



EveryDay Foundations

Teaching Guide AND Essentials

- FOR TEENS -



STUDENTS USE *VELOCITY* OR *FORWARD*
DEVOTIONAL STUDY GUIDES



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Lesson 1/November 2, 2025

Developing Discernment 3

Lesson 2/November 9, 2025

God's Miraculous Provision..... 9

Lesson 3/November 16, 2025

Standing for the One True God15

Lesson 4/November 23, 2025

Faithful Leadership.....21

Lesson 5/November 30, 2025

Humble Obedience27

Lesson 6/December 7, 2025

Answering God's Call.....33

Lesson 7/December 14, 2025

The Suffering Savior.....39

Lesson 8/December 21, 2025

God's Promised Messiah45

Lesson 9/December 28, 2025

Lessons From the Life of Jonah51



WELCOME TO THE D6 EVERYDAY FOUNDATIONS TEEN TEACHING GUIDE. This is the one-size-fits-all guide for teaching teen small groups and correlates with *Velocity* and *Forward* devotional study guides.



D6 EveryDay Foundations curriculum is built on:

- A high view of Scripture
- Church and Home emphasis
- Family alignment and resources for every age
- Practical biblical application
- Intentional focus on developing biblical literacy and a biblical worldview
- Biblical truth and perspective on important cultural issues
- Spotlights on Bible characters

D6 EveryDay Foundations curriculum helps you build confidence in the unchanging, enduring, and authoritative Word of God. The three-year scope and sequence includes an overview of the story of the Old and New Testaments, emphasizing major characters and themes, as well as the application of God's Word to current cultural issues.

Even if the student never misses a single Sunday in the three-year cycle, the task is too much for curriculum alone. We must also depend on the work of the Holy Spirit and the partnership of families so the truth goes beyond head knowledge to heart knowledge and anchors in a permanent place. Combining both at-church and at-home tools, *D6 EveryDay Foundations* curriculum helps churches equip families to grow together, building on the foundation of faith in God's Word.

Elementary and Teen students (and preschoolers, when possible) study the same family themes as their parents and grandparents. This family-aligned curriculum philosophy opens the door to everyday opportunities for faith conversations.

D6 EveryDay Foundations curriculum offers a choice of two devotional study guides for teens.

- **Velocity**—for younger teens
- **Forward**—for older teens

In addition to daily devotions to help reinforce biblical principles, readers enjoy relevant articles, columns, and more. Even if your group is composed of both younger and older teens, each student can choose the guide that fits best.

Every lesson in this teaching guide is built around the CLEAR® Learning System. This time-tested method gives a simple but effective approach to successfully teaching God's Word.

Connect—These suggested activities help capture the group members' attention and answer the question, *Where is this lesson going?*

Learn—*What does the Bible say?* This section answers this question by digging into the biblical text and explaining it in ways both teachers and group members can understand.

Explore—These notes provide more information for the teacher. They address issues like cultural background, historical context, theological importance, apologetics, and other complementary biblical teachings.

Apply—*What difference does all this make in my life?* Apply statements help group members see how the biblical truths they have just heard fit into everyday life. These Apply statements, along with thought-provoking discussion questions, are included in with the **Learn** section as they most naturally fit.

Respond—The final section in each lesson answers the question, *What now?* **Respond** encourages group members to take practical steps to apply the biblical principles they have learned. The lessons are further reinforced in the devotional study guides.

Every lesson also includes:

- Lesson objective—identify the lesson's main goal
- Building Blocks—encourage biblical literacy for the whole family
- Family Verse of the Month—focus on memorizing key Scripture together
- Teaching Tips—give helps and strategies for effective teaching
- Thought-provoking discussion questions—encourage deeper application of biblical truth
- Teaching essentials—downloadable extras (handouts, posters, outlines, and more)
- The teaching guide is also available for download to help you customize the lesson for your group.

Bonus resources:

- Parent Page—weekly tool that provides the key truths of the lesson, application ideas, talking points to extend family discussion, and family activity ideas, as well as a summary of the preschool lesson
- D6 Family App—this app delivers free resources designed to equip you for generational discipleship
- Family Faith Moments—biweekly email providing simple ideas to turn everyday routines into discipleship moments.
- D6 Teacher group on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/D6Family>)—a Facebook forum for D6 curriculum users to share ideas and ask questions



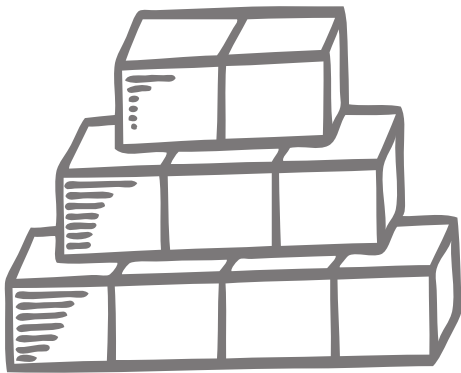
Digital Downloads—To enhance your teaching, digital downloads are available. There you will find teaching essentials and editable teaching outlines. We're also excited to offer a digital version of this Teaching Guide that includes live hyperlinks so you can click directly on a website or Scripture passage and have it pop up on your device. To access these resources, scan this QR code or visit **d6.family/6841**.

FAMILY THEME

Developing Discernment

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will allow godly discernment to guide their media and entertainment usage.

STUDY TEXT: Colossians 2:6–8; Matthew 13:10–17; Proverbs 4:23–27



CHECKLIST

- ☐ Study the biblical text and Teen Teaching Guide.
- ☐ Review the *Teen Teaching Outline* (Teen Handout 1-1 or TH 1-1). You can take notes on this editable document as you study. You can also use it as a guide to teach from.
- ☐ Print and make copies of the *Student Outline* (TH 1-2), “Time Machine” (TH 1-3), “Media Influencers” (TH 1-4), “The Philippians 4:8 Filter” (TH 1-5), and *Parent Page* (PP-1). For free access to these handouts, scan the QR code on page 2 of this teaching guide or go to d6.family/6841.
- ☐ Distribute print or digital copies of *Parent Page* (PP-1) to the parents of your students.



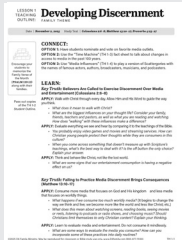
Key Truths

- *Believers Are Called to Exercise Discernment Over Media and Entertainment* (Colossians 2:6–8)
- *Failing to Practice Media Discernment Brings Consequences* (Matthew 13:10–17)
- *Let Godly Discernment Guide Your Media Choices* (Proverbs 4:23–27)

Verse of the
Month

PSALM 119:11

Cue up videos and have them ready to play. D6 Family Ministry does not control ads shown before or after videos.



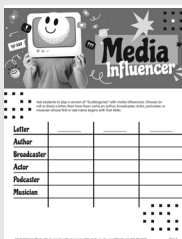
TH 1-1



TH 1-2



TH 1-3



TH 1-4

TEACHING TIP

Be a teachable teacher—convinced of the authority of God’s Word and continuing to learn and apply its truths.

CONNECT

Choose one of the **Connect** options to capture attention and get this session started.

OPTION 1: Ask students to nominate media outlets where they find information and entertainment. Then have a class vote on which are the most popular. Transition to the lesson by saying, *We are all listening to and watching and learning from the media outlets around us. Today we will talk more about making wise choices as we do.*

OPTION 2: Use the factsheet “Time Machine” (TH 1-3) to reflect on the changes in media usage over the past 100 years. Transition to the lesson by saying, *This isn’t your grandma’s media. How do you determine what to watch and hear? We’ll talk more about that in today’s lesson.*

OPTION 3: Use “Media Influencers” (TH 1-4) to play a version of Scattergories with the names of famous actors, authors, broadcasters, musicians, and podcasters. Transition to the lesson by saying, *Sometimes we wonder how helpful our news sources and other media sites are. Today we will see how we should exercise discernment when it comes to media usage.*

LEARN + EXPLORE + APPLY

Distribute copies of the *Student Outline* (TH 1-2).

The people we listen to influence our thinking. We can’t control everything we hear, so we must listen with a discerning heart. We want to understand how movies, music, television, video games, and other media sources impact us.

KEY TRUTH: Believers Are Called to Exercise Discernment Over Media and Entertainment (Colossians 2:6-8)

Paul probably wrote the book of Colossians around AD 62, but its timeless principles are very relevant today. He told those at the church at Colossae to *walk in Christ (verse 6)*. Walking with someone involves more than just giving them a moment of your day, even if that is time talking to them and listening to them. Walking together means the other person will influence you as you go along. As believers walk with Christ, He puts His roots down into their lives, building and teaching them, resulting in a joyful life of thanksgiving that impacts others (**verse 7**).

What are the implications of Paul’s teachings as far as our media consumption is concerned? What we read and listen to throughout our day is what we are “walking with.” Many children are being trained by screens. They spend more time with the iPad or television than with their parents. We are all trained by our media consumption. Who or what is disciplining you?

DISCUSS:

- *What does it mean to walk with Christ?*
- *What are the biggest influences on your thought life? Consider your family, friends, teachers and pastors, as well as what you are reading and watching. How does “walking” with these influences make a difference?*

In **verse 8**, Paul warned those at Colossae that they were susceptible to the philosophies and teachings of the lost world. How could they recognize the philosophies of the world and, ultimately, the Devil? Their teachings contradicted the teachings of Christ. Today, Paul would warn us about the media we consume and challenge us to evaluate it from the teachings of the Bible. If the teachings of our favorite media outlets don't match up with the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount and other teachings of Scripture, they fall into the worldly category noted by **Colossians 2:8**.

DISCUSS:

- *You probably enjoy video games and movies and streaming services. How can Christian young people protect their thoughts while they are consumers in this culture?*
- *When you come across something that doesn't measure up with Scripture's teachings, what's the best way to deal with it? Is the off button the only choice? Explain your answer.*

Non-believers will fall prey to the teachings of the world. In Paul's letter to the Romans, he implored believers to give their bodies and minds to God (Romans 12:1). This is reasonable because of what Christ has done for us. As a result, Christians should not behave as the world behaves. Rather, God owns our minds and our thoughts, and they are to be controlled by Him (Romans 12:2).

DISCUSS:

- *What are some signs that our media consumption is having a negative effect on us?*

How do we know when media is transforming us to be more like the world? Are we thinking and behaving like Christ or like the lost world? A good hint is found in Philippians 2:1–8. Is the media we are consuming making it harder to behave as Jesus did? Another evaluation uses the fruit of the Spirit and the fruit of the flesh (Galatians 5:16–24). The wrong kind of media consumption can lead us toward jealousy, anger, and envy. Whatever media we consume, we must see the fruit of the Spirit exhibited in our lives (such as love, joy, peace, and longsuffering).

The more we are exposed to the messages of our culture, the more we begin to behave (speak, act, tolerate) like the world. Paul warned the Corinthians (and us) about this in 2 Corinthians 10:3–6, teaching we are not to behave or argue as other people do. Instead, we capture rebellious thoughts and force them to obey Christ. We are to use the spiritual weapons God has given us as we fight our battles. They have *divine power* that brings down strongholds.

APPLY:

Walk with Christ through every day. Allow Him and His Word to guide the way you think.

The discussion questions can also be found on the *Teen Teaching Outline* (TH 1-1).

APPLY:

Evaluate everything we see and hear by comparing it to the teachings of the Bible.

APPLY:

Think and behave like Christ, not like the lost world.

 KEY TRUTH: Failing to Practice Media Discernment Brings Consequences (Matthew 13:10–17)

In **Matthew 13:10–11**, Jesus' disciples asked why He spoke to the crowds in parables. He did this because many in the crowds did not really want to hear and obey. The kingdom of Heaven was only for people who wanted to trust and follow God. Learning more about God's kingdom will take some time and the proper priorities. The more we focus on the kingdom of God, the more we will grow and learn. But the more we focus on the things of the world, the more difficult it will be to hear God's voice (**Matthew 13:12**).

What are the implications for our consumption of media and entertainment? We can consume media that focuses on God and His kingdom, such as listening to the Scripture and other biblical content. Or we can consume the world's media. When our ears are filled with worldly voices, we may see or hear but we do not understand (**Matthew 13:13**). Jesus said that Isaiah prophesied about this (**Matthew 13:14–15**).

APPLY:

Consume more media that focuses on God and His kingdom and less media that focuses on worldly things.

DISCUSS:

- *What happens if we consume too much worldly media? (It begins to change the way we think and live; we become more like the world and less like Christ; etc.)*
- *What does this mean about watching screens, reading books, seeing movies or reels, listening to podcasts or radio shows, and choosing music? Should Christians limit themselves to only Christian content? Explain your thinking.*

Consider some of the discussions you hear around the dinner table or at a meal with friends. Are you more likely to talk about scriptural principles or content from favorite streaming services? We are all susceptible to this; that's why Jesus warned us about it. The key to the blessed life is to really see, hear, and understand godly principles (**Matthew 13:16–17**).

One consequence of listening to and dwelling on the wrong things is that the content begins to change us. An example of how all kinds of media have transformed our culture is the use of profanity. As profanity has become more common in movies, news shows, and other outlets, we hear it more in "polite conversation." This behavior has even impacted many Christians.

We see another consequence of dwelling on the wrong things in 1 Peter 1:13–19. We are always to be sober minded and looking forward to Christ's return. We are to live holy lives that are different from the way we lived before we knew Christ (1 Peter 1:13–16). We must remind ourselves that God sees us. We don't really belong to this culture; we are exiles and must live differently. Christ died for us and our lives must reflect that truth (1 Peter 1:17–19).

Does all this mean we should never consume media that does not have a biblical foundation? That would not be possible. We would have to isolate ourselves. Paul indicated that we cannot and should not avoid the ungodly (1 Corinthians 5:9–13). The key is that we recognize the truthfulness or lack thereof behind the media we consume. What is the mindset and motivation of the presenter? Is the material that we hear accurate? Can we consume the media without its transforming us into a worldly mindset? Of course, there

is some entertainment that should never be consumed by Christians and has no redemptive value. But if we do choose to consume secular media (or even Christian media, as not all “Christian” entertainment is biblical), we must do so with a mind of discernment, dissecting what we watch or hear and comparing it to our biblical values. We cannot consume mindlessly and take on the ways of the world, simply because our favorite celebrity said we should or because we find it entertaining. Ideally, we can use the media to learn about others so we can better reach them with the gospel.

EXPLORE:

Plugged In (pluggedin.com) is a ministry of Focus on the Family. The editors at Plugged In evaluate many of the latest movies, TV shows, games, and YouTube channels. This can be a helpful guide to know what’s in the latest forms of entertainment, and it can also provide important discussion starters for families.

DISCUSS:

- *What are some ways to evaluate the media you consume? How can you incorporate some of these practices into daily routines?*
- *Do you struggle more with the content or the amount of media and entertainment you consume? Explain your answer. What can you do for accountability?*

KEY TRUTH: Let Godly Discernment Guide Your Media Choices (Proverbs 4:23–27)

The nonnegotiable with the Lord is that our hearts must be attuned to the Lord rather than the world. This means we must guard our hearts (**Proverbs 4:23**). If we find ourselves being transformed into worldly people by the media, we must cut that out of our lives (**Proverbs 4:24**). We must keep our focus on God (**Proverbs 4:25**). We constantly evaluate the path we are on and stay on the right path (**Proverbs 4:26–27**).

Jesus told us that whatever is in the heart will come out (Matthew 15:18–19). Paul wrote that minds set on the flesh are hostile toward God and minds set on the Spirit bring life and peace (Romans 8:5–8).

In Philippians 4:8, note the positive qualities the believer is called to think about. Does our media usage lead to thinking about these qualities? Verse 9 teaches us to spend time with and learn from people who model the qualities found in this passage. Does consumption of media keep people from fully focusing on their families, their neighbors, their community, or their church? Remember we will give an account for the way we spend our time.

DISCUSS:

- *What media helps you in your walk with the Lord? What media makes it harder to walk with God?*

We can also put media to the Philippians 4:8 test. Begin by asking, *Is it true?* The truth will set us free (John 8:32). The Devil, on the other hand, is the father of lies (John 8:44). God hates lies (Proverbs 12:22) and will punish those who lie (Proverbs 19:9). *Is it honorable or noble?* This gets to whether it presents

APPLY:

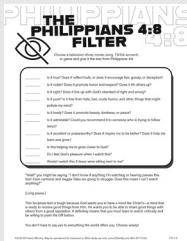
Learn to evaluate media and entertainment. Do not consume it mindlessly.

APPLY:

Evaluate how media usage is affecting you and make changes if necessary.

APPLY:

Put media to the Philippians 4:8 test. Is it true? Is it honorable? Is it just? Is it pure? Is it lovely? Is it commendable? Is it excellent? Is it worthy of being praised?



TH 1-5

Encourage your students to complete the daily devotions in the D6 devotional study guides this week. *Velocity* Devotional Study Guide is intended for middle school students. *Forward* Devotional Study Guide is for high school students. It's fine to mix and match them in your group.



PP-1

The *Parent Page* (PP-1) is a resource to help parents discuss the truths of this lesson with their children at home. Give print or digital copies of this page to the parents of your students. *Parent Page* is also available for free download at D6home.com or at the D6 Family App.

arguments correctly or takes them out of context. *Is it just or right?* Always remember there are two sides to a story. *Is it pure?* Our bodies and vocabularies can be affected. *Is it lovely?* *Is it of a good report, commendable, and admirable?* We want to read and listen to that which lifts people up rather than what tears them down. *Is it virtuous or excellent?* The media we consume should make us better people. *Is it something that should be praised?* When we find media sources that are untruthful or motivated to cause division, the Scripture teaches us to mark them ([Proverbs 6:16–17](#); [Titus 3:10–11](#)).

DISCUSS:

- Sometimes following the Philippians 4:8 test will make you seem like an oddball to your friends or classmates. What are some strategies to help you hold to your values?
- Does using the Philippians 4:8 filter mean you can only read non-fiction? How can the characters and themes of fiction also speak truth?
- How could excessive media consumption keep you from serving Christ?

RESPOND

Use one or more of these **Respond** options to help your group members put into action the principles they learned in this lesson.

OPTION 1: Use the Teen Handout 1-5 (TH 1-5), “The Philippians 4:8 Filter,” to challenge students to evaluate their media usage and improve their discernment.

OPTION 2: Ask your students to develop and publish a “recommended” list of their favorite podcasts, streaming channels, shows, movies, and music. Encourage them to add to the list when they discover new candidates.

OPTION 3: Explore filters with your students (such as Covenant Eyes, Qustodio, Netsanity, and OpenDNS) to encourage them to be more guarded and accountable about their media usage. Pray for God’s protection for them.

Building Blocks:

Share these Bible basics with your learners.

God expects believers to continue to grow in grace and righteousness throughout life.

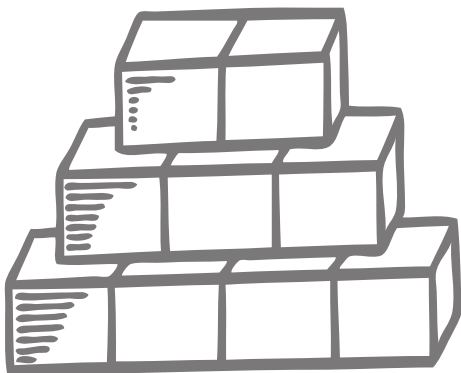
Pray!

FAMILY THEME

God's Miraculous Provision

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will trust God in every situation, knowing He can provide whatever is needed.

STUDY TEXT: 1 Kings 17:1–24



CHECKLIST

- ☐ Study the biblical text and Teen Teaching Guide.
- ☐ Review the *Teen Teaching Outline* (Teen Handout 2-1 or TH 2-1). You can take notes on this editable document as you study. You can also use it as a guide to teach from.
- ☐ Print and make copies of the *Student Outline* (TH 2-2), “Would You Rather?” (TH 2-4), and *Parent Page* (PP-2) if needed. If possible, print the poster, “Empty Jar” (TH 2-3) on larger paper for display. For free access to these handouts, scan the QR code on page 2 of this teaching guide or go to d6.family/6841.
- ☐ If you are using Connect Option 1, bring small cookies. If you are using Connect Option 2, bring hinged clothespins, M&Ms, and small bowls for the relay.
- ☐ Distribute *Parent Page* (PP-2) to the parents of your students.

Key Truths

- God Provides What Is Necessary to Do His Will (1 Kings 17:1–7)
- God Provides for Those Who Obey Him (1 Kings 17:8–16)
- God Can Provide When All Seems Hopeless (1 Kings 17:17–24)

Verse of the
Month

PSALM 119:11

Cue up videos and have them ready to play. D6 Family Ministry does not control ads shown before or after videos.



TH 2-1



TH 2-2



TH 2-3

TEACHING TIP

Your goal is not simply to cover the material in each lesson but to help your students mature in their faith. Don't forget the big picture.

APPLY:

Follow and worship God alone, knowing that putting anything ahead of Him will bring judgment.

CONNECT

Choose one of the **Connect** options to capture attention and get this session started.

OPTION 1: Begin the lesson with the “cookie on the forehead” challenge. Ask three or four volunteers to place a small cookie on their foreheads and try to get the snack to their mouths without using their hands (or dropping the cookie). Transition to the lesson by saying, *Sometimes God provides for us in unexpected and unusual ways.*

OPTION 2: Have relay teams of students take turns using a hinged clothespin to pick up M&Ms or other small candy from one bowl and place them in another small container. Connect this to the story of Elijah by saying, *Similar to the way you placed the M&Ms into the container, the ravens were sent by God to carry food to Elijah.*

OPTION 3: Show a video about ravens and how they usually act, such as this one from YouTube: bit.ly/Ravens5. Transition to the lesson by saying, *God can provide for His people in unusual ways. We'll talk about Elijah's experience with ravens in our lesson today.*

LEARN + EXPLORE + APPLY

Distribute copies of the *Student Outline* (TH 2-2). Display the poster, “Empty Jar” (TH 2-3).

The prophet Elijah is introduced in 1 Kings 17. God sent him to deal with wicked Ahab, king of Israel, and his wife Jezebel. They committed idolatry, practicing the false religion of Baalism. Ahab angered God more than any king before him (1 Kings 16:29–33).

KEY TRUTH: God Provides What Is Necessary to Do His Will (1 Kings 17:1–7)

Elijah announced to King Ahab that there would be a drought in the land (**verse 1**). It would last until Elijah said otherwise. The opening phrase of Elijah's declaration is weighty, taking the form of an oath (*As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives . . .*). Breaking of such an oath was punishable by death. The serious nature of the sins that had led to God's judgment was reflected by the seriousness of this address. The sentence of drought should have been expected; years earlier, Solomon proclaimed this penalty in his prayer at the dedication of the Temple (1 Kings 8:35). Rain had been promised as a blessing resulting from obedience to the Lord's commands (Deuteronomy 11:13–14). Likewise, God had promised to stop the rains in response to disobedience (Deuteronomy 11:17).

DISCUSS:

- What are some things people in our culture put ahead of God?
- What message was God sending to the people when He sent the drought?

EXPLORE:

We are introduced to Elijah the Tishbite, of Tishbe in Gilead. The Hebrew words for Tishbite and Tishbe are nearly identical. Some Bible translations, such as the KJV, designate one as a location (likely of his birth), and another as his status in the land of Gilead (that he lived there, but was not originally from there, thus being a “stranger” in the land). Other versions translate the terms nearly identically: Tishbite and Tishbe, designating distinct geographical locales (to differentiate between the place named Tishbe located in Gilead and another place named Tishbe located in Naphtali). Some speculate that Elijah’s geographical origins mean he was not a Hebrew but a Gentile (perhaps an Ishmaelite in particular). This seems highly unlikely, though, given the way Elijah is presented (1 Kings 19:14) and the way he interacted with others throughout the rest of the biblical account. Additionally, Elijah’s very name means *my God is Jehovah*, which points strongly to his being of Hebrew origin.

The fact that God’s Word came to Elijah (**verse 2**) is significant and a stark contrast between Elijah’s departure here into the wilderness and his later flight from Jezebel in [chapter 19](#). In obedience to the Lord’s command, he went to the brook Cherith (**verse 5**). This was a means of protection for Elijah from Ahab during the early days of God’s judgment as He allowed circumstances to develop and play out.

More than that, in a clearly miraculous way God made it possible for Elijah to dwell there. The delivery by the ravens was certainly amazing, but so was the nature of the food they provided (**verses 3–4**). Elijah received both bread and meat every morning and night (**verse 6**). God miraculously met Elijah’s needs as he obeyed.

God provides what we need to follow Him. He provided safety for Elijah amid difficult political circumstances, as well as sustenance in the midst of a drought. God meets our needs and deserves our thanks for doing so. We ought not take His provision for granted. We draw breath because He wills it ([Isaiah 42:5](#)). He causes rain to fall on the just and unjust alike ([Matthew 5:45](#)), and He withholds His rain when it is necessary for His purposes (**1 Kings 17:1**).

DISCUSS:

- *God’s provision isn’t always what we think of as miraculous. What are some of the supernatural ways God provides for us every day? (He guides us by His Word and the Holy Spirit; He protects us from bad choices; He moves circumstances on our behalf; He answers our prayers; etc.)*
- *What should we do when we don’t know the next step to take in life? (Continue to follow God’s commands in the small things; do the next right thing; ask God for guidance and wisdom; etc.)*

 **KEY TRUTH: God Provides for Those Who Obey Him (1 Kings 17:8–16)**

Elijah’s obedience preceded God’s provision for him in the wilderness. Likewise, obedience was a requirement prior to God’s miraculous provision for a widow and her son (as well as Elijah).

APPLY:

Always follow God’s commands and direction, knowing He will provide what is needed to do so.

The discussion questions can also be found on the *Teen Teaching Outline* (TH 2-1).

APPLY:

Be open to the unexpected. God sometimes uses unlikely means to lead and provide for us.

APPLY:

Obey God by faith, even when it doesn't seem to make sense.

God instructed Elijah to go to Zarephath, 13 kilometers south of Sidon (**verses 8–9**). This location between Tyre and Sidon was the dwelling place of Gentiles. First the Lord had provided for Elijah through unclean birds (ravens). Then God would go on to meet his needs through a Gentile widow, one the Hebrews would have deemed unclean (**verse 9**).

DISCUSS:

- *Why is it difficult to obey God when life is confusing and doesn't make sense?*
- *What would you think if your parents made the same choice the widow made to give away all of your food to a stranger?*

Zarephath would likely have many people who worshiped Baal, making it an unlikely place for Elijah to seek refuge and provision. Yet he found both through God's leading. God's provision is not limited by circumstances that would present significant challenges for people. Even a little faith in dire circumstances is powerful, and faith can be found in places where we least expect it.

The widow had to act on faith. Elijah's request for the woman to bring him a little water to drink (**verse 10**) was no small thing. The drought had impacted that area as well, so water was scarce and valuable. The text records no hesitation on her part to fulfill Elijah's request. Elijah tested her further, asking for food as well (**verse 11**). At this point the widow revealed the depths of her despair and the dire nature of her circumstances. Her response also revealed her understanding of Elijah's identity. The widow's qualification of her statement with an oath (*As the LORD your God lives*; **verse 12**) demonstrates that she had knowledge of the God of Israel and recognized that Elijah was an Israelite.

Elijah's request was extreme, not only asking for food, but instructing her to make food for him first, then for herself and her son. The prophet promised that the Lord would provide if she would obey (**verses 13–15**). The text is clear. Elijah was not making a promise of his own accord and then expecting God to fulfill it. It was, rather, the Lord promising through Elijah (**verse 16**).

DISCUSS:

- *What does this story teach us about faith and generosity, even when we feel like we have nothing to give?*
- *Why do you think God sometimes waits to provide until after we obey?*

The widow's obedience had a direct impact upon Elijah; God blessed him through her act of faith. In turn, Elijah's obedience to God had a direct impact upon the widow and her son, with his faith resulting in the most profound miracle of three recorded in this chapter (when her son was brought back to life).

EXPLORE:

There is debate regarding the nature of the widow's faith. Some argue that Jesus' words in Luke 4:24–27 indicate she was a worshiper of God. However, Jesus' statements do not necessarily clarify one way or another. In fact, in referencing those circumstances to His own as a prophet who found no acceptance in His hometown among those who should have had faith

in God, Jesus might have been indicating she was not yet a believer. The widow spoke of the Lord as “your” God, not “my” God. On the other hand, her willingness to meet Elijah’s request certainly demonstrated a significant amount of faith.

 KEY TRUTH: God Can Provide When All Seems Hopeless (1 Kings 17:17-24)

Even after God’s miraculous provision of sustenance, the widow still endured extreme hardship. There is no promise or guarantee by God that faith leads to ease in this life. In fact, the opposite is true ([Romans 5:1-5](#); [James 1:2-4](#)). Instead of removing all difficulties, the Lord provided in the midst of them.

DISCUSS:

- *Do trials and difficulty usually push you away from God or make you grow closer to Him? Explain.*
- *Why do you think God allowed the boy to die even after providing food for the family?*

The amount of time that passed between the events recorded in **verses 8-16** and those of **verse 17** is unknown. At some point the widow’s son became terribly ill (**verses 17**). Some (including Josephus) have interpreted the condition described as that of a coma or near-death state. However, the Hebrew word translated as *breath* primarily refers to the breath of life, the spirit of a person that enlivens them. Additionally, the widow’s declaration in **verse 18** makes it clear that she understood him to be dead. Elijah did not disagree with this but echoed that understanding in his prayer to God (**verses 20-21**).

While we might say the widow should have believed after the provision for their nourishment, there was no guarantee another miracle would bring her son back to life. Even Elijah did not respond casually as though he expected the miracle to be an automatic result. The mother reacted in the way almost any parent would, with despair and heartache. She did not blame God in all this. The presence of a *man of God*, in her estimation, had brought greater attention to her own sin, which she identified as the cause for the death of her son (**verse 18**).

Elijah, too, reacted with confusion and sadness. Even in these emotions, though, Elijah took the boy to his chambers and laid him on his bed (**verse 19**). He sought the Lord fervently. He cried to the Lord, stretched himself out on the boy three times, and cried to the Lord again (**verses 20-21**). Though he did not understand why God had allowed such a thing to come to pass, Elijah continued to exercise faith in God’s ability to do the impossible. As the widow’s faith had been rewarded earlier (**verse 16**), so too was Elijah’s, and the child lived again (**verses 22-23**). God’s miraculous response served as an affirmation of Elijah as God’s instrument, enabling the woman to testify to this fact for the sake of others (**verse 24**).

Multiple times in this chapter God provided for the needs of people in miraculous ways. Each time He did so to accomplish His will through the obedience of a person. God is able to do what people cannot do ([Luke 18:27](#)).

APPLY:

Understand that following Christ will include trials and difficulty.

APPLY:

Have faith that God can do the miraculous when it is His will.



TH 2-4

Encourage your group members to complete the daily devotions in the D6 Devotional Study Guides this week.



PP-2

The *Parent Page* (PP-2) is a resource to help parents discuss the truths of this lesson with their children at home. Give print or digital copies of this page to the parents of your students. *Parent Page* is also available for free download at D6home.com or on the D6 Family App.

DISCUSS:

- What do you think this miracle showed the widow about who God is?
- God does not always respond in the way we want Him to. How should we respond when the result is different from what we want?
- What does this chapter show you about God's character?

RESPOND

Use one or more of these **Respond** options to help your group members put into action the principles they learned in this lesson.

OPTION 1: Consider showing this video about George Müller's ministry and the incredible way God provided for an orphanage: tinyurl.com/MullerBread. Ask group members why Müller was able to have such incredible faith. Does your group believe God still provides like that today? Pray that your faith in God's provisions will increase.

OPTION 2: Use the handout, "Would You Rather?" (TH 2-4) to review and wrap up the lesson. Challenge students to trust God no matter their circumstances.

OPTION 3: Look up the lyrics to the song "Way Maker" by Leeland and read them to the group. You could also play the song. Focus specifically on the description of God in the chorus. Ask your students for examples they have observed for each of these descriptions.

Building Blocks:

Share these Bible basics with your learners.

A miracle is something only God can do. Natural events cannot explain it.

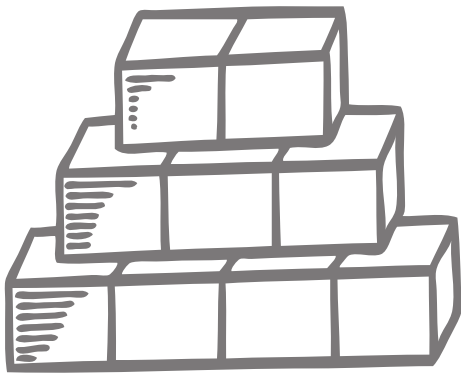
Pray!

FAMILY THEME

Standing for the One True God

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will respectfully stand for God and His ways even when it is not popular.

STUDY TEXT: 1 Kings 18:19–46



CHECKLIST

- ☐ Study the biblical text and Teen Teaching Guide.
- ☐ Review the *Teen Teaching Outline* (Teen Handout 3-1 or TH 3-1). You can take notes on this editable document as you study. You can also use it as a guide to teach from.
- ☐ Print and make copies of the *Student Outline* (TH 3-2), “Cryptoquote” (TH 3-3), “Pray Like Elijah Workshop” (TH 3-4), “Mirror Moment” (TH 3-5), and *Parent Page* (PP-3) if needed. For free access to these handouts, scan the QR code on page 2 of this teaching guide or go to d6.family/6841.
- ☐ If you are using Connect option 1, bring a selection of real and fake valuables for students to identify.
- ☐ Distribute *Parent Page* (PP-3) to the parents of your students.

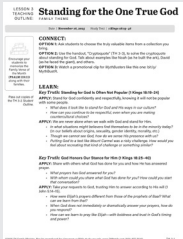
Key Truths

- *Standing for God Is Often Not Popular* (1 Kings 18:19–24)
- *God Honors Our Stance for Him* (1 Kings 18:25–40)
- *God Hears and Answers When We Pray According to His Will* (1 Kings 18:41–46)

Verse of the
Month

PSALM 119:11

Cue up videos and have them ready to play. D6 Family Ministry does not control ads shown before or after videos.



TH 3-1



TH 3-2



TH 3-3

TEACHING TIP

While emotional responses to teaching are not the end goal, recognize that the lesson should touch on feelings as well as the intellect and the will.

CONNECT

Choose one of the **Connect** options to capture attention and get this session started.

OPTION 1: Bring a selection of “valuables.” Some could be real, some should be fake or imitation. Ideas could include money, jewelry, designer clothing and accessories, and first edition books, but you may think of others. Ask students to choose the truly valuable items. Transition to the lesson by saying, *In today's lesson, Elijah asked the people of Israel to choose the true God. No fakes were acceptable.*

OPTION 2: Use the handout, “Cryptoquote” (TH 3-3), to solve the cryptoquote about standing for God. Talk about examples like Noah (as he built the ark), David (as he faced the giant), and others. Transition to the lesson by saying, *Another example is the prophet Elijah, who took a brave stand for God against 450 false prophets.*

OPTION 3: Watch a promotional clip for *MythBusters* like this one: bit.ly/MythBustR. Transition to the lesson by saying, *In today's lesson, Elijah set out to bust the myth that Baal was god. The opposition was strong, but truth won out.*

LEARN + EXPLORE + APPLY

Distribute copies of the *Student Outline* (TH 3-2).

Some people hated Elijah because he stood for the one true God and prophesied the drought for Israel. Others admired him for his willingness to stand for what he believed in. Yet others were curious regarding Elijah and his God. In the closing verses of chapter 18, all these feelings would be tested as the prophet faced the greatest challenge of his lifetime.

KEY TRUTH: Standing for God Is Often Not Popular (1 Kings 18:19-24)

In **verse 19**, Elijah challenged Ahab to summon the people of Israel and the prophets of Baal and Asherah to a showdown with the prophet of God. The actual contest would be 450 prophets of Baal against one prophet of God. (It appears that the 400 prophets of Asherah did not attend.) Elijah was in a very lonely position on Mount Carmel. Doubtless there were hundreds, perhaps thousands, who gathered to watch the showdown (**verse 20**). The number of prophets provided by Queen Jezebel revealed the extent of idolatry during Ahab's reign. Israel had drifted far away from the Lord.

Mount Carmel was between Israel and Phoenicia. It was believed by the Phoenicians to be the sacred dwelling place of Baal. This seemed to shift the advantage to the false prophets, making both Ahab and Jezebel comfortable with this proposed meeting.

In **verse 21**, Elijah challenged the people to end their doublemindedness and decide whom they would worship. The Israelites seemed to be waiting to see

which god would prove to be the most powerful. Elijah challenged them: If God was who He said He was, then follow Him. If Baal was all the false prophets claimed him to be, then follow him.

DISCUSS:

- *What does it look like to stand for God and His ways in our culture?*
- *How can you continue to be respectful, even when you are making counter-cultural choices?*

In **verse 22**, Elijah acknowledged the odds of this contest were not in his favor. Apart from a divine miracle, Elijah (and his God) would easily be defeated. Beginning in **verse 23**, Elijah proposed the details of the contest. Both Elijah and the prophets of Baal were to prepare an altar and a bull for a sacrifice, but neither was to have a fire source to light the sacrificial fire. Then, both sides were to call upon their god; the one who answered by sending fire was to be acknowledged as the true God (**verse 24**).

Even today, those who follow the Lord may be in the minority, even an extreme minority. However, what appeared to be a situation of one against 450 was actually two against 450, with the Lord Almighty on Elijah's side. As Elijah partnered with God to do His will, he was never alone and could withstand even the worst odds.

DISCUSS:

- *In what situations might believers find themselves to be in the minority today? (In our beliefs about origins, sexuality, gender identity, morality, etc.)*
- *Though we cannot see God, how do we sense His presence with us?*
- *Putting God to a test like Mount Carmel was a risky challenge. How would you feel about recreating that kind of challenge or something similar?*

 KEY TRUTH: God Honors Our Stance for Him
(1 Kings 18:25–40)

After the terms of engagement were agreed upon, Elijah continued his quest to demonstrate that the God of Heaven was real and answered the prayers of His people. First, the prophets of Baal followed the instructions of Elijah and prepared the altar (**verse 25**). Apparently they believed their god would respond to them, possibly because of past demonic activity they mistook for an act of their false god.

DISCUSS:

- *What prayers has God answered for you?*
- *With whom could you share what God has done for you? How could you start that conversation?*

Then, in **verse 26**, they spent the entire morning hours praying to their god but to no avail. The Scripture tells us these false prophets then limped or leaped or danced around the altar. Scholars are divided about the actual meaning of this expression, some asserting that it was a ritual dance performed by the Baal

APPLY:

Stand for God confidently and respectfully, knowing it will not be popular with some people.

The discussion questions can also be found on the *Teen Teaching Outline* (TH 3-1).

APPLY:

We are never alone when we walk with God and stand for Him.

APPLY:

Share with others what God has done for you and how He has answered prayer.

followers while others assert that it was a derogatory pun used to portray the foolish gestures of these idolaters.

In **verse 27**, Elijah responded to their foolish actions by taunting them. *Maybe you should pray louder*, Elijah said. Each of the reasons cited for their need to do so are humorous. It could be that their god was busy and could not focus on their needs at that time. It was also possible that he was in the bathroom, or maybe he was away on a journey or was asleep. Elijah's words caused more consternation among the prophets of Baal, and they worked themselves into an even greater frenzy in **verse 28**. Here they mutilated themselves, a custom of many pagan worshipers, but also a sign of distress on the part of these idolatrous priests. Three negative statements are made at the end of **verse 29**, each emphasizing that all their crying and physical destruction was in vain.

In **verse 30**, Elijah called the people to come near and observe what he would do. Because the former altar of the Lord was in disrepair, Elijah began by building it back. With twelve stones, representative of the twelve tribes of Israel, he built an altar and then dug a trench around it that would hold approximately 12 to 14 quarts (**verses 31–32**). Elijah began the sacrificial rite as the bull was cut into pieces. He then instructed that the sacrifice and the wood be soaked in water three separate times, which caused the trench around the altar to be filled with water (**verses 33–35**). In **verses 36 and 37**, Elijah prayed a simple prayer, one that stood in great contrast to the theatrical prayers and cries of the prophets of Baal. Elijah asked God to answer the prayer of His servant to show that He is the true God and to turn the hearts of His people back to Him.

In an amazing demonstration of His power, the Lord responded, and fire came down from Heaven and consumed the sacrifice, the wood, the stones, and the surrounding dust and water (**verse 38**). The people were amazed and cried out in **verse 39** that *the Lord is God!* There was no question as to whose god was the true God. He had done what the supposed god of sky and weather had been unable to accomplish.

APPLY:

Take your requests to God, trusting Him to answer according to His will (1 John 5:14–15).

DISCUSS:

- *How were Elijah's prayers different from those of the prophets of Baal? What can we learn from that?*
- *When God does not immediately or dramatically answer your prayers, how do you respond?*
- *How can we learn to pray like Elijah—with boldness and trust in God's timing and power?*

Because of Elijah's stance for God's truth and glory, the prophet experienced a unique display of God's power and blessings. In addition, his already strong faith in God was strengthened even more. Possibly the greatest outcome of this showdown was that many people recognized Elijah's God was indeed the true God! This was not an isolated event. Scripture and history are filled with stories and events that magnificently reveal God's glory for those who take bold steps of courage in the face of opposition. His name and power are advanced and honored.

Elijah had one final item of business to attend. In **verse 40**, he gave instructions to seize the prophets of Baal. None of them were to escape. Judgment

was coming. Elijah then took them down to the brook Kishon and slaughtered them, just as God commanded Moses in Deuteronomy 13:1–5; this was the civil punishment for idolatry.

 KEY TRUTH: God Hears and Answers When We Pray According to His Will (1 Kings 18:41–46)

In **verse 41**, Elijah spoke to Ahab and declared that heavy rain was coming. King Ahab celebrated the end of the drought while Elijah made his way back up the mountain to pray (**verse 42**; James 5:17–18). The posture of his prayer indicated there was no pride in Elijah for his accomplishments. Even then he was seeking to honor God and bring glory to Him.

DISCUSS:

- *What does this true story teach you about prayer and patience?*

EXPLORE:

Some people doubt the truth of this account of Elijah and the prophets of Baal, or they consider it to be a myth or legend. While there are aspects of the story that parallel mythological accounts, the New Testament verifies the account and teaches us lessons about prayer through it. In James 5:13–18, the brother of the Lord encouraged New Testament believers to pray, and in doing so referenced the account of Elijah on Mount Carmel. Apart from the Lord Jesus, we have no greater example of prayer and what it can accomplish. James taught several key truths about Elijah and prayer. First, he was a man who was subject to the same weaknesses and passions as any other human. Elijah knew his limitations and was aware there were many things he could not accomplish on his own, so he prayed. Also, the prophet prayed earnestly and persistently. As a result, God heard him and answered his prayer. After all, the fervent prayers of righteous persons still account for much.

At the heart of prayer is the acknowledgement that we are insufficient. We need God to meet our needs. This is powerfully seen in Elijah's prayer on the mountain. Prayers come in various lengths, words, and situations. Elijah's prayer is a reminder that it is not the length of our prayer that is important, but our faith in God to accomplish His will. Elijah took a stand for truth and then prayed for God to do what He said He would do.

DISCUSS:

- *Why can we trust God to do what He said He would do?*
- *If you could ask Elijah one question about this true story, what would it be—and why?*

Elijah instructed his servant to arise and look out over the Mediterranean Sea, the direction from which rain usually came. While the first glance revealed nothing, Elijah instructed him to look again, up to seven times (**verses 43–44**). Elijah kept praying and a small cloud appeared that quickly grew until the entire sky was dark and ominous. Elijah sent word to Ahab to get off the mountain before the rain arrived. In fulfillment of Elijah's word, the clouds and wind arrived, followed by torrential rains (**verse 45**). As the king headed

APPLY:

Pray for God to do great things that glorify His name, not yours.

APPLY:

Trust God to do what He said He would do.



TH 3-4



TH 3-5

Encourage your students to complete the daily devotions in the D6 devotional study guides this week.



PP-3

The *Parent Page* (PP-3) is a resource to help parents discuss the truths of this lesson with their children at home. Give print or digital copies of this page to the parents of your students. *Parent Page* is also available for free download at D6home.com and on the D6 Family App.

toward Jezreel, his winter capital, located halfway between Mount Carmel and Samaria, Elijah overtook him running on foot the 25 miles with divine energy driving him (**verse 46**). Through this encounter, Elijah not only defeated the prophets of Baal but also disquieted and humbled Queen Jezebel, a deed that would not go unnoticed.

RESPOND

Use one or more of these **Respond** options to help your group members put into action the principles they learned in this lesson.

OPTION 1: Use the “Pray like Elijah Workshop” handout (TH 3-4) to talk together about praying simple, bold prayers. Remind your students that God is always listening; He has promised to stand with them.

OPTION 2: Have your students identify a key verse in our study today and write it on a notecard. Ask them to pair and share (select one other student to talk to about their verse). Sing “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus” together to end your group time.

OPTION 3: Ask your students to reflect on Elijah’s challenge by journaling a “Mirror Moment” (or use TH 3-5). Ask them to put themselves in Elijah’s place as he faced great opposition in terms of political power and popularity. Ask: *How can we learn from Elijah’s example?*

Building Blocks:

Share these Bible basics with your learners.

Christians tithe by giving 10 percent of their income to God. This is not a requirement of faith but a demonstration of stewardship and love for God.

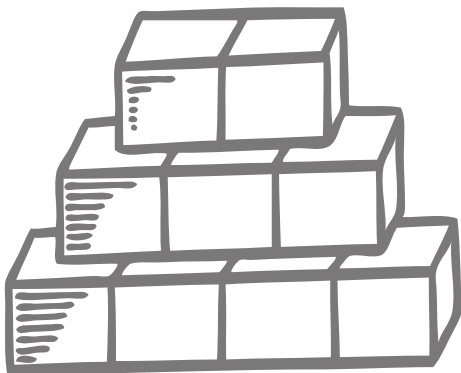
Pray!

FAMILY THEME

Faithful Leadership

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will determine to serve God as long as they live and to do so in His power.

STUDY TEXT: 2 Kings 2:1-15



CHECKLIST

- ☐ Study the biblical text and Teen Teaching Guide.
- ☐ Review the *Teen Teaching Outline* (Teen Handout 4-1 or TH 4-1). You can take notes on this editable document as you study. You can also use it as a guide to teach from.
- ☐ Print and make copies of the *Teen Outline* (AH 4-2), "Passing the Baton" (TH 4-3), "Which Prophet?" (TH 4-4), and *Parent Page* (PP-4) if necessary. For free access to these handouts, scan the QR code on page 2 of this teaching guide or go to d6.family/6841.
- ☐ If you are using Connect option 1, prepare for the relay. If you are using Connect option 2, find a list of mentorships in your area. If you are using Connect option 3, consider inviting a relay runner to class.
- ☐ Distribute *Parent Page* (PP-4) to the parents of your students.



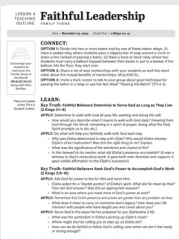
Key Truths

- *Faithful Believers Determine to Serve God as Long as They Live* (2 Kings 2:1-8)
- *Faithful Believers Seek God's Power to Accomplish God's Work* (2 Kings 2:9-15)

Verse of the
Month

PSALM 119:11

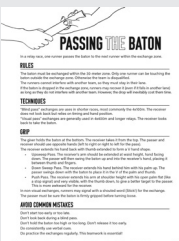
Cue up videos and have them ready to play. D6 Family Ministry does not control ads shown before or after videos.



TH 4-1



TH 4-2



TH 4-3

TEACHING TIP

The more involved students are in the lesson, the more they will learn. That means lectures are less productive than discussions.

CONNECT

Choose one of the **Connect** options to capture attention and get this session started.

OPTION 1: Have an indoor relay with your students. Divide into two or more teams and try one of these variations. (1) Have a seated relay where students pass a slippery bar of soap around a circle or down a line instead of passing a baton. (2) Have a back-to-back relay where two students must carry a balloon trapped between their backs to put in a basket. If the balloon hits the floor, they start over. Transition to the lesson by saying, *Today's lesson records the passing of the baton between Elijah and Elisha from 2 Kings 2.*

OPTION 2: Google for a list of mentorships in your area, and you'll probably find programs for students, jobs and professions, and refugees. Share some of these programs with your students as well this short video about the mutual benefits of mentorships: bit.ly/43tI73L. Transition to the lesson by saying, *Today we'll study about an important mentor relationship between two prophets, Elijah and Elisha.*

OPTION 3: Invite a track runner to talk to your group about good technique for passing the baton in a relay or use the fact sheet ("Passing the Baton," TH 4-3). Transition to the lesson by saying, *Relays are lost or won in the baton pass. Elijah ended his ministry by passing the baton (figuratively) to the next prophet, Elisha. That's what we'll talk about in today's lesson.*

LEARN + EXPLORE + APPLY

Distribute copies of the *Student Outline* (TH 4-2)

Up until this point in 1 and 2 Kings, we read primarily about the ministry and service of Elijah. Chapter 2 marks a shift from his ministry to that of Elisha, the one who had faithfully served as an apprentice and assistant to the prophet for seven or eight years. In this chapter, the transition from Elijah to Elisha takes place.

KEY TRUTH: Faithful Believers Determine to Serve God as Long as They Live (2 Kings 2:1-8)

As the time drew near for God to take Elijah to Heaven, both Elijah and Elisha demonstrated faithfulness to the end. Elijah, knowing the time was near, continued to follow God's direction in visiting and encouraging the young prophets he apparently mentored and taught. Elijah had trained and developed the young prophets, including Elisha, wanting God's work to continue and thrive after he was gone. **Verse 1** gives the background for this event, informing the reader of what was about to happen. This was the time when Elijah was to be taken to Heaven in a miraculous fashion—without dying and on a chariot of fire. An exit of this magnitude had not happened since the days of Enoch (Genesis 5:23-24).

EXPLORE:

Elijah and Elisha played significant roles in God's plan for Israel. Consider the key details regarding each. **Elijah** was one of the most interesting and significant prophets in all of the Bible. In 1 Kings 17:1, he suddenly appeared on the scene challenging King Ahab, the evil, idolatrous king who reigned in Israel's northern kingdom from 874 to 853 BC. Nothing is known of Elijah's family or upbringing, only the fact that he was from Tishbe. While Elijah is most known for his encounter with the prophets of Baal in 1 Kings 18, his ministry was comprised of many other significant moments and events. In fact, Elijah was present with Moses at the Transfiguration of Jesus (Matthew 17:3) and is the prophet to whom John the Baptist was likened (Luke 1:17). **Elisha** was the successor of Elijah as a prophet in Israel and served in this capacity for approximately 60 years. Elisha was called to follow Elijah in 1 Kings 19 and spent the next several years as the prophet's assistant and protégé. During the ministry of Elisha, Baal worship was eradicated in Israel. Elisha's ministry was characterized by humility, a love for the people of Israel, and faithfulness over the course of a lifelong ministry.

The aged prophet Elijah spoke to his young apprentice and instructed him to stay put while he continued on to Bethel. Elisha, also knowing Elijah's time was short and wanting the blessing and endorsement of his beloved mentor, determined to remain with Elijah to the end (**verse 2**). The expression, *As the Lord lives...* was an oath of sorts and revealed the heart of Elisha for the Lord and for Elijah. Consequently, the two prophets of God made one final journey together and went to Bethel.

DISCUSS:

- *How would you describe what it means to walk with God daily?* (Hearing from God through His Word; remaining in a spirit of prayer; doing what the Holy Spirit prompts us to do; etc.)

Verse 3 indicates word had spread regarding Elijah and his impending "death." The sons or company of the prophets (apprentice prophets) spoke of the fact that Elijah would be taken away from Elisha. The truth was that Elijah would be taken from all of Israel and he would be missed by all the young prophets, not just Elisha. Elisha instructed the young messengers to keep it quiet.

EXPLORE:

The *sons of the prophets* were also known as the *company of prophets* or the *school of prophets*. The title is a technical one referring to the members of a prophetic order or guild and had no reference to physical descent from a prophet. During the days of Elijah and Elisha, there were guilds or locations of these prophets in training in Bethel, Jericho, Gilgal, and the hill country of Ephraim. These young servants appeared most often during the ministry of Elisha; they served as an extension or agents of the ministry of the prophet.

For a second time, Elijah attempted to leave Elisha behind as he continued his journey. Again Elisha refused to abandon his mentor and the two of them traveled to Jericho (**verse 4**). Once more a group of the sons of the prophets asked

APPLY:

Determine to walk with God all your life, seeking and doing His will.

The discussion questions can also be found on the *Teen Teaching Outline* (TH 4-1).

Elisha about his awareness of Elijah being “taken away.” The prophet again requested that they keep silent regarding this news (**verse 5**).

For a third time, the aged prophet asked his son in the faith to stay behind as he made his way to the Jordan River. Again, Elisha chose to continue with Elijah, a decision that he would not regret (**verse 6**). At this point, 50 of the sons of the prophets had a front row seat to an event they would not soon forget (**verse 7**). In his final recorded miracle, Elijah took his cloak, a symbol of his authority, rolled it up, and struck the water. The water of the Jordan parted, and Elijah and Elisha crossed on dry ground together (**verse 8**).

The parting of the Jordan may remind readers of the crossing of the Red Sea or the Israelites crossing the Jordan at their arrival into the Promised Land. Many commentators believe this scenario reveals similarities between Elisha’s succession of Elijah and Joshua’s succession of Moses (Numbers 27:18–23; 1 Kings 19:15–21). Both successors were chosen by God and endorsed by their mentors.

APPLY:

Do what will help you faithfully walk with God each day.

DISCUSS:

- *Why was Elisha determined to stay with Elijah? Why would Elisha disobey Elijah’s direct instruction? Was this the right thing to do? Explain.*
- *What was the significance of the whirlwind and chariot of fire?*
- *In this farewell to his mentor, what did Elisha’s presence accomplish? (It was a witness to God’s miraculous work; it gave both men direction and support; it gave visible affirmation to Elijah’s successor)*

 KEY TRUTH: Faithful Believers Seek God’s Power to Accomplish God’s Work (2 Kings 2:9–15)

After a strategic journey and unwavering determination when Elijah tried to discourage him from going, Elisha was given the opportunity to hear, see, and receive spiritual blessings others were not allowed to experience. When asked what he desired from Elijah, Elisha requested extra power (a double portion of Elijah’s spirit) from God to enable him to accomplish the work God had in store for him (**verse 9**). Elisha’s response is similar to Solomon’s response when God asked Solomon what he wanted God to give him (1 Kings 3:5–9).

DISCUSS:

- *Elisha asked for a “double portion” of Elijah’s spirit. What did he mean by that? How did God answer? Was this an appropriate request?*
- *What is an area where you need more of God’s power at work?*

EXPLORE:

The double portion requested by Elisha can seem like a selfish request if not understood in its proper context. Literally the expression meant *according to two shares*. It is rooted in the legal realm as described in Deuteronomy 21:17. In the Jewish culture, the firstborn son was entitled to a double share of the inheritance given by the father. Elisha desired a spiritual inheritance in which he received a double share as compared to the others such as the sons of the prophets. He was requesting the opportunity to be Elijah’s successor, the one who would carry on the ministry established by the great

APPLY:

Ask God for power to live for Him and serve Him.

prophet. In essence, his desire was to be as effective as Elijah had been. An apparent fulfillment of that request resulted in Elisha's performing twice as many recorded miracles and prophetic utterances as Elijah.

In **verse 10**, the aged prophet informed his successor that this *double portion* was not his to give and was indeed a *hard thing* to confer. Elijah did inform Elisha that if he witnessed Elijah as he was taken away, this would be the sign or evidence that this double portion would indeed be given to him.

As the two prophets continued to walk and talk, the miraculous happened when Elijah was taken by a whirlwind up into Heaven (**verse 11**). The details surrounding this event are amazing. Both chariots of fire and horses of fire were present. Horses and chariots were the most powerful means of warfare of that day. The fire and the whirlwind were both symbolic of the presence of God. The whirlwind was likely a storm with lightning and thunder. The Lord was reminding Elisha that His presence and power were greater than any military might. Elisha had no reason to fear.

DISCUSS:

- What does it mean to carry on someone else's legacy? How does your life intersect with people who have taught you and cared about you?

Upon seeing this event unfold before his eyes, Elisha cried out, *My father*, in **verse 12**. Elijah had been Elisha's spiritual father. This relationship was both unique and special. Elisha's reference to *the chariots of Israel and its horsemen* could have been his recognition that God's power through Elijah had been the true strength of Israel. The same would be said at Elisha's death (2 Kings 13:14). With this cry, Elisha tore his clothes, an act of mourning over the loss of the great prophet.

In **verse 13**, Elisha seemed speechless. What more could be said? His action of picking up Elijah's cloak was a reminder of the work left for him to do. Scholars believe this cloak was the same one used by Elijah when he appointed Elisha as his successor (1 Kings 19:19–21). In picking up and taking Elijah's cloak for himself, Elisha took up the work Elijah (and God) left for Him to do.

DISCUSS:

- What was the symbolism in Elisha's picking up Elijah's cloak?
- Where might God be calling you to step up, as Elisha did?
- How can we be faithful to follow God's calling, even when we don't feel ready or strong enough?

In **verse 14**, Elisha took the cloak of Elijah, struck the water, and asked, *Where is the Lord, the God of Elijah?* This was probably a request for God to demonstrate His power just as He had for Elijah. Elijah's final miracle was mirrored by Elisha's first miracle and provided evidence that the power that once rested on Elijah now rested on Elisha. The young prophets who were present recognized God had empowered and endorsed Elisha for his ministry. God recognized and rewarded Elisha's faithfulness. Again, these events recall the transition of leadership between Moses and Joshua (Joshua 3:7–17).

APPLY:

Remember that God's presence and power are greater than any problem we face.

APPLY:

Serve God in the ways He has prepared for you (Ephesians 2:10).



TH 4-4

Encourage your group members to complete the daily devotions in the D6 devotional study guides this week.



PP-4

The *Parent Page* (PP-4) is a resource to help parents discuss the truths of this lesson with their children at home. Give print or digital copies of this page to the parents of your students. *Parent Page* is also available for free download at D6home.com and at the D6 Family App.

The respect and honor once given to Elijah by the sons of the prophets was now given to Elisha (**verse 15**). They recognized not only the position he now filled but also the power and spirit with which he would do it. Out of respect for their leader, this newly appointed prophet of God, they bowed to the ground in honor.

RESPOND

Use one or more of these **Respond** options to help your group members put into action the principles they learned in this lesson.

OPTION 1: Ask students to think about their mentors and choose one influential one. Ask them to write or draw on a notecard one article of clothing that symbolizes that person. Ask others in the class to guess from that drawing or description who the mentor is. Encourage your students to send a thank you note or text to those who have invested in them.

OPTION 2: Saying goodbye to someone who means a lot to you is always hard, whether that person is moving, leaving, or dying. Ask students to make a list of strategies for helping with those hard goodbyes. Remind them of Elisha's actions: staying close, sharing words of encouragement, sharing purpose for the future.

OPTION 3: Ask students to identify Elijah or Elisha as the prophet involved in notable events in 1 and 2 Kings using "Which Prophet?" (TH 4-4). With such similar names, it may help to give the clue that they come in alphabetical order!

Building Blocks:

Share these Bible basics with your learners.

A prophet is a messenger chosen by God to share His words.

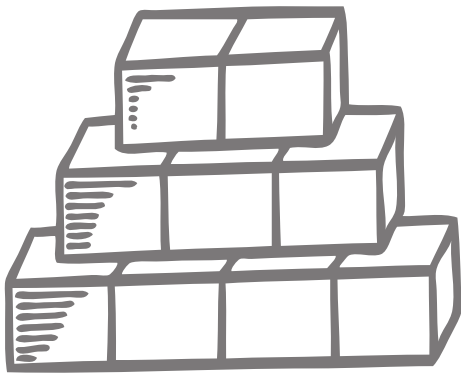
Pray!

FAMILY THEME

Humble Obedience

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will choose to humbly obey God, even when it doesn't seem to make sense.

STUDY TEXT: 2 Kings 5:1-27



CHECKLIST

- ☐ Study the biblical text and Teen Teaching Guide.
- ☐ Review the *Teen Teaching Outline* (Teen Handout 5-1 or TH 5-1). You can take notes on this editable document as you study. You can also use it as a guide to teach from.
- ☐ Print and make copies of the *Student Outline* (TH 5-2), "Crazy Home Remedies" (TH 5-3), "Secret Service" (TH 5-4), and *Parent Page* (PP-5) if needed. For free access to these handouts, scan the QR code on page 2 of this teaching guide or go to d6.family/6841.
- ☐ Distribute *Parent Page* (PP-5) to the parents of your students.



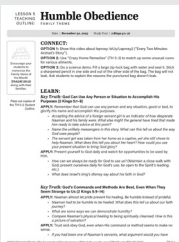
Key Truths

- **God Can Use Any Person or Situation to Accomplish His Purposes** (2 Kings 5:1-8)
- **God's Commands and Methods Are Best, Even When They Seem Strange to Us** (2 Kings 5:9-14)
- **Believers Must Guard Against Fame and Greed** (2 Kings 5:15-27)

Verse of the
Month

PSALM 119:11

Cue up videos and have them ready to play. D6 Family Ministry does not control ads shown before or after videos.



TH 5-1



TH 5-2



TH 5-3

TEACHING TIP

Don't let discussion be merely shared ignorance. Guide discussion times with comments, suggestions, and additional questions.

CONNECT

Choose one of the **Connect** options to capture attention and get this session started.

OPTION 1: Show this video about leprosy: bit.ly/Leprosy2 ("Every Two Minutes: Arshad's Story"). Transition to the lesson by saying, *This video is a bit dated and the World Health Organization is continuing to stamp out the disease of leprosy. However, in Bible times, many faced pain, deformity, and social exclusion because of it.*

OPTION 2: Use "Crazy Home Remedies" (TH 5-3) to match up some unusual cures for various ailments. Transition to the lesson by saying, *Sometimes God uses unlikely people, items, or circumstances to accomplish His purposes. Today we will see how He used a servant girl to set in motion events that would change lives and bring Himself great glory.*

OPTION 3: Do a science demo. Fill a large zip-lock bag with water and seal it. Stick a sharpened pencil in one side and out of the other side of the bag. The bag will not leak. Ask students to explain the reasons the punctured bag doesn't leak. Transition to the lesson by saying, *We cannot always explain what goes on around us. We certainly can't explain all that God is doing. But, like Naaman, we want to obey God. Let's talk more about that in our lesson.*

LEARN + EXPLORE + APPLY

Distribute copies of the *Student Outline* (TH 5-2)

Although this week's passage involves important people like kings and the commander of an entire army, its main focus is on how God used a lowly servant girl and strange instructions from the prophet Elisha to point a mighty pagan commander to Himself. That commander was Syrian. The Syrians moved around with their livestock or lived in small villages before beginning to build cities in Syria. They fortified Damascus as their capital. They were usually military and economic rivals with Israel, but they also went through periods of cooperation. Their language, Aramaic, saw wide use as a diplomatic language among nations of that region. It became the common language spoken among the Jews of Jesus' day.

KEY TRUTH: God Can Use Any Person or Situation to Accomplish His Purposes (2 Kings 5:1-8)

Naaman, the commander of Syria's army, was a mighty warrior, but he also was a leper. He had employed his military skill against Israel. That is how the servant girl from Israel came to be serving in his house (**verses 1-2**).

EXPLORE:

Leprosy in both testaments of the Bible included much more than the disease we know today as Hansen's disease. It covered a variety of skin disorders, including psoriasis. Even fabric and buildings could be said to have leprosy. This probably indicates discoloration from mildew or even

efflorescence on stone or masonry walls. For Israelites, all cases called for the involvement of a priest. In Israel, lepers lived within a set of strict social restrictions because they were considered ceremonially unclean—unfit to participate in the worship of God. Naaman, the Syrian, may have experienced severe pain or discomfort. Leprosy was considered incurable at that time.

The unnamed servant girl apparently wanted Naaman cured, even though he represented her captor. Her attitude strikes us. Perhaps Naaman was a decent master after all. Perhaps serving in his household was better than what she had left behind. Perhaps respecting the God of Israel had shaped her character. Perhaps she wanted Naaman to see how great the God of Israel is. Whatever the cause, she told her mistress, who shared the news with her husband. He went to speak with his master, the Syrian king, relaying what the girl had said (**verses 2–4**). The Syrian king sent a letter requesting that Israel's king cure Naaman. He also sent along some very impressive gifts with the request (**verses 5–6**).

DISCUSS:

- *Accepting the advice of a foreign servant girl is an indicator of how desperate Naaman and his family were. What else might the general have tried that made him ready to take advice at this point?*
- *Name the unlikely messengers in this story. What can this tell us about the way God uses people?*
- *The servant girl was taken from her home as a captive, yet she still chose to help Naaman. What does this tell you about her heart? How could you use your present situation to bring God glory?*

EXPLORE:

Too often we take delight in the discomfort or even suffering of our enemies. Does our faith in Jesus Christ have less effect on our attitudes than the servant girl's faith had on hers? [First Peter 2:23](#) gives us the example of Christ who did not wish evil upon His persecutors because He *entrusted* Himself to God, the righteous Judge. Our desire for revenge or evil upon our enemies indicates we do not fully entrust ourselves to God.

If we had been able to travel through Israel and Syria during this era to select someone who could set in motion important events, we most likely would not have chosen a captive servant girl. Things we view as limitations or qualifications count for little with God. What matters most in accomplishing God's will is to love God and to be available, obedient, and committed to doing what He says.

DISCUSS:

- *How can we always be ready for God to use us? (Maintain a close walk with God; present ourselves daily for God's use; be open to the Spirit's leading; etc.)*
- *What does Israel's king's dismay say about his faith in God?*

APPLY:

Remember that God can use any person and any situation, good or bad, to glorify His name and accomplish His purposes.

The discussion questions can also be found on the *Teen Teaching Outline* (TH 5-1).

APPLY:

Present yourself to God daily and watch for opportunities to be used by Him.

Israel's king was dismayed (**verse 7**). Healing was up to God, after all. He could imagine the reason for such an outrageous request: the king of Syria wanted to stir up trouble and perhaps create an excuse to attack Israel.

The king found himself trying to respond to events set in motion by an unknown servant girl and dependent on a prophet he never respected. When Elisha heard what had happened, he sent word that the king was to send the Syrian to him, so Naaman would know there was a prophet of the true and living God in Israel (**verse 8**).

KEY TRUTH: God's Commands and Methods Are Best, Even When They Seem Strange to Us (2 Kings 5:9-14)

As Naaman approached the home of the prophet, Elisha did not go out to see him, not even to ask who he was or why he came. Perhaps God had revealed all this to him. Perhaps what Elisha had already heard about the situation included these details (**verses 9-10**). Refusing to meet the official to whom he merely sent word may seem odd to us, perhaps even rude or unfriendly. Elisha needed to make a statement about *his* Master, the God of Israel. Naaman served the master of the Syrians, who had defeated Israel. Elisha served the God of Israel and all the earth. By only sending a message through his servant, he established the hierarchy among the various powers involved.

As one might expect, Naaman was angry, perhaps even skeptical about the authenticity of this prophet (**verses 11-12**). His pride was wounded. He expected first to see the prophet and then to see some special ritual or ceremony that would restore his health. Instead, he saw nothing special at all.

APPLY:

Naaman almost let pride prevent his healing. Be humble instead of prideful.

DISCUSS:

- *Naaman had to be humble to be healed. What does this tell us about our faith journey?*
- *What are some ways we can demonstrate humility?*
- *Compare Naaman's physical healing to being spiritually cleansed. How is this a picture of salvation?*

Naaman's servants' pride was not as wounded as his, and they saw more clearly (**verse 13**). Surely he would have undertaken any great task assigned to him by the prophet to bring healing. Might it be worthwhile to give his unusual instructions a chance? Pride and stubbornness have blocked the road for many throughout history. Naaman could have been one of them, but for the logical open-mindedness of his servants. He humbled himself to do what Elisha had instructed. Obedience has its rewards. Naaman went to the river, dipped seven times, and found himself with perfectly restored health (**verse 14**).

God's healing in Naaman's case was not contingent upon some ritual or practice. It needed only Naaman's obedience. The precise instructions did not matter—God could surely have chosen any number of things; it mattered greatly whether Naaman followed them.

DISCUSS:

- *If you had been one of Naaman's servants, what argument would you have used to convince your leader to do as Elisha told him?*

APPLY:

Trust and obey God, even when His command or method seems to make no sense.

- *What are some commands or methods of God that don't seem to make sense?* (Love and pray for your enemies; put others' interests ahead of your own; bless those who persecute you; etc.)
- *Why can we trust God when things don't seem to make sense?* (He is all knowing, all powerful, and all wise; He has all authority; He knows what is best; etc.)

What God tells us to do is not usually very complicated or hard to remember. Even little children can understand. It becomes difficult because we sometimes do not think it is reasonable or sensible. Obedience often opens the door to understanding. First we obey; then we can understand. We, too, need to swallow our pride and simply obey the Lord.

KEY TRUTH: Believers Must Guard Against Fame and Greed (2 Kings 5:15-27)

Naaman's attitude toward Elisha instantly changed. He understood that there was only one God, Israel's God, and he pressed Elisha to accept his gifts (**verse 15**). Converted to our measurements, Naaman carried about 750 pounds (341 kilos) of silver and 150 pounds (68 kilos) of gold. Could Elisha have put the gifts to good use? Of course! There were prophets to feed, widows to protect, and perhaps even his old age to prepare for. He understood, however, that it was more important that his actions teach Naaman that the healing came from God, not the prophet. What gift could he accept for something God had done (**verse 16**)?

DISCUSS:

- *Naaman was not an Israelite. What does this story help us realize about God's plan to reach all nations?*
- *Imagine the response of Naaman's family and of the servant girl when Naaman returned home healed. How do you think the story ended?*

Naaman's actions in **verses 17-18** might seem strange to us. Naaman understood that Israel's God was the only true God. He misunderstood, as did so many of his time, much about God's nature. The pagan world often held that one could properly worship a deity only on his home territory. Therefore, Naaman felt he could only truly worship Jehovah God if he could bow down upon the soil of Israel. He even asked forgiveness ahead of time for fulfilling his civic and military duty to accompany the king when *he* bowed before pagan deities. What a contrast with most of Israel, who added many pagan deities to their worship of Jehovah God.

Elisha's response demonstrated that he understood the limitations of Naaman's newborn faith. Rather than instruct him more fully concerning the nature of Jehovah, he told Naaman what he most needed to hear: *go in peace* (**verse 19**).

Naaman's gifts could not sway Elisha's devotion to God. It was different, however, for Gehazi (**verses 20-21**). He bristled at the opportunity Elisha let slip through his hands. His words and actions followed his greedy heart (**verses 22-23**). He built his deceptive story and took what he knew Naaman would willingly offer. Gehazi apparently was not content with God's provision for him and coveted more. He placed his own desires over God's glory.

APPLY:

Give God the glory for every blessing and accomplishment you experience.

APPLY:

Worship God alone. Give Him priority over everything else, including fame and riches.



TH 5-4

Encourage your students to complete the daily devotions in the D6 devotional study guides this week. *Velocity* is written for middle school students; high school students will use *Forward*.



PP-5

The *Parent Page* (PP-5) is a resource to help parents discuss the truths of this lesson with their children at home. Give print or digital copies of this page to the parents of your students, or link them to it at D6home.com or the D6 Family App.

DISCUSS:

- Elisha put God ahead of everything else, including fame and riches. What idols compete with God for priority in our lives?
- Gehazi's actions had grave consequences. Why was God's judgment on him so severe?

Naaman's servants would surely have carried everything right up to the prophet's home again, and then the truth would have been out. As they got close, Gehazi took the gifts and hid them after the men were out of sight (**verse 24**). His lie to Naaman demanded a lie to Elisha (**verse 25**), which was especially unwise. Naaman's leprosy would move to Gehazi and his descendants (**verses 26–27**).

RESPOND

Use one or more of these **Respond** options to help your group members put into action the principles they learned in this lesson.

OPTION 1: Give your students a “Speak Up” challenge. Like Naaman's servant girl, they can all speak up for the one true God. They don't have to preach! But encourage them to choose one person and tell them one thing God has done for them—answered a prayer, gave peace, provided a need, anything. Let God do the rest!

OPTION 2: Use “Secret Service” (TH 5-4) as a follow up for today's lesson to commission your students to serve others with humility. We can all do small acts of kindness to be a blessing to others, especially during this Christmas season.

OPTION 3: Challenge your students to a “Spot the Servant” game this week. They should be on the lookout for people who serve quietly, out of the spotlight, whether they are custodians, lunch ladies, store clerks, day care workers, family members, or others. Encourage them to write down the names or roles of at least three people they notice doing humble work, pray for each of them, and find a way to say thank you.

Building Blocks:

Share these Bible basics with your learners.

Obedience to God's commands provides evidence of our belief in God.

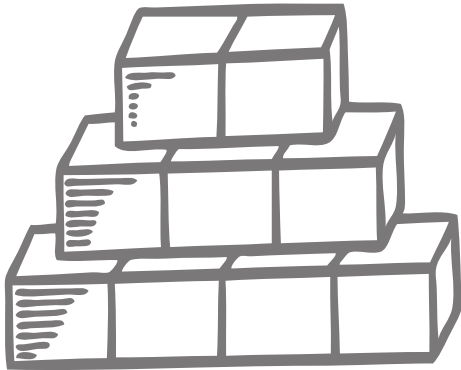
Pray!

FAMILY THEME

Answering God's Call

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will answer God's call to serve Him.

STUDY TEXT: Isaiah 6:1-13



CHECKLIST

- ☐ Study the biblical text and Teen Teaching Guide.
- ☐ Review the *Teen Teaching Outline* (Teen Handout 6-1 or TH 6-1). You can take notes on this editable document as you study. You can also use it as a guide to teach from.
- ☐ Print and make copies of the *Student Outline* (TH 6-2), "Who's Calling?" (TH 6-3), "Mission: Possible" (TH 6-4), "Putting the I in Isaiah 6" (TH 6-5), and *Parent Page* (PP-6) if needed. For free access to these handouts, scan the QR code on page 2 of this teaching guide or go to d6.family/6841.
- ☐ If you are using Connect option 1, set up a student to get a special text. If you are using Connect option 2, locate a video of an amazing scene from nature.
- ☐ Distribute *Parent Page* (PP-6) to the parents of your students.



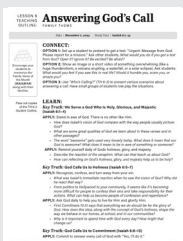
Key Truths

- We Serve a God Who Is Holy, Glorious, and Majestic (Isaiah 6:1-4)
- God Calls Us to Holiness (Isaiah 6:5-7)
- God Calls Us to Commitment (Isaiah 6:8-13)

Verse of the
Month

ISAIAH 9:6

Cue up videos and have them ready to play. D6 Family Ministry does not control ads shown before or after videos.



TH 6-1



TH 6-2



TH 6-3

TEACHING TIP

Be a friend to your students. Your group should not feel impersonal. No one should feel invisible.

CONNECT

Choose one of the **Connect** options to capture attention and get this session started.

OPTION 1: In advance, set up a student to pretend to get a text: “Urgent: Message from God. Please report for a mission.” Ask other students, *What would you do if you got a text from God? Open it? Ignore it? Be excited? Be afraid?* Transition to the lesson by saying, *Instead of a text, Isaiah received a vision from God. We’ll learn more about that today.*

OPTION 2: Show an image or a short video of something overwhelming (like a huge thunderstorm, a volcano erupting, a waterfall, or a solar eclipse). Ask students: *What would you feel if you saw this in real life? Would it humble you, scare you, or amaze you?* Discuss other times when students have felt small in perspective to God’s big world. Transition to the lesson by saying, *Isaiah had a vision that blew his mind. He saw God’s glory! Let’s look at what happened next.*

OPTION 3: Use “Who’s Calling?” (TH 6-3) to present various scenarios about answering a call. Have small groups of students role play the situations. Transition to the lesson by saying, *Isaiah had a call straight from God. How did He respond? We’ll talk more about it in today’s lesson.*

LEARN + EXPLORE + APPLY

Distribute copies of the *Student Outline* (TH 6-2).

The call of Isaiah took place in the year King Uzziah died, which would have been approximately 740 BC. Isaiah’s life and ministry spanned some or all of the rule of Uzziah (767–740 BC), Jotham (740–732 BC), Ahaz (732–716 BC), Hezekiah (716–687 BC), and Manasseh (687–642 BC). He continued to minister until the death of the Assyrian king Sennacherib, approximately 680 BC. Assyria grew to be the dominant power in the region during this time, ultimately leading to the fall of the northern kingdom of Israel at their hands in 722 BC. Later, as the Assyrian empire’s power began to wane, Isaiah also prophesied the rise of Babylon and how God would use them as an instrument of His judgment against the people’s covenant unfaithfulness. The latter portion of the book of Isaiah prophesied about the time of the exile after Babylon destroyed Jerusalem (586 BC) and the subsequent captivity and exile of the Hebrew people.

Isaiah ministered in a difficult time with a difficult purpose. The events of his call (chapter 6) help us understand how he was able to serve faithfully amidst these difficulties. They also equip us with the wisdom necessary to remain faithful in our own service to God.

KEY TRUTH: We Serve a God Who Is Holy, Glorious, and Majestic (Isaiah 6:1-4)

In **verse 1**, we learn that Isaiah was given a glimpse into Heaven. He had a vision of God on a throne with His robe filling the Temple. In the ancient world it was common for kings and high officials to wear long robes, symbols

of their majesty and power. The *seraphim* present in **verse 2** are not explicitly mentioned anywhere else in Scripture, though they are represented in John's vision as described in Revelation 4:8. They have the same number of wings, and repeat *Holy, holy, holy* unto the Lord (**verse 3**). Although they are heavenly beings, they, like man, cannot gaze upon the fullness of God's glory, so they cover their faces with two of their wings. Explanations differ for the covering of their feet.

The earthquake and smoke that accompanied God's presence (**verse 4**) are not uncommon scriptural representations of the presence of God, reminding us of God's presence at Mount Sinai (Exodus 20:18). The people reacted with trepidation and recognition of their unworthiness to be in the presence of God (Exodus 20:18–20).

Much like the symbolic nature of the number seven within the Scriptures, the repetition of *holy* three times is symbolic of completion, thus presenting God as lacking nothing. There are also those who believe it is indicative of the three parts of the Godhead (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit).

All these symbols are representative of the staggering "otherness" of God. The term *holiness* as commonly used in Scripture refers to that which is set apart, distinct. Holiness is the primary aspect of God's nature revealed in the Old Testament.

DISCUSS:

- How does Isaiah's vision of God compare with the way people usually picture God?
- What are some great qualities of God we learn about in these verses and in other passages?
- The word "awesome" gets used very loosely today. What does it mean that our God is awesome? What does it mean to be in awe of something or someone?

God is the most set apart, distinct being in existence. There is nothing else or no one else like Him. He stands alone. This concept was reflected in the first phrase of the *Shema*, the daily recitation among the Jews (which is still practiced to this day by more orthodox Jews) of Deuteronomy 6:4–5: *Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one*. This statement affirms there is only one God (it can also be translated as *The LORD is our God, the LORD alone*). This is a significant assertion in a region and era when polytheism (the belief in multiple gods) was the commonly held belief system.

DISCUSS:

- Describe the reaction of the seraphim. What can that teach us about God?
- How can reflecting on God's holiness, glory, and majesty help us to be holy?

God is one of a kind, and He deserves a one-of-a-kind response—just like Isaiah showed. When God calls us to serve Him, it's not like any other job or responsibility. Serving God should be our top priority and purpose. He deserves our very best because He's the only one worthy of all the glory and honor. The way we serve Him should show just how important He is to us.

APPLY:

Stand in awe of God. There is no other like Him.

The discussion questions can also be found on the *Teen Teaching Outline* (AH 6-1).

APPLY:

Remind yourself daily of God's holiness, glory, and majesty.

KEY TRUTH: God Calls Us to Holiness (Isaiah 6:5-7)

When Isaiah saw how awesome and holy God was, he instantly realized how messed up and unclean he was in comparison. He knew he was in big trouble and cried out for help (**verse 5**). Back then, people believed that seeing God meant certain death (Judges 13:22). But instead of punishing him, God sent a seraph (an angel) to touch Isaiah's lips with a hot coal from the altar. This burned away his sin and made him clean (**verses 6-7**).

EXPLORE:

As Zephaniah 3:9 dictates, purified lips were necessary to call upon God. The concept of purification by fire is a common one in Scripture (Malachi 3:2-3; 1 Peter 1:7; Numbers 31:23; etc.) and of that culture. More specifically, coals of fire were taken from the altar into the holy of holies on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:12).

APPLY:

Recognize, confess, and turn away from your sin.

DISCUSS:

- *What was Isaiah's immediate reaction when he saw the vision of God? Why did he react that way?*
- *From politics to Hollywood to your community, it seems like it's becoming more difficult for people to confess their sins and take responsibility for their actions. What can help us become people of confession and repentance?*

Even though Isaiah was a man of faith and demonstrated a ready spirit to serve (*Here I am! Send me*, **Isaiah 6:8**), God still wanted him to be purified in order to serve Him.

We, too, must be purified in order to serve God. None of us are worthy. Our talents, skills, or understanding are not sufficient. He alone can equip us. Only His work through us makes His will possible. We need His transformation in our lives. As Paul wrote in Romans 12:1-2, God's presence must completely transform the way we think and the way we live. We must be holy as God is holy (1 Peter 1:16). Only God can do that in us and through us (1 Peter 1:18-19).

DISCUSS:

- *First Corinthians 10:31 says that everything we do should be for the glory of God. How does this idea, along with the concept of God's holiness, shape the way we behave in our homes, at school, and in our communities?*
- *Why is it important to spend time with God every day? How might that change us?*

KEY TRUTH: God Calls Us to Commitment (Isaiah 6:8-13)

God calls us in many ways. It might be a call to turn away from sin, to show love to a neighbor, or to serve in some ministry. In **verse 8**, we see God call for someone to go and speak to His people. Isaiah responded with *send me*. The doctrine of the Trinity is supported by the use of the plural *us* in God's call. Isaiah's task was not an easy one, which the Lord made clear from the outset. No matter what Isaiah said, the people would not listen, and no matter what he

APPLY:

Ask God daily to help you to live for Him and glorify Him.

showed them, they would not see (**verse 9**). **Verse 10** reminds us of God's work in the heart of Pharaoh (Exodus 4:21; 7:14). Just as Moses persevered through Pharaoh's stubbornness and the resistance of the Hebrew people he led, so too would Isaiah need to persevere through a difficult time of service where the only hope would be presented as coming to fulfillment far in the future.

EXPLORE:

Verses 9–10 are quoted in all three of the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) during Jesus' explanation of the parable of the sower, along with the purpose behind the use of parables (Matthew 13:14–15; Mark 4:12; Luke 8:10). Only those who were willing to really listen to God on His terms and accept what He revealed would be able to perceive the truth. In Isaiah's ministry, there would be very few who would listen.

The prediction of the near future was bleak. The final three verses of the chapter speak of the coming destruction of both kingdoms (**verse 11**), the exile of God's people (**verse 12**), and the diminishing of their numbers (**verse 13**). The message was not one people would want to hear. Full commitment to God's mission and trust in His sovereignty were necessary for Isaiah to stay the course. The sovereignty of God is seen in the differences of the practices of the two conquering nations. The Assyrians dispersed their captives, which resulted in the ten northern tribes losing their identity. The Babylonians brought their captives to the capital city and kept them in their own community, which preserved their national identity and prepared their eventual return to their country.

DISCUSS:

- *What kind of mission might God be calling teenagers to do?*
- *What does this chapter teach us about serving God? What does it teach us about worshiping God?*

We can feel the darkness is surging in our era too. Jesus explained the fulfillment of **Isaiah 6:9–10** to His followers in the Gospels. Paul's prophetic words to Timothy continued the theme: a time will come when people won't tolerate sound teaching but will listen to false teachers who tell them what they want to hear. They won't listen to the truth but will pursue myths and lies (2 Timothy 4:3–4). The true message of the gospel and the teachings of Jesus that we have been charged to declare (Matthew 28:19–20) will often fall upon deaf ears. We must be fully committed and follow Isaiah's example of faithfulness.

We must do what God calls us to do, no matter how difficult. We must be faithful to His Word and truth, regardless of how unpopular it might be. People need God's truth presented with love.

DISCUSS:

- *How can we strive for both truth and love in our words, tone, attitude, and actions?*
- *How should we respond if the message we share is rejected? Why can we rejoice even in the face of rejection?*

Answering God's call to service requires complete commitment if we are to remain faithful. We should not be surprised when the message is rejected and

APPLY:

Commit to answer every call of God with "Yes, I'll do it," no matter the difficulty.

APPLY:

Speak the truth but do it in love (Ephesians 4:15).



TH 6-4



TH 6-5

Encourage your group members to complete the daily devotions in the D6 Devotional Study Guides this week.



PP-6

The *Parent Page* (PP-6) is a resource to help parents discuss the truths of this lesson with their children at home. Give print or digital copies of this page to the parents of your students. *Parent Page* is also available for free download at D6home.com or the D6 Family App.

the hearers make the lives of the messengers difficult. Jesus told us this would happen ([Matthew 10:16–18, 21–22](#)). Like Isaiah and the other prophets, we also must trust in the message given to us by God, faithfully delivering it as we received it ([Matthew 10:19–20](#)).

RESPOND

Use one or more of these **Respond** options to help your group members put into action the principles they learned in this lesson.

OPTION 1: Use “Mission: Possible” (TH 6-4) to challenge your students to serve God this week. Each teen will draw a “secret mission” inspired by Isaiah’s bold commitment to follow God. Though they don’t yet know what will be involved, each teen can step up boldly to obey.

OPTION 2: Use “Putting the I in Isaiah 6” (TH 6-5) as a summary and review of Isaiah 6. Ask for volunteers to share their art or their conclusions with the group. If you run out of time, this exercise provides a great follow-up for students after class.

OPTION 3: Conclude the lesson with an animated retelling of Isaiah 6, using this clip from Superbook: bit.ly/3TG6QvM. (Isaiah’s vision begins at 1:14.) Pray for your students to willingly answer God’s call.

Building Blocks:

Share these Bible basics with your learners.

The Old Testament books of the major prophets are Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel. They are called Major Prophets due to the length of the writings.

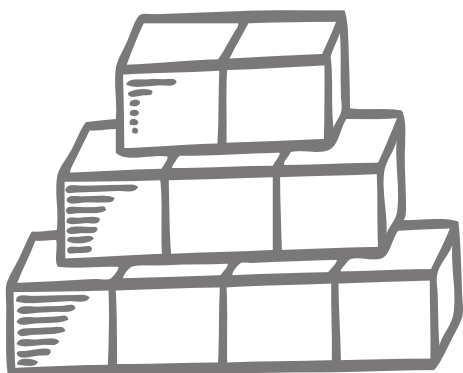
Pray!

FAMILY THEME

The Suffering Savior

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will live for Christ and tell the lost how He died on the cross to save us.

STUDY TEXT: Isaiah 52:13—53:12



CHECKLIST

- ☐ Study the biblical text and Teen Teaching Guide.
- ☐ Review the *Teen Teaching Outline* (Teen Handout 7-1 or TH 7-1). You can take notes on this editable document as you study. You can also use it as a guide to teach from.
- ☐ Print and make copies of the *Student Outline* (TH 7-2), “Christmas Pictionary” (TH 7-4), “Lists of Three” (TH 7-5), “The Suffering Servant” (TH 7-6), and *Parent Page* (PP-7) if necessary. If possible, print “Prepare Him Room” (TH 7-3) on larger paper for classroom display. For free access to these handouts, scan the QR code on page 2 of this teaching guide or go to d6.family/6841.
- ☐ Distribute *Parent Page* (PP-7) to the parents of your students.



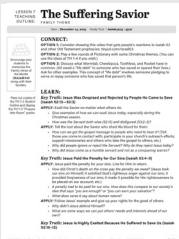
Key Truths

- *Jesus Was Despised and Rejected by People He Came to Save* (Isaiah 52:13—53:3)
- *Jesus Paid the Penalty for Our Sins* (Isaiah 53:4–9)
- *Jesus Is Highly Exalted Because He Suffered to Save Us* (Isaiah 53:10–12)

Verse of the
Month

ISAIAH 9:6

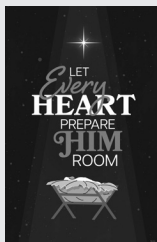
Cue up videos and have them ready to play. D6 Family Ministry does not control ads shown before or after videos.



TH 7-1



TH 7-2



TH 7-3



TH 7-4

TEACHING TIP

Model what you teach. You cannot escape your responsibility as an example (even if an imperfect example) of the practical truth of God's Word.

CONNECT

Choose one of the **Connect** options to capture attention and get this session started.

OPTION 1: Consider showing this video that gets people's reactions to Isaiah 53 and other Old Testament prophecies: tinyurl.com/Israel53. Ask group members why Old Testament prophecy proves the reliability of Scripture and strengthens our faith. After discussion, say: *Today we will examine Isaiah 53 and see how Christ suffered so we could find new life in Him.*

OPTION 2: Play a few rounds of Pictionary with some Christmas themes. (You can use the ideas at TH 7-4 if you wish.) Transition to the lesson by saying, *In our lesson today, Isaiah 52 and 53 give us a picture of Jesus Christ, if we are ready to discover it.*

OPTION 3: Ask students to think about what Wormtail, Chewbacca, Toothless, and Rocket have in common. (All owed a "life debt" to someone who has saved or spared their lives.) Ask for other examples. This concept of "life debt" has shown up in literature and movies and involves someone pledging to serve or repay someone who has saved that person's life. After discussion, say: *While we don't hear much about "life debt" in our culture, Christians understand the idea. Today we will see how we should live for the Savior who gave His life to save us.*

LEARN + EXPLORE + APPLY

Distribute copies of the *Student Outline* (TH 7-2) and display the TH 7-3 "Prepare Him Room" poster.

This week's passage is one of a series of passages in Isaiah that are called "Servant Songs" (others are [Isaiah 42:1-4](#); [49:1-6](#); and [50:4-9](#)). They deal with a special servant of God. Most conservative Christian scholars see the Servant Songs as descriptions of the Messiah to come. After Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, His disciples would have read these passages in a new light. Isaiah's prophecy of the Suffering Servant found its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

KEY TRUTH: Jesus Was Despised and Rejected by People He Came to Save ([Isaiah 52:13–53:3](#))

In [Isaiah 52:13](#), God the Father described the ultimate position of the Servant—exalted and lifted up. The One who was despised, rejected, and crucified would then ascend to the Father's right hand ([Hebrews 1:3](#)). **Verse 14** then describes the reaction of those who would encounter the Servant. Some see this as astonishment at His beaten and battered appearance at His crucifixion. They were appalled. He was marred, disfigured, undesirable, despised, and rejected.

DISCUSS:

- Give examples of how we can exalt Jesus today, especially during the Christmas season.
- How was the Servant both wise (52:13) and disfigured (53:2–3)?

Verse 15, however, moves from the rejection to its result. The *sprinkling* of many nations uses an image from the Jewish sacrificial system: priests sprinkled blood from the sacrificial animals in consecration. Likewise, for the Passover, God instructed the people to apply some of the blood of the sacrificial lamb upon their doorposts to have judgment pass over them. In the same sense, the Servant's blood would consecrate believers from many nations. This vision looked beyond Israel and Judah, beyond the Babylonian captivity, to a time when God's message of salvation by the shed blood of Christ would spread to people from all nations. People would have nothing to say when they realized they beat and crucified the One who came to save them.

DISCUSS:

- How can we get the gospel message to people who need to hear it? (Tell those you meet; participate in your church's outreach efforts; support missionaries and others who take the gospel to others; etc.)
- Why did people ignore or reject the Servant? Why do they reject Jesus today?

EXPLORE:

Isaiah 52:15 speaks of how kings (rulers) would see and understand that which they have not heard or been told about. We can take this in at least two ways. First, we can apply this to the rulers of Gentile nations, who would not otherwise have had any knowledge of God's written revelation to the Jews. In this case, the verse looks ahead to the Great Commission of Matthew 28:18–20; Luke 24:46–48; Acts 1:8; etc. This would certainly be in keeping with other Old Testament glimpses of God's plan for the Gentile nations. Second, we can also envision that Gentile people, living lives transformed by the power of the gospel, would so change society that even their rulers would have to take notice. This would stress the importance of living out the gospel in such a way that even those who pay no attention to its teachings are forced to pay attention to its effects.

Isaiah 53:1–3 tells us few would believe the truth about the Servant and God's power to save. The speaker shifted from God's perspective to man's perspective. Notice the references to *us* and *we* in these three verses. Isaiah continued his identification as a man of unclean lips living among a people of unclean lips. People found no “redeeming qualities” in this Servant. He would not seem special to them. Jesus was rejected by the authorities and people of his day. This was not the dignity the God of the universe deserved.

DISCUSS:

- Why was Jesus rejected by His own people? What are some reasons people reject Jesus today?
- Why did Jesus come as a humble servant and not as a conquering warrior?

APPLY:

Exalt the Savior no matter what others do.

The discussion questions can also be found on the *Teen Teaching Outline* (TH 7-1).

APPLY:

Tell the lost about the Savior who shed His blood for them.

 KEY TRUTH: Jesus Paid the Penalty for Our Sins
(Isaiah 53:4–9)

The pronouns change again in **verses 4 and 5**. The Servant (Jesus) endured the punishment we deserved for our sins. He paid the price for us. Though He had no sin of His own, He willingly bore the weight (and guilt) of our sin (2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:21–24). The people He died for, however, seemed to think this Servant (Jesus) must have deserved this fate, that God was punishing the Servant's own wrongdoing (**verse 4b**). They overlooked their own sin and the punishment they deserved. **Verse 5** indicates a turning point, however, as the prophet acknowledged it was our sin that brought such suffering upon the Servant.

Finally, in **verse 6**, we see full identification: we all sinned, and God punished this Servant in our place. This is not a “mistakes were made” attempt to escape responsibility. It was for all of us—Isaiah, you, me, everyone—that the Servant was treated so shamefully.

APPLY:

Jesus paid the penalty for your sins. Live for Him in return.

DISCUSS:

- *How did Christ's death on the cross pay the penalty we owed?* (Jesus took our sins on Himself; it satisfied God's righteous anger against our sins; it provided forgiveness of our sins; it made it possible for His righteousness to be placed on our account; etc.)
- *A penalty had to be paid for our sins. How does this compare to our society's idea that says “you are enough” or “you can earn your salvation”?*
- *What does verse 6 say about human nature?*

Despite His suffering and innocence, the Servant did not seek to defend Himself or claim He was not guilty. Like a meek lamb being led away to be sheared or slaughtered, He did not resist (**verse 7**). The accounts of Jesus' arrest and crucifixion show us this was true of Jesus. He did not try to explain or defend Himself against the false charges that the religious leaders brought against Him (Matthew 26:62–63; 27:12–14).

Verse 8 describes the Servant being oppressed and led away to His death. He was *cut off from the land of the living*. Jesus was arrested and tried for something He did not do, and then He was taken away to die on the cross. He was crucified with wicked men and then buried in a rich man's tomb. This happened even though He was innocent (**verse 9**).

Jesus had done no wrong. He had a right to justice! Matthew 26:53–54 informs us He could have called for angelic deliverance. Yet He willingly gave Himself to die in our place. He was no overpowered victim; He actively submitted to the horror. Death by crucifixion was reserved for criminals and traitors. He willingly died a criminal's death, as He sacrificed His own rights to obtain our forgiveness.

APPLY:

Follow Jesus' example and give up your rights for the good of others.

DISCUSS:

- *Why didn't Jesus defend Himself?*
- *What are some ways we can put others' needs and interests ahead of our own?*

EXPLORE:

Jesus provided the ultimate example of giving up one's rights for the good of others. The Bible contains others, however:

- Nehemiah did not burden the people or the royal treasury in areas where he had a right to do so ([Nehemiah 5:14-18](#)).
- Paul did not claim his right to travel with a wife, even though Peter and others did so ([1 Corinthians 9:5](#)). He also worked to support himself rather than depending on support from believers ([9:6-7](#)).
- Paul encouraged Philemon not to exercise a master's right of retribution against Onesimus ([Philemon 17](#)).

In an era that seems increasingly defined by the struggle over rights, this should be an important reminder to God's people.

KEY TRUTH: Jesus Is Highly Exalted Because He Suffered to Save Us ([Isaiah 53:10-12](#))

Jesus' crucifixion was not a mere tragic accident of someone who made powerful people angry. It was the turning point of human history. God had planned this before Creation ([Revelation 13:8](#); [Acts 2:23](#); [Ephesians 1:4](#)). **Verse 10** informs us the Servant's life was offered as a guilt offering. Through the Servant, God's plans would prosper and the Servant's days would be prolonged. He will live forever at the Father's right hand. **Verse 11** gives a glimpse of the resurrection of the Servant. His punishment was for *many*. As proof of the Servant's innocence, He would return to life and accomplish the salvation of many. Because He paid the penalty of their sins, those who believe in Him are counted as righteous in God's sight ([Galatians 3:5-6](#)).

DISCUSS:

- *How does Jesus' suffering bring hope to people today?*

Jesus' saving work would result in His being highly exalted. He is now exalted at the right hand of the Father ([Ephesians 1:20-23](#)). Like a general enjoying the spoils of victory in battle, Jesus shares with the redeemed the blessings and spoils of His victory over sin and Satan (**verse 12**). One day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that He is Lord of all ([Philippians 2:8-11](#)).

Christ sacrificed all for us. How can we honor and exalt Him for what He has done for us? Throughout history, multitudes of His followers have sacrificed their very lives for the sake of the gospel. How could we give up life in our comfort zone to share God's good news with people we work with or meet? How could we present our bodies as living sacrifices to Him in response to His love and sacrifice for us ([Romans 12:1](#))? How could we think like Christ instead of being squeezed into the world's mold ([Romans 12:2](#))?

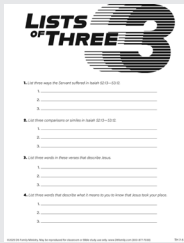
Millions of people throughout history have been counted among Jesus' brothers and sisters. It is only fitting they devote their lives to the One who took on their guilt. It is only fitting the Father honor the Servant who was willing to obey to the ultimate measure.

APPLY:

Be righteous just as God considers you righteous through your faith in Christ.

APPLY:

Worship Jesus for taking your sins on Himself on the cross.



TH 7-5



TH 7-6

Encourage your group members to complete the daily devotions in the D6 Devotional Study Guides this week.



PP-7

The *Parent Page* (PP-7) is a resource to help parents discuss the truths of this lesson with their children at home. Give print or digital copies of this page to the parents of your students. *Parent Page* is also available for free download at D6home.com and the D6 Family App.

DISCUSS:

- *There are some who argue this passage isn't speaking about Jesus. Look back at the entire passage. What evidence proves this passage is prophecy that's focused on Jesus?*
- *How can these verses encourage and motivate you to serve Christ, even when culture pushes back against you?*
- *How can we worship and honor Christ through everyday activities? (Treat others with love and respect; always do the right thing; put others' needs ahead of our own; do what pleases and brings glory to the Lord; etc.)*

RESPOND

Use one or more of these **Respond** options to help your group members put into action the principles they learned in this lesson.

OPTION 1: Use TH 7-5 to have students make four lists of three. First, they will list three ways the Servant suffered in Isaiah 52:13–53:12 (lists may vary). Second, they are to list three comparisons or similes in the passage. Third, have students list three words in these verses that describe Jesus. Finally, ask students to list three words describing what it means to them that Jesus took their place.

OPTION 2: Talk about “the Exchange” the Suffering Savior made possible for us. Have students write something negative we carry (such as guilt, loneliness, shame, fear, or pride) on one side of an index card. On the other side of the card, they should write what Jesus gives us in exchange (such as forgiveness, community, salvation, strength, or humility). Have each student tape his card to the wall, with the negative showing. Then invite students to come flip over a card and read the positive truth aloud. Encourage them to reflect on the ways Jesus has given us healing and forgiveness and share them with others!

OPTION 3: Use the handout, “The Suffering Servant” (TH 7-6) to review today's study. This calls for some creativity, so allow volunteers to share but don't insist on responses.

Building Blocks:

Share these Bible basics with your learners.

When English Bibles spell LORD with all capital letters, it is a translation of *Yahweh* or *Jehovah*, the personal name for God. Yahweh is related to God's statement, “I Am that I Am” ([Exodus 3:14](#)) and is used over 6800 times in the Old Testament.

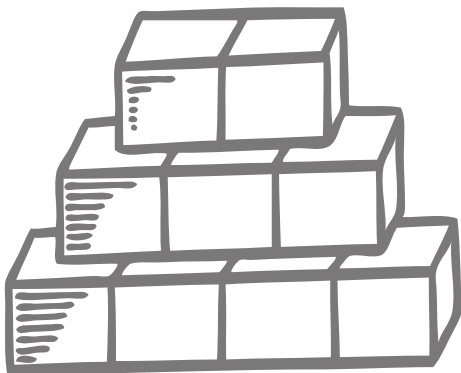
Pray!

FAMILY THEME

God's Promised Messiah

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will celebrate the birth of our Savior knowing it affirms the truth of God's Word.

STUDY TEXT: Isaiah 7:1–16; 9:2–7; Luke 2:25–38



CHECKLIST

- ☐ Study the biblical text and Teen Teaching Guide.
- ☐ Review the *Teen Teaching Outline* (Teen Handout 8-1 or TH 8-1). You can take notes on this editable document as you study. You can also use it as a guide to teach from.
- ☐ Print and make copies of the *Student Outline* (TH 8-2), "Christmas Surprises" (TH 8-3), "The Messiah in Isaiah" (TH 8-4), "Names of Christ From Isaiah 9:6" (TH 8-5), and *Parent Page* (PP-8) if needed. For free access to these handouts, scan the QR code on page 2 of this teaching guide or go to d6.family/6841.
- ☐ Most of the Connect and Respond options this week require some preparation, so gather your materials in advance. You can also use these ideas at a Christmas party.
- ☐ Distribute *Parent Page* (PP-8) to the parents of your students.



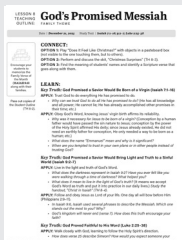
Key Truths

- God Promised a Savior Would Be Born of a Virgin (Isaiah 7:1–16)
- God Promised a Savior Would Bring Light and Truth to a Sinful World (Isaiah 9:2–7)
- God Proved Faithful to His Word (Luke 2:25–38)

Verse of the
Month

ISAIAH 9:6

Cue up videos and have them ready to play. D6 Family Ministry does not control ads shown before or after videos.



TH 8-1



TH 8-2



TH 8-3

TEACHING TIP

Reward those who are punctual by starting on time. Latecomers might catch on.

CONNECT

Choose one of the **Connect** options to capture attention and get this session started.

OPTION 1: Play “Does It Feel Like Christmas?” In advance, cut one side off a large pasteboard box, then make holes for hands to reach inside the box on each end. (You can see an example here: bit.ly/44p2L2.) Turn the box so that class members can see what is inside (through the open side), but the contestant can only reach in to touch the item without being able to see it. The contestant must guess what he or she is touching. Use items like a flashlight or lantern, a crown, a dove, a necktie, and a barbell, as well as traditional Christmas items. Transition to the lesson by helping students make the connection to Christmas, especially the names in Isaiah 9:6 (flashlight gives direction or counsel, crown indicates government, dove for peace, necktie for Father, barbell for strength, etc.).

OPTION 2: Have fun with the skit, “Christmas Surprises” (TH 8-3), then use these discussion questions to transition to today’s lesson: *What surprises you most about how Jesus came to earth? Are there ways we can surprise others this Christmas with kindness or love? How can we keep the focus on God’s greatest gift?*

OPTION 3: Find a baby names book or use a website to determine the meaning of your students’ names. (For example, Allison means noble or kind.) If time permits, help them identify a Scripture verse that goes with their name. (For example, Allison could have Acts 17:10–11 or Proverbs 31:26.) Transition to the lesson by saying, *I’m challenging you to live up to your names this next year. But today we’ll look at our Savior who always lives up to His name.*

LEARN + EXPLORE + APPLY

Distribute copies of the *Student Outline* (TH 8-2)

During the Christmas season, cards, sermons, banners, and signs feature familiar words from Isaiah and many other passages. The lovely words from Isaiah and the other Old Testament prophets were prophecies recorded hundreds of years before Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds. These incidents related to the Christmas account set the story in its context of salvation for all the world, including the Gentiles.

KEY TRUTH: God Promised a Savior Would Be Born of a Virgin (Isaiah 7:1-16)

Verses 1–2 set the stage: King Ahaz of Judah feared greatly that the northern kingdom of Israel, allied with the king of Syria, would defeat him and his kingdom. The nation trembled along with him. God sent Isaiah to inform Ahaz that his enemies’ plans would not prevail (**verses 3–9**). God was accomplishing His plan to preserve the nation of Judah and the line of David to bring the Messiah into the world.

God offered to fulfill any sign Ahaz chose as proof that what He promised would happen. Ahaz pretended religious sincerity (*I don't want to put God to the test*) to hide the fact that he wanted no dealings with God (**verses 10–12**). Isaiah responded swiftly and forcefully, addressing not just Ahaz but the entire house of David (the royal family and officials who were present). He said, *God will choose His own sign for you* (**verses 13–14**).

DISCUSS:

- *Why can we trust God to do all He has promised to do?* (He has all knowledge and all power; He cannot lie; He has already accomplished other promises in their time; etc.)

Who was the virgin in **verse 14** in Ahaz's day? We do not know. Some believe it was a young, unmarried woman of the royal household, perhaps someone soon to be married. The prophecy could have been a reference to the amount of time it would take for the chain of events to happen. We do not know. Whoever it was, God knew. There is a good chance the king and his entourage knew as well. Otherwise, the sign would have meant little to them. Before the promised child was out of infancy or toddlerhood, the two enemy kings and their land would be destroyed (**verses 15–16**).

Yet this prophecy from Isaiah would have another, deeper fulfillment further in the future. God would return to this theme. Even amid the prospects of imminent and deserved destruction, God would respond in grace with the birth of a child, working unexpected and undeserved deliverance. Jesus, the Messiah, would be born to a virgin. He would literally be *God with us* (**Matthew 1:22–23**) and would provide salvation and deliverance by dying on the cross. His fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy affirms that the Bible is God's Word.

DISCUSS:

- *Why was it necessary for Jesus to be born of a virgin?* (Conception by a human father would have passed the sin nature to Jesus; conception by the power of the Holy Spirit affirmed His deity; since Jesus already existed, He did not need an earthly father for conception, He only needed a way to be born as a human; etc.)
- *What does the name "Emmanuel" mean, and why is it significant?*
- *When are you tempted to trust in your own plans or in other people instead of trusting God?*

EXPLORE:

In **Isaiah 7:14**, Isaiah used a Hebrew term that denoted a young unmarried woman; in their culture the term was synonymous with *virgin*. Even in Ahaz' idolatrous regime, Judah and Israel shared the expectation that a young woman would remain a virgin until marriage, though not everyone lived up to that ideal. The Holy Spirit inspired Matthew to apply this verse to the virgin birth of Jesus. Matthew chose a Greek word that explicitly stated "virginity." Why did he choose a Greek word that was more specific than what Isaiah had used? Matthew was quoting from the *Septuagint*, a Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament. The translators wanted the pagans to understand that Isaiah had in mind a young woman who was not merely unmarried, but a virgin as well. They therefore chose a Greek word that specifically means *virgin*.

APPLY:

Trust God to do everything He has promised to do.

The discussion questions can also be found on the *Teen Teaching Outline* (TH 8-1).

APPLY:

Obey God's Word, knowing Jesus' virgin birth affirms its reliability.

KEY TRUTH: God Promised a Savior Would Bring Light and Truth to a Sinful World (Isaiah 9:2-7)

When Assyria and other enemies swept into Israel in Isaiah's day, they first oppressed the northern regions of Israel. In the time of Jesus, people knew the area as Galilee. Isaiah prophesied that those regions would emerge from darkness to light (**verses 1-2**). Seven hundred years later, in the New Testament, Matthew applied Isaiah's description to the ministry of Jesus (Matthew 4:15-16).

APPLY:

Live in the light and truth of God's Word.

DISCUSS:

- *What does the darkness represent in Isaiah 9:2? Have you ever felt like you were walking through a time of darkness? What helped you?*
- *What does it mean to live in the light of God's truth? (It means we accept God's Word as truth and put it into practice.)*

Isaiah foresaw a time when the nation would move from darkness to light. He also saw it moving from the sorrow of oppression to joy and thriving as a nation (**verse 3**). God promised to destroy the weapons of the enemy (**verses 4-5**), even against overwhelming odds.

As in chapter 7, Isaiah again mentioned a special child (**verses 6-7**). In chapter 7 he focused on the child's coming. In chapter 9 he focused instead on what the child would accomplish. Judah and Israel had known political instability and civil breakdown. From this special child they would experience stable, unending, and wise government.

This was no mere child, but a ruler, indeed the ultimate ruler that humanity has needed ever since sin entered the world. His shoulders carried the cross. Afterward, they will bear the government, the rule over humanity. What names did Isaiah list for such a ruler?

- *Wonderful Counselor*, possessing a wisdom beyond human understanding
- *Mighty God*, pointing to His power
- *Everlasting Father*, recalling God's relationship with His creation
- *Prince of Peace*, whose reign would be everlasting peace, not merely a peaceful pause between periods of conflict

APPLY:

Follow and obey Jesus as Lord of your life. One day all will bow before Him (Philippians 2:9-11).

DISCUSS:

- *In Isaiah 9:6, Isaiah used several phrases to describe the Messiah. Which one stands out the most to you? Why? What do they tell us about Jesus' character?*
- *God's kingdom will never end (verse 7). How does this truth encourage your faith?*

Isaiah saw a universal worldwide rule. Yet he also saw something very specific—this child turned ruler would continue the throne of *David*. God promised all this through a particular family in human history. How could Isaiah know such a child would come along? How could he be confident that, with all the calamities to come, such a ruler would take the throne? Only one way—the zeal and power of the Lord of hosts would make it happen!

EXPLORE:

Along with the Psalms, Isaiah is one of the most quoted books in the New Testament regarding prophecies of the Messiah. More than 15 times, Isaiah is quoted in relationship to the Messiah. Use TH 8-4 ("The Messiah in Isaiah") for a list of those verses.

KEY TRUTH: God Proved Faithful to His Word (Luke 2:25–38)

In this passage we have the account of two older people who retained a steadfast hope that God would send the Promised Messiah. God had revealed something very special to Simeon: Simeon would not die before seeing the Messiah (**verses 25–35**).

Finally, the day came when Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the Temple to offer the sacrifice for His dedication, according to the Law of Moses. Simeon, led by the Spirit, "intercepted" them. God let him know that this infant was the One! Simeon approached the couple and took Jesus in his arms.

DISCUSS:

- How does verse 25 describe Simeon? How would you expect someone your age to act if they were described that way today?
- Do you think Simeon was prepared every day to see the Messiah in the Temple? What would living in such expectation of God's fulfilled promise look like?

Verses 29–32 reveal a marvelous psalm, addressed to God Himself. First, Simeon reflected on God's faithfulness. He had indeed seen the salvation from God. He now knew He could leave this life, yet another witness to God's steadfast love. Simeon saw more than an individual Messiah. He saw something of God's vast, sweeping plan for the world. This was not a private, Jewish Messiah; God had prepared Jesus to save all peoples, both the Gentiles and God's people Israel.

Simeon further revealed important truths about Jesus' ministry. It would cause division. At the time of decision, some would choose unbelief and collapse or fall. Others would rise to faith. Many would oppose Him, and Mary would suffer as a result. This division over Jesus would be the ultimate revealer of people's hearts (**verses 34–35**).

Then there was Anna (**verses 36–38**). Some think she lived at the Temple complex. Others believe the text means she spent her waking hours there. She, too, joined in the unusual circumstances. Her reaction still serves as a pattern for us today:

- Thank God for His great salvation.
- Speak of Him to others who need that salvation.

God had promised great things to come through the Christ child. He made sure other people knew about it. They in turn, like Anna, made sure to tell others.



TH 8-4

APPLY:

Walk closely with God, learning to follow the Holy Spirit's direction.

APPLY:

Tell others how Jesus' birth fulfilled God's promises.



TH 8-5

Encourage your group members to complete the daily devotions in the D6 Devotional Study Guides this week.



PP-8

The *Parent Page* (PP-8) is a resource to help parents discuss the truths of this lesson with their children at home. Give print or digital copies to the parents of your students. *Parent Page* is also available for free download at D6home.com or the D6 Family App.

DISCUSS:

- Simeon recognized that God's promises were not just for Israel (verse 32). How should this affect how we treat others?
- Simeon also had hard words for Mary (verse 35). Why are these also included in his blessing of the Messiah?
- Both Simeon and Anna were older people. What can we learn from them (and others we know) about patiently waiting on God to fulfill His promises?

EXPLORE:

Many scholars believe that the confluence of Mary, Joseph, Jesus, Simeon, and Anna in the Temple represents a fulfillment of Malachi 3:1, which indicates that *the Lord will suddenly come to His Temple*. Simeon may have expected a great leader or warrior. He may not have expected a baby coming for dedication. He subjected even his expectations to God's promise. Anna is neither the first nor the last *prophetess* (female prophet) the Bible presents to us. Others include Miriam (Exodus 15:20), Deborah (Judges 4:4), Huldah (2 Kings 22:14), and Philip's daughters (Acts 21:8-9).

RESPOND

Use one or more of these **Respond** options to help your group members put into action the principles they learned in this lesson.

OPTION 1: Add some celebratory culture to your class today by closing with a special excerpt from Handel's *Messiah*: "For Unto Us a Child Is Born." You can find performances on YouTube.

OPTION 2: Bring craft supplies so students can make a small Christmas ornament using the names of God from Isaiah 9:6. Pinterest has many ideas, some simple and some more complex. For a disk ornament, you'll need a base (disk of wood or cardboard), some ModPodge or white glue, and a printout of the names written in a lovely script. (You can use TH 8-5 for that.) Add decorations and ribbon as you wish. For a simple scroll, glue two small sticks to the top and bottom of the verse, then roll the paper up to open as a scroll. Tie with a Christmas ribbon.

OPTION 3: Divide into small groups and ask students to share about the best Christmas gift they ever received. Have each group vote on the best answer and share it with the large group. Remind students that the best gift of all was given by God that first Christmas in Bethlehem, a Savior, Christ the Lord. Encourage students to share the gift with others this Christmas as they celebrate Him.

Building Blocks:

Share these Bible basics with your learners.

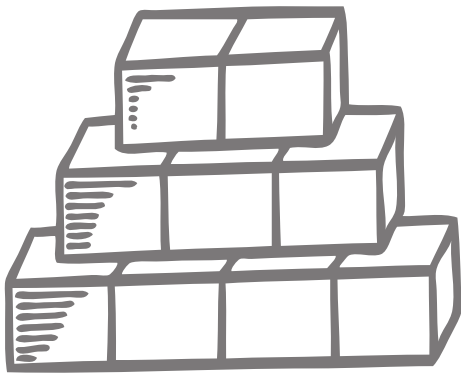
God's name *Adonai* (Hebrew) and *Kyrios* (Greek) means *my Lord* or *my Ruler*. It is translated as *Lord* in the Scripture.

FAMILY THEME

Lessons From the Life of Jonah

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will put life lessons from Jonah into action.

STUDY TEXT: Various Scriptures From Jonah 1–4



CHECKLIST

- ☐ Study the biblical text and Teen Teaching Guide.
- ☐ Review the *Teen Teaching Outline* (Teen Handout 9-1 or TH 9-1). You can take notes on this editable document as you study. You can also use it as a guide to teach from.
- ☐ Print and make copies of the *Student Outline* (TH 9-2), the “New Year” poster (TH 9-3), “Weird and Wacky Sea Creatures” (TH 9-4), “Jonah Journaling” (TH 9-5), and *Parent Page* (PP-9) if necessary. For free access to these handouts, scan the QR code on page 2 of this teaching guide or go to d6.family/6841.
- ☐ Distribute digital or print copies of *Parent Page* (PP-9) to the parents of your students.

In This Character Study:

- *An Introduction to Jonah*
- *Key Events in Jonah's Life*
- *Life Lessons to Apply From Jonah*
- *Ways to Respond*

Verse of the
Month

ISAIAH 9:6



TH 9-1



TH 9-2



TH 9-3



TH 9-4

TEACHING TIP

Be a teacher all week long, not just on Sundays. Send a text, a note, or a birthday card. Remember to pray for those in your group.

You will not have time to read all the Scripture listed for this lesson. Summarize the commentary and read the Scripture passages you feel are most important.

CONNECT

Choose one of the **Connect** options to capture attention and get this session started.

OPTION 1: Challenge students to find a series of emojis to represent Jonah's story. Vote on the best sequence. Transition to the lesson by saying, *You already know a lot about Jonah's life story, but we'll look at it further today in our lesson.*

OPTION 2: Use "Weird and Wacky Sea Creatures" (TH 9-4) to marvel at God's creation. Transition to the lesson by saying: *Imagine one of these swallowing you whole! Something like that happened to Jonah and we'll talk about it in today's lesson.*

OPTION 3: Ask students, "If Jonah were a TikTok or YouTube video, what would the title be?" Suggestions might include: "I Got Swallowed by a Fish and Here's What Happened!" or "When Running from God Goes Wrong." Transition to the lesson by saying, *Jonah's story would definitely go viral. Let's look at why.*

LEARN + EXPLORE + APPLY

Distribute copies of the *Student Outline* (TH 9-2) and unveil the "New Year" poster (TH 9-3).

Meet Jonah

We first meet the prophet Jonah in a brief mention of his prophecy of the restoration of Israel's national borders under the reign of Jeroboam II (2 Kings 14:25). This would have taken place in the first half of the eighth century BC (793–753). Our primary source of information about Jonah comes from the prophetic book of the Bible named Jonah. We typically refer to Jonah as one of the Minor Prophets, which describes the length of the book and not its importance. Jonah's prophetic ministry came during a time of materialism and spiritual decline in Israel. He worked alongside Hosea and Amos in Israel; he was a contemporary of Micah and Isaiah in Judah. In this book God challenged His people to communicate God's love for people beyond the borders of Israel.

Key Events and Life Lessons From Jonah's Life

KEY EVENT: Jonah Ran (Jonah 1:1–17)

This book starts with a straightforward description of God's command to His prophet Jonah. Jonah was to travel to the Assyrian capital of Nineveh and preach against their wickedness. Jonah tried to escape this mission by fleeing the opposite direction to the city of Tarshish. Though the exact location of this city is uncertain, it is often identified as a place near the southern coast of Spain. Jonah's intent was to run from the presence of the Lord (**1:1–3**).

Life Lesson 1: Never run from something God wants you to do.

DISCUSS:

- *Why was Jonah so opposed to going to Nineveh?*
- *What are some common ways people “run” from God’s calling today—even if they stay physically in place?*

While running, Jonah encountered a vicious storm (1:4). This storm was so intense that the sailors feared for their lives. In panic, they called out to their pagan deities and threw cargo overboard. During the panic Jonah slept below deck (1:5). Finally, the captain of the ship located Jonah. The prophet could at least pray to his God for help (1:6). The captain’s only interest in Jonah’s God was to fix the immediate problem of the storm, but he had inadvertently stumbled upon the solution to their problem.

Life Lesson 2: Obey God. Your sin affects those around you.

DISCUSS:

- *Think about choices people make that negatively affect others. Why do people often neglect to think about the far-reaching and long-term consequences of their decisions? What’s the remedy for that?*

In desperation the sailors decided to cast lots as a way of determining who was at fault in the storm. The lot fell to Jonah (1:7–8). When they asked him to explain himself, Jonah identified himself as a Hebrew. He spoke of the nature of his true God, who reigned from Heaven and created the sea and the dry land (1:9). They asked what he had done to provoke such a great God (1:10).

The sailors turned to Jonah for a suggestion of how to appease his formidable God. Jonah advised them to throw him overboard since the entire disaster was his fault (1:11–12). At first the crew refused (1:13), but when the sea grew worse, they finally relented, praying to Jonah’s God for mercy and understanding. They also prayed that God would not hold them liable for Jonah’s death. They tossed Jonah overboard and the sea immediately calmed. In response these pagan sailors offered a sacrifice to the one true God (1:14–16).

No special effects; no myths: a great fish swallowed Jonah whole (1:17). Interpreters and critics have faced off for centuries asking if this could actually happen. When we understand that God created and controls the universe and everything in it, we have no problem accepting the idea that God can design a fish and preserve His prophet. God set Jonah aside to fear and wonder for three days and nights. During this time Jonah recalculated His thoughts. Jonah’s interment in *Sheol* was a prophecy that Jesus identified as a sign of His death, burial, and resurrection (Matthew 12:38–40).

EXPLORE:

God might disguise His work as the normal operations of the created world. Multiple times throughout the book of Jonah, God inserted His will into the story through acts of divine intervention.

- **1:4** - God sent a great wind to cause a storm upon the sea
- **1:17** - God sent a great fish to swallow Jonah
- **2:10** - God commanded the great fish to vomit Jonah onto the shore
- **4:6** - God caused a plant to grow

Discussion questions can also be found on the Teen Teaching Outline (TH 9-1).

- **4:7** - God sent a worm to eat the plant
- **4:8** - God sent a hot east wind that caused Jonah extreme discomfort

In His care and guidance of His people, God can insert His power to accomplish His purposes. He can direct the circumstances of His creation to accomplish His will. In His power and providence God can teach, protect, or provide for His people using any means.

Life Lesson 3: God can work miracles if necessary to accomplish His will.

DISCUSS:

- *Why should we not be surprised that God could cause a fish to swallow and save Jonah?*
- *What does this chapter teach us about God's control over nature and events?*

 KEY EVENT: Jonah Prayed (Jonah 2:1-10)

Jonah lay trapped inside a large fish for three days and nights. This terrifying experience left him with no way out. Certain of his death, Jonah prayed what he probably felt would be his last prayer (**2:1**).

Jonah was in distress and, metaphorically, he was in the grave. But God listened to Jonah when he cried out to Him (**2:2**). Jonah realized that God had controlled his circumstances (**2:3**). He stated that God had cast him into the deep. Even in this desperation Jonah hoped he would see the Temple again (**2:4**). As he described his descent into the depths, Jonah's fear and helplessness are evident. Of course, he thought he was about to die and called out to God in prayer (**2:5-7**).

His prayer acknowledged that those who worship false gods instead of Israel's true God miss out on the opportunity to experience grace and love from the Creator (**2:8**). Jonah's vows, thanksgiving, and declaration of salvation indicated he had come to repentance (**2:9**). At God's instruction the fish vomited Jonah upon the shore. Perhaps dazed, weakened, and confused, yet certainly relieved, Jonah gathered himself to obey God's directions (**2:10**).

Life Lesson 4: God often disciplines disobedient servants so they can reassess their obedience toward Him.

DISCUSS:

- *Hebrews 12:6 tells us God disciplines those He loves. What are some ways God might discipline us today?*
- *How did Jonah's attitude change while he was in the belly of the fish?*
- *What does Jonah 2 tell us about God's willingness to hear our prayers, even when we have messed up?*

 KEY EVENT: Jonah Obeyed (Jonah 3:1-10)

God shows grace and mercy to His people in many ways, including forgiveness, salvation, and power through the presence of the Holy Spirit. Jonah

experienced such grace from God when the Lord's word came to him a second time, a second opportunity to follow God's commands. In fact, the first verse of chapter three echoes the first verse of chapter one (3:1-3).

This time Jonah obeyed and arrived at the city. Some critics have questioned the description of Nineveh as *three days' journey*. This could mean that one would need three days to walk the diameter or circumference of the city. It could mean that one would need three days to preach at all the main sites of the city. Either way, the phrase indicates that Nineveh was a huge city (3:4a).

Jonah went deep into the city and began preaching about God's coming judgment. His message was that Nineveh would be destroyed in 40 days. In Hebrew, Jonah's sermon only takes five words (3:4b). This might be an abbreviation of Jonah's sermon, but it could also indicate that Jonah relished the message of Nineveh's destruction.

Life Lesson 5: Help get the gospel to all people, including those you would consider as enemies.

DISCUSS:

- *How did the people of Nineveh respond to Jonah's message? Why was that surprising?*
- *Is there someone you'd be surprised to see respond to Christ with repentance and faith? What's one way you could share the gospel with that person?*

Because Nineveh was a deeply pagan city with violent tendencies, one would assume the people of Assyria's capital city would scoff at a message about a foreign God's judgment. Instead, the entire city repented. All the people, from the greatest to the least, covered themselves with sackcloth as a sign of sorrow and repented (3:5). It was a work of God.

When the word about Jonah's message reached the king of Nineveh, he joined the repentance. Weeping over their sins as individuals as well as their sins as a society, the citizens sat in ashes and asked God for forgiveness. The king proclaimed a fast from food and water to beg for God's mercy. They all hoped this great God would forgive them and turn from His anger so they would not die (3:6-9). God saw they were sorry for their sins. Our merciful God heard their prayers of repentance and decided not to destroy the city (3:10).

KEY EVENT: Jonah Complained (Jonah 4:1-11)

Ironically, God's forgiveness of Nineveh greatly displeased Jonah (4:1). He was angry with God and expressed that anger in another prayer. Jonah originally fled toward Tarshish, not because he feared what the Ninevites might do to him, but because he feared the mercy of God toward the Ninevites (4:2). He acknowledged that God is gracious, merciful, slow to anger, abounding in love, and willing to relent from judgment (see a similar declaration in Exodus 34:1-9). Jonah quoted these characteristics as vices that stirred resentment in him rather than virtues that stirred praise in him. This hardened prophet was despondent and asked God to take his life (4:3).

God challenged Jonah to consider if his attitude of anger was appropriate to the situation (4:4). In response, Jonah walked to a spot east of the city, built a



TH 9-5

Encourage your group members to complete the daily devotions in the D6 Devotional Study Guides this week.



PP-9

The Parent Page (PP-9) is a resource to help parents discuss the truths of this lesson with their children at home. Give copies of this page to the parents of your students. Parent Page is also available for free download at D6home.com and the D6 Family App.

small shelter, and sat to see what would happen (4:5). To teach the prophet a lesson, God caused a plant to grow near Jonah and provide shade. This became a source of pleasure for the pouting prophet (4:6). Then God sent a worm that ate the plant, causing it to wither and die (4:7). Next, Jonah experienced a miserably hot wind. Jonah was so miserable that he begged God to just let him die (4:8).

God once again challenged Jonah. He repeated His question, asking if it was appropriate to feel such anger for the plant (4:9). Jonah snapped back like a spoiled child, whining that he was right to be angry. God stated His point (4:10–11). Jonah cared so much about the plant outside the city, while God cared deeply about the people inside the city. His mention of more than 120,000 people who could not tell their right hand from their left might refer to the number of children in the city. Was it wrong of God to care about the people of Nineveh? With no further comment, the story ends. God wants His people to care more about lost people, even if they are wicked enemies. God wants repentance from sinners and obedience from His people.

Life Lesson 6: Remember that God loves all people, including our enemies, and wants them to repent and be saved.

DISCUSS:

- How does the plant and worm story in Jonah 4 teach Jonah (and us) something about God's priorities?
- Is forgiveness "fair"? How does God's forgiveness highlight our reluctance to forgive?
- At times, Jonah showed obedience, but he also showed a lack of compassion. How can we develop compassion for the lost?

Ways to Respond: Encourage your students to put what they have learned into action this week.

OPTION 1: Ask students: *What one lesson is your takeaway from the story of Jonah?* Ask volunteers to share, especially in light of the new year just ahead. Sing along with "Second Chances" or "In the Belly of a Whale" from *Jonah: A Veggie Tales Movie* to close.

OPTION 2: Ask students to write a journal entry, from the perspective of Jonah or a sailor or a citizen of Nineveh. You can use TH 9-5 for this. Pray for your students to willingly obey God in the coming year.

OPTION 3: Ask students: *What's your Nineveh? What one place would be the hardest place for you to go?* Show a "Serve with us" video from IM, Inc. (such as iminc.org/bulgaria-opportunities) as a challenge for students.

Building Blocks:

Share these Bible basics with your learners.

The Hebrew word *Elohim* means God and speaks of God's sovereignty over all other gods.

Simplify Discipleship for Your Church

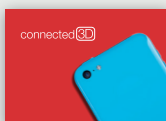
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