

T3 TEEN TIMELINE

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LESSON 2: THE EARLY WORLD

OPENING PRAYER

God our Father and our Creator, you give us the gifts of life, of love, and of your eternal truth. Show us the areas of our lives that have grown cold, the areas that we are in darkness and bring them light. Let there be light, God, so that we can walk with you. Holy Spirit, open our minds and our hearts to all you want to share with us through your Living Word. Amen.

ENTERING THE STORY

As you begin, ask the teens to recite the order of creation without referring to their Bibles. In the notes area of Lesson 2, have them write their "best guesses" about what happened on each "day" of creation (i.e., what God created in what order). When they are finished, ask for volunteers to share their answers with the group. Then, have them go to Genesis 1 to check their answers.

TIME PERIOD(S) COVERED The Early World

WHERE WE ARE ON THE JOURNEY Genesis 1-11

OPENING QUESTION "Do I trust God?"

VERSE TO REMEMBER Genesis 1:26-27

BREAKING IT DOWN

1. In what chapter of Genesis does the temptation of Adam and Eve occur?
Genesis 3
2. What was God trying to teach Adam and Eve when He said that "the birth pangs (pains of child birth) would multiply"? Love means suffering
3. What was Adam and Eve's third son named? Seth
4. How long was the ark? 300 cubits (about 450 feet or 150 yards)
5. How long did it rain before/during the great flood? 40 days

Play the DVD - Disc 1, Segment 2

Have the teens utilize the Fill-in-the-Blank Timeline during the DVD segment

TALKING IT OUT**Discussion Questions**

1. What truths do you think God is trying to teach us through the story of Creation and through Adam, Eve, and the Fall?
2. As the DVD points out, the devil cannot deny God's existence; he can make you doubt God's love, though. In what ways do you see the devil at work in the world? In your life?
3. What can we learn from Noah's example today?

THINKING IT THROUGH

Do you trust God? In what areas of your life do you struggle with trusting God? In what areas are you tempted to choose your way over God's way? Do you trust God with your sexuality (i.e., your chastity)? With your future (i.e., your vocation)? With your family relationships? With your health?

OPTIONAL QUIZ FOR DVD SEGMENT 2:

Match the Definition on the right with the correct term on the left:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. Turquoise | a) "In the beginning" |
| 2. Allegory | b) The first Time Period we find in Scripture |
| 3. One Holy Family | c) Perfect love is manifested in _____ |
| 4. Suffering, pain, truth | d) A literary device used to convey truth through symbolism - like the story of Creation |
| 5. Sabbath | e) Portrait of "Faith" |
| 6. Genesis 3:15-16 | f) The lie that Satan promises |
| 7. The Early World | g) Covenant with Noah |
| 8. One Holy Couple | h) The deliberate "no" to the will to God |
| 9. Genesis | i) Covenant with Adam and Eve |
| 10. Woman | j) The most complex of Creation |
| 11. Noah | k) "The way of making a mother" |
| 12. The Trinity | l) The "curse and the promise" from God |
| 13. Immediate gratification | m) When Adam was created |
| 14. Fall or Sin | n) The color of the earth viewed from space |
| 15. The 6 th day | o) Love means _____ |
| 16. Matrimony | p) What man was created for, sign of the first Covenant |

Answer Key: 1) n 2) d 3) g 4) o 5) p 6) l 7) b 8) i 9) a 10) j 11) e 12) c 13) f 14) h 15) m 16) k

OLD TESTAMENT MESSIANIC PROPHECIES



There are several places in the forty-six Old Testament books that the Messiah is spoken about and when prophecies are given about His life. For those who really know the Hebrew Scriptures, there was almost a “laundry list” of details to look for. Still, Jesus was not what most of His people were expecting. Even though He fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies, He was not the “warrior king” they anticipated. Jesus’ message of love and peace was unlike anything they had ever heard, and His example of power through suffering was unlike anything they had ever seen. Still, He fulfilled what the Scriptures had prophesied. In fact, when He appeared to the disciples on the road to Emmaus, He spent time explaining all the prophecies that referred to Him (Luke 24:27).

Take some time and read through some of the prophecies (listed below) from centuries before Jesus was born. Your eyes will be opened, once again, to the “big picture” of salvation history.

Prophecies

- Genesis 3:15 – the seed of woman will strike at the heel
- Genesis 49:9-10 – the lion of the tribe of Judah
- Exodus 12:6-7 – the lamb slain for us
- Exodus 12:46 – no bones will be broken
- Numbers 21:8-9 – serpent in the wilderness (John 3:14)
- Numbers 24:17 – a star out of Jacob
- Deuteronomy 18:15 – a prophet like Moses
- Psalms 22:7-8 – He will be mocked and insulted
- Psalms 22:17 – they have pierced my hands and feet
- Psalms 22:19 – the soldiers casting lots for His coat
- Psalms 118:22 – He will be the cornerstone
- Isaiah 7:14 – a virgin shall conceive and bear a son – Immanuel
- Isaiah 11:1-8 – the spirit of the Lord will rest upon Him
- Isaiah 40:3 – shouting prepare the way of the Lord
- Isaiah 53:4-5 – He will suffer for others
- Isaiah 53:7 – like a lamb led to slaughter
- Ezekiel 34:11-12 – He will be the good shepherd
- Hosea 11:1 – He will take flight into Egypt
- Zechariah 9:9 – triumphant entry into Jerusalem



LEADER'S NOTE

It is important for young people to understand that Jesus Christ wasn't just a “popular guy” who people in His time followed. The notion that He was merely a moral philosopher can be shattered any number of ways—from proper biblical exegesis to basic philosophical debate to good old-fashioned common sense.

A strong command of the Old Testament is one of the most obvious and direct ways to show that the Incarnation of Christ was pointed to for thousands of years prior to His birth. Dozens of prophecies revealed by God over the centuries in the Old Testament were fulfilled in Jesus. A wider perspective of this “big picture” of salvation history reveals a divine pedagogy, a divine design, that can only be grasped by taking a step back before diving in.

Take time and pray through some of the specific Scriptural prophecies on page 18 of the Student Workbook (see above). Decide which ones to use to accentuate your teaching points. Reaffirm to the teens that prophecy is not fortune-telling; it is knowledge given to the prophet by God for a purpose—in this case, to point to Jesus Christ, who is the foundational reality of the entire Old Testament.

EGYPT & EXODUS



When you are studying the Egypt & Exodus time period, you are going to encounter all kinds of seemingly “weird” plagues in Exodus, chapters 7-12. In fact, one young adult not too long ago asked me about them and his question went something like this...

“So, what’s the deal with all the plagues in the book of Exodus? It seems kind of random to me that God would use things like gnats, lice, frogs, and stuff to upset Pharaoh. Why did he do that? Why didn’t he just send the angel of death the first thing?”

My response was, “My brother, allow me to say that you are not the first person to be confused by the ten plagues in Exodus and you won’t be the last. I actually asked the exact same question in my confirmation class when I was sixteen. It made no sense to me (although I did find the fact that God would use “lice” as beyond funny...nowadays, he’d probably use incurable acne).”

Why the Plagues?

At any rate, the ten plagues that God rains down upon Egypt were done with a few purposes in mind but, principally, they were done to show the Egyptians (and the Israelites) that God was far more powerful than any of their false Egyptian “gods.” You see, the Israelites had been enslaved in Egypt for about 400 years when Moses was called forth by God and sent to Pharaoh. When Pharaoh refused to allow the Israelites to leave Egypt and worship in the desert, God answered (through Moses and his brother Aaron, the priest) with the ten plagues (Exodus 7:14-12:30).

Each of the plagues offered a tangible, visible example and display of our God’s power over

everything/everyone they worshipped and, with each plague that dominated the country, Egyptian hope vanished and Israelite confidence grew. God will prove Himself more powerful than anything else that we allow to have power over us.

While biblical scholars debate over the specifics of the different plagues and their complete meanings, basically each plague - the frogs (overrunning the land), the cattle (dying), the Nile (turning to blood), etc. - were manifestations or visual representations of one of the Egyptian gods being conquered by the God of Moses (and also the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob...oh, and you and me).

The Ten Plagues (in order)

As for the ten plagues, here’s what they were (in order) and what they may have signified:

1. Nile River turns into blood (Exodus 7:14-24)

The Egyptian god Hapi, the Father of all the gods and god of the Nile

The Nile represented life to the Egyptians. All their economy and their livelihood depended on the Nile—they worshiped the river. The plague also represented the sins of the Egyptians coming back to haunt them, the blood of the Israelite children who were thrown into the Nile by Pharaoh.

LEADER'S NOTE

The overview of the plagues found on pages 19–21 of the Student Workbook (see above) seeks to give the teens a better understanding of the “why” of the plagues and help them see why the plagues were not so “random.”

Leaders should strive to do two things in this section:

First, point out to the teens that God will use everything—including suffering—to turn our hearts back to Him. Be sure that they understand that the God of the Old Testament is the same God we worship today. Help them understand that God was not only making a statement to the Egyptians but to the Israelites (and to all of us), as well.

Second, “connect the dots” of all the plagues to the modern day. For example, don’t stop with telling your teens that God conquered the Egyptian sun god through the plague of darkness; take it to the next level and draw a relevant, modern lesson from this plague—such as “God comforts us when we are in darkness by always offering us His light, a light that cannot be extinguished but which extinguishes darkness forever.”

Make the same modern-day application for the other plagues.



2. Frogs (Exodus 7:25-29, 8:1-11)

The Egyptian goddess Heka, the toad goddess and the goddess of resurrection and procreative powers

Frogs were sacred to the Egyptians, and killing one was punishable by death. It's like God saying, "You like frogs, I'll give you frogs!" You couldn't even walk around without stepping on one. The only way to get rid of them was to kill them, which God did, thus shaming Heka.

3. Gnats (Exodus 8:12-15)

The Egyptian god Geb, the god of the earth or vegetation

This was the first plague that Pharaoh's magicians could not replicate with their powers. Pharaoh's heart, though, remained hardened. The gnats came out of the ground, out of the dust, thus placing blame on Geb.

4. Flies (Exodus 8:16-28)

The Egyptian god Khepfi, the god of insects

Insects are out of control, and Khepfi can't stop them! The Egyptians think their god has been defeated or is dead.

5. Livestock (Exodus 9:1-7)

The Egyptian god Apts or Menvis, the bull god, and Hathor, the cow goddess

The Egyptians worshiped many animals, but especially the ram, the ox, and the bull. The soul of their god Osiris was said to reside in the body of the bull. Having all these animals die was a defeat of these Egyptian gods.

6. Boils (Exodus 9:8-12)

The Egyptian god Thoth, the god of medicine, intelligence, and wisdom

The Egyptians had several medical gods, and they sacrificed humans to these gods by burning them alive on a high altar and scattering their ashes into the air. It was believed that with every scattered ash a blessing would descend upon the people. So Moses took ashes from the furnace and scattered them into air, but anyone the ashes touched broke out in boils.

7. Hail (Exodus 9:13-35)

The Egyptian god Nut, the sky goddess, and "Seth," the protector of crops

The hail attacked the fields during the time of harvest, destroying all the crops. Nut was blamed, and Seth could not protect the crops as he was supposed to.

8. Locusts (Exodus 10:1-20)

The Egyptian god Anubis, the god of the fields, and "Isis," the protector against locusts

Whatever wasn't destroyed by the hail was finished off by the locusts. Locusts were so feared by the Egyptians that they actually had a god to protect them from these vile insects. Isis was shamed, and Anubis was overcome.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROPHETS

9. Darkness (Exodus 10:21-29)*The Egyptian god Ra (or Amon-Ra), the sun god*

With darkness so intense you could feel it, it seemed Ra, the sun god, was dead.

10. Death of the First-born (Exodus 11:1-10; 12)*Pharaoh himself, seen as a god-king, and his firstborn son, also seen as a god*

Pharaoh was considered a god, and his firstborn son was, too. In fact, firstborn people and animals were often worshiped. Pharaoh was considered an incarnation of Ra, the sun god. Because Pharaoh's son was considered a god, a god of Egypt actually died.

Each one of these plagues—while seemingly “random”—can still teach us a great deal about our modern faith walk. In all honesty, even in today's culture, many of us make material and worldly things, even people, our “gods.” Boyfriends or girlfriends, sports or jobs, school or friendships, addictions or sex—and all of them can become our “gods” if we let them.

If that is the case, realize that God will allow certain situations and create other situations that will help draw us back to Him and back into His perfect love. He might already be doing that in your life. Keep your eyes open. Although your bedroom might not be overrun with frogs or gnats anytime soon, God is still working and he will prove Himself more powerful than anything else that we allow to have power over us.

Finally, if you've never seen it, take a couple hours and watch *The Prince of Egypt*. It is not completely historically or theologically accurate, but it is a really good interpretation of the Exodus story, well-told and beautifully animated. It might help you get a better feel for the characters in the story and help the story come to life more, visually, when you study this time period in your Bible.

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