

YOUTH BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Lesson 8: God's People in the Old Testament

In our lessons we have studied about the problem of sin and how it came into our world. We have learned about God's love for us, and how because of this great love He is seeking to draw us each one back to Himself. Now we are going to go back in time and study about the people who lived before God's Word was written in a book like we have today. These are the people whose lives we read about in our Bibles. These were God's people of the Old Testament times.

Of course, it will not be possible in just one lesson to study about all the people who lived for over 2,000 years, but we will look at some of them, and at some of the most important events in their lives.

After Adam and Eve sinned, they had to leave their beautiful garden home. Genesis 3:22-24 tells us that they were made to leave, and that angels called cherubims, guarded the garden to see that no one entered it again.

1. What were the names of two sons that Adam and Eve had? Genesis 4:1, 2. Their names were _____ and _____.

"And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground."

Note: Abel loved God and was true to Him but Cain was rebellious and wanted his own way. God had told Adam that he was to offer a lamb as a sacrifice to point forward to when Jesus would come to redeem mankind.

The time came when Cain and Abel were old enough to offer their own sacrifices. By offering a lamb Abel showed his faith that Jesus would come someday and die for his sins and redeem him from death. But Cain did his own thing and offered fruit from his garden.

God accepted Abel's offering but not Cain's. Abel had obeyed and Cain did not. Cain became jealous and angry and finally killed his brother. He became the father of a race of people who were proud and did not obey God at all.

Later, other children were born to Adam and Eve. Soon those children also had children, and eventually, the earth became filled with people.

2. What were the people who filled the earth like? Genesis 6:5, 11, 12. They were W _____ and their thoughts were _____.

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth."

Note: the race of Cain invented their own religion and worshiped the sun, moon and stars and nature and made idols. They were cruel and selfish and soon the earth was full of crime.

3. What did God say He was going to do? Genesis 6:7, 13. He said He would _____ them.

“And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.”

4. How did God say He would destroy the earth? Genesis 6:17. With a _____ of _____.

“And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.”

5. What did God tell Noah to make? Genesis 6:14. An _____ of gopher _____.

“Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.”

Note: This was a very big job that God had given Noah to do. He no doubt had to sell his own possessions to be able to buy things to build it and pay workman. The Bible tells us that it took Noah 120 years to finish building the ark.

How many times during all those years, Noah must have been tempted to doubt if there was really going to be a flood. It had never rained, the earth back then was watered by a mist that came up at night. There was nothing in the world around them that looked any different. Every morning the sun came up and the birds sang, and life went on just like it had for as long as anyone could remember. Hebrews 11:7 tells us that it was because of his faith that Noah built the ark. He believed God meant what He said.

Do you know what faith is? We have a story in the New Testament that tells us about a man that Jesus said had very great faith.

In Luke 7 you can read the story of a Roman soldier whose servant was sick. This man sent word to Jesus, asking Him to heal his servant. When Jesus received the message, He began making His way to the man's home. But, when the Roman officer heard this, he came to Jesus himself and he told Him that he was not worthy to have Jesus come to his home, but that if Jesus would only speak the word, his servant would be healed. Jesus then turned to those around Him and said that He had not found such great faith in all Israel. Faith is believing God's word, whatever He says, knowing that whatever He says is true, because He said it.

6. When God told Noah to go into the ark, how long did He say it would be before it rained? Genesis 7:4, 7, 10. It would be ____ days.

“For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth. And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons’ wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood. And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth.”

Note: When God called Noah to go into the ark, there was no sign of rain anywhere in the sky. He had to go in by faith. Those who waited to go into the ark until they saw that it was really going to rain, were seven days too late; the door had already been closed. When God tells us something, it is very important that we obey Him, whether we can see why or not. When we only obey when we can see the reason, it shows that we have no faith. Hebrews 11:6 tells us that without faith, we cannot please God.

7. How long did it rain on the earth? Genesis 7:12. _____ days and _____ nights.

“And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.”

Note: For more than a month the terrible storm raged, water poured from the sky and came up through the ground. But Noah and his family were in the ark for a year while the flood was happening.

The flood slowed for a time, the terrible tide of evil that had threatened to completely take over the earth. It was not long, however, until men again began to do evil. They decided to build a city and a tower that would reach into heaven so that God could not destroy them no matter how wicked they were. How silly is puny little man to think he can beat God.

8. What did the Lord then do to the people? Genesis 11:7, 8. The Lord _____ them abroad.

“Go to, let us go down, and there confound (mix up) their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.”

Note: All the people of the world until then spoke one language. In some ways, they were like one big family. Now God confused their languages so that they could not understand what one another were saying. They could no longer work all together to carry out the wicked plans and the people separated from each other and spread out to different parts of the earth to live. But, even though they were separated, most of them continued in wickedness.

The Call of Abraham

9. Who did God call to come out from the midst of this wickedness?

Genesis 12:1-3. _____

“Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”

10. What was the new name that God gave to Abram? Genesis 17:5.

“Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.”

Note: Abraham meant ‘a father of nations’, but at the time God changed Abram’s name. He had no children and he was a very old man. Abraham and Sarah did not have any children for another ten years.

11. When the promised child was born, what did they name him?

Genesis 21:3. _____

“And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.”

Note: Isaac’s name meant ‘laughter’ because Sarah laughed when God told them they would have a son because she was an old woman.

Abraham’s Faith Tested

12. How did God test Abraham’s faith? Genesis 22:1, 2. He told him to offer his _____ as an offering.

“And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.”

13. In preparing to offer up Isaac, what did Abraham believe God was able to do? Hebrews 11:17-19. Raise him from the _____.

“By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son. Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.”

14. As Abraham prepared to offer Isaac, what did he hear? Genesis 22:10-12. The _____ of the Lord.

“And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from Me.”

15. By what name, or title was Abraham known? James 2:23. The _____ of God.

“And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.”

Note: Between real friends there is perfect trust. Abraham showed by his faith that his trust in God was perfect. If we are God’s friends, we will trust Him too. We will know that God does not ask us to do anything that is not for our best to do. Knowing this, we will obey Him in everything He asks us to do.

16. What did God tell Abraham that his children would be? Genesis 15:13. A _____ in a _____ not theirs.

“And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years.”

17. For how many generations were they to dwell in this strange land? Genesis 15:16. _____

“But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.”

Note: Abraham’s son Isaac, had two sons, Esau and Jacob. Esau chose to follow the ways of the world, while Jacob chose the ways of the Lord. To Jacob were born twelve sons. Because of a severe famine, Jacob and his sons eventually made their home in Egypt, where there was food.

Israel Delivered

18. Why did God tell Pharaoh to let Israel go? Exodus 8:1. That they might _____ Me.

“And the LORD spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let My people go, that they may serve Me.”

Note: Many years after they had arrived in Egypt, a new Pharaoh [king] began to reign that did not like the children of Israel. As a result, the people of Israel were forced to become slaves and work for the Egyptians. While serving the Egyptians, it was not possible for them to serve God as He wanted them to.

Pharaoh refused to let the people go. Because he stubbornly refused to obey God, judgments were brought on the nation of Egypt. At first, these judgments of God were rather mild, but the king continued to stubbornly refuse to obey until

the last plague, when the first born of all the people in Egypt were killed in one night. (You can read about the plagues that fell upon Egypt in Exodus, chapters 8-11.)

19. For whose benefit were these things written? 1 Corinthians 10:11. For _____ admonition. [warning]

“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”

20. What does reading these stories give us? Romans 15:4. They give us _____.

“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”

Note: God worked wonderfully for His people Israel, delivering them from the cruel bondage of Egypt. After rescuing them from slavery, He took them to a good land—a land that in His goodness He had prepared for them to live. In return, He asked that they have no other gods before Him, and that they serve Him.

21. How did God feed the people on their wilderness journey to their new home? Exodus 16:4. He rained _____ from _____.

“Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.” [The people called it ‘Manna’.]

22. How many days a week were they to gather this manna? Exodus 16:26. _____ days.

“Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none.”

Note: Even though this was some time before the people arrived at Mt. Sinai, where God gave them His law written on the tables of stone, this shows that they already knew about the Sabbath.

23. How many years did the people continue to eat manna? Exodus 16:35. _____ years.

“And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan.”

Note: Every day, for all these years, the people were taught a lesson in faith in God to supply their needs. Every week for all those years, they were reminded of the Sabbath, because on the Sabbath, no manna fell.

Three months after they left Egypt, the people of Israel arrived at Mt. Sinai, where they were to live for the next year. During this time, God gave Moses special instructions for the building of a sanctuary where the people were to worship Him. God gave Moses many other instructions, known as laws. Lesson nine begins to look at some of those laws.

Today we have talked about faith, the faith of Abraham, Noah, Moses and God's people, Israel. Just as it was important for God's people to have faith then, it is ever so important that we have faith today.

God has given us many promises in the Bible, His Word to us. He has given us assurance of sufficient food to eat, the protection of heavenly angels, and that we shall not want for any good thing. None of these promises, however, can be fulfilled to us if we don't have faith. When we come to God, we believe in Him, and that He rewards those who trust in Him. We must trust and obey, for there is no other way to enjoy all that God has promised.

As we read the stories of the great men of faith in the Bible, and the wonderful way God rewarded their confidence in Him, doesn't it make you want to have the same kind of relationship with God? Right now kneel and let's ask God for this faith.

Dear Heavenly Father, I am so thankful for the wonderful promises in Your Holy Word. But Lord, I am so weak; help me to be strong and have a faith like Abraham. Help me to understand Your Word better and have faith that what You say, You will do. In Jesus' name. Amen.