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Session Four

- EGYPT & EXODUS (PART 2)
- DESERT WANDERINGS
- CONQUEST & JUDGES



Books: Exodus, Numbers, Joshua, Judges

God is many things. He is perfect love, unending mercy, unparalleled compassion, and absolute justice.

God is not, however, a genie ... no matter how many people treat him like one.

Countless people go to God only when they want or need something. Now, God is happy to listen to those requests, but he offers (and wants) so much more! God wants you to share your day with him, to invite him into the good and the bad parts. God wants you to thank him when things go well and seek him when things don't turn out as planned.

Sadly, God often is seen more as an emergency back-up plan than as a best friend or loving Father.

Take a minute to think about all the ways God has blessed you. You might even want to write them down here.

Next, thank God for all of those things (and people). Okay, keep this list somewhere safe, and the next time something goes terribly wrong in your life, refer to it.

If the people you're about to study had just remembered all that God had done for them—all the ways he had blessed them—things would have turned out even better in their lives.

Don't ever make the mistake of thinking God doesn't care about you. God is love, and he loves you far more than you can imagine. He's constantly showing it, but if we're too busy thinking up "three new wishes," we'll miss all the blessings he has already granted.



VERSE TO REMEMBER

"... the LORD sees not as man sees; man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."

1 SAMUEL 16:7

13

Themes: Session Four

- God gives each of us different skills and gifts.
- God gave us the Ten Commandments because he loves us. They are like an "x-ray" to show us where we are spiritually sick.
- "False gods" are anything we care about more than God.
- God doesn't always work on our timetable.

Session Four

Step 1

Welcome

- Reward anyone who can recite last week's "Verse to Remember" (Exodus 14:14) or answer the Question of the Week. Choose your question from last week's session. For example: "What body of water miraculously parted to allow Moses and the Hebrew slaves to escape from Egypt?" (The Red Sea.)
- Review the *Bible Timeline* periods, with special emphasis on those covered so far (Early World, Patriarchs, and Egypt & Exodus).
- Introduce *Bible Timeline* periods and narrative books for Session Four.

Step 2

Opening Prayer

"Heavenly Father, you love us enough to teach us right from wrong. Help us to always do what is right. Give us the courage to follow you even when others do not. Grant us the strength to speak up when others are afraid to do so. Fill us with your truth and with your peace. Help us to be less concerned about what other people think about us and to focus only on what you want for us and from us. Holy Spirit, please help us to see ourselves the way heaven sees us. Our Father ..."

Step 3

Introduction/ "Verse to Remember"

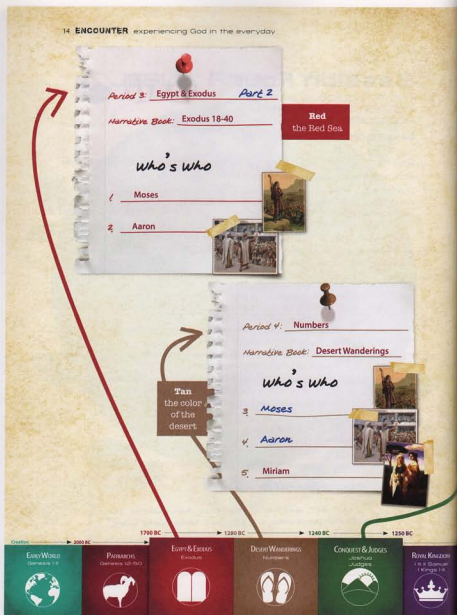
- Have a volunteer read this introduction aloud or read it together silently.
- Have students read the verse aloud together and write in the reference.

Key Events: Egypt & Exodus Part II

- Ten Commandments (Exodus 20)
- Golden calf (Exodus 32)
- Levitical priesthood (Exodus 32:27-29; Numbers 3:5-13)

Key Events: Desert Wanderings

- Twelve spies sent out (Numbers 13)
- Moses strikes the rock (Numbers 20:1-11)
- Bronze serpent (Numbers 21:4-9)



Step 4

Show DVD "Session Four: Egypt & Exodus (Part 2) – Desert Wanderings"

Creating Pictures

STORY: The story of the Israelites' journey from Egypt to the Promised Land is a powerful one. It is a story of faith, hope, and perseverance. The Israelites faced many challenges along the way, but they never gave up. They were led by Moses, who was a great leader and a man of God. The story is told in the books of Exodus and Numbers. The Israelites' journey is a journey of discovery and growth. They learned about themselves and about God. They also learned about the world around them. The story is a reminder that we can overcome our challenges if we have faith and hope. It is a story that inspires us to live our lives with purpose and meaning.

Session 4: Breaking It Down

- Where did God give Moses the Ten Commandments? **Mt. Sinai**
- Which tribe became God's priests? **The tribe of Levi**
- How long would the Israelites have to wander in the desert? **40 years**
- What did Moses do that got him in trouble? **He struck the rock twice**
- How were the snake-bitten Israelites healed? **They looked at the snake on the stick**
- Who was Moses' second-in-command? **Joshua**
- What is the name of the Bible's most famous strong man? **Samson**

Answers that appear in blue are already filled in for students in the Student Workbook.

Period 5: **Conquest & Judges**

Narrative Books: **Joshua, Judges**

Green
the green
hills of
Canaan

Who's Who

4. **Joshua**

7. **Samson**

8. **Ruth**



Key Events:

Conquest & Judges

- Battle of Jericho (Joshua 5:13–6:27)
- Time of Judges (Judges)
- Israel asks for a king (1 Samuel 8)



Step 5 Talking It Out (After the DVD)

- How would the world be different if everyone actually obeyed the Ten Commandments? Give examples.
- Why was the Israelites' punishment of wandering in the desert so important for them? What was God trying to achieve through it?
- What does Moses' punishment teach us about our relationship with God?
- What can we learn about relationships from Samson and Delilah even today?

After the "man on the street" segment, you will be directed to pause the DVD. Have students turn to page 16 in their workbooks and write down as many of the commandments as they can before restarting the DVD. Answers and an "Examination of Conscience" are on pages 36-37.

Consider sending home a note to parents this week, explaining that the students learned about the Ten Commandments and the importance of the sacrament of reconciliation. Encourage them to make arrangements to go to confession as a family this week. Explain how important it is that parents create those opportunities without the kids having to ask.



LIST THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

When God gave Moses the Ten Commandments atop Mt. Sinai, he was doing more than giving all of us a list of "rules" to follow.

God wants us to be with him for eternity in heaven. The commandments are God's way of helping us live holier, more selfless lives—the commandments help us to become saints.

You probably know most (if not all) of the commandments. Do you know them in order?

List as many of the Ten Commandments as you can below, from memory.

The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

How'd you do?

Turn to page 36 to find out.

Step 6 Taking It Home

This is a great time to talk to them about the importance of knowing and living the commandments. Encourage them to commit the Ten Commandments to memory, and let them know you will be quizzing them next week.

Talk with your students about the "Examination of Conscience" (page 37), and encourage them to take some time to examine their consciences thoroughly over the next few days. Have them ask the Lord where they need to change and to improve. Reaffirm to the students how vital the sacrament of penance is to their ongoing prayer life, and explain how God blesses each of them with grace to be stronger following the experience of reconciliation. Remind them that it's not enough to "know" the commandments with their heads; they also need to follow them with their hearts.

Review the "Verse to Remember" (page 13). What do the students take from it, now that they have heard Mark's talk?

Step 7 Closing Prayer

This week, close by reviewing the Act of Contrition – consider having students copy it down in their workbooks as a learning exercise, if they do not already know it by heart:

"Oh my God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy. Amen."

Session Five

- ROYAL KINGDOM
- DIVIDED KINGDOM

Books: 1&2 Samuel, 1&2 Kings

Have you ever said to yourself, "If I could just (insert desired thing here) ... then I'd be happy?"

Some people insert "be popular" or "become famous." Some people say "be smarter" or "be more athletic." I used to say "grow taller" and "get better-looking." My acne was so bad at one point I didn't even want to go to school. I was so stressed about how I compared to others, that it affected everything about me—what I wore, what music I listened to, and even what sports and activities I took part in.

I was more worried about how others saw me than I was about what God thought of me.

I wish I'd read these chapters we're about to walk through when I was in middle school. They remind us about what matters most. They echo what we learned in those first couple of sessions of the Timeline, about where our worth comes from and, more to the point, who it comes from.

This session will remind you, too, that you are capable of way more than you might think ... as long as you keep God first in your life.

No mountain is too tall, no fear too big, no opponent too scary, if God is in your corner.

We're also going to see what happens when we put God second, third, or last. We'll see how badly things go when we rely too much on our own talents and skills and not on the one who gave them to us.

Buckle up, brothers and sisters—this session has more drama than any reality show.

VERSE TO REMEMBER

"Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, and before you were born, I consecrated you."

Jeremiah 1:5

17

Themes: Session Five

- When we sin, God gives us a chance to start over.
- Every life is a precious gift from God. He has a plan for each of us.
- The prophets (prophet means "mouthpiece") courageously carried God's message, though it sometimes put them in a difficult place. We need to speak the truth with courage, too.

Session Five

Step 1 Welcome

- Reward anyone who can recite last week's "Verse to Remember" (1 Samuel 16:7). For the Question of the Week, it's "quiz time"! See how many of the Ten Commandments your students can recall—in order, from memory.
- Introduce *Bible Timeline* periods and narrative books for Session Five.

Step 2 Opening Prayer

"Holy Spirit, help us to become more holy. Show us who we were created to be and what we are created to do in this world. Reveal our gifts and our talents to us, not so we can focus on ourselves, but so we can use those gifts and talents to lead others to you. Help us to find ourselves in each of the stories

we will study today. Thank you for our Holy Father, bishops, priests, deacons, religious, and all who lead us closer to you. Be with us during this time of study, Lord, so that we can begin to listen even more closely to what your plans are for our lives. And may this time in your Word help us to grow stronger in our faith. Glory be ..."

Step 3 Introduction/"Verse to Remember"

- Have a volunteer read the introduction aloud or read it together silently.
- Have students read the verse aloud together and write in the reference.

Key Events: Royal Kingdom

- David kills Goliath (1 Samuel 17)
- Covenant with David (2 Samuel 7)
- First Temple built (1 Kings 5-8)

When God tells David he will "build David a house" that will last forever (2 Samuel 7:11b-16), he is referring to the Davidic dynasty and ultimately to Christ ruling on the throne.

At the beginning of the session, prompt students to write the names of the narrative books in the correct spaces: "Royal Kingdom" is 1 & 2 Samuel and 1 Kings 1-11; "Divided Kingdom" is 1 Kings 12-22 and 2 Kings. (Mark goes through this quickly.)

**Session 5:
Breaking It Down**

1. What was the name of Israel's first king? Saul
2. What was David's first teenage job? Shepherd
3. What army did Goliath fight for? The Philistines
4. What friend did David betray? Uriah
5. Which king built God's Temple? Solomon
6. When did the kingdom divide into two? 930 BC
7. What does the word "prophet" mean? "Mouthpiece"

Purple
royalty

Period 6: Royal Kingdom

Narrative Books: 1 & 2 Samuel

1 Kings 1-11

Who's Who

1. Saul

2. David

3. Solomon



**Step
4**

Show DVD "Session Five: Royal Kingdom"

Session Five: Royal Kingdom • Divided Kingdom 19


Period 7: Divided Kingdom


Narrative Books: 1 Kings 12-22
2 Kings

who's who


- ✓ **Elijah**
- 5. **Elisha**
- 4. **Isaiah**
- ? **Jeremiah**

Black
Israel's darkest period






DID YOU KNOW?
King Solomon imported peacocks to decorate his palace (1 Kings 10:22). Throw pillows probably would have been less messy.




1000 BC 722 BC 586 BC 539 BC 333 BC


DIVIDED KINGDOM
1 Kings 12-22
2 Kings




ELISHA
2 Kings




RETURN
Ezra
Nehemiah




MACCHABEE
1 Macchabees



MESSENGER OF FULFILLMENT
Luke



THE CHURCH
Acts



Key Events: Divided Kingdom

- The kingdom divides (1 Kings 12:16-20)
- A fish catches Jonah (Jonah)
- Jeremiah follows God (Jeremiah)

Turn the page for a map of the Divided Kingdom.

Step 5 Talking It Out (After the DVD)

1. Discuss the battle between David and Goliath. Ask your students if they have ever been "dismissed" by an adult because they are (or appear to be) too young? Let them share what happened to them and how it made them feel.
2. Ask them for some examples—in their own lives—of "giants" they were fearful of, but overcame.
3. David was a great military leader but struggled personally and in his relationships. Ask what qualities are essential for a good leader. Ask them for examples of strong leadership that they have seen in their own lives.
4. Being a prophet of God was not easy. People usually don't like to hear the truth of God. Ask the students who they have seen or heard share truth often and who, if any, received a hard time because of it?
5. Ask them, "Would you want to be a prophet? Why or why not?"

The Divided Kingdom

- Northern Kingdom: Israel (ten tribes); capital: Samaria
- Southern Kingdom: Judah (two tribes); capital: Jerusalem
- Note that the Temple (in Jerusalem) is in the South. The Northern Kingdom set up centers of worship at Dan and Bethel. This will cause them big problems!

**Step 6 Taking It Home**

Point out the main features of this map to give the students a visual of the Divided Kingdom (see above).

Now that you are several sessions into *Encounter*, consider adding one or more of these activities:

- Have them learn the prophetic books (Isaiah through Malachi) in order, using their Bible's table of contents. Offer a prize the following week for those who achieve it.
- Have a large-group "rap session" about what they have learned about Scripture and, more importantly, about themselves in the past few weeks.
- Ask what specific intentions they need prayers for, and spend time as a group in prayer.

- Take a look at the upcoming Sunday Gospel reading and reflect on it as a group, tying in the Bible verses you're studying with the Bible verses they will hear at Mass.
- Have some fun and ask some "quiz-type" questions based on the first five sessions. Reward them for what they have retained.
- Do something to acknowledge how much your students have learned to keep them excited for the final three weeks.

Review the "Verse to Remember" (page 17). What do the students take from it, now that they have heard Mark's talk?

Step 7 Closing Prayer

King David was not just a warrior—he was also a great musician and poet, who wrote many of the psalms. This week, choose one of your favorite psalms to share with the students as the closing prayer.