Messiah who strengtheneth us." Let us not look at our enemies as stronger than us. Let us not look at them as giants instead let us fix our eyes to Yahweh Almighty. Standing firm with our faith in Him, trusting that He will fight for us. Though we are few, we will win the battle because it is not by our might, nor by our power but by the Spirit of Yahweh that is within us that we will crush our enemies under our feet. Our enemies shall bow low before us. Yahweh El is our excellent sword!

As children of Almighty Yahweh, we should be on guard; put on the whole armor of faith because the enemies are against us. Let us cooperate with our Father in heaven in everything. He can only work mightily through those who put their trust in Him, who give Him praises in every situation and are ready to fight the good fight of faith; standing up for the glory of Yahweh El.

If in any case we are facing the kind of war in the world. A spiritual leader and an army leader should always be united so that the blessing of Yahweh Almighty will flow, His protection and power will be upon His people. Never to forget that while the armies are fighting with their weapons against the enemies there should always be prayers or intercession to help them in the spiritual side. Above all things, let us all acknowledge the great and merciful God in heaven and let us love and worship Him alone; then victory is certainly ours!

Answer the following questions

I – Exercises:

1. What do we mean by war?
2. What are the guidelines for war that Moses gave to the Israelites?
3. During the time of Moses, why did the Israelites always win their battle?

4. Why should the spiritual leader and the army leader be united, what is the significance of their unity?
5. How did Moses show to his people his deep faith in Yahweh Almighty?
6. What is the reason why Moses instructed the Israelites to destroy all the living thing in the cities within the boundaries of the Promised Land?

II – Exercises:

1. Have you been to any war or battles in life? Cite an example
2. In facing any battles in life, to whom should we put our trust and faith for courage and strength? Why?
3. Do you believe that even if you are small in number you could still win the victory in battle? In what way?
4. What are the “battles” you are facing today?
What will be your steps to conquer those battles?

The Importance of Obedience to Yahweh Elohim

Deuteronomy

Yahweh El commanded Moses to issue the Laws that the Israelites must obey when they would arrive in the Promised Land.

The instruction that Moses gave to the Israelites was to obey the commandments Yahweh has given to them, especially the Ten Commandments. He reminded the people: Love Yahweh with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. Never forget these commandments that I am giving you today. Teach them to your children, repeat them when you are at home and when you are away. When you are working and when you are resting. Tie them in your arms and wear them in your foreheads as a reminder and write them on the door posts of your houses and on your gates (Deuteronomy 6: 4-9). He also added, "Watch out! Be very careful never to forget what you have seen Yahweh doing for you. May His miracles have a deep and permanent effect upon your lives! Tell your children and your grandchildren about the glorious miracles He did."

Moses told the Israelites that if they will fully obey Yahweh's commandments and laws, they will become a great nation. Blessings will be upon them always and all will go well with them and to their children forever. They will receive praises and honors from the people of the world. Yahweh's love and protection will be upon them. Yahweh will give them reputation for wisdom and intelligence. Yahweh also reminded them to keep always in their mind never to defile themselves by making a statue of God - an idol in any form. Always "beware that your hearts do not turn from Yahweh to worship other gods." Moses also reminded the Israelites that if they will obey Yahweh's commandments, they will have a long and good life in the land Yahweh promised to their ancestors, to them and to their descendants. A wonderful land flowing with milk and honey.

The only thing Yahweh wants from us His people is to completely obey His commandments with all our hearts, mind, body, soul and spirit, and to love Him first and foremost. Yahweh El wants us to be like little children who always depend on Him, trust in Him all the days of our lives. Yahweh gave us laws and commandments to instruct us, following the directions in every detail so that we will learn always to honor Him. To acknowledge that He is Supreme, all that we have come only from Him. What Almighty Yahweh

requires of us is never to forget His commandments, to walk always in His ways, cling to Him. To have a heart that is always wanting for Him, desiring to obey His laws. If we do our part, Yahweh will surely do His part. His blessings will flow upon us. We will have long and prosperous years ahead of us. All will go well with our future and to our children throughout all generations. If we want to avail Yahweh's promises, then, moment by moment let us love and obey Him and follow all His laws and commandments.

Fill in the blanks:

1. "Love Yahweh Almighty with all your _____, with all your _____, with all your _____, and with all your _____."
2. Moses told the Israelites that if they will fully obey Almighty Yahweh's commandments and laws, they will become a _____; _____ will be upon them always. They will receive _____ and _____ from the people of the world. Yahweh's _____ and _____ will be upon them. Yahweh will give them reputation for _____ and _____.
3. Yahweh Almighty reminded the Israelites to keep always in their mind never to defile themselves by _____.
4. Moses also reminded the Israelites that if they will obey Yahweh's commandments, they will have a _____ and _____ life in the _____ Yahweh promised to their ancestors, to them and to their descendants. A wonderful _____ flowing with _____ and _____.
5. The instruction that Moses gave to the Israelites was to obey all the commandments Almighty Yahweh has given to them, especially the _____.

The Result of Disobedience to Yahweh Almighty

Deuteronomy

Moses explained to the Israelites the consequences if they would disobey Yahweh's laws and commandments. He reminded the people that they spent forty years wandering in the wilderness as the result of their disobedience to Yahweh. While traveling through the great, terrible desert they never learned their lesson to obey Yahweh faithfully. Instead they kept on complaining again and again, rebelled against Yahweh's commands until Yahweh El heard their complaints and was very angry and decided to punish the people. As a result they suffered much and some of them were destroyed. By the time they were ready to enter the Promised Land, Moses reviewed to the people their disobedience to Yahweh to remind themselves that curses would befall upon them if they will repeat the same wrong actions. Moses said "If you won't listen to Yahweh El and won't obey these laws I am giving you today, then all of these curses shall come upon you: Curses in the city, Curses in the fields, Curses on your fruits and bread.

"The curse of barren wombs... Yahweh Himself will send His personal curse upon you. You will be confused and a failure in everything you do, until at last you are destroyed because of the sin of forsaking Him. He will send disease among you until you are destroyed from the face of the land which you are about to enter and possess. All these devastations will pursue you until you perish. You must not worship the gods of the neighboring nations, for Almighty Yahweh your Elohim who lives among you is a jealous God, and His anger may rise quickly against you and wipe you off the face of the earth. If you forget Yahweh and worship other gods and follow evil ways, you shall certainly perish, just as Yahweh has caused other nations in the past to perish. That will be your fate too, if you don't obey Yahweh our Elohim. Just as Yahweh rejoiced over you and has done wonderful things for you and has multiplied you, so Yahweh at that time will rejoice in destroying you, and you shall disappear from the land, if you refuse to obey all the laws, thus refusing reverence to the glorious and fearful name of Yahweh."

Yahweh our Elohim is still the same yesterday, today and forever. What He hath spoken in the past is still true today. His words stand forever. Blessings will be upon the obedient to His Laws and Commandments while

curses to the froward or disobedient. Let us not insult Almighty Yahweh by doing what He hates especially the worship of other gods. Always remember He is holy and He tolerates no rivals. Let us always remind ourselves how important it is to obey Yahweh. If our hearts turn away and won't listen, drawn away to worship other gods, then surely Yahweh's punishment and curses will befall upon us. Let us not provoke Yahweh to anger by disobeying Him.

Moses said to the Israelites, "Do you remember how Yahweh led you through the wilderness? For all those forty years, humbling you and testing you to find out how you would really obey Him?" These words are still true to us now, we are also walking on our own wilderness as we live in this world. Are we obedient to Yahweh's command or disobedient? Always remember Almighty Yahweh tests our faithfulness to Him as He did to the Israelites.

Almighty Yahweh gave to us His wonderful promises and assurance that we are under His personal care as long as we completely obey Him. But if we turn away from Him and disobey His laws and commandments, we cannot avail His promises instead curses will come. Don't try Yahweh's patience; don't wait until Yahweh's anger be upon us but live a life that is pleasing to Him. Let us take heed of His words faithfully.

I - Exercises:

1. What do we mean by disobedience?
2. What is the consequence if we disobey the laws and commandments of Almighty Yahweh?
3. Why did the Israelites spend forty years in the wilderness?
4. What are some of the curses mentioned by Moses?
5. What made Almighty Yahweh angry and punished His people?

II – Exercises:

1. Are the laws and commandments of Almighty Yahweh still apply to us today?
2. What should you do, if in some point of your life you disobeyed Yahweh's commands?

III – Exercises:

1. As a Christian, what will you do to help those still in darkness before Almighty Yahweh's punishments befall upon them?
2. What will you do so that while helping them get saved, you will not be drawn by their evil ways?

The Tithe of All Produce

Deuteronomy 14 and Leviticus 27: 30-33

Almighty Yahweh chose the Israelites to be His own people because of the faith of their ancestors most especially Abraham. Yahweh wanted His people to live a life under His guidance because He loves them and cares for them; He wanted them to live according to His will. So, He gave to Moses the commandments to be followed by His people and one of these is the importance of giving their tithe to Him.

Yahweh gave to Moses the guidelines for the tithe and instructed the Israelites to follow it all the days of their lives. Moses said to the people that they must set aside a tithe or a tenth of all that their fields produce each year. Then go to the one place where Yahweh has chosen to be worshiped, and there in His presence eat the tithes of the grain, wine, and olive oil, and the first-born of thy cattle and sheep. "If the way be too long for thee, so that thou art not be able to carry it or if the place be too far from thee, which Yahweh chose, then shalt thou turn it into money and bind up the money in thine hand and shalt go unto the place which Yahweh chose. Spend it on whatever you want-beef, lamb, wine, beer, and there, in the presence of Yahweh, you and your family are to eat and enjoy yourselves" (Thanksgiving and Rejoicing).

"At the end of every third year bring the tithe of all your crops and store it in your towns. This food is for the Levites (ministers), since they own no property and for the foreigners, orphans, and widows who live in your towns. They are to come and get all they need. **A tenth of the produce of the land whether grain or fruits is for Almighty Yahweh and is holy.** If anyone wants to buy back, He must add a fifth to its value. Almighty Yahweh owns every tenth. The tenth selected on the basis of whether it is good or bad, and there be no substitutions, for if there is any change made, then both the original and the substitution shall belong to Yahweh and may not be bought back. Do this and Yahweh your Elohim will bless you in everything you do. **The purpose of tithing is to teach you always to put Yahweh first in your lives.**"

Is it important to give our tithe this days? Are the guidelines for tithing long time ago still applicable nowadays? The Holy Bible says heaven and earth may pass away but the words of Almighty Yahweh stand forever. What He hath spoken in the past is also good for us today especially the giving of tithe. Keeping Yahweh's commands is part of living as Yahweh's people. To give our tithe is to acknowledge that by ourselves we are nothing and that Yahweh is the

source of everything we have. It also shows that we have reverence for Him. That we love Him and are willing to bring back the tenth of our increase to honor Him. When we give our tithe, we should do it heartily, and don't worry about the things for tomorrow. Almighty Yahweh is faithful to His promises to us. He will never forsake us. He will pour out His blessings on us more than we can ask for. He will not only bless us financially but also of peace, joy, and strength. When we give our tithe, we submit ourselves to Almighty Yahweh and He can take control of our lives and move through us.

“Do this and may Yahweh our Elohim will bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest.”

For more references, read also II Chronicles 31; Nehemiah 10: 28-39; 12: 44-47; Malachi 3: 6-12.

I - Exercises:

1. What do we mean by tithe?
2. What is the purpose of giving our tithe?
3. Name some of the promises Almighty Yahweh gave to those who give their tithe?
4. Why should the Israelites bring their tithe of all their crops and store it in their towns at the end of every third year?

II – Exercises:

1. Is this law still applicable nowadays? Why?
2. What lesson have you learned from this message?
3. Do you practice giving your tithe? Why?
4. Base on this lesson, how can you show to the world your love to Almighty Yahweh and bring glory to His name?

III- Essay

1. Why do you think most people nowadays don't give their tithe?

How to Appoint Kings or Choose Leaders

Deuteronomy

During the Exodus, Almighty Yahweh multiplied the Israelites as they journeyed in the wilderness for forty years. At that time, Moses told the people that he needed their help. He said, "You are a great burden for me to carry all by myself for Yahweh El has multiplied you to become as many as the stars and may he multiply you a thousand times more and bless you as he promised, but what can one man do to settle all your quarrels and problems? So choose some men from each tribe who are wise, experienced and understanding and I will appoint them as your leaders."

They all agreed to this. Moses took the men they selected from every tribe, and appointed them as administrative assistants in charge of thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens to decide their quarrels and to assist them in every way. He instructed them to be perfectly fair at all times, even to foreigners. "When giving your decisions, never favor a man because he is rich, be fair to great and small alike. Don't fear their displeasure, for you are judging in the place of Almighty Yahweh. Bring to me any cases too difficult for you, and I will handle them."

Moses also instructed the Israelites that when they would choose a king, they should be sure that they will select as the King the man Yahweh Almighty shall choose. "The chosen king must be an Israelite, not a foreigner. Be sure that he doesn't build up a large stable of horses for himself nor send his men to Egypt to raise horses for him there, for Yahweh has told you, 'Never return to Egypt again.' He must not have too many wives, lest his heart be turned away from Yahweh, nor should he set his heart in making himself excessively rich. When he has been crowned and sits upon his throne as king, he must copy these Laws from the book kept by the Levites-Priests. That copy of the Laws shall be his constant companion. He must read from it everyday of his life so that he will learn to respect Yahweh Almighty by obeying all of His commands. This regular reading of Yahweh's Laws will prevent him from feeling that he is better than his fellow citizens. It will also prevent him from turning away from Yahweh's Laws in the slightest respect and will ensure his having a long good reign. His sons will then follow him upon the throne."

This is a reminder to us how to choose a leader. Nowadays, we have so many leaders in a country, leaders in small or big groups, organization, etc....

But why do you think so many leaders failed to become good leaders? Maybe because first and foremost the people did not consult the Father in Heaven, and the Father has not chosen them. Also, because Almighty Yahweh was not with them and their hearts were not right in Yahweh's sight. They didn't act wisely; they depended on their own worldly wisdom and strength. Above all, many of them never reverently acknowledge the existence of our Father in Heaven and worship Him as they should. There are even leaders who reject His Laws and Commandments.

That is why before Moses died, he reminded the people how important it is to choose a leader or a king. He gave them guidelines to follow for their own good and for their coming generations. Moses emphasized also to the leaders to be fair in every decision and never forget the Laws and Commandments of Yahweh. It should be written in the heart and mind, or body, soul, and spirit. Leaders must be the choice of Yahweh Almighty Himself.

Each one of us has the ability to lead or to become a leader one day. When Almighty Yahweh appoints you to be a leader, always remember that Almighty Yahweh doesn't look how many honors and degrees we have gained. He never look at the outward appearance and the achievements of a person. Almighty Yahweh looks at the heart; the heart that seeks to honor Him. Let Moses be our example, when Almighty Yahweh called him to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. It was not smooth all the way; he met many obstacles along the way. The Egyptians were against him, even the Israelites looked down on him, doubted at him....Moses felt pain, anger, frustration..... but in spite of all the trials, he humbled himself and fully submitted to Yahweh's will. He always listened and obeyed Yahweh's commands. In every circumstance he remained strong, and in every decision he made, he was fair. He depended and trusted Almighty Yahweh every moment of his life. His heart was attuned to Almighty Yahweh. When Moses departed, Joshua was appointed by Yahweh Almighty as the successor of Moses. Why? It is because of his dedication to Yahweh El and loyalty to Moses. He fully submitted to Moses' leadership and was a great support to Moses. Almighty Yahweh also blessed Joshua because he remained faithful to Him all the days of his life.

Let Moses and Joshua be our inspiration to move forward towards the fulfillment of Yahweh's will in our lives. Let us rise up for the glory of our King in heaven. When you are in a position to lead other people, always write in your heart and mind; body, soul and spirit the Laws and Commandments of Almighty Yahweh as Moses and Joshua said and did. Worship Him only and love Him above all things. Put your trust in Him all the days of your life. Do

not let pride enter your very soul. Many great leaders fell and failed in the end because of pride. Listen, obey, and humble yourself before Yahweh and man and the Almighty will bless you and your descendants more than you can ever think of and ask for.

Let us raise the banner of Almighty Yahweh through His Son Yahshua the Messiah and Holy Spirit.

Answer the following questions.

I – Exercises:

1. During the Exodus, why did Moses ask the help of his people?
2. What were the advices of Moses to the people in choosing some men from each tribe?
3. What were the advices of Moses to the chosen leaders?
4. Why is it so important to the chosen king to copy the Laws of Almighty Yahweh and to read it everyday?

II – Exercises:

1. In your own words, why did Moses become a great leader?
2. In choosing a leader, what does God look in a person?
3. What is the basic foundation in order to become a great leader?
4. In choosing a leader, what is the first step to do?
5. For us followers of Yahshua the Messiah, how can we help our leaders to become good leaders?
6. Identify one leader with whom you admire. Write down reasons why you admire him.
7. As followers of Yahshua the Messiah, do you prepare yourself for the greater task that Almighty Yahweh will entrust to you? How?
8. Name at least five virtues or traits a good leader must have.
9. In your opinion, what should a good leader do to the people? Why?
10. A proverb says, "Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Proverbs 16:18). Do you know of a leader who fell because of pride? How?

JOSHUA

Introduction:

The book of Joshua is a narrative of the conquest of Canaan and the division of the land among the twelve tribes of Israel. Notable events recorded in this book include the crossing of the Jordan, the fall of Jericho, the battle of Ai, the renewal of the Covenant between Yahweh El and His people, the Israelites.

*“Decide today whom you will serve...as for my
family and me, we will serve the Lord”
(Joshua 24: 15).*

JS

Almighty Yahweh's Command to Joshua

Joshua

Joshua had been the assistant of Moses and when Moses died, he became the successor according to Almighty Yahweh's command. The Almighty said to Joshua: "Get ready now, lead all the people of Israel and cross the Jordan River into the land that I am giving you." Almighty Yahweh also gave His blessing and promised saying, "No one will be able to defeat you as long as you live. I will be with you as I was with Moses. I will always be with you; I will never abandon you. Just be determined, be confident; and make sure that you obey the whole Law that my servant Moses gave you. Do not neglect any part of it and you will succeed wherever you go. Be sure that the Book of Law is always read in your worship. Study it day and night, and make sure that you obey everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Remember that I have commanded you to be determined and confident! Do not be afraid or discouraged, for I am with you wherever you go."

From the life of Joshua we have learned that when Almighty Yahweh gives a command He also gives not only the blessing that would enable us to do and accomplish what he wants us to do but also a wonderful promise. However, man should always remember that he has a responsibility. In the case of Joshua, his responsibility was to study the Book of Law and obey everything written in it and to teach the Israelites to obey it also. Then, as they do their part or their responsibility they will be prosperous and successful.

Almighty Yahweh also emphasized that Joshua should be determined, and confident that He would always be with him. That Joshua should not be afraid or discouraged. This clearly tells us that Yahweh El and man must work together so that Yahweh's Will in earth be done.

In this world, Yahweh's people are in constant battle against satan. In battle, we should not be afraid or discouraged lest we lose our battle, instead, we should trust that Almighty Yahweh's blessings are upon us and He is with us.

Questions for Exercise:

1. Who appointed Joshua the successor of Moses?
2. What are man's responsibilities in order to win a battle, be prosperous and successful?
3. What other instructions did Almighty Yahweh emphasize to Joshua? Why?
4. Give one of Almighty Yahweh's promises to Joshua.

The Two Spies and Rahab

Joshua

Joshua sent two spies to Jericho to secretly explore the land of Canaan. When they came into the city, they stayed in the house of a prostitute named Rahab. Unfortunately, the King of Jericho heard about the two spies in the house of Rahab. The King sent some of his men to search for them but Rahab hid them well.

When the King's men left, Rahab and the two spies made a covenant. Rahab said: "I know that God has given you this land. Everyone here is terrified of you when they heard how the Red Sea dried up when you left Egypt.... The Lord your God is God in heaven above and here on earth. Now swear by Him that you will treat my family as kindly as I have treated you, and give me some signs that I can trust you. Promise me that you will save my father and mother, my brothers and sisters and all their families. Don't let us be killed."

The spies said to her, "May God take our lives if we don't do as we say. If you do not tell anyone what we have been doing, we promise you that when the Lord gives us this land, we will treat you well. When we invade your land, tie this red cord to the window and see to it that every member of your family is inside the house.... However, if you tell anyone what we have been doing, then we will not have to keep our promise which you have made us give you." Rahab agreed.

When the spies came back to Joshua they gladly reported all that they had been doing in the land and everything that had happened including their covenant with Rahab.

Both the Israelites and Rahab were faithful to their covenant. Later, when the Israelites occupied the land, Rahab and her parents, her brothers and sisters and their families lived among the Israelites. Rahab also married an Israelite named Salmon and consequently became the great, great grandmother of King David, the greatest King in the land of Israel.

What Rahab did to the spies gives us a lesson that when people help Almighty Yahweh's servants, they are also helping fulfill Yahweh's plans, and because the Almighty is faithful to His words, those who help His servants are also blessed together with them even as Almighty Yahweh said to Abraham: "I will bless those who bless you; I will curse those who curse you" (Genesis 12:3).

Questions for Exercise:

1. What is a covenant?
2. Is it important to keep the covenant we made? Why?
3. State the covenant that Rahab and the two spies made?
4. What reward did Rahab receive from Almighty Yahweh for helping the Israelite spies?
5. Why did Almighty Yahweh let the Israelites drive away the Canaanites?
6. How did Rahab become the great, great grandmother of King David, the greatest King of Israel?

Almighty Yahweh's Miracles Among His People

Joshua 3

Yahweh El wanted the Israelites to honor Joshua as their leader so when the Israelites were about to cross the Jordan River, Almighty Yahweh said to Joshua, "What I do today will make all the people of Israel begin to honor you as a great man, and they will realize that I am with you as I was with Moses...."

Then Joshua told the people, "Purify yourselves because tomorrow the Lord will perform miracles among you." He told the priests to take the Covenant Box and go with it ahead of the people. "The priests carrying the Covenant Box must wade in and stand near the bank."

Joshua went on to say to the people, "Choose twelve men, one from each tribe to guide you. When the priests who carry the Covenant Box of the Lord put their feet in the water, the Jordan will stop flowing, and the water coming downstream will pile up in one place." The people gladly obeyed Joshua.

Indeed, as soon as the priests stepped into the river, the water stopped flowing and piled up, so that the people were able to cross over near Jericho. While the people walked across on dry ground, the priests carrying the Lord's Covenant Box stood on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan until all the people had crossed over.

Questions for Exercise:

1. Almighty Yahweh performed miracles when the Israelites crossed the Jordan. Do you know of other miracles that He did?
2. What is/are the purposes of the miracles in Jordan?
3. In crossing the Jordan what was the function of the priests?
4. Describe Joshua as a leader.
5. Do you want to be a leader like Joshua or a priest? Why?

The City Walls and the Trumpets Sounds

Joshua

The walls of Jericho was strong and the gates were shut and heavily guarded. But this did not keep Joshua and the Israelites from conquering them. Almighty Yahweh said to Joshua, "I am putting into your hands Jericho, with its King and all its brave soldiers. You and your soldiers are to march around the city once a day for six days. Seven priests each carrying a trumpet, are to go in front of the Covenant Box. On the seventh day you and your soldiers are to march around the city seven times while the priests blow the trumpets. Then they are to sound one long note. As soon as you hear it, all the men are to give a loud shout, and the city walls will collapse. Then the whole army will go straight into the city."

Joshua called the priests and directed them as Yahweh El commanded. He also ordered his men to do as Almighty Yahweh said. An advance guard going on ahead of the priests blowing the trumpets, behind them are the priests carrying the Covenant Box, followed by a rear guard. All the time while marching, the trumpets were sounding. They did the same thing once a day for six days.

On the seventh day they got up at day break and marched seven times around the city in the same way. But the seventh time around, when the priests were about to sound the trumpets, Joshua ordered his men to shout, "The Lord has given you the city! The city and everything in it must be totally destroyed as an offering to the Lord. Only Rahab and her household will be spared because she hid our spies.... But everything made of silver, gold, bronze, iron is set apart for the Lord. It is to be put in the Lord's treasury."

Activity:

1. Guide the students in presenting a skit.
2. After the presentation, ask the viewers to give their comments and the lessons they have learned.

Achan's Disobedience

Joshua 7

Almighty Yahweh and the Israelites under the command of Joshua made a covenant or agreement that the city of Jericho and everything in it must be totally destroyed as an offering to Him, except for Rahab the prostitute who hid the spies and her family, and the things made of silver, gold, bronze, iron which are to be placed in the LORD's treasury.

But Achan who was the son of Carmi and grandson of Zabdi, and who belong to the tribe of Judah was strongly fascinated with the Babylonian cloak, silver of about five pounds, and a bar of gold weighing over one pound. He secretly took the things and buried them in his tent putting the silver at the bottom.

From Jericho Joshua sent some men to explore the land of Ai. When the men returned, they reported that there's no need for all the soldiers to attack Ai; they only needed around three thousand soldiers. Later, the three thousand Israelite soldiers made the attack but they were forced to retreat and the men of Ai chased them and killed some of them. Because of what happened, the Israelites lost courage and were afraid.

Joshua together with the leaders fasted and prayed to Almighty Yahweh. They lay on the ground before the LORD's Covenant Box and said: "Sovereign LORD why did you bring us across the Jordan? To turn us over to the Amorites? To destroy us....? What can I say, O LORD, now that Israel has retreated? People around will hear it, surround us, and kill everyone of us! And what will you do to protect your honor?"

Almighty Yahweh answered Joshua, "Get up! Israel has sinned! They have broken the agreement with me... they have taken some of the things condemned to destruction. They stole them, lied about it, and put them with their own things. That is why the Israelites cannot stand against their enemies because they themselves have now been condemned to destruction... Get up! Purify the people and get them ready to come before me... the one who is picked out and found with the condemned goods will be burned, along with his family and everything he owns, for he has brought terrible shame on Israel and has broken my covenant."

Among the Israelites who came forward by tribe, by clan, by family, then man by man, Achan was picked out by Almighty Yahweh. So Joshua said: "My son, tell the truth...." Achan answered: I saw a beautiful cloak, silver, and

a bar of gold. I wanted them so much that I hid them and buried them inside my tent.”

Joshua along with the leaders seized Achan, his family members, all his possessions brought them to Trouble Valley, stoned them to death and burned them. By then Almighty Yahweh’s anger cooled off.

Questions for Exercises: True or False

1. _____ It is very important that we keep our agreement or promise.
2. _____ Lying is a little sin, Almighty Yahweh will not punish the liars.
3. _____ Covetousness, lust, and greed are matters or things that the Almighty hates or abhor.
4. _____ Stealing when not caught is okay.
5. _____ It is better to be poor and honest.
6. _____ Sin brings shame and destruction.
7. _____ When poor and in need it is bad and a shame to ask for help.
8. _____ Disobedience begets blessings and applause.
9. _____ Yahweh El sees everyone and knows everything.
10. _____ Joshua was angry at the soldiers when they retreated.

JUDGES

Introduction:

The book is composed of stories about the national heroes called "Judges", most of whom were military leaders rather than judges in the legal sense of the word.

Some of the better known stories are the story of Deborah and Barak, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson.

JS

The Great Lesson

Judges

"As long as Joshua, the successor of Moses lived, the people of Israel served the Lord, and even after his death they continue to do so as long as the leaders were alive who had seen for themselves all the great things that the Lord had done for Israel.... The whole generation died, and the next generation forgot the Lord and what he had done for Israel."

Indeed, after Joshua's generation had gone, the people of Israel—the new generation began to turn away from Yahweh Almighty. They stopped worshipping Him, and instead they worshiped other gods; worshipping idols or images which the pagans among them and around them worshiped. They intermarried with them and copied their ways, the ways of the heathen.

On the other hand, Almighty Yahweh turned against them in anger. He became furious with Israel that He let raiders attack them and overpower them

them. But the Almighty who is the Father of mercy and all help could not bear to see His people suffer and groan for so long. Then He remembered His friendship and covenant with Abraham their ancestor, and looked upon them with mercy. The Almighty would then give them a leader or leaders to rescue them from their enemies and help them.

Almighty Yahweh first gave to them Othniel, the nephew of Caleb, Joshua's contemporary and friend. "The spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he became Israel's leader. He went to war and Almighty Yahweh gave him victory over the king of Mesopotamia. There was peace in Israel as long as Othniel lived.

But soon after Othniel died, Israel sinned against the Almighty again. They started provoking the Almighty Father by worshipping the idols of the heathen. So, the Almighty made King Eglon of Moab stronger than Israel. The Israelites became subject to King Eglon for many years. But when the Israelites were in great distress and had suffered enough, Almighty Yahweh's mercy prevailed. He sent Ehud to rescue them.

From chapter two of the book of Judges, that is, from the death of Joshua through the last, the sequence of events is the same. The people sinned against the Almighty Father, the Father was provoked to anger and let other nations attack and overpower them. The people suffered and groaned, the Father showed mercy upon them by sending to them somebody He anointed to save them. This had been the case from Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah and Barak, Gideon, Tola, Jair, Jephthah, and Samson, until the time of Prophet Samuel and the Monarchy.

The great lesson is that Israel's victory and survival depended solely on loyalty to Almighty Yahweh, while disobedience or disloyalty led to disaster. But even when the people were disobedient, Almighty Yahweh's love and mercy prevailed. When the people repented and turned to him, He was always ready to save them.

Truly, by ourselves we are nothing, but we can do all things by the wisdom and power that come from above!

Questions for Exercise; Assignment:

1. Share with us the lessons that you have learned from your experiences with regard to obedience and disobedience.
2. For interesting stories about Gideon, Samson, ..., read your Bible or Bible Story book and share with us the lessons you have learned.

RUTH

Introduction:

Ruth, a Moabite woman was married to an Israelite. When her husband died, she showed uncommon loyalty to her mother-in-law and deep devotion to the God of Israel. In the end, she found a new husband among her former husband's relatives, and through this marriage, she became the great-grandmother of David, Israel's greatest King.

TS

“More Than Seven Sons”

Ruth

“Your daughter-in-law loves you, has done more for you than seven sons....” (Ruth 4: 15).

Ruth’s story is such an inspiration!

These times where daughters-in-law quarrel, compete and struggle with their mothers-in-law, Ruth’s story is the exact opposite. She is an epitome of a loving, caring, trusting, loyal and obedient daughter-in-law. Women in Israel described her as “good as having seven (7) sons....”

Who is Ruth? What are the virtues we see in her that are worthy of example?

The story of Ruth started when Naomi, Ruth’s mother-in-law and Elimelech her husband with their two sons migrated to Moab during the famine in Israel. One of the sons married Ruth and the other Orpah. Incidentally, Elimelech and his two sons died. Naomi, Orpah and Ruth were left as widows. In those difficult times, Naomi urged her daughters-in-law to return to their homes and start anew while she goes home to Israel alone and pick up the pieces of her life. Orpah left for her home but Ruth, on the contrary, left behind everything she called “her own” to be with a mother-in-law whom she loved, trusted and respected. To cut short a long story, Ruth, with the urging of her mother-in-law and the blessing of Heavenly Father Yahweh, married Boaz and eventually become the great grandmother of Israel’s greatest king-David.

Ruth an extraordinary woman with an extraordinary will and strength! How many of us women are like Ruth? What can we learn from her?

Ruth was humble and trusting. Because she was humble and trusting she had become an obedient, persevering and sacrificing person. In the story she was never ashamed to labor at somebody else’s field (happens to Boaz’s) to provide for herself and her mother-in-law. She persevered the body aches, the heat and the discomfort. It was truly an illustration of “labor of love”.

Ruth was humble and trusting enough to heed Naomi’s advice on her settling down. Naomi hinted the idea that she goes to Boaz and request him “to spread the cover of his garment over her” (interpretation of the phrase). Ruth simply answered her “I will do whatever you say”.

Because of Ruth's humility and trusting attitude, Heavenly Father Yahweh was able to bless her abundantly, so abundantly – that's probably far Ruth could imagine.

The story of Ruth also proves one thing – that Yahweh looks at the heart and motives of the person. Ruth has a heart and motive with the purest intentions that because of it, in spite that she's a foreigner – she had become the great grandmother of Israel's greatest king – also described as the "man after Yahweh's own heart" – David and down the line she had also become an ancestor of Yahshua the Messiah.

Are we worth more than seven (7) sons or daughters?

Reflection:

For your Portfolio:

1. Draw an object / thing you can liken Ruth to and explain why that object/thing.
2. What other virtues do you see in Ruth?
3. What virtues do you see in Naomi? Boaz?
4. What virtues do you believe you possess which are similar to Ruth's?

I & II SAMUEL

Introduction:

The two books of Samuel contain valuable historical materials concerning the religious and moral condition of the Israelite people during the time of Prophet Samuel.

The Book of 1st Samuel tells the history of the Israelites from the birth of Samuel to the death of King Saul.

Samuel had been dedicated to Almighty Yahweh by his mother before his birth, and she took him as a young boy to serve Priest Eli, in the Tabernacle. Samuel grew to be one of the greatest leaders Israel ever had known. He had a triple role: he served as a judge and prophet who could discern Almighty Yahweh's will, as a priest who led Israel to worship, and a military leader (I Samuel 1).

In spite of Samuel's great leadership, the tribe leaders of Israel asked Samuel to appoint for them a king like the other nations around them. Almighty Yahweh told Samuel to warn the people that a king would oppress his own citizens, and makes people into slaves, but still the people wanted to have a king. So at Almighty Yahweh's command, Samuel anointed Saul to be the first king of Israel.

Saul became a good soldier-king of Israel. Whenever the Philistines made war, he led his army into great victories. Saul grew strong and powerful, but still it was Samuel who directed Saul what to do, and constantly reminded Saul

of Almighty Yahweh's Law. But Saul began to want his own way more than Almighty Yahweh's commands through Samuel (I Samuel 8).

Saul disobeyed Almighty Yahweh's instructions again and again. The time came when Almighty Yahweh told Samuel that there is need for a new king, and Samuel must secretly anoint David as the new king. So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed David as king in the presence of his family, and from that day on the spirit of Almighty Yahweh came upon David in power. After David killed the giant Philistine Goliath, David became so popular that Saul was overcome with jealousy and from that day on Saul wanted to kill David (I Samuel 13 & 16).

Saul's son Jonathan who was to be the next successor of Saul's throne became David's good, loyal and most trusted friend, both of them made a promise to be friends whatever may happen. Jonathan helped David escape from his father's death trap a couple of times in spite that his friendship with David might spoil his own chance to become a king. Jonathan knew that Almighty Yahweh's power was working mightily in David and he was to be the next anointed king. From that day on David was in hiding. Saul and his army chased David without success. Instead several times, David had a chance to kill King Saul, but he refused. David said: "I will not lift my hand against my master, because he is Almighty Yahweh's anointed" (I Samuel 20).

Saul and his army was in continuous battle against the Philistines. One day Israel was utterly defeated, many Israelite soldiers were killed and Saul and his sons fled for their lives. The Philistines caught up with them and killed them. The wounded King Saul finally had his last breath (I Samuel 31).

The Book of 2nd Samuel focuses on David as king. For 40 years, David reign over Israel – 7 years in Hebron the then capital city in southern part of Israel, and 37 years as a unified nation and Jerusalem became his new political and religious capital. During David’s early reign, Israel was often at war with the Amorites and the Syrians which later led the unified tribes of Israel to defeat the dreaded Philistines once and for all.

A time of peace and contentment was at last obtained by Israel and David was living in luxury. David planned to build Almighty Yahweh’s Temple for worship, but Almighty Yahweh told prophet Nathan “that it is not for David to build me a Temple, but the LORD will allow a son of David to build Him a Temple”, Almighty Yahweh added a promise saying, “that David’s sons and their sons after them will be king over Israel for ever! ‘Your kingdom will never end as long as they will continue to obey my commands and live to do my will’” (II Samuel 7).

One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace, he saw a beautiful woman bathing. She was Bathsheba the wife of Uriah one of David’s loyal soldiers. David sent for Bathsheba, and he slept with her who later became pregnant. David quickly planned to cover up the wrong he had done, so that Uriah would never know. He sent for Uriah to come home to be with his wife, but Uriah’s devotion to duty spoiled David’s plan. The next option was to intentionally let Uriah be killed by the enemies in battle which they did. David’s sin of adultery led to another which is murder(II Samuel 11).

The things David had done displeased Almighty Yahweh. He sent prophet Nathan to rebuke David. David who had a humble heart listened to

prophet Nathan and sincerely asked Almighty Yahweh's forgiveness, but still his sins resulted to the death of his child with Bathsheba, as punishment (II Samuel 12).

David's sin consequently led to more family troubles, quarrels among his sons who quickly flared up, at every issue. Later, Amnon, David's eldest son cruelly treated his half sister, Tamar. David's failure to punish Amnon led Tamar's full brother Absalom to fury which resulted to the killing of Amnon his half brother (II Samuel 13).

Absalom also led a rebellion against his father. David and his friends fled from Jerusalem. Eventually, Absalom died in battle (II Samuel 15).

One of David's major failures was when he ordered to count (census) the fighting men of Israel and Judah. "David was conscience-stricken after he had counted the fighting men, and he said to Almighty Yahweh, 'I have sinned greatly in what by I have done. Now, O LORD, I beg you, take away the guilt of your servant. I have done a very foolish thing.'" David's acts displeased Almighty Yahweh and the punishment was a terrible disease that killed 70,000 men. When the disease finally ended, David built an altar to offer sacrifices to Almighty Yahweh (II Samuel 24).

Nevertheless, David was Israel's greatest king. Even at his lowest points, his great strength of character showed. In spite of David's failures, he was humble and quick to ask Almighty Yahweh's forgiveness. That made him known as the man after Almighty Yahweh's own heart.

Confidence

I Samuel 17

Confidence is a feeling of security and assurance based on faith and trust. From a spiritual perspective, it's the unwavering belief that God can see you safely through any situation no matter what.

Confidence builds-up those who constantly attune themselves to Almighty Yahweh, and it becomes stronger as the person grows mature in the faith. A man of faith, regardless of the situation, even if it means sacrificing his own life for Almighty Yahweh's will, is not afraid, he is confident that the God whom he trusts and believe is all powerful and He will never fail those who trust Him.

When things occur not as perceived to happen, he is rest assured that all things will work for good to those who loved Almighty Yahweh, and to those who are called according to His own purpose. If things come to worst, a man of faith is confident that by Almighty Yahweh's grace and mercy, he will overcome all trials and temptations in life through Yahshua the Messiah the great Savior and King. He bares the truth that Almighty Yahweh allows everything for a greater purpose, and that He never allows hardships far beyond our ability to endure.

The young David's show of confidence is magnificently illustrated in I Samuel 17. David was full of confidence that Almighty Yahweh will give him victory over the ruthless Philistine army. David portrays what confidence is all about, when he took the challenge drawn by the Philistine champion Goliath. David's faith made him so confident that he can defeat Goliath in spite that he was only a boy with no experience in wars while Goliath has been a champion at wars with a very huge advantage of being a giant. But despite of their disparities David knew that the God whom he trusts is all-powerful and beyond compare , and by Almighty Yahweh's power he will come out victorious.

David affirmed his confidence in Almighty Yahweh by saying to the Philistines, "You come against me with swords and spears and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the LORD will hand you over to me, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head."

David added by saying, "All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD's, and He will give all of you into our hands."

Indeed by Almighty Yahweh's power and might, David defeated Goliath, he struck Goliath on the forehead with a sling, and a stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face down on the ground. When the Philistine armies saw that their hero was dead, they turned and run.

This particular event in David's life signifies that nothing is impossible to those who trust in Almighty Yahweh, and to those whose confidence is in Him. Prophet Jeremiah said, "Blessed is the man who puts his trust in the LORD, whose confidence is in Him" (Jeremiah 17: 17).

Questions for Exercise:

1. In your own words, what do you mean by confidence?
2. How did the young boy David show his confidence in Almighty Yahweh towards his enemies?
3. What is the name of the giant David killed in battle?
4. How did David killed the giant?
5. What did David say to his enemies the Philistines?
6. Cite some personal experiences that you showed full confidence in Almighty Yahweh.
7. As a teacher, what would you advice your students in order to build up their confidence in Almighty Yahweh?
8. Cite some promises that Almighty Yahweh gave to us that would strengthen our faith and trust in Him.

Respectfulness

I Samuel 26

Respectfulness is one of David's inherent qualities. His respect for Almighty Yahweh is so profound and evidently portrayed all throughout David's life.

David's act of respect to Almighty Yahweh and to his fellowmen was strongly characterized on the event when David had the chance to kill King Saul who was hunting him on the hill of Hakilah facing Jeshimon. Instead of killing King Saul to put an end to all his struggles against him, he opted not to and rather declared his thoughts by saying, "Who can lay a hand on the LORD'S anointed and be guiltless? The LORD Himself will strike him; either his time will come and he will die, or he will go into battle and perish. The LORD forbids that I should lay a hand on His anointed."

In that event David showed what respect is all about. His reverence to Almighty Yahweh's commands brought him to a high level of respect to Almighty Yahweh's anointed which eventually caused him to spare King Saul's life in spite of the very rare opportunity to put an end to his troubles.

The situation tested David's heart, and his heart chose respect rather than revenge. David was wise enough to let go of revenge and give due respect to Almighty Yahweh's anointed. That very decision of David bore promising results. Instead of being in full rage and pursuing David more aggressively, Saul rather praised David for his bravery and acts of respect. Saul added by declaring blessings to David saying, "May you be blessed, my son David, you will do great things and surely triumph."

David's show of character inspired more favor in Almighty Yahweh's sight, and urged King Saul to bless David instead.

Respect for one another, most especially to Almighty Yahweh is quite rare this days, in this kind of world we live in where more people is into independent living, fueled by extreme freedom. We believers and followers of Yahshua the Messiah should develop and nurture the virtue of respect, for this is one of the many great qualities, Almighty Yahweh wants His people to possess.

Almighty Yahweh said in Leviticus 19: 3, "Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: 'Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy.' Each of you must respect his father and mother, and you must observe my

Sabbaths. I am the LORD your God.” Almighty Yahweh added by saying, “Rise in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God.”

Questions for Exercise:

1. What do you mean by respect?
2. How did David show his respect to King Saul?
3. How did David show total reverence to Almighty Yahweh?
4. What is the name of the place where David saw King Saul?
5. What quality of David’s heart that you also have?
6. As Christians how can we show to the world our respect for one another?

Loyalty

II Samuel 23

Have you ever tried to risk your own life for the sake of loyalty? Did you ever sacrifice your own welfare for someone's belief and ideologies in the name of loyalty?

As a leader, gaining loyal followers cannot be obtained overnight; it is rather earned through sweat and tears. When the persons around you reach the level of giving up their lives for your sake that means that they very well know and understand you and your visions in life. They obtained such devotion because first of all, it is you who taught them that regardless of the situation you are firm and strong in what you stand for.

Gaining loyal friends is an asset far beyond what this world can offer. True loyalty is tested through time. When a person is still willing to stand by you and your beliefs when no one else seems to do so, clearly defines what loyalty is all about, and given the persons quality, he also deserves your loyalty. He is with you in all your ups and downs so what's worse than to tear your devotion apart? Keep your friendship like precious jewels!

A classic example of loyalty is David's mighty men. That is, when three of the thirty-top-ranking officers of Israel's army went down at harvest time to visit him. David was in the stronghold at the time when the Philistine marauders had occupied the nearby city of Bethlehem. David remarked, "How thirsty I am for some of that good water in the city well!" So the three men broke through the Philistine ranks and drew water from the well and brought it to David. But David refused to drink it! Instead he poured it out before the LORD. "No, my GOD," he exclaimed, "I cannot do it! This is the blood of these men who have risked their lives!

Despite the high risk of getting caught and killed, they courageously went to draw water at the well for David to drink as he wished. They never hesitated to give up their lives just to satisfy their commander's need for good water. What a valiant act of loyalty, and a great display of courage David's men portrayed. Oh! What a joy to have such loyal men.

It's time to discover for ourselves who deserves our loyalty. Let me take this opportunity also to remind ourselves that Almighty Yahweh and Yahshua the Messiah remain faithful and true to those who remain loyal to Him.

Questions for Exercise:

1. What valiant act the top-ranking soldiers did?
2. What do you mean by loyalty?
3. Has someone risked his life for you? In what way?
4. Have you ever tried risking your own life for loyalty sake?
5. How many of David's top-ranking officers risked their lives to satisfy their commander's need?
6. What did David yearn for that is situated in the enemies camp?
7. How will you show to the world your loyalty to Almighty Yahweh and Yahshua the Messiah?

Honesty

II Samuel

Honesty is the moral fiber of the truth; it projects both truthfulness in speech and consistency in conduct. Honesty could result to two things, an appreciation to those who will gladly accept the truth, or dismay to those who oppose to hear the truth.

Honesty professes that regardless, it exposes the detail of the reality that needs to be known or heard, whether it is liked or not. Most often, "truth hurts" knowing the truth in most cases really hurts. It's like a sword plunged into a person's heart which could tear him apart. But there is no substitute for truth and honesty. As the scriptures teach us, "Know the truth and the truth will set you free" (John 8: 32).

To confront a person in authority about his wrong doings, as the prophets did, pauses a great threat to the confronter, and to many, it cost them their lives. Bible history clearly depicts how Almighty Yahweh's children suffered and died because they proclaimed the truth and exposed people's sins.

A simple act of honesty can be a clear and present danger to the concerned party. But let us not allow fear to stop us from revealing the truth, especially the truth that comes from Almighty Yahweh.

We should never be afraid for He who commissioned us is all- powerful and He is always there for us in times of need. He said: "I will never abandon you; I will never fail you nor forsake you." Let prophet Nathan serves as our example the moment Almighty Yahweh sent him to King David to confront him of his sins. When Prophet Nathan came to David, he said: There were two men in a certain town, one rich the other poor. The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle, but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him. It shared his food, drank from his cup and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him.

"Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man and prepared it for the one who had come to him." David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, "As surely as the LORD lives, the man who did this deserves to die! He must pay for that lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and had no pity." Then prophet Nathan said to David, "You are the man!, You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword

and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Amorites.”

Prophet Nathan clearly illustrates what honesty is all about, and he has done it by presenting a case for the king to decide, not knowing he was making a verdict for himself.

Prophet Nathan courageously took the challenge and victoriously accomplished what was assigned to him by Almighty Yahweh. We, on the other hand must also be firm and courageous in accomplishing the will of Almighty Yahweh especially in proclaiming the truth about His grace and love through Yahshua the Messiah or Jesus Christ.

However, like Prophet Nathan we need to know how to handle the truth with care, to be creative and full of wisdom in how to expose the truth, in order not to carelessly put oneself to harm and danger. Nevertheless, in all circumstances, let honesty through faith and courage prevail over fear in doing the will of the Almighty Father!

Questions for Exercise:

1. In your own words what do you mean by honesty?
2. What is the similarity of honesty and truth?
3. Who is the king confronted by a prophet because of sin?
4. How did the prophet confront the king?
5. What is the sin of the king?
6. Have you experienced being confronted because of your wrongs?
What does it feel like?
7. What is the best response if you are confronted by somebody?
8. What is the general reaction of people when confronted?
9. Is there anyone you can turn to in times of trouble? Why?
10. In case Yahweh Almighty sends you to confront a king, would you be willing and happy? Explain your answer.

I KINGS

Introduction:

The first Book of Kings is a continuation of the history of the Israelite Monarchy begun in the books of Samuel. Especially noteworthy in this book is the succession of Solomon as King of Israel and Judah, and the building of the Temple in Jerusalem.

In the two books of Kings each ruler is judge according to his loyalty to God, and national success is seen as depending on this loyalty, while idolatry and disobedience lead to disaster.

Notable also in this book are the prophets of Yahweh Almighty who courageously spoke for Him by warning the people not to worship idols, and not to disobey Him.

Prominent among them is prophet Elijah.

TS

King Solomon Asks Almighty Yahweh For Wisdom

I Kings 3

After King David's death, his son, Solomon became the King over Israel. King Solomon loved and honored Almighty Yahweh and followed all of his father's words.

One time King Solomon went to Gibeon, the most important high place or most famous Altar, to offer sacrifices. There he offered a thousand burnt offering. During the night Almighty Yahweh appeared to him and said, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you". Then King Solomon replied, "Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number. So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong."

Almighty Yahweh was pleased with King Solomon's reply. And so, Almighty Yahweh not only blessed King Solomon with wise and discerning heart but also riches and honor no equal. Besides, long life also if he would walk in His ways and commands as King David, his father did. Then King Solomon woke up and realized it had been a dream. He returned to Jerusalem and stood before the Ark of the Covenant and sacrificed burnt offering. Then he made a great feast.

Yahweh's blessings are given by grace and are enjoyed by complete obedience to His words. Certainly, the scripture says, "Delight thyself in the LORD and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart." In the beginning King Solomon delighted in doing the will of Almighty Yahweh, thus, was pleased and blessed King Solomon with wisdom no equal. In like manner, we will also enjoy Almighty Yahweh's blessings to us as we completely give ourselves unto Him.

Questions:

1. If you are to ask Almighty Yahweh for something, what will that be? Write it in few sentences.
2. Name some of the blessings you have received from Almighty Yahweh. What do you do or what will you do to show that you are grateful?

The Miracles on Mt. Carmel

I Kings 18

After three long years of drought in Israel, Almighty Yahweh commanded Prophet Elijah to present himself to King Ahab. When the two met, King Ahab called Elijah as the trouble maker; the cause of all the troubles. In response, Elijah challenged Ahab to bring all the people of Israel with the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah to Mt. Carmel for the people to decide whom to follow whether Baal or Almighty Yahweh.

So King Ahab summoned all the people and prophets to gather at Mt. Carmel. Prophet Elijah then challenged the people to bring two young bulls – one for the people to offer to Baal and one for him to offer to Almighty Yahweh. The bull would be cut to pieces and laid on the wood in their altar without putting fire and whoever would send fire to light the wood is the true Elohim.

All the people agreed and so they prepared first. They called the name of Baal all morning but no response. Afternoon came, still the people were shouting and nothing happened. When finally evening came they shouted even louder but still no response. By then, Prophet Elijah began calling the people to witness him. Elijah took twelve (12) stones representing each tribe to build the altar. Dug a trench around them, piled wood and cut the bull to pieces. Four (4) barrels of water were poured over the wood. Then Prophet Elijah walked up to the altar and prayed saying, “Ah Elohim, answer me! Answer me so these people will know that you are Elohim and that you have brought them back to yourself.” Then suddenly, fire flashed down from heaven and burned up the young bull, the wood and everything in there. All the people witnessed it and fell down to their knees saying, “Almighty Yahweh is Elohim.” Then Elijah seized all the prophets and killed them in Kishon Brook.

Certainly, Almighty Yahweh will never let you down if you put your trust in Him. Prophet Elijah was a man like us who put his complete trust in the Elohim, trusting that Almighty Yahweh can perform miracles through him. He was the man of the hour: he honored Him to shame His enemies, and for him to give more glory to our Father in heaven. Almighty Yahweh can work mightily as well in our lives. But we need to put our trust in Him and not on our strength and understanding. In this way, Almighty Yahweh has all the credit and is glorified.

Question:

1. Role play the scene on Mt. Carmel.

The Downfall of King Solomon

I Kings 11

King Solomon was known as the wisest King in earth after he asked Almighty Yahweh for wisdom, and the Almighty blessed him with wisdom and riches. But later he became so confident of himself – of his wisdom and power that he ignored the instruction of Almighty Yahweh never to marry an idolatrous or heathen woman because she will lead his heart to other gods. True, indeed, Solomon's heathen wives and concubines led his soul astray, thus, began his downfall.

King Solomon did not only have Pharaoh's daughter of Egypt as his wife but had married many other women. He had a total of seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines. Many of these women came from nations that were worshipping idols. Despite the clear instructions and warnings of Almighty Yahweh not to marry a heathen woman, King Solomon did it anyway. Moreover, he built temples for his foreign wives for burning incense and sacrificing to their gods. Later in his life, his heart was not fully devoted to Almighty Yahweh because the foreign wives turned his heart after other gods.

Such act made Almighty Yahweh angry with King Solomon. As a consequence, Almighty Yahweh said, "I will most certainly tear the Kingdom away from you and give it to one of your subordinates. However, it will not be done during your lifetime but of your son for the sake of King David and Jerusalem which I have chosen."

Almighty Yahweh's commands are clear and should not be taken lightly. He demands our complete obedience and devotion to Him. He never allows a divided heart for He is a jealous Elohim. This also holds true to us today. As Almighty Yahweh blesses us we must all the more keep His words in our hearts. We must never rely on our own strength and understanding, instead we should constantly pronounce and acknowledge Almighty Yahweh's power working in us. Remembering also that Yahweh's blessings are given by grace but are enjoyed in complete obedience to Him.

Questions:

I. Identification: Write the correct answer of what is asked in the following sentences.

_____ 1. The total number of King Solomon's foreign wives.

_____ 2. The total number of King Solomon's concubines.

_____ 3. He built for his foreign wives.

_____, _____ 4-5. It is for their sake that the Kingdom was not divided during King Solomon's time.

II. Write some lessons you have learned from the life of King Solomon.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Prophet Elijah Fights Depression

I Kings 19

When Queen Jezebel learned what Prophet Elijah had done and how he had killed the prophets of Baal with sword, she was very furious and sent a message to Prophet Elijah swearing that she would kill him also the following night. Knowing this, Prophet Elijah ran for his life to Beersheba, a city of Judah and left his servant there. Then he went to the wilderness alone, traveling all day and was so depressed. While resting down, he prayed that he might die for he had enough troubles. Then he deeply fell asleep. As he was sleeping, an angel awaked him and told him to eat some bread and drink some water for the journey ahead was still long.

Prophet Elijah traveled to Mount Horeb, the mountain of the Elohim, for forty days and forty nights. Then Almighty Yahweh spoke to him saying, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" Elijah replied that he had worked for the Elohim yet the people of Israel still broke their covenant with the Elohim by tearing down their altars and killing the prophets and he was the only one left.

Nevertheless, Almighty Yahweh encouraged Elijah that He still reserved seven thousand (7,000) men in Israel whose knees have not bowed down to Baal. So, Almighty Yahweh commanded Elijah to go back and anoint Hazael King over Syria; Jehu, son of Nimshi, King over Israel and Elisha, son of Shaphat of Abel-Nehalah, to succeed him as prophet.

Prophet Elijah's feelings show that prophets are human; in spite of their faith and trust in Almighty Yahweh, there are times when they feel sad, lonely, tired and depressed. In other words, Prophet Elijah's feelings are not unusual. Sometimes, like Elijah, we feel depressed about our work and even ourselves that we wish the Elohim to take our lives as Elijah wished. Not only Elijah has ever felt this way but also Job, Jonah, Moses, and many others.

However, this is not the answer to despair because this will not give glory to our Father in Heaven. This is instead a selfish motive for we become very concerned of saving ourselves and freeing ourselves with the burden rather than giving ourselves for Him. We must instead surrender ourselves to Almighty Yahweh trusting Him to work things out. We've got to believe His promise that He will never leave us nor forsake us.

Questions for Exercise:

I. Identification. Identify the following sentences and write your answer on the space provided.

- _____ 1. The prophet who had killed the prophets of Baal.
- _____ 2. The queen who planned to kill Prophet Elijah.
- _____ 3. Number of days and nights he spent to travel to mount Horeb.
- _____ 4. The mountain where Almighty Yahweh spoke to Prophet Elijah.
- _____ 5. The number of men Almighty Yahweh reserved whose knees have not bowed down to Baal.
- _____ 6. He spoke to Elijah on Mt. Horeb.
- _____ 7. Elijah anointed him to be king over Syria.
- _____ 8. Elijah anointed him to be king over Israel.
- _____ 9. Elijah anointed him to succeed him as prophet.
- _____ 10. He had awakened Elijah and told him to eat and drink.

II Kings

Introduction:

Second Kings continues the history of the two kingdoms, Israel and Judah. These two kingdoms fall apart, captured, desolated, defeated and conquered by their enemies.

This book contains the life and works of kings that remain faithful to Almighty Yahweh and kings who were wicked and disobedient. The prophets who stand out in this book are Prophet Elijah and his successor Prophet Elisha.

Sin, disobedience and unfaithfulness to Almighty Yahweh caused the fall of Israel and Judah.

J.S

Give Full Respect to Almighty Yahweh's Prophets

II Kings

After King Ahab's death, Israel's new king was Ahaziah. One day, King Ahaziah had fallen off the upstairs porch of his palace at Samaria and was seriously injured. He sent messengers to the temple of the god Baal-zebub at Ekron to ask whether he would recover.

But an angel of Almighty Yahweh told Elijah the prophet to meet the messengers of King Ahaziah and asked them, "Is it true that there is no God in Israel? Why are you going to Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, to ask whether the king will get well? Because King Ahaziah has done this, Yahweh Almighty says that he will never leave the bed he is lying on, he will surely die."

The messengers returned to King Ahaziah earlier than expected. He was wondering why they returned so soon. The messengers told him that a man came up to them, and they told to King Ahaziah everything the prophet said. King Ahaziah asked the messengers what the man looks like. They described the feature of the prophet. The king recognized the man right away as Prophet Elijah. Then he sent an army captain with fifty soldiers to arrest him. They found Prophet Elijah sitting on top of a hill. The captain said to him, "O man of God, the king has commanded you to come along with us." But Elijah replied, "If I am a man of God in heaven, let fire come down from heaven and destroy you and your fifty men. Then lightning struck them and killed them all! So the king sent another captain with fifty men to demand, "O man of God, the king says that you must come down right- away." Elijah replied, " If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and destroy you and your fifty men." Again, the fire from God burned them up. Once more the king sent fifty men, but this time the captain fell to his knees before Elijah and pleaded with him, "O man of God, please spare my life and the lives of these, your fifty servants. Have mercy on us! Don't destroy us as you did the others." Then the angel of Almighty Yahweh said to Elijah, "Don't be afraid. Go with him." So Elijah went to the king.

The words that came out in Prophet Elijah's mouth were so sharp, quick and powerful. In that very moment Almighty Yahweh struck the enemy of Elijah with lightning and they all fell dead as Prophet Elijah had spoken. Yahweh Almighty upholds the words that come out of the mouth of His

prophets. He hears, He honors, and answers the request of His faithful servants.

This account should serve as a lesson to us that we should always be careful in the way we talk to Almighty Yahweh's prophets; to His anointed persons.....Give them full respect; the words that come out of their mouth will bring either blessing or a curse. Pay them due respect with humility; acknowledge that they are anointed by the Almighty and always remember that the favor of God the Father in heaven is with them. Yahweh Almighty's presence is with them and He will never leave them, nor forsake them. Most prophets lived simple even poor lives but our attitude towards them must be respectful. We should treat them with high regard because in the eyes of Almighty Yahweh they are very precious; they are the apple of His eyes. We should even consider ourselves nothing in Yahweh's sight compared to them.

Everybody wants to be respected but sadly, in this world, people tend to give respect to people based on their economic and social status. But we, the children of Almighty Yahweh should be an example; a light to everyone. We should always remember that our Father and Savior loves righteousness, and nothing is kept or hidden from Him. He knows all our thoughts and the secrets of our hearts. And, Almighty Yahweh can raise the humble and faithful who has nothing, to greatness for the glory of His holy name.

I - Multiple Choice:

1. How many captains and soldiers struck by lightning?
 - a) 2 captains and 200 soldiers
 - b) 2 captains and 100 soldiers
 - c) 3 captains and 150 soldiers
2. Who told Elijah to meet the messengers of King Ahaziah?
 - a) Angel
 - b) High Priest
 - c) Prophet
3. In what place did King Ahaziah send his messengers?
 - a) Samaria
 - b) Jerusalem
 - c) Ekron
4. Who sat on the throne after King Ahab's death?
 - a) King Hezekiah
 - b) King Nadab
 - c) King Ahaziah
5. How many captains and soldiers spared from death?
 - a) 2 captains and 100 soldiers
 - b) 1 captain and 50 soldiers
 - c) 1 captain and 100 soldiers

6. Who is the god of King Ahaziah?
a) Almighty Yahweh b) Baal-zebul
7. Where was the king's palace located?
a) Jerusalem b) Damascus c) Samaria
8. What is the message of Almighty Yahweh to the king?
a) He will surely die
b) He will surely recover
c) He will surely recover and live a long life
9. Who is Elijah?
a) Angel b) Prophet c) Priest
10. Where did the army captains find Elijah?
a) mountain b) hill c) valley

II - Answer the following questions:

1. What is the meaning of respect?
2. Compare the attitude of the first 2 captains and the 3rd/last captain sent by King Ahaziah?
3. What kind of a man is Elijah?

III - Assessment:

1. What lesson have you learned from the story?
2. To whom do you give respect?
3. In our world today, how do people show their respect to a person?
4. Why is it so important to pay respect to Yahweh's prophets, ministers....?
5. In what way people show their disrespect?
6. Do you want to be respected? Why?

IV - Application:

1. What will you do to make the people show respect to one another?
2. What actions you will implement to those who are disrespectful?

Elisha's Deep Faith in Yahweh Almighty

II Kings

Prophet Elisha was the assistant of Prophet Elijah. When Yahweh Almighty took Elijah away, Elisha asked for twice the prophetic power Elijah had. Elijah replied, "If you see me when I am taken from you, then you will get your request. But if not you won't." As they were walking along, talking, suddenly a chariot of fire, drawn by horses of fire, appeared and drove between them, separating them, and Elijah was carried by a whirlwind into heaven. Elisha saw everything happened, and Yahweh Almighty granted the desires of the heart of Elisha. Elisha's deep faith in Almighty Yahweh paved the way of the many miracles in his time. In chapters 4, 5, and 6, the chapters that recorded his mighty miracles, Elisha's confidence and faith in Almighty Yahweh's power to do miracles enabled him to help a widow who was in need; he miraculously provided her with olive oil to sell. A dead boy was brought to life. Elisha removed poison from stew. Corn and 20 loaves of barley bread- enough to feed 100 men. Naaman the leper was healed and the axhead floats....

Almighty Yahweh is faithful, never failed to fulfill His promise to His people. One night the king of Syria sent a great army with many chariots and horses to surround the city to capture Elisha and put him to death. When the prophet's servant got up early the next morning and went outside, there were troops, horses, and chariots everywhere.

"Alas, my master, what shall we do now?" He cried out to Elisha.

"Don't be afraid," Elisha told him. "For our army is bigger than theirs!"

Then Elisha prayed, "Almighty Yahweh open his eyes and let him see!" Almighty Yahweh opened the young man's eyes so that he could see horses of fire and chariots of fire everywhere upon the mountain. As the Syrian army advanced, Elisha prayed, "Almighty Yahweh, please make them blind." He did. Then Elisha went out and told them "You've come the wrong way! This isn't the right city! Follow me and I will take you to the man you are looking for." He led them to Samaria! As soon as they arrived Elisha prayed, "Almighty Yahweh, now open their eyes and let them see." Almighty Yahweh did, and the Syrian army discovered that they were in Samaria, the capital city of Israel.

Elisha was never afraid of the great Syrian army that surrounded him and his servant. He remained calm and confident in Yahweh Almighty despite

a death threat. Elisha was so sure Yahweh Almighty will protect him against his enemies and indeed, Yahweh Almighty was true to His promises. He never failed to protect Elisha. He sent His chariots of fire to protect him and his servant. Throughout the life of Elisha Yahweh Almighty was with him.

As children of Yahweh Almighty, we can do triple or more mighty miracles in our time in the name of Yahshua the Messiah. Let us set our hearts, mind, or body, soul, and spirit upon the plans of our Father and Savior in our lives. We are not different from Elisha, we are all the same-human beings, our creator is the same. The question is how deep is our faith in Almighty Yahweh? Let us be like Elisha, let us put our trust and confidence in our Father and Savior. The Holy Bible says, "We can do all things through Yahshua the Messiah who strengtheneth us. With men it is impossible but with our Father and Savior all things are possible." As long as we do our part humbly and faithfully, our Father and Savior will do the rest. He said: Even when we have faith as small as mustard seed we can say to a mountain transfer to the sea and it will obey. Let us pray without ceasing, constant communication to our Father and Savior will help us a lot. It's so amazing, just a simple prayer of Elisha, Yahweh Almighty answered him by making the Syrian army blind. He never let Elisha down. Pray, believe, and rely on our Father and Savior to get you through in any situation - no matter how bad it seems and no matter how unable you are to cope with it on your own. Those who put their trust in Yahweh will never be disappointed. The prayer of a righteous man is always answered by our Father and Savior.

The world is filled with many evil people. Satan uses them to attack the children of Almighty Yahweh. But let us not be shaken, nor be afraid, let us stay calm in every situation. Even in the midst of death, be strong in your faith, be steadfast, and unmovable. The people in the past who trusted Yahweh El were never disappointed. Our God and Father is alive and active. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. He loves His faithful people. He will command His heavenly armies to protect us, and keep us safe when we need it. We may or may not see them with our naked eyes but they are always there ready to defend us. Let us do our part; our portion of responsibility so that they can do their work mightily.

Let us delight in our Father and Savior; delight in doing His will and He will grant the desires of our hearts, as He did to Elisha. Be strong, be courageous, and in everything we gained, let us give all the glory to our Heavenly Father Yahweh El, Son Yahshua the Messiah, and Holy Spirit. Halleluyah!

I – Answer the following questions:

1. How did Elisha become a prophet?
2. Why was Elisha's request to Elijah granted?
3. What did Elisha see that took his master away from him?
4. What enable Elisha to do mighty miracles?
5. What did the servant of Prophet Elisha see in the spiritual realm?
6. What were the mighty miracles Prophet Elisha performed?
7. What did the king of Syria want for Elisha?
8. How did Almighty Yahweh protect Elisha against his enemies?
9. What did Elisha do when he was surrounded by his enemies?

II – Assessment

1. How did Prophet Elisha gain the favor of Almighty Yahweh?
2. How deep is your faith in God Almighty?
3. Do you believe Almighty Yahweh can work miracles through your life?
Explain your answer.
4. What is the best thing to do in times of threatening situation? Explain your answer

III – Application

1. How will you show to the world your faith and trust in Yahweh Elohim?

IV - Write down your personal experience on how Almighty Yahweh helped you in times of trouble, hardship, threatening situation.

The Obedience of King Josiah

II Kings

King Amon did all the evil things his father King Manasseh had done. He worshiped idols and turned his back on the Lord God of his ancestors. He refused to listen to Almighty Yahweh's instructions. One day his aides conspired against him and killed him in the palace. Then a group of civilians killed all the assassins and placed Amon's son Josiah upon the throne. King Josiah became the new King of Judah and he reigned for thirty one (31) years. He began to reign at the age of eight. King Josiah was a good king, he followed the steps of his ancestor King David, obeying Yahweh Almighty completely.

In the 18th year of his reign, King Josiah sent his secretary Shaphan to the Temple to give instruction to Hilkiah, the High Priest: "Collect the money given to the priests at the door of the Temple when the people come to worship. Give this money to the building superintendents so that they can hire carpenters and masons to repair the Temple and to buy lumber and stone."

One day Hilkiah the High Priest went to Shaphan the secretary and exclaimed, "I have discovered a scroll in the Temple, with Yahweh's Laws written on it." He gave the scroll to Shaphan to read. When Shaphan reported to King Josiah the progress of the Temple repairs, he also mentioned the scroll found by Hilkiah. When the king heard what was written in it, he tore his clothes in terror. He commanded Hilkiah, Shaphan, and many others to ask the Lord God in heaven, "What shall we do? For we have not been following the instructions of this book. You must be very angry with us, neither we nor our ancestors have followed your commands." So Hilkiah the High Priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan and Asaiah went to the Mishneh section of Jerusalem to find Huldah the prophetess. She gave them this message from Yahweh Almighty. "I am going to punish Jerusalem and all its people, as written in the book that the king has read. They have rejected me and have offered sacrifice to other gods and so have stirred up my anger by all they have done. My anger is aroused against Jerusalem, and it will not die down. As for the king himself, this is what I, Yahweh Almighty says: 'You listened to what is written in the book and you repented and humbled yourself before me, tearing your clothes and weeping, when you heard how I threatened to punish Jerusalem and its people. I will make it a terrifying sight, a place whose name people will use as a curse. But I have heard your prayer, and the punishment which I am going to bring on Jerusalem will not come until after your death. I will let you die in peace.'" The men returned to King Josiah with this message.

King Josiah renewed the covenant. He began to follow its teaching. He sent for the elders and other leaders of Judah and Jerusalem to go to the Temple with him. So all the priests, prophets, and the people great or small of Judah and Jerusalem gathered there at the Temple so that the king could read to them the entire book of Yahweh's Laws which had been discovered in the Temple. He stood beside the pillar in front of the people and he led them to make a solemn promise to Yahweh to obey Him at all times and to do everything the book commanded.

King Josiah instructed Hilkiah the High Priest, and the guards of the Temple to destroy all the equipment used in the worship of Baal, to wipe out all idol worship. The king had all the idols burned in the fields of Kidron Valley outside Jerusalem. He killed the heathen priests who had been appointed by the previous kings of Judah. He burned and tore down all the statues near or far. As Josiah was looking around he noticed several graves in the side of the mountain. He ordered his men to bring out the bones in them and to burn them there upon the altar, just as Yahweh's prophet had declared would happen to Jeroboam's altar. "What is the monument over there?" King Josiah asked, and the men of the city told him. "It is the grave of the prophet who came from Judah and proclaimed that what you have just done would happen here at the altar of Bethel." So King Josiah replied, "Leave it alone. Don't disturb his bones."

King Josiah also demolished the shrines on the hills in all of Samaria which had been built by the various kings of Israel and had made the God of heaven very angry. He crushed them into dust, just as he had done at Bethel.

Then the king issued orders for his people to observe the Passover ceremonies as commanded by the Lord their God in the book of the covenant. He also exterminated the mediums and wizards and every kind of idol worship, both in Jerusalem and throughout the land.

There was no other king who completely turned to Yahweh Almighty and followed all the Laws of Moses, and no king since the time of Josiah has approached his record of obedience. He did what was right and pleasing to Yahweh. He led the people to repent of all their sins and iniquity and to promise to Yahweh El to obey His Laws and Commandments. He was determined to do what is right, he tore down near and far all images, idols used in worship and even killed all the pagan priests... He completely obeyed Yahweh's Laws and Commandments. He was never afraid to do the right action.

As children of Yahweh Almighty through faith in Yahshua the Messiah, each one of us has the responsibility to lead the people to worship our Father in heaven in truth and in holiness. So, let us follow the steps of our faithful ancestors. Let us teach and lead the people in Yahweh's ways. Let us start within ourselves, with our family, with our friends, and to all the people around the world. Let us always renew our covenant with our Father in heaven to worship Him alone. Like King Josiah, when Yahweh Almighty has put you in a high position don't hesitate to do what is right. Remember, the more you obey Him, the greater will be the blessings. Wherever you may be or whatever position you may have, remember always the words, laws and commandments of Yahweh Almighty. Write them upon your heart and mind; body, soul, and spirit. Never forget the covenant Almighty Yahweh made with you; never worship other gods. Worship Him alone, and He will keep you safe and will bless you, your family, your country. He will bless you with long, prosperous and peaceful life. Never forget to teach your children and to let them pass it on to the next generations so that they too will enjoy abundant and eternal life.

Remember always that Almighty Yahweh abhors worshiping of idols; He tolerates no rival. Destroy everything that Yahweh abhors. Most of all, like King Josiah, love and obey Yahweh Almighty with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your strength and He will abundantly bless you.

I - Multiple choice

1. How old King Josiah started his reign?
a) 10 b) 9 c) 8
2. Who is the father of King Josiah?
a) King Manasseh b) King Amon c) King Hezekiah
3. Who is the father of King Amon?
a) King Hezekiah b) King Manasseh c) King Jereboam
4. Who killed King Amon?
a) aides b) soldiers c) servants
5. How many years King Josiah reigned in Judah?
a) 32 years b) 31 years c) 30 years
6. Who is the secretary sent by the king to the Temple?
a) Achbor b) Ahikam c) Shaphan

7. Who is the High Priest who found the scroll?
a) Hilkiyah b) Shaphan c) Achbor
8. Who is the prophetess who lived in Mishneh section of Jerusalem?
a) Deborah b) Huldah c) Ruth
9. In what place were the idols burned?
a) Judah b) Bethel c) Kidron Valley
10. What ceremony ordered by King Josiah to be observed?
a) Passover b) Tabernacle c) Pentecost

II – Answer the following questions:

1. What is the meaning of obedience?
2. How did King Josiah show his complete obedience to Almighty Yahweh's laws and commandments?
3. In the 18th year of King Josiah's reign what did he do?
4. When King Josiah heard the laws of Yahweh Elohim, what was his first reaction?
5. What was the assuring message of Almighty Yahweh to King Josiah?
6. What did King Josiah instruct to the High Priest and Temple guards to do?
7. What did the ancestors of King Josiah do that made Almighty Yahweh angry?

III – Assessment:

1. What great lesson have you learned from the life of King Josiah?
2. Why is it so important to obey Yahweh's laws and commandments?
3. What are the laws of Yahweh Elohim (Give 5 laws)
4. How important is the keeping of the Covenant with Yahweh El?

IV – Application:

1. How will you show your complete obedience to Almighty Yahweh's laws and commandments?
2. What is your role in life?
3. How will you lead the people to obey Yahweh's laws and commandments?

The Downfall of Almighty Yahweh's People

II Kings

Again and again Almighty Yahweh sent His prophets to warn His people that His judgment is coming and will fall upon them if they will not repent of their sins and iniquity. Indeed, the judgment came as declared because the people didn't listen, the people no longer worship the God in heaven and their lives were not pleasing to the sight of Yahweh Elohim.

Most of the kings mentioned in 2 Kings in the Holy Bible led the people astray. Like King Ahaz of Judah, he did not follow the Lord of heaven as his ancestor David had done; instead he was as wicked as the kings of Israel. He even killed his own son and offered him as burnt sacrifice to the gods, following the heathen customs of the nations around Judah.

The evil king encouraged the people into grievous sin by worshiping idols. They had followed the evil customs of the nations which Almighty Yahweh had cast out from before them. The people had secretly done so many things that were wrong, and they had built altars to other gods throughout the land. They had placed idols at the top of every hill and under every green tree, and they had burned incense to the gods of the very nation which Yahweh Almighty had cleared out of the land when Israel came in. The people of Israel worshiped idols, despite Almighty Yahweh's specific and repeated warnings. In their foolishness they defied all the commandments of Yahweh Almighty. They made detestable, shameful idols. They even burned their own children to death on the altars of Molech. They consulted fortune-tellers and used magic and sold themselves to evil.

In all this time Yahweh Almighty never failed to send His prophets to warn both Israel and Judah to turn from their evil ways. He had warned them to obey His commandments which He had given to their ancestors through the prophets. But Israel wouldn't listen and even Judah refused to obey the commandments of Yahweh Almighty. The kings and the people were stubborn; they rejected Almighty Yahweh's laws and the covenant He has made with their ancestors, and despised all His warnings. So Almighty Yahweh was very angry. He swept them from His sight. He punished them by delivering them to their enemies until most of them were destroyed.

Almighty Yahweh destroyed the people of Jerusalem and Judah through King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. General Nebuzaradan, the captain

of the Royal Bodyguard, arrived at Jerusalem from Babylon and burned down the Temple, the palace, and all other houses. He then supervised the Babylonian army in tearing down the walls of Jerusalem which became the beginning of the fall of Jerusalem. Kings were put to death, Judah's leaders were killed. Jerusalem has fallen. The covering and protection of Almighty Yahweh was not with them anymore.

What happened long time ago still happens today. Almighty Yahweh keeps sending His ministers to proclaim the good news of salvation that we may all be saved. He is sending His prophets to warn the people that the hour of His coming, the day of judgment is near.

Today, nations and people around the world as in the past are worshiping idols, greatly in defiance to the heavenly Father and that could be the reason the world groaneth in pain. Consequently, many people everywhere suffered, constantly looking for an answer to their problem but they could not find it. Yahweh's judgment will be upon this earth but those who in faith will endure to the end will have a crown of eternal life, and Almighty Yahweh will bless all our efforts with success. May the downfall of Yahweh's people long time ago serves as a reminder to us now never to bow down to any idol, never make graven images. Worship Him alone, the King of Kings Yahweh Elohim. Take heed always His words, He is a God who never changes His Laws and Commandments. "Heaven and earth will pass away but His words remain forever."

Do not provoke Yahweh Elohim to anger!

I - Answer the following questions:

1. What is the consequence of sin?
2. What grievous sin has been committed by the people and encouraged by the evil kings?
3. Did the people listen to Yahweh's warning through His prophets? Why?
4. What does Almighty Yahweh usually do before His judgment or punishment is implemented?
5. What is the greatest role of a king?
6. Who was the king used by Almighty Yahweh to punish His people?
7. What did he do to Jerusalem and Judah?

II - Assessment

1. How important is to follow the laws and commandments of Yahweh Elohim?
2. What can you say to the mighty and holy words of Yahweh Elohim?
3. When Almighty Yahweh disciplines you what should be your response? Explain your answer.
4. Does Almighty Yahweh still speak to us nowadays? In what way?
5. What is the greatest/precious opportunity Almighty Yahweh gives to us right now before His judgment comes?
6. Is the punishment Almighty Yahweh give fair? Explain your answer.

III- Application

1. Do the people nowadays worship lifeless idols?
2. What will you do to help them get saved before the judgment of Yahweh Elohim comes?
3. When we say, "the judgment of Yahweh El", what do you have in mind? Or, what is your understanding of it?
4. What happen to the religious life of the people this time? How can you help them return to Yahweh Elohim?
5. What will you do to make your faith in Yahweh El through His Son Yahshua the Messiah and Holy Spirit remain strong and firm in spite of the situation of our world today?

I CHRONICLES

Introduction:

The book of First and Second Chronicles are largely retelling of the events recorded in the books of Samuel and Kings.

However, two main purposes govern the account of the history. One is that, God was faithful in keeping His promises and was working out His plan through the people in Judah. Another is, the origin of the worship of God in the Temple in Jerusalem and the organization of priests and Levites by which the worship was carried out.

David is presented as the real founder of the Temple and its rituals, even though it is Solomon who builds the Temple.

FS

Almighty Yahweh's Promise to King David

I Chronicles 17

When King David has sat on his throne he planned to build a Temple for the Ark of the Covenant of Almighty Yahweh to have a place. Prophet Nathan consented with King David.

Meanwhile, during the night Almighty Yahweh spoke to Prophet Nathan for King David disapproving his plan. Almighty Yahweh said, "You are not to build my Temple." Moreover, Almighty Yahweh says, "I took you from being a shepherd and make you the King of my people.... I will make your name great; I will make you famous as the greatest leaders in the world... I now declare that I will cause your descendants to be Kings of Israel just as you are... I will place one of your sons upon your throne... He is the one who shall build me a Temple." Prophet Nathan told King David all that Almighty Yahweh has said.

David, upon learning what Almighty Yahweh has said, humbled himself before God and thank the Almighty for the blessings He had bestowed upon him and his descendants and faithfully obeyed what Almighty Yahweh has commanded.

King David was called a man after Almighty Yahweh's own heart. Why was Almighty Yahweh so pleased with David's life? What made him different from all men during his time and even this time? It was because David's heart's desire was to please Almighty Yahweh above all. Day and night he meditated upon God's words, laws and commandments. He took heed Almighty Yahweh's will for his life, although David was already living in a beautiful palace he never forgot his love and gratitude to Almighty Yahweh. He never neglected his role and responsibility to Almighty Yahweh. In fact, he wanted to bring back all the blessings he received from Yahweh El by building a Temple for the Ark of the Covenant to have a place.

This heart's longing of David pleased Almighty Yahweh so much that he declared David's descendants to always sit on the throne in Israel. However, Almighty Yahweh did not allow King David to build a Temple for Him but David's son.

In like manner, Almighty Yahweh has a purpose for each of our lives. Each one of us is given a task to do. No matter how good our intention may be if it is not in accordance to His will then certainly He will not allow it.

This is a reminder for us to seek guidance and approval first from our Heavenly Father before pursuing our plans. There must be constant communication with our Father in Heaven. Almighty Yahweh knows our thoughts and hearts and nothing is kept secret unto Him. Whatever He says, let us humbly accept and willingly do it.

On the other hand, when Almighty Yahweh makes a promise He certainly not break that promise. He is faithful to fulfill that promise. Thousands of years have passed but still His promise to King David stood firm. Even our Savior and King Yahshua the Messiah was from the lineage of David. Indeed, the words of Almighty Yahweh is powerful and good as done already.

How about you? How can you gain the favor of Almighty Yahweh? Gaining Almighty Yahweh's favor is no easy way. Testing of our faith is always present. But be strong and courageous for Almighty Yahweh's grace will always see us through. Remember, that "the road to righteousness is narrow but wide is the road to wickedness and destruction." So, in our daily walk in life, let us always seek Almighty Yahweh's favor and approval.

Exercises:

I. True or False. Write true if the statement is true and false if otherwise.

- _____ 1. King David was called the man "after Almighty Yahweh's own heart."
- _____ 2. King David planned to build a Temple for Almighty Yahweh.
- _____ 3. Almighty Yahweh approved the desire of King David that is to build a Temple.
- _____ 4. Almighty Yahweh declared to King David that his descendants will always have a place in the throne.
- _____ 5. Prophet Nathan consented on David's plan to build a Temple presuming that it is approved by God.

II. Short – answered essay.

1. What made Almighty Yahweh so pleased with David's life?
2. What were the promises of Almighty Yahweh to King David?
3. As follower of Yahshua the Messiah, how will you gain favor and approval of God?

II CHRONICLES

Introduction:

Second Chronicles continues the story of First Chronicles. The highlight of this book is the reign of King Solomon and the wisdom he asked from Almighty Yahweh. He became the undisputed king, his kingdom was so rich and powerful. Another highlight is how King Solomon built Yahweh's magnificent Temple.

After King Solomon's death, the nation waves back and forth between obeying Yahweh and forgetting Him. This book also records the life and works of the next kings who reigned in Israel.

TS

King Solomon Asks Almighty Yahweh For Wisdom

II Chronicles

King Solomon was the son of the greatest King of Israel, King David. When King David died at an old age, wealthy and honored; his son Solomon reigned in his place. Solomon was the undisputed ruler of Israel, for Yahweh Almighty had made him a powerful monarch. He summoned all the army officers and judges to Gibeon as well as all the political and religious leaders of Israel. He led them up to the hill to the old Tabernacle constructed by Moses. While he was in the wilderness. (There was a later Tabernacle in Jerusalem, built by King David for the ark of God when he removed it from Kiriath-jearim). The bronze altar made by Bezalel (son of Uri, son of Hur) still stood in front of the old Tabernacle, and now Solomon and those he has invited assembled themselves before it, as he sacrificed upon it 1,000 burnt offerings to Yahweh Elohim.

That night Yahweh Elohim appeared to Solomon and told him, "Ask me anything, and I will give it to you."

Solomon replied, "O Yahweh El, you have been so kind and good to my father David, and now you have given me the kingdom - this is all I want! For you have fulfilled your promise to David my father and have made me king over a nation full of people. Now give me wisdom and knowledge to rule them properly, for who is able to govern by himself such a great nation?"

Almighty Yahweh replied, "Because your greatest desire is to help your people, and you haven't asked for personal wealth and honor, and you haven't asked me to destroy your enemies, and you haven't asked for a long life, but for wisdom and knowledge to properly guide my people- yes, I am giving you wisdom and knowledge you asked for! And I am also giving you such riches, wealth, and honor as no other king has ever had before you, and there will never again be so great a king in all the world!"

Solomon left the Tabernacle, returned down the hill and went back to Jerusalem to rule Israel. During Solomon's reign, silver and gold were as plentiful in Jerusalem as rocks on the road! And expensive cedar lumber was used like common sycamore!

King Solomon's fame spread all over the nations because Yahweh Almighty blessed him with great wisdom.

Our God in heaven is omnipotent and holy, the beginning and the ending. He created the universe and human beings with His wisdom and power. No one could ever comprehend the greatness of His works. His great wisdom is far beyond compare.

How does one gain wisdom? The scripture says, "Have reverence in Yahweh Elohim." To believe He is the source of everything, the sustainer of life. To follow obediently His commandments and above all things, to love Him and worship Him alone.

Why is it so important to have wisdom? Because wisdom enables us to know what is right and wrong. It is wisdom that leads us to the path of righteousness and make us live life to its fullness. It teaches us good sense, knowledge and understanding, courage, self-control. With wisdom righteousness and justice will prevail.

All of us have so many talents and spiritual gifts but without wisdom, our time, money, efforts will be wasted. So many people have suffered, in troubles, broken lives and families, nations were poorly managed because they lack the wisdom from our Heavenly Father. They live and lead with their own human understanding and judgment. They don't even ask or seek Yahweh's advice. We cannot go on walking the wrong directions and then complain on the bad consequences. Complain why things did not work out as we hoped. We should all acknowledge that we need wisdom to handle people and everything properly. Like King Solomon, we should not lean on our own understanding.

Our ancestors in the faith like Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, lived a victorious life because they acted wisely. They used the wisdom the heavenly Father blessed them. Kings mentioned in the Holy Bible who have reverence in Yahweh Elohim were victorious against their enemies, they won every battle they fought because they trusted in Him who is the source of wisdom.

What a great blessing for us to have wisdom from Yahweh Elohim. We could live a fair life, peace and harmony. "Wisdom, honor, and a life that pleases Yahweh El far outweigh all the world's wealth and the possessions wealth can bring." My brethren, let us embrace wisdom while she can be found. "Do not envy the success of evil people. Refuse to walk the paths of evil. Remain obedient to Yahweh's words. At the end, those who have reverence in Yahweh El will enjoy a fruitful life. His name will be remembered."

As King Solomon says, "Wisdom begins when you sincerely want to learn. To desire wisdom is to love her, to love her is to keep her laws; to keep her laws is to be certain of immortality, immortality will bring you close to Yahweh. To desire for wisdom can prepare you to rule a kingdom. So then, you

that rule the nations, if you value your thrones and symbols of authority, honor wisdom so that you may rule forever." Let us all value wisdom and we will not be blown away when storms come.

I – Answer the following questions:

1. What is the meaning of wisdom?
2. What made Solomon asked for wisdom?
3. What can we gain by having wisdom?
4. Where does wisdom come from?
5. How did Almighty Yahweh exalt Solomon?
6. Who is Solomon?
7. Why do most leaders nowadays failed to do their role and responsibility?
8. Do you think, the people nowadays still value wisdom?
9. Why is wisdom so important to all of us?
10. How did Almighty Yahweh appear to Solomon?

II - Comprehension:

1. List the three (3) other blessings Almighty Yahweh gave to Solomon.
2. List the four (4) groups of people that King Solomon summoned to go with him to offer burnt offerings to Yahweh Elohim.
3. Give eight (8) differences between a man who value wisdom and a man who ignores wisdom.

III – Assessment:

1. How can we gain wisdom from Almighty Yahweh?
2. In your own words, how did Almighty Yahweh show His great wisdom to us?
3. Almighty Yahweh spoke to Solomon, do you believe He also wants to talk to you? Why?

IV - Application:

1. What is your greatest role now? Do you have hard time coping up with your role? Why?
2. Do you need wisdom to handle things in life? In what way? (List 10 steps)
3. How do you show to the world that God in heaven is your first priority?
4. How will you show your total respect and love to Yahweh El?
5. What is God in heaven telling you right now through this lesson? (Write it in 2 paragraphs).

The Mighty God of King Hezekiah

II Chronicles

King Sennacherib of Assyria invaded Judah and laid siege to the fortified cities, planning to place them under tribute. When it was clear that Sennacherib was intending to attack Jerusalem, Hezekiah summoned his princes and officers for a council of war, and they decided to plug the springs outside the city. They organized a huge work crew to block them, and to cut off the brook running through the fields.

King Hezekiah further strengthened his defenses, manufactured large numbers of weapons and shields. He recruited an army and appointed officers and summoned them to the plains before the city and encouraged them with this address:

“Be strong, be brave, and do not be afraid of the king of Assyria or his mighty army, for there is someone with us who is far greater than he is! He has a great army, but they are all mere men, while we have the Lord our God in heaven to fight our battles for us!” This greatly encouraged them.

Then King Sennacherib sent a message to King Hezekiah and the citizens of Jerusalem by telling them: “Do you think you can survive my siege of Jerusalem? King Hezekiah is trying to persuade you to commit suicide by staying there, to die by famine and thirst, while he promises you saying, ‘The Lord our God in heaven will deliver us from the King of Assyria!’ Don’t you realize that King Hezekiah is the very person who destroyed all the idols, commanded Judah and Jerusalem to use only the one altar at the Temple, and to burn incense upon it alone? Don’t you realize that I and the other kings of Assyria before me have never yet failed to conquer a nation we attacked? The gods of those nations weren’t able to do a thing to save their lands. Name just one time when anyone, anywhere, was able to resist us successfully. What makes you think your God can do any better? Don’t let Hezekiah fool you! Don’t believe him. I say it again - no god of any nation has ever yet been able to rescue his people from me or my ancestors; how much less your God?” Another letter of King Sennacherib was read scorning the Lord God of Israel. “The gods of all the other nations failed to save their people from my hand, and the God of Hezekiah will fail, too!”

The messengers who brought the letters shouted threats in the Jewish language to the people gathered on the walls of the city, trying to frighten and

dishearten them. These messengers talked about the God of Jerusalem just as though he were one of the heathen gods—a handmade idol.

Then King Hezekiah and Isaiah the prophet cried out in prayer to God in heaven and Yahweh Almighty sent an angel who destroyed one hundred eighty five thousand (185,000) Assyrian army with all its officers and generals! So Sennacherib returned home in deep shame to his own land. And when he arrived at the temple of his god, some of his own sons killed him there. That is how Yahweh Elohim saved Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem who trusted Him and waited for His help.

From then on King Hezekiah became immensely respected among the surrounding nations, and many gifts for Yahweh El arrived at Jerusalem, and valuable gifts for King Hezekiah, too.

The greatness of Almighty Yahweh is beyond discovery. His power is absolute, mere man is nothing compared to Him. To Him, “The nations are like drops of water.” Yet, in spite of His greatness, He still loves us so much. He knows when to deliver the godly man against his enemies. He finds pleasure in protecting the people who put their trust in Him alone.

Journeying in this kind of world is not easy especially for Yahweh’s children. Satan kept trying to motivate evil people to destroy, to dishearten, to discourage Yahweh’s children by attacking them in so many ways. He works to hinder the blessing of Almighty Yahweh for his children, because he wants to take away the joy, the happiness, the peace that belong to them. Satan wants to hurt people especially those in the side of truth. Dear brethren in the faith, our victory does not depend on how good we are, how strong and mighty we are. Our victory and security comes from Yahweh El through His Son Yahshua the Messiah. If we believe and do not doubt that our Father in heaven will deliver us against our enemies, Yahweh El can work mighty things which thou knowest not. Remember our Father in heaven and Savior work in so many wonderful ways. He will make a way for us because with Him nothing is impossible. When Yahweh our Father acts, our enemies will know the shame of defeat.

Our confidence and trust in Yahweh Elohim will be tested how deep and strong it is when somebody rejects us, mock us....In times like this let us fix our eyes in Yahweh El and Yahshua the Messiah alone. We should all be dependent on Him. Be like King Hezekiah, when his enemies challenged and mocked him, he was not shaken, nor surrendered to his enemies, instead he prayed to his mighty God pleading to save them, and encouraged his people that their God is so mighty and powerful, the only God that is alive and will

deliver them against their enemies. King Hezekiah didn't rely on his capabilities, army or strength. He rather acknowledged the greatness of God in heaven and put his trust in Him alone. Because of his response toward the situation, Yahweh Elohim answered his prayers, His great favor was upon them. He even sent holy angels to kill the enemies of King Hezekiah. Yahweh El gave great victory to His people.

Blessed and happy is the man who put his trust in Yahweh alone. Whatever circumstances he is in, he will be unmoved, because he knows that the God he worships will never fail to protect him. The eyes of Almighty Yahweh are upon him day and night. He will even order his holy angels to protect His beloved children for He says, "Because he loves me, I will rescue him, I will make him great because he trusts in my name. But He will destroy the wicked by their own plans. He will cut them off."

The Holy Bible tells us how mighty, how glorious our God is. He is alive and His greatness is clearly seen. For all of us who trust Yahweh Elohim, remember His goodness, the miracles He did to our ancestors in the faith. Let us learn from their lives. Let us live by faith not by sight. Never forget to teach or tell our coming generations the mighty miracles Yahweh Elohim did to our ancestors and to us, so that they too will live a life that pleases the Lord Almighty.

When we face troubles or battles, let us spend more time with the Lord; praying and meditating upon His words. He will make us hear what He wants us to do. Remember, prayers and praises can change things.

I – Answer the following questions:

1. Describe the God of King Hezekiah?
2. What is the difference between King Hezekiah and King Sennacherib?
3. What was the reaction or response of King Hezekiah when he received the message of King Sennacherib?
4. Who was the prophet that cried out in prayer to Yahweh Elohim together with King Hezekiah?
5. Why was King Hezekiah victorious against his enemies?
6. How did Almighty Yahweh save His people?

7. What is the biggest role of a prophet?
8. What is the biggest role of a king?
9. During the crucial times of King Hezekiah, he did not panic. Why?
10. What is the toughest decision King Hezekiah made?

II - Assessment:

1. For you, how will you show your strong faith in God Almighty?
2. How is your personal relationship with God in heaven right now?
3. Have you been to tough decision? What did you do? Are you happy of the outcome and why?
4. Have you experienced someone discouraging you, putting you down or mocking you? How did you feel and what was your positive response toward the situation?
5. In all your troubles who is always there for you? How did he defend you?
6. Upon reading this story, what is the great impact to you?
7. Evaluate yourself. How can you show to the people your strong leadership ability? (List 10 steps or actions you will do).

EZRA

Introduction:

Ezra, according to the record, is an expert in the Law of the Almighty Father Yahweh, who helped the people recognize their religious and social life in order to safeguard the spiritual heritage of Israel. "Ezra devoted his life to studying the Law of the LORD, to practicing it, and to teaching all its laws and regulations to the people of Israel."

The book of Ezra and of Nehemiah are companions. It is a sequel to Chronicles. While Ezra gave an account of the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon and the rebuilding of the Temple, Nehemiah's book is about the rebuilding of Jerusalem, and the efforts to bring religious reforms to the people.

TS

Almighty Yahweh's Faithfulness

Ezra

During the time of Prophet Jeremiah, the time when the Babylonians attacked the Jews, defeated them and brought them captives to Babylon, the Almighty made a promise to Jeremiah that one day, He would lead His people back home.

Indeed, in the first year that Emperor Cyrus became emperor of Persia and Babylonia, the Almighty caused him to issue a command and encouraged the Jews to return to Jerusalem in Judah, and to rebuild the Temple of Yahweh El who is to be worshiped forever and ever.

Emperor Cyrus gladly provided the Jews everything that they needed in going back home, especially the things that they needed in rebuilding the Temple. He also gave them back the bowls and cups that King Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the Temple in Jerusalem.

The Emperor showed the Jews great favor, and surely, not as a coincidence or accident, but because Yahweh El is faithful to His promise. We may not know when but He will certainly fulfill what He had promised to you and me. All that He had said is as good as done already.

Questions for Exercise:

- I. Are you faithful to your promise? Remember, we, as children of the Almighty should be heirs of our Father's virtues.
- II. True or False
 1. _____ Almighty Yahweh did not make a promise but the Jews wanted to go back home.
 2. _____ The kindness that the Emperor showed to the Jews was accidental.
 3. _____ Almighty Yahweh touched the Emperor and caused him to issue a command for the Jews to go home.
 4. _____ Almighty Yahweh is holy and faithful to His words and promises.
 5. _____ Almighty Yahweh made the Jews captives in Babylon because of their disobedience and sin.

Knowing Our Priority

Ezra

There are many good things that we want to do and we can do everyday like cooking, sewing, gardening, etc.; but if we want to really succeed in life, we must know our priority and do first the things that need to be done first so that we would be more productive and more useful to the people around us, even to the whole world.

Some people lack self-discipline and so disorganized in their activities that they waste more time. They always seem to be very busy but have accomplished nothing. But Yahshua the Messiah said: "Seek ye first the kingdom of Yahweh and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). "These things" are all the good things that we need in life such as good health, peace, joy, financial and material things.

Ezra was an example of people who seek the Father first, His kingdom, and His righteousness. He first led the people to pray to the Father in heaven for guidance and when they arrived in their homeland, he saw to it that worship of the Father in heaven began again as soon as possible.

Do you want to have good things in life? Good health, strength, peace, love, joy, success in studies, success in works? Then, let us go to Him who is the Source of life and of all good things, through faith in His Son Yahshua the Messiah, and He will give us the Holy Spirit to teach us, guide us, and help us so that our lives will be fruitful and meaningful.

Questions for Exercise:

1. What is your priority today?
2. What do you plan to achieve four or five years from now?
3. Are you capable and ready to lead others to do the best things to be done, like Ezra?
4. Are you excited to seek the Father first....so that you will have all the good things that you need?
5. Do you need to correct and discipline yourself, and reorganize your activities? If so, start right now, do not delay.

Handling Oppression & Hardship

Ezra

The scripture says that “we belong to God even though the whole world is under the rule of the Evil One” (I John 5:19). It is not surprising therefore that even if we do what is good and right, there are opposition and hardship because the world that we have right now is “under the rule of the Evil One.”

Recorded fact says, the prophets were strongly opposed, put to shame, and threatened; the apostles were persecuted and beaten; most of them were imprisoned, tortured, burned, and killed. Even Yahshua the Messiah Himself was arrested and sentenced to death for helping the people and for telling the truth that He is the Son of God and the Savior of the world. But praise be to the Almighty Father Yahweh, none of them gave up doing what they believed was good and right; none of them gave up doing the will of the Father in heaven. In fact, the scripture also tells us that Yahshua the Messiah thought nothing of the disgrace of dying on the cross but fixed His eyes and hope on the everlasting and glorious rewards.

When the Jews were back in their land from captivity and started rebuilding the Temple led by Zerubbabel and Joshua, some people tried to discourage and frighten them, even went to the extent of giving bribe to some government officials to work against them. Day by day, year after year, the enemies persistently worked against them. But the harder the enemies opposed them, the more and the better they do their works by the grace of the Almighty Father because they believed that they were doing the Father’s will, and trusted that He would make a way for them until they completely succeeded. Indeed, they were victorious and successful!

Have you been doing something good and was annoyingly opposed? If so, do not be surprised nor discouraged. Next time, the harder the enemies work against you, the more and the better you should do until you become a winner and the enemies are put to shame and silenced forever.

When you are opposed and in hardship, you are naturally down and perhaps discouraged, but you need not be. Put on the spiritual armor such as the armor of faith and prayer,.... And rise, fight the good fight by persistently doing what is good and right.

In times like this, you need most the help of the Holy Spirit who is our Comforter and Helper. Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you with His fruit and gifts and continue the good fight. "If God is for us, who can be against us?" The world may be against us but remember Yahshua the Messiah has overcome the world.

Question for Exercise:

1. Write your experience concerning opposition and hardship.

Temple Dedication

Ezra

What is dedication? The dictionary defines dedication as an act or rite of dedicating to a divine being or to a sacred use. A devoting or setting aside for a particular purpose.

When the Jews completed the rebuilding of the Temple, they dedicated it to the heavenly Father Yahweh. In other words, they gathered together for worship and made a formal declaration that the Temple belongs to Yahweh El for sacred purpose or activities, and for His glory.

As they assembled for dedication, they all sang praises to the Father Almighty, offered prayers of thanksgiving, freewill or special offerings, and presented to Him their petitions as well. They also gave the necessary offering, and the goats for sin offering, etc.

Dedication is a happy and joyful occasion. Everybody rejoices because of the Father's blessing, praising and thanking Him, gladly give to Him the offerings, and joyfully eat with the brethren.

Have you experienced this wonderful rite of dedication? Have you dedicated yourself and your family (if you are the head of the family) to our Father in heaven?

Think and pray about this thing!

Gifts for the Temple

Ezra

Giving of gifts is part of a meaningful and beautiful life. Gift-giving with a pure motive pleases our Father in heaven. It also strengthens the relationship of the giver and the recipient. It makes life both to the giver and the recipient more colorful and wonderful.

Almighty Yahweh is our number one example in gift-giving. He is the greatest giver! He created us and gave us life, He made the earth and every good thing therein for us to dwell and enjoy. Above all, He gave us His only begotten Son-Yahshua the Messiah for our salvation, abundant, and eternal life. He also gave us the Holy Spirit as a gift for our faith in His Son, to teach us, comfort us and help us. He never withheld any good thing from us but gave us all that we need like the sunshine, fresh air, rain, river, spring, etc. Yahshua the Messiah on the other hand, gave Himself for us and so He became our Savior and our King. He gave Himself for us so that in Him and through Him we would have power and authority to take dominion over every thing in earth, and enjoy eternal life with Him.

The Father through the Son and the Holy Spirit has given to us everything that we need, what shall we give to Him? The Israelites together with the Persian Emperor, his advisers and officials gladly gave the following items as their gifts for the Temple.

<u>Items</u>	<u>Weights</u>
• Silver	= 25 tons
• 100 silver utensils	= 150 pounds
• Gold	= 7,500 pounds
• 20 gold bowls	= 270 ounces
• 2 fine bronze bowls	= -

Then Ezra said to the priest: "These gifts brought to Almighty Yahweh as freewill offerings are sacred just as you are sacred to the LORD, take charge of them."

Do you enjoy giving? Do you make giving to the Father in heaven and to the brethren a part of your daily life? Remember the scripture teaches us, "Love Yahweh with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your strength. Love your neighbor as you love yourself"(Matthew 22: 37 & 39).

Fortunately, we cannot love without giving. We can give without loving but we cannot love without giving. Give your best to the Master and Father in heaven!

Questions to Ponder:

1. When was the last time you've given your special offering to our Father and Savior?
2. When was the last time you've given to someone in need something that is precious to you?
3. How did you feel afterwards?
4. Have you experienced receiving a gift which you long wanted to have? If you did, have you ever thought that the Lord gave it to you through somebody?
5. If someone gives you a gift today, what would that be? Why?

NEHEMIAH

Introduction:

The book of Nehemiah gives an account of the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem. It further records the efforts and activities of Nehemiah as Governor of Judah.

TS

Make A Difference

Nehemiah

Nehemiah son of Hacaliah a Jew had been a captive in Babylon for many years. However, he had made his way to a top position in the Persian Empire as the king's cupbearer, and a trusted adviser. This was a position in which the king had to have great confidence.

Given Nehemiah's position and standing, and by having enjoyed security and prestige in the king's court, his heart was elsewhere in Jerusalem his hometown. Knowing from Hanani his friend who just came from Judah, that the Jewish remnant in Jerusalem was in great trouble and dismay and the wall of Jerusalem broken down, Nehemiah was so hurt and devastated. He wept, and mourned for what had happened, and fasted for days and prayed before Almighty Yahweh for forgiveness of sin for all the Israelite people, for disobeying Almighty Yahweh's commands, decrees and laws.

Nehemiah also pled for Almighty Yahweh's mercy and kindness by saying, "Remember the instruction you gave your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations, but if you return to me and obey my commands, then even if your exiled people are at the farthest horizon, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place I have chosen as a dwelling for my Name'" (Nehemiah 1: 8).

Nehemiah wanted to make a difference, he asked Almighty Yahweh to grant him favor that will enable him to go back home and help his people. But, Nehemiah knew that he needed all the help and support he could get, he knew that the task was too big for him to handle. He was going to need the king's support and most especially the prayers of his people to strengthen his spirit to move on towards the accomplishment of his goal.

Nehemiah pled to Almighty Yahweh by saying, "O LORD, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant and to the prayers of your servants who delight in revering your name. Give your servant success today by granting him favor in the presence of this man" (Nehemiah 1: 11).

When the time came for Nehemiah to attend to his work, the king noticed something different and asked, "Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill?" Nehemiah responded that this is nothing but sadness of heart, my hometown Jerusalem is in great peril. Then the king did a remarkable thing. The king asked, "What is it you want?" Nehemiah prayed to the GOD of heaven, and he answered the king, "If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my

fathers are buried so that I can rebuild it" (Nehemiah 2: 5). The king granted Nehemiah's request. He even provided him what he needed for the journey and for the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem and its walls.

Nehemiah is no ordinary person, his vision to make a difference for his people and for Almighty Yahweh's glory made him more than a leader, and a planner. His dependence to Almighty Yahweh's great power made him successful and victorious in everything he did in spite of all the opposition and troubles inflicted by other people whose interest in life was to see Nehemiah fail.

Nehemiah's frequent prayers for guidance, help, and approval from Almighty Yahweh led him to victory. His deep devotion to Almighty Yahweh's laws and commands made him superior over his enemies and most favored in the eyes of Almighty Yahweh. Nehemiah recognized that prayers and supplication to Almighty Yahweh help build the foundation of his plans and actions, that frequent prayer is helping him shape his future plans, and that frequency in prayers keeps him in full submission to Almighty Yahweh's power and authority, acknowledging that by his own power and might he can't do anything, but by Almighty Yahweh's grace and mercy he can do all things.

"The prayer of the upright pleases the LORD our GOD" (Proverbs 15: 8).

"Whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours" (Mark 11: 24).

Questions for Exercise:

1. Who is the father of Nehemiah?
2. What are the two top positions that Nehemiah handled?
3. In what country was Nehemiah together with other Jews been captive?
4. Who is the friend of Nehemiah?
5. Where is the hometown of Nehemiah?
6. In what city was the father of Nehemiah buried?
7. To whom did Nehemiah always ask for help, advice, approval and guidance? Why?
8. What is the significance of prayer?
9. How did Almighty Yahweh respond to Nehemiah's prayers?
10. Do you believe in the power of prayer?

ESTHER

Introduction:

This book is the last of the historical books. The story centers around a Jewish heroine named Esther, who by her courage and devotion to her people saved them from being exterminated by their enemies.

TS

A Woman's Act of Courage

Esther

There was a Jewish woman in Persia, whose name was Hadassah, also known as Esther, a woman of lovely form and features, who later became the new chosen Queen for Xerxes, King of Persia.

Through her position and great love for her people Queen Esther saved them from being exterminated. Queen Esther's courage and determination in the midst of crises made her great and famous throughout history that up to now her deeds have inspired many people. Queens during the time of Esther in Persia, was just an ordinary powerless life partner to the king, who only comes to the king's presence when called to perform her duties.

Queen Esther's acts of courage came to light, when a man named Haman, a royal official whose seat of honor is higher than that of all the other nobles, and was given a command by the king that all royal officials at the king's gate would bow down and paid him honor. An official named Mordecai, Queen Esther's cousin, who had taken Esther as his own daughter after her parents died, would not bow down or pay him honor.

This very incident made Haman so furious and enraged, having learned who Mordecai and his people were, he scorned the idea of killing only Mordecai. Instead he looked for a way to destroy all of them, the Jews throughout the whole Kingdom of Xerxes. So, Haman persuaded the king to issue a decree to destroy all those whose customs are different from the rest of the people, and do not obey the king's law.

This proposal pleased the king so much, so an order through Haman was dispatched to destroy, kill and annihilate all the Jews-young and old, women and little children a single day. When Mordecai learned about this, he asked Esther to help all the Jews. He urged Esther to go into the king's presence to beg for mercy and plead with him for her people.

The existing law was, anyone man or woman who approached the king in the inner court without being summoned will be put to death. The only exception is when the king extends the gold scepter to spare the person's life. So, Queen Esther sent a reply to Mordecai, "Go gather together all the Jews in Susa and fast for me for three days. I will do the same together with my servants. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish."

When the hour has come for the Queen to approach the king and present her case, she courageously did. When the king saw her standing in the court, he was pleased with her and spare her life. Then the king asked, "What is it, Queen Esther? What is your request? Even up to half the kingdom, it will be given you." "If it pleases the king," replied Esther "May the king together with Haman, come to a banquet I have prepared for him".

On the 2nd day of Queen Esther's banquet for the King and Haman, she finally presented her petition. Queen Esther pled by saying: "If I have found favor with you, O king, and if it pleases your majesty, grant me my life and spare my people." King Xerxes asked, "Who is the man who has demanded such a thing?" Queen Esther replied, "The adversary and enemy is this vile Haman." King Xerxes in fury had Haman hanged on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai.

Queen Esther again pled with the king to put an end to the evil plan of Haman by writing an order overruling the proclamation to destroy the Jews. The king granted her request by granting the Jews in every city the right to assemble and protect themselves.

Queen Esther was in the right place at the right time, and the best thing is that she acted on what Almighty Yahweh expected of her, to save His people. By Almighty Yahweh's grace Queen Esther saved the Jews from total annihilation. The event showed that Queen Esther was not afraid to lose her own life for the sake of Almighty Yahweh's will.

Like Queen Esther, we should learn to accept our portion of responsibility no matter how small or big it may be, since there is no such task as small or big in the eyes of our Father and King. All that matters to Him is our devotion to Him and our commitment to the task assigned to us. Often, we ask so many questions and make lots of excuses. But we should rather learn to trust and obey. Be keen to listen to His instruction and obey so that the Almighty can move and work freely through us miraculously.

In this case, we are more than a hero because we are not doing it just for ourselves, but we are doing it all for Almighty Yahweh's glory.

Questions for Exercise:

1. What did Queen Esther do that made her so famous in history?

2. Who is one with Esther all throughout, who helped her in fulfilling Almighty Yahweh's plans and purposes in her life?
3. What is the name of the man who tried to annihilate all the Jews?
4. What is the name of the country where Esther was crowned as queen?
5. What did the Jews in Susa do to help Esther?
6. In times of trouble what is the best thing to do? Why?
7. In your position right now how can you bring glory and honor to our heavenly Father?

Be Prepared for God's Purpose

Esther

Queen Esther's success in defending the Jews throughout the kingdom of Xerxes against Haman's evil plan was made possible through the cooperation of Mordecai and the Jews who fasted and prayed for her success, in saving her people, the Jews.

After several days of fasting and pleading for Almighty Yahweh's intervention, finally the loving and merciful Elohim showed them mercy and granted Queen Esther's heartfelt desire and petition to save her people from total annihilation and destruction initiated by Haman. History tells us that always, Almighty Yahweh moved and worked through man to represent His being here on earth, and He often does things in mysterious ways; ways not even known to man. He does all things as He sees pleasing to Him.

At this very instance, Almighty Yahweh sees Esther as the best candidate for the task, but this could only be done if Queen Esther would fully submit herself to the perfect will of Almighty Yahweh. At the very beginning, it is of no coincidence that Esther became the Queen of Persia and Media which is very unlikely for a Jew to become one in a foreign land, but it all happened with a purpose and that purpose has presented itself at Haman's expense.

Now the big question is, did Queen Esther make herself ready for her assigned task at the appointed time? Second, would she allow herself to be used for that purpose and for Almighty Yahweh's glory? Praise and glory be to the Almighty, His candidate Queen Esther successfully did her part of saving the lives of many Jews, and to show to the world how great and powerful is the GOD in whom they put their trust.

Almighty Yahweh is in constant search for people like Queen Esther whose heart's desire is to do Almighty Yahweh's will, and to be of great service to His people. A man who is willing to give up everything, even willing to give up his own life for the accomplishment of Almighty Yahweh's plans and purposes. A man who is not afraid to lose everything for Almighty Yahweh's glory and most of all, a man whose heart's desire is to constantly obey Almighty Yahweh's commands and to do His Will.

Questions for Exercise:

1. Does a person need to be a king or queen first in order for God to use him/her?
2. Do you think you can do what Esther did for her people the Jews?

Victors through Faith in the Almighty

Esther

What hinders man to become an achiever, is man himself. Man has the tendency to dwell on his weakness and often, doubt on his GOD-given skills and abilities to achieve something of value and importance.

Many of us entangled ourselves with negative thoughts and allowed it to control our judgments and decisions in life, instead of nurturing the brilliant ideas Almighty Yahweh has instilled in our hearts and minds, and develop those ideas for Almighty Yahweh's glory. In this world we live in, various things can occur beyond our expectations. Possibilities for success, as well as for failures are always on the line, and our success and failures mostly depend on the choices we make.

Sadly, man does not always have the right choice, and even if he does, it might not always work as he expected. But the good news is, a man of GOD; a man who has reverence for Almighty Yahweh knows whom to put his trust in times of need. He is not worried or afraid of receiving bad news, his faith is strong and it is well anchored in Yahshua the Messiah our Savior and King.

When doubts and fears arise as they always do, it is best to seek for a good man's advice and wise counsel. Wise counsel from great men and women who in life had been through lots of struggles but came out strong and victorious.

In times like this, times when problems, doubts, and fears seem to overpower the good, fill yourself with all the inspiring life stories of the victors of the faith and engross yourself with the powerful words of our Father and Savior. Let us take into account what Queen Esther did to surpass the dilemma she was in and her people the Jews. First of all, she was not alone in her struggle, she was in constant contact with her relative Mordecai, who served as her counselor and guide together with all the Jews who fasted and prayed for her victory.

Prayer support by GOD-fearing people distinguished the results of the battle fought by Almighty Yahweh's people. These prayers could strike the enemy in both sides whether spiritual or physical, it paves the way towards victory. As the Holy Scripture says, "The fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16).

It is very advantageous to have good people back you up especially in prayers, and to be surrounded by GOD-fearing, wise and intelligent people who are ever willing to share their GOD-given gifts and talents even their own life for the fulfillment of Almighty Yahweh's plans and purpose for your life.

As much as possible, keep the company of such people in this ever troubling world. Like Queen Esther take time to listen to their advices, and like her also make it your priority to listen and obey Almighty Yahweh's commands and instruction, and He will never fail you. He cannot allow His children to fail because Almighty Yahweh wants you and me to become great achievers and victors through faith.

Never hesitate to do your part in the building of Almighty Yahweh's Kingdom here on earth. Do not be too concerned about what others will say about you, just learn to trust and obey and our Father and Savior will take care of the rest for you.

Take to heart that it is not by your own effort and strength that you become what you are, but because of Almighty Yahweh's power working in you and through you.

Questions for Exercise: True or False

1. _____ Almighty Yahweh wants you to become great achievers and victors.
2. _____ When doubts and fears arise as they always do, it is best to seek for a good man's advice and wise counsel.
3. _____ The fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.
4. _____ Man has the tendency to dwell on his weakness and often, doubt on his GOD-given skills and abilities.
5. _____ Queen Esther was all alone in her struggle.
6. _____ A man who has reverence for Almighty Yahweh knows whom to put his trust in times of need.
7. _____ Our success and failures in life mostly depend on the choices we make.
8. _____ Believers of God the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit do not experience doubts and fears.
9. _____ To overcome doubts and fears, we must ignore them.
10. _____ Fears and doubts are the opposite of faith.

JOB

Introduction:

The book of Job is the first of the poetical books, and it deals with the problem of suffering. Job loses all his children and property and is afflicted with a repulsive disease.

God allows satan to afflict Job, a devout and prosperous Jew in order to test his faith. God also reprimands Job's friends for failing to understand his suffering. Only Job had sensed that God is greater than traditional religion had depicted Him.

Job's friends assumed that since God rewards good and punished evil, the sufferings of Job can only mean that he has sinned. But Job did not lose his faith in God, and repented of the wild and angry words he had used. God restored Job by blessing him with even greater prosperity than before and, beautiful children.

The Upright Who Suffers

Job

Pain and suffering is part of life and no one is exempted 'for all have sinned', and sin is the cause of life's sufferings. When troubles come and desperation sinks in, most people's reaction is to question, and the most apparent question is: Why of all people, me? When the pain gets severely intense, people's tendency is to seek for ways to escape from reality and to blame others for what had happened. The worst of all, is when ignorant people put the blame on GOD.

Man didn't realize that pain and suffering is mostly a reflection of his choices in life. There is a man in the Holy Bible named Job, who I believed suffered in life more than anyone. For me, he suffered more than anyone else because Job did not understand what causes his pain, and most of all, he did not deserve it.

Before the tragedy, Job was highly regarded as a very wealthy man. A man with a reputation of being blameless and upright; one who fears God and shuns evil (see Job 2: 3). In a blink of an eye, everything in Job's life turned around. First, raiders stole his belongings and slaughter his servants. Fire from the sky burned up his sheep, and mighty wind destroyed his house and killed his sons and daughters.

Finally, Job came down with a horrible, painful disease. Due to the enormous pain they have suffered Job's wife burst out and said: "Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse GOD and die!." Job replied and said "You are talking like a foolish woman shall we accept good from GOD and not trouble?" (see Job 2: 9-10).

Job steadfastly refused to curse GOD, but he did curse the day he was born. "May the day of my birth perish, and the night it was said, 'A boy is born!' That day may it turn to darkness; may GOD above not care about it, may no light shine upon it, may darkness and deep shadow claim it once more." (see Job 3: 3-4).

I could not imagine how deeply troubled Job was at that instance, and how painful was pain for him that he uttered those words of despair. Job continued by saying: "Oh, that I might have my request, that GOD would grant what I hope for, that GOD would be willing to crush me, to let loose His hand and cut me off!"

Many people did not know that everything that took stage here on earth has a significant connection to what took stage in the spiritual realm. The ongoing war between good and evil in the spiritual realm closely affects the lives of the people here in earth, and the deciding point is man's decision and actions in life. Man is always in a dilemma whether to choose good or evil. Two forces are always on the pull and man is caught in between and our choice do really matters. This spiritual truth is strongly confirmed by Yahshua the Messiah who said: "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, whatsoever ye shall loose in earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Let us be fully aware that satan is very tricky and full of lies and deception, and remember that the scripture says: "The way to destruction is wide, but narrow is the way to eternal life." Satan exerts all his might to deceive everyone, most especially the children of Almighty Yahweh. Satan would even challenge Almighty Yahweh to agree with him to inflict pain to Almighty Yahweh's people, to test them whether they would still be faithful to Almighty Yahweh in spite of all that happens.

Job's life serves as a proof to this encounter, and satan continues doing like what he did to Job and try to get what he wants. But we cannot and we should not allow the enemy to triumph over us. And that is only possible if we remain faithful and true to Almighty Yahweh through His Son Yahshua the Messiah and the Holy Spirit, even if it means to sacrifice our own lives for His glory.

Let the promise of hope from Almighty Yahweh fuel our passion to be faithful and firm even up to the end of times. Let us be strong and determined to do the will of Almighty Yahweh with the courage that even if we suffer and die, we will suffer and die serving our Father and King, like our forefathers in the faith.

Like Job, we may feel weary and weak for a time, but never lose hope for great is our reward in heaven. Let the words of the psalmist remind us always to "Give thanks to Almighty Yahweh in everything, in everything give thanks to Him."

Questions for Exercise:

True or False

- _____ 1. Job is blameless in the sight of Almighty Yahweh.
- _____ 2. In a blink of an eye everything Job owns was gone like a wind.
- _____ 3. Job's wife is very supportive to him.
- _____ 4. Job was never attack by horrible disease.
- _____ 5. Job remains faithful and true to Almighty Yahweh in spite of everything.
- _____ 6. Job cursed the day he was born.
- _____ 7. Job blames God for everything that happened in his life.
- _____ 8. Satan attacked Job by destroying everything he owns, even his own body.
- _____ 9. Satan is very tricky and full of lies and deception
- _____ 10. Job felt weary and weak for a time, but never lost hope in Almighty Yahweh's saving power and grace.

Hope

Job 19: 25

Hope is one of the most important elements in life that keeps us living. Hope drives our passion to live longer in spite of all the hardships and troubles we encounter, as we strive to survive in this ever changing world, a world full of pain.

A ray of hope lifts up a worry heart, and ignites our passion to move forward regardless of all the obstacles along the way. A glint of hope brings joy and inspiration for man to continue on hoping even if there is not enough reason for hoping, and a shared hope lightens up a troubled heart.

Hope may not sound convincing as the other elements that sustain life, but I believe every inch of hope there lies a powerful force that drives man to perform beyond his expectation, and conquers pressures in life beyond imagination.

Job's responses to pain and suffering projects an imagery of what real hope is, and what hope can do to a man in deep agony. Job, in spite of his very discouraging condition, expresses astonishing words that deliver hope beyond compare. He declared: "I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end He will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see Him with my own eyes I, and not another."

Job in one way or another declares that even if he loses everything including his own life, it brings him no worry or fear because he believes in what he hoped for. He believes that there's a better and wondrous life ahead of him. A glorious life in union with Almighty Yahweh, the creator of heaven and earth and all that is in it.

Here is a beautiful saying which convincingly illustrates the importance of hope.

"A man may live for 40 days without food.

A man may live for 7 days without water.

A man may live for 5 minutes without an air.

But a man without hope may only last for a second."

Take good courage my brothers and sisters in the faith, live as Almighty Yahweh called you, never allow hardships and troubles in life to destroy Almighty Yahweh's great plans and purposes in your life. Rather take it as part of your sacrifice for Almighty Yahweh's glory. Prophet Jeremiah wrote: "For I know the plans I have for you", declares the LORD, "Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Never lose hope, instead let Job's life be our inspiration to continue hoping for a beautiful and better life ahead in the kingdom of Almighty Yahweh, even if the world and everything in it tears and crushes you apart. As the Psalmist said in Psalm 62: 5 & 6, "Find rest, O my soul, in GOD alone; my hope comes from Him. He alone is my rock and my salvation; He is my fortress, I will not be shaken."

My brothers and sisters in the faith, let us lay our hope in our Heavenly Father Yahweh, through His Son Yahshua the Messiah and the Holy Spirit who never falter nor fail with His promises to us His people.

Questions for Exercise:

1. In your own words what do you mean by hope?
2. How can you say that, that man is full of hope?
3. How did Job show his total devotion and hope in Almighty Yahweh?
4. Describe briefly the character of Job?
5. Describe a man without hope?
6. Have you ever been in a very desperate situation like Job's? Explain.
7. How can you give hope to others who need hope in order to survive?
8. What makes life meaningful and wonderful?

Steadfast Love and Devotion

Job

Great pain transform to great victory! For me, this powerful line best describes Job's extraordinary life experience.

In the first few chapters of Job's life, he was richly blessed, blessed beyond measure because of his unwavering faith and constant obedience to Almighty Yahweh's law and commands. In the second part Job was intentionally afflicted by Satan with troubles and pain to test his faith, and hoping he would curse GOD in the end and die. Satan was so disappointed with Job, Job never give up to Satan's wish. There were times that he felt so weak and vulnerable but his faith in the living Elohim whom he served was strong. Despite, He trusted that Almighty Yahweh will never leave him nor forsake him. Indeed, by Almighty Yahweh's love and grace Job came out victorious and more blessed than the previous.

Job's experience of pain and anguish is not so rare, it happens so often to many faithful believers and followers of Yahshua the Messiah. It only differs on the degree of pain and how a person handles the situation, and how the people around support that person to ease the pain and lightens his burdens. Be on your guard! Satan is always on the look seeking whom he may devour, and his favorite targets are Almighty Yahweh's chosen people.

Job's stability under pressure impacts millions of faithful believers and followers of Yahshua the Messiah. It serves as inspiration that no matter how hard life might be, in Yahshua the Messiah we will come up victorious like Job. As long as we are willing to give up everything for that greater and more glorious life in the kingdom of Almighty Yahweh, we will be victorious for the scripture says: "He who loses his life for my sake will have it, but he who tries to save his life will lose it."

Job said, "But he knows the way that I take, when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold." Let us eagerly aspire for the gold not for the many dirt. My brothers and sisters in the faith, be an inspiration and a channel of blessings to many, especially to the fellow believers and followers of Yahshua the Messiah in the community.

Do not hesitate to extend a helping hand regardless of his standing in life. Don't be jealous but be a blessing for our Father's glory. Remember that Yahshua the Messiah had suffered for our salvation and redemption, and it is just right and fitting to make sacrifices for others. When we called out for help,

He showed mercy to us and helped us. In the same way be kind to others and gladly help, remembering that fervent charity covers a multitude of sin (see I Peter 4: 8).

Job's friends kept on pushing the notion that Job was at fault and was being punished for some sins, but let us take note that in the end Almighty Yahweh declared, "Job was upright and without sin." While it is true that Almighty Yahweh never leaves the guilty unpunished, let us not judge anyone hastily and wrongly especially when one is in pain.

Harsh and unkind words will only worsen the condition and increase the pain. Most of all, if we do so like Job's friends we would be sinning against our brother and against Almighty Yahweh. "For the LORD watches over the righteous and listens to their cries; but he opposes those who do evil" (Psalm 34: 15-16).

Be therefore a blessing rather than a burden for you never know exactly what will happen in the future. Love Almighty Yahweh with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength, and love your neighbor as you love yourself (see Matthew 22: 37 & 39).

Questions for Exercise: True or False

- _____ 1. Job has unwavering faith and constantly obey Almighty Yahweh's law and commands.
- _____ 2. Satan afflicted job with troubles and pains to test his faith.
- _____ 3. Job never curse God.
- _____ 4. Satan was so happy with Job's reactions.
- _____ 5. Job's friends were very supportive to him.
- _____ 6. Satan was victorious over the life of Job.
- _____ 7. Almighty Yahweh blessed Job more than the first time.
- _____ 8. Job Acknowledged the supremacy of God the Father in heaven.
- _____ 9. Almighty Yahweh declared Job as an upright man.
- _____ 10. Job gave-up to satan's demand.

Job's Declaration of Faith

Job

Job possessed stability and inner strength beyond measure; his faith was strong and he puts his trust in Almighty Yahweh, the giver and sustainer of life. His faith was so strong that even the most unimaginable condition in his life, didn't cause him to abandon his faith that the Elohim in whom he puts his trust is all-powerful and is able to save those who trust Him. That He will save him from agony and pain, and is out to bless him with good things.

Job's show of faith and trust to Almighty Yahweh was highly characterized during his conversation with his friends who came to visit and console him. However to Job, surprisingly, their visit was more of a burden instead of a comfort. His friends kept on insisting the notion that sin was the main factor of his suffering and that no pain could come to a person who suffers as he did, if not because of sin.

Deep inside Job's heart and mind he knew that sin was not the cause, because he never failed to perform his duty to compensate his wrong and for Almighty Yahweh to show compassion and mercy to him and his family. So Job in turned focused on how to glorify and magnify Almighty Yahweh out of his present condition that whether he would live or die at an instant he would live and die for Almighty Yahweh's glory.

Job's affirmation of faith in the midst of crisis inspired millions of believers and followers of Yahshua the Messiah who, in one way or another suffered and in pain because of their faith. Job in the midst of crises declared words of praise and strong affirmation of his faith to Almighty Yahweh, and a few of those were:

"Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD be praised" (Job 1:21).

"I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end He will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see GOD" (Job 19:25-26).

"But He knows the way that I take; when He has tested me, I will come forth as gold" (Job 23:10).

“As long as I have life within me, the breath of GOD in my nostrils, my lips will not speak wickedness, and my tongue will utter no deceit. I will maintain my righteousness and never let go of it” (Job 27: 3-4 & 6).

Almighty Yahweh was so pleased with Job, that He blessed Job’s life more than the first. Almighty Yahweh made Job prosperous again and gave him twice as much as he had before. Job has proven his worth to Almighty Yahweh up to the end and that made him so dear to Almighty Yahweh.

Questions for Exercise:

1. In 150 words describe Job’s faithfulness to Almighty Yahweh.
2. What strikes you most about Job’s life?
3. Are you willing to share the life story of Job to others? In what way?
4. If you are to gauge your faith from 1 to 10, and 10 is the highest where do you think you are now? Why?
5. Have you been to an experience similar to Job’s? Tell us your story.

PSALMS

Introduction:

The book of Psalms is a collection of poems, hymns, and prayers written over a long period of time by various authors. The people of Israel used these poems, hymns, and prayers in their worship and, eventually this collection was included in their Scriptures.

These religious poems, hymns, and prayers are many kinds: there are hymns of praise and worship of Yahweh the Almighty; songs of thanksgiving for Yahweh's blessings; prayers for help, protection, and salvation. Pleas for forgiveness; petitions for the punishment of enemies. The prayers are both personal and national; some prayers express the most intimate feelings of one person, others portray the feelings and need of all the people. It is the longest book in the Bible.

The psalms were also used by Yahshua the Messiah; he quoted some of them while he was teaching the people.

*A Call to Praise Yahweh the Almighty
and Yahshua the Messiah*

Psalms

Let us praise Yahweh our Father in heaven who is the Almighty; the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and all natural things therein.

Sing His praise and honor Him Forever.

Let us praise Yahweh our Father in heaven who is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent.

Sing His praise and honor Him Forever.

Let us praise Yahweh our Father in heaven whose rule is everlasting.

Sing His praise and honor Him Forever.

Let us praise Yahweh our Father in heaven for His words; the Law that guides us and gives light to our path.

Sing His praise and honor Him Forever.

Let us praise Yahweh our Father in heaven who never forget His covenant.

Sing His praise and honor Him Forever.

Let us praise Yahweh our Father in heaven who gives sound judgment to all who obey His commands.

Sing His praise and honor Him Forever.

Let us praise Yahweh our Father in heaven whose mercy is as great as His Majesty.

Sing His praise and honor Him Forever.

Let us praise Yahweh our Father in heaven whose compassion endures from generation to generation.

Sing His praise and honor Him Forever.

Let us praise Yahweh our Father in heaven who said: "Come now let us reason together though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool."

Sing His praise and honor Him Forever.

Let us praise Yahweh our Father in heaven who remembers what we are made of; remembers that we are only dust by ourselves and looks upon us with mercy.

Sing His praise and honor Him Forever.

Let us praise Yahweh our Father in heaven who said: "Call unto me and I will answer thee and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not."

Sing His praise and honor Him Forever.

Let us praise Yahweh our Father in heaven who said: "I know the plans I have for you, plans for good, plans to bring you prosperity,...plans to give you the future that you hoped for."

Sing His praise and honor Him Forever.

Let us praise Yahweh our Father in heaven who looks upon us with mercy, whose ears are open to our prayers, whose favor is upon us always.

Sing His praise and honor Him Forever.

Let us praise Yahweh our Father in heaven who sent His begotten Son Yahshua the Messiah to the world for our salvation, abundant, and eternal life.

Sing His praise and honor Him Forever.

Let us praise Yahweh our Father in heaven who gave us the Holy Spirit to teach us, and help us live according to His will.

Sing His praise and honor Him Forever.

Let us praise Yahweh our Father in heaven who gave us holy angels to guard us, protect us, defend us, uphold us and keep us safe.

Sing His praise and honor Him Forever.

Let us praise Yahweh our Father in heaven who is gracious, loving, merciful, and forgiving.

Sing His praise and honor Him Forever.

Let us praise Yahshua the Messiah our Savior and our King.

His love for us is eternal; His faithfulness lasts forever.

Let us praise Yahshua the Messiah who cleansed us from all iniquities.

His love for us is eternal; His faithfulness lasts forever.

Let us praise Yahshua the Messiah who gave us abundant and eternal life.

His love for us is eternal; His faithfulness lasts forever.

Let us praise Yahshua the Messiah who heals our infirmities and diseases.

His love for us is eternal; His faithfulness lasts forever.

Let us praise Yahshua the Messiah who said: "If you love me, keep my commandments."

His love for us is eternal; His faithfulness lasts forever.

Let us praise Yahshua the Messiah who said: "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you have love one to another."

His love for us is eternal; His faithfulness lasts forever.

Let us praise Yahshua the Messiah who is always true to His promises to us.

His love for us is eternal; His faithfulness lasts forever.

Let us praise Yahshua the Messiah who promised to us saying:

“If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask what you will and it shall be done to you.”

His love for us is eternal; His faithfulness lasts forever.

“If you believe in me, the things that I do you shall do also and even greater things....”

His love for us is eternal; His faithfulness lasts forever.

“I will never leave you; I will never abandon you.”

His love for us is eternal; His faithfulness lasts forever.

Let us praise Yahshua the Messiah who said: “Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and the door shall be opened to you.”

His love for us is eternal; His faithfulness lasts forever.

Let us praise Yahshua the Messiah who said: “Whatsoever you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.”

His love for us is eternal; His faithfulness lasts forever.

Let us praise Yahshua the Messiah who said: “All things are delivered unto me by my Father.”

His love for us is eternal; His faithfulness lasts forever.

“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

His love for us is eternal; His faithfulness lasts forever.

Let us praise Yahshua the Messiah who said: "Let the little children come to me for of such is the kingdom of God."

His love for us is eternal; His faithfulness lasts forever.

Let us praise Yahshua the Messiah who said: "Seek ye first the kingdom of Yahweh and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

His love for us is eternal; His faithfulness lasts forever.

"Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of Yahweh."

His love for us is eternal; His faithfulness lasts forever.

Let us praise Yahshua the Messiah who taught us saying, "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy."

His love for us is eternal; His faithfulness lasts forever.

"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."

His love for us is eternal; His faithfulness lasts forever.

"Blessed are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires."

His love for us is eternal; His faithfulness lasts forever.

The Meaning of True Worship

Psalms

Yahshua the Messiah said: "To worship God the Father in heaven is to worship Him in spirit and in truth." This is to say that our worship of the Father must be based on His words or instructions; it must be based on the truth He has revealed to mankind through His servants the prophets like Moses through whom the Ten Commandments or the Law was revealed. In other words, we must not invent ways to worship our Father according to our likes or wishes out of vain imagination; imaginations which are abominable in the sight of our Father. Nor should we follow the ways of the heathen who know nothing about the truth.

The Psalmist encouraged the people to "Worship God in the beauty of holiness." To worship God in the beauty of holiness is to believe in Him and that He alone is worthy of our worship, and we must worship Him with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength. In other words, our worship must be sincere and pure, and it requires our whole being-body, soul, and spirit. Some people feel that they cannot worship God without spending an hour or more in singing but singing or praising is only a bit of the whole thing.

Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans said, "Offer yourselves as living sacrifice to God. Dedicated to His service and pleasing to Him. This is the true worship that you should offer." We must be eager not only to give and offer to our Father in heaven praises and thanksgiving, tithes and free-will offerings, acknowledging that all the good things that we have and the things around us come from Him, but most of all, we must offer ourselves to Him. To offer ourselves to our Father is to surrender our lives to Him; allow Him to rule and reign over us. Allow Him to use us the way He wants as His vessels or tools for the fulfillment of His will in earth. To worship our Father in heaven is to live with Him and for Him; to obey Him at all times in the name of His Son Yahshua the Messiah, and by the help of the Holy Spirit who is the Teacher of truth.

Questions for Exercise:

1. Do you worship God our Father in heaven?
2. According to the scriptures how should we worship our Father in heaven?
3. What can you say about: "Surrender ourselves to Him." Write a short essay.

Father, I Worship You

Psalms

Father, I worship you for who you are –
I adore you and your most precious, holy name.
I praise you and thank you for your love and mercy
I need you; I need your love and mercy day by day.

Father, I worship you for you alone are worthy.
I worship you because you are holy, glorious, and mighty.
I worship you and bless your holy name forever
The name that brings healing and saving power.

Father, I worship you! I adore you and thank you
For the wonders of your holy words and Law.
The words that are holy, sharp, quick, and powerful
The words of life and the words that stand forever faithful.

Father, I worship you for the sweetness of your promises.
Promises that will never fail nor fade.
Promises that you will never forsake us....
Promises of victory, lasting success and prosperity.

God the Supreme Ruler

Psalms

The Psalmist experienced so many trials. He had experienced hardship in every aspect of life. As a man of God, he was not free from the struggle to rise above the prevailing spiritual, political, economic and social condition at the time. In fact, he had fought hard battles and in his struggle, he surely had experienced sadness, pain, and anguish. Like us, he had also experienced failures and downfalls, as well as victories and success. Even loneliness in spite of his love for God and trust in Him, was not totally away from him in his struggle and determination to do the will of God in all circumstances.

St. James and Apostle Paul said: "Happy is the person who remains faithful under trials..., the trying of your faith worketh patience..., trouble produces endurance, endurance brings God's approval, God's approval creates hope, and this hope does not disappoint us...."

Indeed, the difficult and trying experiences that the Psalmist had were the things that made him recognized that God is his refuge, his rock of safety, his mighty protector, his deliverer, his light and salvation, and God is supreme. It was his experience that made him see and realized that there is none like our Father in heaven. He is kind and merciful; He is supreme over all.

He alone is the supreme ruler of everyone and everything both the seen and unseen so that with Him nothing is impossible. Gladly, it was God the supreme ruler who brought the Psalmist-King David to the throne and made him known as the greatest king of Israel.

Questions and Thoughts to Ponder:

1. Do you have trials? How do you see your trials?
2. Do you see them as challenges for you to grow stronger, better, and a winner?
3. Make God the ruler of your life and arise, take up his power through faith and be where God wants you to.

A Prayer for Mercy and Blessing

Psalms

- Father, there is none like You; You alone are the source, the giver, the sustainer of life, and the source of all good things.

Have mercy on us and bless us, we pray.

- Father, You are the greatest King, the Almighty who controls the heavens and the earth and all that is therein.

Have mercy on us and bless us, we pray.

- Father, You are the mighty Shepherd of us all, lead us to where we should be for your honor and glory.

Have mercy on us and bless us, we pray.

- Father, You are the great, immovable rock in whom we trust and take refuge for protection and safety.

Have mercy on us and bless us, we pray.

- Father, You are the omnipotent, the omniscient who is ever ready to rescue and protect those who obey you.

Have mercy on us and bless us, we pray.

- Father, we acknowledge that by ourselves we are nothing but we believe that with You we can do all things.

Have mercy on us and bless us, we pray.

- Father, the fields, the mountains, the hills, the valleys are yours and in You alone we depend for our abundant provision.

Have mercy on us and bless us, we pray.

- Father, You make the sun shine during the day, the moon at night to give light so that no one may stumble; make us blessings to all your people.

Have mercy on us and bless us, we pray.

- Father, You make the stars glitter at night for beauty and delight; keep us shining and glittering with your precious words and glorious light.

Have mercy on us and bless us, we pray.

- Father, You let the wind blow, the waves roar and roll; keep us rolling and moving forward to reach our goal.

Have mercy on us and bless us, we pray.

***God's Everlasting Mercy
& Faithfulness***

Psalms

Father, you are holy, merciful and faithful!

You are glorious and all-powerful

You are supreme over all.

In contrast, we are only humans

Apart from your grace and mercy

We are nothing at all.

We have sinned against you in

Words, in thoughts, and in deeds.

Sin of commission, sin of omission.

Sin of ignorance, and sin of presumption.

Our flaws, weaknesses, and imperfections

Are clear and loud in Thy sight and hearing.

We failed... and we are deeply sorry for our sins.

Father, we praise you and thank you because

Your love, your care, your mercy upon us

Are not based on what we have done

But on what Yahshua the Messiah

Has done for us, as well as on

Our faith and devotion to Him.

*We praise you and thank you that
You love us not because we are excellent,*

*We praise you and thank you that
You love us because we are your children.*

*We praise you and thank you because
You are our loving and merciful Father
Through Your begotten Son our Savior.*

*We praise you and thank you because
Your love for us is sure, strong, and eternal.*

*We praise you and thank you because
Your goodness is steadfast and firm to the end.*

*We praise you and thank you because
Your faithfulness lasts forever.*

*We praise you and thank you because
Your mercy upon us is unfailing and everlasting.*

Hymn of Thanksgiving

Psalms

“Let the giving of thanks be your sacrifice to God Almighty,....”

“Giving of thanks is the sacrifice that honors me, and I will surely save all who obey me” (Psalm 50:14 & 23).

- Give thanks to God our Father and Savior for He is good to all.
His Goodness is beyond compare; His mercy endures forever.
- Give thanks to God our Father and Savior who gave us freedom from sin and from the power of sin.
His Goodness is beyond compare; His mercy endures forever.
- Give thanks to God our Father and Savior who heals our sicknesses and diseases.
His Goodness is beyond compare; His mercy endures forever.
- Give thanks to the King of kings who never forgets His covenant with us.
His Goodness is beyond compare; His mercy endures forever.
- Give thanks to the King of kings whose mercy is as great as His majesty.
His Goodness is beyond compare; His mercy endures forever.
- Give thanks to the great One who is true and faithful to His promises to us.
His Goodness is beyond compare; His mercy endures forever.
- Give thanks to the Supreme Ruler who makes all things possible for us.
His Goodness is beyond compare; His mercy endures forever.
- Give thanks to the LORD of Lords who looks upon us with mercy and whose favor is upon us always.
His Goodness is beyond compare; His mercy endures forever.

- Give thanks to the Almighty who gives sound judgment to all who obey His commands.

His Goodness is beyond compare; His mercy endures forever.

- Give thanks to our Father and Savior who is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

His Goodness is beyond compare; His mercy endures forever.

- Give thanks to our Father and Savior whose words are holy, sharp, quick and powerful.

His Goodness is beyond compare; His mercy endures forever.

- Give thanks to Him who is our righteousness and success.

His Goodness is beyond compare; His mercy endures forever.

- Give thanks to our Father & Savior whose love for us is strong and steadfast.

His Goodness is beyond compare; His mercy endures forever.

- Give thanks to the King of kings whose mercy upon us never ceases.

His Goodness is beyond compare; His mercy endures forever.

- Give thanks to the Lord of lords who makes all things work together for our good.

His Goodness is beyond compare; His mercy endures forever.

- Give thanks to the Lord of Lords who said, "Come to me all of you who are tired and I will give you rest."

His Goodness is beyond compare; His mercy endures forever.

- Give thanks to our Father in heaven who is the Almighty. The "I Am" to us all.

His Goodness is beyond compare; His mercy endures forever.

- Give thanks to our Father & Savior who said: "In this world there shall be tribulation, but be of good cheer I have overcome the world."

His Goodness is beyond compare; His mercy endures forever.

- Give thanks to our Father and Savior whose goodness follow us all the days of our lives even forever.

His Goodness is beyond compare; His mercy endures forever.

*In Praise of God's Mercy**Psalms*

*Father, You are holy and great yet merciful!
Your Mercy is what makes ailing people whole.*

*Apart from Your Mercy who would ever endure?
The troubles of life in this world are beyond measure.*

*Daily we are in constant battle against the foes of our body and soul
But Your Mercy and our faith in You make them stumble and fall.*

*Truly, You are our refuge because You are merciful
Thy tender mercies upon us are more than all!*

*In times of troubles, You are our security and safety
Because Your tender mercy is as great as Your majesty.*

*In Praise of God's Love, Forgiveness,
& Care*

Psalms

*O, Father in heaven how great is Your love,
How wonderful is Your mercy and forgiveness
How sweet and tender is Your care.*

*Your love is greater than the greatest thing I know.
It is deeper than the deepest ocean down below,
Stronger than the mighty rolling waves I saw.*

*You forgave all our transgressions and sins
You washed us and made us whiter than snow-
Yes, You forgave us, healed us, and blessed us also.*

*Your care is as tender as ever-
Nice, wonderful, and mysterious forever
The loveliest of things one could ever remember.*

*In Praise of God's Kindness
& Patience*

Psalms

*Contrary to our desire, our prayer, and our goal
Again and again we stumble and fall,
But, Father You are really kind, true, and faithful
You willingly make Your kindness and patience visible to all.*

*In my shortcoming and failures
Your kindness and patience I clearly saw,
How blessed are those upon whom You bestow
The kindness and patience that make every sorrowful heart and face glow.*

*Your kindness and patience are now my ardent desire
My aim, my prayer, I know You will never fail
Because my longing, my desire and prayer are in accordance to
Your perfect will.*

*I pray Your kindness and patience will be shown
Not only to the nobles but also to the common -
For everyone to see Thy noblest intention
To make every man's life pure and free from pretension.*

God's Wonderful Blessing

Psalms

*Father, you are the Creator of the heavens and the earth.
 You are the source, the giver, the sustainer of life,
 and the source of all good things.
 You are the Almighty, the omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent.
 There is none like you!
 You are great; your greatness is unsearchable.
 Your deeds are mighty and wonderful
 Yet, you are so good, so loving, and merciful.*

*We praise you and thank you
 For your great goodness and tender-mercies.
 We praise you and thank you
 For your favor and loving-kindness,
 We praise you and thank you
 For your ears are open to our prayers always.
 We praise you and thank you
 For your light that shines on our way,
 We praise and thank you
 For the holy angels who protect us all day.*

*We praise you and thank you
 That there is mercy and wonderful blessing
 For all who repent and turn to you humbly.
 We praise you and thank you
 That there is mercy and wonderful blessing
 For all who seek you,...and your kingdom day by day.
 We praise you and thank you
 That there is mercy and wonderful blessing
 For all who worship you only.
 We praise you and thank you
 That there is mercy and wonderful blessing
 For all who put their trust and hope in you faithfully.*

PROVERBS

Introduction:

The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, is part of the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament. It is a collection of moral and religious teachings. Much of it are sayings of common sense and sound advice that relate to all ways of life.

TS

The Importance of Knowledge and Wisdom

Proverbs

The book of Proverbs emphasizes the importance of knowledge, wisdom, and understanding. It starts with the teaching that “to have knowledge is to have reverence for the Lord.” In other words, unless we honor Almighty Yahweh, our Creator and Father, His Son our Savior and King, and the Holy Spirit who is the teacher of truth, we cannot have true knowledge, wisdom, understanding or insights about things that relate to life. For, the scriptures say, “It is the Lord who gives wisdom; from him comes knowledge and understanding. He provides help and protection for righteous, honest men.”

“Getting wisdom is the most important thing you can do.... Love wisdom and she will make you great. Embrace her and she will bring you honor. She will be your crowning glory.” The Psalmist also declared, “the way to become wise is to have reverence for the Lord; he gives sound judgment to all who obey his commands. He is to be praised forever” (Psalm 111: 10).

Knowing the Law of the Almighty, loving Him, and honoring Him by abiding in His Law and commands is a sign of wisdom. It is the first step towards greater wisdom and more knowledge, even wisdom and knowledge about deep things in life. In fact, “the Lord created the earth by his wisdom; by his knowledge he sets the sky in place. His wisdom caused the rivers to flow and the clouds to give rain to the earth.”

Stupid people are destroyed and die before their time because they always think they are right and reject the voice of wisdom, but whoever listens to her will be safe and will live a long, honorable, and happy life.

Questions for Exercises: True or False

1. _____ Knowing and abiding in the Law and commands of the Almighty is the first step to wisdom and knowledge.
2. _____ Wisdom leads to long and happy life.
3. _____ Money is scarce in fact, there are many poor people, wisdom and knowledge are always available so we should be more concern about money.
4. _____ The writer of Proverbs says, “to have knowledge and wisdom is to go to school”; unschooled people cannot have wisdom and insight.
5. _____ We should love wisdom and she will make us great.
6. _____ We should embrace wisdom and she will bring us honor.
7. _____ Stupid people are destroyed because they reject wisdom.
8. _____ “Getting wisdom is the most important thing a person can do....”
9. _____ The LORD gives wisdom and sound judgment to all who obey His commands.
10. _____ “To be wise you must have reverence for the LORD.”

Wisdom As Against Foolishness

Proverbs

Yahshua the Messiah said: "A tree is known by its fruit." The wise and the foolish are also known by their words and actions or by the things they do and say.

- The words of the wise preserve life; the words of fools destroy it. The words of the wise heal, comfort, correct, strengthen and guide, but the words of fools can wound as deeply as a sword and give anguish to the body and soul.
- The wise work hard to learn and help everyone; fools work to destroy what the wise have done.
- When wise men speak, their message is like pure gold in the hands of the listeners. When it is put into practice, it is like a beautiful necklace that enhances ones beauty and appearance.
- Wise men love righteousness; fools are stupid.
- Fools speak without thinking and constantly suffer its consequence.
- Wise men appreciate correction and good advice; fools hate it, he thinks he is always right.
- Fools are senseless, they are ignorant and shameless; wise people are sensible, they understand the meaning of fairness and justice, and they give to everyone what is due to each one.
- Wise people avoid trouble; fools walk right into it.
- Wise men seek peace and keep things calm; fools create trouble.
- Stay away from foolish people, they have nothing good to give you.
- Foolish men will always be servants to the wise.

Advices to Young People

Proverbs

- Live in reverence for Almighty Yahweh. Follow the steps of Yahshua the Messiah or the examples He gave us. Be loyal and faithful to the Almighty as Yahshua the Messiah was faithful even to death on the cross.
- Put your trust in our Father and Savior. He is loving and merciful; if we live in reverence for Him, He will never forsake us. He will not allow us to be put to shame in time of crisis.
- Respect your father and mother. Pay attention to their words and do your best to make them happy.
- Be humble. Submit yourself to the Kingship of our Father and Savior, always obey His commands.
- Honor the Almighty Father with your produced or income. Give Him the best of the produced of your garden or farm, or your income by giving Him your tithe and offering. He will be pleased with you and He will bless you more.
- Be eager to learn; pay attention to warnings and correction. If you do, you will grow wiser.
- Be determined to do what is good and right. When temptations come, be strong against it and overcome it. Keep yourself away from anyone or anything (like television show) that will lead you to do wrong.
- Be a good steward/manager of everything that our Father and Savior has given you. Be a good steward of your body, soul, and spirit; your family, your money or wealth. Keep yourself healthy and use everything the Father has given you wisely and properly for His glory.

- Be respectful and kind to Almighty Yahweh's prophets and ministers. Remember, they are channels of Almighty Yahweh's blessings. They gave themselves to the Almighty as His instruments to guide His people and to bless them.
- Be kind to loyal friends; your friends and the friends of your parents. Never hesitate to help them in times of need but guard yourself against any danger involved.
- Consult our Father and Savior in everything you plan to do. Seek His guidance and help, and be determined to obey Him.
- "Be sure that the book of Law (the Bible) is always read in your worship. Study it day and night, and make sure that you obey everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful" (Joshua 1:8).

Exercise:

1. Memorize and recite or write as many advices to young people as you can.
2. Can you remember some delightful advices from your parent or grandparents?
3. Do you know a poem that is addressed to young people?
Share it with us.

ECCLESIASTES

Introduction:

The book of Ecclesiastes contains the thoughts of the author who calls himself "the Preacher," "the Philosopher," "the son of David", who reflected how short and contradictory life is, and concluded that "life is useless."

Many of the Philosopher's thoughts appear negative, but many people have found comfort in seeing themselves in the mirror of this book.

The fact that Ecclesiastes is in the Bible, it certainly has a special value.

TS

Be Grateful

Ecclesiastes

“Be grateful for every year you live.”

To whom should we be grateful or thankful? Of course, we should be thankful to the One who is the source of life, our creator and Father Yahweh Almighty and to His Son our Savior and Lord.

Some people think that it is not a Biblical practice to celebrate a birthday. Yes, the Bible records no Birthday Party but the Philosopher and writer of Ecclesiastes gladly admonished us that we should be grateful not only for our life, but also for every year we live (Ecclesiastes 11: 8).

How should one give thanks to God for every year he lives? People do it in many different ways. Some, by singing hymns of praise and prayers of thanksgiving, some others by giving special offerings, other people express their gratitude by doing both. All these are good and acceptable if sincerely done to honor God, but the most meaningful of all, is to live day by day according to the will of our Father and Savior.

Questions:

1. In the past three years, how did you show your gratefulness to God for your life and for every year you live?
2. What do you mean by “living according to the will of our Father and Savior”?
3. Interview at least two oldest people that you know. Ask them also to impart to the young people the striking lessons they have learned through life.

“A Time for Everything”

Ecclesiastes 3

Of all that is written in the book of Ecclesiastes, I suppose, “A Time for Everything” is the most popular and often quoted. Yes, not only because it sounds nice and it is beautiful to remember; not only because “everything in this world happens at the time God chooses”; not only because it is meaningful, but most of all, because it clearly depicts the Sovereignty of God our Father in heaven, over everyone and everything.

Below is the time and season for our meditation:

“A time to be born, and a time to die;

A time to plant, a time to pluck up....

A time to kill, and a time to heal;

A time to breakdown, a time to build up;

A time to weep, and a time to laugh;

A time to mourn, a time to dance;

A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones...;

A time to embrace, a time to refrain from embracing;

A time to get, and a time to lose;

A time to keep and a time to cast away;

A time to rend, and a time to sew;

A time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and time of peace.” KJV

Questions:

1. Have you been through some of these times and seasons? What did you have in mind at that time and how did you handle the situation?
2. What lessons have you learned from your experience?

Remember Your Creator

Ecclesiastes

*“Remember your creator while you are still young,
before those dismal days and years come....” Ecclesiastes 12: 1*

The teaching as quoted is particularly addressed by the writer to the young people. Why? Young people are naturally energetic, strong, always excited about something, and unusually curious. They have great passion for some things and strong tendencies to explore. If these tendencies and passion are not directed and guided properly, they might just be wasting their time and energy. The saddest thing of all, is when out of their excitement and curiosity, they would forget their Creator and Father.

But praise and glory be to our Father and Savior for the Philosopher who thoughtfully admonished everyone, especially the young people to remember their Creator before their dismal days and years come. To remember our Creator is to acknowledge that He is the source of our lives, and the source of all good things that we enjoy. That apart from Him, we are nothing and nothing could exist apart from His grace, mercy, and blessing. Hence, it is right and fitting that we live in reverence for Him, praise Him and thank Him, and give our best to Him all the days of our lives.

Questions:

1. Do you know of some people who forget their Creator and their Savior?
2. How do you recognize a person who forgets his Creator?
3. What do you think you could do to help him remember his Creator, and his Savior?
4. How do you show to the world that you constantly remember your Creator?
5. Cite some advantages of a person who remembers his Creator while he is young..., over the person who remembers his Creator when he is very old.

Bible Verses for Discussion

Ecclesiastes

- Life is useless, all useless. You spend your life working, laboring, and what do you have to show for it? (Ecclesiastes 1: 2-3)
- You work for something with all your wisdom, knowledge, and skill, and then you have to leave it all to someone who hasn't had to work for it. It is useless.... (Ecclesiastes 2: 21)
- God gives wisdom, knowledge, and happiness to those who please Him, but He makes sinners work, earning and saving, so that what they get could be given to those who please Him (Ecclesiastes 2: 26).
- Wisdom does more for a person than ten rulers can do for a city.
Ecclesiastes 7: 19
- I have always said that wisdom is better than strength, but no one thinks of a poor man as wise or pays any attention to what he says.
Ecclesiastes 9: 16
- God made us plain and simple, but we have made ourselves very complicated (Ecclesiastes 7: 29).
- Look at what happens in the world: sometimes righteous men get the punishment of the wicked, and wicked men get the reward of the righteous. I say it is useless (Ecclesiastes 8: 14).
- I realized another thing, that in this world fast runners do not always win the races, and the brave do not always win the battles. Wise men do not always earn a living, intelligent men do not always get rich, capable men do not always rise to high positions (Ecclesiastes 9: 11).
- After all this, there is only one thing to say:
Have reverence for God, and obey His commands, because this is all that man was created for (Ecclesiastes 12: 13).

THE SONG OF SONGS

Introduction:

The Song of songs or the Song of Solomon in some translations is a series of love poems addressed by a man to a woman and by the woman to the man.

To the Jews, these songs, is a picture of the relationship between God and His people, and by Christians, the relationship between Christ and the believers.

JS

The First Song

Song of Songs

"No woman could keep from loving You.

Take me with you...."

A Prayer for Women

Father in heaven, it is my earnest prayer
That all women would say to You and to Your Son

"We couldn't keep from loving You.

Take us with You."

Father, I pray that the Holy Spirit
 Would touch every woman and inspire her
 To love You and Your Son
 Who suffered much so that every human
 Would become perfect man and woman.

Woman, you were once deceived and defeated
 But now, I tell you, arise to follow
 The groom with joy and pride,
 Because you are now His beautiful bride.
 Be glad and rejoice forever
 The shackles have been broken and discarded.

Father, I thank You for the wonderful and lasting freedom
 You have given to every believing woman.
 Freedom from shackles that kept women in bondage,
 Freedom from sin and from the power of sin
 Through the offering of Your Son and our faith in Him.
 Freedom to enjoy abundant and eternal life in heaven.

The Second Song

Song of Songs

*"This is the time for singing; the song of doves is heard in the fields....
 Come then, my love; come with me....My lover is mine,
 and I am his.... Promise me women of Jerusalem;...
 that you will not interrupt our love."*

Interruption and Distraction

Have you tried to do something very important and you were interrupted or distracted by something that upset you and partially ruined your work? If you had, so it is spiritually and even worse.

If we are not careful and we allow something to get in the way between us and our LORD; if we allow something to pollute our beautiful relationship with Him; if we allow ourselves to be interrupted with the cares of the world; if we allow our love and devotion to our Father and Savior to be distracted, eventually, it will be destroyed.

So, the quotation from the Second Song, I believe, is a very fitting reminder that, now, that we are in the LORD; now, that “my lover is mine and I am his”, it is time to rejoice; it is time to give praise; it is time to give thanks; it is time to gladly do the will of our Father and Savior. It is time to deepen and strengthen our relationship with Him and not allow any form of interruption and distraction that may bring it to a sad ending.

Interruptions and distractions are all around us but we must fix our attention to our LORD and Savior; we must stay focused towards our goal and destination if we are determined to enjoy eternally the wonderful love of our Savior and King. Again, there are innumerable interruptions and distractions, that is why the sacred scriptures warned us saying, “Let us rid ourselves of everything that gets in the way,...keep walking on straight paths....Guard yourselves against turning back from the grace of God. Let no one become immoral or unspiritual like Esau, who for a single meal sold his rights as the older son” (Hebrews 12).

Let no one sell his right as a child of the heavenly Father, and as heir of the heavenly kingdom.

Questions for Exercise/ Assignment:

1. Briefly tell us the story of the family of Isaac, Rebecca, Jacob and Esau.
2. What happened to Jacob and Esau?

The Third Song

Song of Songs

“Women of Zion, come and see King Solomon.

*He is wearing the crown that his mother
Placed on him on his wedding day, on the*

Day of his gladness and joy....

My sweetheart, my bride, is a secret

Garden, a walled garden, a private

Spring; there the plants flourished.”

The Role of Mothers

While it is true that there are people who grew well and strong without the privilege of enjoying the love of mothers, yet, the role of mothers in building strong families, building lives, that is, making their children grow strong, wise, and sensible; leading them to a successful life, is very important and indispensable.

The third Song talks about King Solomon and his mother who placed the crown on his head on the day of his wedding. The Song also tells us that his sweetheart, his bride is a secret garden, a private spring where plants flourish. We can therefore say that the marriage here was not with a woman but with the land or country. For reference, read these scriptures: Jeremiah 2:2; Ezekiel 16: 8-22; Hosea 2: 19; Isaiah 62: 45.

Let us recall that based on the prevailing standard of succession at the time, Solomon was not the rightful heir of the throne of his father King David. But his mother Bathsheba took good care of him and when King David was very old, she made a solemn request to the King that their Son Solomon would be the next to sit on the throne. Literally, the mother did not place the crown on her son but she was very instrumental. She reared her son the best she could and taught him to love the Father Almighty, to love his people and country; to be wed or married to his country. Bathsheba prepared her son to lead the people to love the land God the Father in heaven has blessed them.

David on the other hand, knew how Bathsheba took care of Solomon so that he did not hesitate to give to him the crown and the throne.

Questions to Ponder:

1. Do you love your country? How did you show your love?
2. Are you grateful to God for the land He gave you?

The Fourth Song

Song of Songs

“Everything About Him Enchants Me”

A Poem for the LORD of Lords; the KING of Kings

Everything about my Lord Yahshua the Messiah enchants me,

He is strong, courageous, handsome, and desirable,

He is my Savior and my King; the Lord and King of everything.

His eyes are beautiful, his heart is wonderful!

He clearly saw things none of the people of the world has ever seen.

He constantly see things through the eyes of faith in Yahweh Almighty,

And, he did things he saw his Father doing.

My Lord, my Savior, my King is a great lover,

He loves everyone big and small, young and old.

He walked through the desert under a hot and biting sun

Teaching, healing, feeding to show how much He loves everyone.

He walked on deep water without sinking –

His way of saying, “the Father is in me I am in Him.”

I pray everyone in this world would be enchanted

The great and wonderful lover I’ve ever met.

He is my heart’s desire; my ardent longing day by day,

My delight, my joy all the way.

*My lover is my strength; a refuge for everybody
The Rock of safety in every adversity.*

*My great lover loves you and me,
Let us walk with Him till eternity.
He holds the most beautiful future one can ever see,
He is the way towards a happy destiny.*

*The Father said: "He is my Son in whom I am well pleased"
Let us find joy and enchantment in Him who is the best.*

You Are My Everything

*Dear Lord, You are my everything!
You are my hope and assurance.
You are my righteousness and peace.
You are my wisdom and power.
You are my joy and strength.
You are my very present help and refuge,
You are my Rock of safety.
You are my great protector and defender.
You are my shelter from every storm.
You are my strong fortress and deliverer.
You are my light and my salvation.
You are my life abundant and eternal,
You are the Almighty, the "I Am".
You are the "Alpha and the Omega".
You are my everything!
I thank You that in You
I will never lack any good thing.*

The Fifth Song

Song of Songs

“Darling, I have kept For You the Old Delights and the New”

Keeping Ourselves, Our Country, Our World Beautiful

We often hear some people, some women say that they are not beautiful. But the Scriptures tell us that when God the Father Yahweh created the universe and all that is in it, He looked at His creation and saw that it was good (Genesis 1: 4 & 12-13).

The “good” I believe, is complete and enough to tell us that what the Almighty Father created is beautiful and desirable. However, the Father created a variety of beauties. Some are white, some are black, some are brown, others are big and tall, some others are short and small but they are all beautiful.

The quotation from the fifth Song says: “Darling, I have kept for you the old delights and the new.” The question is: Have we considered our Creator and Father, our Lord and Savior and the Holy Spirit our darling? Someone we love most; someone so dear and precious to us; someone we want to please all the days of our lives? If we consider our Father and Savior our darling, then, we must keep the old delights of ourselves, our country, our world and cherish it while we also eagerly welcome the new delights. Let us keep ourselves, our country, our world clean, fresh, and beautiful. Let us add to what our Father has created something that is good, something that enhance its beauty, not something that ruin it and make ourselves, our country, our world really ugly.

Apostle Paul in his letter to the Corinthians says: “Surely, you know that you are God’s Temple.... So if anyone destroys God’s Temple, God will destroy him.” Certainly, he who is not a good steward of his own body, he who does not take good care of his country, and of the whole world will be destroyed because God will destroy everything that is worthless, filthy, and ugly.

Above all, let everyone make himself really beautiful by faith in the power of the words of our Father and Savior.

The Sixth Song

Song of Songs

*“Love is as powerful as death,...It burns like a raging fire.
Water cannot put it out; no flood can drown it.... My lover knows that
with Him I find contentment and peace.”*

Yahweh's Love For Man

*Almighty Yahweh's love is strong and powerful,
No one has been able to measure it because it is immeasurable.
No one has been able to comprehend its height, its depth, and its width.
No one has fully understood how it works to save and restore man and woman.*

*Almighty Yahweh's great love for man
Caused him to send to the world His begotten Son.
The Son gladly suffered to do the Father's will
Living among sinful men to get a feel of the world's ordeal.*

*The fifth Song states, “love is as powerful as death”
The Son bearing the Father's love on the cross He died,
That the power of sin in men's lives would be offset and from bondage freed.
He died in pain shedding his blood, an evidence of the Father's love.*

*May all men and women find contentment
In the peace the Father offered
Through His Son who bled and died,
But later resurrected and ascended for all men to really live.*

ISAIAH

Introduction:

Isaiah was a son of Amoz and he prophesied at the time when Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah were kings of Judah.

The book of Isaiah is the first collection of prophecy of the four major Hebrew prophets. The first part of the book warns the people that the real threat of the nation is not their powerful neighbor Assyria but Israel's sin and disobedience towards Yahweh El and their lack of trust in Him. Isaiah particularly warned the Israelites that Almighty Yahweh will punish sin and they need to stop their wicked ways and ask Yahweh El for His forgiveness. He also foretold a time of world-wide peace and the coming of a descendant of David who would be King of the whole world.

The second part of the book speaks of a time when the Israelites were exile in Babylon, crushed and without hope. The prophet encourage the people by proclaiming that Yahweh El would set His people free and take them back home. Isaiah also reminded the Israelites that Yahweh is the LORD of history; He is in control of every situation and His plan for His people includes their mission to all nations.

The third part was addressed to the Israelites who were back to Jerusalem. The prophet reassured them that Yahweh El is faithful; He will fulfill His promise. He also emphasized the importance of right living, justice, observance of the Sabbath, and prayer.

It is also interesting to note that Yahshua the Messiah began His ministry in Nazareth, Galilee by reading from the book of Isaiah 61:1-2 where He then said, "These scriptures come true today."

Yahweh Says: "Learn To Do Right"

Isaiah

Yahweh Almighty had a complaint against Israel, His chosen people. He says, "Cattle know who owns them, donkeys know where their master feeds them. But that is more than my people Israel know. They don't understand at all."

"My people your sins drag you down, you have rejected your Creator and have turned your back on Him. Your heads are covered with wounds, and your heart and mind are sick. From head to foot you are covered with bruises. There is not a healthy spot in your body.

"You call evil good and call good evil. You turned darkness into light and light into darkness. You make what is bitter sweet, and what is sweet bitter. You are doomed, you sinful nation, you corrupt and evil people. You, who worship idols, you who worship trees, and planted sacred gardens (pagan practice of dedicating a garden to a fertility god); you who take bribe and pervert justice, you are doomed."

In the Song of the Vineyard Isaiah said:

*Israel is the vineyard of Yahweh Almighty;
the people of Judah are the vines he planted.
He expected them to do what was good,
but instead they committed murder.
He expected them to do what was right,
but their victims cried out for justice.*

"It is useless for you to bring your offering. I am disgusted with the smell of the incense you burned. When you lift your hands in prayer, I will not look at you. No matter how much you pray, I will not listen....

"Stop doing evil and learn to do right, and though you are stained red with your sin, I will wash you and make you as white as snow. Then you will

eat the good things the land produces. But if you defy me, you are doomed to die. I, Yahweh the Almighty have spoken.”

Questions for Exercise:

I. True or false.

1. _____ Yahweh El had a complaint against Israel because they were lazy.
2. _____ The Israelites were rebellious and corrupt.
3. _____ Yahweh said: He will not forgive the evil that the Israelites had done.
4. _____ Yahweh El punishes sinners and sinful nation because He tolerates no evil.
5. _____ It is wrong to lift our hands to Almighty Yahweh in prayer because He said, “I will not look at you when you lift your hands in prayer.”

II. Enumerate the sins of the Israelites mentioned in the scriptures.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Isaiah's Calling

Isaiah

Isaiah was one of the four major prophets who prophesied during the time of King Uzziah until the time of King Hezekiah. Prophets are Almighty Yahweh's messengers to His people. It was Yahweh El Himself who called them, chose them, sanctified and anointed them as they responded positively to the call. Then through visions and revelations they received messages from Yahweh El and proclaimed those messages by words of mouth or by writing.

In the case of Isaiah, Almighty Yahweh showed His glorious presence to Isaiah in the Temple. Together with the Almighty were wonderful creatures who were calling out to each other:

*"Holy, holy, holy
The LORD Almighty is holy!
His glory fills the world."*

When the creatures sang, Isaiah noticed that the sound of their voices made the foundation of the Temple shake, and the Temple was filled with smoke.

Almighty Yahweh's holiness and glory overwhelmed Isaiah with anguish and despair for then he recognized how sinful he was. He declared, "There is no hope for me! I am doomed because every word that passes my lips is sinful and I live among sinful people. And yet, with my own eyes I have seen the King, the LORD Almighty."

After Isaiah made his confession how sinful he was, one of the creatures came to him carrying a burning coal from the altar with a pair of tongs.

He touched Isaiah's lips with the burning coal and said, "This has touched your lips, and now your guilt is gone, and your sins are forgiven."

Finally, Isaiah heard Yahweh El says, "Whom shall I send? Who will be our messengers?" Isaiah answered: "I will go! Send me!"

Questions for Exercise:

Fill in the blanks

1. Yahweh El showed His _____ to Isaiah in the Temple.
2. The wonderful creatures called out to each other:

3. The voices of the creatures made the _____ shake.
4. The Temple was filled with _____.
5. Yahweh's _____ and _____ overwhelmed Isaiah with anguish and despair.
6. Isaiah confessed that he was _____.
7. Isaiah's _____ was forgiven.
8. Isaiah lived among _____.
9. Yahweh _____, _____, _____, _____, the prophets as they responded positively to the call.
10. Isaiah answered: _____, _____.

The Good News of Everlasting Peace

Isaiah

Yahweh the Almighty spoke through Prophet Isaiah of the wonderful plans He has for His creation. A beautiful plans for His people; the people who loved Him and honor Him by obeying His commands.

Ever since, the world has been groaning in pain because of sin. "The land is full of idols, the people worship objects that they have made with their own hands. The land is full of violence; the sins of the people are great and wickedness is all over the land." But Yahweh El says, "A day is coming when human pride will be ended and human arrogance destroyed. Everyone will be humiliated and disgraced. Idols will completely disappear, and the LORD alone will be exalted on that day.

"People will hide in caves in rocky hills or dig holes in the ground to try to escape from the LORD's anger and to hide from his power and glory, when he comes to shake the earth.

"In days to come the mountain where the Temple stands will be the highest one of all, towering alone to the hills. Many people will say, 'Come ye, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths.... And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nations shall not lift up sword against nations, neither shall they learn war any more."

The condition of the world is not hopeless, neither is your condition as a person or as a family no matter how difficult it may be. Our Father in heaven is in control of the universe; nothing is kept or hidden from Him. He sees and knows everything and with Him nothing is impossible. Remember, "Faith that is firm is also patient." Just live one day at a time; don't worry about tomorrow. Yahweh our Father in heaven who is merciful will have mercy on us all, and will bless us with everlasting peace.

Questions for Exercise:

1. Why is the world groaning in pain?
2. What are the sins that Prophet Isaiah mentioned?
3. What will the people do when Almighty Yahweh comes to shake the earth?
4. What is the good news that Prophet Isaiah proclaimed?

“The Sign of Immanuel”

Isaiah

Immanuel or Immanu El means Yahweh El is with man or God is with man.

In the ancient times sign from Yahweh El was very important. It was also a common practice that people asked from Yahweh El a sign for His approval in certain plans. For example, a king may ask for a sign from Yahweh Almighty through a prophet if Yahweh approves of his plans to attack another country or not. Another example, is when a king asks for a sign from Yahweh El through a prophet if he surrenders or fight when being attacked by another king.

During the time of King Ahaz, the grandson of King Uzziah Yahweh El gave a special sign through Prophet Isaiah. Prophet Isaiah said to King Ahaz, “Well then, the Lord Himself will give you a sign: a young woman who is pregnant will have a son and will name him ‘Immanuel’. By the time he is old enough to make his own decision, people will be drinking milk and eating honey....”

The prophet went on to say, the land will have days of trouble.... But Yahweh El promised that during that time even if a farmer has been able to save only one young cow and two goats, they will give so much milk that he will have all he needs. They will have milk and honey to eat.

The sign that prophet Isaiah spoke about was the coming of Yahshua the Messiah. It was the planned and will of Yahweh the Father in heaven that the Israelites would accept Yahshua the Messiah as their Savior and King so that through Him Yahweh El would bless His people with peace and abundance. They would have milk and honey to eat; they would have all that they need. But you must have noticed that up to this day, Israel is far from having peace. Why? We need to continue studying the Bible in order to get the complete answer.

Questions for Exercise:

1. Immanuel means Yahweh El is with man. How did Yahweh El live among men?
2. What was the sign that Yahweh El gave to King Ahaz?
3. Was the sign fulfilled? If so, who was the person concerned?
4. What was/is Yahweh’s purpose for the life of Yahshua the Messiah?

The "Prince of Peace"

Isaiah

Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans said, "the whole creation has been groaning in pain because of sin." Indeed, ever since the 'Fall of Man' everybody has been in pain. Everyday is a day of struggle between good and evil for everyone. Even within ourselves we constantly struggle; we have to overcome evil thoughts, and evil desire first before we can make wise decisions, do things properly and live a life that is pleasing in the sight of our Father in heaven. That is the reality of life in this sinful world, and no one can escape it except by the grace of our Father and Savior.

Our Father in heaven who knows everything knew very well our situation, and in His mercy He decided to give to mankind a ruler who will ultimately end all pains and groaning and give us everlasting peace. Yahweh El made known His decision to men through Prophet Isaiah. By the power of the Holy Spirit, the prophet spoke:

*"A child is born to us!
a son is given to us!
and he will be our ruler.
He will be called, "Wonderful"
"Counselor," "Mighty God"
"Eternal Father," "Prince of Peace."*

Life in this world is really hard especially for those who seek to do the Father's will. But be of good courage, there is so much hope for complete freedom and perfect peace for all those who faithfully follow the Messiah, the Prince of Peace.

Almighty Yahweh has more to say about the Prince of Peace:

"He will rule his people with justice and integrity.

*Wolves and sheep will live together in peace, and
leopards will lie down with young goats.*

Calves and lion cubs will feed together, and little children will take care of them.

Cows and bears will eat together, and their calves and cubs will lie down in peace.

Lions will eat straw as cattle do.

Even a baby will not be harmed if it plays near a poisonous snake....there will be nothing harmful or evil.

The land will be as full of knowledge of the LORD as the seas are full of water."

(Isaiah 11)

I. Choral Recitation:

1. Memorize and recite the prophecy of Prophet Isaiah.

II.

1. Imagine the peaceful and beautiful world Prophet Isaiah prophesied. Make a drawing or paint a picture of your imagination.
2. Show your drawing or painting to your friends and start telling them the Good News.
3. Or, compose a poem/ a song giving thanks to our Father & Savior for the new peaceful world.

Almighty Yahweh's Assurance to His People

Isaiah

Are you afraid of somebody or something?

Proverbs 29:27 states, the righteous hate the wicked, and the wicked hate the righteous. This proverb alone tells us that it is not surprising why people in general, and even animals live in constant fear. It is because the righteous are against the wickedness of the wicked, and the wicked are against the ways of the righteous. So, each is afraid that the other might harm him anytime.

The Israelites in spite of their position as the chosen people of Yahweh Almighty, experienced hardness and harshness of life, pain, and fear. Many times, they were threatened and frightened, suffered much because their enemies triumphed over them. They groaned in shame and pain because their conquerors laughed at them, enslaved them, and people around despised them.

While we are still in this world, troubles and pain might strike anytime. Like the Israelites, we too may groan and sigh in pain and distress. But remember that Almighty Yahweh's love is unfailing and His mercy is everlasting. Yahweh El says, "Turn to me now and be saved, people all over the world! My promise is true and it will not be changed. Do not be afraid; let nothing terrify you for I will help you. I will protect you and save you. Small and weak as you are do not be afraid; I will help you."

Almighty Yahweh's words are sharp, quick, and powerful. Things may fade and people may fail but Yahweh's words will endure because He is holy and faithful! So, "arise and shine!".

Questions for Exercise: True or False

1. _____ The chosen people are the white and tall people.
2. _____ The chosen people did not suffer because they are special.
3. _____ Yahweh Almighty finds pleasure in suffering.
4. _____ Yahweh El does not care when people suffer.
5. _____ Yahweh's people do not experience fear.
6. _____ When threatened and frightened Yahweh Almighty, Yahshua the Messiah, Holy Spirit must be our refuge and guide.
7. _____ Believing in Yahweh El and His words will heal our pain and drives away fear.
8. _____ Yahweh's words are sharp, quick and powerful.

Almighty Yahweh's New Creation

Isaiah

"I am making a new earth and new heavens.

The events of the past will be completely forgotten.

Be glad and rejoice forever in what I create"(Isaiah 65: 17-18).

Isaiah chapter sixty five contains one of the most wonderful promises of our Father in heaven. Although the first half of the chapter shows the fate of the rebellious, and punishment that they would get, the last half is full of hope and joy.

Yahweh El says, "I have always been ready to welcome my people who stubbornly do what is wrong and go their own way. But they shamelessly keep on making me angry by offering pagan sacrifices and burning incense on pagan altars. At night they go to caves and tombs to consult the spirits of the dead. They eat pork and drink broth made from meat offered in pagan sacrifices. I have already decided on their punishment, and their sentence is written down. I will not overlook what they have done, but will repay them for their sins and the sins of their ancestors."

But to the faithful Yahweh El says, "Be glad and rejoice.... There will be no more weeping, no calling for help. Babies will no longer die in infancy, and all people will live out their life span. Those who live to be a hundred will be considered young. To die before that would be a sign that I had punished them. The work they do will be successful, and their children will not meet with disaster. I will bless them and their descendants for all time to come. Even before they finish praying to me, I will answer their prayers." HalleluYah!

Activity:

1. Imagine the new, beautiful, peaceful world that Yahweh our Father promised to us, and make a drawing of your imagination, or write a prayer of thanks or write a poem.

JEREMIAH

Introduction:

Prophet Jeremiah lived during the latter part of the seventh century and the first part of the sixth century B.C. He prophesied during the reign of Kings Josiah, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah.

Jeremiah deeply loved his people and he hated to have to pronounce judgment upon them. He warned the people of the punishment and destruction that was to fall upon the nation because of sin, particularly, because of idolatry.

The prophet had a secretary named Baruch, and he lived to see his prophecies come true with the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonian King-Nebuchadnezzar, destruction of the City and the Temple, the exile of Judah's people to Babylonia.

However, a message of hope of a new covenant that would be written on the people's hearts has firmly and strikingly balanced the judgment that he pronounced (Jeremiah 31: 31-34).

Authority Over Nations and Kingdoms

Jeremiah

When Almighty Yahweh called Jeremiah to be a prophet, Jeremiah was too young. Jeremiah answered, "Sovereign Lord, I don't know how to speak; I am too young." But the Almighty said: "Do not say you are too young, go to the people I send you to, and tell them everything I command you to say.... I chose you before I gave you life, and before you were born I selected you...."

Then the Sovereign Lord reached out, touched Jeremiah's lips, and said: "Listen, I am giving you words you must speak. Today I give you authority over nations and kingdoms to uproot and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant."

Meanwhile, the Sovereign Lord showed Jeremiah visions of destruction of the land which he should tell the people. The Almighty also warned the prophet that the people would be against him but comforted him by saying, "Do not be afraid of them for I will be with you to protect you. They will not defeat you for I will be with you to protect you."

Now, let us focus our attention to the wonderful statement Almighty Yahweh gave to Jeremiah.

*"Today I give you authority over nations and kingdoms
to uproot, to pull down, to destroy, to overthrow,
to build, and to plant."*

Amos 3:7 states, The Sovereign Lord never does anything without revealing His plan to His servants, the prophets. This clearly tells us that the prophet's task is very important. Although the prophet says only what the Sovereign Lord wants him to say, the Lord would do what He plans to do only after the prophet has already warned the people, and the Sovereign Lord does things according to the words of the prophet. In this case, the prophet has authority over the nations, and kingdoms; authority to overthrow as well as to build nations.

Take note also that in every message of destruction, it is followed by a message of hope. For example: "to uproot, to pull down, to overthrow," but also "to build, and to plant." That is so because our heavenly Father does not take pleasure in punishment and pain, but many times He has to, because His people need to be corrected and disciplined.

Questions for Exercise:

True or False

1. _____ Jeremiah desired to be a prophet, so he volunteered to become one.
2. _____ Almighty Yahweh has given Jeremiah authority over nations and kingdoms.
3. _____ Jeremiah was chosen before birth to uproot, pull down, overthrow, to build, and to plant.
4. _____ Almighty Yahweh takes pleasure in punishing His people and see them in anguish.
5. _____ The people were kind and sympathetic to Jeremiah.
6. _____ Almighty Yahweh warned Prophet Jeremiah that people would be against him but assured him of His protection.
7. _____ Almighty Yahweh never gave Prophet Jeremiah visions of destruction only words to speak.
8. _____ Almighty Yahweh never does anything without revealing His plan to His servants the prophets.
9. _____ Almighty Yahweh's message of destruction is always followed by a message of hope and restoration.
10. _____ As a prophet, Jeremiah was young but strong and he never wept.

Almighty Yahweh's Covenant & Promise of Hope

Jeremiah

- “The New Covenant that I will make with the people of Israel will be this: I will put my law within them and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they shall be my people.
- “I will forgive their sins and I will no longer remember their wrongs.
- “I will refresh those who are weary and will satisfy with food everyone who is weak from hunger. People will say, ‘I went to sleep and woke up refreshed.’
- “I am going to gather the people from all the countries where I have scattered them in my anger and fury. I am going to bring them back to this place and let them live in safety.
- “I will give them a single purpose in life: to honor me for all time. For their own good and for the good of their descendants.
- “I will never stop doing good things for them, and I will make them fear me with all their heart, so that they will never turn away from me.
- “I will take pleasure in doing good things for them, and I will establish them permanently in this land.
- “I am going to give them all the good things that I have promised.
- “I am going to strike my people down in my anger and fury because of the evil things they have done. But I will heal this city and its people and restore them to health.
- “I will be merciful to my people and make them prosperous again.
- “Israel, you are my dearest son, the child I love best. Whenever I mentioned your name, I think of you with love.... I will be merciful to you.
- “Call to me, and I will answer you; I will tell you wonderful and marvelous things that you know nothing about.”

Question for Exercise:

1. Nowadays, are the promises true only to the Israelites or to all the believers of the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit? Why?

*Almighty Yahweh's Case Against
His People*

Jeremiah

- “The people of Israel and Judah have betrayed me completely.... They have said that the prophets are nothing but windbags, they have no message from the Lord.
- “In Hinnom Valley they have built an altar called Topheth, so that they can sacrifice their sons and daughters in the fire. I did not command them to do this, it did not even enter my mind.
- “When someone falls down, doesn't he get up? If someone misses the road, doesn't he turn back? Why then, my people, do you turn away from me without ever turning back? You cling to your idols and refuse to return to me.
- “How can you say that you are wise and that you know my laws? Look, the laws have been changed by dishonest scribes.
- “Why have you made me angry by worshipping your idols and by bowing down to your useless gods?
- “The people of Judah have as many gods as they have cities, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem have set up as many altars for sacrifices to their disgusting gods.
- “Look, you put your trust in deceitful words. You steal, murder, commit adultery, tell lies under oath, worship other gods, offer sacrifices to Baal.

- “Jeremiah, tell them that if they love their lives, they must not carry any load on the Sabbath. They must not work on the Sabbath, they must observe it as a sacred day, as I commanded their ancestors. If they do, I will set the gates of Jerusalem on fire. Fire will burn down the palaces of Jerusalem, and no one will be able to put it out.”
- “Jeremiah declared: ‘the Lord himself says that you refused to listen to him. Instead, you make him angry with your idols.’
- “I have kept on speaking to you, and you have not obeyed me. I have continued to send you all my servants the prophets.... They warned you not to worship and serve other gods, but you would not listen to me or pay attention to me.
- “You have burned the scroll, and you have asked Jeremiah why he wrote that, the King of Babylon would come and destroy this land. So, now I the Lord, say to you King Jehoiakim, that no descendants of yours will ever rule over David’s Kingdom.
- “Why do you make me angry by worshipping idols and by sacrificing to other gods?”

Question to Ponder:

1. Are you guilty of the same sins that the Israelites had done? If so, what should you do?

LAMENTATION

Introduction:

Lamentation is a book of tears. The writer of this book is Prophet Jeremiah, who is also known as the “weeping prophet”.

Their destruction, troubles, sufferings, are the result of their wickedness and turning away from Yahweh Elohim. The judgment of punishment fell upon them. Prophet Jeremiah saw everything that happened to Jerusalem, he wept and his heart was broken. He puts his own feelings and that of the people into words in this book.

But in spite of everything, this book tells us that there is always great hope for Yahweh’s children, hope beyond compare. This reminds us that “The steadfast love of Yahweh El never ceases, His mercy never comes to an end. Great is His faithfulness, His loving-kindness begins afresh each day.”

TS

The Punishment

Lamentation

Over and over again Almighty Yahweh sent His prophets to warn His people to repent of all their sins and to stop worshipping idols. But the people refuses to listen; they continue walking in their evil ways, following only their human desires. The sin of the people and the nation was so horrible, Yahweh Elohim could not tolerate it anymore. The time was already up, and the great punishment of Yahweh Almighty fell upon them. His judgment day was really at their doors. He poured out His anger to His people and nothing could stop it. With his own eyes and with grief in his heart Prophet Jeremiah saw everything that Yahweh Elohim did to His people. Prophet Jeremiah wrote:

“A cloud of anger from Yahweh Almighty has covered Jerusalem, the fairest city of Israel.... In His day of awesome fury He has shown no mercy even to His Temple. The Lord without mercy has destroyed every home in Israel. In His wrath He has broken every fortress, every wall. He has brought the kingdom to dust, with all its rulers. All the strength of Israel vanishes beneath His wrath. He has withdrawn His protection as the enemy attacked. Yahweh burns across the land of Israel like a raging fire. His strength is used against them to kill their finest youth. His fury is poured out like fire upon them. Kings and priests together fall before his wrath. Almighty Yahweh has broken His Temple; He has rejected his own Altar for He despises the false worship of His people. Your “prophets” have said so many foolish things. They have not tried to hold you back from slavery by pointing out your sins. They lied and said that all was well. So all your enemies deride you. They hiss and grind their teeth and say, ‘ We have destroyed her at last! With our own eyes we’ve seen her fall.’ But it is Yahweh Elohim who did it, just as he had warned. He has fulfilled the promises of doom he made so long ago. He has destroyed Jerusalem without mercy and caused her enemies to rejoice over her and boast of their power.” On the other hand, the people have realized and said: “The joy of our hearts ended; our dance has turned to death. Our glory is gone. The crown is fallen from our head. Woe upon us for our sins. Our hearts are faint and weary; our eyes grow dim. Jerusalem and the Temple of the Lord are desolate, deserted by all and wild animals are lurking in the ruins. Yahweh have deliberately called for this destruction....”

Almighty Yahweh is great yet merciful; nothing can be compared of His love for His people. In spite of our frailties, He is so patient to each one of us, even to a nation. He is always giving us a chance to return to Him. He is waiting for that day when we will be restored unto Him. To renew our lives

together with Him and to acknowledge that He is our creator, the source of everything, the sustainer of our life. Above all, for us to worship Him only.

He doesn't want the people of the world to perish. He wants all of us to be saved from sin. He even gave to us His begotten Son Yahshua the Messiah so that through Him all of us will be saved and come to Him again. He has sent to the world His prophets, ministers to preach the gospel of salvation. Ministers who pray all night and day that the Father in heaven will show mercy and give His people more time to repent before His judgment comes.

People of the world listen to the voice of Yahweh El, through His prophets, and faithful servants or ministers. Learn from what happened to the Israelites long time ago. Do not harden your hearts and minds when you hear the voice of the Almighty God but let the truth sink into your very soul. All of us have sinned against the Father in heaven, let us now all repent of our sins while there is still time. Come back to Him, seek Him first His righteousness, and His kingdom. Ask Yahweh's forgiveness through His Son Yahshua the Messiah, He is our only hope, our source of peace. The only One who can save us and has the power to forgive our sins. Remember our Father is a God who never changes, all His principles are still the same. If we obey and worship Him faithfully His blessings will flow upon us but if we disobey His laws, His warning, and continue living a sinful life, then you will see that He will pour out His anger and punishment. Who can stop Him? Who can ever stand against Him? No one can escape the doom day. Do not try Yahweh's patience. Seek Him while there's still time. Let us ask Him humbly to create in us a new heart and mind; let Him make us new persons in the name of His Son Yahshua the Messiah. And never forget to tell people of His great salvation, that they too will be saved.

Our God is holy, and He tolerates no rival. He alone deserves our worship, praises and thanksgiving. Remember never to worship any other gods, idols, images in any form, it is abominable in the sight of Almighty Yahweh.

My brethren, there are times that Yahweh Elohim corrects us, disciplines us and even punishes us. Why? Maybe because we neglect already our duty and responsibility toward Him. Maybe we are beginning to trust in our own ability or beginning to trust completely in human strength. Maybe we are not listening to His voice, His guidance; or our personal relationship with Him is getting cold. In this case, His punishment shows that He loves us and cares for us, and to awaken us. Do not be discouraged; this will make us follow Him closely or seek Him even more. Do not despair but rise up and trust that He knows everything. He knows what's good for us. He chasteneth every child

He loves. Do not let go of your faith in Him but trust that He forgives your sins. Never forget also what He'd done to our lives, the mighty miracles he had shown to us.

Brethren, the day of Yahweh's judgment is so near. Repent now! On the day when Yahweh acts, He will strike down all the wicked people, only those who sincerely love Him and worship Him will survive that doom day. Repent now while there's still time!

I - Answer the following questions:

1. What is the meaning of punishment?
2. What is the greatest role of a prophet?
3. What do you mean by judgment day?
4. How did Almighty Yahweh warn His people before His judgment comes?
5. What did Jeremiah see that broke his heart?

II – Knowledge:

1. List (5) five punishments Almighty Yahweh had given to the Israelites.
2. The Israelites realized they have lost many things while they were punished. List at least five (5).

III- Assessment :

1. Do you think the punishment of God Almighty to the Israelites during the time of Prophet Jeremiah was fair? Why?
2. Are you willing to be corrected or disciplined when you do something wrong? Why?
3. How's your personal relationship with the God Almighty right now?

IV - Application

1. What lesson have you learned from this message? What will you do to avoid being punished?
2. What is the situation of our world today? What will you do to help the world and the people get saved?
3. Yahweh El blesses each one of us wonderfully. In return what would you offer to Him?

A Ray of Hope

Lamentation

"I am the man who has seen the afflictions that come from the rod of God's wrath. He has brought me into deepest darkness, shutting out all light. He has turned against me. Day and night his hand is heavy on me. He has made me old and has broken my bones. He has built forts against me and surrounded me with anguish and distress. He builds me in the dark places; I cannot escape; he has fastened me with his heavy chains. And though I cry and shout, he will not hear my prayer! He has shut me into a place of high, smooth walls! He has filled my path with detours. He has filled me with bitterness; and given me a cup of deepest sorrows to drink. Yet there is one ray of hope. His compassion never ends. It is only the Lord's mercies that have kept us from complete destruction. Great is his faithfulness; his loving-kindness begins afresh each day. My soul claims the Lord as my inheritance; therefore I will hope in him. Yahweh Elohim is wonderfully good to those who wait for Him, to those who seek him. It is good both to hope and wait quietly for the salvation of Yahweh El.

"It is good for a young man to be under discipline, for it causes him to sit apart in silence beneath Yahweh's demands, to lie face downward in the dust; then at last there is hope for him. Let him turn the other cheek to those who strike him, and accept their awful insults, for Yahweh Almighty will not abandon him forever. Although Yahweh gives him grief, yet he will show compassion too, according to the greatness of his loving-kindness. For he does not enjoy afflicting men and causing sorrow.

"Why then should we, mere humans as we are, murmur and complain when punished for our sins? Let us examine ourselves instead, and repent and turn again to Yahweh El. Let us lift our hearts and hands to him in heaven, for we have sinned; we have rebelled against Yahweh El and he has not forgotten it. You have engulfed us by your anger, Yahweh El, and slain us without mercy. We are filled with fear, for we are trapped and desolate, destroyed.

"My eyes flow day and night with never-ending streams of tears because of the destruction of my people. Oh, that Yahweh Elohim might look down from heaven and respond to my cry! My heart is breaking over what is happening.....

"My enemies, whom I have never harmed, chased me as though I were a bird. They threw me in a well and capped it with a rock. The water flowed

above my head. I thought, This is the end! But I called upon your name, O Yahweh Elohim, from deep within the well, and you heard me! Yes, you came at my despairing cry and told me not to fear.

“O Yahweh El, you are my lawyer! Plead my case! For you have redeemed my life. You have seen the wrong they did to me; be my judge, to prove me right.”

Almighty Yahweh is holy, just and fair. Before He punished the Israelites, He sent Prophet Jeremiah to warn them to come to Him, to repent of all their sins. But they won't listen, they refused to obey Him. Yahweh Elohim can't tolerate their sins anymore and by a glimpse of an eye all things have changed. The painful judgment of Yahweh El was right at their doors.

Prophet Jeremiah has seen how Yahweh Almighty punished His own people because of sin. The Israelites were broken into pieces, were being destroyed, everything they own was ruined, their lives were shattered, their enemies won victoriously against them. They were being mocked and laughed of their downfall. Jeremiah's heart was broken into pieces when he saw what happened. He wept night and day for his people. Pain was so unbearable; he was pleading to Almighty Yahweh for grace, hoping He might look down from heaven and respond to his cry. Although Jeremiah's heart was heavy with sorrow, there's still one ray of hope within him. He knew deep within his heart that Almighty Yahweh will look upon them with mercy. He believes that Yahweh's compassion is so great, His faithfulness will never end. His punishment upon the Israelites was just and fair. Jeremiah kept in his heart the wonderful promises of Yahweh El for those who sincerely love and obey Him. It always lifted him up whenever he thought about the wonderful words of assurance that Yahweh Almighty gave to him and to His people. He found strength in Yahweh's love; the words of Yahweh El were his comfort, the source of courage for him to live. Jeremiah's faith in Yahweh Almighty was strongly anchored that even when all around him was being destroyed, he could still raise his head up high and look upon Yahweh for salvation. He patiently waited for Yahweh El to rescue them again.

There is great difference between the righteous man and the unrighteous man. A man who truly loves Yahweh and is living a righteous way of life will never lose hope. There are always reasons for him to live. In times of persecutions, trials, hardships, difficulties..., he will never be completely broken. He knows and believes that someone greater than himself watches over him. He may feel lost, weak or maybe in deep sorrows, pains; he may shed so many tears, yet there is always a ray of hope deep within him. He knows Yahweh El will wipe the tears from his eyes, in Yahweh's appointed time He

will restore those who are His. The righteous man will keep on trusting Yahweh's words, and keep on believing that all will go well for those who love the Father in heaven. A good man will not be shattered because his faith is founded strongly and the source of his strength comes from Yahweh Almighty alone. As the Proverbs says, "The good shall never lose Yahweh's blessing but the wicked shall lose everything. The hope of good men is eternal happiness; the hopes of evil men are all in vain" (Proverbs 10:28 and 30). When disasters strike, all the wicked will lose hope and will be whirled away. But the man who has faith in Yahweh El will live forever.

For all of us who believe in Yahweh El through His Son Yahshua the Messiah and Holy Spirit, let us rise up and soar high. These trials we encounter are not worthy to be compared with the glory and blessings that Yahweh will pour upon us. We are different from the unrighteous people because we have a great, mighty God in heaven whose love for us is incomparable. There may be times when we shed so many tears, people may treat us badly, the enemies may try to keep taunting us, our troubles may pile so high, yet we still have peace deep within our souls because we know that Yahweh El will never fail to comfort us; He will never abandon us. He takes full control of everything, one touch of Him, one word of Him can change everything. He doesn't ignore the prayers of His chosen, righteous children. Let us keep our faith in Him strong. In a matter of time Yahweh Almighty will fulfill His promises to His children. Never stop doing what pleases Him. Give Him always the praises and thanksgiving that He deserves. "Wait patiently upon Almighty Yahweh and He shall strengthen thine heart."

I- Answer the following questions:

1. Who is Jeremiah?
2. What makes Prophet Jeremiah lament?
3. What is the meaning of hope?
4. What did Prophet Jeremiah hope for?
5. To whom did Prophet Jeremiah put his hope and trust? Why?
6. How was Jeremiah's faith strongly anchored in Yahweh Almighty?
7. Describe the great love of Yahweh Almighty toward His people?

II - Knowledge:

1. Cite (10) ten differences between a man who has hope with God Almighty and a man without hope.

III – Assessment:

1. Is it easy to be a prophet? Why?
2. What do you think are the reasons why so many people, nations suffered?
3. Have you been to trials, difficulties.....in life? From whom did you get your strength to survive and how?

IV – Application

1. What is your situation right now? In spite of your situation what will you do to bring glory to Yahweh Elohim and to rise above your situation today?
2. What steps will you make to live a righteous way of life?
3. Identify one person who needs hope, assurance, and comfort this time. Write down everything you want to say to this person and what help or actions you will do to help this person rise up beyond his situation.

EZEKIEL

Introduction:

Prophet Ezekiel lived in exile in Babylon during the period before and after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. The book is divided into two sections: the first denounces the sins and abominations of Jerusalem. The second looks to the future with the hope that the city will be restored after it has been cleansed.

As a priest and a prophet Ezekiel had special interest in the Temple, and in the need for holiness.

FS

A Call for Service

Ezekiel

Each one of us has a special calling, a calling to serve Almighty Yahweh with all our hearts, with all our souls, with all our might and with all our strength. The task may differ from each other, to a few it may involve a country, to others a city, and for some his/her own family and circle of friends. The bottom line is, whether the task assigned appears to be great or small as long as you faithfully do your part, in the eyes of Almighty Yahweh every task is as important as the other for the establishment of His kingdom here on earth.

The task assigned to you may look so inferior compared to others, maybe you were assigned to stay at home, and to spend much of your time and energy in nurturing your kids in the way they should go and to teach them the holy words - the commands of our Heavenly Father so that when they get old, they will not depart from it, nor let go of it and by the time Almighty Yahweh calls them, they will be ready and fully equipped to do their part. By the way, who knows the one you're carefully nurturing is Almighty Yahweh's long awaited person to lead His people for ultimate victory?

To respond to Almighty Yahweh's calling does not mean life would then be easy. I tell you, on my account as Almighty Yahweh's servant and based on what is recorded in the Holy Bible, and by the testimonies of many, it is just the beginning of the many hardships and difficulties that we as believers and followers of Yahshua the Messiah need to endure and conquer for Almighty Yahweh's glory. At first you may complain, "Why me my Father among so many others who are better qualified? I tell you, Almighty Yahweh looks at the heart of men, not on what he has or obtained from this present world. All He needs is a humble heart to do His will, so He can move freely. All you need to do is to move as He tells you, let go and let Him take care of the rest for you.

Indeed, as expected things get rough and hard because the world as the holy scriptures say, "is dominated by the evil one", and the devil and his forces will certainly exert all efforts to stop you in fulfilling Almighty Yahweh's will in your life. By all means, they will block all the possibility for success and steal all the blessings Almighty Yahweh has sent you.

But these hardships and difficulties in life are not for long. Almighty Yahweh knows everything that happened in you, hang on! He is sending all the help you need for your success and for His glory. Take courage! Almighty

Yahweh can turn every adverse condition in your life into great blessing at His appointed time. All these hardships and difficulties in life are temporary, but what Almighty Yahweh has stored for us is eternal.

Questions for Exercise:

1. What is your calling?
2. Write down the steps you will take to fulfill your mission in life?
3. "Hardships and difficulties in this world are temporary, but what the Almighty Father has prepared for His children are eternal."

Enumerate at least six of the wonderful things the Almighty Father has prepared for his children:

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 4. |
| 2. | 5. |
| 3. | 6. |

Ezekiel's Calling

Ezekiel

Ever since Almighty Yahweh has been calling His people to return to Him, through the prophets, and one of these is Prophet Ezekiel.

Prophet Ezekiel was called to denounce the sins and abomination of Jerusalem at his time, to bring warnings to the people about Almighty Yahweh's judgment on them and to the nations that oppressed and misled His people. Ultimately, to deliver the promise of hope in the middle of crises to those who sincerely repent and return to Almighty Yahweh.

The moment Prophet Ezekiel was called Almighty Yahweh said: "Son of man, I am sending you to the Israelites, to a rebellious nation that has rebelled against me; they and their fathers have been in revolt against me to this very day. The people to whom I am sending you are obstinate and stubborn. Say to them, this is what the Sovereign LORD says, 'And whether they listen or fail to listen - for they are a rebellious house - they will know that a prophet has been among them. And you, son of man, do not be afraid of them or their words.'

"Do not be afraid, though briars and thorns are all around you and you live among scorpions. Do not be afraid of what they say or terrified by them, though they are a rebellious house. You must speak my words to them, whether they listen or fail to listen, for they are rebellious. But you, son of man, listen to what I say to you. Do not rebel like that rebellious house; open your mouth and eat what I give you."

As Almighty Yahweh called Prophet Ezekiel, He has called us too and like Prophet Ezekiel, be not afraid; we must speak to the people the words Almighty Yahweh has given to us, whether the people listen or not.

What is important is that we do our portion of responsibility, and leave the rest to Almighty Yahweh.

What is your call? Don't miss to answer Almighty Yahweh's call; to miss His call now is to miss the wonderful blessing He intends to give you in the future.

Questions for Exercise:

1. Who is Ezekiel?
2. What is Ezekiel's calling in life?
3. Describe the people in Ezekiel's time?
4. How can you help Almighty Yahweh's people do His will?

Warnings

Ezekiel

Almighty Yahweh loves His people so much in spite that most of His beloved failed to compensate His love for them. Although His people keep on sinning all over again, which make Almighty Yahweh sad and disappointed to a point that He wanted to fully wipe out everything and start anew, yet His love and mercy always prevail.

What caused Him to do so was His undying love for His people and hope that someday they will realize that His people need Him. Out of that wonderful love Almighty Yahweh gave His people a chance, and another chance to repent of their sins and wrong doings and to live a pure life with Him by giving them warnings.

To warn them, Almighty Yahweh called His servants the prophets to reach out those who were lost and guide them back to the path of righteousness. He called them to deliver warnings of the possible punishment and destruction they will get if they fail to repent. Like the other prophets, Ezekiel was called to remind the people that they need Almighty Yahweh to take care of them, and apart from Him nothing good will come to them.

Jerusalem was at the center of Almighty Yahweh's love and affection, but sad to say that this very people often failed to compensate Almighty Yahweh's love for them and most painful of all, was their rejection of their relationship with Him by worshiping idols and other gods. That time, Almighty Yahweh called and sent Prophet Ezekiel to bring warning about His judgment; about the coming fall and destruction of Jerusalem because of their sins.

Prophet Ezekiel declared: This is what the Sovereign LORD says: "This is Jerusalem, which I have set in the center of the nation, with countries all around her. Yet in her wickedness she has rebelled against my laws and decrees more than the nations and countries around her. She has rejected my laws and has not followed my decrees."

The Sovereign LORD added by saying: "I myself am against you, Jerusalem, and I will inflict punishment on you in the sight of the nations. Because of all your detestable idols, I will do to you what I have never done before and will never do again. Therefore in your midst fathers will eat their children, and children will eat their fathers. I will inflict punishment on you and will scatter all your survivors to the winds.

“Therefore as surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, because you have defiled my sanctuary with all your vile images and detestable practices, I myself will withdraw my favor; I will not look on you with pity or spare you. A third of your people will die of the plague or perish by famine inside your walls; and third will fall by the sword outside your walls; and third I will scatter to the winds and pursue with drawn sword.”

This is how terrible things will happen for those who sin against Almighty Yahweh and fail to repent. Similarly, Almighty Yahweh is also giving His warning to us now. Before it's too late, let us seek Him and His righteousness. Repent, and live a new life with Almighty Yahweh forever through faith in His Son Yahshua the Messiah.

Questions for Exercise:

True or False

1. _____ Prophet Ezekiel was called to deliver warnings to the people.
2. _____ Almighty Yahweh's love for His people is beyond compare.
3. _____ The people repented of their sins and returned to Almighty Yahweh.
4. _____ Babylon was at the center of Almighty Yahweh's love and affection.
5. _____ The people worship idols and other gods in the time of Ezekiel.
6. _____ Almighty Yahweh is patient with His people by sending prophets to remind and to correct them.
7. _____ Almighty Yahweh didn't bring Jerusalem to destruction and downfall because the people were faithful to Him.
8. _____ Almighty Yahweh said, “Therefore in your midst fathers will love their children and children will love their fathers.”
9. _____ Jerusalem sinned against Almighty Yahweh.
10. _____ A fourth of your people will die of the plague or perish by famine, A fourth will fall by the sword....

Judgment

Ezekiel 25-32

The first 24 chapters of the book of Ezekiel talk about the Israelites who repeatedly broke the law of Almighty Yahweh, and the great punishment that awaits to them who fail to repent of their sins. In the succeeding chapters, the prophet's vision of judgment expands to the nations around Israel, nations that oppressed and misled Almighty Yahweh's people.

This is what the Sovereign LORD says: "I am determined to inflict punishments to those nations who acted in vengeance and took revenge with malice on their hearts and with ancient hostility sought to destroy Judah."

The Sovereign LORD further declares that: "Those nations that said 'Aha!' over My sanctuary when it was laid waste, and over the land of Israel when it was laid waste, over the people of Judah when they went into exile, and to rulers and kings who took pride in their hearts: who says, 'I am a god; I sit on the throne of a god in the heart of the seas and who think they were wise, as wise as a god.'

"Therefore, with such violence and wickedness, I the Sovereign LORD is determined to carry out great vengeance on them and punish them in my wrath. Then, these nations, kings and rulers will know that I am the LORD."

After years of prophecy, Ezekiel's vision of judgment on Israel and to its neighboring nations finally came to its fulfillment. The people heard His words but they did not listen and obey, so they suffered the consequences of their actions.

My dear brothers and sisters in Yahshua the Messiah, if you hear Almighty Yahweh's words through His servants never ignore even the simplest of things, most especially His warnings, but seek His will and pray for guidance before you make any negative conclusion of the matter, so that in the end you will not regret nor suffer the punishment that awaits to those who fail to repent of their sins and do the Father's will.

Questions for Exercise:

1. Did the people listen to Prophet Ezekiel?
2. What did Almighty Yahweh do to the people who refused to repent and return to Him?
3. What did Almighty Yahweh say to the nations who acted in vengeance and took revenge with malice on their hearts and with ancient hostility sought to destroy Judah?

DANIEL

Introduction:

The book of Daniel tells about the life and works of Daniel during their captivity in Babylon. Daniel is very well known having thrown into the lions' den, for receiving visions from Almighty Yahweh, interpreting dreams and giving meaning to it.

This book includes also the life of his three loyal friends who remained faithful to their friendship and most especially to Yahweh Almighty. Daniel's faithfulness to Almighty Yahweh opened the spiritual senses of the kings-to know the truth and then come to realize and declare that there is only one Almighty God who is worthy of worship, praises and thanksgiving. Through the life of Daniel, Almighty Yahweh has been glorified forever.

FS

The Life of Daniel

Daniel

Daniel was a young boy when King Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem with his armies and Almighty Yahweh gave King Nebuchadnezzar victory over Jerusalem. When Nebuchadnezzar returned home he brought the sacred cups from the Temple of Yahweh Almighty and placed them in the treasury of his god in the land of Shinar. He also ordered Asphenaz, who was in charge of his palace personnel to select Jewish young men to bring captives, young men of royal family and nobility. Strong, healthy, good-looking and those who have read widely in many fields, are well informed, alert, sensible and have enough poise to look good around the palace and to teach them chaldean language and literature.

The Jewish boys that were selected and were given Babylonian names are: Daniel-Belteshazzar, Hananiah-Shadrach, Mishael-Meshach, Azariah-Abednego. The king provided them best food and wine while they would be under training for three years. But the boys made a negotiation with Asphenaz that they would eat only vegetables and drink water, they succeeded.

Almighty Yahweh gave these three youths great ability to learn and they soon mastered all the literature and science of the time. Almighty Yahweh gave to Daniel special ability in understanding the meanings of dreams and visions. When the three-year training period was completed, the superintendent brought all the young men to the king for oral exams, as he had been ordered to do. King Nebuchadnezzar had a long talk with each of them and none of them impressed the king as much as Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. So they were put on his regular staff of advisors. In all matters requiring information and balanced judgment, the king found these young men's advice ten times better than that of all the skilled magicians and wise astrologers in his realm. Daniel held this appointment as the King's counselor until the first year of the reign of King Cyrus.

A significant time for Daniel to shine and to show the greatness of Almighty Yahweh was when he told and interpreted the dream of King Nebuchadnezzar.

One night King Nebuchadnezzar has a terrifying dream and to make the matters worst, he could not remember his dream. He called all his magicians, incantationists, sorcerers, and astrologers and demanded them to tell his dream. Not one of them could tell his dream. Instead, they all said,

“There isn’t a man alive who can tell others what they have dreamed! And there isn’t a king in all the world who would ask such thing! This is an impossible thing the king requires. No one except the gods can tell you your dream, and they are not here to help.” Upon hearing this the king was so furious and sent out orders to execute all the wise men of Babylon which include Daniel and his three friends. When Daniel heard what happened, he went to see the king and ask for a time and he will tell him the dream. Then he went home and asked his three friends to pray to Almighty Yahweh to reveal to them the dream and the meaning of it. That night in a vision Yahweh Almighty told Daniel the King’s dream.

When Daniel received the dream, he praised Almighty Yahweh for answering their prayers, and went to see the king to tell his dream. Daniel acknowledged first the greatness of his God in heaven. “No wise man, astrologers, magicians, or wizard can tell the king such things, but there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has told you in your dream what will happen in the future. He who reveals secrets was speaking to you. But remember, it is not because I am wiser than any living person that I know this secret of your dream, Almighty Yahweh showed it to me for your benefit.” After Daniel revealed the dream and the meaning of it. King Nebuchadnezzar greatly rewarded Daniel. He gave him many valuable gifts, and appointed him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, as well as chief over all his wise men. Then at Daniel’s request, the king appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego as Daniel’s assistants, to be in charge of all the affairs of the province of Babylon while Daniel served as chief magistrate in the King’s Court.

Daniel remained dedicated to Yahweh Almighty all his life. He never forgot the commandments and the laws his ancestors obeyed and followed. In the midst of death, his faith was never shaken. His faith was founded strongly in the God of heaven and earth. So, through the life of Daniel Almighty Yahweh’s power and greatness was shown to the king and all the people of Babylon. Daniel remained true and faithful to Yahweh Almighty. He loved Him with all his heart and Almighty Yahweh blessed him abundantly. The Almighty’s protection and favor was upon him all of his life. His fame is even cherished by many of us until now.

Like Daniel’s, Almighty Yahweh has wonderful plans for our lives. He predestined every step we make because He loves us and He knows what’s best for each of us. But it is for us to make the right choice in everything that concerns our lives.

For all of us who love our Father and Savior, let us make Daniel our model and inspiration. Wherever we may be, whatever we do, we should not

copy what the heathen do; never worship the idols, images they made. In all circumstances, even if the whole world hates us, let us stand firm and true to our Father and Savior. In this way, Almighty Yahweh can also work great wonders and miracles through us. In this dark world and in the darkest hour, like Daniel we should never be shaken or afraid but let the light of our Father and Savior that is upon us shines so brightly to all.

I - Answer the following questions

1. Who is Daniel?
2. When was the time Daniel shine?
3. When Daniel together with his three friends and all the astrologers....were endanger to death, what did Daniel do?
4. Before Daniel revealed the dream and the meaning of it, what did he say first to the king?
5. Even while in foreign land, surrounded with idolaters, why do you think Daniel did not give up his faith in God Almighty?
6. How was Yahweh's greatness and power shown to the kings and to the people through the life of Daniel?

II - Knowledge/Comprehension

1. State the nine (9) requirements of the king concerning the young men to be selected to work in the palace.
2. What are the spiritual gifts of Daniel that come from Almighty Yahweh?
3. State the four (4) rewards Daniel received after he revealed and interpreted the king's dream.

III - Matching Type

Match Column A with Column B

<u>Column A</u>	<u>Column B</u>
_____1) The other name of the Israelites	a) Asphenaz
_____2) Meschach	b) Nebuchadnezzar
_____3) Incharge of palace personnel	c) Daniel
_____4) Shadrach	d) Azariah
_____5) Things place in the treasury in the land of Shinar.	e) Hebrew
_____6) Belteshazzar	f) Mishael
_____7) The language of the Babylonian	g) Sacred cups
_____8) Abednego	h) Hananiah
_____9) King of Babylon	i) Jerusalem - Judah
_____10) Country that is captured by a king	j) Chaldean

The Writing on the Wall

Daniel

When King Nebuchadnezzar died, his son Belshazzar became the new king of Babylon. One day Belshazzar invited thousands of his officials to a great feast. When King Belshazzar was drinking, he was reminded of the gold and silver cups taken long ago from the Temple in Jerusalem during King Nebuchadnezzar's reign. He ordered that these sacred cups be brought to him. When the cups arrived, he used it together with his princes, wives, and concubines. They drank toasts from it to their idols made of gold and silver, brass and iron, wood and stone.

As they were drinking from these sacred cups, they saw a mysterious hand writing words on the plaster of the wall opposite the lampstand. The King himself saw the fingers as they wrote. His face blanched with fear, and terror gripped him that his knees knocked together and his legs gave way beneath him.

He shouted to bring all the magicians, astrologers and the chaldeans to interpret the meaning of the words written on the wall. If anyone can interpret it, he will become the third ruler in the kingdom. But when they all arrived, none of them could understand or interpret the meaning of the words written on the wall. King Belshazzar grew more and more hysterical, his face reflected the terror he felt and his officers too were shaken. When the queen mother heard of what happened she rushed to the banquet hall and said to Belshazzar. "Calm yourself your majesty, don't be so pale and frightened over this. For there is a man in your kingdom who has within him the spirit of the holy gods. In the days of your father this man was found to be full of wisdom and understanding as though he were himself a god, and in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, he was made chief of all the magicians, astrologers, chaldeans and soothsayers of Babylon. Call for this man Belshazzar (Daniel), for his mind is filled with divine knowledge and understanding. He can interpret dreams, explain riddles and solve knotty problems. He will tell you what the writing means." So Daniel was called to see the king. When Daniel was in front of King Belshazzar, the king said that if Daniel can tell the meaning of those words written on the wall, King Belshazzar will give him reward and make him the third ruler in the kingdom.

Daniel answered, "Keep your gifts, or give them to someone else, but I will tell you what they mean. Your majesty the Most High God gave

Nebuchadnezzar, who long ago preceded you a kingdom and majesty and glory and honor. He gave him such majesty that all the nations of the world trembled before him in fear. He killed any who offended him, and spared anyone he liked. At his whim they rose or fell. But when his heart and mind were hardened with pride, Almighty God removed him from his royal throne and took away his glory and he was chased out of his palace into the fields. His thoughts and feelings became those of an animal, and he lived among the wild donkeys; he ate grass like cows and his body was wet with dew of heaven, until at last he knew that the Most High overrules the kingdoms of men and that he appoints anyone he desires to reign over them.

“And you, his successor, O Belshazzar - you knew all this, yet you have not been humbled. For you have defied the Lord of heaven and brought here these cups from His Temple, and you and your officers and wives and concubines have been drinking wine from them while praising gods of silver, gold, brass, iron, wood and stone - gods that neither see nor hear, nor knew anything at all. But you have not praised the God who gives you the breath of life and control your destiny! And so God sent those fingers to write this message: “Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin!

This is what it means!

‘Mene’ means “numbered” - Almighty Yahweh has numbered the days of your reign, and they are ended.

‘Tekel’ means “weighed” - you have been weighed in God’s balances and have failed the test.

‘Parsin’ means “divided”- your kingdom will be divided and given to the Medes and Persians.”

Then at Belshazzar’s command, Daniel was given the reward he promised to those who can tell the meaning of the words written on the wall. And Daniel was proclaimed the third ruler in the kingdom.

That very night, Belshazzar, the chaldean king was killed. And Darius the Mede entered the city and began reigning at the age of sixty-two.

This story reminds us how important it is to take heed the laws and regulations of Almighty Yahweh. The instructions that were given to Moses still apply to us now. One of these instructions is to remind always ourselves and to teach others the difference between what is holy and what is ordinary, what is pure and what is impure. The things that belong to Yahweh El, especially the things use for worship and everything inside the Temple is holy and sacred whether it is big or small - they are holy. We should not take it

lightly, it is our responsibility to remind or instruct our family, our congregation... the importance of this regulation; we should completely obey it with all our hearts. All who serve and worship God our Father in heaven must respect His holiness. The things use for worship must not be used in ordinary days and purpose. They must be well taken cared of after the worship service.

Our Father in heaven Almighty Yahweh is holy, just, faithful, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent. He is great and awesome in power. He alone is worthy of our praises, thanksgiving, highest respect and worship for there is none like Him.

My dear brethren each of us is accountable to all our deeds. Let us not provoke our God Almighty Yahweh to anger by doing the things that displease Him. Do not be ignorant of the truth; His rules, His instructions, His commands are still the same up to this very day. Do not wait until He will punish us and learn the hard way. Instead, we should be a light, a model to all the people of the world. They must see in our life that we have complete reverence to our God in heaven by doing the things that please Him. Let us always remind ourselves that our God in heaven is holy and all the things that belong to Him is sacred and holy. And, He said to us: "Be ye holy for I your God, Almighty Yahweh Am holy."

I - Multiple Choice:

1. Who is the king of Babylon that saw the mysterious hand that wrote on the wall?
 a) King Darius b) King Nebuchadnezzar c) King Belshazzar
2. Who is the woman who remembers the man who could interpret the writing on the wall?
 a) wife b) queen mother c) concubine
3. Who is the man who interpreted the writing on the wall and gave its meaning?
 a) Daniel b) Shadrach c) Abednego
4. When King Belshazzar was killed, who was the king who entered the city and began reigning at the age of sixty-two?
 a) King Ahab b) King Nadab c) King Darius
5. What is the reward to those who can interpret the writing on the wall?
 a) Advisor b) Third ruler in the kingdom c) Prince

II - Answer the following questions:

1. What were the reasons why there was a hand writing on the wall?
2. Why do you think the magicians, astrologers and the chaldeans could not interpret the writing on the wall?
3. What character the king had that destroyed him and the reason his kingdom was divided?
4. How did Daniel compare King Belshazzar with his father King Nebuchadnezzar?
5. What did Almighty Yahweh wants to tell to King Belshazzar?
6. How did Almighty Yahweh express His holiness?
7. Describe the god of Belshazzar.
8. Give the meaning of the following: a) Mene b) Tekel c) Parsin
9. What are the qualities of Daniel as described by the queen mother to Belshazzar?
10. Describe the difference of the holy and the unholy things?

III – Assessment:

1. What lesson have you learned from this incident?
2. Are you a good steward of the things Yahweh Elohim entrusted to you?
In what way?
3. Why is it so important to respect the things used in the Worship Service?
4. How will you show your complete reverence to Almighty Yahweh?

The Conviction of Daniel's Three Friends

Daniel

King Nebuchadnezzar made a gold statue ninety feet high and nine feet wide and set it up on the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon, then sent messages to all his officials, people to come to the dedication of his statue.

When all the people arrived and standing in front of the monument, the king's command was announced to everyone. "This is the king's command: That when the band began to play, everyone - whatever his nation, his language, his religion must fall to the ground and worship the statue. Anyone who refuses to obey will immediately be thrown into a flaming furnace." When the band began to play everyone fell to the ground except the three friends of Daniel. Some officials who were jealous with them went to the king and reported what happened. They said to the king, "Your majesty, you made a law that everyone must fall down and worship the gold statue when the band begins to play and that anyone who refuses will be thrown into a flaming furnace. But there are some Jews out there- Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, whom you have put in charge of the Babylonian affairs who have defied you, refusing to worship the gold statue you set up."

King Nebuchadnezzar was so furious and ordered to bring them in front of him. When they arrived, he questioned them if all the reports were true and gave them second chance that if they will bow down and worship the statue, he will spare their lives but if they will refuse they will be thrown into the flaming furnace.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied, "O King Nebuchadnezzar, we are not worried about what will happen to us. If we are thrown into the flaming furnace, our God is able to deliver us and He will deliver us out of your hand. But if He doesn't, please understand Sir, that even then we will never under any circumstance serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have erected." King Nebuchadnezzar was so furious, he commanded his men that the furnace be heated seven times hotter than usual. Daniel's three friends were bound with ropes tightly, and fully clothes when they were thrown to the furnace. It was so hot that the flames leaped out and killed the soldiers who threw Daniel's three friends.

As they were watching, the king was so amazed that there were four men standing in the flaming furnace. He saw four men walking, unbound and weren't hurt. "The fourth man," the king said, "look like a god." King

Nebuchadnezzar called Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to come out. So they came out.

King Nebuchadnezzar and his officials crowded around them and saw that the fire hadn't touched them in any way. They were miraculously kept safe.

King Nebuchadnezzar said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego for He sent His angel to deliver His trusting servants when they defied the king's commandments and were willing to die rather than to serve or worship any god except their own. Therefore, I make this decree that any person of any nation, language, or religion who speaks a word against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn from limb and limb and his house knocked into a heap of rubble. For no other God can do what this one does."

Then the king gave promotions to Daniel's three friends-Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and they prospered greatly there in the province of Babylon.

The conviction of Daniel's three friends to do what they believe is right, to obey Almighty Yahweh's commands, and to stand firm even when they were threatened with the fiery furnace, brought honor to Almighty Yahweh. Together they held to their faith and conviction that the Almighty will greatly reward any decision made to honor and praise Him.

How blessed is a person who finds good, loyal, faithful friends like the three friends of Daniel who were faithful to Yahweh Almighty and to their friendship. In this world, we can rarely find true and loyal friends; friends who stand by you at all times. Friends who stand by your side in times of hardship and struggles, like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego who, even to the point of death, they were hand in hand standing together against their enemies. They never betrayed their friendship, and most of all their faith in Yahweh Almighty. Their faith and their friendship were severely tested and they stayed strong forever.

Brethren, we may not be literally put in fiery furnace but our faith is constantly tested and will certainly be tested severely. And, Yahshua the Messiah prayed, "Father, I pray that they may be one even as we are one." Do we know who are our brethren, and who are our enemies? As brethren, are we one on standing against our enemies? Yahshua the Messiah said: If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask what you will and it shall be done unto you." Let us make sure that we know our enemies and take heed the words of our Father and Savior. For, only then can we stand victorious and say that

truly, “greater is He who is in us than he that is in the world.” Then, every one will bow, every tongue will confess the goodness, the greatness, the loving-kindness and tender mercies of our Father and Savior.

In times of great trouble, remember that our Father said: “Call unto me and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not. He will call upon me and I will answer him, I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him, with long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation.”

I - Answer the following questions:

1. What is the meaning of conviction?
2. What did King Nebuchadnezzar make that brought Daniel’s three friends to the fiery furnace?
3. What is the conviction of Daniel’s three friends that made King Nebuchadnezzar very furious?
4. When they were in crisis, what did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego do to remain strong?
5. In what way did God Almighty show His great power and bring glory to His name through the life of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.
6. What makes King Nebuchadnezzar realized and convicted of all the wrong he did?
7. After King Nebuchadnezzar was convicted of his sins, what did he do?

II – Assessment:

1. When is the time when we feel convicted?
2. Have you experienced having someone stood beside you when someone accused you falsely? How did you feel?
3. Have you experienced Almighty Yahweh used some incidents in your life to bring glory to His name?

IV – Application:

1. How can you show to the world your faith and commitment to Yahweh Elohim?
2. When trials or testing of your faith is severe and inevitable what would you do?
3. Many of our ancestors died because of their faith and ministry. Are you ready to do your part?

Daniel's Confidence in Almighty Yahweh

Daniel

The reigning king at this time was King Darius. King Darius divided the kingdom into 120 provinces, each under a governor. The governors were accountable to three high officials (Daniel was one of them), so the king could administer the kingdom efficiently.

Daniel proved himself more capable than all other officials and governors for he had great ability, and the king began to think placing him over the entire empire as his administrative officer.

The other officials and governors were very jealous and began searching for some faults in the way Daniel handles the affair so that they could complain to the king. But they could not find one. Daniel was honest, true, and faithful in everything he did. So they conspired to attack his religious life. They convinced the king to make a law that for the next thirty days anyone who asks a favor from anyone except from the king himself will be executed or thrown to the lions' den. They requested the king to sign the law so that it cannot be canceled, it will be the law of the Medes and Persians. The king signed the law.

Though Daniel knew about it, he was not afraid, he went to his home and knelt down as usual in his upstairs bedroom, with its windows open toward Jerusalem, and prayed three times a day, just as he always had done, giving thanks to Almighty Yahweh.

Then the men found Daniel in his house praying, asking favor to his God. They ran back to the king and reminded him about his law. They said: "Haven't you signed a decree, that permits no petitions to any God or man except you, for thirty days? And anyone who disobeys will be thrown to the lions?" The king replied, "Yes." Then they told him that Daniel didn't pay attention to his law and is asking favor to his God three times a day.

The king was so sad that he signed the law. He was determined to save Daniel's life. But Daniel's opponent won't stop telling the king that the law he signed cannot be changed. At last, the king gave his order to arrest Daniel and throw him to the lions' den. The king said to Daniel, "May your God, whom you worship continually deliver you." The people threw him in and placed a stone over the mouth of the den and the king sealed it with his signet ring and that of his government, so that no one could rescue Daniel. The king returned to his home sadly, he didn't sleep all night. One early morning he hurried out to the lions' den, and called out in anguish, "O Daniel, servant of the living

God, was your God whom you worship continually, able to deliver you from the lions?" Then the king heard Daniel's voice! "Your majesty, live forever! My God has sent His angel and shut the lions' mouth, so that they can't touch me, for I am innocent before Almighty Yahweh, nor Sir, have I wronged you."

The king was full of joy and ordered to lift Daniel from the den and not a scratch was found in him. The king commanded to arrest all the opponents of Daniel including their families and to put them in the lions' den. The lions leaped and tore them apart before they could even reach the bottom.

The king decreed that everyone in every part of his kingdom should tremble and fear before the God of Daniel. "For his God is the living, unchanging God whose kingdom shall never be destroyed and whose power shall never end. He delivers his people, preserving them from harm, he does great miracles in heaven and earth; it is He who delivered Daniel from the power of the lions." Daniel prospered in the reign of King Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

Almighty Yahweh is so good to His faithful people; He never ran out of ways to save the life of His chosen ones. They were always safe under His protection, and we can learn a lot from the life and experiences of Daniel. In the midst of troubles, even to the point of death, Daniel didn't compromise his faith. He remained strong and true to his God in heaven. He was never afraid, instead he remained calm and prayed more. His real confidence was based upon Almighty Yahweh's love and ability to take care of him whatever the situation he's in. He was willing to be put to death rather than do what they wanted him to do, the things Yahweh Elohim abhors.

We should not be surprised that there are points in our life that even how good our intention is and how right the things we do, there are people who find a way to destroy us. These people are jealous of who you are and what you are. Most of them were motivated by their evil desires or satan himself must have motivated them. But don't be afraid, don't panic, don't be tired of doing what is right, never give up your faith in our Father and Savior. "Don't be terrified of anyone that kills the flesh instead fear the one who can bring eternal damnation of our spirit. Say, 'I'd rather obey Almighty Yahweh than mere man'."

Living a faithful life is not easy; it even causes the enemy to draw more obstacles on our path. Sometimes they seem so unbearable to handle. Sometimes we are tempted to give up. But don't surrender, keep trusting in our Father and Savior. He knows everything, nothing is hidden from him. The hands of Almighty Yahweh are not short that He cannot help us. He will surely

turn every adverse condition to our great advantage. His favor is upon us always. He will make our situation a turning point for people to know who you really are, and how mighty your God is. Keep on praying as Daniel did, as this is one of our great weapons against the enemy. Be confident that God can lead you safely through any situation - no matter what. We may not be put to death to the lions' den but during our unpleasant situation we will know how strong we are in the Lord. Our confidence in the Lord must be proven valid in every situation.

Like Daniel let us be confident in Almighty Yahweh's power. Let us remember that through Daniel's life God in heaven opened the eyes of the king and caused him to know and acknowledge that the true king - the King of kings is the God of Daniel. Most of all, the king decreed that the people will fear the true God, the God of Daniel and acknowledge His supremacy at all times.

So then, let us live a life that pleases Almighty Yahweh and allow Him to use our difficult situations as instrument for all His people to know and acknowledge Him as their Creator, Father, Savior, and King.

I - Answer the following questions:

1. What is the position of Daniel during the times of King Darius?
2. Why were the other officials and governors very jealous towards Daniel?
3. Did the enemies of Daniel find faults the way he handled his position? Why?
4. What did the enemies know about Daniel and use it to plot evil against him?
5. How did Daniel prove that his confidence in Yahweh Almighty is valid?
6. What is the reaction of King Darius when he found out the agenda of Daniel's enemies?
7. Where was Daniel thrown?
8. How did Almighty Yahweh show His great love to Daniel?
9. What did King Darius do to the opponent of Daniel?

10. After Almighty Yahweh saved Daniel, what was the decree of King Darius throughout his empire?
11. How did King Darius describe the God of Daniel?
12. In your own words, describe the great authority of Yahweh Almighty?

II – Assessment:

1. Name one of our great weapons as Christians? How can this weapon be useful in our journey in this world?
2. Do you believe in Holy Angels? Explain your answer.
3. Write a personal experience, when your faith was being questioned, tested, or attacked by enemies. What did you do and how Almighty Yahweh saved you?
4. What is the great promise of Yahweh Elohim to those who remain faithful to Him at all times?
5. Cite other examples or situation that Almighty Yahweh shows His great power to the world. (Give 10 examples or situation)
6. What is the positive effect if we put our confidence in Yahweh Elohim alone at all times?

III – Application:

1. Do you believe that Almighty Yahweh can also work mightily in your life? What do you do to be prepared at all times?
2. During your unpleasant moment or situation, what is the best thing you have to do?
3. Write down every step you will do to make your confidence in Yahweh Elohim remain strong in every situation you are in.

HOSEA

Introduction:

Hosea is the first book of the twelve minor prophets. He preached in the Northern Kingdom of Israel before the fall of Samaria in 721 B.C. Since the times were outwardly prosperous, idolatry prevailed and immorality was rampant. The prophet pictured the faithlessness of the people in terms of his own marriage to an unfaithful woman named Gomer.

His message urged the people to return to Almighty Yahweh and he encouraged them by letting them know how much Almighty Yahweh love them. He boldly expressed Yahweh's love with his touching words: "How can I give you up, Israel? How can I abandon you?... My heart will not let me do it! My love for you is too strong."

JS

Hosea's Marriage to Gomer

Hosea

Hosea's marriage to an unfaithful woman named Gomer was a picture of the whole nation's unfaithfulness to the Father in heaven, Yahweh. Just as Hosea loved and cared for his wife in spite of her acts of adultery, so was the Almighty to the nation of Israel. Yahweh El so loved Israel that He blessed them with good land full of grain, wine, olive oil, silver and gold. He protected them, but, instead of acknowledging his love and giving to Him their thanks and offering, they used all that He has given to them in the worship of idols which Almighty Yahweh warned His people not to do.

Through prophet Hosea Almighty Yahweh spoke to His people Israel in words and in deeds through the life of the prophet's family, and called them to repent and return to him. Yahweh El said, "Return to me or I will strip you naked in front of your lovers....I will put an end to your festivals, religious meetings, and celebrations. I will destroy your grapevines, fig trees, and crops. I will turn your vineyard and orchards into a wilderness."

It is clear that Almighty Yahweh treats the nation He has chosen as His wife and the people as His children. As a good husband, He loves and cares for His family. He protects and warns them of any danger, and punishes His children when necessary.

Exercises:

YES if the statement is correct. NO if the statement is not correct.

1. Giving thanks and offering to idols is an act of unfaithfulness to Almighty Yahweh. _____
2. People can go on disobeying the Almighty because He is loving and merciful. _____
3. Prophet Hosea married a prostitute/unfaithful woman to give example to other men that they should marry a prostitute. _____
4. The wealth of the nations like good land, good harvest, silver and gold come from Almighty Yahweh. _____
5. Almighty Yahweh sternly warned His people that He will strip the nation of its wealth and punish them if they deliberately go on sinning. _____
6. Disobeying the Almighty means turning away from Him and forgetting Him. _____
7. We should be good stewards of the wealth of the nation and give thanks offering to the heavenly Father. _____

“The People are Under the Spell of Idols”

Hosea

Almighty Yahweh has a complaint against His people. He says, “Like a prostitute, my people has left me; they have defiled themselves by worshipping idols. They ask for revelations from a piece of wood, and a stick tells them what they want to know. Idolatry has a powerful hold on them.”

“They took their silver and gold and made idols for their destruction. Craftsmen made the idols and the people worship it. The more altars they build for removing sin, the more places they have for sinning! The more prosperous they became, the more altars they built. The more productive their land was, the more beautiful they made their pagan places of worship.”

As a result Almighty Yahweh says, “My people have become senseless and are doomed. They make promises and break them; they lie, they commit adultery, murder, steal, and are guilty of robbery. They delight in prostitution and prefer disgrace to honor.”

“My people are so sick and their wounds would not heal because they abandoned me and ignored my teachings, so I will abandon and punish you all. I will turn your honor into disgrace.” Yahweh Almighty says.

When the people realized that the Almighty has forsaken them because of their ways, they said to one another, “Let’s return to the Almighty that our wounds would be healed. As surely as the day dawns, as surely as the spring rain falls upon the earth, He will come to us and revive us; He will make us live in His presence.”

But Almighty Yahweh answered: “Israel and Judah your love for me disappears as quickly as morning mist; it is like dew that vanishes early in the day.... What I want from you is plain and clear. I want your constant love....”

Exercises:

1. Why were the people so sick?
2. What does Almighty Yahweh want from His people?
3. From your observation, in few words, write about idolatry.

Almighty Yahweh's Wonderful Love

Hosea

"I was the One who taught Israel to walk.

I took my people up in my arms,

I drew them to me with affection and love.

I picked them up and held them to my cheek;

But my people refused to acknowledge that I took care of them."

Almighty Yahweh loved His people so much but the people He loved and cared for have become rebellious to the point that He was compelled to punish them. He said, "Because you refuse to return to me, war will sweep through the cities and break down the city gates. I will destroy my people because they do what they themselves think best, and insist on turning away from me."

True, indeed, devastating war swept them away like a mighty storm, but Almighty Yahweh Himself was in pain when he saw how much His people suffered. He admitted how much anguish He felt and how much love He had for them when He said, "How can I give you up, Israel? How can I abandon you? Could I ever destroy you as I did Admah, or treat you as I did Zeboiim? My heart will not let me do it! My love for you is too strong."

Almighty Yahweh's love and promises to His people are boundless and lasting. They are also true to us now; to us who live in reverence for Him by believing in His Son Yahshua the Messiah, who said: He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me shall be loved by my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him (John 14: 21).

Questions for Exercise:

1. What caused the war that swept through the cities, broke the city gates and destroyed the people?
2. In three or five sentences describe how much Almighty Yahweh love His people.
3. What should we do in order to show our love and reverence to our Father in heaven Yahweh, Yahshua the Messiah, and the Holy Spirit?

JOEL

Introduction:

The book of Joel was written during the time when the people of Judah was in great distress; a time when devastating drought and locust plagued the land. The prophet perceived that the devastation is an indication of the coming day of the Almighty. A time when Almighty Yahweh punishes those who opposed His will.

However, the prophet was also careful to convey Almighty Yahweh's promises of restoration and blessing to those who sincerely repent and return to Him. Noteworthy is the promise that the Almighty will send His Spirit upon the people, man and woman, young and old, and they will dream dreams and see visions, they will prophesy.

JS

Drought and Locusts

Joel

While the field grows drier and drier everyday and the pastures and trees wither, the ground mourns, the streams go dry, the flocks of sheep suffer, the cattle are bellowing in distress, the seeds die in dry earth, the crops are destroyed, four types of locusts attacked what they could find and see. After the cutter-locusts finished eating the crops, the swarm-locusts ate what was left. Then the hopper-locusts came, and the stripper-locusts too.

The people were helpless and terribly in distress. Their joy and feasting were all gone. There was no more celebration. Instead of rejoicing, they cried and groaned, they grieved and mourned because the land that was full of good things is now empty and barren.

Through the events Prophet Joel saw Yahweh's fury upon His people; he saw that the drought and locusts attack or the plague was Almighty Yahweh's punishment for the sins of the people, and a warning of the coming 'Day of the LORD'; a dark and gloomy day. A day when the earth shakes and the sky trembles. A day of great destruction.

Nevertheless, the prophet was also careful to convey to the people the Almighty's love and mercy. "Repent sincerely and return to me", Yahweh El said, "with fasting and weeping and mourning. Let your broken heart show your sorrow...."

The prophet also encouraged the people by saying, "Come back to the LORD your GOD. He is kind and full of mercy; He is patient and keeps His promise; He is always ready to forgive. Perhaps the LORD your GOD will change His mind and bless you with abundant crops."

Almighty Yahweh's wrath is terrible and terrifying. No one is strong enough to stand against His power. So let us not provoke Him to anger. Let us worship Him alone, make a constant evaluation of our relationship with Him and abide with Him always.

Let us humbly and sincerely return to Him before it is too late. Remember, "He is kind and full of mercy; He is ready to forgive."

Questions for Exercise:

1. What caused the plague?
2. What should the people do when they are being punished by the Almighty?
3. What are the four types of locusts?
4. What is the 'Day of the LORD'? or Describe the 'Day of the LORD'.

Responsibilities of Elders and Priests

Joel

Prophet Ezekiel made it clear that the priests are to study Yahweh's laws and keep them, and to teach the people to do the same. They are to make a distinction between what is holy and what is not. They are to teach the difference between clean and unclean things.

The New Testament also tells us that Yahshua the Messiah gave gifts to mankind. He appointed some to be apostles, others to be prophets, others to be evangelists, others to be pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of the Messiah which is the Assembly of believers or the church.

So, in times like the time of Prophet Joel when the people was hit with a terrible plague, what could be the reason why the people failed to keep the Law of the Almighty and sin against Him? The case is like a single coin with two sides. There is only one reason, with two sides involved; the side of the elders or apostles, priests, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers; and the side of the people.

It could be that Yahweh's ministers failed to teach the people the way of righteousness because they were not faithful in doing their duties and responsibilities, or the people were too rebellious that they refused to be taught. But, whichever side failed, the fact remains that sin is abominable in the sight of our Father in heaven and unless the people repent and return to Him punishment is certain and suffering is the sure consequence.

During the great drought and locusts attack, Prophet Joel called the attention of the priests and elders; he urged them to lead the people to come back to the Almighty Father. He said to them: "Give orders for a fast; call a solemn assembly! Gather the people of Judah and cry out to the Almighty. Gather the people together; prepare for a sacred meeting; bring the old people, the children, and the babies too. Even newly married couples must leave their homes and come. Come to the Almighty with fasting, weeping, and mourning. Come to the Temple-weep and pray: 'Have pity on your people LORD!'"

Are you a priest or an elder? A minister or a follower? Remember we all have responsibilities towards one another and one day we will all stand before our Maker and Master who will reward everyone according to what he has done.

Questions for Exercise:

I.

1. What is repentance?
2. Does it mean that when we have repented, we do not anymore commit mistakes?
3. What is the main duty of the elders, priests, and ministers?
4. What is the common consequence of disobedience and sin.

- II. Do you think our nation/world needs religious reforms? If yes, what reforms would you suggest? If no, explain your answer.

The Promise of Restoration

Joel

“In the years that swarm of locusts ate your crops, it was I who sent this army against you. But I will give you back what you lost. The threshing places will be full of grain; the pits beside the presses will overflow with wine and olive oil. Fields, don’t be afraid, but be glad. Animals, don’t be sad but be joyful because the pastures are green. People of Zion rejoice at what the Almighty has done; rejoice and sing for joy. The trees bear their fruits, there are plenty of grapes and figs. The field produces abundant crops.”

How wonderful! The Almighty Father is really wonderful. He is holy and His heart is full of love and compassion. As the Psalmist put it: “His mercy endures from generation to generations.” Because the Almighty is holy, He does not tolerate evil and punishes the evil doers. Yes, the book of Prophet Joel is a clear message that the Almighty punishes His people to correct them, not to completely destroy them. Almighty Yahweh does not take pleasure in seeing His people suffer but He has to punish them because He cannot allow them to go on sinning and be destroyed by their evil actions.

We are not Israelites or people of Zion, but we became children of the Almighty Father through our faith in His Son Yahshua the Messiah. We are the people he really cares for. As children or people of the holy and gracious Father, we should be good, loving, and obedient children. Children who bring honor and glory to the Father who deserves all the glory and the best of our praises and thanksgiving.

Questions for Exercise

True or False

1. Almighty Yahweh is holy and His heart is full of love and compassion. _____
2. Almighty Yahweh does not take pleasure in seeing His people suffer. _____
3. Father Yahweh does not punish His children because it pains Him to see them suffer. _____

4. When the Almighty punishes, He punishes them for complete destruction. _____
5. As children, we should not provoke our Father to anger but live as good, loving, obedient children. _____
6. We are not Israelites, so we should not obey the Almighty Father as the Israelites should. _____
7. We became children of the Father in heaven through our faith in Yahshua the Messiah, and faith requires obedience even as Yahshua the Messiah said: "Whoever loves me will obey my teaching." _____
8. _____ Almighty Yahweh's mercy for His children endures from generation to generations.
9. Almighty Yahweh promised to restore Israel because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob..., David _____.
10. _____ Almighty Yahweh did not send the locust; it was just an accident.

AMOS

Introduction:

Prophet Amos was an herdsman from Tekoa, a small town in Judah. He preached to the people of the northern kingdom of Israel, about the middle of the eight century B.C. The land enjoyed great prosperity but the prophet saw that prosperity was limited to the powerful and there was apparent injustice and oppression on the people.

Prophet Amos also saw that religious observance was insincere. In his preaching, the prophet put emphasis on justice and righteousness by saying: "Let justice flow like a stream, and righteousness like a river that never goes dry" (Amos 5:24).

FS

*Almighty Yahweh's Message
through Prophet Amos*

Amos

When you read the book of Prophet Amos, you will notice that the book began with the message about Almighty Yahweh's judgment on many places such as Syria, Philistia, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Moab, Judah, and Samaria.

Every time the prophet prophesied against a nation, he started by saying: Yahweh Almighty says, "The people sinned again and again, and for this I will certainly punish them."

It is sad to note that the message of the Father to His children or people is constantly about punishment because they have sinned again and again. Since the 'fall of man' which has been for a long time already, I believe this has been the cycle of events in this world. A cycle of sin, punishment or judgment, anguish and pain; the Father's love and mercy, and restoration. Then when restoration begins, before it reaches its peak it collapses again because of sin.

Wouldn't it be better and nicer to live in a cycle full of pure love, holiness, and abundant blessings from the Father in heaven? Remember, each one of us is part of either cycle. Which cycle would you choose?

Activity: Choose from the following

- a) Make a skit showing a father and mother who grow tired and sick because of a rebellious son.
- b) A rebellious son who later repent like the prodigal son.
- c) A cycle of a happy life.

The Task of the Prophets

Amos

We have been studying the words of the prophets and certainly, mankind has been greatly blessed by their lives and their works. But, what is really the task of a prophet? The prophets' task is wonderful and very challenging. It is wonderful in that the Almighty Father talks to them through divine dreams or visions, and even through audible voice. We can also say that they are very close to the Father in heaven that the Father shares with them His thoughts and reveals to them His plans. Amos 3: 7 declares, The Sovereign LORD never does anything without revealing His plan to his servants, the prophets. So, the prophets have the privilege of knowing things in advance what is going to happen. Surely, these are all nice! It is really nice to be close to somebody who is holy and Almighty. On the other hand, it is very challenging because often they are to proclaim the Father's judgment or punishment on His people because of their sins. They are to warn the people and cause them to repent of their sins or return to the Almighty, otherwise, severe punishment will fall upon them.

The prophets did not live a happy and enjoyable life. On the contrary, they had suffered much and wept often. Most of them were mistreated, arrested, imprisoned, tortured and murdered because of the message that they proclaimed. The reality is therefore very clear that the people in general are proud and arrogant. They do not want to be corrected, guided, and disciplined, even if it is for their own safety and well-being. A sad reality that no one can evade or hide and escape.

Given the choice, I think very few people or none at all would choose to become Yahweh's prophets. But, it is the Almighty Himself who chose them because He trusts them. On the part of the prophets there is also a compelling force within him that urges him to perform his task. As the scripture says: "When the Sovereign LORD speaks who can keep from proclaiming his message?"

Activity:

1. Everybody, memorize the following Bible verses:

- Son, when the LORD corrects you, pay close attention and take it as a warning.

- The LORD corrects those he loves, as a father corrects a son in whom he delights (Proverbs 3: 11-12).
- The Sovereign LORD never does anything without revealing his plan to his servants, the prophets (Amos 3: 7).
- When the Sovereign LORD speaks who can keep from proclaiming his message? (Amos 3: 8)

2. Choral Recitation

Prophet Amos' Visions

Amos

Prophet Amos was faithful in his task as prophet. In all his prayers, he pleaded to the Father in heaven in behalf of the people.

The Prophet had five visions: A vision of Locusts, A vision of Fire, A vision of a Plumb line, A vision of a Basket of Fruits, A vision of the Almighty Standing by the Altar.

In a vision of locusts, the prophet saw the locusts eat up every green thing in the land. The prophet prayed: "Sovereign LORD, forgive your people! How can they survive? They are so small and weak!"

"The LORD changed his mind and said, 'What you saw will not take place!'"

In a vision of fire, the prophet saw the Almighty preparing to punish His people with fire. "The fire burned up the great ocean under the earth and started to burn up the land. The prophet said: 'Stop Sovereign LORD! How can your people survive? They are so small and weak!'"

"The LORD changed his mind again and said, 'This will not take place either!'"

How comforting to know that the prophets have certain influence in the plan and decision of the Almighty. Indeed, "the prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

In a vision of a plumb line, the Almighty Father said to the Prophet, "I am using it to show that my people are like a wall that is out of line."

In a vision of a basket of fruits, the Almighty said to prophet Amos, "The end has come for my people Israel."

In the fifth and last vision where the prophet saw the Almighty standing by the Altar, He gave a command: "Strike the tops of the Temple Columns so hard that the foundation will shake. Break them off and let them fall on the heads of the people. I will kill the rest of the people in war."

Unfortunately, in the last three visions the Almighty was already determined to punish His people and not change His mind. "The Sovereign LORD touches the earth, and it quakes; all who live there mourns. The whole world rises and falls.... I will shake my people among the nations to remove all who are worthless. The sinners among my people will be killed in war."

In all these visions, Prophet Amos was faithful in proclaiming Almighty Yahweh's message to His people, not counting or fearing the cost.

Questions:

I-

1. Enumerate the five visions of Prophet Amos.
2. What is the purpose of the visions?
3. In the message of Prophet Amos, how does Yahweh Almighty remove all who are worthless?
4. What will happen to the sinners?
5. How important are the prayers of righteous man and woman?

II-

1. Describe Prophet Amos and the five visions he saw. Give at least three adjectives for Prophet Amos, and also for each vision.
2. If you were the first person that Amos told about his visions, what would you do? Would you support him? Why?

OBADIAH

Introduction:

Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament. It has only one chapter and was written some time after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. The time when the Jews were sent into exile by the Babylonians.

The prophet, Obadiah, prophesied that Edom would be punished and defeated, along with other nations that were the enemies of Israel.

TS

Vessel of Inspiration

Obadiah

The book of Obadiah tells us of a vision of a man during Israel's one of its trying times. It is such a comforting and inspiring "the only chapter" of the book in times of the chosen people's downfall, difficulty and distress. So, what are the virtues one can glean from the book of Obadiah?

One dominant and important virtue is openness to the messages of our Heavenly Father Yahweh. Obadiah received a vision from Almighty Yahweh and then prophesied Israel's victory against its enemies in the time where they were defeated and taken advantage by their enemies. It further narrates of its enemies' downfall and Israel's freedom from ruins and shame. It was such an important message at that time for somehow it showed as an inspiration for a troubled, distressed and forsaken people. It became a reason to move on and strive hard in spite of their distasteful situation.

Like Obadiah, let us pray for that gift of openness for Yahweh's messages with the hope that we become vessels or instrument of inspiration; that we may be able to touch lives and be a blessing to many.

The book of Obadiah is just very short, in fact, only one (1) chapter, but it has somehow become a very important book for it served its purpose in a given time. Let us aspire also that in our given time and in our own little way we would be able to serve our purpose here on earth.

Questions / Activity for the Portfolio:

1. Meditate and listen to your heart.... What is our Heavenly Father telling you right now?
2. Do you know your purpose here on earth in your given time? If so, what is it?

JONAH

Introduction:

The book of Jonah contains the story of a prophet sent by God to Nineveh, the capital city of the empire of Assyria. The prophet tried to flee by sea to Tarshish. But during the voyage his fellow passengers were forced to throw him overboard by the prophet's urging, and because of the great storm. He was saved by a big fish sent by God which swallowed him.

After a series of dramatic events, he positively answered God's call and went around Nineveh preaching the message of repentance. The prophet was successful because through his preaching the King ordered that everyone in his empire man and animals should fast to show their repentance.

JS

“Rise and Shine”

Jonah

Humble, repentant, selfless and obedient—these are the qualities that Jonah had and these are a few of the qualities that Heavenly Father Yahweh desires (or even expects) His people to have.

In what respect was Jonah humble, repentant, selfless and obedient?

Jonah was humble because when he knew he was the cause of the storm he willingly admitted to the sailors that he was the cause of their ordeal. Jonah said, “I know it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you” (Jonah 1: 12). Some people could have kept quiet about it or worse deny it but Jonah humbly admitted it and risked being the center of the passengers and crews anger, irritations and blaming. As children of our Heavenly Father Yahweh we should learn to be responsible to accept the consequences of our actions and decisions—whether favorable or unfavorable (good or bad). The blessing of healing and forgiveness flows better when a person accepts his/her mistakes and somehow openly submits or accepts the consequences of it. Like Jonah’s situation, our Heavenly Father Yahweh was able to freely released His forgiveness to Jonah and provided him a “detour” or an “alternative” to his perilous situation.

Further, Jonah was repentant, in spite the fact that Jonah committed a sin by fleeing from the instructions of our Heavenly Father Yahweh, he seriously lamented of that mistake and that the whole chapter two (2) of his book was devoted to his prayer.

Another part of reflection about Jonah’s life is the fact that what comes with repentance is action. It is not enough to wail and lament but also to do something about it. Well, just a caution also that whatever action man does, it should be under the will of our Heavenly Father Yahweh. Jonah, after he had admitted that he was at fault, summoned all his courage to go to Nineveh and preach the word of our Heavenly Father Yahweh to everyone there. (Take note, this task was the one he tried to avoid in the earlier part of the story because of his own reasons). Jonah set aside all his doubts and questions with the task handed to him (read Jonah 4: 1) and just did what our Heavenly Father Yahweh asked him to do - complete surrender and trust to our Heavenly Father Yahweh and to His instructions knowing that His plans are always for the good of mankind.

Jonah was also selfless. This is one virtue described to be as a “glimpse” of what Yahshua the Messiah did for mankind hundreds of years (900-800) after Jonah. Though perfect, Yahshua the Messiah gave up His life for all of us sinners. Jonah, too, willingly sacrificed his own life to save the people on board the ship he was in. He said “pick me up and throw me into the sea....and it will become calm” (Jonah 1: 12). Jonah knew he was the cause of the great storm and he was willing to do whatever it takes to correct any mistake he had done.

How many of us are like Jonah? We are all not perfect but we continue to shape our lives to the image that our Heavenly Father Yahweh wants us to be. It's never too late to start now....

Reflection:

For the Portfolio

1. Draw and describe the things that you did, you are doing or you are going to do to live in the image of our Heavenly Father Yahweh.

MICAH

Introduction:

Prophet Micah was from a town in Judah. He was a contemporary of Prophet Isaiah. Like Prophet Amos who prophesied for the Northern Kingdom, Micah was also convinced that the Southern Kingdom—Judah was about to face a catastrophe. Almighty Yahweh would punish Judah because of injustice.

However, the prophet also proclaimed a message of hope for the future. Hope for future universal peace and a great King who would come from the family line of King David.

FS

Micah's Lament over Judah and Samaria

Micah

“Hear this, all you nations; listen to this, all who live on earth! The Sovereign Lord will testify against you.... because of this I will mourn and lament. To show my sorrow, I will walk around naked and barefoot. I will howl like a jackal and wail like an ostrich.

“People of Judah, cut off your hair in mourning for the children you love..., because your children will be taken away from you into exile. The Sovereign Lord says, ‘I am planning to bring disaster on you and you will not walk so proudly anymore.’

“Listen, you rulers.... You are supposed to be concerned about justice, yet you hate what is good and love what is evil.... The time is coming when you will cry out to the Lord, but he will not answer you. He will not listen to your prayers for you have done evil.

“Listen to me, you rulers..., you hate justice and turn right into wrong. You are building God’s city on a foundation of murder and injustice. The rulers govern for bribes, the priests interpret the Law for pay, the prophets give their revelations for money – and they all claim that the Lord is with them.”

Questions for Exercise:

1. What are the sins of the people that Prophet Micah pointed out?
2. Are the ways of the people – rulers in our country today the same/different from the ways of the people in Judah and Samaria centuries ago? How?
3. How should we build our cities or what should be the foundation of our cities?
4. How did Prophet Micah describe the rulers; the priests, and the prophets?
5. Memorize Micah 6: 8.

*The Prophets' Declaration
of
Universal Peace*

Micah

Prophet Micah

“In days to come the mountains where the Temple stands will be the highest one of all, towering above all the hills. Many nations will say, ‘Let us go up the hill of the Lord, to the Temple of Israel’s God. For he will teach us what he wants us to do; we will walk in the paths he has chosen....’

“He will settle disputes among the nations, among the great powers near and far. They will hammer their swords into plows and their spears into pruning knives. Nations will never again go to war, never prepare for battle again. Everyone will live in peace among his own vineyards and fig trees, and no one will make them afraid. The Lord Almighty has promised this” (Micah 4).

Prophet Malachi

“The Almighty says, ‘The day is coming when all proud and evil people will burn like straw. On that day they will burn up, and there will be nothing left of them. But for you who obey me, my saving power will rise on you like the sun and brings healing like the sun’s rays. You will be as free and happy as calves let out of a stall. On the day when I act, you will overcome the wicked, and they shall be like dust under your feet’” (Malachi 4).

Prophet Isaiah

“...a new King will arise from among David’s descendants. The Spirit of the Lord will give him wisdom and the knowledge and skills to rule his people. He will know the Lord’s will and have reverence for him, and find pleasure in obeying him. He will not judge by appearance or hearsay; he will judge the poor fairly and defend the rights of the helpless. At his command the people will be punished, and evil persons will die. He will rule his people with justice and integrity. Wolves and sheep will live together in peace, and leopards will lie down with young goats. Calves and lion cubs will feed together and little children will take care of them. Cows and bears will eat together, and their calves and cubs will lie down in peace. Lions will eat straw as cattle do. Even a

baby will not be harmed if it plays near a poisonous snake.... There will be nothing harmful or evil. The land will be as full of knowledge of the Lord as the seas are full of waters" (Isaiah 11).

"The Lord says, 'I am making a new earth and new heavens. The events of the past will be completely forgotten. Be glad and rejoice forever in what I create.... Babies will no longer die in infancy, and people will live out their life span.... The work they do will be successful, and their children will not meet with disaster. I will answer their prayers.... Snakes will no longer be dangerous, there will be nothing harmful or evil" (Isaiah 65).

Questions for Exercise:

1. Did you know these wonderful promises and plans that our heavenly Father has for us His people?
2. Have you prepared yourself, and are you ready to be counted citizens of the new, beautiful, and peaceful earth?
3. Are you excited to live in a world where there will be nothing harmful or evil?
4. Are you doing your portion of responsibility so that the Father's Kingdom will come on earth"?
5. What strikes you most in the prophets' declaration of peace? Why?
6. Do you think your friends know already these wonderful promises? Assuming they haven't heard of it, what would you do?
7. Do you believe with all your heart that God's promises will be fulfilled? Cite some Biblical reasons or Bible verses that support your answer.

NAHUM

Introduction:

The book of Nahum consists of poems that tell the fall of Nineveh, the capital city of Israel's ancient and oppressive enemy, the Assyrians.

The fall of Nineveh near the end of the seventh century B.C. is seen as God's judgment upon a cruel and arrogant nation.

TS

Almighty Yahweh's Answer to Injustice

Nahum 1

“The LORD is a jealous and avenging GOD; the LORD takes vengeance and is filled with wrath. The LORD takes vengeance on His foes and maintain His wrath against his enemies. The LORD is slow in anger and great in power; the LORD will not leave the guilty unpunished.”

These were the exact words from the book of Nahum the Elkoshite, concerning his vision. Nahum is a prophet who spoke with power and confidence; he conveyed Almighty Yahweh's message without hesitation or fear. He described Almighty Yahweh's anger and wrath to the most vivid imagery possible to be clearly understood by the people of his time.

The most dominant and striking of Nahum's oracle concerning Nineveh was, “ The LORD is slow in anger and great in power; the LORD will not leave the guilty unpunished.” The prophet lived seeing weak people get trampled. Unfortunately, he himself strongly felt the force of such injustice caused by the dominant world power in his time - the Assyrians.

Nahum's vision of Almighty Yahweh's vengeance against Nineveh, the capital city of Assyria, clearly illustrates Almighty Yahweh's determination to end up Nineveh's brutal power and seemingly endless cruelty, and how He condemned those who mistreat His beloved people.

In the first place, Almighty Yahweh never intended that His people would suffer this way, nor be dominated by foreign power and ruled by godless people. But Almighty Yahweh had no choice, it had to happen this way to a certain degree, so that His people would realize that they have sinned against Him. They had to be ruled by foreigners as punishment so that they would repent of their sins and cling to Him in faith for safety.

Unfortunately, the Assyrians went beyond Almighty Yahweh's limit and, they became the source of more evil and temptation that led the Israelites farther away from Almighty Yahweh. So, words of anger and condemnation came out of the mouth of Almighty Yahweh through Prophet Nahum. He said: “The LORD has given a command concerning you, Nineveh: “You will have no descendants to bear your name. I will destroy the carved images and cast the idols that are in the temple of your gods. I will prepare your graves, for you are vile.

Prophet Nahum's vision continued by asking: "Who can withstand His indignation? Who can endure His fierce anger? His wrath is poured out like fire; the rocks are shattered before Him. The mountains quake before Him and the hills melt away. The earth trembles in His presence, the world and all who live in it."

This message gives the picture of the greatness and power of Almighty Yahweh. It also shows how just and fair He is. He punishes as each one deserves, and the guilty will He not leave unpunished.

Are you fair and just in your dealing with everyone? Almighty Yahweh may use you to punish somebody, but do you seek His guidance in doing so? Are you certain you are not going beyond the limits that He has given you? Remember that He will not leave the guilty unpunished and He never tolerates injustice.

Questions for Exercise:

1. What is the capital of Assyria?
2. What did the Assyrians do to the weak people?
3. To what tribe does Nahum belong?
4. What is Nahum's vision?
5. What are the main reasons why Almighty Yahweh allowed His people to suffer?
6. Describe the greatness and power of Almighty Yahweh.
7. Give an example of a man you know who practice fairness and justice. How?
8. How do you show fairness and justice to everyone?

The Message of Hope and Encouragement

Nahum 2 - 3

Our Father in heaven is the Father who really cares that He called Nahum to deliver the message of hope, comfort, and encouragement to the oppressed, weary, and sad!

The book of Nahum is full of powerful word pictures about Almighty Yahweh's strength and goodness. It vividly describes His saving power to those who were in trouble. The book also manifests the Elohim's great concern for His beloved people by giving words of hope and comfort to those who were victims of injustice and evil.

The exact message of hope and encouragement was: "The LORD will restore the splendor of Jacob, like the splendor of Israel, though destroyers have laid waste and have ruined their lives." The prophet added by saying: "Celebrate your festivals, O Judah, and fulfill your vows. No more will the wicked invade you; they will be completely destroyed."

Given Assyria's world dominance and power during that time, it seemed impossible that Nineveh would ever be defeated and destroyed, but the prophet never hesitated to proclaim Nineveh's downfall, in spite of the dangers involved. Nahum spoke with authority and power that Almighty Yahweh is against Nineveh and that He is determined to completely destroy this sinful city.

The prophet says in his book that, "Nineveh is like a pool, and its water is draining away. 'Stop! Stop!' they cry but no one turns back. She is pillaged, plundered, stripped! hearts melt, knees give way, bodies tremble, every face grows pale."

Nahum continues by saying, "I am against you" declares the LORD Almighty. "I will burn up your chariots in smoke, and the sword will devour like young lions. Woe to Nineveh city of blood, full of lies, full of plunder, never without victims!. There the fire will devour you; the sword will cut you soon."

Nahum's predictions came true fifty (50) years later, in the year 612 B.C. when Nineveh was totally destroyed by Babylon. History declares that no one can escape Almighty Yahweh's wrath and anger as revealed by the prophets, especially if the concerned refused to listen or repent of their sins and ask

Almighty Yahweh's forgiveness through His beloved Son Yahshua the Messiah.

When Prophet Nahum said those words, everything seemed meaningless and amount to nothing. But time came that what he has said became the most important thing, that is, to be saved. This only proves that no one can escape the punishment Almighty Yahweh has prepared for those who deserve to be punished. May this also serves as a reminder to us all that we are no better than the people of Nineveh, if we too, fail to listen and obey Almighty Yahweh's words and commands.

On the other hand, we who have been called to be messengers and leaders of Almighty Yahweh's people, we should make sure that we do exactly our portion of responsibility regardless of the people's response. It is our duty to inform the people the message Almighty Yahweh wants them to hear and do. Like Prophet Nahum, we should not allow fear to interfere our works because the One who commissioned us is omnipotent and omniscient. He is with us and He will never forsake us. And, if doing so makes us suffer, let us take note that Yahshua the Messiah Himself also suffered for our sake. He shed his blood for our salvation, what shall we give to Him in return?

Let us therefore take every hardship as a challenge believing that we can do all things through Yahshua the Messiah who strengthens us, and with our Father and Savior nothing is impossible. One thing we all need to do is to patiently endure remembering that no trials and hardships last forever but the glory that awaits us is eternal in the hands of Almighty Yahweh, our Father.

Questions for Exercise:

1. Describe briefly the book of Nahum.
2. How many years past before the predictions of Nahum took place?
3. What did Nineveh do that causes Almighty Yahweh to be angry?
4. What message of hope and encouragement did Nahum proclaim to the people?
5. Describe the character of Prophet Nahum.
6. What lessons have you learned from this topic?

HABAKKUK

Introduction:

The words of the prophet explicitly show his concern with the unpunished evil in the world. It was revealed to Habakkuk that they were God's means of punishing the wicked and that evil would destroy itself.

The book concludes with a poem of thanksgiving and great faith of the prophet and poet.

TS

Life's Questions

Habakkuk 1-2

Life is full of questions! Isn't It? These questions in life only prove that by mere human understanding, we are nothing. One simple question in life, could turn complicated as this leads to another and another question. If we do insist on justifying these questions by our own human capability, this craving of ours can only lead to self-destruction or worst, eternal destruction as man persistently makes his own way to meet his longing and desires.

My fellow believers and followers of Yahshua the Messiah, there is none other that could fully satisfy our search for the answers to life's questions but Almighty Yahweh alone. He who is the creator and foundation of life, who knows everything even our deepest thoughts, the Alpha and the Omega, is the ultimate answer to every need and to every question.

Prophet Habakkuk on the other hand, is one of the great prophets in the Old Testament time. But he was no different from us. In spite of his position as prophet who was in constant communication with Almighty Yahweh, he also had lots of unanswered questions in life. The only difference perhaps, is that, instead of looking for the answers himself, he preferred to address his questions to Almighty Yahweh in prayers.

In his lifetime the prophet saw injustice, violence, and evil in his own country which led him to ask: "Why didn't GOD intervene? Why do you make me look at injustice? How long, O LORD, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, 'Violence!' but you do not save?"

Almighty Yahweh kept silent to Habakkuk's complaints. The prophet persisted until finally Almighty Yahweh answered him. But much to his own surprise because the response was not according to his expectations. Almighty Yahweh said: "I am sending the Babylonians to punish Judah, that ruthless and impetuous Babylonians who sweep across the whole earth to seize dwelling places not their own. Guilty men, whose own strength is their god."

So Habakkuk complained again by asking: "Why then do you tolerate the treacherous? Why are you silent while the wicked swallow up those more righteous than themselves? Almighty Yahweh replied: "For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it lingers, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay."

The revelation is, Almighty Yahweh will punish the Babylonians. "Because you proud Babylonians have plundered many nations, the peoples

who are left will plunder you. For you have shed blood; you have destroyed lands and cities and everyone in them." "Babylon will be filled with shame instead of glory. The cup from the LORD'S right hand is coming around you, and disgrace will cover your glory."

Almighty Yahweh also challenged the Babylonians and their gods by saying, "Of what value is an idol, since a man has carved it? Or an image that teaches lies? For he who makes it trust in his own creation; he makes idols that cannot speak." Almighty Yahweh despised them also by saying: "Woe to him who say to the wood, 'Come to life!' or to lifeless stone, 'Wake up!' Can it give guidance? It is covered with gold and silver but there is no breath in it." In contrast, Prophet Habakkuk declares that Almighty Yahweh his Elohim is in His Holy Temple; let all the earth be silent before him.

The book of Habakkuk clearly emphasized that no matter how difficult life may be, a man of faith knows whom to call for refuge and strength in times of trouble. This said account also proves that Almighty Yahweh cannot and will not be silent to our prayers forever. While the wicked prosper, he will finally punish those who despised and mistreated His people.

Almighty Yahweh's silence for a moment, serves as our reminder that we have sinned and are lost from His grace and protection. But His silence cannot be forever because His heart grieves to see His children suffer, nor is He happy to see the wicked prosper. The wicked shall be destroyed but "the just shall live by his faith."

Another wonderful revelation that the Almighty Father gave to His people through Prophet Habakkuk is that, the time will come when the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. HalleluYah!

Questions for Exercise:

1. What lesson can we learn from the life of Prophet Habakkuk?
2. Describe the feelings and reactions of Prophet Habakkuk to Almighty Yahweh's answer.
3. What is the answer of Almighty Yahweh to Habakkuk's questions?
4. What did Prophet Habakkuk experience and see that made him ask questions?
5. Expound briefly this verse: "For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it lingers, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay."

"I Will Rejoice in the LORD"

Habakkuk

Chapters 1 & 2 of the book of Habakkuk portray most of the prophet's "Complaints" and Almighty Yahweh's answer. As we read the Scriptures we understand that Habakkuk has had enough of the troubles and injustices around him. In his lifetime he lived to see the wicked enjoyed most of the good things in life, and remains wicked still.

To the prophet's frustration in seeing all this wickedness, he decided to lift up everything he saw and experienced to Almighty Yahweh in prayers. As we go along the Scriptures, we may notice the emotions involved between Habakkuk and Almighty Yahweh. Try to feel that emotions inter-playing in their conversation and try to consider yourself in the place of Prophet Habakkuk.

After that, spend some time to reflect, look around you and see what's going on. Do things look similar to what had happened during the time of Habakkuk? Now, how does it feel being oppressed and mistreated, and you have no one to turn to? Can you picture how desperate and lonely Habakkuk was? Can you figure out how heavy the load he was carrying? What possible complaints do you think can burst from you?

Almighty Yahweh is really merciful and full of constant love. He is so kind and patient that in spite of Habakkuk's outburst reactions and complaints, He graciously answered Habakkuk. The answer may not be as the prophet wanted to hear but what a comfort and assuring it is to hear Him gives a wonderful promise to those who love Him and look to Him for help.

The end chapter of Habakkuk sets a different tone of emotion, the words were full of praises and thanksgiving, a beautiful, joyful psalm was rendered by the prophet, acknowledging that apart from Almighty Yahweh we are nothing, and as children of the great Elohim, regardless of circumstances we should always give Him thanks.

The chapter elaborates Almighty Yahweh's power and might with Habakkuk saying: "In wrath you strode through the earth and in anger you threshed the nations." "You came out to deliver your people, to save your anointed one."

Prophet Habakkuk emphasizes that no matter what, we should never forget to always thank Almighty Yahweh in everything. The prophet said,

“Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes in the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in GOD my Savior.”

Prophet Habakkuk’s actions and decisions clearly showed his devotion and reverence to Almighty Yahweh. He is determined to honor and glorify Almighty Yahweh all the days of his life regardless of the situation. Now, have you been in the practice of praising and thanking our Father and Savior at all times? Let us do so!

Prophet Habakkuk ends his conversation with Almighty Yahweh by saying: “LORD, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, O LORD. Renew them in our days, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy.”

Questions for Exercise:

1. If you are in the shoes of Prophet Habakkuk, what will be your reactions or feeling towards the situation? Answer briefly.
2. Have you experienced being oppressed and mistreated? In what way?
3. What did Almighty Yahweh say to Habakkuk’s complaints?
4. At the end, what tone or emotions did Prophet Habakkuk show?
5. Expound briefly Prophet Habakkuk’s final words: “Lord, I have heard of your fame, I stand in awe of your deeds, O Lord. Renew them in our days, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy.”

ZEPHANIAH

Introduction:

Prophet Zephaniah preached the prophetic message of doom and destruction. In his message, Yahweh Almighty will punish Judah for her worship of idols or other gods. Other nations will also be punished but Jerusalem will be restored.

JS

The Wrath and Mercy of Almighty Yahweh

Zephaniah

Zephaniah was a prophet. The word of Almighty Yahweh came to him during the reign of King Josiah, son of Amon declaring judgment upon Judah and to the gentile nations that ignored Almighty Yahweh's demand for righteousness. It would be a terrible day!

Almighty Yahweh's wrath would sweep away everything in the land both men and animals alike. Those who are hypocrites in the land and the idolaters – Baal and Molech worshippers and even those who formerly worship Almighty Yahweh but no longer do. The whole land then will be devoured by the fire of His jealousy. The people of Jerusalem would try to hide, but the invading soldiers would find them and punish them.

Because of their sin, the nations around Judah would also feel the wrath of Almighty Yahweh. They too will receive the wages of their pride and their worship of false gods.

Nevertheless, Almighty Yahweh's mercy still prevails. The meek and humble remnants will be regathered and restored to their land. They will call unto Him, serve Him and will trust in the name of Almighty Yahweh. There will then be rejoicing and singing for the troubles had ended and people will have nothing to fear. Almighty Yahweh will be exalted over His people in happy songs. Above all, Almighty Yahweh will live among them. The prophet declared.

Indeed, if we humbly and faithfully obey Almighty Yahweh, He will delight in us. But if we rebel, He punishes us in order to correct us. For, Almighty Yahweh is a jealous Elohim and He accepts no rivals and permits no rebellion.

Questions for Exercise:

1. What is rebellion?
2. How did the Israelites rebel against Almighty Yahweh?
3. What do you think will happen when the people continuously rebel against the authorities?
4. Sometimes rebellion against human authorities has valid reason, do you think sometimes there is valid reason for man's rebellion against God? Explain your answer.

HAGGAI

Introduction

This book is a collection of brief messages from Yahweh Almighty through prophet Haggai in 520 BC. The messages urge the leaders to rebuild the Temple which lay in ruins.

Almighty Yahweh also gave His promises of prosperity and peace.

TS

Putting Almighty Yahweh First

Haggai

When the Jews returned to Jerusalem from exile in Babylon they began to rebuild Almighty Yahweh's Temple and restore the nation. But before it was finished, oppositions came to discourage and frighten the people. Eventually, the Jews abandoned the work and built beautiful houses to live in instead. But in the second year reign of King Darius the message of Almighty Yahweh came to Prophet Haggai to be delivered to Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, and to Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the High Priest, saying, "Why is everyone saying, the time has not yet come for Yahweh's house to be built? Is it then the right time for you to live in luxurious homes when the Temple lies in ruins?"

The people failed to put Almighty Yahweh's house ahead of their own houses. As a result, Almighty Yahweh sent drought in the country and crops were very little. The people ate and drank but never had their fill. They worked but were living in poverty.

At this point, Haggai appeared with a message from heavenly Father Yahweh El encouraging the people to go back to work on the Temple. The Temple of Almighty Yahweh must be the first priority so people would have a place of worship. Then Zerubbabel, Joshua and the people returned to Almighty Yahweh and Yahweh's favor was upon them all. Almighty Yahweh gave them the desire to rebuild the Temple. He promised that the splendor of this restored Temple would be far greater than Solomon's Temple, for the Elohim of glory Himself would minister in this Temple. In addition, Almighty Yahweh also promised abundance unto their produce.

Such event remind us that when we put Almighty Yahweh first, when we love Him with all our hearts, mind and strength, we have the promise of His care. On the other hand, whenever Almighty Yahweh's work is neglected by putting ourselves first, we lose His blessing. Let us remember that the Scriptures say: "What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses his own soul?" "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mark 8: 36; Matthew 6: 33).

Almighty Yahweh promised blessing upon His people if they obey Him, and disciplines or punish them if they disobey.

Exercises:

1. Write Ten of the things that you want to do and accomplish according to priority.
2. Explain briefly why do you chose your number one item as your first priority.
3. Who was the Governor and the High Priest during the time of Prophet Haggai?
4. What did Prophet Haggai say to the Governor and to the High Priest?
5. In few sentences, write how Almighty Yahweh disciplines or punishes His people for their disobedience.

ZECHARIAH

Introduction:

The book of Zechariah records the visions that Prophet Zechariah received from Almighty Yahweh. It includes also his prediction of the coming Messiah. During this time Jews came back to Jerusalem after having exiled in Babylon. Zechariah together with other prophets and people started rebuilding the Temple. After four years, the Temple was completed.

FS

The Source of Our Victory

Zechariah

This is the time that Zechariah, together with his co-prophets, governor Zerubbabel rebuild the Temple of Almighty Yahweh. Along the way some of them became discouraged, losing their hopes....Yahweh Almighty who knows everything was determined to bring victory to His people.

While Zechariah was asleep the holy Angel who had been talking with him, woke him up. This very moment Zechariah saw a vision of a gold lampstand, holding seven lamps, flowing into through seven tubes. He also saw two olive trees carved upon the lampstand, one of each side the reservoir. Then Zechariah asked the holy Angel about the meaning of the vision. The holy Angel said: "This is Almighty Yahweh's message to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says Yahweh Elohim, you will succeed because of my Spirit, no mountain however high, can stand before him! And Zerubbabel will finish building this Temple with mighty shouts of thanksgiving for Almighty Yahweh's mercy, declaring that all was done by grace alone." Another message that Zechariah received from Yahweh Elohim is this: "Zerrubbabel laid the foundation of this Temple, and he will complete it. (Then you will know these messages are from Yahweh, the Lord Almighty). Do not despise this small beginning, for the eyes of Yahweh Almighty rejoice to see the work begin, to see the plumbline in the hand of Zerubbabel. For these seven lamps represent the eyes of Yahweh Elohim that see everywhere around the world. "Then Zechariah asked about the meaning of the two olive trees on each side of the lampstand, and about the two olive branches that emptied oil into gold bowls through two gold tubes. Then the holy Angel told him, 'They represent the two anointed ones who assist the Lord of all the earth.'"

There are points in our life, especially in our ministry that we feel exhausted, tired, our faith shaken to some degree. Sometimes we feel alone, so weak, we don't know what to do, it seems victory is too far to achieve. But my dear brethren, let us hold on to our faith, just keep on going forward towards the fulfillment of the wonderful plans of Almighty Yahweh in our life, in our ministry or in our country and even in the whole world. Keep on trusting Him, for He is determine to give us victory over the whole world. Our God in heaven is so strong, so mighty, there's nothing our God cannot do. Though we are few, though the world sees us so small and weak but God is for us, and who can be against us? Whatever Yahweh Almighty wants to do is as good as done. He knows in advance all that He will do and what decisions He will make. The

power of Almighty Yahweh does not depend upon the size and strength of an army or anybody, or anything in this world.

Let us keep reminding ourselves that we should do our part heartily. Let us stand firm and fight the good fight of faith. Let the whole world see that through our lives the awesome power of Yahweh Elohim is in the world. Do not despair, nor be discouraged in our small beginning. At the Almighty's appointed time it will bear much fruits. "We can do all things through Yahshua the Messiah who strengtheneth us." "For with Yahweh nothing is impossible." We are victors not a loser, in the mighty and holy name of Yahshua the Messiah. The source of our victory is Yahweh Elohim alone. What Almighty Yahweh has started in our lives, is as good as done because He is faithful to finish what He has started.

When lowly time comes, let us always encourage ourselves, encourage one another, let us always think about the wonderful words of Almighty Yahweh; His promises to us. Be an instrument of His grace, mercy, and power. Let your life be an instrument that Almighty Yahweh can speak with His people and, so that you will be able to receive visions and revelations from Him, for His people to hear. For His people to be guided and comforted, and to give them assurance that He takes control of everything.

In the world's view, it's so impossible that we would be victorious, that we will bring success to Almighty Yahweh's wonderful plans in earth. For them we are nothing, not having much value, a loser. But that's a lie. So, be strong at all times for in the spiritual realm we are gaining success. In Yahweh's time table, they will be astounded of our victory and success.

Above all my dear brethren, let us remind ourselves that for everything we gain, victory, success, abundant blessings, to our Father and Savior alone be the glory. Let us give Him all the honor, praises and thanksgiving. Worship Him alone and you will see that "He will open the windows of heaven" and bless you even much more than you can ever think of or ask for.

I - Answer the following questions:

1. Who is the source of our life?
2. What did Zechariah do together with co-prophets...that made them tired, discouraged along the way?
3. How did Zechariah ministered the people who were discouraged, tired and even attempted to quit doing the task?

4. What made Zechariah strong and determined to move forward and finish the job?
5. What are the assuring messages Yahweh Almighty gave to Zechariah?
6. What were the visions Zechariah saw?
7. Who was talking to Prophet Zechariah while asleep?
8. What assurance Yahweh Almighty gave to Zerubbabel through Prophet Zechariah?
9. What is the meaning of the seven lamps?
10. Why was Almighty Yahweh determined to bring victory to Prophet Zechariah and the people?
11. In your own words, describe our God Yahweh Almighty.

II – Assessment:

1. Is your plan or are your plans according to God's will? Explain your answer.
2. What lesson have you learned from this topic?
3. Cite a personal experience or crisis you've been. How did you keep your faith strong and still keep on moving forward in spite of the situation?
4. In all you have achieved in life, to whom did you give first the credit and why?
5. Cite a personal experience that Almighty Yahweh used you to bring courage, hope, assurance to the people around you who are distressed, down, who need comfort to keep going on with their life.
6. What did you do and how the experiences affect your life?

III - Application:

1. What problems are you facing nowadays? What will you do to overcome these problems?
2. Base on this lesson, what role of responsibility do you have right now? How can you best use your role to be victorious in your task?

The Prediction of the Coming of the Messiah

Zechariah

Zechariah was a prophet. In his time, he received visions and messages from Yahweh Almighty. He even predicted the promised Messiah who was to rescue His people, and to rule the Kingdom of Yahweh Almighty here on earth. Zechariah also predicted the triumphal entry of the Messiah into Jerusalem, that is, the Palm Sunday. The following are the words from Yahweh Elohim through Zechariah concerning the coming of the Messiah. He spoke these words for the people to know and to give them courage and hope.

“Rejoice, greatly, O my people! Shout with joy! For look-your King is Coming! He is the Righteous One, the Victor! Yet He is lowly, riding on a donkey’s colt! I will disarm all peoples of the earth, including my people in Israel, and He shall bring peace among the nations. His realm shall stretch from sea to sea, from the river to the ends of the earth.”

This prediction partly came true after 500 years had past. It was such a long, long years. But it doesn’t matter whether the prediction comes true the next day, next year or hundreds of years later. All it matters is that, what Almighty Yahweh hath said to His prophets, and servants proved true and His promises to His children are as good as done. His words never fade and fail.

The events of the past remind us of the greatness and power of our Father in heaven Yahweh Elohim. He is taking control of everything. He is in control over the events which have happened since the beginning of time, and the events which are yet to happen in the future. He is live and active. He is the beginning and the ending of everything. Nothing is kept secret from Him and He is the God who never change.

Our Father in heaven is a loving Father; He thinks of us with love. He loves to commune with us, to listen to us. He always wants to tell us of His wonderful plans for our lives, for our family, and even His plans for the whole world. He desires to impart to us His plans and works. From the moment He created Adam and Eve, He talked to them lovingly, He found pleasure in being with them. He also spoke to our faithful ancestors in so many ways.

Nowadays, is He talking to us also? Yes! For He never changes. Almighty Yahweh talks to us in so many different ways. He talks to us through visions, dreams, and revelations. He even loves to tell us little by little His

wonderful plans, and the events of the future. He is giving to us warnings, comforting us....He is a God who loves to interact with His people. But are we giving Him the best of our time to commune with Him? Most of the people could not hear Him anymore. Most of us are so busy doing so many things, working here and there, and having long list of activities....Most people are occupied doing things that concern the physical needs only. It's already hard for them to find time to sit and rest, and most of all to pray, read the Holy Bible and commune to our God and Father in heaven. Sad to say that of the many people in the world only few could hear Him. I do believe that Yahweh Almighty will be very happy to find one person sacrificing his life, giving the best of his time, just to be with Him. I do believe also that this person would be very precious to our Father in heaven.

My dear brethren in Yahshua the Messiah, let us give our best time, our best effort to our Father and Savior. Let it be our heart's desire to please Him. Let's make our lives a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable in His sight. Let us seek to do His will and be assured that at His appointed time Almighty Yahweh will accomplish every word He has spoken and every promise He has made. Remember, Prophet Zechariah's prediction of the coming of the Messiah really came true. At Yahweh's appointed time Yahshua the Messiah came to the world.

I – Answer the following questions:

1. What is the meaning of prediction?
2. What is the meaning of vision?
3. How did Almighty Yahweh speak with Prophet Zechariah?
4. What are the two (2) prophetic predictions of Prophet Zechariah? What is the great significance of these predictions?
5. Compare the life of a prophet and an ordinary person.
6. What do you think, Prophet Zechariah did the reason he could receive visions from Almighty Yahweh?

II – Assessment:

1. Is God Almighty also talking to us nowadays? How?
2. Why do you think most people could not hear Him?
3. How do you give to Almighty Yahweh your best?

III – Application:

1. What should man do to hear the voice of God Almighty?
2. What lesson have you learned from this topic? How will you apply the lesson you have learned for your day to day journey in this world?
3. Almighty Yahweh is the source of our life, what can you give Him in return?
4. What is the great promise and assurance of Almighty Yahweh to each one of us? How can it help us?
5. In your own words, write a message to all the people around the world so that they too may hear the words of Almighty Yahweh and even hear His voice.

MALACHI

Introduction:

Malachi is the last book of the Old Testament. Prophet Malachi warned the priests and the people to return to Yahweh Almighty, reminding them the importance of their faithfulness to Him. Calling everyone for repentance before Yahweh's judgment fall upon them.

The book ends with Almighty Yahweh's promises to all the people who remain faithful unto Him even in adverse condition. Great promises that are sealed with His name and cannot be broken.

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Sins of the Priests and the People

Malachi

Prophet Malachi condemned the priests and the people for being so careless in doing their duty and responsibility for Yahweh Almighty. The priests became worldly and the nation was far from the God of heaven and earth, the Almighty. They no longer worship Him as they should.

Both the priests and the people dishonored the Almighty Father by offering polluted sacrifices on the holy Altar. The priests did not treat Yahweh's Altar as really sacred and their acts encouraged the people to bring cheap, sick animals as offering to Him. They praise and pray to Him only with their lips; they were hypocrites. They haven't seriously taken the things that are most important to Yahweh. Prophet Malachi said to them: "Priests' lips should flow with the knowledge of God in heaven so that the people will learn Yahweh's laws. The priests are the messengers of the Lord Almighty and men should come to them for guidance. But not to you! For you have left Yahweh's path. Your guidance has caused many to stumble in sin. You have distorted the Covenant of Levi and made it into a grotesque parody. You let your favorites break the law without rebuke."

They even rob God in heaven by not giving their tithes and offering. Prophet Malachi said, "Bring the full amount of your tithe to the Temple so that there will be plenty of food there." But for them it's difficult to serve God and do what He asks and turn up their noses at the rules He has given to them to obey. There is treachery everywhere, and men have defiled God's holy and beloved Temple by marrying heathen women who worship idols. Almighty Yahweh has seen their treachery in divorcing their wives who have been faithful to them through the years, the companions they promised to care for and keep. Yahweh El, hates divorce and cruel men. The people became proud and arrogant. They said that "Evil is good, or by saying that God won't punish us, he doesn't care. For those who do evil shall prosper and those who dare God to punish them shall get off scott-free."

Nothing is kept secret from Almighty Yahweh. He had seen all the sins of His people. But in spite of what His people did, He remains merciful and faithful to them. Through Prophet Malachi He gave His people warnings, calling them to repent of all their sins and to return to Him. But they refused to listen, they hardened their hearts and minds. So, Almighty Yahweh said to them, " If you don't change your ways and give glory to my name, then I will

bring terrible punishment upon you and instead of giving you blessings as I would like to, I will turn on you with curses.”

Our situation this time is not different from the time of Malachi. Most people now walk astray, they don't believe in God the Father in heaven. They hardened their hearts and minds. So, their relationship with the Lord has been cut. They are too self-centered, always busy with things that are worth nothing; things that have no value in Yahweh's sight.

People live in a sinful way, they don't care about the laws and the commandments of Yahweh Elohim. Many are blinded of the material things here on earth and are walking on the path of destruction. They don't want to listen to the words of Yahweh El. They refuse to follow His rules and instructions and they are not afraid of the terrible punishment that will befall upon them. To make matters worse, they mocked the people who follow and obey the laws and commands of Yahweh Elohim. They even despise the people who truly worship the God in heaven.

But for us who know the truth, even if the whole world despises us for obeying the commandments of Yahweh El, let us continue walking in His path. Let us not be tired of doing what is right, and fight the good fight of faith. Let us meditate day and night on the laws our Father in heaven has given to us, and obey them. Everyday, every moment of our lives, let us print in our hearts and minds the laws of Yahweh El, so that they would hold us back from doing wrong or that we will not slip into sin. We should not conform to the standard of the world, and we should not copy the ways of evil people. Remain faithful to Yahweh El, and be a joy to Him by living a life that pleases Him. Above all things, Love Him with all your heart, mind, body, soul and spirit. Never forget to teach our coming generations the importance of His commandments, and to humbly obey them that they too will be blessed abundantly.

Nowadays, the world is in turmoil but remember Yahshua the Messiah said, “Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” Let us endure unto the end, until that day we received the crown of eternal and abundant life as our victory prize. Always remember the wonderful promises of Yahweh Elohim to those who never turn their back on Him. He said, “They shall be mine, in that day when I make up my jewels. And I will spare them as a man spares an obedient and dutiful son. Then you will see the difference between God's treatment of good men and bad, between those who serve Him and those who don't. And all the nations will call you blessed, for you will be a land sparkling with happiness.” These are only some of the promises that Yahweh Almighty gave us. Be assured that His words stand forever, remain faithful unto Him!

I - Answer the following questions:

1. What is the great role of Prophet Malachi?
2. What are the reasons why Almighty Yahweh condemned the people of Israel?
3. What is a covenant? Why is it important to keep the covenant?
4. What are the reasons, why the Israelites did not keep their promises to Yahweh Almighty?
5. How did the Israelites rob God in heaven?
6. How did the Israelites despise the commandments of Yahweh Almighty?
7. What is the consequence of sin?
8. What is the important role of the priests?
9. How did Almighty Yahweh show His faithfulness and mercy toward His people?
10. What happened to the relationship of the Israelites with Yahweh Almighty during the time of Prophet Malachi?

II – Application

1. What can you say of our world nowadays? What happened to the attitude of the people toward the Almighty God? What steps will you take to help the people who are still in darkness?
2. In spite of our circumstances today, what will you do to make your faith in God Almighty remain strong? What action will you take to apply the commandments of Yahweh Almighty everyday of your life?

The Judgment Day

Malachi

Almighty Yahweh spoke to Prophet Malachi the promise of hope for His faithful people. Words that were so beautiful, so wonderful and so powerful. Words that will stand forever.

Prophet Malachi said, "Watch out" Yahweh declares. "The day is coming when all proud and evil people will burn like straw. On that day they will burn up and there will be nothing left of them. But for you who obey me, my saving power will rise on you like the sun and brings healing like the sun's rays. You will be as free and happy as calves let out of a stall. On the day when I act, you will overcome the wicked, and they will be like dust under your feet."

Yahweh's love for His faithful people is so great; His grace is beyond compare. The times when evil people ruled the world, Almighty Yahweh looked upon His people with mercy. His heart ached with great pain seeing His children did their best to faithfully remain in Him and obediently follow His laws. Nothing is kept secret unto Him; He knows everything that is happening. In times of trials and persecution, He never forgets to take care of His children. Through His prophets, He gives them words of assurance, words of comfort. He gives them hope and great promises.

The judgment day of Yahweh Elohim is so near, nearer than we first believe. Let us hold on to what we believe, walking always on the path of righteousness. Follow Him forever even though the nations around the world worship idols. Let us fully commit our lives to Him, asking Him to take full control over our whole being, and let Him reign over our lives. We should be serious in our duty and responsibility, doing always what He wants us to do. Let us not neglect His Laws and Commandments; it must be written in our hearts and minds so that it will hold us from sin. Let us devote our time in studying His words, praying and worshiping Him alone. Thinking and meditating on His laws and His wonderful promises day by day. Let us love Him above all things.

When enemies are all around us, keep trusting Him and His words. He is a Father who never lie, who never fail to fulfill His promises. Remember, the words of our Father and Savior are sharp, quick, and powerful. Let us declare everyday that we will stand firm in our faith in Him, and fight the good fight of faith. Let us prove to the whole world that we are worthy to be called children of the Most High, Yahweh our Father in heaven.

My dear brethren, remember that there will be times of severe testing of our faith and the enemies are always roaming around to hurt Yahweh's children. Do not be afraid, do not despair, nor be discouraged. Our God and Father is so great. He is our shield and protector. Almighty Yahweh will make all things work together for our good and great favor. The trials that our Father allows are meant to make us realize that in all the days of our lives, we should always depend on Him; letting Him direct our paths. The tribulations are meant to teach us so many lessons. It will mold our character, conduct, and attitude until we are perfectly purged, purified, and as white as snow in the sight of our Father Almighty Yahweh. The trials and tribulations are meant to correct and strictly discipline us.

Then, at the right time - on Yahweh's judgment day, all the world will know and see who we are. For, He will announce to the whole world the names of His children and nothing can stop Him. Those who are against us will know the shame of defeat and they will be astounded of the great power and blessings that belong to us.

Wait patiently upon Almighty Yahweh. The day of His coming is near. Be more confident, be strong, hold on to your faith. Every moment of our lives, let us say to ourselves "Almighty Yahweh's saving power will rise on me like the sun and brings healing like the sun's rays. I will be free and happy as calves let out of a stall. On the day He acts, I will overcome the wicked and they will be like dust under my feet." HalleluYah!

I – Answer the following questions (10 points each):

1. Describe the great love of Yahweh Almighty toward His people.
2. What will happen to the wicked on Yahweh's judgment day?
3. What are the promises of hope to those who remain faithful to Yahweh Almighty?
4. What will happen during judgment day?
5. What should we do to gain the favor and enjoy the wonderful promises of Yahweh Almighty?
6. In your own words, how will Almighty Yahweh judge the good and the bad people on His judgment day?
7. What is the situation of our world today?
8. What will you do to spread the wonderful promises of Yahweh Almighty to those who follow His Son Yahshua the Messiah, and to give warnings to those who continue disobeying Him?
9. What strikes you most in this topic?

THE NEW TESTAMENT

Introduction:

The New Testament has a total of twenty seven books. It begins with the four Gospels by St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John. The word Gospel is an Anglo-Saxon word that conveys the idea of a good and joyful message.

We call the first three Gospels, i.e., by Matthew, Mark, Luke, the Synoptic Gospels because of their striking similarity. Or, because they present the same general view of the life, teachings, and ministry of our LORD Yahshua the Messiah.

The term synoptic comes from the Greek word sunoptikos which means seeing the whole together or taking a comprehensive view. But as applied to the Gospels the word has come to mean affording or taking the same or a common view.

The book of St. John is also a Gospel but the narrative is diverse from the others.

There are critics who say that the Gospels are full of contradictions. But care must be fully exercised, and the readers must consider that although the writers were all chosen by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit, they came from different backgrounds such as family, educational, environmental backgrounds; and as such it is expected that the narratives would not duplicate one another.

For clearer understanding, we can ask four people to describe one object as example. One will probably describe the right side view of the object, another the left side view, the third one may choose to describe the back view, the fourth one the front view. In this illustration all four people are certainly correct but their descriptions of the object are not the same.

In other words, the readers must take into consideration that the writers of the Gospels were people who were experientially molded and emotionally shaped by varied forces; experiences and forces which became part of their personality and consequently affected their choices, inclination, and preference as individuals.

MATTHEW

Introduction:

The Gospel according to St. Matthew is the good news that Yahshua is the promised Savior. This good news is not only for the Jewish people, among whom Yahshua was born and lived, but for the whole world. The book of St. Matthew begins with genealogy from Abraham to King David, from King David to the time when the people of Israel were taken into exile in Babylon. Then from the time after the exile in Babylon to the birth of Yahshua the Messiah. There were fourteen generations from Abraham to King David, fourteen generations from King David to the exile in Babylon,, and fourteen generations from then to the birth of Yahshua the Messiah.

Much of Matthew's teaching is gathered by subject matter into five collections as follows:

- *The Sermon on the Mount*
- *Instructions to the disciples for their mission*
- *Parables about the Kingdom of heaven*
- *Teaching on the Meaning of discipleship*
- *Teaching about the end of the present age and the coming Kingdom of God.*

Joseph, Mary, Yahshua

Matthew

The book of Matthew tells us that Mary was engaged in marriage to Joseph when miraculously she found herself pregnant before her marriage. She conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit as the angel had told her.

Instantly, and while Mary pondered upon what the angel told her, naturally I suppose, she was greatly happy; she was filled with joy that no words could fully describe. She was indeed blessed! Of all the women in the world, she was especially chosen by the Almighty Father to be the mother of the Savior of the world.

On the other hand, recalling that during those days immoral women were to be condemned and to be stoned to death, we can also say that she must have been anxious and troubled when she realized her situation. She must have been thinking about her planned marriage, about her safety and that of the baby. Even bothered about what the religious authorities might do to her. She must have been asking herself, "Will my parents or my family understand me and help me? If not, what will I do? Where shall I go?"

Remembering mother Mary without really thinking deeply, everything seems so nice and wonderful for her. But evidently, it was not so! She rather played a very unusual role. Together with her Son she struggled, was in pain, and sacrificed more than any woman in the world did, but gladly and willingly endured. Praise God for the life of Mary!

Are you afraid, troubled, and in pain? Do you feel that no one understands you and you are alone in your struggle for a better life? Are you holding a very special role in your family? Often, our Father in heaven touches one member of the family for the salvation of everybody. If you are holding this role, rejoice and pray to our heavenly Father and put your trust in Him. Wait patiently, He will make a way for you as He did to Mary. Remember, God the Father caused Joseph to marry her and kept her and the baby Yahshua safe all the way.

"There is nothing that God cannot do."

Questions for Exercise:

1. When in pain and under pressure what would you do? Where should you go first for help?
2. Are you willing to sacrifice for the sake of the Father's will?

Respect to Parents and Parents' Blessing

Matthew

The first chapter of the book of Matthew opens with genealogy or list of ancestors from Abraham down to the birth of Yahshua the Messiah.

This account speaks of the importance of every person's family line. It makes us recognize that Yahweh our Father in heaven created us through our ancestors or parents, so we owe our lives to them to a certain extent.

It is also good to recall and remind ourselves that one of the Ten Commandments is, "Respect your father and your mother, so that you may live a long time in the land that I am giving you."

Apostle Paul in his letter to the Ephesians said: "Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on earth. And, ye father, provoke not your children to wrath or anger: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the LORD."

Obviously, parents are responsible in bringing up their children well in the Lord. However, parents like everyone else do have some flaws and weaknesses. When necessary, children can go to the authorities for help but children do not have the privilege to dishonor their parents or go around talking against them because of their weaknesses. They should rather pray for their parents, remembering that parents' blessing upon their children strengthens the very foundation of their lives, and so that "they may live long on earth."

Questions for Exercise:

1. How do you honor your father and mother or what should you do so that your father and mother would be happy and feel honored?
2. What is the very promise attached to the commandment: "Honor thy father and thy mother."
3. What are the responsibilities of parents toward their children? Or, how should parents bring up their children?
4. What is the promise that Almighty Yahweh gave to those who honor their father and mother?
5. What did Apostle Paul say to the parents concerning their children?

The Ministry of John the Baptist

Matthew

John the Baptist was a son of Priest Zechariah and Elizabeth, and a relative of Yahshua the Messiah. He was miraculously conceived because Elizabeth was too old to bear a child but she did according to the word of the angel who was sent by the Almighty Father. He was months older than Yahshua the Messiah and he is the one whom the Father in heaven sent to prepare the way of the Messiah.

When John was old enough to do the works of God the Father, he went around preaching the message of repentance. He urged the people to repent of their sins and be ready to receive and abide with the Messiah. John also baptized the people who heard the message and repented of their sins, in the Jordan River where Yahshua Himself appeared to be baptized to show an example to the people the way of righteousness. One evident example that Yahshua showed was an act of humility towards the Father's appointed authority, and a message that there is no short cut to the Kingdom of heaven. While we are still living on this earth, we have to abide in the teachings of the Almighty Father as taught by the authorities.

John's preaching to the whole nation also tells us that individually and collectively or as a nation we have to humble ourselves to our Father in heaven, acknowledging that we have sinned against Him, turn from our sins and obey His teachings before the Almighty Father can freely and fully act for our salvation. And, for our salvation He anoints person or persons to lead His people and the nation, and eventually the whole world as He did in the ancient times and as recorded in the Bible. Remember that the anointing of the Almighty Father is for a certain or particular purpose. John the Baptist was anointed to preach the message of repentance and to prepare the people to receive the Messiah. **Yahshua was anointed to be the Savior and King.** The prophets of old were also anointed as well as the apostles.

Are you being oppressed by the devil in some ways and want to be saved? Does the devil oppress you spiritually, physically through sickness, economically, and socially? Repent of all your sins, acknowledge your sins humbly, and ask the Father to forgive you and bless you. No one who comes to the Father humbly will be disappointed. The scripture says: "Submit yourselves to our Father and Savior and resist the devil and he will flee away from you."

Questions for Exercise:

1. As a believer and follower of the Messiah what message do you preach to the people?
2. Choose from the following topics for your preaching
 - A – a message of repentance
 - B – a message of hope
 - C – a message of love and peace
 - D – a message of courage and prosperity
3. Almighty Yahweh's purpose for the life of John the Baptist was to preach the message of repentance and to prepare the way of the Messiah, what do you think is Yahweh's purpose for your own life?
4. How determined are you in fulfilling Yahweh's purpose for your life? Do you do those things that will lead you to its fulfillment?

Yahshua the Messiah's Sermon

Matthew 5:1-12

Once the people crowded around Yahshua the Messiah and His disciples. So Yahshua went up a hill and began to teach them. His teaching at this moment is known as The Sermon on the Mount. It concerns the character, duties, privileges, and destiny of the citizens of the Kingdom of heaven.

Yahshua went to say,

"Happy are those who know they are spiritually poor; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!

"Happy are those who mourn; God will comfort them!

"Happy are those who are humble; they will receive what God has promised!

"Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires; God will satisfy them fully!

"Happy are those who are merciful to others; God will be merciful to them!

"Happy are the pure in heart; they will see God!

"Happy are those who work for peace; God will call them His children!

"Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!

"Happy are you when people insult you and persecute you and tell all kinds of evil lies against you because you are my followers. Be happy and glad, for a great reward is kept for you in heaven. This is how the prophets who lived before you were persecuted."

Do you want to be a citizen of the Kingdom of heaven and enjoy all the privileges therein? If so, then you must have the character of the person who is qualified to be in the Kingdom as Yahshua the Messiah said. A person who constantly give thanks to the Almighty Father and who rejoices in the midst of persecution; a person who is not discouraged because of persecution, and who continuously and gladly perform the duties that are required of a citizen.

Questions for Exercise:

1. Have you been persecuted because of your faith in Yahshua the Messiah or because you obey our Father and Savior?
2. How did you react to the persecution and to the persecutor?
3. What should be our reaction when persecution comes? Sad or Happy? Support your answer.
4. Do you pray for your persecutor? Remember the scripture says "Love your enemies." "Pray for those who persecute you."
5. Are you excited to become a citizen in the heavenly Kingdom? If you are, then the Messiah's Sermon must be seen in your life.
6. Share a testimony of God's mercy upon you or your family.
7. Explain: "Happy are those who know they are spiritually poor; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!"

The Parables

Matthew 13

What is a parable? The dictionary tells us that it is a usually short fictitious story that illustrates a moral attitude or religious principle.

The Gospel books of Mark and Luke have recorded some of the Messiah's parables but the book of Matthew has more of them, hence, Matthew thirteen is known as the parable chapter of the Bible.

The following are the parables that Yahshua the Messiah told the people to give them lessons:

- *The Parable of the Sower*
- *The Parable of the Weeds*
- *The Parable of the Mustard Seed*
- *The Parable of the Yeast*
- *The Parable of the Hidden Treasure*
- *The Parable of the Pearl*
- *The Parable of the Net*

When the people left, the disciples asked Yahshua, "Why do you use parable when you talk to the people?" Yahshua answered: "The knowledge about the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them.... The reason I use parables in talking to them is that they look, but do not see, and they listen but do not understand. So the prophecy of Isaiah applies to them."

Indeed, "Blessed are those who hear the words of God and obey them. Blessed are the eyes that see and the ears that hear." For, Yahshua the Messiah said: "Many of God's people wanted very much to see what you see, but they could not, and to hear what you hear, but they did not."

Do we have the knowledge about the secrets of the Kingdom of heaven? Friends, unless we set our hearts and spirits right with our Father and Savior through faith; faith that works or obeys in love, we cannot see and we

cannot hear the things that come from our Father in heaven. Much less understand them. I Corinthians 2: 14 & 15 declare: Whoever does not have the Spirit cannot receive the gifts that come from God's Spirit. Such a person really does not understand them; they are non-sense to him, because their value can be judged only on a spiritual basis. Whoever has the Spirit, however, is able to judge the value of everything,....

Assignment / Reflection:

- 1- Study the parables in Matthew 13
- 2- Which parable is your favorite and why?
- 3- What are the lessons that you learned from the parables?
- 4- Have you heard some people like your grandparents talked in parables? If you had, share it with us.
- 5- One of the parables in Matthew 13 is, "The Parable of the Sower." Have you tried planting some seeds?
- 6- Do you know that just as there are literal-physical seeds, there are also spiritual seeds like the seed of truth, and seed of faith, etc.? Name some other spiritual seeds that you have planted in the hearts of men and women, and children.

The Great Commandment

Matthew

Thousands of years ago Yahweh Almighty gave to the people of Israel through Moses the Ten Commandments to guide them so that they would be able to live in accordance to His will; live a righteous life. The Israelites tried their best to obey the Law or the Ten Commandments but failed to meet the righteous demands of the Law because they did it according to their worldly wisdom not by the wisdom that comes from Yahweh Almighty through sincere faith and humble obedience. So in spite of their zeal to obey the Law, they fell short of Yahweh's standard and expectation. To be specific, the religious leaders became proud and confident that they know the Law. In fact, Yahshua the Messiah has said that they were hypocrites, and they were blind leaders.

Much later, when Yahshua the Messiah went around preaching, feeding, healing the sick, and teaching them, He summarized the Ten Commandments into two. He said, "*Love Yahweh (God) with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength.* This is the greatest and the most important commandment. The second most important commandment is like it. *Love your neighbor as you love yourself.* The whole Law of Moses and the teaching of the prophets depend on these two commandments."

To love Almighty Yahweh with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, is to wholly submit ourselves to Him, to humbly and faithfully obey Him; to worship Him only. To love our neighbor as we love ourselves is to be good and kind to them; to do no harm to them. Remembering that "love worketh no ill to his neighbor therefore love is the fulfillment of the Law (Romans 13: 10).

Questions for Exercise:

1. How do you find obeying the commandments or the teaching of our Father and Savior? Easy or difficult?
2. When understanding and obeying the teachings of our Father and Savior is difficult, what do you do?
3. What are the great commandments that Yahshua the Messiah taught the people?

*The Arrest of Yahshua the Messiah
And
His Seven Last Words*

Matthew

Yahshua the Messiah and His disciples went to a place called Gethsemane. There He prayed earnestly to the heavenly Father Yahweh while His disciples were at a distance away. His prayer was: *“My Father, if it is possible, take this cup of suffering from me! Yet not what I want, but what you want.”* After awhile He prayed again saying, *“Father, if this cup of suffering cannot be taken away unless I drink it, your will be done.”* Once more, He said this same prayer the third time when suddenly Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve disciples arrived with a large crowd armed with swords and clubs who were sent by the chief priest and the elders. Judas made a signal to his companions by approaching Yahshua and saying, *“Peace be with you, Teacher,”* and kissed Him.

Judas’ companions came up, arrested Yahshua the Messiah and held Him tight. They took him to the High Priest Caiaphas, the teachers of the Law, and the elders who were gathered together. There, Yahshua was questioned and later brought to Governor Pilate where He was sentenced to death according to the demand of the people who shouted at the top of their voices, *“Crucify him! Crucify him!”*

Yahshua was then led to a place called Golgotha to be crucified and many painful things happened along the way aside from the fact that He was already beaten, slapped, falsely accused, and put to shame in many other ways.

At Golgotha He was ruthlessly nailed on the cross. While on the cross, before He gave up His last breath, He uttered the following statement which is known as the *“Seven Last Words.”*

- *Father, forgive them for they know not what they are doing. Luke 23: 34*

- *Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise.*

Luke 23: 43

- *Woman, behold thy son...behold thy mother! John 19: 26*

- *Eli Eli lama sabachthani? Which means,
 “My God, my God, why did you abandon me?” Matthew 27: 46*

- *I thirst. John 19: 28*

- *It is finished. John 19: 26-27*

- *Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit. Luke 23: 46*

Questions for Exercise:

1. The Bible tells us that Yahshua was born holy, and to be the King of Kings, why did he have to go through such suffering? Was it wrong to exercise His power and authority as King?
2. Have you prayed for the good of those who hurt you most? Or, can you pray for them? If not, then that must be a sign that you need to improve your relationship with Yahshua the Messiah.
3. Can you imagine how hard Yahshua suffered? Are you willing to do similar things for your loved ones?
4. Perhaps, your loved ones need salvation and eternal life, are you willing to sacrifice for them?
5. As a follower of Yahshua the Messiah, what have you been doing so that the Father's will be done on earth?
6. Yahshua the Messiah said: "Father, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." What is the Father's will on earth?
7. How important is forgiveness? Or, why do we need to forgive?
8. When we forgive, does that mean that we have to be close friends with the forgiven offender or "barkada" after? Explain your answer.

MARK

Introduction:

The book of Mark is the earliest of the Gospels. This Gospel presents Yahshua the Messiah as the man of power, the strong and active Son of God. Mark presents Yahshua the Messiah and his ministry with emphasis on healing and teaching, which clearly show his power over demons and His power to forgive people's sins.

The last chapters of Mark report the events of the last week of Yahshua the Messiah's earthly life, especially His crucifixion and resurrection.

FS

*Yahshua the Messiah's Power
Over Demons, Sickness and Disease*

Mark

- In Capernaum, a man with an evil spirit came to the synagogue where Yahshua the Messiah taught. The man screamed, "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Are you here to destroy us? I know who you are-you are God's holy messenger!" Yahshua ordered the spirit, "Be quiet, and come out of the man!" The evil spirit shook the man hard, screamed, and came out of him.

- Simon's Mother in-law was sick in bed with a fever. Yahshua was told about her, so He went to her, took her by the hand and helped her up. The fever left her....

- A man suffering from a dreaded skin disease came to Yahshua, knelt down, and begged Him for help. "If you want to," he said, "you can make me clean." Yahshua reached out and touched him and said, "I do want to. Be cleaned!" At once the disease left the man, and he was clean.

- In Capernaum, four men carrying a paralyzed man to Yahshua arrived. Since the crowd was great, they could not get near Him. So they made a hole in the roof above the place and let the paralyzed man down in front of Yahshua the Messiah. Seeing how much faith they had, Yahshua said to the paralyzed man, "My son, your sins are forgiven."

- In the synagogue, there was a man who had a paralyzed hand. Yahshua saw him and said to him: "Come up here to the front." Meanwhile, Yahshua asked the people, "What does our Law allow us to do on the Sabbath? To help or to harm? To save a man's life or to destroy it? Then Yahshua said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." The man stretched out his hand and his hand became well again.

- When Yahshua arrived on the other side of Lake Galilee, he was met by a man who came out of the burial caves there. This man had evil spirits in him and lived among the tombs. He was too strong for anyone to control him. Many times he broke the chains and smashed the irons on his feet. When this man saw Yahshua at a distance, he screamed “Jesus, Son of the Most High! What do you want with me? Please don’t punish me.” Yahshua answered, “What is your name?” “My name is mob- there are so many of us! The spirits begged saying, “Send us to the pigs, let us go into them.” Yahshua let them go and the pigs about two thousand in all rushed down to the side of the cliff into the lake and were drowned.
- Everywhere Yahshua went, people brought their sick to Him and beg Him to let their sick at least touch the edge of His cloak. All who touched it were made well.

Questions:

1. Name some of the sickness and disease that Yahshua the Messiah healed.
2. Is it possible for one person to have many evil spirits within him?
3. What name did the evil spirit give when Yahshua asked the possessed man?
4. Is it possible for someone to do the works that Yahshua the Messiah did? In what way?
5. In 3 to 5 words, describe Yahshua the Messiah as a healer.
6. Have you experienced a miraculous healing? Tell us briefly your experience.
7. What very important advice or advices can you give to the people to help them keep themselves spiritually and physically healthy?

Yahshua the Messiah As A Teacher

Mark

Yahshua the Messiah was the rarest of teachers that has ever taught to peoples around the world. His teachings; the spiritual truths and principles He taught were the same since the creation of the world, today, and forever. In other words, it applies for all time; it is effective in the past, in the present, and also in the future. "He taught with authority." One of the striking truths that Yahshua the Messiah taught was: "The right time has come," He said, "and the Kingdom of God is near! Turn away from your sins and believe the Good News!" The Kingdom of God is the Kingdom of righteousness and peace. Although we do not see the world in the state of righteousness and peace right now, yet, for an individual who is a sinner and who hears the Good News, it is his right time to receive the righteousness and peace of God through sincere repentance, and faith.

In contrast, some well-known teachers and even scientists, in many instances, were not consistent in what they say or teach. At one point in time they say for example, that this particular thing is good but five or ten years later, it is discovered that it is not; they themselves would say that the side effects are more destructive. So, it does more harm than good, and the use of it must be banned or prohibited.

Questions for Exercise:

1. If you have time to read and listen, whose book or what book would you prefer to read? Why?
2. If you have been in the practice of reading the Book of our Father and Savior, how much time in a day do you allot for reading? 15, 30 minutes? An hour or more?
3. How do you find your reading of the Holy Bible? Is it interesting? Have you been enriched and strengthened spiritually?
4. Do you want to be a teacher? If you have the opportunity, what will you teach?
5. What did Yahshua the Messiah teach? How did he teach?
6. Describe the Kingdom of God.

Other Striking Miracles

Mark

A. Yahshua made His disciples went ahead of Him in a boat to Bethsaida. At evening, the boat was already at the middle of the Lake while Yahshua was on land. He saw the disciples rowing against the wind. Some time between three and six o'clock in the morning, He came to them walking on the water. When the disciples saw Him they were terrified and shouted, "It's a ghost." Yahshua answered them at once: "Courage!" He said. "It is I. Don't be afraid."

B. The book of Mark recorded that wherever Yahshua the Messiah went, many people followed Him. On one occasion while the people were gathered around Yahshua, He called the disciples to Him and said: "I feel sorry for these people, because they have been with me for three days and now have nothing to eat." His disciples asked, "Where in the desert can anyone find enough food to feed all these people?" "How much bread do you have?" Yahshua asked. "Seven loaves," they answered. They also had a few small fish. "Yahshua ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground. He then took the bread and the fish, gave thanks to the Almighty Father, broke them, and gave them to the disciples to distribute to the people.

"There were about four thousand people, everybody ate and had enough. Then the disciples took up seven baskets full of pieces left over."

Questions:

1. Has Yahshua the Messiah done some miracles to you and your family?
2. Share your testimony.
3. Name some other Bible personalities that performed miracles.
4. It is common knowledge that not so many people could perform genuine miracles. Why?

Yahshua the Messiah's Trial

Mark

After Yahshua the Messiah was arrested, the chief Priest hurriedly met with the elders, the teachers of the Law, and the whole Council. They then decided to put Yahshua in chains, led Him away, and handed Him over to Pilate.

The chief Priest accused him of many things and Yahshua never answered them; He was quiet. But when Pilate asked Him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Yahshua answered: "So you say."

Pilate the governor, was in the practice of setting any one prisoner at every Passover Festival so when the people gathered to ask for the usual favor, Pilate asked them: "Do you want me to set free to you the King of the Jews?" The priests quickly stirred the people to ask Pilate to set Barabbas who was a murderer, free. "What then would you want me to do with the King of the Jews?" Pilate asked. The people shouted, "Crucify him." Pilate asked again, "What crime has he committed?" They shouted much louder, "Crucify him."

Pilate set Barabbas free according to the demand of the people, then he had Yahshua whipped and handed Him over to be crucified.

Questions for Exercise:

1. Name 3 or 5 adjectives that you think describe Pilate best as a judge.
2. What can you say about the Priests..., are they good leaders?
3. The chief Priest, elders, and teachers accused Yahshua of many things but Yahshua was quiet. Why do you think was He quiet?
4. If you were in the place of Yahshua, what do you think you would do?
5. In few sentences, describe the trial. Was it fair and just?

LUKE

Introduction:

The Gospel according to St. Luke presents Yahshua as the promised Savior of mankind. He is also presented as the healer, redeemer, friend of the weak, the compassionate Savior.

In Luke are found the story of the birth of John the Baptist, the birth of the Messiah, the songs of the angels and the shepherds' visit, the parable of the good Samaritan, the parable of the lost sheep, and the prodigal son. The writer also placed emphasis on the role of women in the ministry of Yahshua the Messiah.

From this Gospel also comes the special feeling of the mercy of God the Father as Yahshua showed it to the people.

The Mercy of God the Father

Luke 15: 11-32

The story of the prodigal son is very touching! It clearly and strongly pictures the steadfast love and unending mercy of our Father in heaven.

Like the prodigal son in Luke 15: 11-32, we too mankind are guilty of sin against our heavenly Father in many ways, even in the way we handle the wealth of our Father. In the first place, the Father has given us life-body, soul, and spirit. Now, are we taking care of our body, soul, and spirit the best that we can? Are we not lavish in our eating and drinking with foods that are not good for our body? When our first ancestors and all mankind fell from the glory of our Father, He gave us a Savior. Have we sincerely and gladly received our Lord and Savior? Do we faithfully follow Him for our good? The Father has given us the world; the world rich with all kinds of good things. But the question is: How have we managed the world? How did we handle its resources? How is the condition of the world?

Pondering on all these things will certainly make us see that we are all like the prodigal son, the son who foolishly spent his father's money. Obviously, mankind has not been a good steward or a good manager of our Father's wealth-ourselves, our children or families, our land. We don't deserve our Father's love! Marvelously, our Father's love for us is strong and His faithfulness is eternal, that in spite of everything, He lovingly said to us: "Come now, let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land."

Brethren, life in this world has been harsh and hard because of disobedience, because of sin. Let us humbly come to our merciful Father; let us be willing and obedient that we may enjoy all the good things in the land. Let us celebrate and rejoice with our Father and Savior who rejoice over every one sinner who repents and obey Him.

Exercise:

1. From the story of the prodigal son in Luke 15: 11-32, make a skit.
2. After the presentation, ask some viewers to share the lesson or lessons they have learned.

Being Rich in God's Sight

Luke 12: 13-21

It is good to be rich! Our heavenly Father Yahweh also wants us to be rich in all good things. In fact, the reason why He sent to the world His begotten Son Yahshua the Messiah and let Him suffered, is for us His people to have abundant and eternal life. Abundant and eternal life is certainly riches and wealth beyond measure!

Yes, our Father in heaven Yahweh wants us to be rich, but never to be covetous or lustful, selfish, proud and boastful. That is why Yahshua the Messiah Himself strongly teaches the people saying, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things (good things) shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6: 33).

To "seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness first", is first and foremost to acknowledge that our life and all good things that we have come from God. To sincerely thank Him and be active in the building of His kingdom on earth. If we are already rich, we should continue to be good stewards of the riches that are in our hands whether spiritual or financial and material. We should be eager to help those who have less or none at all, giving each one person the opportunity to grow in every aspect of life. To feel the love and mercy of our Father and Savior until all of mankind would acknowledge the greatness and the mercy of our loving Father and glorify Him forever. If poor, be willing to be taught and learn, to work humbly, and trust in the love and mercy of our Father and Savior.

Luke chapter twelve tells us of a parable of the rich fool. Why rich fool? It is because the rich man in the story thought that his riches was the result of his own effort, and he was only thinking of his own comfort and pleasure. He "piled up riches for himself and was not rich in God's sight."

So Yahshua the Messiah concluded by warning the people saying, "Watch and guard yourself from every kind of greed; because a person's life is not made up of the things he owns, no matter how rich he may be" (Luke 12: 15).

Questions for Exercise:

1. Are you rich? What are your riches-spiritual? Money or material? Both?
2. How is your stewardship or management of your wealth?
3. Enumerate some ways to improve the management of your wealth.
4. Assuming you are poor, write down the things that you can do to improve yourself, and start doing it.

A Good Neighbor

Luke 10: 25-37

The parable of a good Samaritan in Luke chapter ten tells us of a traveler who was attacked on the road, robbed of every good thing he had, beaten and lying on the road unconscious. Some religious and respectable people passed by him but they did not extend any help. When a Samaritan saw the unconscious man, he did everything he could to help him, even spent his own money to save the man. (Take note that the Jews or Israelites had no dealing with the Samaritans because they were gentiles-not among the chosen people). But in spite of their differences and how the Jews treated the Samaritans, this Samaritan showed kindness, and willingly helped the unconscious Jew. He acted like a neighbor. In other words, according to the parable, a kind and helpful person is like a neighbor. Therefore, neighbors must be kind to one another like the good Samaritan.

We all have neighbors or families living near our house. What is a good neighbor? How do you express your kindness to your neighbor? We surely can do so in many ways, but one thing that I would like us to give emphasis is to be concerned of the welfare and safety of our neighbors. Sometimes some neighbors quarrel because of garbage, because of dogs and other forms of disturbances and hazards.

Let us be considerate! Let us be good neighbors to one another. Let us remember that "love worketh no ill to his neighbor."

Exercise:

1. Share your experience with your neighbors.

Note: Strictly no mention of names.

2. If you were a mayor or a governor, what reward would you give to a person who is like the good Samaritan? Why?

Mary & Martha

Luke 10: 38- 42

Mary and Martha were sisters of Lazarus who lived in Bethany and who later became sick, died and buried but after four days Yahshua the Messiah came and brought him back to life miraculously. This Mary is also the one who poured sweet perfume on Yahshua's feet and wiped them with her hair. Both sisters Mary and Martha, and Lazarus were dear friends of Yahshua the Messiah.

One day Yahshua the Messiah visited Mary and Martha, and started teaching. While Yahshua the Messiah was talking, Mary sat down and seriously listened to Him but Martha was very busy preparing some foods to serve their beloved friend and his companions. Martha was probably running out of time, and tired that she said to Yahshua: "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her to come and help me." The Lord answered: "Martha, Martha! You are worried and troubled over so many things, but just one is needed. Mary has chosen the right thing, and it will not be taken away from her."

Both sisters had good and valuable qualities. While Mary listened, Martha prepared food to serve their friends. What Martha did was surely good! But knowing that Yahshua had something which others could not give, and knowing also that He is not always around, at that moment Mary has chosen the right and the best thing; the thing that could not be taken away from her.

Mary and Martha are clear pictures of the reality of life especially among us women. Some of us are always worried over many things which are not really necessary. Also, like Mary and Martha, we all have good qualities, special skills and abilities. But the question is: what is our priority this time or hour, this day, this week, this month, this year? Remember in this world, good and precious opportunity rarely comes our way. Above all, let us remember also that "some good things never last."

Exercise:

1. List the things and activities that are important to you.
2. Of the things you have listed, which is the most important and most precious to you? why?

JOHN

Introduction:

This Gospel presents Yahshua the Messiah as the eternal word of God the Father, who became a human being and lived among us.

The book also records various miracles which show that Yahshua the Messiah is the Son of God, the promised Savior.

John emphasizes the gift of eternal life through faith in Yahshua the Messiah, a gift of life which begins at the moment we accept Him as our Savior.

JS

The Son of God

John

How do we know that Yahshua the Messiah is the Son of God? How can we be sure who He is when some of the people particularly the religious leaders said: "He has Beelzebul in him, the chief of the demons...."? (Mark 3: 22).

Let us recall that when John the Baptist was baptizing the people in the Jordan River, some Priests and Levites came to ask him, "Who are you?" John answered: "I am not the Messiah." Then "Who are you? Are you Prophet Elijah?" The Priests and Levites asked. John replied: "No, I am not." So, the Priests and Levites said: "If you are not the Messiah why do you baptize?"

Then, John gave his testimony concerning the Messiah, saying:

"I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from heaven and stay on him, I still did not know that he was the one, but God, who sent me to baptize had said to me, 'You will see the Spirit come down and stay on a man; he is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' I have seen it, and I tell you, he is the Son of God" (John 1: 32-35).

When Yahshua started calling some men to be His disciples, He first called Andrew, then Andrew invited Simon Peter his brother to join them. Next, was Philip. When Philip saw Nathanael, he told him that he has found the one whom Moses wrote about. "He is the son of Joseph from Nazareth." Philip said.

Nathanael was in doubt and asked, "Can any good thing come from Nazareth?" Philip invited him anyway, to meet the Messiah. When they met and Yahshua talked with him, Nathanael exclaimed, "Teacher, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"

What do these mean to us today? In our present world, how do we recognize the man of God and the things of God? What are the criteria? Is it his degree and popularity? Or, is it our own standing in the society that make us recognize the gifts of God?

Brethren, let us remember that the Father has given us the Holy Spirit, who is the teacher of truth to teach us and guide us. If we humbly and sincerely seek His help, He will be pleased to bless us with understanding of the truth, and to lead us into all the truth.

Questions:

1. How did John the Baptist and Nathanael know that Yahshua is the Messiah, the Son of God?
2. Most of the people did not know that Yahshua is the Messiah. Name some others who knew.
3. What should we do in order to recognize the things of God, and the man of God?
4. Briefly, make your own testimony of the Messiah.
5. Say something about Nazareth where Yahshua and his parents lived.
6. Memorize the following:

“Whoever does not have the Spirit cannot receive the gifts that come from God’s Spirit. Such a person really does not understand them; they are nonsense to him, because their value can be judged only on a spiritual basis. Whoever has the Spirit, however, is able to judge the value of everything,....” (I Corinthians 2: 14-15)

“A tree is known by the kind of fruit it bears...a good person brings good things out of his treasures of good things, a bad person brings bad things out of his treasures of bad things.”

Matthew 12: 33 & 35

“The Authority of the SON”

John 5

The Almighty Father Yahweh has given to His Son power and authority over His whole creation. The book of Matthew 28: 18 declares that Yahshua the Messiah said: “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”

In particular, what is this power? Power over what?

John diligently took note the following:

- What the Father does, the Son also does. For the Father loves the Son and shows all that He Himself is doing.
- Just as the Father raises the dead and gives life, in the same way the Son gives life to those He wants to. Yahshua the Messiah Himself declared: “I am the resurrection and the life...” (John 11: 25).
- Nor does the Father judge anyone. He has given His Son the full right to judge so that all will honor the Son as they honor the Father.
- Just as the Father is Himself the source of life, in the same way He has made His Son to be the source of life. “I am the way, the truth, and the life...” (John 14: 6).
- You study the Scriptures, because you think that in them you will find eternal life. And these Scriptures speak about me! Yet you are not willing to come to me in order to have life.
- But I know what kind of people you are, and I know that you have no love for God in your hearts.
- I have come with my Father’s authority, but you have not received me; when, however, someone comes with his own authority, you will receive him.

These are the words of Yahshua the Messiah about Himself and the power and authority that the Father has given Him which John has carefully recorded for us.

Questions:

1. There is always a need for a human father to give power and authority to his son over his possession because he is mortal. But Almighty Yahweh is eternal, why do you think, did He give power and authority to His Son? Write a short paragraph.
2. Does the Father also give power to us, as He did to His Son Yahshua the Messiah? Explain your answer.

"Peace Be With You"

John

One evening after the Messiah's resurrection, He appeared to His disciples who were gathered together and said to them: "Peace be with you, as the Father sent me, so I send you."

My dear brethren, let me tell you this: Starting the Lord's work or doing the ministry the Lord has placed upon our hands is truly far from easy. In fact, sadly, there are some who decided to leave the ministry. That is especially so because when the Lord called us or sent us, He did not call us because we have much money to spend, not because we are highly skilled to do the work, not because we are eloquent speakers. In most cases, it is exactly the opposite. Not even because we have sufficient knowledge of His words and spiritual principles. Simply, He called us because He sees our hearts; He saw that we are good candidates to be His successful ministers. Take note that the holy scriptures tell us this: "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in His presence" (I Corinthians 1: 26-29).

In the first place, to make the decision alone is already a struggle. And, given the said condition at the time most ministers are called, life is really difficult and work is hard. Both life and works are wearisome and lonely. It is giving up completely of ourselves, our family to God our Father and Savior. It is giving ourselves to Him as living sacrifice. But, brethren, indeed, "peace be with you" and rejoice, for, although "we live as having nothing yet we possess all things." We possess some things that the world never knew. We will possess what the world never thought we would ever have.

One of the marvelous things we have which the world does not know and could not understand, is what Yahshua the Messiah did and gave to His disciples when He appeared to them. And this gift is also ours to enjoy at the right time because of our faith in Him.

Yahshua the Messiah breathed on them and said:

“Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive people’s sins, they are forgiven, if you don’t forgive them, they are not forgiven” (John 20: 22-23).

*“Whoever listens to you listens to me;
Whoever rejects you rejects me; and whoever rejects me
Rejects the One who sent me.”*

*I saw satan fall like lightning from heaven.
Listen! I have given you power and authority, so that you can
walk on snakes and scorpions and overcome all the power of the
Enemy, and nothing will hurt you.”*

Luke 10: 16, 18 & 19

Questions:

1. Aside from the Holy Spirit, what do you have that the world does not have? Enumerate at least 5.
2. Explain what you have enumerated in No.1.
3. Why do you think what Yahshua the Messiah did and gave to His disciples was marvelous?

Acts

Introduction:

The book of Acts is a continuation of the Gospel according to St. Luke. It is an account of what the disciples did after the resurrection of the Messiah.

An important feature of Acts is the activity of the Holy Spirit, who comes with power upon the believers in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost and continues to guide and strengthen the believers.

JS

Forty Days More

Acts

The first chapter of the book of Acts clearly tells us that Yahshua the Messiah died, buried, resurrected, and ascended to heaven. But, before he was taken up, for forty days after His death He appeared to His disciples several times. "He appeared to them many times in ways that proved beyond doubt that he was alive. They saw him, and talked with them about the Kingdom of God."

He also gave them the following instructions:

- *"Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift I told you about, the gift my Father promised. John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.*
- *"...when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

Then He was taken up to heaven. They watched Him until a cloud hid Him from their sight.

Questions for Exercise:

1. Yahshua the Messiah stayed on earth for forty days more after His resurrection. Cite other events in the Bible that took forty days.
2. What is the gift that the heavenly Father promised?
3. Why do you think the apostles had to wait for the promised gift before they leave Jerusalem?
4. What were the disciples-apostles supposed to do after receiving the promised gift?
5. What did the Messiah talk about when He appeared to them during the forty days?

The Day of Pentecost

Acts

The day of pentecost is the day when the Holy Spirit descended upon the believers while they were gathered together in one place.

This is how it happened: "Suddenly there was a great noise from the sky which sounded like a strong wind blowing and it filled the whole house.... Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire which spread out and touched each one person there. They were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to talk in other languages, as the Spirit enabled them to speak."

There were many Jews, and religious men from different countries such as: Parthia, Media, Elam, Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya, Cyrene, and Rome. In amazement the people exclaimed, "These people are Galileans, how is it that we hear them speaking in our own native languages?"

Some people made fun of the believers and said: "They were drunk." But Peter stood up and spoke: "Fellow Jews and all of you, let me tell you what this means. These people are not drunk but this is the fulfillment of what Prophet Joel spoke about: 'In the last days, God says: I will pour out my Spirit on everyone. Your sons and daughters will proclaim my message; your young men will see visions, your old men will have dreams....'"

Then Peter made an appeal to them saying, "Each one of you must turn away from his sins and be baptized...so that your sins will be forgiven; and you will receive God's gift, the Holy Spirit. Save yourselves from the punishment coming upon the wicked people!"

About three thousand people were added to the group that day. They spent their time in hearing..., taking part in the fellowship; sharing in the fellowship meals and the prayers.

Questions for Exercise: Fill in the Blanks

1. _____ is the day the Holy Spirit descended upon the believers.
2. The believers saw _____ when the Holy Spirit descended.

3. What happened during the day of Pentecost was the fulfillment of the prophecy of _____.
4. Peter spoke and appealed to the people to turn away from their _____ and be _____ that their sins will be _____.
5. In the prophecy, the prophet said: God will pour out His _____ on everyone, and young men will see _____ old men will have _____.
6. The believers were filled with the _____ when they spoke other languages.
7. Some people made fun of the believers and said that they were _____.
8. _____ the number of people added to the group of believers that day.
9. Peter said: Save yourselves from the punishment coming upon the _____.
10. The believers spent their time in _____, _____, _____.

The Believers New Way of Life

Acts 4: 32-37

The believers are to witness the love, mercy, and power of the Almighty Father in the life of His Son Yahshua the Messiah. Yes, all believers of the Messiah must be witnesses of the wonderful works of the Father through His Son. Nevertheless, the Scriptures teach us that while the believers were busy and eager to tell the world of the Messiah's sacrificial death, resurrection, and ascension for mankind's salvation, they saw to it that first and foremost they were one in heart and mind by showing genuine concern, love and care for one another.

While Yahshua the Messiah was with His disciples on earth, He taught them saying, "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one to another" (John 13:35). Indeed, the disciples showed their love and care to one another by sharing their possessions. "No one said that any of his belongings was his own, but they all shared with one another everything they had.... There was no one in the group who was in need."

The scriptures tell us further that some of the believers who owned fields and houses sold them, and turned over the proceeds to the apostles; and the money was distributed to each one according to his need.

Today, the believers are composed of many denominations, and they need not sell their fields and houses, and give the money to the leaders for distribution. But every believer regardless of the name of his denomination must take heed of the principle that has been taught to us. We should be conscious of the fact that we have greater responsibility towards our brethren than to the people of the world. We should first of all be concerned of their welfare, care for each other, and help one another. In this way, together we would all become effective witnesses to the world for the honor and glory of our Father and Savior. Everyone should understand that believers are not competitors but brethren.

Questions for Exercise:

I. True or False

1. _____ Believers are witnesses of the goodness, greatness, love, and mercy of the heavenly Father through His Son.
2. _____ The Messiah taught his disciples to sincerely love one another.
3. _____ Ministers should focus their attention on reaching out the people of the world, leaving the believers to themselves.
4. _____ Believers should sell their possessions and give the money to the leaders to prove that they are faithful, otherwise, they are not true believers.
5. _____ Believers should not help carry one another's burdens but strive to compete for God's attention.

II. Memorize

*"Love one another as I have loved you.
By this all men know that you are my disciples,
if you have love one to another."*

John 13: 34 & 35

A Sinner Who Becomes A Saint

Acts 9: 1- 31

Saul was a persecutor! A Hebrew or Israelite; a descendant of Abraham who was very religious but did not believe in Yahshua the Messiah. The Scripture says: "He tried to destroy the church; going from house to house, he dragged out the believers, both men and women, and threw them into jail." Saul also approved of Stephen's murder, a man full of faith in Yahshua the Messiah, who was stoned to death.

While Saul kept up his violent threats of murder against the believers and followers of the Messiah, he asked from the High Priest letters of introduction to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he should find there any followers of the Messiah, he would be able to arrest them, both men and women, and bring them back to Jerusalem.

But while Saul traveled and was coming near Damascus, suddenly a light from the sky flashed around him. "He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul! Why do you persecute me?'" "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you persecute," the voice said. "But get up and go into the city, where you will be told what you must do."

Saul got up and opened his eyes but could not see a thing; he became blind for three days and during that time he did not drink or eat anything.

In Damascus, there was a faithful believer of Yahshua the Messiah named Ananias. The Lord said to him, "Get ready and go to Straight Street at the house of Judas, ask for a man named Saul. Ananias went and when he found Saul he said: "Brother Saul, the Lord who appeared to you on the road has sent me so that you might see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Saul stood up and was baptized. He stayed for a few days with the believers in Damascus. Then he went to the synagogues and began to preach the gospel. This Saul is the Apostle Paul who later wrote to the Romans, Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, Thessalonians,.... Saul was a sinner who became a saint!

Questions for Exercise:

1. Give a brief testimony of your personal experience with the Lord.
2. Why do you think the Lord picked Saul for Himself in spite that he was a persecutor?

ROMANS

Introduction:

The epistles were written from Corinth about 58 A.D.

First, he informed the believers in Rome of his plan to visit them to work among them for awhile, and to secure their support in his missionary program since he also planned to proceed to Spain.

Apostle Paul stresses the universality of man's sin but Almighty Yahweh saves all men through faith in Yahshua the Messiah. That is, all mankind both Jews and Gentiles alike are under the power of sin, but they are put right with Almighty Yahweh through faith in Yahshua the Messiah.

In his letter, the apostle gladly describes the new life in union with Yahshua the Messiah. He said: "The believers have peace with Almighty Yahweh and is set free by the Holy Spirit from sin and death. He also wrote to explain that the Almighty turned Israel's rejection of the Messiah into blessing to the Gentiles. He believes that the Jews will not always reject the Messiah, rather, he hopes that someday both Jews and Gentiles will be completely one in worshipping the Almighty Father in the name of Yahshua the Messiah.

The Universality of Sin

Romans

Sin is terrible and deadly; it destroys and kills body, soul, and spirit. The scriptures tell us that we should hate sin, keep ourselves from all forms of evil, and remove from our sight even the clothes that are stained with sin. But we need not be ashamed to acknowledge that we have sinned because the truth is, everyone has sinned and fell from the glory, and standard of our heavenly Father. That is, everyone person born on earth – brown, black, white, small, great, short, tall, rich or poor, with the exception of Yahshua the Messiah, has sinned against the Almighty Father.

No one person also can save himself from sin, nor can sin be eradicated with something like money, wealth of any kind or form, only faith in Yahshua the Messiah whom the Father sent to the world and suffered, shed His precious blood to pay the penalty of our sin and for our salvation, abundant, and eternal life in the Kingdom of our Father and Savior.

Perhaps some people are tempted to think that because they do not steal, do not commit murder, etc., they are completely free from sin. That is not true, for again I stress “All men have sinned,” and everyone needs to repent of his sins and have faith in Yahshua the Messiah in order to be saved.

Faith in Yahshua the Messiah means believing in Him, obeying His commands, and follow Him by applying or practicing His teaching. Simple observation clearly reveals that there are many people who say that they are ‘Christians’ but do not obey Christ’s commands nor practice His teaching. Apostle James in his letter to the believers says: “So then, as the body without the spirit is dead, also faith without actions is dead.” Man’s faith and his actions must work together; in other words, if we say we have faith in Yahshua the Messiah, we must obey His teaching. Yahshua the Messiah himself said: “If you love me, keep my commandments. Whoever accepts my commandments and obeys them is the one who loves me. My Father will love whoever loves me; I too will love him and reveal myself to him. Whoever does not love me does not obey my teaching. And the teaching you have heard is not mine, but comes from the Father who sent me.”

Questions for Exercise:

1. Do you believe in Yahshua the Messiah with all your heart and mind?
2. How do you show to the world that you have faith in Yahshua the Messiah?
3. When you confess and ask for forgiveness, do you believe you are forgiven?
4. After receiving forgiveness, do you continue committing the same sin?
5. When tendency to commit sin is strong, what should you do?
6. Yahshua the Messiah said: "if you love me keep my commandments." What are these commandments?
7. Why should we hate sin?
8. How does sin destroy man?
9. What did Apostle James say about faith?
10. When people say, "We do not need to repent because we have not cheated, stolen something, or committed murder...." What do you say?

Memorize: John 14:21 and Matthew 7:21

"Whoever accepts my commandments and obeys them is the one who loves me...." John 14: 21

"Not everyone who calls me 'Lord, Lord' will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but only those who do what my Father in heaven wants them to do."

Matthew 7:21

The Purpose of the Law

Romans

In Biblical context, when we say Law or the Law, we mean the Ten Commandments. We all know that the Law was given by the heavenly Father to Moses in two tablets of stone during their journey from Egypt to the Promise Land. Certainly, that was a very long time ago; that was in the Old Testament period. We can also say that in the wilderness the Israelites have strayed so that the Almighty Father saw the need to give them the Law in the hope that they would recognize that they have gone far away from Him and by keeping the Law, they would be led back close to Him. As the scripture says: "It was the Law that made man know what sin is. Or, what the Law does is to make man know that he has sinned. Or, from the Law they would learn to choose what is right."

The religious leaders like the Priest and the Pharisees tried their best to interpret and obey the Law in order to please the Almighty Father, but sadly, their best effort failed to meet the righteous demands of the Law. This account simply reminds us that we are not saved from sin and from the power of sin by obeying the Law (Romans 8: 3-4). We are saved by the grace of the Almighty Father and our faith in His Son Yahshua the Messiah. Man is put right with the heavenly Father through faith as our ancestor Abraham did. He believed and obeyed. Interestingly, our faith would then enable us to uphold the Law. In other words, we do not disobey the Law because we live by grace and faith; we do not disregard the Law because of faith as some people wrongly think and say. Rather, our faith in Yahshua Messiah would enable us to rightly uphold the Law because of the Holy Spirit who is the Teacher of truth whom the Father has given to us as a gift for our faith in His Son, and who helps us live according to His will.

Questions for Exercise: True or False

- _____ 1. In Biblical context, the Law and the Ten Commandments are the same.
- _____ 2. We are saved by grace and faith in Yahshua the Messiah so the Law is useless.
- _____ 3. Man is able to rightly uphold the Law because he has finished college education and able to interpret the Law.
- _____ 4. The Law makes man know that he has sinned.
- _____ 5. Abraham believed the Almighty Father and obeyed; we can make him our example and inspiration.

Hope For Future Glory

Romans

Our sincere faith in Yahshua the Messiah has set us free from sin and from the power of sin, and made us children of the Almighty Father. For, the scriptures teach us that "There is no condemnation now for those who live in union with Yahshua the Messiah." "Those who are led by God's Spirit are God's sons."

Truly, by our faith in Yahshua the Messiah we have become God's children, but we must continuously live as God's children, having ourselves controlled by the Holy Spirit not by our human nature because those who are controlled by their human nature do not obey God's Law, and in fact cannot obey it and cannot please Yahweh our heavenly Father. In other words, we must humbly submit ourselves to our Father and Savior and let the Holy Spirit take control over our lives so that we would be able to live in obedience to the Father's Law and teachings.

Right now, as the scripture tells us, the creation groans with pain and waits with eager longing for God to reveal His sons. But it is not just creation alone which groans; we who have the Spirit as the first of God's gifts also groan within ourselves as we wait for God to set our whole being (body, soul, spirit) free.

Apostle Paul in his letter to the Philippian believers also says, "Keep on working with fear and trembling to complete your salvation, because God is always at work in you to make you willing and able to obey his own purpose."

It is very clear therefore that although we are God's children, at present we still groan in pain yet, if we faint not and continue working to complete our salvation, if we patiently wait in faith, we have the assurance of final victory, success, peace, and glorious life because Yahshua the Messiah in whom we put our trust and hope has overcome the world. And, all who suffered with Him will also share His glory forever.

Are you tired and weary of living with all your troubles and problems? Do not look at your problems, look to our Father and Savior. Look around and count His blessings and you will see that they are too many and wonderful; they are countless and immeasurable. Praise Him for His great goodness and tender mercies. Stand up in the strength and power of our Lord and Savior, and set your hope on the glorious future.

Exercises:

1. List down all your troubles and problems.
2. Lift it to our Father and Savior in prayer; surrender it to Him.
3. Keep praising Him for His great goodness and tender mercies.
4. Thank Him in advance for answering your prayers. Wait patiently.
5. Bring an offering (money, goods) to the heavenly Father by giving it to His ministers. Give to the poor and needy.

CORINTHIANS

Introduction:

The epistle of Paul to the Corinthians were written from Ephesus about 57 A.D. At that time Corinth was a cosmopolitan Greek City, the capital of Roman Province of Achaia. The city was noted for its commerce, proud culture, widespread immorality, and variety of religions.

Apostle Paul's chief concerns are matters concerning divisions of the assembly of believers, immorality, gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the resurrection.

The Apostle also presents love as the best of the Spiritual gifts, as shown in I Corinthians chapter 13.

JS

Giving Thanks to the Almighty Father

I Corinthians

It is easy to give thanks when we are happy; when we are in good condition. When everything is alright. But can we give thanks in the midst of pain and sorrow? Can we give thanks in all circumstances?

Apostle Paul received a report that there were quarrels among the believers in Corinth. Some of them say, "I follow Paul"; others say, "I follow Apollos"; one group says, "I follow Peter"; some others say, "I follow Christ." There was a lot of disagreement and divisions!

Brethren, imagine how hard Paul suffered to bring to them the good news. How difficult it was for him to start teaching them, to guide them in the way of righteousness. Some time later after he left, he heard that those people whom he hoped to grow strong and mature in the faith quarreled and are breaking apart. The news was really heartbreaking! Paul could have felt sad, angry, bitter, and discouraged because he had invested so much for them. In anger and discouragement, Paul could have ignored them and let them have their own way. But Paul never did that, he was patient and took time to write letters to continue ministering to them. Indeed, Paul's efforts were not in vain because until now his letters have greatly ministered to many of us. Are you patient with yourself? Are you patient with your spouse and children? Are you patient with the people around you—your officemates or your students?

In spite of the unpleasant news Paul never lose patience. Most of all, he never forget how important it was to give thanks to the Almighty Father. In fact, the first thing he did was to thank the Almighty Father for the life of the believers, and for His rich blessings upon them. Paul also inspired the believers by recalling to them the love and mercy of the Father through His Son Yahshua the Messiah, and the abundance of His blessings upon them. He said to them, "You have not failed to receive a single blessing rather, in union with the Messiah you have become rich in all things, including all speech and knowledge."

Brethren, the present world is full of bad news and sad news. Can we give thanks to our Father and Savior in everything and continue to proclaim the good news of salvation that the Father offers to all who believe and follow His Son? Can we give thanks in the midst of hardship, troubles, heartbreaking news? Perhaps, you would say, "it's not easy." Yes, it's not easy but

murmuring, complaining, living a discouraged and bitter life will surely lead to nothing but destruction. And, one good news is, it is much easier and better to give thanks than murmur and complain. That is why Paul in one of his letters admonishes the believers saying, "Rejoice ever more. Give thanks to the Father in everything. Pray without ceasing."

Let us then give thanks to our Father and Savior in all circumstances believing that He is the Almighty. He is able to make all things work together for our good!

Questions for Exercise:

1. Do you enjoy giving thanks to our Father and Savior?
2. Some people give thanks through prayers, hymns, and offerings; others by doing something such as acts of kindness. Give example of an act of kindness.
3. What is the best way to thank our Father and Savior?
4. Have you experienced disagreement and divisions in your Assembly or church? What did you do?
5. What can you say of people who constantly quarrel and disagree? What advices can you give to them?
6. Memorize:

"Rejoice ever more. Pray without ceasing.

Give thanks to the Father in everything."

I Thessalonians 5: 16-18

Spiritually One

I Corinthians

*But he who joins himself to the LORD becomes spiritually
one with Him (I Corinthians 6: 17).*

Before Yahshua the Messiah was arrested, crucified, and died, He prayed to the Heavenly Father for His disciples saying, "Father, grant that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us...."

It is really the desire of our Lord and Savior that we would be one with Him just as He is one with the Father, so that we would be able to manifest to the world the perfect image of the Son Yahshua the Messiah, for all peoples to know Him and live in reverence for our Father and Savior.

To be perfectly one with our Father and Savior does not happen instantly and automatically. It rather means constantly abiding in Him through faith, and by letting His words abide in us through humble obedience until we will be completely 'joined' to the Lord in faith, thus, making our body the temple of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is given as God's gift to those who obey him (Acts 5: 32). In the book of John, the Messiah also says, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: *but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you*" (John 14: 16-17).

I would like to emphasize that when we sincerely accepted Yahshua the Messiah as our Savior and King, the Holy Spirit is given to us and he dwells with us to help us, and as we continuously abide in our Father and Savior through faith and humble obedience, the Holy Spirit will be in us, in which case our body becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit and we become completely one with Yahshua the Messiah.

Sensible people do not live or do not want to live in a dirty house and place. Think, how much more so it is for the Holy Spirit? Common sense will tell us that the Holy Spirit does not and will not live permanently or forever in a filthy body or place. So, apparently, a body can only be a temple of the Holy

Spirit if it is free from all kinds of filth like sexual immorality, idolatry, greed, pride and arrogance, crimes and violence, lust, etc.

Brethren, let us all make it our aim to be completely one with our Savior and King by keeping ourselves holy through sincere faith and humble obedience.

Questions for Exercise:

1. Do you want your body to be a temple of the Holy Spirit?
2. Describe the life of a person whose body is a temple of the Holy Spirit.
3. What is the difference between the life of a person who is one with the Messiah and the person who is not.
4. Explain this line: "But ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."
5. Enumerate at least five practical ways to keep ourselves pure and fit for the Holy Spirit.
6. What was the prayer of Yahshua the Messiah for His disciples before he was arrested and crucified?
7. What can you say of the believers of Yahshua the Messiah today? Are they one as the Messiah prayed?
8. Explain: "If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." John 15: 7

Future Judge of the World

I Corinthians

“Don't you know that God's people will judge the world?... Do you know that we shall judge the angels? (I Corinthians 6:2-3).

Apostle John says, “He (Almighty Yahweh) has given His Son the full right to judge, so that all will honor the Son in the same way as they honor the Father” (John 5: 22). Romans 8: 16 & 17 also tells us that: God’s Spirit (the Holy Spirit) joins himself to our spirits to declare that we are God’s children. Since we are his children, ... we will possess with Christ what God has kept for him; for if we share Christ’s sufferings, we will also share his glory.

“For if we share Christ’s suffering, we will also share his glory”, is one of the wonderful promises of our Father and Savior to all who believe and obey Him. Our Father and Savior is holy; it is impossible for Him to lie. He is true and faithful to His promises and He can be trusted at all times. So, as promised, all who believe and humbly share the Messiah’s suffering in this world (Sufferings for the sake of righteousness and of the Gospel) will one day judge the world and the angels, together with Yahshua the Messiah.

As the appointed judges of our Father and Savior, we must know the will of our Father and Master. We must constantly and seriously study His Laws for the people in order to know His will and learn His ways. We must acquaint ourselves or get ourselves familiar with the precepts and instructions of our Father and Savior so that we would be able to perform our duties and responsibilities well. In other words, we must be one in heart with our Father and Savior so that we would be able to implement His divine laws for mankind wisely and properly.

When we study and learn from the words of our Father and Savior, it is not only for our personal salvation, for present need and benefit but also for future duties and responsibilities that our Father and Savior will give to us, as part of the glorious rewards He has kept for us. Remember that our Father has said to us, “You will be the head, not the tail. You will be the leaders, not followers.”

As a warning and as an inspiration, let us take heed that the scripture says: “The wicked will not possess God’s Kingdom....People who are immoral

or who worship idols or adulterers or homosexual perverts or who steal or are greedy or are drunkards or who slander others or are thieves – none of these will possess God’s Kingdom” (I Corinthians 6: 9-10).

Questions for Exercise:

1. Are you excited to become one of the judges of this world and of all angels? Remember that in this world you cannot be a judge if you have not studied Law and passed the Bar Examination. Do you study God’s Law?
2. Our Father and Savior wants us to be the leaders, are you preparing yourselves to be good and wise leaders?
3. Name some traits, qualities or virtues good leaders should have.
4. Write a short essay:
“God wants you to be the head, not the tail; the leader, not follower.”
5. Who are the people, who, according to the scriptures cannot possess the Kingdom of God?

Women in Worship

I Corinthians 11

Worship is the first and foremost or must be the first and foremost in the life of the believers. In fact, worship comes first before ministry, otherwise, no one can minister meaningfully and effectively without worship in the first place.

Romans 12: 1 & 2 teaches us this, “So then, my brothers, because of God’s great mercy to us I appeal to you: *Offer yourselves as a living sacrifice to God, dedicated to his service and pleasing to him. This is the true worship that you should offer.* Do not conform yourselves to the standards of this world, but let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind. Then you will be able to know the will of God – what is good and is pleasing to him and is perfect.”

For women in worship, Apostle Paul makes it clear first of all that “Christ is supreme over every man, the husband is supreme over his wife, and God (the Father) is supreme over Christ.” So, “any woman who prays or proclaims God’s message in public worship with nothing on her head disgraces her husband.... On account of the angels, then, a woman should have a covering over her head to show that she is under her husband’s authority” (I Corinthians 11: 3,5,10).

Covering the head of the women in public worship as the scripture requires is an act of submission to the hierarchy that our heavenly Father has established for mankind, and for protection and safety.

The author believes that one significant reason in the setback of churches due to sexual immorality is the neglect of this teaching.

Some people say, “what if the women cover their heads but wear mini-skirts and backless?” Common sense tells us that everyone especially the believers should be decent or modest in every way.

For more reference read also Genesis 6: 1 & 2.

Questions for Exercise:

1. According to Romans 12, how does a person offer true worship to the heavenly Father?
2. Differentiate worship from ministry.
3. The Scripture says, “Any woman who prays or proclaim God’s message in public worship should have a covering on her head.” Why?

Different Kinds of Spiritual Gifts

I Corinthians 12

There are Spiritual gifts and there are natural talents. “Most of us possess natural talents as well as Spiritual gifts. We receive natural talents at our first birth, our natural birth. We receive spiritual gifts at our second birth, our spiritual birth (except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of heaven – John 3: 3). Both are abilities that are God-given, but the sole purpose for spiritual gifts is not to make money or entertain people but to advance God’s rule and reign on earth.”

The different kinds of spiritual gifts such as the gift of the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, discerning of spirits, faith, healing, the working of miracles, prophecy, teaching, diverse kinds of tongues, the interpretation of tongues, come from the same Spirit. So, “there are different ways of serving, different abilities to perform service, but the same Spirit gives ability to everyone for their particular service. The Spirit’s presence is shown in some ways in each person for the good of all.”

Apostle Paul uses the human body as an illustration of the different spiritual gifts. Yes, the human body has many parts – the head with the eyes, the nose, the mouth, the ears, then the arms, the legs, the feet, etc. We all know that each of these parts functions for the good of the whole body. If the head aches, or the hands or any of the parts of the body aches, the whole body suffers.

We, the believers and followers of Yahshua the Messiah are like the many parts of the body of the Messiah. Some of us maybe the eyes, others maybe the ears, some others maybe the hands, but each of us must function according to the gift or gifts that we have for the good of all Yahweh’s people, just as Yahshua the Messiah gave Himself for us all. None of us should think that I am more important than the others but be a blessing, a help to one another for the fulfillment of the Father’s will.

Questions for Exercise:

1. Make an inventory of your natural talents and see how have you used them?
2. There are several spiritual gifts like the gift of teaching, the gift of prophecy, the gift of healing... which gift or gifts do you desire most? Why?
3. What spiritual gift or gifts do you already have?
4. Are you exercising your gifts so that you will be a blessing to Almighty Yahweh’s people?

II CORINTHIANS

Introduction:

Apostle Paul's second letter to the Corinthians was written when some members of the assembly or church had made strong attacks against him. He wrote to recall with them his works, sufferings, and his relationship with the assembly. He also explained why he responded with severity to insults and opposition. He strongly defended himself against false accusation by telling them his visions and revelations from the Lord.

In spite of every trouble, Paul evidently expressed joy and great hope for reconciliation. He also appealed for a generous offering to the needy brethren in Judea.

JS

Responsible Use of Time

II Corinthians

Every day is very precious or must be very precious to each one of us because only God our Father in heaven knows exactly what will happen tomorrow. In other words, every day is a gift from God. We can also have many plans what to do with 'today' and 'tomorrow' but only our Father in heaven determines the outcome. That is why Apostle Paul in the midst of harsh accusations against himself boldly said to the Corinthians, "Hear what God says: 'When the day arrived for me to save you, I helped you'" (II Corinthians 6: 2).

Almighty Yahweh's words in Paul's epistle remind us that He is the Master of everyone and everything. No one can tell Him what to do and when to do it, so that we should not waste any moment with worthless things like quarreling, complaining, murmuring, accusing one another for selfish motives or jealousy but to see to it that we get saved 'today' by humbly and gladly doing the will of our Father and Savior. Surely, you know that it would be foolish for someone to say to the Almighty, "Lord, last year, last month or last week I was so busy but now, here I am show me your favor, help me, save me, bless me"(See also Isaiah 40: 13-14).

Let us take note that some of the Corinthians at this time were against Paul and had accused him as false minister. Paul defended himself by saying: "We have patiently endured troubles, hardships, difficulties; we have been beaten, jailed, mobbed, and gone without food or sleep. By our purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, by our message of truth, by the Holy Spirit who worked miracles through us, we have shown to be God's servants."

After proving to the Corinthians that Paul and his companions were true servants of the Almighty, he encourages them to seriously obey the teaching he has given them. To continue the good works they had started and not to waste any precious moment.

Brethren, the world has been plagued with so much troubles and problems, let none of us add to it anymore in any way. Let us make it our aim to do good, to show kindness; to help and build up one another fulfilling the command of our Lord and Savior who said, "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one to another" (John 13: 35).

Let us make sure that every hour is an opportunity to receive God's favor; every day is a chance for everyone to get saved.

Questions for Exercise:

1. Are you a good steward of time? Do you use your time in a way that you would be productive and useful?
2. Aside from your daily routine, what other good things you would like to do if you have the opportunity?
3. a – Have you experienced being falsely accused by somebody? How did you react? Now, how do you react?
b – Share a testimony
4. How did Paul defend himself against the accusers? Or, what did he say to them?
5. To whom should you go first for help?
6. We must avoid troubles, but if it comes, how do you see it? Do you see it as opportunity to apply our Father's instructions and see how far you have grown strong and mature?

Galatians

Introduction:

As the good news about Yahshua the Messiah was preached and accepted by some people who were not Jews, the question arose as to whether a person must obey the Law or have faith in Yahshua the Messiah in order to be put right with the Almighty Father Yahweh.

Paul's letter to the Galatians stresses that it is by faith in Yahshua the Messiah that a person is put right with the Almighty Father, not by obeying the Law. But by faith man's obedience to the Law flows freely and naturally.

TS

Becoming An Apostle or A Minister

Galatians

Most ministers become so by the teaching that they have received from above through the older ministers or through the Assembly. They believed and accepted the teaching and eventually proclaim it themselves to others by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

But in the book of the Galatians we learned that Paul who was formerly called Saul became an apostle in a unique and special way. Paul said: "Let me tell you my brothers, that the Gospel I preached is not of human origin. I did not receive it from any man, nor did anyone teach me. It was Jesus Christ (Yahshua the Messiah) who revealed it to me.

How? Acts 9 and 2nd Corinthians 12 tell us these stories. Acts 9 tells us that Paul was devoted to his Jewish religion. Thinking that Yahshua the Messiah was spreading false teaching which could be destructive to the people, he went to the High Priest and asked for letters of introduction to the synagogue in Damascus, so that if he should find there any followers of the Lord, he would be able to arrest them.

But while Paul was on the road to Damascus a light from the sky flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul! Why do you persecute me?" "Who are you, Lord?" Saul or Paul asked. "I am Jesus (Yahshua) whom you persecute. But get up and go into the city, where you will be told what you must do."

Questions:

1. From whom did Paul receive the teaching or Gospel that he proclaimed? Directly or through his mentor?
2. Who was the man snatched up to the highest heaven or paradise 14 years before he wrote his letters to the Corinthians and Galatians?
3. What was Paul's purpose in going to the synagogue in Damascus?
4. In our modern world, do you have an idea where is Galatia?
5. Do you have an experience similar to one of Paul's experiences? Tell us briefly.

Law or Faith

Galatians

Obedience to the Law or Faith in Yahshua the Messiah for salvation from sin, and to become right with Almighty Yahweh was a great issue to the religious people especially to the Galatians.

So, in his letter Paul explains that a sinner is not saved from sin by obeying the Law. In fact, by his own understanding and by his own power, he cannot really obey the Law or he cannot comply the righteous demands of the Law. But a sinner is saved from sin when he hears the Gospel – he believes and accepts it or believes in Yahshua the Messiah as his Savior, Lord and King.

Is the Law then bad and to be disregarded? In no way. To the Romans Paul wrote: “No one is put right in God’s sight by doing what the Law requires; what the Law does is to make man know that he has sinned. You know what God wants you to do, and you have learned from the Law to choose what is right” (Romans 2 & 3).

In other words, the Law makes man recognize that he has sinned or that he has done something against the will of the Father. And, if a person has faith in Yahshua the Messiah, the Father gives him the Holy Spirit who is the teacher of truth that will enable him to naturally obey or uphold the Law as he does the will of the Father.

Questions:

1. What saves man from sin?
2. What does Paul mean by the Law? Is the Law and the Ten Commandments the same?
3. Write the first and the greatest commandment.
4. Recite at least three more laws or commandments Almighty Yahweh gave to man?
5. Who is the Teacher who helps us uphold the Law?

Freedom from Sin

Galatians

When Yahshua the Messiah offered Himself as a sacrifice, shed His precious and powerful blood, He did it so that whosoever believes in Him would be free from sin and from the power of sin that kept the sinner in bondage.

So, believers are free! Before the sinners believe in Yahshua the Messiah, the power of sin kept them from obeying our Father in heaven. But now, because of faith the believers are already free to worship the Father in heaven, free to praise Him and thank Him, free to do the will of the Father or to do the works of our Father, here on earth.

That is why Yahshua the Messiah took the pain and shame of crucifixion so that man would be able to worship Almighty Yahweh in spirit and in truth, and to do His will, to honor and glorify Him. That is why also Apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians saying, "Preserve your Freedom." In other words, we should take care of the freedom that we have received through the sacrifice of Yahshua the Messiah. We should use our freedom carefully and wisely. Use it only and always for the glory of our Father and Savior, never to satisfy the desires of the flesh or you will be under the power of sin again.

Questions:

1. What keeps people from worshiping our Father in heaven in spirit and in truth, and from obeying Him?
2. Who gave you the freedom to worship our Father in heaven in spirit and in truth?
3. How did He give it to you?
4. What did Apostle Paul say to the Galatians concerning their freedom?
5. Are you grateful to the Lord for your freedom?
6. What do you do to show that you are free from the bondage of sin? Do you eagerly participate in the building of our Father's Kingdom in earth?
7. Name some desires and works of the flesh that are common in society? What do you do so that the victims would be free?
8. Explain: "sin or the power of sin" keeps the people from obeying our Father in heaven.

EPHESIANS

Introduction:

In this letter or epistle, Apostle Paul presents Almighty Yahweh's purpose to save men through faith in Yahshua the Messiah, and His great plan to bring all creation together, everything in heaven and on earth, with Yahshua the Messiah as head.

Oneness of Almighty Yahweh's people in union with Yahshua the Messiah is shown in some 'figure of speech' like a wife with Yahshua the Messiah as the husband, like a building with Yahshua the Messiah as the cornerstone, like a body with Yahshua the Messiah as head.

JS

Blessings through Yahshua the Messiah

Ephesians

Through our faith in Yahshua the Messiah, Yahweh Almighty has made us His sons or children. Because we are His children, He put His stamp of ownership on us by giving us the Holy Spirit. Through the Holy Spirit, He has given us also every spiritual blessings in the heavenly world. He has blessed us particularly with the Spiritual gifts like the gifts of: wisdom and insight, knowledge, prophecy, discerning, healing, teaching, miracles, etc. The Spiritual fruit is also ours to enjoy like the fruit of love, peace, joy, patience, etc. Also, the Spiritual armor. All these are ours to use and enjoy until the time when Almighty Yahweh through His Son Yahshua the Messiah brings all creation together, everything in heaven and on earth, with the Messiah as head; the supreme Lord over all things. "The one who has the power to rule over all, and a title superior to all titles of authority in this world and in the next."

For all these blessings as Apostle Paul said, let us give thanks to Yahweh our Father in heaven, and let us praise His glorious name now and forever.

Questions:

1. What made us children of the Father in heaven?
2. Name some of the spiritual blessings the Father has given us, for us to use and enjoy.
3. What particular spiritual blessings do you have?
Are you exercising them to edify the believers?
4. Who is the head of all creation?
5. What kind of title does Yahshua the Messiah have?
6. Where in the Bible can we find the following?

Spiritual Gifts: a) Mark b) Romans c) I Corinthians 12

Spiritual Fruit: a) Timothy b) Galatians 5 c) Jude

Spiritual Armor: a) I Peter b) James c) Ephesians 6

Spiritual Maturity and Unity

Ephesians

There is only one God and Father who created all things in heaven and in earth, who, through His Son Yahshua the Messiah gave gifts to mankind. "The Son came down to the earth and went up, above and beyond the heavens, to fill the whole universe with His presence. It was He who gave gifts and appointed some to be apostles, others to be prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to build up the believers, so that all of them shall come together to that oneness in faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God." In the King James version, it says, "He gave some, apostles; some prophets; some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4: 11-13).

In other words, Yahshua the Messiah did what He had done and appointed some men prophets, evangelists....so that the believers would become mature people, people having an understanding of the truth and living according to the will of the Father in heaven until the believers reach the full stature of Yahshua the Messiah or become like Yahshua the Messiah in goodness and righteousness.

This also means that people around the world should make use of the services of the apostles or elders, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers; or ministers because they are the ones our Lord and Savior has appointed to help the people grow spiritually strong and mature, and eventually have the goodness and righteousness of Yahshua the Messiah, in themselves. This also means further that when every one person has the same understanding of the truth and of the Father's will, naturally, they will be united and one in doing the will of the Father, and in giving Him honor, praises, and glory forever and ever.

Choose the Correct Answer or Answers:

1. To build up the believers, our Father and Savior has appointed
 - a) Prophets
 - b) Treasurer
 - c) Evangelists
 - d) Fishermen
2. The purpose of the gifts and appointment are:
 - a) To sing in the choir

- b) To be one in faith and knowledge of Yahshua the Messiah, the Son of God
 - c) To grow strong and mature spiritually.
3. The Creator of all things in heaven and in earth:
- a) Almighty Yahweh
 - b) the holy angels
4. Our Father and Savior wants mankind:
- a) To freely do his own will
 - b) To reach the fullness of the stature of Yahshua the Messiah
5. Apostles or elders, prophets....are appointed by the Lord; people should:
- a) ignore
 - b) respect
 - c) listen and obey
6. To reach the full measure of the stature of Yahshua the Messiah means:
- a) To be like an angel.
 - b) To possess and manifest the perfect goodness and righteousness of Yahshua the Messiah.
 - c) To be able to do the works that Yahshua the Messiah had done on earth.
7. Maturity is
- a) instant
 - b) automatic
 - c) a long process
8. The things necessary for unity are:
- a) Knowledge and understanding of the truth
 - b) Merging of institutions/organizations.
 - c) A big church building
 - d) Humble obedience to the truth and commandments of our Father & Savior.
9. To be a perfect man is:
- a) To be able to do everything without mistakes.
 - b) To have the perfect goodness and righteousness of Yahshua the Messiah.
 - c) To possess the virtues of Yahshua the Messiah.

“Put on the Spiritual Armor”

Ephesians

The scriptures teach us that the whole world is under the power of sin.... The whole world is under the rule of the Evil one (Galatians 3: 22; I John 5: 19). Since the whole world is under the power of sin and under the rule of the Evil one, it is pretty clear that those who follow the way of righteousness and do the will of the Father in heaven are in constant assault by the Evil one and his cohort. They first come in the form of temptations. If the believers could not be tempted, they aggressively attack through their lies and false accusations, and persecution. In many cases also, the Evil one and his cohort attack the believers by afflicting them with sickness; hitting them in the areas where they are weak, as shown in the miraculous healing that Yahshua the Messiah performed. In several other instances the Evil one and his demons, through continuous assault overcome human beings and make their human bodies, their dwelling place. In other words, in this case, human beings are possessed.

For the believers, life in this world is not easy. We need to be constantly alert because the scripture says, “We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” In another version of the Bible it says, “We are not fighting against human beings but against the wicked spiritual forces...and cosmic powers of this dark age.”

Hence, we need to be strong in union with our Lord and Savior Yahshua the Messiah, and we should constantly put on the spiritual armor that He has given us so that we would be able to stand against the Devil - the Evil one, victoriously.

These spiritual armor are: truth, righteousness, as our breastplate; our feet must be shod with the readiness to preach the gospel of peace; the shield of faith; the helmet of salvation; the sword of the spirit which is the word of God; prayers and supplications or prayers and fasting; perseverance (Ephesians 6: 11-13).

Questions:

1. In what book and verse in the Bible can we read that the whole world is under the power of sin; under the rule of the Evil one?
2. Memorize, and do your best to put on the spiritual armor and fight the good fight....

*Admonitions to Husbands and Wives
Children and Parents*

Ephesians 5 & 6

- “Be careful how you live. Don’t live like ignorant people, but as wise people. Try to find out what the Lord wants you to do.
- “Submit yourselves to one another because of your reverence for Christ (Yahshua the Messiah).
- “Wives submit yourselves to your husbands as unto the Lord.
- “Husbands, love your wives just as Christ loved the church and gave His life for it. Men ought to love their wives just as they love their own bodies. A man who loves his wife loves himself.
- “Every husband must love his wife as himself, and every wife must respect her husband.”
- Pray for one another constantly, and pray for your children.
- “Children, it is your Christian duty to obey your parents, for this is the right thing to do. Respect your father and mother is the first commandment that has a promise added, so that all may go well with you, and you may live a long time in the land.”
- “Parents, do not provoke your children to anger or do not treat your children in such a way as to make them angry. But bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”

Exercise:

1. Memorize and recite the scriptural admonition to children and parents.
2. What is the promise added to the commandment:
“Respect your father and your mother?”
3. Explain:
“Submit yourselves to one another because of your reverence for Christ.”

PHILIPPIANS

Introduction:

The epistle of Apostle Paul to the Philippians was written while Paul was a prisoner in Rome. The church or the assembly of believers in Philippi was the first assembly that Paul established on Europe soil, in the Roman Province of Macedonia.

The epistle or letter is full of thanks and appreciation to the Philippians for the gift they had sent to help him in his time of need. He also took this opportunity to encourage them to stand firm in their faith in Yahshua the Messiah in spite of the Apostle's trouble and their trouble as well. He at the same time pleaded with them to put on the humble attitude of Yahshua the Messiah and not to be controlled with selfish ambition and pride.

In his letter, Apostle Paul also expressed his deep affection for the Philippian believers.

"You Are Always In My Heart"

Philippians

Proverbs 17: 17 teaches us that "A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity." Yes, a true friend, indeed, loves at all times and true friends are very precious.

The sad truth is, in this world there are many seasonal friends; friends when times are good and situations are favorable. Friends in times of abundance, and in drought their friendship withers like dry leaves.

But praise God! The Philippians were not so; they were Paul's true friends and brethren. In fact, in his letter Paul said: "You have all shared with me in this privilege that God has given me, both now that I am in prison and also while I was free to defend the Gospel and established it firmly."

What is this privilege that Paul said God has given him? Of course, it is the privilege of serving our Father and Savior by proclaiming and defending the Gospel. The privilege of suffering with Yahshua the Messiah for the salvation of mankind, and to build the Father's Kingdom on earth.

To Apostle Paul, all that he went through was a privilege. Yet, not an easy privilege. It was that privilege instead which brought him to prison. But in all these, the Philippian believers were all one with Paul. They never doubted in him and in his ministry. On the contrary, they remained loyal to him and faithful to our Father and Savior. While he was in prison, they sent him gifts to help him. They shared with him in all his troubles every way they could, as expression of their deep love for him and gratitude for his service. That is why Paul in his letter could not help himself being emotional and said, "You are always in my heart!"

Questions:

1. How do you know that your friends are true friends?
2. Do you consider it a privilege to suffer with Yahshua the Messiah in order to build the Father's Kingdom on earth?
3. Are your friends and brethren always in your prayers?
4. What did the Philippians do while Paul was in prison?
5. Are you in the habit or practice of helping the brethren?

Greatness through Humility and Obedience

Philippians

Talking about greatness, Yahshua the Messiah is the greatest of all human beings on earth and in the heavens. He was and is the holy Son of Almighty Yahweh the Father in heaven. He was and is the Lord of lords; the King of kings.

But how did Yahshua the Messiah rise to greatness? The scriptures clearly tell us that Yahshua the Messiah “always had the nature of God, but he did not think that by force he should try to become equal with God. Instead, of his own free will he gave up all he had, and took the nature of a servant. He became like (ordinary) man.... He was humble and walked the path of obedience all the way to death – his death on the cross. For this reason God raised Him to the highest place above.... And so, all beings in heaven, on earth, and in the world below will fall on their knees, and all will openly proclaim that He is Lord to the glory of God the Father.”

In other words, Yahshua the Messiah is the Son of Almighty Yahweh who has the very nature of His Father. Like His Father He is wise, holy, and powerful. On the other hand, His Father did not force Him to take the nature of a servant, but of His own free will He did it, and walked in the path of obedience until His physical life on earth was ended on the cross. Because of His humility and obedience from the beginning to the end of His life, the Father afforded Him the highest place above, and the greatest honor forever and ever.

Our Father in heaven wants all His children in the faith to be great and to enjoy glorious life together with His Son, but each one should remember that this could only be possible if we follow the steps of Yahshua the Messiah who said: “If you want to be great you must be the servant of the rest....” (Matthew 20: 26).

Questions for Exercise:

True or False

1. _____ Yahshua the Messiah has the qualities of His Father, the Father in heaven.
2. _____ Yahshua the Messiah occupies the highest place above by asserting His right as the Son of Almighty Yahweh.
3. _____ Yahshua the Messiah worked hard like a servant.
4. _____ Yahshua the Messiah was humble and obedient.
5. _____ Yahshua the Messiah said: "If you are the son of the highest official in your place, you need not be humble.
6. _____ Humility and obedience apply only when necessary, not constant and continuous to the end of life.
7. _____ If we want to be great we must be humble and obedient to the will of the Almighty Father.
8. _____ God the Father does not want us to be like His Son Yahshua the Messiah .
9. _____ Yahshua the Messiah had the full nature of God the Father.
10. _____ All beings on earth and in the heavens will openly proclaim that Yahshua the Messiah is the Lord of lords, the King of kings.

The Battle Ground

Philippians

Spiritually, the believers are in constant battle against “the powers of darkness in high places.” That is why Apostle Paul constantly reminded the believers to put on the spiritual armor and fight the good fight of faith.

However, in order to fight well and stand victorious, we should first and foremost recognize that our number one enemy is the devil who is the father of lies and all wickedness. Second, is our very own sinful nature. So, obviously our first battle is against our own sinful nature, and the first battle ground is our hearts and minds. Yahshua the Messiah Himself affirmed this truth by saying, “From a person’s heart come the evil ideas which lead him to kill, commit adultery, and do other immoral things; to rob, lie, and slander others” (Matthew 15: 19). Prophet Jeremiah also said: “Who can understand the human heart? There is nothing else so deceitful; it is too sick to be healed. I the Lord, search the minds and test the hearts of men. I treat each one according to the way he lives, according to what he does” (Jeremiah 17: 9-13).

So, to the Philippians whom Apostle Paul loved so much and to whom he said: “My brothers, how dear you are to me and how I miss you! How happy you make me and how proud I am of you!”, he lovingly and unceasingly ministered unto them. Although he was in prison, he ministered to them through letters. He said: “Rejoice! Don’t worry about anything, but pray.... And God’s peace which is far beyond human understanding will keep your hearts and minds safe in union with Yahshua the Messiah. Fill your minds with those things that are good and that deserve praise; things that are honorable. Put into practice what you have learned....”

In other words, it is best not to entertain evil or impure thoughts because that will lead to destruction. We should instead fight against them and overcome them by filling our hearts and minds with pure and beautiful things; things that are precious and valuable. “Things that deserve praise: things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely and honorable” (Philippians 4: 8).

Exercise:

- I – Write the things that we should fill our hearts and mind in order to keep them safe.
- II – Write down the things that we should avoid in our hearts and minds; why?

COLOSSIANS

Introduction:

Apostle Paul writes to the Colossians to oppose false teachings, and to remind them that through Yahshua the Messiah, God the Father created the world and through the Messiah, God is bringing it back to Himself. Only in union with Yahshua the Messiah is there hope of salvation for the world.

JS

Admonish One Another

Colossians

Apostle Paul's letter to the Colossians was composed of a greeting, a prayer, some doctrine and practical instruction on how we should live.

Simple but striking words were applied to put clear emphasis on Apostle Paul's intention in writing the letter. His longing and desire are for the Colossian believers to live a life in obedience to the words and teaching of Yahshua the Messiah and to obey His commands as preached and taught by the apostles and ministers of the word of Yahshua the Messiah.

Paul was deeply troubled with the believers' dangerous tendencies to copy the filthy conduct and ways of the unbelievers who surround them or for them to return to their old way of life before they met Yahshua the Messiah as their LORD and Savior.

So, Paul in his letter made clear that the believers should put to death whatever belongs to earthly nature which are: "sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry". For emphasis Paul added that because of this the wrath of God is coming. Paul reminds the people to get rid the things that they once lived such as: "anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language. Paul also said: "Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator" (Colossians 3: 5-9).

On the other hand, Paul encouraged the church as God's chosen people to clothe themselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. To bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances they may have against one another, and to forgive as the LORD forgives. And over all the virtues he mentioned, Paul see to it that they put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity (Colossians 3: 12-14).

Paul's letter not only served as a word of advice to the people of Colosse but also for us today. He warns us of the possible consequences of our evil actions and if we fail to repent and follow Yahshua the Messiah but continue to sin which is abominable in the eyes of Almighty Yahweh, we will indeed suffer and die in vain. So, it is time to reflect and ponder upon the words of Apostle Paul before it's too late and take the opportunity to be one with Yahshua the Messiah's blessed people.

It is of great importance to have a man like Paul in the household of faith whose interest and mission in life is to constantly remind us of our duties and responsibilities for the strengthening of our faith in Yahshua the Messiah our LORD, and who is always there to correct our mistakes and to guide us before it complicates and pull us really down and away from the Lord.

Let us recall and be refreshed of Paul's heartfelt word of advice saying, "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the LORD Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him" (Colossians 3: 15-17).

Questions for Exercise:

1. Enumerate the six (6) attitudes that belong to earthly nature and should not be among the believers and followers of Yahshua the Messiah.
2. What are the reasons why Apostle Paul was deeply troubled with the believers in Colosse?
3. Enumerate the 5 attitudes that Apostle Paul kept on reminding the Colosse believers to get rid off.
4. What are the virtues that Apostle Paul mentioned that should be seen in the life of the believers?
5. What is or are the consequences of sin?

The Supremacy of Yahshua the Messiah

Colossians

The church of Colosse was founded by one of Paul's converts name Epaphras. While in prison in Rome, Apostle Paul heard that false doctrines were being introduced in the church, so he wrote a letter to reinforce his teachings and to warn the believers of the possible effects of there curiosity and by entertaining other teachings aside from what the apostles had taught them about Yahshua the Messiah and His second coming; and most of all, to establish them back in the faith.

Paul in his letter warned the believers in Colosse by saying: "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than in Christ or Yahshua the Messiah."

"Historians believe that the first-century town of Colosse was a perfect breeding ground for cults. Situated on a major trade route from the East, Colosse entertained steady stream of Oriental traders with mysterious religious ideas. Even Jews in that area worshiped angels and river spirits."

Apostle Paul's approach was kind and unique. Instead of attacking the people's beliefs and religious practices, he opted to declare the Supremacy of Yahshua the Messiah over all the so called gods worshiped by the people in that town. Paul proclaimed in his letter that Yahshua the Messiah is the fullness of Almighty Yahweh and that only through faith in Him can we obtain salvation. For emphasis Paul declared that: "He is the image of the invisible God, the first born over all creation. For through Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created through Him and for Him."

Indeed, Yahshua the Messiah is the King of Kings, the LORD of Lords , the Savior of the world. By His power everything came to its existence and by His might everything is in order. He is the mighty Ruler of Almighty Yahweh's creation. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. It is just right and fitting to put our hope and trust in Him. He is the living and the all-knowing God who is in control of all things. Apart from Yahshua the Messiah we are nothing, but through Him we can do all things and by His grace and mercy we can have eternal life with Him.

As Apostle Paul labored so hard for the church in Colosse proclaiming the message of life, and as he stood to defend the Christian faith which is

anchored in the belief that Yahshua the Messiah is the Savior of the world, and as recipient of Paul's undying effort in spreading the gospel, we in turn must stand in faith and proclaim with boldness in our hearts the message of truth that Yahshua the Messiah is indeed the Savior of the world and that He tolerates no rival. He alone is our Lord; our Savior and King. He deserves the best of our praises and thanksgiving forever and ever.

Questions for Exercise:

I - Multiple Choice:

1. Who wrote the letter for the believers in Colosse?
 - a) Matthew
 - b) Jude
 - c) Apostle Paul
2. Who is the Alpha and the Omega the beginning and the end?
 - a) Apostle Paul
 - b) Yahshua the Messiah
 - c) Epaphras
3. Who founded the church in Colosse?
 - a) Epaphras
 - b) Apostle Paul
 - c) Timothy
4. Who is the Apostle who was in prison in Rome?
 - a) Jude
 - b) Paul
 - c) Luke
5. Paul opted to declare the Supremacy of:
 - a) Holy Spirit
 - b) Yahshua the Messiah
 - c) Abraham

II - Answer the Following Questions Briefly:

1. Why did Apostle Paul write letters to the Colosse believers?
2. What is the teaching of Apostle Paul all about?
3. How did Apostle Paul introduce his teaching to the Colosse believers?
4. Who is worthy of the best of our praises and thanksgiving? Why?
5. As followers of Yahshua the Messiah, what will you do to spread His love and the message of salvation for mankind?

I & II THESSALONIANS

Introduction:

Thessalonica was the capital city of the Roman province of Macedonia. I & II Thessalonians were written by Paul from Corinth about 52 A.D. These two epistles encourage the believers to do their duty everyday and not stand idle, waiting for the second coming.

T.S

Be Sanctified

I Thessalonians

Aside from words of praise and acknowledgement about the Thessalonians' good deeds, Apostle Paul never took for granted the opportunity to show his concern and love for them. He lovingly instructed the Thessalonians through his letter to live a life pleasing in the eyes of Almighty Yahweh.

By the authority of Yahshua the Messiah who sent Paul as minister of the Gospel, he instructed the people by saying: "It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God. The LORD will punish men for all such sin." (I Thessalonians 4: 3-6).

He also reminded the Thessalonian believers that, "God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life"; and in order for the believers to understand the seriousness of the matters involved, Paul posted a warning in his letter by declaring that, "he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you the Holy Spirit."

My brothers and sisters in the faith listen carefully and pay close attention to Apostle Paul's advice to the Thessalonians. Take Paul's advice as your own, as we all know Paul had suffered, been to prison and in chain, cruelly beaten for this message. He labored and toiled day and night for the sake of spreading the gospel about Yahshua the Messiah's death and resurrection and for us to receive the glorious gift of life offered by Yahshua the Messiah Himself.

"We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers: We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our LORD Jesus Christ"
(I Thessalonians 1: 2).

As a loving father to his son who constantly monitor his son's progress in life while he strives and struggles to live life in its fullness, so does Paul in

his concern for our progress in the faith, and how we live our lives to please Almighty Yahweh our Creator and His Son our Savior.

Paul's missionary work in Thessalonica was a great success, in spite of all the odds and persecution done by the Jews themselves and Roman authorities who love to see Paul beaten and in despair. Instead of quitting Paul became more eager and fully energized in spreading the gospel for the people to know, learn and understand the truth about Yahshua the Messiah.

Paul's heart leaped for joy in hearing the positive report of Timothy about the Thessalonians' love for the gospel. Paul wrote: "We thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe" (I Thessalonians 2: 13).

"May the LORD make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our LORD Jesus Christ comes with all his holy ones."

I Thessalonians 3: 12-13

Questions for Exercise:

1. Explain why we should avoid sexual immorality?
2. Why do we need to grow in faith?
3. In spite of all the hardships and persecution Apostle Paul had encountered in life, what kept him going on in the service of our LORD and Savior Yahshua the Messiah?
4. As followers of Yahshua the Messiah why do we need to be sanctified?
5. What do we mean by 'sanctified'?
6. What are the reasons why people need to be constantly reminded?
7. How did Apostle Paul show his love and concern to the believers in Thessalonica?
8. Apostle Paul sacrificed everything for the sake of the Gospel. Have you ever sacrificed something for the Gospel?

“The Day of the Lord”

II Thessalonians

Paul’s second letter to the Thessalonians was closely similar with his first. The letter contains some of Paul’s response in connection to the events that occurred in Thessalonica that stirred the believers’ faith, and to some things which made them confused, matters that create frenzied speculations among the believers. Some of their major concerns that Paul takes into priority involve the Messiah’s second coming, spiritual growth, and idleness.

The situation among the believers in Thessalonica was no ordinary matter that it needed special attention since the one at stake was their own life in relation to their faith and beliefs in Yahshua the Messiah our LORD and Savior. In order for Paul to show the seriousness of the matter, he opted to use stronger, less friendly words to make sure that they will fully understand and realize what is at stake if they failed once again to respond to his instructions and recommendations.

Paul wrote: “So then, brothers, stand firm and hold on to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter.”

Taking into account Paul’s second letter which is very similar to his previous letters, we can say that the Thessalonians failed to listen and obey. Hence, they became complacent and idle toward Apostle Paul’s teachings and warnings. So, Paul stresses that they really need to abide to his teaching in order to avoid confusion and chaos among the believers.

Concerning the uproar about the idea of Yahshua the Messiah’s second coming, Apostle Paul affirmed that certain events must happen first before the second coming of Yahshua the Messiah. This statement was made in response to the false reports Paul had received that he claimed that the last days had already arrived. To put an end to all their speculations and in order to clear the matter once and for all, Paul warned them “not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, reports or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the day of the Lord has already come. Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction”(II Thessalonians 2: 3).

As Paul wrote in his previous letters which said: “About the time and dates we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying that there

is, 'Peace and Safety,' destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape" (I Thessalonians 5: 1-3).

The time for the Messiah's second coming is so near, nearer than we first believed. Satan and all his forces of evil are roaming around displaying all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders to deceive the people and make them believe as he proclaims that he is the God. Be very watchful and careful of such schemes which dilutes the mind and deceives the heart because they are the works of satan aimed to destroy God's people.

Apostle Paul was so diligent in reminding the people to earnestly and constantly pray; "to pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith. But the LORD is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one" (II Thessalonians 3: 2-3).

The Holy Spirit who is the teacher of truth will guide us and teach us into all the truth that we need to know and understand. He will help us determine the genuine from the fake, and He will guide us to the path of righteousness. By the Holy Spirit's power also we will be able to see the light of life which helps us discern and conquer all evil in the mighty and holy name of Yahshua the Messiah our LORD and Savior.

Due to some complaints Apostle Paul had received about Idleness among others, he was forced to repeat to them his rule that, "If a man will not work, he shall not eat"(II Thessalonians 3: 10). In addition, he also said and wrote that: "Such people we command and urge in the LORD Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat" (II Thessalonians 3: 14). "And as for you, brothers, never be tired of doing what is right."

Questions for Exercise:

1. What are the main concerns of Paul's letter to the Thessalonians?
2. What is the important role of the Holy Spirit?
3. How can we overcome the enemies' works?
4. What does Apostle Paul mean by "The Day of the LORD"?
5. According to Apostle Paul, how does the Day of the LORD comes?
6. Before the second coming of the Messiah, what is going to occur first?
7. What are the lessons that you have learned?
8. What important advice or advices did Apostle Paul give to the brethren?

TIMOTHY

Introduction:

Timothy is a young believer and worker. He works as a teacher, and evangelist. In the first letter, Paul warned Timothy against false teachings and instructed him about worship and the character that leaders and helpers should have.

In the second letter, Paul advised and encouraged Timothy to be faithful in the face of suffering and opposition.

T.S.

Instructions Regarding Prayers

I Timothy 2

Paul in his letter to Timothy, a young church leader, indicates that prayer is very important and indispensable ministry in the church. Paul urged the church to pray in order to please Yahweh Almighty. This suggests that people should pray in the light of Yahweh's will for it certainly does not please our Father in Heaven when people pray selfishly.

The right attitude to prayer is first and foremost to give thanks to our Father and Savior and to pray not only for oneself but for others and those in authority. The purpose of prayer is not to get man's will done but for Yahweh's will to be done in earth. Yahweh's will is for all men to come to the knowledge of salvation and to understand the truth that there is only one God the Father and one mediator between God and men, the man Yahshua the Messiah who gave himself as ransom for all men. Yahweh Almighty does not want that men would perish but that all should come to repentance. Hence, fervent prayers are necessary for it is through it that Almighty Yahweh can work mightily with His people. Through prayers Almighty Yahweh can touch those who govern, and those who are lost. Prayers must be for the good of the people, that they may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. Let us remember that the "prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5: 16).

Prayer is an act of worship, not just an expression of our wants and needs. There should be reverence in our hearts as we pray to our Father. Our hearts must be right with our Father and Savior and with each other. However, it is a sad thing to realize how prayers lost its importance in many churches today. People have lost the zeal to prayer. Many people have become more excited on church banquet than in prayer meetings and solemn gathering. Thus, people become more prone to sin and downfall.

This is a reminder for us to revive our zeal to prayer. For, when there is much prayer, there is much spiritual power.

Questions:

1. What is prayer?
2. What should be the subject of prayer?
3. How important is prayer?
4. What are the benefits of prayer?
5. To whom should we address our prayer?

The Importance of Preaching the Word

II Timothy

When we say, the Word, it is the word of our Father Yahweh and His Son Yahshua the Messiah. It is therefore the word of truth. Yahshua the Messiah said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life...." In other words, Yahshua the Messiah is the truth that comes from the Father in heaven. Or, through Yahshua the Messiah, the Father revealed the truth about the reality of man's life here on earth; He also revealed His plan, purpose, and will for man.

Sadly, the reality is that the world we have is full of lies, and chaotic. Hence, Apostle Paul strongly encouraged Timothy who was young then to live a life pleasing to our Father and Savior, and to preach the word at every opportunity.

Apostle Paul Said:

"Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young, but be an example for the believers in your speech, your conduct, your love, faith, and purity"(I Timothy 4: 12).

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth"(II Timothy 2: 15).

Brethren, maybe you are still young like Timothy or like Jeremiah when he was called to prophesy. Maybe you are already old or much older. But the truth remains that the world needs good examples, good models; good, humble, and faithful preachers. The world needs to hear, know, and believe the truth. Let us pass on to others the truth that we have received from our Father and Savior, in words and in deeds as Apostle Paul and Timothy did.

True or False

1. _____ The Word is truth that comes from our heavenly Father.
2. _____ Apostle Paul encouraged Timothy to study the word and to preach.
3. _____ Unlike the time of Paul, our world is peaceful.
4. _____ There are already products of new technology like televisions and computers; it is not necessary to study and preach the word.
5. _____ Timothy was still young when he started in the ministry.
6. _____ Apostle Paul and Timothy preached that salvation, abundant and eternal life is through faith in Yahshua the Messiah. \
7. _____ Young or old, we should be good examples in speech, conduct, faith, and love.
8. _____ Yahshua the Messiah said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life."
9. _____ It is not necessary and important to preach the Word.
10. _____ People should not listen or pay attention when preachers are young.

Share the Faith

II Timothy 4

Paul in his second letter to Timothy gave final instructions and admonition to Timothy.

Paul solemnly advised Timothy to preach the word of Almighty Yahweh and Yahshua the Messiah urgently at all times. In season or out of season. Whether it is convenient or not. Paul wanted Timothy to see the importance of it not only because he was facing death but even more, because all the people would be facing final judgment when Yahshua the Messiah appears. This letter also, was to encourage Timothy to work courageously and faithfully, never fearing any man who could destroy only the body. But that all men should fear Yahweh Almighty who can destroy body, soul, and spirit.

Paul also summoned Timothy to endure hardship and to fulfill his duties in his ministry. Timothy has to do whatever works Yahweh Almighty wants him to do. As an evangelist, he must be serious and faithful. In addition, he has to endure hardship for the ministry is not easy and results would not be immediate. Paul warned Timothy that time will come when people will no longer listen to Yahweh's words but he must be patient with those who oppose his preaching, and continue preaching.

Before Paul ended his letter, he encouraged Timothy to be faithful and enduring like a loyal soldier, a good athlete, and a farmer. Some of Paul's ministered people were unfaithful particularly Demas who loved the life in this world. Paul was greatly disappointed. Finally, Paul urged Timothy to come before winter. When winter comes it would be difficult for Timothy to travel or not at all, and thus miss his opportunity to travel and see Paul for the last time.

Paul's admonition to Timothy are also his admonitions to us. In serving our Father and Savior there are times when we experience hardships to the point of facing death but let us keep on going even when we face difficulties. Remembering that we are serving the one who owns our lives and who is in control of everything. You and I must be faithful so that people around the world and the future generations may hear the Gospel, believe and be saved.

Questions:

1. What are Paul's admonition to Timothy, a young church leader? Briefly.
2. As believers of Yahshua the Messiah, how can you show your faithfulness to Him. Cite some instances.
3. Why did Paul liken the preacher to a loyal soldier, good athlete, and a farmer? What common characteristics do they have?

TITUS

Introduction:

Titus is a letter of Apostle Paul to Titus - who is his brother in the faith. By this time Titus had a great responsibility for all the believers or churches in the island of Crete. Through this letter, Paul helped him how to become a good leader. He also gave Titus guidelines for all the believers to follow, and how to recognize false teachers. Paul also emphasized the importance to always live a life that is right in the eyes of God and men.

TS

Paul's Instruction to Titus

Titus

Titus was one of Paul's closest friends but he addresses him as truly his son in the affairs of the Lord in heaven.

Paul wrote to Titus to help him become a good leader, gave him guidelines to choose the right men for the church, to recognize the false teachers and how to live a righteous life. Paul asked Titus to appoint elders or pastors in every city in the island of Crete who would follow all the instructions he gave. The men he must choose must be well thought of their good lives, has only one wife, children who have good reputation and obedient to their parents. The elders or pastors must be blameless, because they are God's ministers. They must not be proud, impatient, drunkards, greedy.... They must be sensible, fair, clean minded and level headed. Their belief in the truth which they have been taught must be strong and steadfast, so that they will be able to teach it to others and show those who disagree with them where they are wrong. He also warned Titus about the false teachers who called themselves Christians but refused to obey the truth.

These men were hypocrites who were only after of their money. They claim to know God but their ways show that they don't. A person who is pure of heart sees goodness and purity in everything, but a person whose own heart is evil and untrusting finds evil in everything, for his dirty mind and rebellious heart color all he sees and hears. Paul also gave guidelines for grandfathers to be sensible, knowing and believing the truth and doing everything with love and patience. And for grandmothers to be quiet and respectful in everything they do. They should be teachers of goodness. These older women must train the younger women to live quietly, to love their husbands and their children, and to be sensible and clean minded. For the young men to behave carefully, taking life seriously. He also taught Titus that he himself must be an example for all the believers through his good deeds. He must let everything he does reflect his love of the truth, his conversation must be sensible and logical that anyone who wants to argue will be ashamed of himself. To remind the people to obey the government, not to speak evil but be obedient and ready for any honest work, gentle, and truly courteous to all. To be kind and helpful to people. To avoid quarrels and unanswerable questions. If anyone is causing divisions among the believers, he should be given first and second warnings. After that have nothing more to do with him, for such a person has a wrong sense of values.

There is really big difference between the situation long time ago and nowadays. Before there was no electricity, no computer, mailing is not as fast as we have this time..... But in spite of their situation Paul has a burning desire to serve God the Father in heaven through Yahshua the Messiah and Holy Spirit. Paul was never discouraged and their situation was not a hindrance for him to serve the Almighty Father. Instead Paul kept on writing letters to all the believers of Yahshua the Messiah and to his closest friends like Titus. His dedication to help them even though through letters only really helped the believers to move forward. The letters of Paul gave them courage, inspiration to continue the good works they have started. They always had the eagerness to spread the good news of salvation and also a reminder to live a life that pleases the Father in heaven with their faith in Yahshua the Messiah. I do believe Paul never imagined that his letters would reach to our very own time. But because of his decision to sit down and spend time to write, he brought light to all of us. His letters still give us enlightenment, courage, and strength to continue the good works they have started.

Today, with the advance technology, we have no more reason why we cannot write or do the things Almighty Yahweh wants us to do, most especially in spreading the good news of salvation of mankind from the bondage of sin. As followers of Yahshua the Messiah, arise and shine! Let us be more serious in doing the will of Almighty Yahweh and Yahshua the Messiah. Our first priority must be the will of our Father and Savior, and to love His every wish. Let us remind ourselves that the first priority of Yahshua the Messiah was the fulfillment of the Father's will. He gave up His personal desires, and prefer obedience to Yahweh's will. Above all, through His sacrificial death we are being saved, redeemed, and our personal relationship to Yahweh Almighty is being restored. Apostle Paul through his letters is also reminding us of our role and responsibility. Our life must be an example to all the young believers so that their faith will grow strong and mature. And also to the non-believers that they too may come to know our Father in heaven and worship Him in spirit and in truth. Let us help one another as Yahshua the Messiah helped us and showed us kindness and mercy. He set a good example for all of us to follow. All of us followers of Yahshua the Messiah must be mirrors of the character of our Father and Savior. Just as Yahshua the Messiah abide in the Father by obeying Him, let us stay within the boundaries of Almighty Yahweh's love by faithfully following His Son our Savior.

Our days are crucial days; days of troubles, violence, and darkness. But be of good courage; be strong in the faith. Our Savior Yahshua the Messiah said: "In this world there shall be tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have

overcome the world" (John 16:33). In the name of Yahshua the Messiah, we will overcome the world.

I - Answer the following questions:

1. What are the role and responsibilities of Titus?
2. What was the role of Paul to the life of Titus?
3. Is it important to be instructed? Why?
4. Is it important to train people for the ministry? Why?
5. Do leaders need to have partners? Why?
6. Describe the false teachers.
7. Is it important that a leader should have a strong faith in Yahshua the Messiah? Why?
8. What is your purpose in life? What do you do to accomplish this purpose?
9. What should the parents do to keep the respect of their children?
10. How should the ministers in the church act towards the people most especially toward his family?

II - Knowledge/ Comprehension:

1. List 10 instructions Paul gave to Titus with regard to appointing leaders or pastors.
2. List the 4 help of Paul to Titus.

III – Assessment:

1. How to grow good or anointed leaders?
2. How to identify good leaders?
3. How will you show good example to others?
4. How can you help your government?
5. Base on this message, what is your conviction of your role and responsibility? How and where do you believe you can best use it?

IV – Application:

1. Are you willing to give up your personal desires to obey the will of Yahweh Elohim in your life? Yes-In what way? No- why?
2. As Christians, how should we act towards one another?

PHILEMON

Introduction:

Philemon is a Christian man in Colosse. Apostle Paul wrote a letter to Philemon telling him and acknowledging all the good works he had done to all the believers in Colosse. In the letter, Paul also lovingly asked Philemon to forgive his run-away slave Onesimus.

Paul persuades him that Onesimus has repented sincerely and he would be a great help to him and for the ministry. Paul guaranteed in his letter that he will pay everything Onesimus owed him. Paul ended his letter with much hope to see them all soon.

TS

Forgiveness

Philemon

Philemon was Paul's brother in the faith. He loved and trusted Yahshua the Messiah with all his heart. He shared his faith with others that they too will grip and know the truth. He showed kindness to all the believers and even opened his house for a place to worship. While Paul was in prison for preaching the gospel, he heard about all the good things Philemon did to the people especially to the believers. Paul was comforted and gained joy from Philemon's act of love to Yahweh's people. When Paul was still in jail he met a man Onesimus who was a run-away slave. Paul won him for the Lord, and Onesimus repented of all his sins and became a great help and support to Paul. When Onesimus became a believer, he knew that he ought to go back to his master and ask for forgiveness. Paul also found out that the master of Onesimus was Philemon. So, Paul wrote a letter to Philemon full of compassion and concern on behalf of Philemon's run-away slave. He asked Philemon a favor to forgive all the wrongs Onesimus had done and to accept him as a brother in faith. Paul wrote: "My plea is that you show kindness to my child Onesimus, whom I won to the Lord Almighty while I am here in my chains. Onesimus hasn't been of much use to you in the past, but now he is going to be of real use to both of us. I am sending him back to you, and with him comes my own heart. I really wanted to keep him here with me while I am in these chains for preaching the Good News, and you would have been helping me through him, but I didn't want to do it without your consent. He ran away from you as slave but now he will be with you as a beloved brother. He will mean much more to you too.

Paul asked Philemon to accept Onesimus the same way he welcomed him. He also guaranteed with his own hand writing that if Onesimus had stolen anything or done harmed to them before, they could charge it to him and he will pay for it.

Paul wrote this letter full of hope and positive thinking that Philemon would do what he asked and will give him joy with this loving act, and that his weary heart will praise the Almighty God. At the end of Paul's letter he said, "All the believers send their love and greeting to you my beloved brother Philemon. Please keep a guest room ready for me, for I am hoping that God Almighty will answer your prayers and let me come to you soon."

The letter of Paul to Philemon teaches us the value of true repentance and to ask for forgiveness. When Onesimus heard the word of God in heaven

through Paul, he humbled himself before God and man. He repented of all his sins and tried his best to live as new person through faith in Yahshua the Messiah. He repented in words and actions that he became a great support and help to Paul and even made a plan to go back to his master Philemon to ask for forgiveness.

In our day-to-day living, we meet so many people. Some are our friends, relatives, or just acquaintances. There are times when these people cause us pains, hurting, difficulties and even reject us because of our faith. By purely human reasons, our response would be to become angry at them, even bitter. We just don't realize that hatred is slowly creeping into our very soul. This ill feelings will show in the way we handle things, and the way we treat people. Some other people's reactions is to fight back, take vengeance, pay them back even more than what had been done to them. Mostly, they lost their trust in people, and always in doubt of people's intentions and motives.

They keep on guarding themselves from being hurt again. But if these feelings dominate us, our relationship with one another will not be healthy. Even if other people see us very successful, it's not worth if deep inside we are alone, hurt, sad, and full of anger. Much more so our personal relationship with Yahweh Almighty, Yahshua the Messiah and Holy Spirit, if we allow this 'garbage' to pile up as wall that will separate us from our Father and Savior. Yahweh Almighty wants us to be happy the reason why He wants us to release forgiveness to one another.

The second great commandment says, "Love your neighbor as you love yourself." How can we show compassion if there is anger and hatred deep inside us? Remember, how Yahshua the Messiah suffered for the sake of us all. In spite of what the Israelites did to Him, His prayer was "Father in Heaven forgive them for they do not know what they're doing." He gave up His life for the sake of us that the Almighty Father will forgive our sins. In spite of our frailties, He still love us so much and ready to forgive our sins. He is our best example in forgiveness.

Follow Him and you will live a peaceful life. It is not easy to forgive when people wronged you. Pride, anger, hatred hinder you to release forgiveness. But it is best to forgive or to release forgiveness to all the people who caused you pain. Even if they didn't ask for your forgiveness just say it when you pray. It is very important to forgive; do not wait for the offender to come to you and ask your forgiveness. Just obey the teaching of our Father and Savior. Our Father in heaven knows everything.

He sees everything, just humble yourself before Him, and surrender it all to Him. Tell Him all that you feel and ask Him to give you His grace so that you can do the right thing always. Almighty Yahweh cares for His people; He watches everything that happens here on earth. When people is not fair to us, our God in heaven is a perfect judge, He will not let injustice prevail forever. When life is rough, when every time you look around is unfair and you are disheartened, shakened, remember how mighty and just our God in heaven is. In these situations, Yahweh El is testing our character, and our faithfulness unto Him. So, keep always the right attitude. Ask the help of the Holy Spirit to guide you, to keep you calm always and learn to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit. Do not hinder Almighty Yahweh's works in your life, just put your trust in Him. At His appointed time He will turn it into blessing to us. The enemy will know who we really are, and that our God in heaven is alive and will give justice to the oppressed. As the Psalmist says "Don't be impatient for Yahweh to act! Keep traveling steadily along His pathway and in due season He will honor you with every blessing and you will see the wicked destroyed (Psalm 37: 34). The Psalmist advises us also saying, "Stop your anger! Turn off your wrath. Don't fret and worry - it only leads to harm" (Psalm 37: 8). Don't let the people who hurt you hinder you in doing what is right. Don't let them take away the joy and happiness that Yahweh Elohim blesses you every new day. Face every morning with joy and full of hope, love, free of bitterness and anger. Let go and let God in heaven have His wonderful ways. "Wait upon Yahweh and He shall strengthen thine heart. He will turn our mourning into dancing. He will turn our sorrows into joy." When the time is right, the just God will punish the wicked and no one will escape.

To all people who are still living in darkness, confess now your sins to God Almighty while there is still time. Pray and seek Him while He can still be found. Let us all remember that we all have sinned and come short of the glory of Yahweh. Only by believing in Yahshua the Messiah that we will be saved and only through Him that our sins will be washed away. Yahshua the Messiah said, "I am the way, the truth and the life no one comes to the Father in heaven except through me." What a great relief for a sinner to return to Yahweh El, through His Son Yahshua the Messiah and Holy Spirit. What a great joy the Father in heaven would feel when His people humbly repent and return to Him!

I – Answer the following questions:

1. What is the meaning of forgiveness?
2. What is the meaning of repentance?

3. Why is it so important to release forgiveness?
4. What do you mean by kindness?
5. Have you experienced someone showed kindness to you especially during your hardship? What it feels like?
6. What usually drives the person to be kind?
7. What usually hinders the person to say sorry or forgive me?
8. What were the good qualities you have seen in the life of Onesimus after he was converted and know the truth?
9. In the letter of Paul to Philemon, what is the strong value to build on? Why?
10. Have you experienced reconciliation with somebody that caused you pain? What it feels like after you have been reconciled?
11. Have you experienced someone push you up and say good things about you? What it feels like?
12. What makes a man fulfilled and happy?

II - Knowledge/Comprehension:

1. Cite 5 incidents that happened in the Holy Bible that show repentance.
2. List the 4 good works of Phelimon that brought joy to Paul.
3. Give 5 outcome feelings of a person who forgives and the person who did not forgive the offender.
4. List 10 good qualities of your good friend.

III – Assessment:

1. How can you show kindness especially to all the believers of Yahshua the Messiah near or far who need help.
2. Are there people who have done wrong to you that you have not forgiven up to now? As followers of Yahshua the Messiah what is the best thing to do?

IV – Application:

1. Evaluate yourself. Have you done something wrong before and now, that you have not yet repented? (Explain your answer)

HEBREWS

Introduction:

The epistle does not explicitly state the name of the writer, but the concluding words such as, "I beg you, my brothers, to listen patiently the message of encouragement....I want you to know that our brother Timothy has been let out of prison. If he comes, I will have him with me when I see you", can lead us to think who had gone with Timothy in his missionary work, and who had personally written him a letter.

The epistle to the Hebrews was written to a group of believers and followers of the Messiah who faced increasing opposition, and were in danger of abandoning the faith. The epistle emphasizes three truths: (1) Yahshua the Messiah is the eternal Son of Almighty Yahweh, who learned obedience through the suffering that he endured. (2) Yahshua the Messiah has been declared by the Almighty Father to be an eternal Priest, superior to the priests of the Old Testament. Yahshua the Messiah as High Priest, provides the true salvation. (3) through Yahshua the Messiah the believers are saved from sin, fear, and death.

In chapter 11 of Hebrews the writer cited the example of faith of some famous people in Israel's history, and appealed to the believers to remain faithful.

The Begotten Son of Almighty Yahweh

Hebrews

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

I believe we all know that our original ancestors, Adam and Eve had sin against the Almighty Father, and fallen short of His glory by disobeying His words. As a result all their seeds or descendants shared their sinful nature. The scripture teaches us that the wages of sin or the payment for sin is death so, because of sin mankind was destined to die and perish (Romans 3: 23; 6: 23). But our Father in heaven is so good, kind, and merciful. He was and is not willing that any would perish but that all men should repent and have eternal life. In His great goodness and mercy, the Father provided ways for man to return to Him until mankind would be restored to Him perfectly. The best and ultimate way that the Father gave is His begotten Son Yahshua the Messiah who said: “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14: 6).

You might ask, “How do we really know that He is the begotten Son of the Father in heaven?” Now, let’s go back to the scriptures. Matthew chapter two tells us that Mary conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost and gave birth to the Messiah. Yahshua grew up under the care of Joseph and Mary. When He was thirty years old, the time when He began His ministry, He went to the Jordan River to be baptized by John the Baptist in the presence of so many people who also came for their own baptism. After Yahshua the Messiah was baptized, “A voice came from heaven, ‘You are my own dear Son. I am pleased with you’” (Luke 3: 22 & Matthew 3: 17).

Questions for Exercise:

1. How did Adam and Eve sin against the Almighty Father?
2. What is the payment for sin?
3. What was Almighty Yahweh’s purpose for sending Yahshua the Messiah to the world?
4. Does it please our Father in heaven that man commits sin, die and perish?
5. What did the Father say of Yahshua the Messiah when He was baptized?

*The Eternal High Priest
and
The Blood that Purifies Sin*

Hebrews

The Bible tells us that our ancestors in the faith particularly, the Israelites had priests and a High Priest to lead the people in the worship of Almighty Yahweh. "The Priests go into the outer tent everyday to perform their duties, but only the High Priest goes into the inner tent, and he does so only once a year." In other versions of the Bible, the outer tent is also called the outer court or the holy place, while the inner tent is called the inner court or the most holy place.

When the High Priest goes into the most holy place, he takes with him the blood of animals such as goat or bull, which he offers to Almighty Yahweh for his own sin and for the sin which the people committed without their knowing that they were sinning. "But these are all outward rules which apply only until the time when God will establish the New order" (Hebrews 9: 10).

You might wonder and say, "why blood?" What is the significance of the blood that is offered to Almighty Yahweh with the sins which the people committed? The book of Leviticus tells us that, "The life of every living thing is in the blood, and that is why the Lord has commanded that all blood be poured out on the altar to take away the people's sins. Blood, which is life, takes away sins" (Leviticus 17: 11). "Indeed, according to the Law almost everything is purified by blood, and sins are forgiven only if blood is poured out" (Hebrews 9: 22).

At the fullness of time Yahshua the Messiah came and through Him Almighty Yahweh established the new order as promised. John 3:16 says, God sent His begotten Son so that whosoever believes in Him would not perish but have everlasting life. The problem was, the people did not believe in Yahshua the Messiah; they had no faith in Him so sin still abides with them. In other words, the people remained sinful because they did not believe in the Messiah and did not accept Him as their Lord and Savior.

Yahshua the Messiah is holy; He has no fault in Him (Hebrews 7: 26). He did not deserve the pain, the suffering He went through. He certainly did not deserve the death on the cross. But He willingly offered Himself as a sacrifice to Almighty Yahweh once and for all; He shed His own precious blood for the forgiveness of man's sins. "Even though he was God's Son, he

learned through his sufferings to be obedient. When he became perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all those who obey him, and God declared him to be High Priest, in the priestly order of Melchizedek" (Hebrews 5: 8 & 9). Yahshua the Messiah, then, is the High Priest that meets our needs. The High Priest who sits at the right side of the throne of Almighty Yahweh, in heaven. As the scriptures say, "after achieving forgiveness for the sins of mankind He sat down in heaven at the right side of God, the Supreme Power" (Hebrews 1: 3). "So He is able, now and always, to save those who come to God through Him, because He lives forever to plead with God for them" (Hebrews 7: 25).

Choose the correct answer:

1. Yahshua the Messiah shed His blood and died on the cross because:
 - a) He was guilty of sin and was sentenced to death.
 - b) For the forgiveness of man's sins.
2. According to the Scripture blood is sacred and it is for:
 - a) Healing
 - b) Eating
 - c) Poured out as offering for forgiveness of sins
3. Yahshua the Messiah is:
 - a) A Priest who performs his duty everyday.
 - b) The High Priest who offered himself once and for all, for the forgiveness of the sins of everyone who believes in Him.
4. Yahshua the Messiah is:
 - a) The High Priest that meets our need.
 - b) God's Son who depends on the holy angels.
5. Yahshua the Messiah:
 - a) Did not willingly offered himself but was forced by circumstance.
 - b) Learned through His suffering to be obedient and became the source of eternal salvation.

*Yahshua the Messiah Greater
Than
The Angels, Moses, All Other High Priests*

Hebrews

“God’s Son, Yahshua the Messiah was made greater than the angels....For God never said to any of his angels ‘You are my Son; today I have become your Father.... But all of God’s angels must worship him!’” About the angels God said, “God makes his angels winds, and his servants flames of fire.” About the Son, God said: “Your Kingdom will last forever and ever! You love what is right and hate what is wrong. That is why God, your God has chosen you and has given you the joy of an honor far greater than he gave to your companions. God never said to any of his angels: ‘Sit here at my right side until I put your enemies as a footstool under your feet.’ What are the angels, then? They are spirits who serve God and are sent by him to help those who are to receive salvation.”

“Moses was faithful in God’s house as a servant,.... But Yahshua the Messiah is faithful as the Son in charge of God’s house.”

“Let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we have a great High Priest who has gone into the very presence of God.... There were many of those priests because they died and could not continue their work. But Yahshua the Messiah lives on forever.... And so he is able, now and always, to save those who come to God through him because he lives forever to plead with God for them.”

Questions for Exercise:

1. What make Yahshua the Messiah greater than anyone else?
2. In two or three sentences tell us the difference between:
 - Yahshua the Messiah and the angels.
 - Yahshua the Messiah and Moses.
 - Yahshua the Messiah and the other high priests.
3. What kind of Kingdom does Yahshua the Messiah have? Or, describe the Kingdom of Yahshua the Messiah.

JAMES

Introduction:

The letter from James was written to all God's people around the world. It emphasizes the importance of actions along with faith, in the practice of religion (James 2: 14-26).

The writer also deals some topics such as good conduct, temptations, faith and actions, the use of tongues, wisdom, pride and humility, perseverance, quarreling, prejudice, riches and poverty.

JS

Virtues

JAMES – What are the virtues of a Christian we see in the book of James?

The book of James tells us of some practical steps to Holiness:

I enumerate five (5): here are some:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 1. Avoid favoritism.
(Just) | James 2: 1
James 5 (act justly) |
| 2. Faith plus deeds
(Faith that works in love) | James 2: 14 & 17 |
| 3. Tame the tongues
(Calmness in speech) | James 3: 8
James 5: 12 |
| 4. The Right Motives
(Having the right motives)
“If it is the Lord’s will” | James 4: 3 |
| 5. Perseverance / Patience in suffering | James 1: 2
James 5: 11-12 |

The letter of James has been described as a collection of practical instructions. These practical instructions help in developing or harnessing in us the appropriate virtues that believers ought to possess.

Here’s a few:

1. Being Just

*“My brothers as believers in our glorious Lord,
Yahshua the Messiah, don’t show favoritism” (James 2: 1).*

“Look! The wages you failed to pay the workmen who mowed your fields are crying against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of Yahweh Almighty” (James 5: 4).

One of the important virtues a believer of Yahshua the Messiah must possess is being just. The tendency of people is to be discriminatingly respectful. But the followers of Yahshua the Messiah avoid to play favoritism rather is fair and give the person what is due him/her.

Yahshua the Messiah is a pure and true example who never looked at the expensiveness of person’s clothes, his jewelries neither his house or the number of properties he has, but he looked straight to the heart – the goodness – of the person and the sincerity of his intentions.

Let us endeavor to possess the virtues of being just and avoid favoritism. It might be difficult to change the whole world in an instant but it has to start somewhere – within you!

2. Faith Plus Deeds

“What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him?” (James 2: 14).

“Faith by itself, if not accompanied by action is dead” (James 2: 17).

One classic example of faith with deeds is Abraham. Abraham’s faith was put to test when Heavenly Father Yahweh asked him to offer his only and long awaited son, Isaac, on Mt. Moriah.

Isaac was very precious to Abraham and Sarah. No amount of money or a choice of words can describe how precious Isaac was? is?, to Abraham and Sarah. Any parent know the euphoria of having a child, how much more for Abraham and Sarah.

As you might have known, Isaac came to Abraham’s and Sarah’s life as a wonderful blessing in their old age. A tangible, complete proof of Yahweh’s promise to Abraham, yet, ironically Yahweh asked Abraham to offer him as sacrifice. Indeed a great test to Abraham’s faith – show your faith with your deeds. Abraham, a great man, without complains readily obeyed. Abraham’s

faith in the wisdom and greatness of our Heavenly Father Yahweh never faltered. Indeed, he is worthy of the title “father of faith” even in deeds.”

As believers of heavenly Father Yahweh and as followers of Yahshua the Messiah, let our actions speak louder than our words. Let our deeds speak our faith. Let our deeds complete our faith.

3. **Calmness in Speech** (Tame the tongue), appropriate in speech

*“But no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil,
full of deadly poison” (James 3: 8).*

*“Above all, my brothers, do not swear – not by heaven,
or by earth or by anything else. Let your “Yes” be yes and your “No”, no,
or you will be condemned” (James 5: 12).*

The tongue is a small but never an immaterial part of the body. In fact, when not on a tight rein, it spits out deadly poison.

As Christians, James reminds us to be mindful of the appropriateness of our speech – tame our tongue!

This “little” part of the body – when untamed – can be instruments of many sorts of evil things. It can actually kill the soul, damage a person, can tarnish an image – never underestimate what an untamed tongue can do. As the scripture says, “It is a world of wrong occupying its place in our bodies and spreading evil through our whole being” (James 3: 6).

Let this be the challenge for us believers in Yahshua the Messiah that our tongues, our speech be seasoned by grace. Let it be a source of life, strength, inspiration and most of all of love and joy. Let us use our tongues to our advantage especially for the greater glory of our Heavenly Father Yahweh.

How do we tame our tongue? Let it spit out praise and songs for our Heavenly Father Yahweh. Let us spit out words of life, encouragement and of positive ideas. Most importantly, pray that Heavenly Father Yahweh tame our tongues. Remember “The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective” (James 5: 16).

4. Having the Right Motives

“When you ask, you do not receive because you ask with wrong motives...” (James 4: 3).

Have you asked yourself the question “Do I really have the right motives in everything I do for the Lord?” Pause. Think deeply about this question.

Whatever good we do but we have the wrong motives – never pleases our Heavenly Father Yahweh.

An evangelist, speaking on a crusade is remembered for a very deep and insightful sharing on having the right motives. He shared that most often believers and workers in the vineyard of our Heavenly Father Yahweh, and Yahshua the Messiah and the Holy Spirit, comfort themselves with the idea that everything they do is for the Lord not really realizing that sometimes they just use such idea to cover up pleasing one’s self, his/her ego, doing man’s will and not really Almighty Yahweh’s will.

Christians working with the wrong motives will never be successful in their endeavors. As Christians, it is a challenge for us to really possess the virtue of discerning “Yahweh’s will” in all our plans, actions and decisions. Let us exemplify in our lives the phrase that Yahshua the Messiah uttered in Gethsemane “not my will but let your perfect will be done.”

5. Perseverance

“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance” (James 1: 2).

“Be patient then brothers, until the Lord’s coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop.. you too be patient and stand firm...” (James 5: 7 & 8).

A Christian’s life is never easy. It is actually a concoction of everything - that in spite of elation, comfort and joy there are moments of trying and testing.

But on a positive note, these moments of trying and testing have one goal to accomplish – to polish the character. One of the important virtues of a Christian is perseverance. It is in persevering where refiners in character come. It is in persevering where one makes real the verse “all things work together for good to those who love Almighty Yahweh and to those who are called according to his purpose” (Romans 8: 28).

Remember Abraham, Job, David and many others. They never lived a hassle-free, luxurious life. Their only assurance was that they live by the grace of our Heavenly Father Yahweh and that His plans and will are always for their good. One of the admirable virtues these three great people had was they all “hoped even when there was no reason for hoping.” They persevered knowing that all trials, difficulties in life were temporal and were part of testing one’s faith and character. As a result they all emerged polished and victorious.

Let this be our habit that in all circumstances and in everything we do we give thanks to our Heavenly Father Yahweh through His Son Yahshua the Messiah and the Holy Spirit. That instead of grumbling, murmuring and complaining – we see the positive side of every situation – most importantly a venue for us to say thanks to our Heavenly Father Yahweh that in spite of everything He is always there for us as the scripture says. Our Heavenly Father Yahweh said: “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

Guide Questions

Insight for the Portfolio:

1. What other virtues can you enumerate from the book of James?
2. What are some of the virtues mentioned in the book of James that you can say: You have possessed? You want to have/develop/harness?

I & II PETER

Introduction:

The books admonish the believers of Yahshua the Messiah to have hope and courage and to trust in the power of God.

It also warns of false teachers and reminds them to be brave and patient.

TS

Painful Trials

I Peter

“In this you greatly rejoice though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith – of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire – may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed” (I Peter 1: 6-7).

“Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trials you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the suffering of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed” (I Peter 4: 12-13).

“And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast” (I Peter 5: 10).

The verses presented earlier were St. Peter’s encouraging and affirming statements in response to questions raised by the believers and followers of Yahshua the Messiah during their time. Sadly, those questions keep on echoing even among the believers nowadays.

Persecution. Why does Almighty Yahweh allow it? Why did faithful believers and followers of Yahshua the Messiah have to suffer because of their faith? Does Almighty Yahweh really care for His people? If He does, why from centuries past till now do thousands and even more have been persecuted, oppressed, imprisoned, put to shame, tortured and died for the sake of their faith? Why do more and more people oppose to the truth that Yahshua the Messiah brought to this world? These are only few of the many questions the believers have been asking every now and then.

In detail Peter wrote to the believers why do we need to suffer for a little while. Few of the major causes of these dilemma Peter mentioned were: “Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.” In other words, satan was and is the cause of the suffering the believers had experienced. The enemy never stops looking for ways and opportunities when the believers might fall under his schemes. But, friends, satan has already been defeated by Yahshua the Messiah. He willingly offered Himself for our salvation. All that satan can do is to frighten the believers

hoping they might give way and fall under his traps. Also, because “they think it strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you” (I Peter 4: 4).

To counter and overcome satan’s works, Peter advised the believers by saying:

- “Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you, be self-controlled and alert. Resist the devil, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of suffering.”
- “If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rest on you. If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any kind of criminals, or even as a meddler. However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.”
- “Live such good lives among pagans that, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us.”
- “Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray. Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers a multitude of sin.”

Be therefore attentive and alert because satan is a spirit and he works in ways which mere human eyes cannot see. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you and direct you at all times. Let the Holy Spirit control you to the fullest, so that satan cannot pursue his evil desire against you. Granting that satan does, he certainly will not succeed because the Holy Spirit will never leave us nor forsake us; He will always be there for us.

Do not be discouraged....nor despair, “after you have suffered a little while, the Messiah Himself will restore you and make you strong, firm, and steadfast.”

Questions:

1. Why do believers and followers of Yahshua the Messiah suffer?
2. As a believer of Yahshua the Messiah, have you experienced persecution? Explain briefly.
3. Do you know of other reasons why believers had been under persecution aside from what St. Peter had mentioned. Explain briefly.

“Watch Out”

II Peter 7

The second letter of St. Peter to the believers in Northern Asia Minor (now Turkey) concerns directly on false teachers and false prophets plaguing the society. With so much concern Peter clearly specified the seriousness of the problem that occurred in the area, which the believers need to address the matter as a priority and as an immediate concern for their own welfare.

Peter not only presented the problems, but also proposed some solutions and even elaborated the fate of those men who lead the people astray. Peter addressed the believers by saying, “But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed, these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping” (II Peter 2: 1-3).

While Yahshua the Messiah was still here on earth with His disciples including Peter. A couple of times Yahshua the Messiah warned His disciples concerning falsehood, lies and deception. In Matthew 7: 15, Yahshua the Messiah said: “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.” For added emphasis, Yahshua the Messiah taught them by saying: “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles? Then I will tell them plainly, I never knew you. Get away from me you evildoers!’” (Matthew 7: 21-23).

In another occasion, Yahshua the Messiah with His disciples, once again warned them about falsehood. He said, “For false Christ and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect” (Matthew 24: 24).

It is not surprising that Yahshua the Messiah and Peter kept on warning the people about false teachers and false prophets. In fact, even today there are lots of falsehood, lies, and deceptions in every street corner in any part of the world. And if the believers are not careful enough they might fall under the traps set by the enemy of righteousness.

Be therefore, very careful and alert because we are not just fighting against flesh and blood but against evil spirits. Armed yourselves with the mighty weapon of righteousness and clothed yourself with the power of the Holy Spirit. This is the only possible way to conquer satan and all his evil schemes. The Holy Spirit who is the teacher of truth will guide us and enable us to understand and see what is behind in everything that occurs around us.

As long as we faithfully obey Almighty Yahweh's commands and do His perfect will, there is no need to worry or be afraid. The power that dominates the world is nothing compared to the mighty power that is in Yahshua the Messiah our Savior and King. If there are strange events that are happening in your community do not, however, be quick to pass judgment but pray, because there are still lots of things that we do not know and understand. It is better to seek first the help of the Holy Spirit who is the teacher of truth.

The Elohim in whom we put our trust and confidence will always tell us in advance about His plans for us His people. Nothing will be kept secret between us and Him as long as we faithfully do His will. It is our Father's desire to reveal His plans and purposes here on earth, so that we can prepare and fully understand the things that happen before His most awaited second coming.

Questions for Exercise:

1. What are the possible dangers that false teachers and false prophets can inflict to the believers ?
2. Distinguish the false teachers and false prophets from the true prophets and teachers.
3. Explain: "They come in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves."
4. Memorize: Matthew 7: 21-23
5. What is the best way/s to protect ourselves from falsehood and deception?

I-II-III JOHN

Introduction:

The first Letter of John has two main purposes. These are to encourage the believers to live in fellowship with God and with His Son Yahshua the Messiah, and to warn against false teaching. John also emphasized that Yahshua the Messiah is a real human being, and he who believes in the Messiah and love God must also love his brethren.

The Second Letter was written to "the dear Lady and her children." The contents of the letter was a warning against false teachers, and an appeal to love one another as Yahshua the Messiah teaches.

The Third Letter was written to a man named Gaius. The letter contains praises, and acknowledgement of the help that Gaius extended to the brethren.

It also warned him against a man named Diotrephes.

JS

False Spirits

I John

“My dear friends, do not believe all who claim to have the Holy Spirit, but test them if the spirit they have comes from God. For many false prophets have gone out everywhere.” This is John’s stern warning to the believers in his first letter to them.

John’s warning evidently shows the presence of evil spirits and their works among men. Some of them work through deception particularly, through false prophets and false teachers. They are liars and what they say are lies and will only lead people away from our Father and Savior.

These evil workers are on the side of the evil one; they are being motivated and empowered by their master the devil. They are enemies of truth and righteousness, and whose desires are the destruction of men, women, and children in this world especially the believers and followers of Yahshua the Messiah. They are thieves and robbers; they are always ready to steal the blessings that our Father and Savior send to us His children such as good health, peace, and joy. Yahshua the Messiah said: “The thief cometh not but to steal, to kill, and to destroy. But I came that you might have life and that you might have it more abundantly” (John 10: 10).

Brethren, do not be ignorant of the truth, study the sacred scriptures so that none of us will be deceived. Live as wise children through humble and faithful obedience to the teaching of our heavenly Father. Children who are able to discern what is good and right from what is false and evil, until we reach our goal, that is, to be perfectly one with our Father and Savior.

Questions for Exercise:

1. Write at least three evil works that you know, and tell us how would you overcome them?
2. Memorize: John 10: 10
3. Have you any victorious encounter? Share your testimony briefly.

Who Will Overcome The World?

I John

It is such a sad truth that the world is ruled by the evil one (I John 5: 19). Galatians 3: 22 tells us also that the whole world is under the power of sin. Well, then, will the world goes on as it is? If not, who can defeat the world?

Praise, honor, glory, and thanksgiving be to Yahweh our Father for His Son, Yahshua the Messiah who has overcome the world. Yahshua the Messiah Himself said: "In this world there shall be tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (John 16: 33).

HalleluYah! Yahshua the Messiah, indeed, has overcome the world and surely, so is everyone who becomes a child of God through faith in Yahshua the Messiah. For, the scripture says: "We win the victory over the world by means of our faith" (I John 5: 4).

Truly, dear brethren, there are trials, hardships, tribulation in this world but do not be discouraged. "Be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" for in due time we will overcome the world in the name of Yahshua the Messiah our Savior and King.

Exercise:

Make a short paragraph using the following words:

1. Tribulation
2. Faith in Yahshua the Messiah
3. Victory over the world

Basic Foundation of A Christian Life

II John

John wrote his second letter addressed to a Christian woman and her children. In his letter, John expressed his friendship and joy, concern and warnings to the family. Moreover, John reminded the family some of the basic foundations of a Christian life.

First, John expressed his joy to find some of the children walk in the truth. Second, is the command to love one another. Third, John wanted the family to abide in the truth.

Indeed, to walk in the truth is to walk in obedience to Almighty Yahweh's words. It also means studying carefully His words and allowing the Holy Spirit to teach us. It is to put in the heart the truth and permit it to control every area of our life. There is no greater joy than for Almighty Yahweh's children to walk in the truth.

On the other hand, loving one another is an expression of obedience to Almighty Yahweh's words. This command is best exemplified in the life of Yahshua the Messiah Himself. Yahshua the Messiah is love and if we love Him we must obey His commands, that is, to love one another.

To abide in the truth is to remain in the Christian faith with practices that are in accordance to the words of our Father and Savior. We must firmly hold on to the truth for there are deceivers or false teachers who have gone out into the world to deceive. Thus, confused and blinded the people from the truth.

This letter is also a reminder to us. You and I must have faith and must walk in faith. We must constantly obey the truth and be willing to sacrifice for Almighty Yahweh's glory. In addition, we need to love one another. This is one way of showing to the people that we are disciples of Yahshua the Messiah. For, Yahshua the Messiah said: "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you have love one to another" (John 13: 35).

Exercises:

1. To whom is the letter addressed?
2. What are the three basic foundations of Christian life that John talked about? Explain each.
3. Why is it important to love one another as brethren?

Be A Good Witness

III John

The third letter of John was written to Gaius. Gaius was one of the leaders of the Assembly and a friend of John. John emphasized on walking in the truth despite the difficulties.

Gaius as a leader was recognized as a man who faithfully served Almighty Yahweh by serving the believers in the name of Yahshua the Messiah. He was a glowing example of the many people around him. The fact that he welcomed the ministers of the Gospel even though they were strangers to him was a great help, comfort, and inspiration to the ministers. He did not only opened his home but also his heart for the brethren in the faith. His faith and his love for Yahshua the Messiah was also shown in his deeds.

But not everyone in the Assembly is like Gaius. Diotrefes loved to be first and thus refused to listen to the authority of John. Still not satisfied, he refused to welcome his brothers in the faith. He even stopped others to do so, and if they do he put them out of the church.

Such attitude should not influence and contaminate the believers. This must be stopped. On the other hand, Demetrius was well spoken of by everyone. He was a man worth imitating because he not only had a good witness about the believers, but also in the word of truth.

Usually, in the Assembly there exist different kinds of people. These people strongly affect the fellowship and unity of the believers. Be on guard! And make it your aim always to be a good witness.

Each one of us is a witness. We either reflect good or bad ways. We are either helping spread the truth or are hindering it. We are either Diotrefes or Gaius and Demetrius.

But as children of light, we must be a good witness of Yahshua the Messiah. Our faith and our love to Him must be seen in our deeds like Gaius and Demetrius. We must be a glowing example to everyone wherever we may be, for the salvation of mankind and for the glory of our Father and Savior.

Exercises:

1. How did Gaius and Demetrius show their faith and obedience to Yahshua the Messiah? Explain.
2. How did Diotrefes affect the unity and fellowship of the Assembly?
3. As a witness of Yahshua the Messiah, in what way(s) did you show your faithful stewardship to Him?

JUDE

Introduction:

Jude is one of the shorter books in the New Testament. This letter is written by one of the brothers of Yahshua the Messiah who did not believe in Him until after the resurrection.

In his letter, Jude warned the Christians everywhere against false teachers and stand firm with their faith. He reminded the believers to stay within the boundaries where Yahweh's love can reach and bless them. He ended his letter with a benediction that is often quoted at the close of Worship Service.

J.S.

Faith and Compassion

Jude

Jude was writing a letter to all Christians everywhere in his time. He reminded them of the salvation they have received through their faith in Yahshua the Messiah. In his letter he also warned the Christians to be steadfast and firm in their faith because there are false teachers, people condemned for damnation who secretly slipped in among their group. In his letter he wrote: "Dear friends, I'm urging you to strongly defend the truth which Almighty Yahweh gave, once for all, to His people to keep without change through the years. I say this because some godless teachers have found their way among you, saying that after we become Christians we can do just as we like without fear of Almighty Yahweh's punishment."

Apostle Jude reminded also the people in his letter of the punishment Almighty Yahweh will pour upon the people who disobeyed His laws, teachings, and commandments. Jude reviewed what happened to their ancestors who left out of the land of Egypt, except for Caleb and Joshua, they all died or killed on the way to the Promised Land because they did not trust Yahweh's greatness, love and mercy. He went on to say that the angels who sinned were bound in chain waiting for their judgment. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were being destroyed by Yahweh through fire because the people living in these cities were so lustful, and sexual immoral There are teachers who are bound with lustful desires, and live immoral lives. They even scoff at the good ones, laughing at those in authority over them. Even slander celestial beings. Yet Michael, one of the mightiest angels of Yahweh El, when he was arguing with satan about the body of Moses did not dare accuse satan but simply said: "The Almighty Yahweh rebuke you."

While Jude gave warnings to his brethren against false teachers, he also encouraged them to build up their lives even more strongly upon the foundation of their holy faith, learning to pray in the power and strength of the Holy Spirit. He encouraged them to have compassion to people who did not know the truth. He said, "Save some by snatching them as from the flames of hell itself. And as for others, help them to find the Lord by being kind to them but be careful that you yourself aren't pulled along into their sins. Hate every trace of their sins while being merciful to them."

My dear brethren in Yahshua the Messiah, Apostle Jude is not only writing a letter to the believers long time ago. His words are also for us today.

Yes, his words are alive and powerful, especially that we are now living in the 'last days.' As we all know there are false teachers and false religions, false doctrines being taught everywhere. Many people are being deceived because they do not know the truth. The enemy is trying his best to distort what is good and what is true, even try to snatch the children of Almighty Yahweh. Satan is using some people to destroy the lives and works of the believers of Yahshua the Messiah. These people enter in our assemblies, groups, homes pretending to be true servants of Yahshua the Messiah but the truth is that they are armies of the Enemy. Be on guard; put on the whole armor of faith that we may stand against the wiles of the devil. Let us fight the good fight of faith, be able to discern the good from the bad. Let us be one in destroying all the works and plans of the enemy. Be ready always for every battle whether spiritual or physical. The enemies are tirelessly roaming around seeking whom they may devour. As children of Yahweh Almighty let us not be tired of doing what is right, let us pray at all times, be watchful, be alert, build up strongly your faith. Fill your hearts and mind with the wonderful promises of Yahweh Almighty especially the promise of eternal and abundant life through His Son Yahshua the Messiah. Let us endure until we see the glorious Kingdom of our Father in heaven here on earth. Be conscious that some people will appear and make fun of you; reject you. As a reminder to us all, do not let hate overpower you, release forgiveness so that satan cannot accuse you or see a hole through which he could attack you. Let us not be discouraged but let love, peace, and unity be among us. Let us continue what we have started, let us spread the good news of salvation while there's still time to save those people who are still in the darkness. But be very careful in every action you make; be wise, do not let satan and his armies take hold on you.

In this chaotic world be assured that the eyes of Almighty Yahweh is upon us all. "Now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy - to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Yahshua the Messiah our Savior and King before all ages, now and forevermore." HalleluYah!

I - Answer the following questions:

1. What is the main subject of Jude's letter?
2. What message that strikes you most from the letter of Jude? Why?

3. Why did Jude need to write a letter to the beloved Christians?
4. Why do we need to be compassionate to others?
5. Why is it so important to be reminded and be warned?
6. Do you write letters? What do you usually write?
7. If you were on the shoes of Jude, are you not afraid to give warnings to your family, or church if they disobeyed Yahweh's laws and commandments? Why?

II - Knowledge/ Comprehension:

1. State at least 5 differences between the teachers of truth and the false teachers.
2. In ministering the people, what must we do in order not to be trapped by the enemies or fall into sin. Give at least 5 guidance.

II – Assessment:

1. How do you defend your faith?
2. How can we save others who are still in the darkness?
3. As followers of Yahshua the Messiah, what will you do to build your faith strongly at all times?

IV- Application

1. What will you do if godless teachers penetrate in your church, family....?
2. Write a Christian letter to the very person whom you are concerned right now.

REVELATION

Introduction:

Revelation was written at the time when the believers and followers of Yahshua the Messiah were severely persecuted. It was particularly addressed to the seven churches in the province of Asia. These seven churches were in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. The book, as its title says, contains the visions and revelations that John received from the Lord Yahshua the Messiah while he was in the island of Patmos. "I was put in the island of Patmos because I had proclaimed God's words and the truth that Jesus Christ revealed" (Revelation 1:9).

Although there are differences of opinions regarding the details, the central theme is clear. It is to: (a) give the believers hope, and encouragement to remain faithful in times of persecution. (b) God will finally and totally defeat satan and his cohort. (c) the faithful will be rewarded with wonderful blessings when the victory is complete.

Important Messages to the Seven Churches

Revelation

To Ephesus

“To the angels of the church in Ephesus write:

‘This is the message from the one who holds the seven stars in his right hand and who walks among the seven gold lampstands. I know what you have done; I know how hard you have worked and how patient you have been. I know that you cannot tolerate evil men.... You are patient, you have suffered for my sake, and you have not given up. But this is what I have against you: you do not love me now as you did at first. Think how far you have fallen! Turn from your sins.... If you don’t turn from your sins, I will come to you and take your lampstands from its place.’”

To Smyrna

‘This is the message from the one who is the first and the last, who died and lived again. I know your troubles; I know that you are poor-but really you are rich! I know the evil things said against you...., they are a group that belongs to satan! Don’t be afraid of anything you are going to suffer. The devil will put you to the test....those who win the victory will not be hurt by the second death!’

To Pergamum

‘This is the message from the one who has the sharp two-edged sword. I know where you live, there where satan has his throne. You are true to me, and you did not abandon your faith in me.... But there are a few things I have against you: there are some among you who follow the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak how to lead the people of Israel into sin by persuading them to eat food that had been offered to idols and to practice sexual immorality.... Turn from your sins! If you don’t, I will come to you soon and fight....with the sword that comes out of my mouth!’

To Thyatira

'This is the message from the Son of God, whose eyes blaze like fire, whose feet shine like polished brass. I know what you do. I know your love, your faithfulness, your service, and your patience. I know that you are doing more now than you did at first. But this is what I have against you: you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a messenger of God. By her teaching she misleads my servants into practicing sexual immorality and eating foods that have been offered to idols. I will repay each one of you according to what he has done.'

To Sardis

'This is the message from the one who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know what you are doing; I know that you have the reputation of being alive, even though you are dead! So wake up, and strengthen what you still have before it dies completely.... Remember what you were taught and obey it; turn from your sins. If you do not wake up, I will come to you....and you will not even know the time when I will come.'

To Philadelphia

'This is the message from the one who is holy and true. He has the key that belonged to David, and when he opens a door, no one can close it, when he closes it, no one can open it. I know what you do; I know that you have a little power; you have followed my teaching and have been faithful to me. I have opened a door in front of you, which no one can close. For that group that belongs to satan, those liars..., I will make them come and bow down at your feet. They will all know that I love you.... I will also keep you safe from the time of trouble which is coming upon the world to test all the people on earth. I am coming soon.'

To Laodicea

'This is the message from the Amen, the faithful and the true witness, who is the origin of all that God has created. I know what you have done; I know that you are neither cold nor hot. How I wish you were either one or the other! But because you are lukewarm..., I am going to spit you out of my mouth! You say, 'I am rich..., I have all I need.' But you do not know how miserable and pitiful you are! You are poor, naked, and blind. I advise you to

buy gold from me..., in order to be rich. Buy white clothing to dress yourself and cover your shameful nakedness.... I rebuke and punish all whom I love. Be in earnest, then, and turn from your sin.'

Questions for Exercise:

- I. 1. If you were to choose, which among the seven churches would you like to join? Why?
2. What general message and lesson can we learn from the different condition of the churches?
3. What is the teaching of Balaam?

- II. The Giver of the message described himself differently in each church. Match the correct description in column A and column B. Write only the letter.

A	B
1. _____ Laodicea	a. The one who holds the seven stars.
2. _____ Philadelphia	b. The first & the last, who died and lived again.
3. _____ Sardis	c. Who has the sharp two-edged sword.
4. _____ Thyatira	d. Whose eyes blaze like fire.
5. _____ Pergamum	e. Who has the seven spirits of God & the seven stars.
6. _____ Smyrna	f. The one who is holy & true.
7. _____ Ephesus	g. The Amen, the faithful; and the true witness.

Comfort and Encouragement

Revelation

Let us recall that when John received the visions and revelations, the believers were greatly persecuted because of their faith in Yahshua the Messiah. In fact, that is why John was exiled in the island of Patmos. The visions and revelations strongly confirm the truth that our Father and Savior is indeed all-knowing and ever seeing. Nothing is being kept from Him, and He lovingly cares for His people. The Psalmist gladly declared: "His love for us is strong; His faithfulness is eternal" (Psalm 117).

To comfort and encourage His troubled and suffering people, the Almighty showed to John visions that revealed the marvelous truth that someday Almighty Yahweh's people, the people who faithfully follow Yahshua the Messiah will win the victory and rule the earth with justice and integrity.

Following a wonderful vision, a revelation was declared: "...the four living creatures and the twenty four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each had a harp and gold bowls filled with incense, which are the prayers of God's people.

They sang a new song:

*'You are worthy to take the scroll and to break open its seals.
For you were killed, and by your sacrificial death you bought for
God people from every tribe, language, nation, and race.
You have made them a Kingdom of priests to serve
our God, and they shall rule on earth.'"*

"Again, I looked, and heard angels, thousands and millions of them! They stood around the throne, the four living creatures, and the elders, and sang in a loud voice:

*'The Lamb who was killed is worthy to receive
power, wealth, honor, glory and praise!'"*

“Then, I heard every creature...all living beings in the universe - and they were singing:

*‘To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb,
be praise and honor, glory, and might, forever and ever!’”*

Questions for Exercise:

I.

1. Why was John exiled to the Island of Patmos?
2. What wonderful experience John had in Patmos?
3. What was the main purpose of the visions and revelations?
4. What special message and lesson can we learn from John’s experience?
5. Did you know that our Father and Savior has appointed you one of the rulers of the whole earth?
6. Are you excited to hold or occupy your position as ruler?
7. Are you preparing yourself physically and spiritually for such a great task? Remember that the scripture says: “some will be ruler over five cities, some over ten cities,....”

II. Differentiate the rulers of the present world and the people our Father & Savior has chosen to rule His Kingdom on Earth.

Present World	Heavenly Kingdom on Earth
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

"The Thousand Years"

Revelation

Everybody knows that the world we have is in bad shape; it is chaotic. In this world we can find all sorts of unpleasant things that bring pain. It is not the right or ideal place to live in, and our loving Father is very well aware that this is not the best place for us His children. A composer expresses this truth in his song saying, "My heart can sing when I pause to remember. A heartache here is but a stepping stone. Along a trail that's winding always upward, this troubled world is not my final home." The book of Hebrews declares this: "It was in faith that all these persons died (Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses). They did not receive the things God promised, but from a long way off they saw them and welcomed them, and admitted openly that they were foreigners and refugees on earth" (Hebrews 11: 13). Since we are only pilgrims on earth, our loving and merciful Father made it known to us through Prophets Isaiah, Micah, and Apostle Peter (Isaiah 2,11,65; Micah 4; II Peter 3: 13), that He has prepared for us a new earth and new heavens; a new earth where righteousness will reign, and where we will enjoy life to its fullness.

The book of Revelation also tells us that holy angels are working hard with us and for us. "Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key of the abys and a heavy chain. He seized the dragon, that serpent—that is, the Devil, or Satan—and chained him up for a thousand years.... After that he must be set loose for a little while.

"Then I saw thrones, and those who sat on them were given the power to judge. I also saw the souls of those who had been executed because they proclaimed the truth that Jesus Christ revealed and the word of God.... They came to life and ruled as Kings with Christ for a thousand years. Happy and greatly blessed are those who are included in this first raising of the dead. The second death has no more power over them; they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and they shall rule with him for a thousand years."

Questions for Exercise:

Choose the correct answer or answers:

1. The world became chaotic because
 - a. God wanted it that way
 - b. Sin has infected mankind
 - c. Leaders and people are not godly.
2. This world we have is
 - a. our permanent place; it is here we live and die
 - b. temporary; it is decaying and perishing
 - c. heavenly kingdom
 - d. we are only pilgrims, foreigners and refugees.
3. Those who are included in the first raising of the dead will
 - a. suffer hunger and thirst, and die later
 - b. enjoy abundant and eternal life
 - c. rule with Yahshua the Messiah for a thousand years
 - d. be priests of God and of the Messiah.
4. The holy angels are:
 - a. God's servants sent to help us.
 - b. pure and should not be in this sinful world.
 - c. he seized the dragon that ancient serpent the devil or satan and chained him for a thousand years.

*The Fate of the Enemy
and the
Rebellious People*

Revelation

“After the thousand years are over, satan will be set loose from his prison, and he will go out to deceive the nations scattered over the whole world. Satan will bring them all together for battle....

“They spread out over the earth and surrounded the camp of God’s people.... But fire came down from heaven and destroyed them. Then the Devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, where the beast and the false prophets had already been thrown; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

“Then I saw great white throne and the one who sits on it.... Books were opened, and then another book was opened, the book of the living. The dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books....whoever did not have his name written in the book of the living was thrown into the lake of fire.

“Whoever wins the victory will receive this from me: I will be his God, and he will be my son. But cowards, traitors, perverts, murderers, the immoral, those who practice magic, those who worship idols, and all liars – the place for them is the lake burning with fire and sulfur, which is the second death” (Revelation 20 & 21).

Questions for Exercise:

I. True or False

1. _____ During the thousand years satan is imprisoned.
2. _____ After the thousand years is over satan will be set loosed for awhile.
3. _____ The people whom satan deceived will gather together and fight against God’s children.
4. _____ Almighty Yahweh is so good; satan, the beast, the false prophets will not be tormented day and night.

- 5._____The people will be judged according to their deeds as recorded in the book.
- 6._____On judgment day, whoever did not have his name written in the book of the living can plead for mercy and he will not be thrown into the lake of fire.
- 7._____Those who win the victory will become God's children and receive eternal life.
- 8._____The names satan, devil, dragon or ancient serpent, the enemy or adversary refer to different beings.
- 9._____The devil, the beast, and the false prophets are fighting against each other.
- 10._____The Holy Angels are working hard in favor of God's children.

II. Who are the people whose place is the lake burning with fire and sulfur?

Memory Verses

Old Testament

God (Almighty Yahweh) said: Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth (Genesis 1: 26 KJV).

He blessed the seventh day and set it apart as a special day, because by that day He had completed His creation and stopped working.

Genesis 2: 3 TEV

God (Yahweh El) said: "I Am who I Am. You must tell them: 'The One who is called I Am has sent me to you'" (Exodus 3:14 TEV).

The Lord (Yahweh El) told Moses to say: "Be holy, because I, the Lord your God, am holy" (Leviticus 19: 1-2 TEV).

The Lord (Yahweh El) said: "Now hear what I have to say! When there are prophets among you, I reveal myself to them in visions and speak to them in dreams" (Numbers 12: 6 TEV).

"Be completely faithful to the Lord" (Almighty Yahweh).

Deuteronomy 18: 13 TEV

"Joshua, no one will be able to defeat you as long as you live. I will be with you as I was with Moses. I will always be with you: I will never abandon you" (Joshua 1: 5 TEV).

The Lord (Almighty Yahweh) said unto him (Gideon), Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man (Judges 6: 16 KJV).

Ruth answered: "Don't ask me to leave you! Let me go with you. Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, your God will be my God (Ruth 1: 16 TEV).

“For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord (Almighty Yahweh), He hath rejected thee from being king” (I Samuel 15: 23 KJV).

He (Yahweh El) covered himself with darkness; thick clouds, full of water, surrounded him (II Samuel 22: 12 TEV).

Solomon woke up and realized that God (Yahweh El) had spoken to him in the dream. Then he went to Jerusalem and stood in front of the Lord’s Covenant Box and offered burnt offerings and fellowship offerings to the Lord (Yahweh Elohim). After that he gave a feast for all his officials.

I Kings 3: 15 TEV

In every city of Israel King Josiah tore down all the pagan places of worship which had been built by the kings of Israel, who thereby aroused the Lord’s (Almighty Yahweh) anger. He did to all those altars what he had done in Bethel. He killed all the pagan priests on the altars where they served, and he burned human bones on every altars. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

II Kings 23: 19-20 TEV

David ruled over all Israel and made sure that his people were always treated fairly and justly (I Chronicles 18:14 TEV).

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

II Chronicles 7: 14 KJV

Ezra had devoted his life to studying the Law of the Lord (Almighty Yahweh), to practicing it, and to teaching all its laws and regulations to the people of Israel (Ezra 7: 10 TEV).

Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord (Yahweh Almighty): neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength (Nehemiah 8: 10 KJV).

“Now Queen Esther, what do you want? Tell me and you shall have it. I’ll even give you half the empire” (Esther 7: 2 TEV).

Job said: O that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together! For now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea: therefore my words are swallowed up (Job 6: 1-3 KJV).

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord (Yahweh Elohim), my strength, and my redeemer (Psalm 19: 14 KJV).

You may think everything you do is right, but the Lord (Almighty Yahweh) judges your motives (Proverbs 16: 2 TEV).

Gold and silver are tested by fire, and a person's heart is tested by the Lord (Yahweh Elohim) (Proverbs 17: 3 TEV).

Son, when you stop learning, you will soon neglect what you already know (Proverbs 19: 27 TEV).

This is all that I have learned: God (Almighty Yahweh) made us plain and simple, but we have made ourselves very complicated.

Ecclesiastes 7: 29 TEV

Wisdom does more good than weapons, but one sinner can undo a lot of good (Ecclesiastes 9: 18 TEV).

How beautiful you are my love! How your eyes shine with love behind your veil. Your hair dances like a flock of goats bounding down the hills of Gilead (Song of Songs 4: 1 TEV).

My lover is handsome and strong; he is one in ten thousand.

Song of Songs 5:10 TEV

Come now, and let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool (Isaiah 1: 18 KJV).

A day is coming when human pride will be ended and human arrogance destroyed (Isaiah 2: 11 TEV).

Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

(Isaiah 5: 20 KJV)

I alone know the plans I have for you, plans to bring you prosperity and not disaster, plans to bring about the future you hope for (Jeremiah 29:11 TEV).

Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not (Jeremiah 33: 3 KJV).

It is of the Lord's (Almighty Yahweh) mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not they are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him (Lamentations 3: 22-24 KJV).

Whether those rebels listen to you or not, they will know that a prophet has been among them (Ezekiel 2: 5 TEV).

By your lies you discourage good people, whom I do not wish to hurt. You prevent evil people from giving up evil and saving their lives.

Ezekiel 13: 22 TEV

My God (Yahweh Elohim) hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

Daniel 6: 22 KJV

The more altars the people of Israel build for removing sin, the more places they have for sinning! (Hosea 8: 11 TEV).

People of Israel, stop celebrating your festivals like pagans. You have turned away from your God (Almighty Yahweh) and have been unfaithful to Him. All over the land you have sold yourselves like prostitutes to the god Baal and have loved the grain you thought he paid you with! (Hosea 9: 1 TEV).

Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord your God (Yahweh Almighty) and cry unto the Lord (Joel 1: 14 KJV).

Let justice flow like a stream, and righteousness like a river that never goes dry (Amos 5: 24 TEV).

The day is near when I, the Lord (Yahweh El) will judge all nations.
Obadiah 1: 15 TEV

But I will sing praises to you; I will offer you a sacrifice and do what I have promised. Salvation comes from the Lord (Yahweh Almighty)!
Jonah 2: 9 TEV

He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord (Almighty Yahweh) require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? (Micah 6: 8 KJV).

The Lord God (Almighty Yahweh) tolerates no rivals; He punishes those who oppose Him. In His anger He pays them back (Nahum 1: 2 TEV).

Those who are evil will not survive, but those who are righteous will live because they are faithful to God (Yahweh Almighty) (Habakkuk 2: 4 TEV).

The great day of the Lord (Yahweh Almighty) is near – very near and coming fast! That day will be bitter, for even the bravest soldiers will cry out in despair! (Zephaniah 1: 14 TEV).

The new Temple will be more splendid than the old one, and there I will give my people prosperity and peace. The Lord Almighty (Yahweh Almighty) has spoken (Haggai 2: 9 TEV).

For thus saith the Lord of host; after the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye (Zechariah 2: 8 KJV).

This is the word of the Lord (Almighty Yahweh) unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.
Zechariah 4: 6 KJV

Will a man rob God (Almighty Yahweh)? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings (Malachi 3: 8 KJV).

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord (Yahweh Almighty) of host, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it (Malachi 3: 10 KJV).

New Testament

It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God (Yahweh Almighty) (Matthew 4: 4 KJV).

But seek ye first the kingdom of God (Yahweh Almighty), and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Matthew 6: 33 KJV

John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins (Mark 1: 4 KJV).

Jesus (Yahshua the Messiah) said: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God".

Mark 10:14 KJV

Jesus (the Messiah) said, "Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace" (Luke 8: 48 KJV).

Jesus (Yahshua the Messiah) said: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke 10: 41-42 KJV).

I am not looking for human praise. But I know what kind of people you are, and I know that you have no love for God (Yahweh Elohim) in your hearts.

John 5: 41-42 TEV

It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God (Yahweh Elohim). Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me (John 6: 45 KJV).

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him (John 14: 21 KJV).

Jesus (Yahshua the Messiah) said: “If a man loves me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” (John 14: 23 KJV).

Believe in the Lord Jesus (Yahshua the Messiah), and you will be saved – you and your family (Acts 16: 31 TEV).

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God (Yahweh Almighty) (Romans 3:23 KJV).

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God (Yahweh El), and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? (I Corinthians 3: 16 KJV).

Don't you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and who was given to you by God (Yahweh El)? You do not belong to yourselves but to God; He bought you for a price. So use your bodies for God's glory (I Corinthians 6: 19-20 TEV).

But this I say, he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God (Yahweh Almighty) loveth a cheerful giver (II Corinthians 9: 6-7 KJV).

The man who is being taught the Christian message should share all the good things he has with his teacher (Galatians 6: 6 TEV).

So then, as often as we have the chance, we should do good to everyone, and especially to those who belong to our family in the faith.

Galatians 6:10 TEV

To him who by means of his power working in us is able to do so much more than we can ever ask for, or even think of (Ephesians 3:20 TEV).

Don't do anything from selfish ambition or from a cheap desire to boast, but be humble toward one another, always considering others better than yourselves and look out for one another's interests, not just for your own.

Philippines 2: 3-4 TEV

Be wise in the way you act toward those who are not believers, making good use of every opportunity you have. Your speech should always be

pleasant and interesting, and you should know how to give the right answer to everyone (Colossians 4: 5-6 TEV).

Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God (Yahweh Almighty) in Christ Jesus (Yahshua the Messiah) concerning you (I Thessalonians 5: 16-18 KJV).

Do not let anyone deceive you in any way. For the Day will not come until the final Rebellion takes place and the Wicked one appears, who is destined to hell (II Thessalonians 2: 3 TEV).

I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting (I Timothy 2: 8 KJV).

All scripture is given by inspiration of God (Almighty Yahweh), and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (II Timothy 3: 16-17 KJV).

For since a church leader is in charge of God's (Yahweh El) work, he should be without fault. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered, or a drunkard or violent or greedy for money. He must be hospitable and do what is good. He must be self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined.

Titus 1: 7-8 TEV

Your love, dear brother, has brought me great joy and much encouragement! You have cheered the hearts of all of God's (Almighty Yahweh) people (Philemon 1: 7 TEV).

Let us hold on firmly to the hope we profess, because we can trust God (Yahweh El) to keep his promise (Hebrews 10: 23 TEV).

Do not forget to do good and to help one another, because these are the sacrifices that please God (Almighty Yahweh) (Hebrews 13: 16 TEV).

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without work is dead also (James 2: 26 KJV).

Submit yourselves therefore to God (Almighty Yahweh). Resist the devil, and he will flee from you (James 4: 7 KJV).

For through the living and eternal word of God (Yahweh El) you have been born again as the children of a parent who is immortal, not mortal.

I Peter 1: 23 TEV

For God (Yahweh Almighty) wants you to silence the ignorant talk of foolish people by the good things you do (I Peter 2: 15 TEV).

But we wait for what God (Yahweh El) has promised: new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness will be at home (II Peter 3: 13 TEV).

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (I John 1: 9 KJV).

We know that we have left death and come over into life; we know it because we love our brothers. Whoever does not love is still under the power of death (I John 3: 14 TEV).

Be on your guard, then, so that you will not lose what we have worked for, but will receive your reward in full (II John 1: 8 TEV).

Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God (Yahweh Almighty): but he that doeth evil hath not seen God (III John 1: 11 KJV).

Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied (Jude 1:2 KJV).

I rebuke and punish all whom I love. Be in earnest, then, and turn from your sins (Revelation 3: 19 TEV).

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God (Yahweh Almighty), and he shall be my son. But cowards, traitors, perverts, murderers, the immoral, those who practice magic, those who worship idols, and all liars – the place for them is the lake burning with fire and sulfur....(Revelation 21: 7& 8).

Vitae



Dr. GIBSON JUN T. VALENZONA

- A holder of the degree Doctor in Technology Education
- Earned Units in Doctor in Management
- Master of Science in Agro-Industrial Technology Management
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- Diploma in Agriculture Technology
- Co-founder: Truth Seekers Assemblies and Ministries, Inc.
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DR. RUTH LOVE VALENZONA - RUSSELL

- A holder of the degree Doctor in Management.
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- Bachelor of Science in Psychology.
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- Assistant Professor, School of Business Management, Xavier University-Ateneo de Cagayan, School Year 1998-1999 to present.
- Faculty, Department of Psychology & Guidance, Xavier University-Ateneo de Cagayan, SY. 1996-1997 to SY. 1997-1998.
- Faculty, Department of English, Xavier University-Ateneo de Cagayan, School Year 1996-1997.
- Co-founder: Truth Seekers Assemblies and Ministries, Inc.
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- Has attended various seminars and has been invited as resource speaker of various organizations.



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- A holder of the degree Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Planning and Management
- Master in Management major in Human Resource Management.
- Earned Units in Master of Science in Teaching Physical Sciences.
- Earned Units in Master in Education major in School Management.
- Bachelor of Science in Biology.
- Professional Education.
- Professional Teacher, Philippine Regulatory Commission.
- School Principal, Immanuel Mission International School, SY 2003 to Present.
- Teacher, Immanuel Mission International School, SY2000-2001 to SY 2002-2003.
- Substitute Teacher, Angelicum Learning Center, November –December 1998.
- Bible Teacher: Truth Seekers Assemblies and Ministries.
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VERNIE JOY T. VALENZONA, B. Music

- Bachelor of Music, Major in Music Education Piano Principal (Piano Awardee 1996-2000)
- Professional Teacher, Philippine Regulatory Commission.
- Passed with Distinction: Theory of music examination of the Associated Board of The Royal Schools of Music – British Council, 1998.
- Piano and Violin Teacher
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SEGUNDINA T. VALENZONA

- A holder of the degree Bachelor of Science in Commerce (BSC-Accounting)
- Graduate Studies: Has completed the requirement for Master of Arts in Economics (Minus Thesis).
- A holder of the degree Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies.
- A holder of certificates for Seminar Workshops attended such as Muslim Evangelism (Contextualized Ministry), Million Leaders Mandate, etc.
- A former Sunday School Teacher in The United Church of Christ in the Philippines, Cagayan de Oro City.
- Anointed by the LORD for His own Special Purpose.
See Visions & Revelations from the year 1982 to the present 2009. The anointing was externally made on March 13, 1993 with Bro. Roderick Tesalona, an evangelist who resides in Metro Manila but occasionally comes to Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines.
- Appointed writer and witness to the world.
See Revelations on March 1988; May 20,1988; October 19,1996). The appointment was confirmed by Ms. Donna Brennan one of the American Church Leaders who came to Cagayan de Oro City to conduct seminar on "Women in Leadership Training" in 1996. In one of the sessions, Ms. Brennan prayed for her and gave her words of knowledge and inspiration saying: "The Holy Spirit says, 'You will write books that will give men and women freedom from bondages.'"
- Founder of the Truth Seekers Assemblies & Ministries, Inc.
- Has Authored the books: Visions: More Witness For Christ, Beyond The Glorious Voice, "Thy Kingdom Come" In Earth, The Promise Of Eternal Life, The Covenant Of Peace, The Wisdom Of God.

Note: Revelations are published in the book:

The Great & Terrible Day of the LORD And The Good News
About The Kingdom