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## **Bible Lesson 16 (BTJ)**

### **1. Introduction**

After King Saul died, David became the king of Israel. Before King Saul had died, God had chosen David to be his successor. David was a good man who served God and led the nation of Israel well. David believed in God and he worshiped God. He forbade the Israelites to worship idols. God prospered David and he became very rich and had many possessions.

After David had ruled the nation of Israel for many years, he chose his son Solomon to succeed him. Later, David died and his son Solomon began to rule the nation of Israel. Solomon was a very wise man who built an extravagant temple to replace the tabernacle. Now the Israelites came to the temple to worship God and present their sacrifices to him.

After Solomon died, the nation of Israel became two kingdoms. Ten tribes followed Jeroboam as their king. They are referred to as the ten northern tribes or Israel. Two of the tribes remained faithful to Rehoboam, Solomon's son. These two tribes are called Judah or the two southern tribes.

Included in this lesson is the story of God's work through the prophet Jonah. This story shows God's sovereignty and unparalleled power. It shows his love for people. It shows that God is long-suffering, merciful, and gracious to undeserving people. This story shows that God withholds judgment and forgives people who trust in him.

Even though the Israelites often forsook God for false gods and their idols, God did not forsake them. He loved his chosen people and continue to work through them so that the promised Deliverer would eventually come through them. He sent many prophets to them to warn them about their evil ways. These prophets also spoke prophecies concerning the coming Deliverer.

Repeatedly in this lesson God's faithfulness to his people is seen. Why was God so patient with the Israelites when they repeatedly forsook him for false gods? God was patient because he promised that he would send a Deliverer for all mankind through them. This shows us that God alone is the only true God. He is totally good, he loves people, and he works in humanity to bring people to salvation. However, if people reject him they will die in their sins and be separated from God forever in the place of the never-ending fire of punishment.

### **2. Review**

**Setting:** Teacher stopped by Patrick's house and joined in the discussion about Moses

and Aaron leading the Israelites from the land of Egypt.

**Patrick:** We are talking about God's mercy and grace to the Israelites. Even though God showed them mercy and was very good to them, they often forgot about his goodness to them.

**Teacher:** Give some examples of what you mean. How did they forget about God's goodness and mercy to them?

**Patrick:** While the Israelites were still in Egypt, God was merciful to them and showed favor to them by keeping the plagues from harming them. He made a distinction between Israel, his chosen people, and others who lived in Egypt.

**Teacher:** Pharaoh continued to fight against God even though he could not overcome God. The Israelites should have been in awe of God for the way he protected them from the horrible plagues.

**Patrick:** The Israelites saw and experienced God's deliverance at the Red Sea. Once they were in the wilderness, they soon forgot about the power of God and complained about their circumstances. They even said it would have been better to remain in Egypt than to live in the wilderness.

**Teacher:** Why was it wrong for them to complain about not having food and water in the wilderness? Without food and water people will die.

**Patrick:** The Israelites should have trusted God. If they had believed in him, they would not have complained against him. They would have trusted him to supply food, water and protection while they lived in the wilderness.

**Teacher:** Why were Moses and Aaron not allowed to enter the land of Canaan?

**Patrick:** Moses and Aaron disobeyed God's command. He told them to speak to the rock and then water would flow from it. They did not do that. They were angry at the people because they complained so much. Moses struck the rock two times and then water flowed from it. Even though Moses and Aaron were God's chosen leaders, God punished them for their disobedience. God has one standard for everyone.

**Teacher:** Why did God want Joshua and the Israelites to drive out the inhabitants of Canaan? What was wrong with the Canaanites?

**Patrick:** The Canaanites worshiped idols and lived wickedly. They did not serve God. They lived for themselves and taught their children how to live wickedly. God did not want their way of life to affect the Israelites. God did not want the Israelites to follow the Canaanite's ways. To worship an idol is to sin against God.

**Teacher:** After Joshua died, the Israelites turned to idol worship. They watched the Canaanite people's idolatrous practices and started to worship idols. God punished them and they were conquered by other nations. Then they repented and begged God for help. God was merciful and delivered them. Later, they worshiped idols again.

**Patrick:** When I heard how the Israelites repeated the cycle of turning away from God for dead idols I thought, "Will we do the same thing?" We must believe in God and not doubt the Bible stories. I do not want my children to grow up without knowing about God.

**Teacher:** Why did the Israelites want a king to lead them? Did God fail to rightly lead them? Could a king be a better leader than God?

**Patrick:** God did not fail the Israelites in any way. The Israelites wanted to be like the nations around them and have their own king. They forgot that God had led them out of the land of Egypt into the land of Canaan. They forgot about his faithfulness and goodness to them.


**Teacher:** It is good to discuss the things you are learning about God and the history of the Israelites. God wants you to think about these things so that you will not forget about him. He wants you to know who he is. It would be tragic for you to forget about God. He is the only one who can provide a way of escape from the consequence of being a sinner.

**Teacher:** It is time to go to the meeting. The next lesson is about things that happened after Saul, the first king of Israel, died.

### **3. David Became the King of Israel**

After King Saul died, David became the new king of Israel. God had chosen him to take Saul's place several years before Saul died. During that time, David did not try to overthrow king Saul. He loved God and followed God's direction for his life. Because David followed God's directions, he was able to be a good ruler over the Israelites.

David was a person just like we are. He was born a sinner and needed to be saved from the penalty of sin. David knew that he was a sinner without any hope of being able to save himself. That is why he believed in God. He trusted God and offered blood sacrifices to God to show God that he deserved to die. He trusted God to accept the death of the blood sacrifice on his behalf. David had faith in God just like Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and many others. God saved him from the penalty of sin because David believed all that God said.

A painting of David, a man with dark hair and a beard, wearing a green tunic and a brown sash. He is playing a large, wooden, bowl-shaped harp. He is standing in a green field with two white sheep in the background. The sky is blue with some clouds.

**Show #42: David the shepherd**

Before David was the king of Israel, he was a shepherd boy. He took care of his father's flocks of sheep making sure they had good pastures and he protected them from wild animals too. Later David was a soldier and protected people and villages from evil people. David was not like King Saul. He did not live for himself. He lived for God and God blessed his life.

After David was recognized as the king of Israel, he ruled all of the Israelites well. He did not follow his own impulses like King Saul did. He relied upon God to direct him and show him how to rule the people. King David wanted all of the Israelites to worship God and to serve him. He forbade the Israelites from worshiping idols because anyone who worships an idol sins against God. David also wrote many songs of praise which are in the Bible. The Holy Spirit directed him and he wrote songs of praise and thoughts given to him by the Holy Spirit. King David's writings are found in the part of the Bible called Psalms.

King David became very rich and he had many possessions. He had skilled carpenters build him a very nice house made from beautiful wood, gold, silver and stone. It was a very nice house. No one in the land of Israel had a house as nice as his.

One day King David was thinking about his very nice house as he noticed all the fine ornaments and decor. He thought, “I live in a very nice house. However, the tabernacle where God lives is made of animal skins and cloth.” The tabernacle was the same one that the Israelites had made in the wilderness while Moses and Aaron were still alive. They

had carried it for forty years from place to place in the wilderness before it was carried into the land of Canaan. Now it was old and King David wanted to build a new, permanent house for God. King David thought God's place of dwelling among them should be a very fine dwelling.

Lets think about this question. Does God need a permanent, fine house? No, God does not need a house. He is everywhere present at the same time. David wanted to build a permanent house for God because Israel was now settled in the land of Canaan. They were not moving around like they had been during the forty years of wandering in the wilderness. David wanted a permanent house built so that the Israelites would have a permanent place for offering their blood sacrifices to God. David loved God so he wanted the best house for God, not just one made of animal skins and cloth.

God was pleased with David's plans. So he sent one of his prophets to tell David of his approval to have the Israelites build a house or temple made of good materials such as very nice wood and stones. However, the prophet told David that God would not allow him to build this house or temple. The prophet told David, "Your son will be the one who builds this permanent house for God." David heard the prophet's message from God and submitted to God's command. David obeyed God because it was the right thing to do. Although David was the king of Israel, he knew that he needed to submit to the will of God and obey him. That's why King David willingly obeyed God.

The prophet told King David that his son, the one who would succeed him, would build the house for God. God also promised David that he would not take his favor from him as he did from Saul. God promised that David's house and kingdom would continue before him for all time and that his throne would be secure forever. This promise pointed forward to the time when God would send the promised Deliverer to save people from their sins. God's promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was now given to King David. That meant a descendant of his would be the Deliverer and he would rule forever.

King David continued to rule Israel and had the Israelites prepare the materials for the temple construction which his son Solomon would supervise. When David was old, he appointed his son Solomon to be the next king of Israel. Sometime later he died and his son Solomon became the new king of Israel.

Let's think about what happened to King David when he died. Where did David's spirit go when he died? Listen carefully. David's spirit went to be with God because he believed in God and trusted God. David had worshiped God all his life. He knew that he had sinned against God and deserved death. David offered the blood sacrifices to God as a substitute for his death and God forgave him of his sins. David was a good man who

truly followed God.

#### **4. Solomon Built the Temple**

After David died, Solomon, one of his sons became the king of Israel. He sat on the king's throne and ruled all of the Israelites. He gave orders for carpenters and craftsmen to build the temple using the materials that his father King David had gathered and prepared for the temple's construction.

The new house for God, or the temple as it was called, was built in Jerusalem. After it was completed and dedicated to God, the tabernacle was no longer used. The temple was built after the pattern of the tabernacle, however, it was much larger and very beautiful. The temple had two rooms just like the tabernacle's. A thick curtain hung between the holy place and the most holy place going from the ceiling to the floor. Only the high priest would enter the most holy place once a year. God lived in the most holy place of the temple. The bright light which showed his presence at the tabernacle moved to the most holy place of the temple. That is where God was present among the Israelites.

The priests continued their ministry they had in the tabernacle at the new temple. They performed their duties like they had in the tabernacle. Once a year on the day of atonement, the high priest entered the most holy place with animal blood and sprinkled it upon the mercy seat. If everything was done correctly, God forgave the people's sins from the past year. The way to come to God at the new temple was the same as it had been at the tabernacle.



Show #43: Solomon's temple

The priests who worked at the tabernacle continued to offer sacrifices for the people. The sacrifices reminded the people that they were sinners and needed God's mercy and grace to save them from their sins. They were reminded that sin's payment is death. They were reminded that God accepts people who have faith in him and come to him by his way. All other ways are rejected and useless.

## **The Two Kingdoms**

Solomon ruled the Israelites many years. When he was old, his son Rehoboam succeeded him as the king of Israel. Many of the Israelites did not like Rehoboam because he was harsh and inconsiderate of them. They rebelled against him and chose another man named Jeroboam as their leader.

Most of the Israelites followed Jeroboam and made him their new king. He was a very wicked man who worshiped idols and followed the evil practices of the Canaanite people. The Israelites who followed Jeroboam were ten tribes in the northern region of the land of Israel. These ten tribes are called Israel after this division. Two tribes in the southern area remained faithful to Solomon's son Rehoboam and he ruled over them. These two tribes are called Judah. The nation of Israel was now divided into two kingdoms, the kingdom of Israel and the kingdom of Judah.

Once the land of Israel was divided into two kingdoms, many of the people began to worship idols and live wickedly. God saw the Israelites worship idols and live wickedly. During that time God sent many prophets to the Israelites to warn them of the consequences of their evil ways. Often the Israelites would not listen to the prophets. They liked living like the Canaanites and liked being wicked. They did not love God. They did not worship him.

During this time, some of the Israelites continued to offer the blood sacrifices to God but they didn't believe in him. They did not have faith in him. Do you think that God accepted their false worship? No, he did not accept their false worship. He rejected their false worship just like he rejected Cain's offering. To be accepted by God people must have faith in him. People must come to God in his way or he will not accept them and they will die in their sins.

### **1. The Story of Jonah**

During the time when many kings ruled the Israelites, the nation of Assyria was one of Israel's enemies. Assyria was a powerful nation and a threat to the Israelites. The Assyrians did not serve God. They did not believe in God. The Assyrians worshiped their idols which they had made with their own hands and they lived wickedly.

One day God spoke to Jonah, an Israelite, about the Assyrian city Nineveh. Nineveh was a large city with many people who lived wickedly. God said to Jonah, "Get up and go to the great city of Nineveh. Preach to them that I am about to judge it because I have seen how wicked its people are." Jonah heard God's command but thought, "No way, I'm not

going to preach to those wicked people. If I preach to them and they repent from their sins, then God will spare them.”

Jonah was not pleased that God wanted him to preach to the people of Nineveh. Jonah got up and went in another direction away from Nineveh. He deliberately disobeyed God because he did not want God to be merciful to the people of Nineveh. He wanted the people of Nineveh to feel the pain of God’s punishment upon them.

Let’s talk about this. Why did God want Jonah to preach to the wicked people of Nineveh? Why did God want the people of Nineveh to know that he would soon destroy them? God wants everyone to know him and to believe in him. He does not want people to die in their sins. He does not want people to die when they are separated from him. If people die when they are separated from God, they will go to the place of the never-ending fire of punishment. God loves people and he wants all people to believe in him. He wants them to turn away from their wickedness and from following worthless religious practices such as worshiping idols. He expects everyone to believe in him.

Did Jonah understand God’s command to go to Nineveh? Jonah clearly understood God’s command but decided to not obey God. He got up and went in the opposite direction. He wanted to get away from God so he went to the port of Joppa and boarded a ship going to Tarshish. How foolish of Jonah to try to get away from God who is everywhere present. But, that is what he did. Once he was on the ship, he went down below the deck and fell asleep.

God saw Jonah’s disobedience. While Jonah was sleeping soundly, he caused a violent storm on the sea which threatened to destroy the ship. The ship was thrown to and fro by the powerful storm and waves. The sailors, desperate and afraid for their lives, shouted to their false gods to save them. Could these false gods save the ship from destruction? Of course not. The storm raged more and more. Then the sailors threw the cargo overboard to lighten the ship. Could their false gods and idols now calm the storm? Of course not. False gods and idols are powerless to control storms. Only the true and living God could do that because he is the true Creator of all things.

The sailors awakened Jonah and said, “Get up and pray to your god! Maybe he will pay attention to us and spare our lives.” Jonah heard their pleas. However, he knew that God had caused the storm because he had disobeyed God and had tried to run away from God. Jonah said to the sailors, “Throw me into the sea and the storm will be over. This terrible storm is my fault.”

Then the sailors picked up Jonah and threw him into the raging sea. At once the storm stopped! The sailors were awestruck by the LORD's great power. As Jonah splashed into the raging sea, a great fish, which God had prepared, swallowed him. Now rebellious, disobedient Jonah was inside the fish in the deep sea.

Let's talk about Jonah. Jonah thought he could get away from God. How foolish of him to attempt to get away from God! He was disobedient to God and he failed to get away from him. God, the creator of everything, used his power to have a large fish ready to swallow him as he landed in the sea. It was not hard for God to create the storm, to prepare the fish to swallow him, and then to still the storm. God is the creator who controls the whole world. By his unequalled power, he made all things and he sustains all things. When God commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh, he should have gone. God expects everyone to obey him without hesitation. After all, he is God!

In the belly of this huge fish, Jonah realized his sin against God. "Why did I sin against God?" thought Jonah. For three days and nights Jonah was inside the belly of the huge fish. God kept him alive during this time.



Show #45: Jonah and the huge fish

Jonah had lots of time to think about his disobedience and about God. Then Jonah cried out to God for mercy. Jonah believed in God and knew that only God could save him from death inside the belly of the huge fish. There was no way that he could rescue himself. Only God could do so. Then God showed great mercy to Jonah and caused the huge fish to vomit Jonah and he was out on dry land again.

God saved Jonah from death inside of the huge fish's belly. He showed mercy and grace to Jonah. Then God spoke to Jonah again. "Get up, go to the great city of Nineveh and preach to them the message which I have given to you." God did not change, did he? No, he still wanted the people of Nineveh to hear his message for them through the prophet Jonah. God wanted them to repent from their wickedness and be spared from destruction.

This time Jonah obeyed the Lord's command. He went to Nineveh, a very large and wicked Assyrian city. On the day Jonah entered the city, he proclaimed God's message

for the people of Nineveh. “Listen! In forty days God is going to destroy Nineveh!” Jonah obeyed everything God told him and preached with great power and conviction to the people of Nineveh. They heard his message and were convicted of their sin. They believed God’s message which the prophet Jonah preached to them. From the greatest to the least in the city of Nineveh, they turned away from their wickedness and believed in God. Even the king of Nineveh humbled himself before God and commanded everyone to turn from their evil ways and to stop all violence.

When God saw that everyone in Nineveh turned away from their great wickedness, he did not destroy them. He was merciful to them and allowed them to live. God was pleased to see the people of Nineveh admit their sinfulness and beg him to be merciful and forgive them of their sins.

Listen carefully to this point. God wants people to admit that they are sinners who need his mercy and grace. When the people of Nineveh turned from wickedness to believing in him, God was pleased. He withheld his judgment of destruction upon them and allowed them to live.

God wants everyone to believe in him. God wants everyone to trust him. We can only be saved from the penalty of our sins if we believe in him. If we do not believe his message for us, he will not save us. If the people of Nineveh had not believed God’s warning through Jonah, in forty days God would have destroyed all of them.

If you believe God’s message for you, God will be merciful and show you favor. He will forgive you from the guilt and penalty of your sins. If you do not believe God’s message for you, you will die in your sin and be separated from God forever in the never-ending fire of punishment.

## **2. The Prophet’s Message**

During the times of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, there were many prophets who told the Israelites about God and warned them against wickedness. Jonah was only one of many whom God chose to be prophets for the Israelites. Why did God choose some men to be prophets? What did these prophets do?

The prophets were God’s spokesmen or messengers for the Israelites. God wanted the Israelites to know his messages for them so he chose certain men to deliver them to the Israelites. The prophets spoke warnings to the Israelites telling them to turn away from idol worship and other ways of living wickedly. They warned the Israelites that God would punish them if they did not give up their evil ways.

Often, the Israelites rejected the prophets' message from God. They hated the prophets because they spoke about their many evil ways and their false worship of God. The Israelites who rejected God's warnings through the prophets lived and died in their sinfulness. When their last breath was gone, their spirits went to the place of the never-ending fire of punishment because they died in their sins.

Let's talk about false worship of God. Many of the Israelites who went to the temple to worship God also worshiped idols. They mixed pagan practices with their practices of worshiping God. While they were in the temple and going through the motions of worshiping God, their hearts and minds were with the false gods and selfish living. God hated this kind of mixed worship. While the Israelites were worshiping a false god, they also worshiped the true and living God. Though outwardly they appeared to be worshiping God, in reality they were not. They were unbelievers who mixed pagan beliefs and practices with their beliefs about God. God hates and rejects all false worship.

Sometimes the prophets told the people what God was going to do in the future. They warned the Jews of future captivity by their enemies if they did not turn away from worshiping pagan idols. The prophets warned that God's punishment would come upon them if they did not cease to live wickedly. God warned the Israelites through the prophets because he wanted them to turn away from wickedness and to serve him. He wanted them to worship him for all his goodness, mercy and grace to them.

Although the prophets told the Israelites the truth from God, many of the people did not listen to their message. Many Israelites wanted to live for themselves and follow their own ways. Often they persecuted the prophets and even killed some of them. Many of the Israelites worshiped idols and lived wicked lives. They did not care about God. They lived like the pagan nations around them.

### **3. Prophecies about the Deliverer**

Many years had gone by since God first promised a Deliverer to Eve and Adam in the Garden of Eden. Later, God chose Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to be the custodians of the promise he made concerning the coming Deliverer. When David was alive, God promised that one of his descendants would be the promised Deliverer. Though many years had passed since God had spoken this promise, God did not forget his promise to Israel. He would send the Deliverer at the right time.

God loves people and wants them to be saved from the penalty of their sin. He wants people to believe in him and trust him so that they will not die separated from him. God does not want people to die in their sins.

God chose some of the prophets to write down prophetic statements about the coming Deliverer. God knows everything so he knew what would happen to the Deliverer once he lived with the Israelites. God revealed to the prophets what would happen to the Deliverer because he wanted them to write it down and tell the Israelites. The prophets wrote exactly what God directed them. They did not write their own thoughts. All of the prophets who wrote these prophecies lived hundreds of years before the Deliverer came.

Listen to some of the prophecies that God said would be true of the Deliverer when he comes. All of these prophecies were spoken many years before the Deliverer came.

The prophet Isaiah (9:7) wrote that the Deliverer would be one of David's descendants and that he would rule as king forever. God made this same promise to David when he was still alive.

The prophet Isaiah (7:14) also wrote that a virgin will give birth to the Deliverer, but, the Deliverer would not have a human father.

The prophet Micah (5:2) wrote that the Deliverer will be born in the town of Bethlehem.

The prophet Hosea (11:1) wrote that the Deliverer would be brought out of Egypt.

The prophet Isaiah (11:2) wrote about the Deliverer's characteristics. He will follow God's very good ways.

The prophet Isaiah (53:4-5) wrote that evil will happen to him and he will suffer. However, he would not be guilty of wrongdoing.

The prophet David, king of Israel, wrote (Psalms 41:9) that the Deliverer's friend, one he knew well, will betray him.

The prophet Zechariah (11:12-13) wrote that people will sell the Deliverer for 30 pieces of silver.

The prophet David, king of Israel wrote (Psalms 27:12) people will falsely accuse the Deliverer and tell lies about him.

The prophet Isaiah (50:6) wrote that evil men will strike the Deliverer and spit on him. However, he will not retaliate or return evil with evil.

The prophet Isaiah (53:7) wrote that the Deliverer will not answer when wrongly accused, but remain silent.

The prophet Isaiah (53:3) says the Jews will reject the Deliverer.

The prophet David, the king of Israel, wrote (Psalms 22:16) that wicked people will pierce the Deliverer's hands and feet.

The prophet David, the king of Israel, wrote (Psalms 22:18) that people will gamble for the Deliverer's clothes.

The prophet Isaiah (53:12) says the Deliverer will be treated like a wicked man and die with the wicked.

The prophet David, the king of Israel, wrote (Psalms 22:6-8) that people will mock him.

The prophet Isaiah (53:9) wrote that the Deliverer will be buried in a rich man's grave.

The prophet David, the king of Israel, wrote (Psalms 16:10) that although the Deliverer will die, his body will not decompose and he will rise again and be alive.

The prophet David, the king of Israel, wrote (Psalms 68:18) that he will return to Heaven.

All of these prophecies were written about the Deliverer many years before they happened. Later, you will learn how these things were fulfilled in the Deliverer's life.

#### **4. Captivities, Return and Jerusalem Rebuilt**

The Bible teaches us about God. He is the only true and living God. All other gods are false. The Israelites continually rejected God and followed their own traditions. Some Israelites worshiped idols and believed in false gods. Some Israelites worshiped God and false idols so their hearts were not truly focused on God.

Many of the Israelites were proud that they were descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but, they didn't follow God as these three forefathers did. God saw how they rejected him. He saw their rejection of his prophets, their persecution of his chosen prophets and their wicked practice of worshiping idols. God hates wickedness and judges it. He wants people to live for him and to worship him.

Since the Israelites were determined to live their own way, how did God respond to them? Did God tolerate their sinfulness? Did he ignore it? How did God respond to such wickedness? God is loving and longsuffering. He is patient and often waits a long time for people to turn away from sinfulness and to believe in him. God wants people to believe in him. God sent prophets to warn the Israelites of their wickedness. He wanted them to serve him. If they served him and worshiped him in truth, he would have blessed them and they would have enjoyed a good life and relationship with him.



Show #47: The Israelites taken into captivity

The Israelites, however, rejected God's warnings which the prophets gave them. When the prophets told them that God was angry at their sinfulness, they persecuted the prophets and killed some of them. When the prophets warned them of certain judgment from God, they would not listen to them. "Get out of here or we will kill you!" was their attitude. They were determined to live their own way, follow their traditions and culture and worship idols.

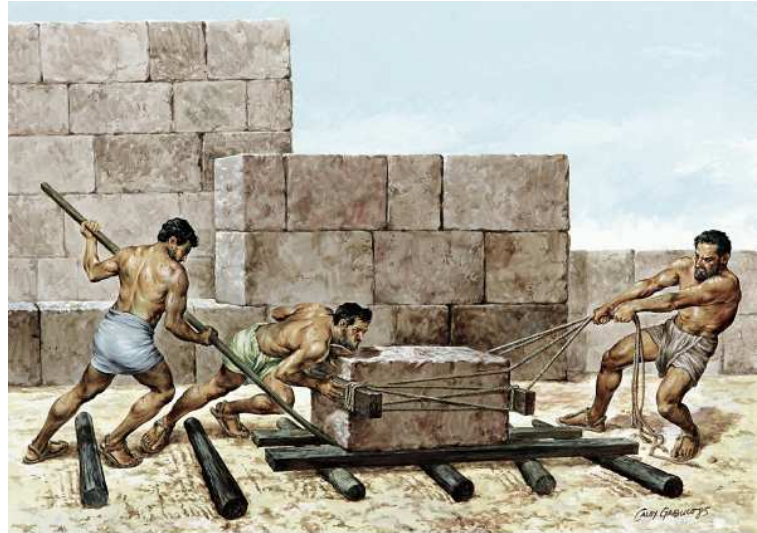
Assyria, the country where the city of Nineveh was located, was an enemy of Israel. Years earlier, Jonah had preached to them and warned them that God was going to judge them for being so wicked. The people of Nineveh heard Jonah's message they had repented of their wicked living and God spared them from judgment at that time.

Years after Jonah had preached to the people of Nineveh, the Assyrian army came to the ten northern tribes called Israel and fought against them. The Israelites lost the war and many of them were taken captives by the Assyrians. Then the Assyrians brought in people from other nations to occupy the land of Israel. These new inhabitants did not believe in God. They were idol worshipers and lived to please themselves.

Some of the Israelites were not taken as captives to Assyria. They remained in their homeland and intermarried with the people who were brought there by the Assyrians. The descendants of these mixed marriages followed many pagan beliefs but claimed to worship God. The descendants of these mixed marriages were called Samaritans. Later, you will learn more about the Samaritans.

Later, the two southern tribes called the country of Judah were taken into captivity by the Babylonians. Even though they knew about God's judgment upon the ten northern tribes, they continued living wickedly and worshiping idols. The Babylonian army destroyed the walls of Jerusalem and took many of the people to Babylon. They also destroyed the beautiful temple that Solomon had built. The people of Judah were punished for their wickedness and rejection of God.

God's prophets had warned the Israelites about their wickedness and need to repent. They warned them that if they continued to worship idols, God would punish them. They would be taken captive by other countries. The Israelites refused to listen to the prophets warnings. They did not believe that God would punish them. They continued to ignore God and live for themselves. They continued to falsely worship God. Then God punished them just like the prophets had warned them. They could not escape his punishment because God always punishes those who do not believe his message.



Show #48: The Israelites rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem

Anyone who refuses to believe in God will be punished by him. People who refuse to admit that they are sinners will have to pay for their own sins in the place of the never-ending fire of punishment. Every opponent of God will be destroyed and punished in unending punishment. Wicked people, Satan and the evil fallen angels will all be punished by God with an unending punishment.

After many years, some people from the ten northern tribes who were taken captive by the Assyrians, returned to the land of Canaan again. They resettled the land and intermarried with the people still living there. Most of the people did not worship God in truth. They mixed local pagan beliefs with their beliefs about God. God did not approve of their false worship system.

The Israelite captives who were taken to Babylon repented of their sinfulness and cried out to God for mercy. God heard their cries and delivered them from their captivity. Many returned to Jerusalem and the two southern tribes's land called Judah. Then they rebuilt the temple in Jerusalem and they started temple worship practices again.

When the Israelites returned from the captivities to the land of Canaan again, the whole country was called Israel and the people were called Jews. Sometimes in the teaching, the people who are the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will be called Israelites. Other times they will be called the Jews. When they are referred to as a nation, they will be called Israel. All three of these terms refer to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. You will learn much more about these people.

## **5. After the Meeting**

**Setting:** Wilbur and Oren called everyone together to review and discuss the last teaching session.

**Wilbur:** Let's talk about the last Bible lesson Teacher taught us. We learned about Saul, David and Solomon. Were these men the same kind of character?

**Oren:** Saul did not fully follow God. Often he followed his own ways and tried to cover up his mistakes. David was a man who trusted God always and ruled the Israelites well. His son Solomon ruled after him and he built the temple at Jerusalem.

**Wilbur:** David wanted to build the temple at Jerusalem but God told David through a prophet that he would not allow him to build it. His son Solomon would build it. After the temple was built, they no longer used the Tabernacle because the glory of God moved from the tabernacle to most holy place in the temple.

**Oren:** The story of Jonah shows us how God cares for people. He wants all people to turn from their wickedness and believe in him. Jonah should have known that he could not run away from God. God is everywhere present and saw everything that Jonah did.

**Wilbur:** Jonah acted foolishly against God's command because he did not like the people of Nineveh. They were not descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob so he did not care if they died in their sin.

**Oren:** God cared for them and that is why he sent Jonah to them. Once Jonah was inside the big fish's belly, he changed his rebellious mind because he knew that God was in control of everything.

**Wilbur:** When God told him to go to Nineveh the second time, he obeyed God like he should have the first time God spoke to him. Jonah preached God's message that God was going to destroy them in forty days. Jonah was very bold as he preached to them.

**Oren:** I like the part about the people of Nineveh repenting and God withholding his judgment upon them. When they believed God's message through Jonah and repented of their wickedness, God was merciful to them and allowed them to live.

**Wilbur:** God has also allowed us to live. He has been merciful to us by sending Teacher to us so that we might learn about him and his message for us. We have already turned away from many of the bad things we used to do. Today we believe in God and trust him. We must continue to believe God's good message for us.

**Oren:** When the Israelites ignored God, he judged them and sent them into captivity. The idols they worshiped were powerless to help them escape God's judgment because they are dead objects. We need to think about God's holiness. If we think we can listen to Teacher's teachings but ignore the meaning as it applies to us, we are being like the Israelites who pretended to worship God but their hearts were somewhere else.

**Wilbur:** God's enemy, Satan, is trying hard to confuse our thinking. If we believe God's message for us, our thinking will become clear. If we keep holding onto our old beliefs, then our thinking will be confused. I believe that Satan wants our minds to be confused. He wants all of us to go to the place of the never-ending fire of punishment. He hates God and he hates us. But if we believe God's message for us, he will save us as he spared the people in Nineveh from destruction. They repented of their sinfulness and he withheld his judgment against them.

**Oren:** All of us, we need to believe God's message for us. And, we need to help each other understand the meaning of the teaching because it is truth.

6. **Review of the Lesson's Themes**

**God is faithful all the time:** Stress that God remained faithful even though the Israelites often forgot about him. God did not forget the promises he made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He continued to work in history to ensure that the Deliverer would come.

**God communicates with man:** During that time of the kings of Israel and Judah, God spoke to the people through his servants, the prophets. God did not hide from the Israelites. He spoke to the prophets who relayed his message to the kings and the people.

**God loves people:** The story of God sending Jonah to preach to the people of Nineveh shows that God is long-suffering, merciful and he shows undeserved favor to people because he wants them to repent and believe in him.

This story highlights how sovereign God works in the history of mankind. It shows how he works to bring wicked people to repent and believe in him for the forgiveness of their sins. It shows God's great mercy to people who abandon their evil ways and worship him.

This story also shows that God is omnipotent and sovereign. Without God's protection Jonah would have died during the storm either by shipwreck or within the huge fish's belly. God, the Creator, exercised his great power and preserved Jonah's life. No power compares to God's. No power or being could have spared Jonah's life as God did.

**Man is a sinner, helpless, and needs God's help for salvation:** No one is able to do something or find a way to be made great with God. Only God is able to help sinful man with his sin problem. Without God's mercy shown to people, there is no hope for anyone.

God shows mercy and grace to people in many ways. What does God expect of people who have been shown mercy and grace? God expects everyone to believe in him. What does that mean? It means people must trust God without having any reservations. They must believe in him because he is trustworthy.

**Satan, the enemy of God, continually fights against God and his purposes:** Why did the Israelites worship idols? Satan tempted them to live like the pagan nations which surrounded them. Satan did not want God's people to worship God and live according to God's will. Satan did not want the Deliverer to come and save people from their guilt and penalty of their sins.

7. **Students Practice Telling the Stories**

At the end of this lesson, practice telling the story you have just heard to each other. Everyone needs to practice teaching Bible lessons by telling the stories.

Practice telling the stories of this lesson in pairs. One pair should teach one of the stories in the lesson following this lesson's Table of Contents for divisions in the lessons.

The Table of Contents at the beginning of the lesson lists the stories for each lesson. Some of the stories or sections of a story are short so they should be combined with another section to make the exercise of practicing to teach by using stories a profitable exercise.

When you are teaching a lesson by telling the story, use culturally appropriate questions and illustrations to keep the story interesting and to make the people think about the lesson's meanings. Be prepared to engage the audience with questions which are crafted to bring out how well they understand the meaning of the story. Emphasize the important points when telling the stories.

Use visual aids or objects used in the lesson when you teach a story. Show the pictures at the right time in the story. When illustrations are used, be sure to bring them to a right and logical conclusion. If you do not make the right conclusions through telling the story, people will likely guess what it means and they could easily come to a wrong conclusion.

After you have practiced telling stories to each other, talk about ways to improve your story-telling ability. Be open to critique and be kind to each other as you work together to help each other become master story-tellers. The goal of teaching God's Word via telling Bible stories is not to merely impress your peers; it is the salvation of spiritually lost people.

As you tell the stories ascertain how well you present the stories and the themes. Does your teaching tend to highlight man or does it rightfully focus on God working in history? Do you tell the story so that God is highlighted? Or is man, in a subtle way, the main actor in the story? You need to make sure that the role of God in these stories is the main focus.

## **8. Teaching Tips for Teachers**

### **A General Note:**

Some of the content of this lesson needs to be taught to tie together historical events. This content may not seem to be as important or needful as other lesson points to bring people to salvation. However, teaching it helps the whole story flow as one continuous story and emphasizes the faithfulness of God as he worked in history to ensure the coming of the Deliverer.

### **Lesson Point #3-5:**

These sections teach a brief overview of Israel's history after King Saul died through the time of the division of Israel into two kingdoms. During this time God was faithful to Israel because he was going to bring the Deliverer to mankind through the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God confirmed this promise to King David.

When teaching about Solomon building the temple, be sure that it is clearly understood that God did not ask for the temple. He did not need the temple because he is self-sufficient. God dwelt in the completed temple just as he had dwelt in the tabernacle.

Point out that after the division of Israel, the ten northern tribes quickly began to worship idols and never repented of their idolatry.

### **Lesson Point #6:**

Emphasize that God loves people. He does not want anyone to die in their sins. God sent Jonah to the city of Nineveh because he wanted the people living in that city to turn away from their wickedness and worship him. Emphasize God's mercy, long-suffering, and grace which he showed to the city of Nineveh. Explain to the people how this story applies to them. They need to see themselves as the people of Nineveh whom God said he would destroy him forty days. God did not destroy them because they turned away from their wickedness and believed in him. In the same way that people you are teaching will be saved if they turn away from their former life and belief system and believe in God alone.

### **Lesson Point #7-8:**

Emphasize God's faithfulness to the Israelites. He sent prophets to them with warnings about their evil ways. God wanted the Israelites to serve him and worship him. God also had prophets write about the future coming of the Deliverer. These prophecies were written hundreds of years before the coming of the Deliverer. In the lesson there are statements that the prophets made about the Deliverer.

Please take note of this: Do not read this scripture text or the fulfillment of the prophecy from the New Testament. The reference in the lesson text is for teachers so they can study that text before teaching.

Sometimes teachers want to go to the New Testament fulfillment passage and read it right away. Do not do this. Only read this sentence that states what the prophet wrote about the coming Deliverer. Stress that the Holy Spirit showed the prophets what they should write about the coming Deliverer. By teaching these prophetic statements, you should see the people become excited to learn more about the Deliverer.

Do not use a prophecy chart that shows the Scripture references of the prophecies with their New Testament fulfillment. Only teach the statements of prophecy as they appear in the lesson.

If someone in the audience already knows that these prophecies apply to Jesus Christ, the Messiah, talk to them in private and encourage them to not disclose their understanding before it is taught to the public. Tell them that it is necessary for the audience to think about what they are being taught.

If many people in the audience know, or think they know, who the Deliverer is, encourage them to listen to the story before they speak to others about the Deliverer. Firm foundations for believing in the gospel are best developed step by step. Why? Because it gives them time to think about and process the meaning of the lessons that you are teaching them.

**Lesson Point #9:**

This section provides the historical background for teaching the New Testament events. It also teaches how the Israelites from the northern tribes and from the southern tribes were chastised by God for their wickedness. Even though they were the chosen people, the ones through whom the Deliverer was to come, God did not ignore their wickedness.

Stress that God did not forget his promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to King David. He continued to work in the history of the Israelites in order to ensure the coming of the Deliverer. God wanted the Israelites to live in the promised land and wait for the coming Deliverer who could save them from the guilt and penalty of their sins.

**9. To the Honorable Teacher**

If any part of this lesson is misunderstood, go over that part again. Play that part of the lesson again. Summarize that part briefly for the students then play that part a second time. Then ask questions to ascertain whether or not this part of the lesson is now understood correctly.

Be prepared to use proper illustrations to clarify a given lesson point. Sometimes it is helpful to use a picture and talk about what is portrayed in the picture as you teach.

Stress to the students that the important themes of this lesson must be understood before proceeding to the next lesson.

Simple drama can be useful to make a point clearer in the people's minds. Before using drama, be sure that it is culturally appropriate to do so. If people are not accustomed to understanding simple drama, it may be best to not use it.