



Old Testament Survey 1
Books of the Law
Teaching Notes

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Lesson 1

Introduction

This course is designed to provide students a general introduction to the Old Testament and a look at the important details and theological themes included in the first five books of the Old Testament. Students will take Old Testament Survey 2 and Old Testament Survey 3 in the following terms this year, courses which will look more closely at the Writings, and the Prophets. In the first lesson we will introduce basic information about the Old Testament as a whole, review the five steps of the Interpretive Journey learned in the Old Testament Interpretation course, and study the book of Genesis. Each lesson in this course will include a section in which students will use information they learned about these Old Testament sections to continue practicing faithful biblical interpretation using the steps of the Interpretive Journey.

Part 1 – The Old Testament

It is impossible to understand the ministry of Jesus, the mission of Jesus, or the significance of Jesus without studying the Old Testament. All 39 books point to some aspect of Jesus himself, his ministry, or his mission.

The Old Testament includes 39 different books written by as many as 35 to 40 different authors. In this Bible School, we will look at all 39 books through three different Old Testament Survey courses. Above all else, Scripture is God's self-revelation. It is the ongoing revelation of God in the Old Testament that looks forward to and points us to the greatest revelation of God, Jesus Christ. In short, the Serpent-crusher of Genesis (Gen. 3:15), the Prophet like Moses (Deut. 18:18), the Suffering Servant of Isaiah (Isa. 53), the Son of David, the Messiah of Daniel (Daniel 9), and the Humble King of Zechariah (Zech. 9:9)—all are found in one person, Jesus Christ. The New Testament is only completely understood when we see its foundation of the events, characters, laws, sacrificial system, covenants, and promises of the Old Testament.

The Old Testament lays down promises that are fulfilled in the New Testament. Everything God promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, plus everything he prophesied through Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms – everything that the people of Israel heard and believed, waiting in faith for the day that God would bring them salvation. These are found in the Old Testament.

The Old Testament lays the foundation for the teachings and events in the New Testament. If you skip reading and studying the Old Testament, you will have a hard time understanding the characters, the plot, and the ending, the reason for John the Baptist, why the religious leaders of Israel and Jesus opposed each other, as well as many of the examples that Jesus used in his teaching, and the reason Jesus had to go to the cross.

If we only had the New Testament, we would come to the Gospels and not know why the Jews were looking for a Messiah (a Savior King). We would not understand why

this Messiah was coming (see Isaiah 53), and we would not have been able to identify Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah through the many detailed prophecies that were given concerning Him [e.g., His birth place (Micah 5:2), His manner of death (Psalm 22, especially verses 1, 7–8, 14–18; 69:21), His resurrection (Psalm 16:10), and many more details of His ministry (Isaiah 9:2; 52:13)].

A study of the Old Testament is also important for understanding the Jewish customs mentioned in passing in the New Testament. We would not understand the way the Pharisees had perverted God’s law by adding their own traditions to it, or why Jesus was so upset as He cleansed the temple courtyard, or where Jesus got the words He used in His many replies to adversaries.

The Old Testament records numerous detailed prophecies that could only have come true if the Bible is God’s Word, not man’s (e.g., Daniel 7 and the following chapters). Daniel’s prophecies give specific details about the rise and fall of nations. These prophecies are so accurate, in fact, that skeptics choose to believe they were written after the fact.

We should study the Old Testament because of the countless lessons it contains for us. By observing the lives of the characters of the Old Testament, we find guidance for our own lives. We are exhorted to trust God no matter what (Daniel 3). We learn to stand firm in our convictions (Daniel 1) and to await the reward of faithfulness (Daniel 6). We learn it is best to confess sin early and sincerely instead of shifting blame (1 Samuel 15). We learn not to toy with sin, because it will find us out (Judges 13–16). We learn that our sin has consequences not only for ourselves but for our loved ones (Genesis 3) and, conversely, that our good behavior has rewards for us and those around us (Exodus 20:5–6).

A study of the Old Testament also helps us understand prophecy. The Old Testament contains many promises that God will yet fulfill for the Jewish nation. The Old Testament reveals such things as the length of the Tribulation, how Christ’s future 1,000-year reign fulfills His promises to the Jews, and how the conclusion of the Bible ties up the loose ends that were unraveled in the beginning of time.

In summary, the Old Testament allows us to learn how to love and serve God, and it reveals more about God’s character. It shows through repeatedly fulfilled prophecy why the Bible is unique among holy books—it alone is able to demonstrate that it is what it claims to be: the inspired Word of God. In short, if you have not yet ventured into the pages of the Old Testament, you are missing much that God has available for you.

ASK: What is one passage in the Old Testament that is very meaningful to you? How does this passage help you know or trust Jesus more? Allow students to share a few thoughts, but do not get stuck on this question for more than 5 minutes.

ASK: Are there parts of the Law that you find difficult or confusing? Which ones? Why do you think these are difficult? As before, allow students to share different thoughts, but do not try to answer each one at this time. We will explore each book individually through these lessons, and students will have opportunities to ask questions later.

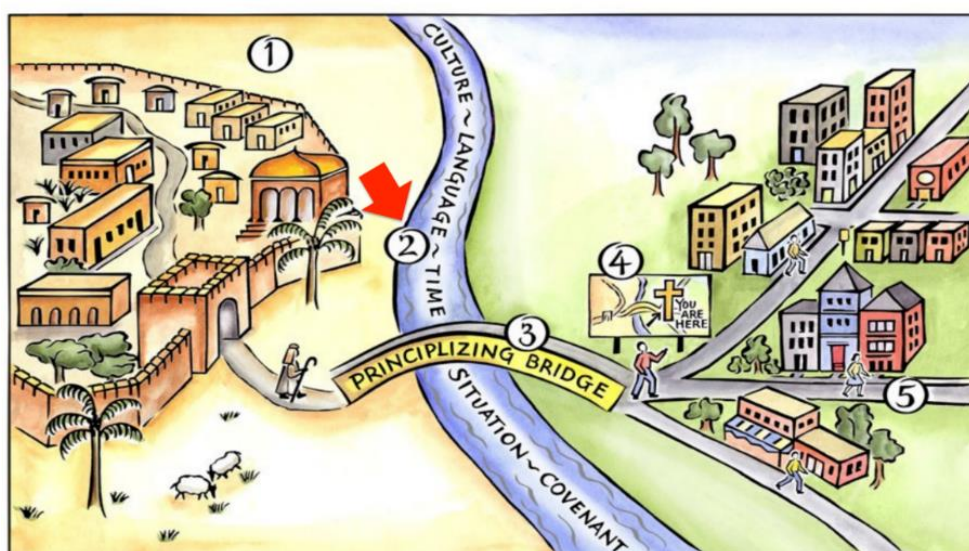
Part 2 – Review the Interpretive Journey

Explain to the students that we will continue using the five steps of the Interpretive Journey learned in the previous course to develop our skills in faithful and accurate biblical interpretation. Distribute copies of the full-page picture of the Interpretive Journey found at the end of this lesson, and lead students through the questions below to refresh their memory of the process.

ASK: What are the five steps of the Interpretive Journey? What is the Key Question that goes with each step?

- Step One – Grasp the text in their town.
 - Key Question – What did the text mean to the original audience?
- Step Two – Measure the width of the river to cross.
 - Key Question – What are the differences between the biblical audience and us?
- Step Three – Cross the Bridge of Timeless Truth
 - Key Question – What is the unchanging biblical principle in this passage?
- Step Four – Consult the biblical map.
 - Key Question – How does our timeless truth fit with the rest of the Bible?
- Step Five – Grasp the text in our town.
 - Key Question – How should individual Christians and churches live out the timeless truth in this passage?

ASK: Look at the picture and explain what each step means as much as you can. What do we do for each step? What should we know when we have completed that step? What questions can we ask to help our study during each step in the process?



Part 3 – The Book of Genesis

Genesis is not only the first book of the Law, it is the first book of the Old Testament. It is first for a very good reason. The book of Genesis is a book of beginnings. It is the beginning of creation. It is the beginning of mankind. It is the beginning of sin. It is the beginning of the promise of salvation. It sets the beginning for the rest of the Bible. It sets the foundation for the rest of the Bible especially the New Testament. The influence of the Book of Genesis in Scripture is shown in that it is quoted over 35 times in the New Testament. It sets the beginning of the themes that run throughout the rest of the Bible. It introduces how sin came into the world and how salvation for mankind will be brought about. The promise of salvation begins early in Genesis and is completed in the book of Revelation.

For each book we study in this course, we will explore the following areas: (1) key historical facts, (2) a basic outline of the book with key sections explained, (3) explanation of noteworthy passages, and (4) important theological themes.

(1) Key Historical facts

Who is the author?

Moses

While the author does not identify himself in Genesis and while Genesis ends almost three hundred years before the birth of Moses, the Old Testament (Exodus 17:14; Numbers 33:2; Joshua 8:31; and Malachi 4:4 to name a few) identifies Moses as the author of the first five books of the Old Testament which includes the book of Genesis. The New Testament also identifies Moses as the author of the first five books of the Old Testament as well (Matthew 8:4; Mark 12:26; Luke 16:29; and John 5:46 just to name a few).

Moses is the most obvious author to write the book of Genesis. Moses was fully qualified to write the Pentateuch. He was raised in Pharaoh's house by the daughter of Pharaoh. Therefore, he could read and write. He received an Egyptian royal education. He was commissioned by God to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. He was used by God and was God's prophet (Deuteronomy 18:18).

When was it written?

1440 B.C.

Although the exact date is unknown, scholars believe it was written after the Exodus and before the death of Moses. It is suggested that it was written around 1400 B.C. (before the birth of Christ).

Where was it written?

Unknown – probably just before they entered the Promised Land.

We are uncertain exactly where it was written. Many scholars to day believe that it was either written when they were staying at Mount Zion or as they were preparing to cross the Jordan River and entering the Promised Land.

To whom was it written?

Jewish nation – Israel

It was written for the Jewish people benefit. As Israel was preparing to enter the Promised land, they needed to know why they were pushing the inhabitants out of the land. They needed to know the world’s history and especially the history of the other nations, especially that of the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land (sin and rebellion). They also needed to know their own background and especially the promises God gave to their fathers (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob).

What was the purpose or reason for the writing Genesis?

To show His people how they are different than the Canaanites and why they are going into the Promised Land.

What is the most important theological theme?

The revelation of Himself (God), who He (God) is and the plan of salvation that He (God) will bring about.

Key Historical Facts	
Who is the author?	Moses
When was it written?	Around 1440
Where was it written?	Unknown
To whom was it written?	Israel
What was the purpose or reason for writing?	To show His people how they are different than the Canaanites and why they are going into the Promised Land.
What is the most important theological theme?	The revelation of Himself (God), who He (God) is and the plan of salvation that He (God) will bring about.

(2) Basic Outline

The book of Genesis covers from the beginning of creation to the end of the Patriarchal age leaving Israel in the land of Egypt. The book is divided mainly into two parts. The first part goes from the creation of everything to God’s judgment on the tower of Babel (Genesis 1-11). The second part goes from the call of Abraham out of the Land of Ur to the death of Joseph in the land of Egypt (Genesis 12-50). Some of the key features of Genesis are the creation story, the flood, and the Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Unfortunately, we do not have time to discuss every chapter and verse in Genesis in this course. However, we will select a few important passages from these key features that we have listed to summarize and explain in the notes following the basic outline below.

- I. The Creation and the Fall of Man (1:1 – 11:9)
 - A. The creation (1:1 – 2:3)
 - B. The beginnings of man and woman (2:4 – 25)

- C. The fall of man (3:1 – 5:32)
 - D. The judgment of man (6:1 – 11:9)
- II. The period of the patriarchs (11:10 – 50:26)
- A. The life of Abraham (11:10 – 25:18)
 - B. The life of Isaac (25:19 – 26:35)
 - C. The life of Jacob (27:1 – 50:26)

(3) Noteworthy Passages in Genesis

- *Creation and the Fall of Man* (1:1 – 5:32)

The beginning with creation shows God's ownership and God's right to rule over his creation. The creation was perfect. The highest mark of God's creativity was His creation of man and woman. They also were perfect and were designed to represent God's rule over his perfect creation. However, Satan, as the serpent is introduced as the enemy of God. It established Satan as the challenger to God's rule on earth. Man is judged by God which introduces death both physically and spiritually to Man. With the judgment, God also declares a promise (3:15) that the Seed from the woman will crush Satan and restore the rule of God bring about man's salvation and the restoration of fellowship with God. That Seed is Jesus who through his death and resurrection brings about man's salvation and the restoration of fellowship with God.

- *The Flood* (6 – 9)

The sin of mankind grows to intolerable lengths and brings about God's judgment through a flood. The flood shows the severity of sin and its consequences. It also shows the mercy of God in preserving the righteous which are then used to bless the world. This saving of Noah and his family shows God's concern for His creation. It also shows the corrupting influence of sin and the pride of man which is shown in the building of the tower of Babel which again brings about judgement from God. The corruption of sin, God's judgment of sin, and the mercy of God are shown in contrast throughout the Bible. Its greatest example can be seen on the cross where the crowds screamed for Jesus to be crucified. But while on the cross where Jesus bore our sins, we see God's love and mercy for his creation by letting His son, Jesus, die for our sins.

- *The Life of Abraham* (11:10 – 25:18)

The life of Abraham is designed to demonstrate the election by God of a people for Himself. God makes a covenant with Abraham (12:1 – 15:21) which enlarges upon the earlier promise of a Seed (1:15). God promises Abraham that he will become a great nation and that all the families of the earth will be blessed through him. The promise is enlarged again with the promise of an heir (Isaac) and a land (the future land of Israel). A covenant is ratified with a sacrifice. Through this it is clear that the promise comes by grace and not by works (15:21). Abraham believes God. Therefore, the basis of Abraham's righteousness before God is faith alone (15:6). Abraham was 99 years old and Sarah was 90 years old when God fulfilled the

promise of giving them an heir (Isaac) (21:1-22:19). But God tests Abraham's faith by asking him to offer his son up as a sacrifice which God stopped before Abraham completed it. But in Abraham's obedience, he demonstrated his faith in God and God's promise to him. The promise of God to Abraham finds its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus and the ultimate sacrifice that God gave was his Son on the cross for our sins that in faith in Him we might have forgiveness of sins and become part of His family.

- *The Life of Isaac (25:19 – 26:35)*

The focus shifts to the life of Isaac and the covenant of God is renewed with him (25:12 – 26:35). As Rebekah, Isaac's wife, gives birth to Esau and Jacob, God's election is further demonstrated by God declaring that the older (Esau) will serve the younger (Jacob). God's election is confirmed. First, when Esau sells his birthright (25:29 – 34). Now a birthright was your position as first born so Jacob now had position as first born. Secondly, it is confirmed when Jacob tricked his father out of the spiritual blessing which is usually meant for the first born. The election is also highlighted in Esau's selection of wives (26:34-35). They brought grief to Isaac and Rebekah. Our election is secure in the Son of God, Jesus Christ. It is through him that our spiritual blessing come.

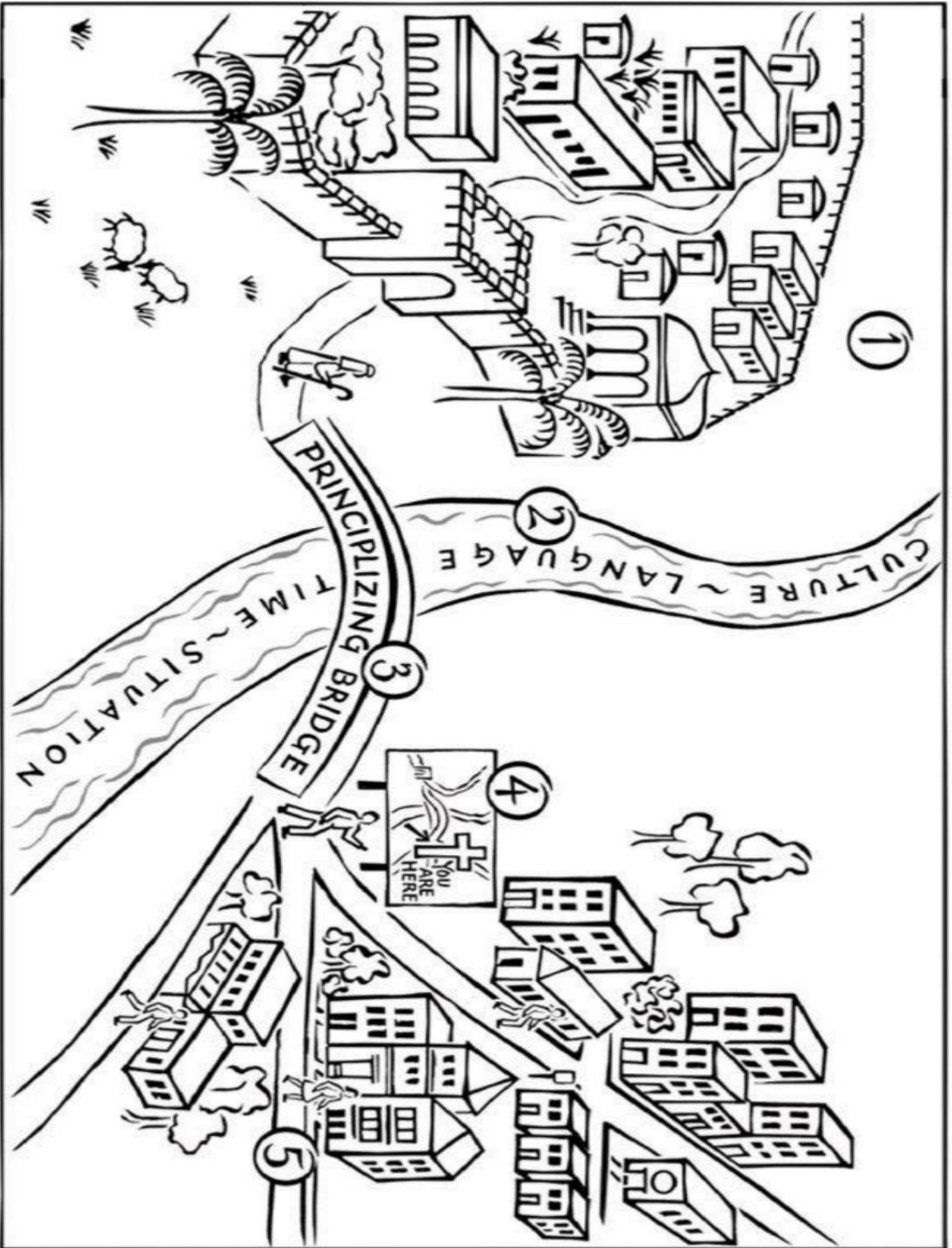
- *The Life of Jacob (27:1 – 50:26)*

The life of Jacob which includes his son, Joseph, is the real focus of the rest of Genesis. God established his covenant with Jacob at Bethel (28:10-22). Here he emphasizes the Seed and the inheritance of the land (28:13-15). The covenant is reaffirmed and expanded when Jacob is again in Bethel (35:1-15). The name change to "Israel" carries with it the idea that "Israel will be a special nation through which the promise will become a reality. The rest of Genesis is the story of how Jacob and the promise to him by is preserved through his son Joseph (37:1-50:26). God's faithfulness and providence can be seen in the life of Joseph. First, Joseph is betrayed by his brothers and sold into slavery. Then Joseph was falsely accused of rape and thrown into prison. Next, he was introduced to the ruler of Egypt. Finally, he is reunited with his brothers and ultimately with his father when a 7 year drought struck the land. In the end, Joseph and his family were preserved in Egypt during the drought. Through all of this we see God's hand and providence in keeping Israel. Joseph sums it up best, "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring this present result, to preserve many people alive" (50:20). Genesis ends pointing forward to the promise of a special nation through whom His chosen Seed (Jesus Christ) will fulfill the promise to Abraham that through him all the nations will be blessed.

Part 4 – Review and Discussion

This first lesson has provided much information, and the lessons that follow will be challenging as well. Ask the following questions to give students an opportunity to remember some of the details about and think about the new ideas they have learned so far.

1. How many books are in the Old Testament?
39
2. How many authors wrote the Old Testament?
35 to 40 authors
3. When was the book of Genesis written?
Sometime around 1440 B.C.
4. To whom was it written?
To the Jewish nation, Israel
5. What was the promise given to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden?
It was that their Seed would crush Satan
6. Who was that Seed?
Jesus Christ
7. What was the promise given to Abraham? Who is a part of that promise today?
It was that he would be a great nation and that all the nations through him would be blessed? We who have accepted Jesus as our Savior are a part of this blessing.
8. The sacrifice of Isaac is seen as a type of what sacrifice that was given later?
It was a forerunner of God sacrificing His Son (Jesus) on the cross.
9. Jacob's name was changed to what and what did it show?
His name was changed to Israel and it showed that he would become a special nation. Special in that through it Jesus would come.
10. The story of Joseph and his going to Egypt shows what of God? How does this relate to us today?
It shows God's providence over Israel. If we are God's children then His providence is active in our lives as well.



Lesson 2

Introduction

Genesis shows the beginning of everything, how it was good and how mankind's rebellion separated mankind from a loving God. It shows how a loving God sets out providentially to redeem humanity and reconcile His creation to Himself. He selects one man through whom will make a special nation through whom He will accomplish His work of reconciliation. Exodus opens with Israel being that special people. It is the true story of how a holy God sets about being with His people in this work of reconciliation. In able to dwell with His people, God set about not only to deliver them from slavery but to set laws and a dwelling place by which He could be with His people. Exodus explains the origins of Torah—the law of the Jewish people and the tradition surrounding that law. Torah is not merely a list of laws, but, rather, the notion of law as a way of life. Indeed, the law exists as a way of life for Moses and his people. Exodus, thus, is the theological foundation not only for the nation of Israel but also for the whole Bible.

Part 1 – The Book of Exodus

In this lesson, we will look at the acts of God by which he prepares His people for his dwelling with them. We will (1) learn the historical facts about the book of Exodus; (2) look at a basic outline of its contents; (3) explore some of the noteworthy passages in a little more detail; (4) think about the important theological themes found in the book of Exodus. After we have learned all these things, we will use our new knowledge together by practicing the five steps of the Interpretive Journey to study a passage in the book of Exodus.

(1) Historical Facts

Who is the author?

Moses

Moses names himself as the author in the book of Exodus (17:14; 34:27-28). As in Genesis, he is assumed as the author in other Old Testament writings as well as New Testament writings. Jesus states that Moses was the author of the book of Exodus (7:10; 12:26).

When was it written?

As in the book of Genesis it was probably written around 1440 B.C.

Where was it written?

Most scholars believe that it was probably written while the Israelites were camped at Mount Sinai.

To whom was it written?

To the Israelites

What was the purpose or reason for writing Exodus?

The book is designed to show how the special people of God chosen in Genesis through Abraham is prepared to become a theocratic nation by divine redemption from Egypt and the giving of the covenant of law through Moses (19:6). After the redemption of the exodus, God gives Israel the law in order to separate His people to Himself and establish His presence.

What is the most important theological theme?

The fulfilling of the covenant with Abraham and then with his descendants, Israel

Key Historical Facts	
Who is the author?	Moses
When was it written?	1440
Where was it written?	Mount Sinai
To whom was it written?	Israel
What was the purpose or reason for writing?	To begin to fulfill His promise to Abraham by making Israel a great nation governed by Him.
What is the most important theological theme?	The fulfilling of the covenant with Abraham and then with his descendants, Israel

(2) Basic Outline

The book of Exodus opens with Israel in Egypt after the death of Joseph and ends with them camped at Mount Sinai. Exodus is divided into three parts. The first is their time in Egypt (Exodus 1:1-12:36). The second part is Israel on the Road to Mount Sinai (12:37-18:27). The third part is Israel camped at Mount Sinai (19:1-40:38). Some of the key features of Exodus are the ten plagues, the crossing of the Red Sea, the feeding of Israel with manna from heaven, the ten commandments, the building of the golden calf, the building of the Tabernacle and the setting aside of Aaron and his sons as priests. Unfortunately, we do not have time to discuss every chapter and verse in Exodus in this course. However, we will select a few important passages from these key features that we have listed to summarize and explain in the notes following the basic outline below.

- I. Israel is separated to God by deliverance from Egypt (1:1-18:27)
 - A. The bondage of Israel under Egypt's rule (1:1-22)
 - B. The preparation of Moses to lead Israel (2:1-4:31)
 - C. Deliverance of Israel from Egypt's rule (5:1-15:21)
 - D. The preservation of Israel in the wilderness (15:22-18:27)

- II. Israel is separated to God by a covenant of law (19:1-31:18)
 - A. The giving of the covenant of law (19:1-24:11)
 - B. Instructions for worship under the covenant of law (24:12-29:46)
 - C. Instructions for maintenance of the covenant of law (30:1-31:18)

- III. Israel's response to the covenant of law (32:1-40:38)
 - A. Disobedience of Israel to covenant of law (32:1-33:23)
 - B. Renewal of covenant of law (34)
 - C. Obedience of Israel to covenant of law (35:1-40:38)

(3) Noteworthy Passages in Exodus

- *The Deliverance of Israel through the Plagues (7-12)*

The plagues were ten disasters sent upon Egypt by God to convince Pharaoh to free the Israelite slaves from the bondage and oppression they had endured in Egypt for 400 years. When God sent Moses to deliver the children of Israel from bondage in Egypt, He promised to show His wonders as confirmation of Moses' authority (Exodus 3:20). This confirmation was to serve at least two purposes: to show the Israelites that the God of their fathers was alive and worthy of their worship (Exodus 6:6-8; 12:25-27) and to show the Egyptians that their gods were nothing (Exodus 7:5; 12:12; Numbers 33:4). When Moses approached Pharaoh, demanding that he let the people go, Pharaoh responded by saying, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go" (Exodus 5:2). Thus began the challenge to show whose God was more powerful. By the time the Israelites left Egypt, they had a clear picture of God's power, God's protection, and God's plan for them. For those who were willing to believe, they had convincing evidence that they served the true and living God. Sadly, many still failed to believe, which led to other trials and lessons by God. The result for the Egyptians and the other ancient people of the region was a dread of the God of Israel.

- *The Giving of the 10 Commandments (20)*

The Ten Commandments are formed as a direct command and given in the second person (you). They may also be grouped into two broad categories. Verses 2-11 deal with man's relationship with God. Verses 12-17 deal with man's relationship to the community. Nine of the Ten Commandments are repeated in the New Testament several times in different ways. Jesus repeats four of the Ten Commandments to the young ruler in Mark 10:17-19. The only commandment not repeated in the New Testament is the fourth one which is on Sabbath-keeping. Paul uses the Commandments as background when he says in 1 Timothy 1:8-10: "But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully, realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous person, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers (5th and 6th commandments), for murderers (6th commandment) and immoral men and homosexuals (7th commandment) and kidnappers (8th commandment) and liars and perjurers (9th commandment), and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching" (NASB). Finally, the Commandments reflect the unchanging character of God, so they, like God, are eternal, timeless, universally applicable, and unchangeable.

- *The Tabernacle in the Wilderness* (25:1-9)

The books of the Law record 5 different names for the tabernacle. They are: 1) sanctuary, 2) tent of meeting, 3) tabernacle, 4) tabernacle of the congregation, and 5) tabernacle of the testimony. It is easiest to remember it simply as tabernacle. The tabernacle was a temporary place of worship that God had the Israelites build according to His specifications. Although the tabernacle was heavy and had many parts, it was surprisingly portable. Priests carried the Ark and the altars on their shoulders, but the rest fit in ox-drawn carts.

The purpose of the tabernacle of Moses was to provide a place where the people could properly worship God. Priests sacrificed animals on the altar in the outer court. The bread of the presence, the continually burning lampstand, and the offering of incense were all in the Holy Place. And once a year, the high priest would enter the Holy of Holies as part of the ceremony of the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16). At no other time was anyone to enter the Holy of Holies, as the presence of God dwelt with the Ark of the Covenant. When Jesus was crucified, the veil between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies in the temple ripped from top to bottom (Matthew 27:51). Just as He fulfilled for all time the sacrificial requirements, He ushered us into the presence of God.

- *The Idolatrous Worship of the Golden Calf* (Exodus 32:1–6)

While Moses was up on the mountain receiving God's laws, the people were getting anxious down on the plain. Moses spent forty days on the mountain with God, and by the end of that time, the people were beginning to think Moses had died or left them. The people urged Aaron, their temporary leader, to make gods for them to follow. Since they were accustomed to having visual representations of gods, this was the natural (but sinful) result of their thinking. Aaron took their gold earrings, which they had brought from Egypt, and melted them down to make a golden idol. The idol he crafted for them was a calf, but Aaron maintained the name of the Lord in connection with it (Exodus 32:5). He was merging the pagan practices they were familiar with and the worship of God. Aaron called the people together and told them that the golden calf was the god who delivered them from Egypt. The people offered sacrifices and then engaged in pagan rituals including orgies (Exodus 32:25) to worship this new god. Why did Aaron do this? Aaron was faced with an unruly crowd that placed a demand on him. The solution of making an idol and calling it by God's name seemed fairly reasonable to Aaron especially since they had come from a land where idols were plentiful. The bull calf was a symbol of strength and fertility of which the people were probably already familiar with from the land of Egypt. Aaron's bull was a mixture of the powerful God who delivered the people through mighty works and the pagan methods of worship that were borrowed from the people around them. Their experiences are a lesson to us today. Even though we might justify our actions through reason or logic, if we are violating God's clear commands, we are sinning against Him, and He will hold us accountable for those sins. God is not to be worshiped with images, because any image we make will draw more attention to the work of our hands than the God who made all things. We worship God by believing His Word, obeying it, and declaring His greatness to others.

(4) Important Theological Themes

1. *The Redemption of Israel*

The 10 Commandments (Exodus 20:1-2) opens with God declaring “I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.” The book of Exodus recounts the Israelites’ escape from their oppressors in Egypt, with the help of a series of dramatic plagues. The idea of deliverance continues through the book of Exodus and even into the New Testament. However, the exodus story is nothing like a typical ancient conquest narrative in that the Israelites don’t defeat the Egyptians by fighting—instead, they trust their God to deliver them. In other words, the Israelites’ flight from Egypt is not a story of them defeating their enemies; it’s a story of God confronting, judging, and conquering their enemies on their behalf. Likewise, it’s not just a story of the people’s deliverance *from* an oppressive situation, but also a story of their new freedom to live *for* God alone. In this regard, Exodus can be read as a story of the Israelites’ change of status from oppressed slaves to redeemed servants. Likewise, we are told that we have been redeemed from the bondage of sin through His Son and are forgiven of our sins (Colossians 1:13-14).

2. *Worship of God*

Much of the second half of Exodus highlights the theme of worshipping the one true God (Exodus 20:3-7). God makes it clear that all false gods stand in opposition to the one true God, and to worship them clashes with the worship of God. To place anything above or beside God is hated by God. To worship anything other than God is idolatry and will not be tolerated by God. In response to Satan’s third temptation of Jesus, Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 6:13, “You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.”

Part 2 – Practice Interpreting Scripture

In this section, guide the students through the five steps of Interpretive Journey to discover the meaning of Exodus 32:1-6. Encourage the students to use the information they have just learned about in the book of Exodus to better understand what this passage means to the original audience, then work through the remaining steps to find the unchanging truth that applies to the lives of Christians and churches today. Try to keep the class moving quickly through this practice. This should take 30-45 minutes, and students will not be able to work out every detail or question they may have about the question. Help them focus on the most important points in this passage.

Read Exodus 32:1-6.

Now when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people assembled about Aaron and said to him, “Come, make us a god who will go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.” Aaron said to them, “Tear off the gold rings which are in the ears of your wives, our sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.” Then all the people tore off the gold rings which were in their ears and

brought them to Aaron. He took this from their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool and made it into a molten calf; and they said, "This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt." Now when Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow shall be a feast day to the Lord." So the next day they rose early and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play."

Step One – Grasp the Text in Their Town

Instruct the group to look closely at the verses and answer as many of the following questions as possible just from reading the text.

ASK

Observing the Situation

- What is happening in this passage? Describe the situation
Students should work together to retell the story in their own words. Include as many details as possible, and be very specific, about words spoken and the order that events happened.
- When is this happening?
Around 1440 while they were at Mount Sinai
- Where was this happening?
The land around Mount Sinai
- Who wrote this book?
Moses wrote this book
- Who is speaking?
The Israelites and in particular Aaron
- Who is being spoken to?
The Israelites and Aaron are speaking to each other
- Exactly what is being said or taught? Be specific and note details and important words. Is there any response from the audience? If so, what is it?
Aaron made a golden calf and the Israelites ate, drank, and played.
- What does the author or speaker expect the hearers to do in response?

Observing the Context

Historical Context

- Where does this passage fit in the history of the Old Testament?
This passage takes place in the Israelite wanderings in the wilderness before they came into the land of Canaan.
- What country or kingdom does this passage take place in?
It take place in no kingdom or country. It takes place in the wilderness of Sinai.

- Who was king or ruler?
There was no king or ruler but Moses was God's appointed leader.
- What was the situation of the people who waited for Moses? Are they free or slave? Rich or poor? Male or female? Young or Old? Jew or Gentile? Happy, unhappy, confused, hurting?
They were all Israelites of all ages and both male and female. They were anxious and maybe a little afraid because Moses hadn't come down from Mount Sinai for over a month?

Literary Context

- What is the genre – or kind of writing – you are studying in this passage?
This passage is a narrative (written in story form).
- What happened or what is written before and after the passage you are studying?
God called Moses to come up the mountain to receive God's instructions for the people. After the building of the golden calf, Moses was sent down the mountain by God to confront their sin of making a golden idol.
- What is the main theme of the book you are studying? How does this passage relate to that theme?
The main theme of Exodus is redemption of Israel and God's holiness. This passage shows that God a holy God and cannot tolerate sin. The 10 Commandments is a sharp contrast to the golden calf.
- Where does this passage fit in the flow and outline of the entire book? Is it part of the beginning? Is it a critical explanation in the middle? Is it a summary at the end.
This passage sits between the middle and the end of the book. This passage is the climax to all of Israel's grumbling and rebellion in this book.

Create a Short, Simple Statement

Explain the most important truth that is taught in this passage.

Example: In Exodus 32:1-6, we see what rebellion does in a person's life and that a holy and just God will not let it go unchallenged as He brings us to be His holy people.

Step Two – Measure the Width of the River to Cross

For this step, encourage the students to discuss what they know of each of the major categories listed below.

- *Language* – What language did Moses and the Israelites speak? What language did Moses write in? Do the differences between their languages and the language that we are speaking influence how we understand this?
- *Time* – When was all this happening? What do we know today that they did not know?

- *Culture* – What was important to the Israelites in their culture that is not as familiar to us today? (For example, they had come out of a culture that worshipped many gods).
- *Situation* – What are some significant ways that our situation is similar to or different from the situation the Israelites were in?
- *Relationship to God* – What was the Israelites' relationship to God in this story? How is their relationship to God like ours or different from ours?

ASK: What are the most important similarities between this story (their town) and our story (our town)? What are some important differences?

ASK: Would you consider the river between their town and our town to be extremely wide (major, important differences), narrow (small differences), or something in between? Why do you think that?

Step Three – Cross the Bridge of Timeless Truth

Instruct the students to think carefully about everything learned about this passage in the first two steps. Re-read the passage once or twice if necessary.

ASK: What are some of the details of this passage that might not apply today? What are the most important parts of this text that still need to be believed and obeyed today?

ASK: Now work together to write short sentences using present tense verbs that communicate that timeless truth taught in this passage. Remember the guiding questions we introduced earlier.

- Is this truth reflected clearly in the text?
- Is this truth timeless and not tied to a specific situation?
- Is this principle universal and not tied to a particular culture?
- Does this principle agree with the teaching of the rest of the Bible?
- Does this principle apply both to the biblical audience in “their town” and today’s?
- Christians in “our town?”

An example of timeless truth from Exodus 32:1-6 might be:

“God calls us and redeems us to be His people and He expects us to be obedient and faithful to Him.”

Step Four – Consult the Biblical Map

At this time, help the students to compare their timeless truth to other verses and passages in the Old Testament to see whether there are any problems with their interpretation.

ASK: What other verses in the Old Testament can support or contradict the timeless truth we have discovered in this passage

Examples: Psalm 130:5-8; Isaiah 43:1-7

ASK: Based on these other verses you have suggested, does the timeless truth we discovered in this passage agree with the rest of God's Word?

Step Five – Grasp the Text in Our Town

ASK: According to this biblical principle, what must we believe?

ASK: According to this biblical principle, what must we do?

ASK: How can we begin to obey this biblical principle?

ASK: How does this biblical principle apply to the different relationships in our lives?

ASK: What would happen if everyone in our church believed and obeyed this biblical principle?

Take note of each of the practical applications that the students suggested as you work through these questions. Help them keep their applications tied closely to the text we are studying and the timeless truth we have stated. If someone suggests an application that does not connect to our text or timeless truth, offer a gentle correction to guide them back. For example, imagine you are asking the question, "According to this biblical principle, what must we do?" How would you respond if a student answers, our congregation should wait patiently until God is done speaking to the pastor. While God did speak to Moses and Moses was to deliver the message to the people, this is not what the passage is teaching. When students suggest an application that is not directly connected to the timeless truth, we need to help them see the mistake so that they can understand and avoid repeating it in the future.

ASK: Look at all the suggested applications that we have found for teaching this timeless truth to people in "our town." If you were teaching a Bible study on this passage, which applications would you include in your lesson? Choose two or three and explain why you would want to include them.

Part 3 – Review

The Old Testament

1. How many books are in the Old Testament?
39
2. How many authors are in the Old Testament?
35 to 40

The Book of Genesis

3. To whom was the book of Genesis written?
Israelites
4. What was the main purpose or reason for writing Genesis?
To show His people how they are different than the Canaanites and why they are going into the Promised Land.
5. What is significant about God speaking to Eve after she sinned?
It is the first place we have the promise of a Seed (Savior) who would redeem humanity.

The Book of Exodus

6. When was the book of Exodus written?
About the same time as Genesis, 1440 B.C
7. To whom was the book of Exodus
Israelites
8. Why did God have the Israelites build a tabernacle
The purpose of the tabernacle of Moses was to provide a place where the people could properly worship God.
9. Why did God give the Israelites the 10 Commandments?
To show the Israelites how to live before a holy and righteous God.

Lesson 3

Introduction

What does it mean to be holy? Pause and ask the students the question. Do not spend more than 2-3 minutes on their answers.

This word is derived from the same root from which a very attractive English word comes. This word is wholeness. So, holiness means wholeness, being complete. The word “*Holy*” is mentioned more times in Leviticus, than any other book in the Bible.

God is complete; he is perfect. There is no blemish in God; he lives in harmony with himself. He is absolutely what a person ought to be. He is filled with joy and love and peace. He lives in wholeness. And he looks at us in our brokenness and says to us, "You too, shall be whole."

Man has lost his way. He was made in the image and likeness of God. When man first came from the hand of God, he was whole. Adam functioned as God intended man to function. He was functioning in the image and the likeness of God. But now we have lost that likeness. We still have the image, but the likeness is gone. In order to restore that likeness, God had to separate His people from all those around them. "I have separated you from the peoples." (Leviticus 20:24). You shall be holy to me; for I the LORD am holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine. (Leviticus 20:26). We have been called out from those around us. It is a process of separation. The reason we are so broken is that we are involved in a broken race. Our attitudes are wrong. Our vision of life is twisted and distorted. We believe illusions, take them to be facts, and act upon them. We followed falsehoods. So, God must separate us. He has to break us loose from conformity to the thought patterns and attitudes and reactions of those around us. He has to deliver us from all that, straighten out our thinking, set our minds and hearts aright, and correct our tangled, fouled relationships. It was through the ceremonies and offerings that God taught the Israelites about holiness.

All the ceremonies and offerings of the Old Testament are shadows and pictures of Jesus Christ. All the sacrifices, the rituals, and the ceremonies pictorially describe Jesus Christ and his work. It shows how Jesus fulfilled the Law and so through Him we have a way to our heavenly Father.

Part 1 – The Book of Leviticus

In this lesson, we will examine the holiness of God and God’s plan for the holiness of His people, Israel. We will follow the same pattern as the previous two lessons: (1) learn the historical facts about the book of Leviticus, (2) look at a basic outline of its contents, (3) explore some of the noteworthy passages in a little more detail, and (4) think about the important theological themes found in this book. We will also continue practicing the steps of the Investigative Journey to look closely at one passage in the book of Exodus

(1) Historical Facts

Who is the author?

Moses

When was it written?

Between 1440 B.C. and 1400 B.C.

Where was it written?

At the bottom of Mount Sinai

To whom was it written?

Israelites encamped at the base of Mount Sinai

What was the purpose or reason for writing Leviticus?

The worship, sacrifices, and regulations of the Levitical priesthood form the substance of Leviticus and indicate its purpose.

Leviticus instructs Israel in how they are to approach God and walk before Him as a priestly and holy nation. Leviticus was written to bring about the cleansing and consecration of Israel in their new relationship to God. The key to a relationship with God is found in the recurring word "holy" (93 times) The words "atonement" (51 times) and "blood" (93 times) indicate the means by which the Israelites can be ritualistically set apart to God, but the book also provides the people with regulations for personal holiness.

What is the most important theological theme?

The holiness of God and the will of God for Israel's holiness.

Key Historical Facts	
Who is the author?	Moses
When was it written?	1440 B.C – 1400 B.C.
Where was it written?	Mount Sinai
To whom was it written?	Israelites
What was the purpose or reason for writing?	To instruct Israel in how they are to approach God and walk in holiness
What is the most important theological theme?	The holiness of God and the will of God for Israel's holiness

(2) Basic Outline

The book can be divided into two major parts. The first half consists mainly of the laws of ritual necessary for approaching God. The second half contains mostly laws regulating personal holiness and has less of the ritualistic aspect. The laws for approaching God through ritual (1:1-17:38) concern the levitical sacrificial system and the priesthood, for the most part. The laws of the second half of Leviticus are laws which provide for approaching God through personal holiness (18:1-27:34).

- I. Laws of approaching God (1:1-17:16)
 - A. Laws for offerings (1:1-7:38)
 - B. Laws of the priesthood (8:1-10:20)
 - C. Laws of purity (11:1-15:33)
 - D. Laws of national atonement (16)
 - E. Laws of sacrificing (17)
- II. Laws of personal holiness (18:1-27:34)
 - A. Laws of holiness for the people (18:1-20:27)
 - B. Laws of holiness for the priests (21:1-22:33)
 - C. Laws of holiness in worship (23:1-24:23)
 - D. Laws of holiness in the Promised Land (25:1-27:34)

(3) Noteworthy Passages

- *The Feast of Passover (Lev. 23:3-5)*

The feasts and the offerings found in Leviticus point to what Christ did for or will do for us. Although how it is to be done is found in Exodus 12: 1-28, it is again mentioned in Leviticus. It is noteworthy that it is mentioned first in the list of feasts that are presented. It is also noteworthy that the feasts often began and ended with a "Sabbath rest," and the Jews were commanded to not do any customary work on those days. Both the normal weekly Sabbath and the special Sabbaths that were to be observed as part of the Jewish feasts point us to the ultimate Sabbath rest, which is found only in Jesus Christ. It is a rest that Christians experience through faith in the finished work of Christ upon the cross.

The Passover was to call the Israelites to remember their deliverance from Egypt and their salvation from the bondage of slavery. The Passover also points to our deliverance from the bondage of sin. It points to Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God who was offered as a covering sacrifice for our sins. It is on that basis alone that God can justify the ungodly sinner. Just as the blood of a lamb sprinkled on the doorpost of Jewish homes caused the Spirit of the Lord to pass over those homes during the last plague on Egypt (Ex. 12), so those covered by the blood of Jesus will escape the spiritual death and judgment of God that will be visited upon all who reject Jesus. Of all the Jewish festivals, Passover is of the greatest importance because the Lord's Supper was a Passover meal (Matthew 26:17-27). In passing the bread and wine

and telling the disciples to eat of His body, Jesus was presenting Himself as the ultimate Passover Lamb.

- *The Feast of First Fruits (Lev. 23:9-14)*

The Feast of First Fruits consisted of a burnt offering and a grain offering. It took place at the beginning of the harvest and signified Israel's gratitude to and dependence upon God. According to Leviticus 23:9-14, an Israelite would bring a sheaf of the first grain of the harvest to the priest, who would wave it before the Lord as an offering. Deuteronomy 26:1-11 states that, when the Israelites brought the firstfruits of their harvest before the priest, they were to acknowledge that God had delivered them from Egypt and had given them the Promised Land. This reminds us of Christ's resurrection as He was the "firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Corinthians 15:20). Just as Christ was the first to rise from the dead and receive a glorified body, so shall all those who are born again follow Him, being resurrected to inherit an "incorruptible body" (1Cor. 15:35-49).

- *Burnt Offering (Lev. 1:1-17)*

The burnt offering was distinct in that it was totally consumed on the altar except for the hide or the crop of the bird. The blood was collected and some was sprinkled on the alter. This signified the worshiper's total dedication to God. It covered unintentional sins by the worshiper. Its intent was to secure a covering for sins so as to be a means to approach a holy God by an unholy person. Just as the burnt offering was for atonement for sin, Jesus on the cross became our atonement for our sins. By the shedding of his blood on the cross, Jesus became our burnt offering.

- *Grain Offering (Lev. 2:1-16)*

This offering was to be free of yeast and honey (2:11) but was to be salted like all offerings for the altar (2:13). A portion of it was burned upon the altar for God, the rest was given to the priests to eat. While a grain offering could be offered by itself as a distinct sacrifice, its more common use was as an accompaniment to either a burnt or a peace offering.

The idea of the grain offering was the recognition that as grain was the primary food for maintaining life, so God was the true source of life and substance and therefore everything the worshiper had belonged to God. From this concept comes the idea that the grain offering was the worshiper's dedication offering, dedicating everything he had to God from whom it all had come.

(4) Important Theological Themes

- *The Holiness of God*

As stated before, the holiness of God is mentioned more in the Book of Leviticus than in any other Old Testament book (93 times). The holiness of God and his demand that His people be holy is woven throughout the book of Leviticus. Holiness is the fundamental belief on which Leviticus is

built. The command to be holy is based on grace. As a result of his deliverance of them, the Israelites have become bound to God. They are now his servants, set apart from all the other nations not only to obey His will but also to display His character in the world. They have been set free to holy. Holiness is comprehensive; no area of life will be left untouched by it. However, we are sinful people. How can we be holy? We cannot become holy unaided. It comes through our acceptance of Jesus as our Lord and Savior and with the help of the Holy Spirit . The call of God in Leviticus to be holy for He is holy leaps across the centuries and cultural divide calling us to holiness (1 Peter 1:15-16). We are to persue holiness in every aspect of our lives. We have been set free through Jesus not so that we might continue to live in sin or with indifference to God; rather we have been set free to be holy.

- *Sacrifices*

The topic of sacrifices or offerings is clearly important to understanding worship in Israel. The word used for sacrifice in Leviticus has the meaning of drawing near to God. When sacrifices were offered, the individual came “to draw near to God,” with the hope that the sacrifice would be accepted and that his sin would then be atoned for. Sin has to be judged, and God is the one who judges. He accepts the death of the sacrifice as a covering for sin. The worshiper was reconciled with God through the offering of a sacrifice. The animal serves as an example of Christ, the ultimate and perfect sacrifice for sin. Isaiah 53 provides clear revelation that God poured out His wrath on the “sacrifice to come” because of the iniquity of His people. While it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin, Christ, having offered Himself once as a sacrifice for sin, perfected for all time those who are sanctified (Hebrews 10:1-18).

- *Atonement*

It refers to the condition of being one with others. We generally think of the word atonement meaning reconciliation with God. Through the sacrifices, God was reconciling Israel unto Himself. In Genesis 3, after Adam and Eve sinned, they sewed for themselves loin-cloths from fig leaves to cover their nakedness. It didn't work. But what does work are the animal skins which God made into a covering for them. This is a picture of atonement. God makes a sacrifice to cover their sin and shame. What is present in the sacrificial system in the book of Leviticus is present in Genesis 3. God created an atonement for Adam and Eve's sin based on the shedding of blood of innocent animals. The innocent animals served as substitutes. A innocent substitute paid a price by blood which is accepted by God to restore the broken relationship with Him. This culminated Jesus shedding his blood as an atonement for us. Through him we are reconciled to God as we receive his gift of salvation and forgiveness from the cross.

Part 2 – Practice Interpreting Scriptures

Repeat the process you followed in the previous lesson to guide the students through the Interpretive Journey. Again, try to keep the class moving quickly through this practice. This should take 30-45 minutes, and students will not be able to work out every detail or question they may have about the question. Help them focus on the most important points in this passage.

Read Leviticus 24: 10-16.

Now the son of an Israelite woman—his father was an Egyptian—went out among the sons of Israel; and the Israelite woman’s son and an Israelite man had a fight within the camp. And the son of the Israelite woman blasphemed the Name and cursed. So they brought him to Moses. (Now his mother’s name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan.) Then they put him in custody, *waiting for Moses* to give them a clear decision in accordance with the command of the LORD. Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Bring the one who has cursed outside the camp, and have all who heard him lay their hands on his head; then have all the congregation stone him. You shall also speak to the sons of Israel, saying, ‘If anyone curses his God, then he will bear *the responsibility* for his sin.’¹⁶ Moreover, the one who blasphemes the name of the LORD must be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The stranger as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.

Step One – Grasp the Text in Their Town

Instruct the group to look closely at the verses and answer as many of the following questions as possible just from reading the text.

ASK

Observing the Situation

- What is happening in this passage? Describe the situation.
Students should work together to retell the story in their own words. Include as many details as possible, and be very specific about words spoken and the order that events happened.
- When is this happening?
Sometime around 1440 B.C. to 1400 B.C.
- Where is it happening?
This happens while the Israelites were at Mount Sinai.
- Who wrote this book?
Moses
- Who is speaking?
God.
- Who is being spoken to?
Moses

- Exactly what is being said or taught? Be specific and note details and important words. Is there any response from the audience? If so, what is it?
This passage states that those who heard him curse should lay their hands on him, take him outside the camp and stone him to death.
- What does the author or speaker expect the hearers to do in response?
Obey and not blaspheme the name of the Lord

Observing the Context

Historical Context

- Where does this passage fit in the history of the Old Testament?
Early in Israel's history, before Israel went into the land of Canaan.
- What country or kingdom did this take place in?
It is in the wilderness at the bottom of Mount Sinai.
- Who was the king or ruler?
Moses was the leader and God spoke to him.
- What was the situation of the people who received this message? Are they free or slave? Rich or poor? Male or female? Young or old? Jew or Gentile? Happy, unhappy, confused, hurting?
They were free Israelites who followed Moses at God's instruction to Mount Sinai. It was a mixed congregation concerning wealth and age.

Literary Context

- What is the genre – or kind of writing – you are studying in this passage?
This passage is part of a narrative.
- What happened or what is written immediately before and after the passage you are studying?
Immediately before, God was speaking to Moses on instructions about the lighting and show bread that was to be in the Tabernacle. Immediately afterward, God tells Moses to tell the people that cursing Him is a sin and will lead to him being put to death.
- What is the main theme of the book you are studying? How does this passage relate to that theme?
The book of Leviticus emphasizes the holiness of God. It shows that God takes sin seriously shall not go unpunished.
- Where does this passage fit in the flow and outline of the entire book? Is it part of the beginning? Is it a critical explanation in the middle? Is it a summary at the end?
This passage is included towards the very end of the book.

Create a Short, Simple Statement

Explain the most important truth that is taught in this passage.

Example: That God is holy and he wants us to be holy (Lev. 19:2).

Step Two – Measure the Width of the River to Cross

For this step, encourage the students to discuss what they know of each of the major categories listed below.

- Language – What language were they speaking? What language was this book written in? Do the differences between their languages and the language that we are speaking influence how we understand this?
- Time – When was all this happening? What do we know today that they did not know?
- Culture – What was important to the Israelites in their culture that is not as familiar to us today?
- Situation – What are some significant ways that our situation is similar to or different from the situation the Israelites were in?
- Relationship to God – What was the Israelites relationship to God in this story? What about the original readers of Leviticus? How is their relationship to God like ours or different from ours?

ASK: What are the most important similarities between this story (their town) and our story (our town?) What are some important differences?

ASK: Would you consider the river between their town and our town to be extremely wide (major, important differences), narrow (small differences), or something in between? Why do you think that?

Step Three – Cross the Bridge of Timeless Truth

Instruct the students to think carefully about everything learned about this passage in the first two steps. Re-read the passage once or twice if necessary.

ASK: What are some details of the Israelites and their situation that might not apply today? What are the most important parts of this text that still need to be believed and obeyed today?

ASK: Now work together to write a short sentence using present tense verbs that communicates that timeless truth taught in this passage. Remember the guiding questions we introduced earlier.

- Is this truth reflected clearly in the text?
- Is this truth timeless and not tied to a specific situation?
- Is this principle universal and not tied to a particular culture?
- Does this principle agree with the teaching of the rest of the Bible?
- Does this principle apply both the biblical audience in “their town” and today’s Christians in “our town?”

An example of timeless truth from Leviticus 24:10-16 might be:
“God takes sin seriously and we are to take His name seriously.”

Step Four – Consult the Biblical Map

At this time, help the students to compare their timeless truth to other verses and passages in the New Testament to see whether there are any problems with their interpretation.

ASK: What other verses in the Old Testament can support or contradict the timeless truth we have discovered in this passage?

Examples: Psalm 139: 20-21; Matthew 6:9

ASK: Based on these other verses you have suggested, does the timeless truth we discovered in this passage agree with the rest of God's Word?

Step Five – Grasp the Text in Our Town

ASK: According to this biblical principle, what must we believe?

ASK: According to this biblical principle, what must we do?

ASK: How can we begin to obey this biblical principle?

ASK: How does this biblical principle apply to the different relationships in our lives?

ASK: What would happen if everyone in our church believed and obeyed this biblical principle?

Take note of each of the practical applications that the students suggest as you work through these questions. Help them keep their applications tied closely to the text we are studying and the timeless truth we have stated. If someone suggests an application that does not connect to our text or timeless truth, offer a gentle correction to guide them back. For example, imagine you are asking the question, "According to this biblical principle, what must we do?" How would you respond if a student answers, "We should love God?" It is true that we should always love God, but that is not what this passage is teaching. When students suggest an application that is not directly connected to the timeless truth, we need to help them see the mistake so that they can understand and avoid repeating it in the future.

ASK: Look at all the suggested applications that we have found for teaching this timeless truth to people in "our town." If you were teaching a Bible study on this passage, which applications would you include in your lesson? Choose two or three and explain why you would want to include them.

Part 3 – Review

The Book of Genesis

1. When was the book of Genesis written?
Around 1440 B.C.
2. Why was it written?

To show how God had chosen them to be his people from among the nations.

3. Explain one of the theological themes revealed in Genesis.
That God has revealed Himself to us and the plan of salvation that He will bring about for us.

The Book of Exodus

4. To who was the book of Exodus written?
Israelites
5. Where was the book of Exodus written?
Mount Sinai
6. What is one important theological theme in the book of Exodus?
Redemption of Israel; Worship of God

The Book of Leviticus

7. To whom was it written?
Israel
8. Who wrote the book of Leviticus?
Moses
9. What is the major theme of Leviticus?
The holiness of God and how we are to be holy
10. The feasts and the offerings are a picture of who in the New Testament
Jesus

Lesson 4

Introduction

The book of Numbers tells the experiences of two generations of the nation of Israel. The first generation participated in the Exodus from Egypt. Their story begins in the book of Exodus (2:23), continues through the book of Leviticus, and into the first 14 chapters of the book of Numbers. The book gets its name from the numbering of the people that is a major focus chapters 1-4 and chapter 26. The numbering was for the war of conquest in Canaan. However, when the people arrived at the southern edge of Canaan, they refused to enter the land. Because of their rebellion against God, all the adults 20 and over (except Caleb and Joshua) were sentenced to die in the wilderness. It would be their sons and daughters who would enter the land promised to them by God. Their generation was numbered (26:1-56). At the end, we find the transference of power from Moses to Joshua.

Part 1 – The Book of Numbers

We will follow the same pattern as the previous lessons: (1) learn the historical facts about the book of Numbers, (2) look at a basic outline of its contents, (3) explore some of the noteworthy passages in a little more detail, and (4) think about the important theological themes found in this book. We will also continue practicing the steps of the Investigative Journey to look closely at one passage in the book of Numbers.

(1) Historical Facts

Who is the author?

Moses

When was it written?

1400 B.C.

Where was it written?

In the plains of Moab across the Jordan River opposite the city of Jericho

To whom was it written?

Israelites

What was the purpose or reason for writing the book of Numbers?

The book is a historical record of Israel's wandering in the wilderness, from Mount Sinai to Moab. Theologically, however, the book is designed to show how God prepared His people to enter the land through the bestowal of His mercy in testing. Israel's many failures are highlighted in Numbers so that God's discipline, grace, and mercy can also be demonstrated. God preserves His people and bestowed mercy on them for the sake of the covenant made with their forefathers. Thus God is faithful to His promises in spite of the sinfulness of His chosen people. Therefore, the book of Numbers reminds believers of the spiritual warfare in which they are engaged, for numbers is the book of service and walk of God's people.

What is the most important theological theme?

The walk of obedience and the cost of disobedience and the faithfulness of God

Key Historical Facts	
Who is the author?	Moses
When was it written?	1400 B.C.
Where was it written?	Plains of Moab opposite Jericho
To whom was it written?	Israelites
What was the purpose or reason for writing?	Historical record of their wondering and highlighting God's faithfulness, mercy, and grace
What is the most important theological theme?	The walk of obedience and the cost of disobedience and the faithfulness of God

(2) Basic Outline

The book of Numbers contains three distinct divisions based on Israel's response to the word of God. The first part is Israel's obedience to the commands of God. The second division is based on the older generations disobedience to God's commands. The third division is the younger generations renewed obedience to God's commands.

- I. Preparation of the Older Generation to Enter the Land (1:1-10:10)
 - A. Organization of Israel (1:1-4:19)
 - B. Sanctification of Israel (5:1-9:14)
 - C. Guidance of Israel (9:15-10:10)

- II. Failure of Older Generation to Enter the Land (10:11-25:18)
 - A. Israel's failure en route to Kadesh Barnea (10:11-12:16)
 - B. Israel's failure at Kadesh Barnea (13:1-19:22)
 - C. Israel's failure en route to Moab (20:1-21:35)
 - D. Israel's failure at Moab (22:1-25:18)

- III. Preparation of the New Generation to Enter the Land (26:1-36:13)
 - A. Reorganization of Israel (26:1-27:23)
 - B. Regulations of offerings and vows (28:1-30:16)
 - C. Conquest and division of the land (31:1-36:13)

(3) Noteworthy Passages in Numbers

- *The Spies' Report (13:25-33)*

God told Moses to send 12 people to spy out the land of Canaan. When they came back, ten of them gave a bad report. Only Joshua and Caleb encouraged people to trust God and go into the land. The people rejected their advice and listened to the ten spies instead. Not only that, they rose up against Moses and accused God of bringing them to this point only to have the Canaanites kill them and enslave their children. Moses stood between

them and God's wanting to kill them all and make a nation out of Moses. God did not kill them. However, He vowed that none of the older generation would see the Promised Land. Though Israel's enemies were numerous, physically imposing, and dwelt in fortified cities in the midst of a difficult terrain (Num 13:28–29, 31–33), God could have easily removed their protection (Num 14:9) and eventually did so when Joshua led Israel to conquer Canaan. But the older generation did not trust God and refused to believe in him. They were exhorted to overcome the enemy, and if they had believed in God, he would have granted them the victories that were to become evident in the book of Joshua.

- *The Waters of Meribah (20:1-12)*

Meribah means “quarrel, provocation, strife” in Hebrew. In the book of Leviticus, it was given to a place where the Israelites quarreled with Moses for leading them to a place with no visible water. They quarreled with God about their need for water in the desert. The Israelites needed water and doubted God's provision for them. Even Moses, who struck the rock two times out of anger instead of speaking to it as God commanded, forgot who God is. The Israelites' faithlessness had no effect on God's faithfulness to provide for His people. Second Timothy 2:13 teaches that even “if we are faithless, he remains faithful.” The miracle of the water is an example of that truth. Because God can be trusted, we should heed the guidance of the author of the book of Hebrews in the New Testament who wrote, “do not harden our hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness, where your fathers put me to the test and saw my works for forty years” (Hebrews 2:8-9).

- *Fiery Serpent (21:4-9)*

The account of the fiery serpent is in Numbers 21. Here we find the people are discouraged and in their unbelief, they murmur against Moses and ultimately against God for bringing them into the wilderness. They had already forgotten that it was their own sin that caused them to be there, and they tried to blame Moses for it. As a judgment against the people for their sin, God sent poisonous serpents into the camp, and people began to die. This showed the people that they were the ones in sin, and they came to Moses to confess that sin and ask for God's mercy. When Moses prayed for the people, God instructed him to make a bronze serpent and put it on a pole so that the people could be healed if they looked at it. Jesus makes reference to this (John 3:14). Just as everyone in Moses' day who looked at the serpent would be healed, so too Jesus was lifted up on the cross for our sins and everyone who looks to him in faith will be healed.

(4) Important Theological Themes

- *Israel's disobedience and God's faithfulness*

Throughout the book of Numbers we see Israel rebelling and God bringing judgment upon them. But in spite of their grumbling, complaining and rebellion, God remains true to his covenant with them despite Israel's repeated failures. His love was not always reciprocated by the generation that left Egypt, he lovingly provided for

their children, guiding them to the entrance into the Promised Land. Throughout the book of Numbers, references are made to the overshadowing cloud, symbolic of God's unchanging presence with his people (9:15-23; 14:10, 14; 16:42). The cloud is a reminder of his nearness but also of His holiness. The dramatic stories, serious warnings and legal provisions related in Numbers concerning human sin and how it is to be dealt with continue to be relevant today in our society where many appear unconcerned about the tragic consequences of sinful behavior. Paul maintained that these stories 'were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore, let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall (1Co 10:11b-12).

- *The Promise of the Land*

The Promised Land was the goal for Israel's wanderings. It was the fulfillment of part of God's covenant with the Patriarchs. It rested underneath all of the instructions given in Exodus and Leviticus. No matter how discouraging and exhausting the wanderings in the wilderness, the reality of the land provides a constant reminder that the journey was purposeful. The provision of a land flowing with milk and honey was a constant theme throughout the book. The land took on a more theological theme as time went on. It became a future place where "instead, each of them will sit under his vine and under his fig tree with no one to make *them* afraid, because the mouth of the LORD of armies has spoken" (Micah 4:3-4).

Christians sometimes refer to heaven and the future restoration of the earth as the Promised Land. God has promised a glorious eternal home for all those who love Him and have trusted in Christ Jesus for salvation. God's eternal Promised Land is the heritage of all who come to Him through His Son (John 14:6).

- *The Wilderness*

The book of Numbers takes place "in the wilderness." The wilderness is usually thought of as a place where grass, trees, and water is not abundant. It is a place that is usually away from people. It is thought of as a place of wild animals, many of whom are dangerous to man. Yet it also represents a place of testing. It is in the wilderness that God tested the children of Israel to see if they would be obedient to him. He wanted to see what was in their hearts and whether they would obey the commandments that He had given them (Deuteronomy 8:2). Likewise, in the New Testament, Jesus was led by the Spirit out into the wilderness where he was tempted by Satan (Matthew 4:1-11). The wilderness was also thought of as a place where Israel was molded and shaped by God to be the people that he wanted them to

be. God wanted the Israelites to trust him and be dependent upon him. Why did Israel have to eat strange food like manna during these years? Moses says, “that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord” (Deuteronomy 8:3). Jesus used this same verse against Satan when Satan tempted him in the wilderness. Jesus trusted his heavenly Father through all of his life here on earth even to the cross.

Part 2 – Practice Interpreting Scripture

Repeat the process you followed in the previous lesson to guide the students through the Interpretive Journey. Again, try to keep the class moving quickly through this practice. This should take 30-45 minutes, and students will not be able to work out every detail or question they may have about the question. Help them focus on the most important points in this passage.

Read Numbers 11:4-7; 18-21; 31-35

The rabble who were among them had greedy desires; and also the sons of Israel wept again and said, “Who will give us meat to eat: We remember the fish which we used to eat free in Egypt, the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic, but now our appetite is gone. There is nothing at all to look at except this manna. Say to the people, “Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat meat; for you have wept in the ears of the LORD, saying, “Oh that someone would give us meat to eat! For we were well off in Egypt.” Therefore the LORD will give you meat and you shall eat. You shall eat, not one day, nor two days, nor five days, nor ten days, nor twenty days, but a whole month, until it comes out of your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you; because you have rejected the LORD who is among you and have wept before Him saying, “Why did we ever leave Egypt?”

Now there went forth a wind from the LORD and it brought quail from the sea, and let them fall beside the camp, about a day’s journey on this side and a day’s journey on the other side, all around the camp and about 1 meter deep on the surface of the ground. The people spent all day and all night and all the next day and gathered the quail and they spread them out for themselves all around the camp. While the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the anger of the LORD struck the people with a very severe plague. So the name of that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had been greedy.

Step One – Grasp the Text in Their Town

Instruct the group to look closely at the verses and answer as many of the following questions as possible just from reading the texts.

ASK

Observing the Situation

- What is happening in this passage? Describe the situation.
Students should work together to retell the story in their own words. Include as many details as possible and be very specific about words spoken in order that events happened.
- When is this happening?
This happens around 1400 B.C.
- Where was this happening?
Somewhere in the wilderness during their wanderings before entering the Promised Land.
- Who wrote this book?
Moses
- Who was speaking?
The Israelites and then God
- Who was being spoken to?
Moses and then the Israelites
- Exactly what is being said or taught? Be specific and note details and important words. Is there any response from the audience? If so, what is it?
- What does the author or speaker expect the hearers to do in response?

Observing the Context

Historical Context

- Where does this passage fit in the history of the Old Testament?
This passage is early in the Old Testament
- What country or kingdom did this take place in?
It takes place in the wilderness
- Who is the king or ruler?
Moses is the leader under the direction of God
- What was the situation of the people who received this message? Are they free or slave? Rich or poor? Male or female? Young or old? Jew or Gentile? Happy, unhappy, confused, hurting?
They were Israelites who were grumbling that they did not have any meat to eat?

Literary Context

- What is the genre – or kind of writing – you are studying in this passage?
It is a narrative (story form)
- What happened or what is written immediately before and after the passage you are studying?

Immediately before, the Israelites were grumbling as they came to a stop for the day

- What is the main theme of the book you are studying? How does this passage relate to that theme?

The main theme is the obedience/disobedience of the Israelites and the faithfulness of God. This passage shows the Israelites complaining about the provisions of God and when He answers them, they become greedy and take more than what they can eat.

- Where does this passage fit in the flow and outline of the entire book? Is it part of the beginning? Is it a critical explanation in the middle? Is it a summary at the end?

This passage is included towards the beginning and seemingly sets the tone for the rest of the book..

Create a Short, Simple Statement

Explain the most important truth that is taught in this passage.

Example: In Numbers 11 we see that even though the Israelites (and we His people) grumble and are disobedient, He is still faithful to us.

Step Two – Measure the width of the River to Cross

For this step, encourage the students to discuss what they know of each of the major categories listed below.

- Language – What language were the Israelites speaking? What language did Moses write in? Do the differences between their languages and the language that we are speaking influence how we understand this?
- Time – When was all this happening? What do we know today that they did not know?
- Culture – What was important to the Israelites in their culture that is not as familiar to us today?
- Situation – What are some significant ways that our situation is similar to or different from the situation the Israelites were in?
- Relationship to God – What was the Israelites relationship to God in this story? What about the original readers of the book of Numbers? How is their relationship to God like ours or different from ours?

ASK: What are the most important similarities between this story (their town) and our story (our town?) What are some important differences?

ASK: Would you consider the river between their town and our town to be extremely wide (major, important differences), narrow (small differences), or something in between? Why do you think that?

Step Three – Cross the Bridge of Timeless Truth

Instruct the students to think carefully about everything learned about this passage in the first two steps. Re-read the passage once or twice if necessary.

ASK: What are some details of God's response to the Israelites and their situation that might not apply today? What are the most important parts of this text that still need to be believed and obeyed today?

ASK: Now work together to write a short sentence using present tense verbs that communicates that timeless truth taught in this passage. Remember the guiding questions we introduced earlier.

- Is this truth reflected clearly in the text?
- Is this truth timeless and not tied to a specific situation?
- Is this principle universal and not tied to a particular culture?
- Does this principle agree with the teaching of the rest of the Bible?
- Does this principle apply both the biblical audience in "their town" and today's Christians in "our town?"

An example of timeless truth from Numbers 11 might be:

Jesus is always faithful to us even when we are rebelling (sinning) against Him.

Step Four – Consult the Biblical Map

At this time, help the students to compare their timeless truth to other verses and passages in the Old Testament to see whether there are any problems with their interpretation.

ASK: What other verses in the Old Testament and New Testament that can support or contradict the timeless truth we have discovered in this passage?

Examples: Deuteronomy 32:4; Hosea 11: 7-9; Romans 3:3-4

ASK: Based on these other verses you have suggested, does the timeless truth we discovered in this passage agree with the rest of God's Word?

Step Five – Grasp the Text in Our Town

ASK: According to this biblical principle, what must we believe?

ASK: According to this biblical principle, what must we do?

ASK: How can we begin to obey this biblical principle?

ASK: How does this biblical principle apply to the different relationships in our lives?

ASK: What would happen if everyone in our church believed and obeyed this biblical principle?

Take note of each of the practical applications that the students suggest as you work through these questions. Help them keep their applications tied closely to the text we are studying and the timeless truth we have stated. If someone suggests an application that does not connect to our text or timeless truth, offer a gentle correction to guide them back. For example, imagine you are asking the question, "According to this biblical principle, what must we do?" How would you respond if a student answers, "We should love God?" It is true that we should always love God,

but that is not what this passage is teaching. When students suggest an application that is not directly connected to the timeless truth, we need to help them see the mistake so that they can understand and avoid repeating it in the future.

ASK: Look at all the suggested applications that we have found for teaching this timeless truth to people in “our town.” If you were teaching a Bible study on this passage, which applications would you include in your lesson? Choose two or three and explain why you would want to include them.

Part 3 – Review

The Book of Genesis

1. When was the book of Genesis written?
Around 1440 B.C
2. To whom was it written?
Jewish nation – Israel
3. Explain the purpose or reason for writing Genesis?
To show His people how they are different than the Canaanites and why they are going into the Promised Land.

The Book of Exodus

4. What is the most important theological theme?
The beginning of the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham to make his descendants a great nation.
5. What are other important theological themes in Exodus
Redemption of Israel and how to worship God

The Book of Leviticus

7. To whom was the book of Leviticus written?
Israelites
8. What is important theological theme of Leviticus?
The holiness of God and God’s will for Israel to be holy.
10. What is the importance of the Offerings and Feasts for the New Testament?
They foreshow their fulfillment in Christ

The Book of Numbers

11. Where was it written?
In the plains of Moab across the Jordan River opposite the city of Jericho
12. What is the most important theological theme in the Book of Numbers?
The walk of obedience and the cost of disobedience and the faithfulness of God.
13. Why was God angry with Israel for wanting meat?
Because they were not content with what He had given them and were greedy for something else (meat).

Lesson 5

Introduction

Here we are again, just outside the border of the Promised Land. Here again, the children of Israel are set to go in again. The Israelites who assembled on the plains of Moab waiting to cross into Canaan were a new generation. The old exodus generation who had received the law all died in the wilderness. The new generation needed a reminder of what God had done and would do in relationship to his promises and purpose for Israel. The word “Deuteronomy” means “the second law” or “the law copied or repeated.” Deuteronomy was written to renew the covenant with a new generation of Israelites in preparation for their life in the Promised Land as God’s chosen people. The renewal called for a response of obedience and love from Israel as they experience God’s love and mercy in the new land.

Part 1 – The Book of Deuteronomy

We will follow the same pattern as the previous lessons: (1) learn the historical facts about John’s gospel, (2) look at the basic outline of its contents, (3) explore some of the noteworthy passages in a little more detail, and (4) think about the important theological themes found in this book. We will also continue practicing the steps of the Investigative Journey to look more closely at one passage in the book of Deuteronomy.

(1) Historical Facts

Who is the author?

Moses

When was it written?

1400 B.C.

On the plains of Moab on the east side of the Jordan River opposite the city of Jericho.

To whom was it written?

To a new generation of Israelites who were only children during the exodus from Egypt and the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai.

What was the purpose or reason for the writing of Deuteronomy?

The purpose of Deuteronomy was to remind the Israelites of God’s law, and everything that God did for them and every promise God made to them. The purpose of Moses was to remind them of God’s law, and everything that God did for them, and every promise God made to them. Moses explained to them that their new life in the land of Canaan would be blessed or cursed depending on their ability to walk after God and His law. These words were spoken to them on the 11th month of the final year of Israel’s wandering in the wilderness, the 40th year after they left Egypt.

What is the most important theological theme?

It is the keeping of the covenant laws that God gave them and they enter the land that God had promised to their forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He had chosen Israel as His special people and he wanted them to share in a holy partnership with Him. Furthermore, the book of Deuteronomy reminds us that God has always taken the initiative in coming to us in undeserved grace and mercy. The Israelites have been chosen by Him not, as they vainly imagined, on the basis of their superior number (7:7), power (8:17) or morality (9:4), but simply because He loves them (4:37; 7:8; 10:15; 23:5).

Key Historical Facts	
Who is the author?	Moses
When was it written?	Around 1400 B.C.
Where was it written?	Plains of Moab
To whom was it written?	Israelites
What was the purpose or reason for writing?	To remind the Israelites of God's law, and everything that God did for them and every promise God made to them.
What is the most important theological theme?	Keeping of the covenant laws as they enter the Promised Land

(2) Basic Outline

Moses is writing a series of speeches to the people of Israel in the plains of Moab on the day before they entered the land of Canaan, the promised land.

- I. Introduction and First Address (1:1-4:31)
 - A. Historical setting and prologue of the covenant (1:1- 5)
 - B. Israel appointed leaders at Mount Sinai (1:6-18)
 - C. Israel rebelled at Kadesh Barnea (1:19-46)
 - D. Israel journeyed from Kadesh Barnea to Moab (2:1-3:29)
 - E. Israel is exhorted to obey the Law (4:1-40)
 - F. Israel is given cities of refuge east of the Jordan River (4:41-43)
- II. Second Address – Rehearsal of the Covenant (4:44-26:19)
 - A. Introduction to the Law (4:44-49)
 - B. Repeating of the Ten Commandments (5:1-33)
 - C. Speaking of the great commands (6:1-11:32)
 - D. Speaking of specific commands (12:1-26:19)
- III. Third Address – Ratification of the Covenant (27:1-28:68)
 - A. Preparation for the ratification ceremonies (27:1-26)
 - B. Pronouncements of the blessings and the curses (28:1-68)
- IV. Fourth Address – Renewal of the Covenant (29:1-30:20)
 - A. The background of the Covenant (29:1-9)
 - B. Those receiving the Covenant (29:10-15)
 - C. Consequences of the Covenant (29:16-30:10)

D. Charge to obey the Covenant (30:11-20)

V. Transition from Moses to Joshua (31:1-34:12)

A. Preparation for the transition (31:1-32:47)

B. Death of Moses (32:48-34:12)

(3) Noteworthy Passages in the book of Deuteronomy

- *The Greatest Commandment (Deuteronomy 6:4-7)*

This verse echoes one of the central themes of the Old and New Testament. It interprets the meaning of the first commandment and is later stated by Jesus to be the greatest commandment (Matthew 22:35-40). The basic idea is that Israel must display an undivided love and loyalty to the LORD because he alone is their God. "Hear O Israel!" describes both the mental activity of hearing as well as its effects. In other words, hearing is always followed by obeying what was said. Then, Moses added, "The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!" The oneness not only emphasizes God's uniqueness but also His relationship with Israel. The Israelites were to recognize the LORD alone as their God. In addition, Israel was to love their God. Moses said, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. Notice the word **all** along with the terms **heart, soul, might** in the same verse (verse 5).

The word "heart" describes the place in you that deals with intelligence, including intent and thoughtful consideration. It is also what you think is important. Are you selfish or are you self-giving? Are you prideful or a humble person? All of this takes place in the heart. Are you hateful, jealous, or envious of others? All of these feelings are found in the heart.

The "soul" refers to the invisible, spiritual part of a person. It is also the place where we keep our deepest desires, our need to find goals for life. It also is the place where our personality and identity reside. It is that part of us that continues to exist after our body is gone.

The word "might" has the idea of "to a high degree." It means to do it with every ounce of our energy.

Taken together, the command to love God with all our heart, soul, and might seems clearly to take in every aspect of our being as well as all of our energy. All of our lives, all of our identity, and all of our actions, all of who we are, our gifts, our abilities to act, everything is to be used in our love of God. No part of our lives is to be apart from full devotion to God, to obey and follow his commands.

The fact that Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 6:4-5 as the greatest of all the commandments makes it a cornerstone for New Testament believers as well. Jesus added to this commandment that we are to "love our neighbors as ourselves." This means that as we love God with everything we are and have, we will love others as well. It is the result of our love for God.

- *A Prophet like Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15-20)*

Moses, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, promised that another Prophet would come that would be like himself. This Prophet would be from the midst of Israel. This means that not only would the Prophet be an Israelite, that the Prophet would be like one of the common people. Like Moses, this Prophet would command the attention of the nation. This means that Israel should both listen to him and that they would listen to him. Like Moses, this Prophet would be a mediator, representing God to the people and representing the people before God. Like Moses, this Prophet would speak God's Word. Those who rejected his message would do so with great penalty. Like Moses, He would receive and preach the divine revelation and He would lead His people (John 6:14; 7:40). This ultimate Prophet to come was none other than the Messiah, Jesus. The New Testament plainly tells us that Jesus is this prophet (Acts 3:19-21; 7:37).

- *Choose Life (Deuteronomy (30:15-20)*

At the time Moses was speaking, the Israelites were about to enter the land God had promised them. God reminded the Israelites of the covenant He had made with them. He had also personally given His Law to them and instructed them on ways to live and to worship Him. The Israelites were now about to start upon a mission to claim the Promised Land, a good land flowing with milk and honey. Just over the ridge, around the corner, was a whole new existence for the Israelites. There was a new land, a new life, a new opportunity!

But, all of this came with a choice. To claim this promise, the Israelites had to make a choice that meant life or death. They were about to enter a land where the inhabitants worshipped false gods. The temptation to go after those gods and the culture of the land was great. If the Israelites chose to turn away from God and serve those false gods, they would surely perish. God warned His people that they would face things that would be a snare to them. The other nations in the land would tempt them to not believe the truth of God's Word and rather believe a lie. At the time of Moses writing, the Israelites were about to enter the land God had promised them. Before sending them into the land to conquer it, God reminded the Israelites of the covenant He had made with them. He had also personally given His Law to them and instructed them on ways to live and worship him.

According to this passage, for us to choose life means we follow God and what He has told us to do. To follow God faithfully comes from loving Him with all our being – all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. From this the blessings of God flow to us for an abundant life. To choose life means to love God. God is telling them and us to cling to Him for life. He is like the life preserver that is tossed to us when we are drifting alone at sea. If we want to live, we will hold on to him. If they left Him and pursued other "gods" they would surely perish. If we want to live we will cling to God for dear life. The New Testament tells us that to choose God and live is to choose His Son, Jesus Christ, who is life (John 14:6; 11:25-26). Between the choices of life and death, we are encouraged to choose life, to choose Jesus.

(4) Important Theological Themes

- *The Covenant of God with Israel*

The covenant between God and Israel is renewed and expanded in the Book of Deuteronomy. As we have seen time and time again, Israel broke the covenant and deserved to be destroyed. However, behind the covenant agreed to at Mount Sinai is the covenant God made with Abraham. It is to that covenant, God remains faithful and to that covenant God renews the covenant made at Mount Sinai. The issue of Deuteronomy seems not so much the need to renew the covenant but the degree to which the Israelites were willing to commit themselves to obedience to God.

Foundational to the covenant was the idea that they were to obey it with all their heart, soul and might (4:29; 30:2, 10). In light of that, Moses places stress on obedience to God and His commandments.

- *Obedience to God*

The book of Deuteronomy starts out by reviewing how God had brought them to the point where they are now, ready to cross into the Promised Land. He then review the covenant that He has with His people. In the renewal of the covenant is a series of blessings and curses. The passages on the curses are longer than the passages on blessings. God wanted to really make the point that He is a holy God and will bless those who follow Him but He will truly curse them if they disobey. To follow Him is life but to not follow Him is certainly death and destruction and their tendency is not to follow him especially as they move into a land that is full of pagan gods.

- *The Righteousness of God.*

Although God's righteousness is not always seen, it is one of the most basic and important themes behind the book of Deuteronomy. One cannot hope to understand this book without keeping in mind this idea that God is righteous (32:4). Chapter 10:17b - 18 states that God "is not partial and takes no bribe. He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing.

Part 2 – Practice Interpreting the Scripture

Repeat the process you followed in the previous lesson to guide the students through the Interpretive Journey. Again, try to keep the class moving quickly through this practice. This should take 30-40 minutes, and students will not be able to work out every detail or question they may have about the question. Help them focus on the most important points in this passage.

Read Deuteronomy 18:15-18.

The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him. This is according to all that you asked of the LORD your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, let me not see this great fire anymore, or I will die.' The LORD said to me, 'They have spoken well. I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his

mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.

Step One – Grasp the Text in Their Town

Instruct the group to look closely at the verses and answer as many of the following questions as possible just from reading the text.

ASK

Observing the Situation

- What is happening in this passage? Describe the situation
Students should work together to retell the story in their own words. Include as many details as possible, and be very specific about words spoken and the order that events happened.
- When is this happening?
1400 B.C about a month before the Israelites enter Canaan
- Where is it happening?
On the plains of Moab, across the Jordan River, opposite the city of Jericho
- Who wrote the Book?
Moses
- Who is speaking?
Moses
- Who is spoken to?
The Israelites
- Exactly what is being said or taught? Be specific and note details and important words.
- Is there any response from the audience? If so, what is it?
- What does the author or speaker expect the hearers to do in response?

Observing the Context

Historical Context

- Where does this passage fit in the history of the Old Testament?
It is in the beginning portions where Israel is going into the Promised Land.
- What country or kingdom did this take place in?
No kingdom or country in the plains of Moab
- Who was the ruler or king?
There was none
- What was the situation of the people who received this message? Are they free or slave? Rich or poor? Male or female? Young or old? Jew or Gentile? Happy, unhappy, confused, hurting?
Mixed group of Israelites

Literary Context

- What is the genre – or kind of writing-you are studying in this passage?
It is narrative or story form

- What happened or what is written immediately before and after the passage you are studying?
Guide the students to look carefully at the surrounding verses and paragraphs to understand what came before and after.
- What is the main theme of the book you are studying? How does this passage relate to that theme?
The main theme is the renewal of the covenant to a new generation. This passage tells of another prophet like Moses will do as God instructs him.
- Where does this passage fit in the flow and outline of the entire book? Is it part of the beginning? Is it a critical explanation in the middle? Is it a summary at the end?

Create a Short, Simple Statement

Explain the most important truth that is taught in this passage.

Example: In Deuteronomy 18:15-20, Moses is prophesying that there is coming someone like him who will speak the words God has given him.

Step Two – Measure the width of the River to Cross

For this step encourage the students to discuss what they know of each of the major categories listed below.

- Language – What language were the Israelites speaking? What language did Moses write in? Do the differences between their language and the language that we are speaking influence how we understand this?
- Time – When was all this happening? What do we know today that they did not know?
- Culture – What was important to the disciples in their culture that is not as familiar to us today?
- Situation – What are some significant ways that our situation is similar to or different from the situation the Israelites were in?
- Relationship to God - What was the Israelites relationship to God in this story? What about the original readers to the book of Deuteronomy? How is their relationship to God like ours or different from ours?

ASK: What are the most important similarities between this story (their town) and our story (our town?) What are some important differences?

ASK: Would you consider the river between their town and our town to be extremely wide (major, important differences), narrow (small differences), or something in between? Why do you think that?

Step Three – Cross the Bridge of Timeless Truth

Instruct the students to think carefully about everything learned about this passage in the first two steps. Re-read the passage once or twice if necessary.

ASK: What are some details of Moses' message that might not apply today? What are the most important parts of this text that still need to be believed and obeyed today?

ASK: Now work together to write a short sentence using present tense verbs that communicates that timeless truth taught in this passage. Remember the guiding questions we introduced earlier.

- Is this truth reflected clearly in the text?
- Is this truth timeless and not tied to a specific situation?
- Is this principle universal and not tied to a particular culture?
- Does this principle agree with the teaching of the rest of the Bible?
- Does this principle apply both the biblical audience in "their town" and today's Christians in "our town?"

An example of timeless truth from Deuteronomy 18:15-20 might be:

"Jesus is the long-awaited Prophet that Moses said would speaking the words that God put in his mouth."

Step Four – Consult the Biblical Map

At this time, help the students to compare their timeless truth to other verses and passages in the Old Testament to see whether there are any problems with their interpretation.

ASK: What other verses in the Old Testament and New Testament that can support or contradict the timeless truth we have discovered?

Examples: Luke 7:16; John 6:14

ASK: Based on these other verses you have suggested, does the timeless truth we discovered in this passage agree with the rest of God's Word?

Step Five – Grasp the Text in Our Town

ASK: According to this biblical principle, what must we believe?

ASK: According to this biblical principle, what must we do?

ASK: How can we begin to obey this biblical principle?

ASK: How does this biblical principle apply to the different relationships in our lives?

ASK: What would happen if everyone in our church believed and obeyed this biblical principle?

Take note of each of the practical applications that the students suggest as you work through these questions. Help them keep their applications tied closely to the text we are studying and the timeless truth we have stated. If someone suggests an application that does not connect to our text or timeless truth, offer a gentle correction to guide them back. For example, imagine you are asking the question, "According to this biblical principle, what must we do?" How would you respond if a student answers, "We should love God?" It is true that we should always love God, but that is not what this passage is teaching. When students suggest an application that is not directly connected to the timeless truth, we need to help them see the mistake so that they can understand and avoid repeating it in the future.

ASK: Look at all the suggested applications that we have found for teaching this timeless truth to people in "our town." If you were teaching a Bible study on this passage, which applications would you include in your lesson? Choose two or three and explain why you would want to include them.

Part 3 – Review

The Book of Leviticus

1. What is the reason for writing the book of Leviticus?
To instruct Israel in how they are to approach God and walk in holiness
2. What is the most important theological theme of the book of Leviticus?
The holiness of God and God's will for Israel to be holy.
3. How is Christ shown in the book of Leviticus?
Through the offerings and the feasts

The Book of Numbers

4. What is the most important theological theme in the book of Numbers?
The walk of obedience and the cost of disobedience and the faithfulness of God
5. What was the theological purpose or reason for writing the book of Numbers?
To show how God prepared His people to enter the land through the bestowal of His mercy in testing
6. Where was the book of Numbers written?
In the plains of Moab across the Jordan River opposite the city of Jericho

The Book of Deuteronomy

7. What was the purpose or reason for writing the book of Deuteronomy?
To remind the Israelites of God's law and everything that God did for them and every promise God made to them.
8. What is the most important theological theme in the book of Deuteronomy?
The covenant laws as they entered the Promised Land
9. Who is the prophet Moses is talking about in Deuteronomy 18:15-18?
Jesus

10. Where was the book of Deuteronomy written?
The plains of Moab

Part 4 – Final Exam Preview

Explain to the students what will be required for their final exam. The exam includes two parts.

The first part is a written exam. Each student will take the written exam individually. The written exam will include 25 questions worth 2 points each. A score of 50% is needed to pass.

For this exam, students should carefully review all the notes that have been covered throughout this course. They should know all of the historical facts (see the informational tables in this section of each lesson) for all five books of the Law. They should be familiar with the important theological themes from all five books. They will need to be able to recognize which themes are included in each book. Also, students should be able to explain in one or two sentences at least one significant truth found in each of the following key passages studied in this course:

- The Promise of a Seed to save us from our sins. (Genesis 3:14-15)
- The worship only the one true God (Exodus 32:1-6)
- Cursing God (Leviticus 24:10-16)
- Disobedience in grumbling against God (Numbers 11:4-35)
- The promise of a prophet like Moses – Jesus (Deuteronomy 18:15-18)

The second part of the exam is a group project. The group will work together for 30-45 minutes to follow the steps of the Interpretive journey to the best of their ability. You will assign them a specific passage from one of the five books of the Law to study and interpret. They can talk, use their Bibles and study Bibles, or use their class notes to complete the study. Smart phones and computers should not be allowed. The instructor will observe how well the group follows the five steps and assign a grade of “Pass” or “Fail.” Each student must pass both the written exam and the group project to complete this course successfully.

Old Testament Survey 1

Final Exam

1. How many books are in the Old Testament?
 - a. 19
 - b. 27
 - c. 31
 - d. 39
2. How many different authors wrote the books of the Old Testament?
 - a. 3
 - b. 9
 - c. 27
 - d. We don't know maybe around 35-40
3. What is the one central theme of the whole Old Testament?
 - a. Jesus Christ is Lord of all!
 - b. God loves you.
 - c. The revelation of God
 - d. The power of the Holy Spirit.
4. What is the name of the 5-step process we have learned to help us faithfully and correctly interpret the Bible?
 - a. The Big Secret
 - b. Reading Like Jesus
 - c. Bible Study Methods
 - d. The Interpretive Journey
5. To whom was the book of Genesis written?
 - a. Israelite readers
 - b. Roman readers
 - c. All Gentiles
 - d. The Egyptians
6. What was the main purpose or reason for writing the book of Genesis?
 - a. To show the Israelites why they were different
 - b. To make the Israelites feel ashamed.
 - c. To show that Jesus is Messiah who was promised in the Old Testament.
 - d. To write down everything that Jesus said and did.
7. Which of the first five books in the Old Testament did Moses write? **Circle all the correct answers**
 - a. Genesis
 - b. Exodus
 - c. Leviticus
 - d. Numbers
 - e. Deuteronomy

8. Where was the book of Genesis written?
 - a. Goshen, Egypt
 - b. Jerusalem
 - c. Mount Sinai
 - d. Plains of Moab

9. What is the most important theological theme in the book of Exodus?
 - a. Satan is defeated.
 - b. The beginning of the fulfilling of the covenant promise to Abraham
 - c. God speaking to Moses
 - d. To show Jesus as the all-powerful Son of God.

10. Why did God give the Israelites the 10 Commandments?
 - a. To show how they could not keep the 10 Commandments
 - b. To show the Israelites how to live before a holy and righteous God.
 - c. To show how they needed a savior
 - d. To make them like the other nations

11. Where was the book of Leviticus written?
 - a. Goshen, Egypt
 - b. Jerusalem
 - c. Mount Sinai
 - d. Plains of Moab

12. When was the book of Leviticus written?
 - a. 33 A.D.
 - b. 0 A.D.
 - c. 1440 B.C.
 - d. 1400 B.C.

13. What is the most important theme in the book of Leviticus?
 - a. Disobedience of the Israelites.
 - b. Faithfulness of God.
 - c. Holiness of God.
 - d. God's concern for the lost.

14. Where was the book of Numbers written?
 - a. Goshen, Egypt
 - b. Jerusalem
 - c. Mount Sinai
 - d. Plains of Moab

15. When was the book of Numbers written?
 - a. 33 A.D.
 - b. 0 A.D.
 - c. 1440 B.C.
 - d. 1400 B.C.

16. What is the central theme of the book of Numbers?
- The walk of obedience and the cost of disobedience and the faithfulness of God
 - The holiness of God
 - The promise of the Seed
 - The idea of good leadership
17. When was the book of Deuteronomy written?
- 33 A.D.
 - 0 A.D.
 - 1440 B.C.
 - 1400 B.C
18. Where was the book of Deuteronomy written?
- Goshen, Egypt
 - Jerusalem
 - Mount Sinai
 - Plains of Moab
19. When was the book of Deuteronomy written?
- 33 A.D.
 - 0 A.D.
 - 1440 B.C.
 - 1400 B.C
20. What is the central theme of the book of Deuteronomy?
- Keeping of the covenant laws as they enter the Promised Land
 - Disobedience of the Israelites
 - Creation
 - Listening to the pastor

Write one or two sentences to explain at least one important truth taught in each of the following passages:

21. Genesis 3:15 | The Promise of the Seed

22. Exodus 32: 1-6 | The Golden Calf

23. Leviticus 24: 10-16 | The Cursing of God

24. Numbers 11:4-7, 18-21, 31-35 | The Eating of the Quail

25. Deuteronomy 18:15-20 | The Raising up of a Prophet

New Testament Survey 1 Final Exam – MASTER COPY

*Correct answers are in **bold letters**. Each correct answer is worth two points. This exam is worth a total of 50 points.*

1. How many books are in the Old Testament?
 - a. 19
 - b. 27
 - c. 31
 - d. 39**

2. How many different authors wrote the books of the Old Testament?
 - a. 3
 - b. 9
 - c. 27
 - d, We don't know maybe around 35-40**

3. What is the one central theme of the whole Old Testament?
 - a. Jesus Christ is Lord of all!
 - b. God loves you.
 - c. The revelation of God**
 - d. The power of the Holy Spirit.

4. What is the name of the 5-step process we have learned to help us faithfully and correctly interpret the Bible?
 - a. The Big Secret
 - b. Reading Like Jesus
 - c. Bible Study Methods
 - d. The Interpretive Journey**

5. To whom was the book of Genesis written?
 - a. Israelite readers**
 - b. Roman readers
 - c. All Gentiles
 - d. The Egyptians

6. What was the main purpose or reason for writing the book of Genesis?
 - a. To show the Israelites why they were different**
 - b. To make the Israelites feel ashamed.
 - c. To show that Jesus is Messiah who was promised in the Old Testament.
 - d. To write down everything that Jesus said and did.

7. Which of the first five books in the Old Testament did Moses write? **Circle all the correct answers.**
- a. **Genesis**
 - b. **Exodus**
 - c. **Leviticus**
 - d. **Numbers**
 - e. **Deuteronomy**
8. Where was the book of Genesis written?
- a. Goshen, Egypt
 - b. Jerusalem
 - c. **Mount Sinai**
 - d. Plains of Moab
9. What is the most important theological theme in the book of Exodus?
- a. Satan is defeated.
 - b. **The beginning of the fulfilling of the covenant promise to Abraham**
 - c. God speaking to Moses
 - d. To show Jesus as the all-powerful Son of God.
10. Why did God give the Israelites the 10 Commandments?
- a. To show how they could not keep the 10 Commandments
 - b. **To show the Israelites how to live before a holy and righteous God.**
 - c. To show how they needed a savior
 - d. To make them like the other nations
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- a. Disobedience of the Israelites.
 - b. Faithfulness of God.
 - c. **Holiness of God.**
 - d. God's concern for the lost.
14. Where was the book of Numbers written?
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 - Mount Sinai
 - Plains of Moab**
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 - 1440 B.C.
 - 1400 B.C**
20. What is the central theme of the book of Deuteronomy?
- Keeping of the covenant laws as they enter the Promised Land**
 - Disobedience of the Israelites
 - Creation
 - Listening to the pastor

Write one or two sentences to explain at least one important truth taught in each of the following passages:

21. Genesis 3:15 | The promise of the Seed
Mankind was cursed by God but He would bring someone who would lift the curse and save us from our sins. That person was Jesus.

22. Exodus 32: 1-6 | The Golden Calf
We are to worship only God.

23. Leviticus 24: 10-16 | The Cursing of God
We are not to take God's name in vain and to remember that He is holy.

24. Numbers 11:4-7, 18-21, 31-35 | The eating of the quail
We are not to grumble against God nor be greedy with what He gives us.

25. Deuteronomy 18:15-20 | The raising up of a prophet
Moses prophesied that another prophet would come and God would put His words in his mouth. That prophet is Jesus.

Interpreting the New Testament Group Project

For this part of the final exam students must work as a group to study a passage from the New Testament following the steps of the Interpretive Journey. Select one of the passages listed below for the student project. Instruct them to talk through all five steps of the Interpretive Journey together. The group should be allowed 30-45 minutes to complete this study. They should write down the following notes to show the work they have done:

(Step One) Write a short, simple statement to summarize the message that God was revealing to the original audience.

(Step Three) Write the timeless truth (or truths) that you discovered from studying this passage.

(Step Five) Write two or three specific applications of your timeless truth that you would teach to others in your church.

Passages for Interpretive Journey Group Project:

The Tower of Babel – Genesis 11:1-9

The Burning bush – Exodus 3: 1-17

Our Response to God – Deuteronomy 6:4-6

How to grade the group project:

After giving the students full instructions, watch them closely for the entire time of the project. Try to give as little help as possible; encourage them to follow the steps of the Interpretive Journey as they have learned. You should be able to see that the group has learned all five steps of the Interpretive Journey, the key questions for each step, and how to complete each step in the process. They are free to use their Bibles and any notes they have, but no cell phones or computers are allowed. The group should submit the statements they have written for steps 1, 3, and 5 as noted above.

The group will be graded as a whole with either a 'pass' or 'fail.' If you see that everyone in the group has learned the steps, understands how to follow the Interpretive Journey process, and shows some ability to interpret the passage in a faithful and accurate way, then award them a grade of 'pass' for their work on this project.