

# THEME 1

## From Abraham to the Exile

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Theme 1 includes in the first unit a simple review of the time of Abraham through the exile. Fifth grade has just spent the entire year studying the Israelite story from the Salvation History point of view. Sixth grade teachers will want to be aware of this. However, you may also have new students entering sixth grade without the background that other students have. You may use Unit 1 at your discretion to help students with background information before beginning the brand new information in units 2 and 3.

Unit 2, “Far from Home,” and Unit 3, “Out of the Ashes,” pick up the story where fifth grade left off. Fifth grade learned about the Israelites being taken into exile. Sixth grade helps students to understand that there were at least three major deportations from Jerusalem to Babylon, in the years 597, 587, and 582 BCE. The Babylonians took the leaders and elites into exile. They did not take all or perhaps even the majority of Jews into exile (*see 2 Kings 24:14-16 and Daniel 1:1-4*). The poor stayed behind in the defeated land of Israel. Others fled to Egypt. The temple in Jerusalem now lay in ruins.

Defeated and far from home, the exiles asked themselves many questions. It was not an easy time for God’s people, but it did turn out to be a productive time. A serious look at past patterns of unfaithfulness to the Lord brought important changes. Idolatry was never again to be the constant weak spot it had been before the exile. The ancient stories passed on from generation to generation took on new meaning. They gave confidence in God’s faithfulness. Some of these stories were put into writing. Other writings were collected and organized.

The Jewish people emerged from the exile with a renewed belief that God fulfills promises to those who are faithful.

# Grade 6—Unit 1

## Old Testament Review

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Unit 1 is a review for new and returning students of the time of Abraham up through the divided kingdom. You may use all or some of the material at your discretion. Do a check-up with students to see how much they know, to determine how you need to cover to prepare the students for the following units.

### **LESSONS**

1. God's Continuing Faithfulness
2. Abraham to Joseph
3. Moses to Joshua
4. Judges and Prophets
5. Kings and the Divided Kingdom
6. Review Project

# Unit 1: Old Testament Review

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## Unit Information

### SUMMARY

God demonstrated faithfulness to the people of the Old Testament. Through the stories of Abraham and his descendants to the nation of Israel, it is clear that God was moving alongside this people, desiring to guide and bless them. Many of these people, in turn, found that their trust in a faithful God sustained them through difficult circumstances.

### KEY BIBLE TEXTS

Hebrews 11:4-34

Genesis 15, 24-42

Exodus 1-20

1 Kings

2 Kings

### BIBLICAL BACKGROUND

#### Abraham to Joseph

Most scholars suggest that Abraham lived around 2000 BCE. Ancient texts from the city of Mari show that this was a time of free trade. People freely traded both goods and ideas. It was a time when moving to another place was possible. This Abraham and Sarah did, along with their household. They traveled to Canaan, where the culture of the city-states was less developed and where the prevailing religion was a particularly degrading form of fertility cult. Abraham and Sarah did not follow the cult of the moon god, for which Haran was a center.

The God of Abraham was a free God, not tied to any one thing in creation, but maker of it all; not controlled by certain ceremony and ritual, but revealing himself when and where he would. The God of Abraham was a covenant God who initiated relationships with humans and called for trust and faithfulness in response.

*Covenant* is a way of understanding relationships. In Genesis, it is a key metaphor for God's relationship to humankind and is seen again in the relationships with Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.

Water in this dry land became a sign of God's provision. Isaac, man of peace, left many wells when quarreling began with the local herdsmen. He trusted God to provide for his household and his herds. Isaac, like his father Abraham before him, was in relationship with God, relying on God and believing in God's covenant.

Deceit and fear had marked Jacob's life until the dark and fearsome night beside the Jabbok stream. In the game of life, Jacob had done fairly well. He had snatched the blessing away from his firstborn brother. Despite his father-in-law's lack of integrity, Jacob had managed to leave Paddan Aram with enough to form two camps as he awaited an attack from his brother Esau. Now, alone in the dark, Jacob confessed his fears. He was coming home. Would his brother be angry?

All through the night Jacob struggled. He wrestled with a man (*who was later revealed as God*). This was a symbol of Jacob's own inner struggles. After struggling with God all night, Jacob was blessed and his name changed to Israel. This

new name means “he struggles with God,” a fitting name for a man who had come to know his destiny lay in God’s hands. Jacob’s descendants called themselves Israelites and would continue their own struggles in their covenant with God and their relationships with other people.

The story of Joseph in Genesis 37-50 is really a story about the family of Jacob. God preserved the extended family of Jacob in spite of formidable odds, family alienation, and famine. A Hebrew sold by his own brothers, Joseph rose to a position next to Pharaoh. He married the daughter of a priest and preserved the entire family of Jacob. The book of Genesis ends with the death of Jacob and Joseph. The only land owned by the patriarchs in the Promised Land was a burial place for the clan. The burial place was a sign of hope. It reflected their early belief in a God of creation and history, not merely a god of the seasons. The Israelites knew God, who preserved his people throughout the generations.

### **Moses to Joshua**

The Hebrews were enslaved in Egypt. Joseph was long forgotten. After many years of seeming silence, God spoke directly to Moses. Moses was Hebrew by birth, but had been adopted by an Egyptian princess. Yet Moses identified with his people, the Israelites. God spoke directly to Moses. God was sending Moses to the Pharaoh to bring God’s people, the Israelites, out of Egypt. Moses had several questions for God, but God assured Moses, “I will be with you” (Exodus 3:12).

It was truly an awesome task for Moses to stand before Pharaoh making a demand in the name of an unheard of god. Pharaoh’s response was totally predictable: “I do not know this god. I will not let these Hebrews go to worship in the desert.” But Pharaoh did not have the last word. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had heard the cry of a people in bondage. Even Pharaoh could not stop their liberation. After ten plagues and a miracle at the Sea of Reeds, the Israelites were liberated.

Moses continued to lead the Israelites as they spent 40 years in the wilderness. Moses received the Ten Commandments from Yahweh on Mount Sinai. This continued the covenant that God had made with Abraham. God also instructed Moses on the building of the ark of the covenant and the tabernacle. The tabernacle, the ark of the covenant, and all that was set apart for worship in the tabernacle would continue to point to the Lord’s holiness.

After 40 years in the wilderness, God chose to lead Israel into the land of Canaan under the leadership of Joshua. Israel crossed the Jordan by a special act of God. Time and again they won battles in spite of military inferiority. The writers of Joshua and Judges believed that God was doing the fighting for them. Once Yahweh had won the battle for them, it was Israel’s responsibility to completely destroy the wickedness that contaminated the land. God first promised this land to Abraham at Shechem. Now, God was keeping the promise made so long ago. Joshua knew that in order for Israel to remain faithful to Yahweh, the Israelites would have to remember their story. Joshua acted as both a spiritual and military leader. The confederation of tribes formed at Shechem under Joshua’s leadership lasted 200 years during the time of the judges. Without king or political system, the tribes of Israel remained aware of whose they were and their relationship to each other.

### **Judges and Prophets**

After Joshua died, Israel lived in the land as a nation of tribes held together by their covenant with God. After Joshua’s generation had died, another generation

grew up who knew neither the Lord nor what the Lord had done for Israel. Then the Israelites did evil in the sight of the Lord.

The time of the judges shows a cycle of disobedience, punishment, crying out to the Lord, forgiveness, and renewal. Whenever the Lord raised up a judge for them, the Lord was with the judge and saved them out of the hands of their enemies as long as the judge lived. But when the judge died, the people returned to ways even more corrupt than those of their ancestors, following other gods and serving and worshiping them (Judges 2:18-19).

The Lord began to choose prophets to help guide the people. Deborah was both a judge and a prophet, as was Samuel. A prophet was God's special messenger. The prophet gave God's message to the Israelites, or the people to whom he or she was sent. There were many prophets chosen by God. Some of them include Elijah, Elisha, Obadiah, Jonah, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Huldah. Huldah is a woman prophet who was consulted by King Josiah (2 Kings 22:8-23:3 and 2 Chronicles 34:1-2, 8, 14-33).

The old association of tribes eventually disintegrated. Opposition from the Philistines was growing strong. In the face of many problems, the elders of the tribes asked for a king. The prophet Samuel was disturbed, because God was their king. But God allowed a human king to be chosen, after giving a solemn warning about the danger of kingship.

### **Kings and the Divided Kingdom**

The people of Israel demanded their own way. Even though a king may not have been the best choice, God allowed them to have a king. The prophets continued to speak God's word to the kings. The prophets worked toward two ends: 1.) to inform and remind the people that covenant faith and obedience were still the basis of their relationship with God and 2.) to accommodate the people with the mixed blessing of kingship.

The kings did not always follow in God's ways. Tensions between the rulers, who maintained a royal perspective, and the prophets of God, who acted from a covenantal perspective, grew. There was widespread unrest, disillusionment, sadness, and hopelessness. The kingdom divided into two factions. Israel was to the north and Judah was to the south, each with their own set of kings. Israel and Judah struggled to follow in God's covenant. God would not stand for disobedience. The house of Israel and Judah would eventually fall. Yet God continued to love the people. The prophet Isaiah envisioned a time when righteousness and justice would be restored to the land and to the poor once more. The hope of Isaiah helps us to participate in the hope of God's promises for all people.

### **ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS**

- God was faithful to the people of Israel throughout the Old Testament, even when they strayed from God.
- God appointed judges and prophets to guide Israel in their faith.
- Israel's kings provided a variety of leadership styles, sometimes encouraging Israel to follow God and other times opening the door to worship other gods.

### **WORSHIP**

Set a positive tone for this year's Bible class by including prayer in your worship time. Encourage students to share requests and pray aloud for each other. By

starting this practice in the beginning of the year, students will become more comfortable praying for each other as the year progresses.

Use the following songs for worship:

“We walk by faith”—*Hymnal: A Worship Book* #570 (Use with lessons 1-3)

“Great is thy faithfulness”—HWB #327 (Use with lessons 1-4)

## MEMORY PASSAGE

Hebrews 11:1-3 (Lessons 1 and 5) **Main memory work**

*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.*

## MEMORY VERSE CONNECTIONS

The biblical characters studied in this unit often display strong faith in God. We can also see an invisible power at work throughout the Old Testament stories, as referenced in this passage.

## ASSESSING TEACHING / LEARNING

For some of your students, this unit may be a review of concepts already mastered. Challenge them to apply God’s faithfulness to their lives in new ways. Others may not have a strong background in the stories included in this unit. Be aware of this, and provide extra encouragement and support to those students. Do not approach this unit expecting the students to already know the stories, but be willing to teach the stories to students for the first time as needed.

The assessment includes recitation of the Bible memory verse. Because this may be the first formal memory assessment for many students, be lenient with your grading this time. Give plenty of prompts and encouragement. New students may feel nervous about reciting the verse to you.

Each student will describe all of the shoebox scenes for the final assessment. The purpose of this is for each student to display a general understanding of the major Old Testament stories, not retain all the details therein. It is also important for students to recognize examples of God’s faithfulness within these stories.



Now faith is the assurance  
of things hoped for,  
the conviction of things not seen.  
Indeed, by faith our ancestors  
received approval.  
By faith we understand that  
the worlds were prepared  
by the word of God,  
so that what is seen  
was made from things  
that are not visible.

Hebrews 11:1-3

# From Abraham to the Exile

## LESSON 1: GOD’S CONTINUING FAITHFULNESS

### Objective

Students will consider how God has been faithful to them in the past.

**Text:** Hebrews 11:1-34

### Key Concepts

- God is faithful to all people.
- We can have faith in God because God is devoted to us.

### Essential Questions

- In what way has God shown you faithfulness?

**Estimated Lesson Time:** 45 minutes

### Materials

- “Stories of God’s Faithfulness” (pp. 51-52)
- Student Bibles

### Teacher Preparation

- Make copies of the student page “Stories of God’s Faithfulness,” one for each student.

## INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**Ask students to think of their best friends.** What characteristics make that person special? How do they feel when they are around that person, and how does the person treat them? After students have had time to think, solicit responses from the class. List the characteristics of a good friend on the board.

Emphasize the aspects of forgiveness and faithfulness in strong friendships. Suggest that God has demonstrated these actions toward human beings better than any person ever has. Ask students to begin thinking of ways God has been like a best friend to them.

## LESSON STEPS

**1. “Stories of God’s Faithfulness.”** Distribute the student page. Allow 10-15 minutes for students to thoughtfully respond to the questions on their own.

**2. Share responses.** As a way to get to know each other at the beginning of Bible in 6th grade, ask students to share their responses to the questions on the student page. Have all students share #1 and #5, and use volunteers for the other questions, as they deal with more sensitive thoughts and feelings.

**3. Read Hebrews 11:1-3** aloud as a class. This is the memory verse for this unit. Explain that students will be expected to write or recite this for the assessment at the end of Unit 1. Then explain that the rest of this chapter mentions many biblical characters who had strong faith in God, even during difficult times. Ask the stu-

dents to brainstorm a list of who those characters from the Old Testament might be. Write their suggestions on the board.

**4. Read Hebrews 11:4-34** aloud. Have two volunteers check off the characters on the board as they appear in the text. Close the class by mentioning that you will be reviewing these Old Testament examples of faith in this unit. Explain that students will need to take good notes of all the faith heroes. At the end of the unit, they will be expected to make a shoebox scene of one of these stories. First, they will identify one scene from their chosen character's life story. Then they will use the shoebox as a theater shell and create the scene inside. More directions will be given for this project in Lesson 6. Students may want to be thinking about the hero they would like to represent with their shoebox scene. Start collecting shoeboxes now.

Characters from Hebrews 11:4-34:

Abel	Sarah	Samson
Enoch	Joseph	Jephthah
Noah	Moses	David
Abraham	Rahab	Samuel
Isaac	Gideon	Prophets
Jacob	Barak	

### **EXTEND THE LESSON**

*(This activity will extend the lesson to longer than 45 minutes.)*

- **Faith in God interviews.** Assign a special project where each student interviews a close relative (*parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, etc.*) about a time in his/her life when God was faithful, as well as a time when he/she had to rely on faith in God. Students can share these stories with the class in a variety of forms, such as a transcription of the interview, epic-style poem, descriptive writing, oral storytelling or digital storytelling.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Stories of God's Faithfulness*

In Unit 1, we will review ways God was faithful to the people of the Old Testament. The Old Testament is not the only place to find stories of God's faithfulness, though. You and your classmates have stories of God's faithfulness, too! Answer the questions below, taking time to think before writing your responses. You will be asked to share some of your responses with the class.

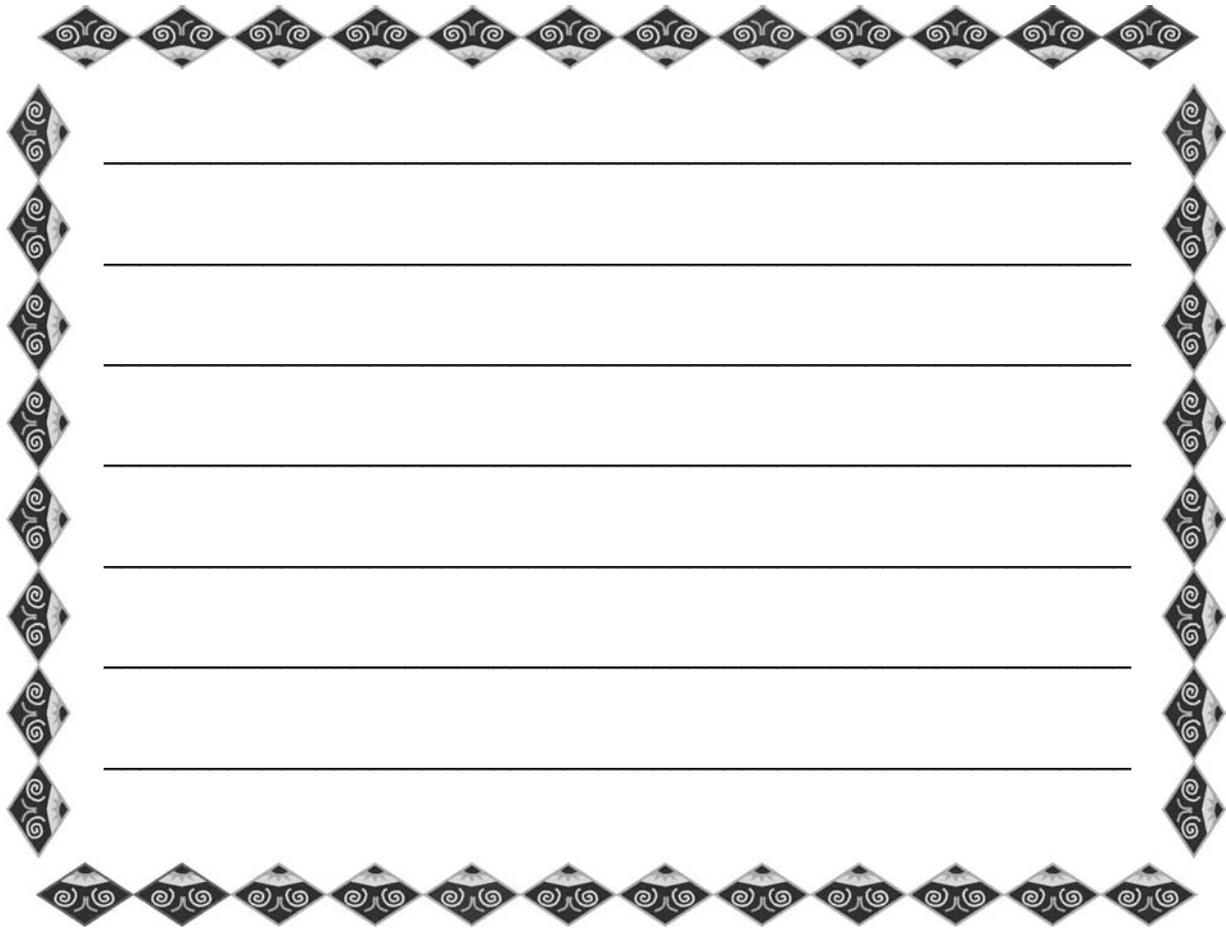
1. List five fun things you did this summer.
2. Name one way you felt God near you in one of those activities.
3. List two times you were a little bit worried or scared this summer.
4. Name one way God was near you during one of those times. If you don't feel like God was with you at all, write down a way that another person helped you through it. Sometimes God uses other people to comfort us.
5. List three things you hope to do in 6th grade.
6. How would you like God to help you as you work towards those goals?

## *Stories of God's Faithfulness, Side 2*

7. When things are going well, it is often easy to feel that God is near to us. But when we feel worried or scared, God is sometimes harder to sense, because those worries are getting in the way and are clouding our “view” of God. Hebrews 11:1-3 says:

*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.*

This year you are hoping that some things will happen. You also may be hoping that God is really there, because God cannot be seen! Write a brief prayer to God, asking for faith this year:



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\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

# From Abraham to the Exile

## LESSON 2: ABRAHAM TO JOSEPH

### Objective

Students will review the characters of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Esau, Jacob, Leah and Rachel, and Joseph and his brothers.

**Text:** Passages from Genesis

### Key Concepts

- God developed a holy people, beginning with Abraham and his descendants.

### Essential Questions

- How is God faithful to the Old Testament characters, from Abraham to Joseph?

**Estimated Lesson Time:** 45 minutes

### Materials

- “Pieces of the Puzzle” (p. 55)
- Paper clips or envelopes
- Student Bibles
- Construction paper in various colors

### Teacher Preparation

- Make copies of the student page, “Pieces of the Puzzle,” one for each student. Have a school volunteer or aide cut apart the puzzle pieces. Paper clip the pieces together (*or put each set in an envelope*), so that students will receive a packet of all their pieces together.

## INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**Name the characters.** Remind students of yesterday’s lesson, when they named Old Testament characters who demonstrated strong faith in God, even though they made some mistakes along the way. Ask them to name those they can recall, beginning with Abraham and ending with Joseph. They should be sure to include Rebekah, Leah, and Rachel (*and possibly others such as Miriam and Deborah*)—even though they are not directly in the passage from Hebrews—along with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.

## LESSON STEPS

**1. Distribute the packets of puzzle pieces** that are in envelopes or paper clipped together. Each student should have one of each of the puzzle pieces. Have students remove the first puzzle piece. They should read the passage noted on the piece, then write a brief summary in the space provided. After finishing one piece, they will move on to another until they have completed the whole puzzle.

If there is time, distribute construction paper and have the students glue the puzzle together using the construction paper as a frame. *Note: If you do not have*

*class time to work with the puzzle pieces, just make copies of the student page and use it as is, without cutting it apart.*

**2. Share the summaries.** At the end of the class period, review the students' summaries by inviting different ones to share their writings for each passage. Make sure that all students understand the stories. Take time to review if needed.

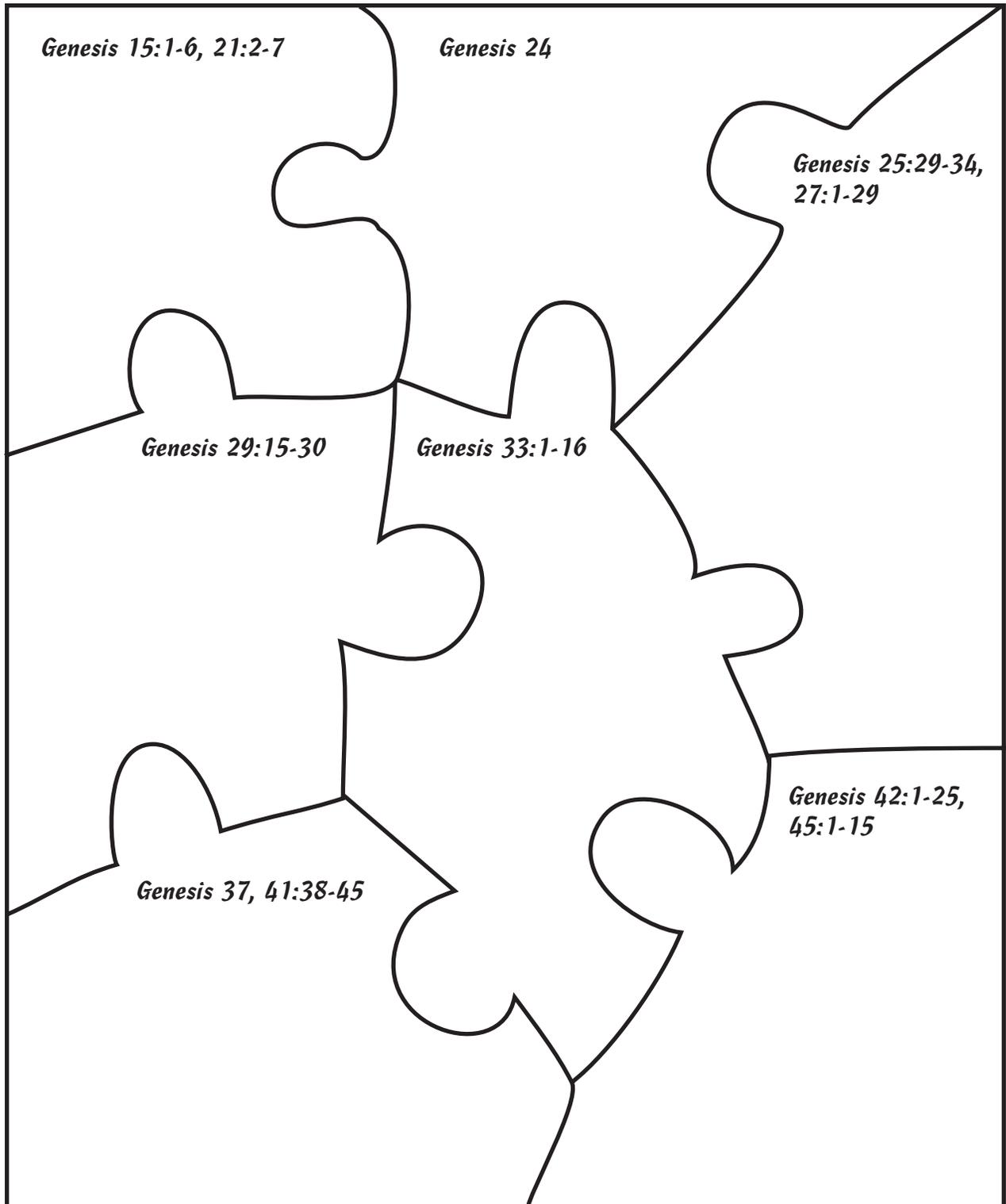
**3. Remind the students** to be thinking about which story they would like to represent in their shoebox scene for Lesson 6, at the end of the unit.

### **EXTEND THE LESSON**

*(This activity will extend the lesson to longer than 45 minutes.)*

- **Time travel exercise.** Have students choose one character from today's lesson and imagine they have traveled back in time to meet this person. They should write a one or two-page narrative of their experiences in meeting the historical character. While students may fictionalize the character's personality, their interaction should mainly be within the context of one of the biblical stories about that person.

# *Pieces of the Puzzle*



## Pieces of the Puzzle

### **Genesis 15:1-6, 21:2-7**

God makes a promise to Abraham that he will have a son and countless descendants. Sarah has Isaac in her old age.

### **Genesis 24**

Abraham's servant finds Rebekah, a relative of Abraham, and asks her to marry Isaac. She agrees.

### **Genesis 25:29-34, 27:1-29**

Isaac's youngest son, Jacob, bribes his older brother Esau for the birthright. Rebekah helps Jacob trick Isaac into giving him the blessing instead of Esau.

### **Genesis 29:15-30**

Jacob falls in love with Rachel and asks to marry her. Rachel's father, Laban, tricks Jacob into marrying his oldest daughter Leah first. Jacob has to work for Laban a total of 14 years until he finally marries Rachel.

### **Genesis 33:1-16**

Jacob brings a huge gift of animals and servants to Esau, in order to make peace with him. Esau forgives Jacob.

### **Genesis 42:1-25, 45:1-15**

Joseph's brothers travel to Egypt to buy food. Joseph, who has become an important government official, meets them and tells them to come back with Benjamin. After they do, Joseph reveals his identity and is kind to them.

### **Genesis 37, 41:38-45**

Joseph's brothers are jealous, because he is Jacob's favorite son. They sell him to some traders headed for Egypt.

# Old Testament Review

## LESSON 3: MOSES TO JOSHUA

### Objective

Students will review the stories of Moses, the Exodus, and Joshua.

**Text:** Passages from Exodus, Joshua 1:1-18

### Key Concepts

- God was faithful to the Israelites by giving them the leaders Moses and Joshua.
- Moses and Joshua demonstrated strong faith in God’s plan.

### Essential Questions

- In what difficult situations did Moses and Joshua demonstrate faith in God?
- How did God show faithfulness to the Israelites?

**Estimated Lesson Time:** 45 minutes

### Materials

- “A Reader’s Theater” (p. 59)
- Student Bibles
- “The Call of Abram” (p. 60)
- For Extend the Lesson, option one: costumes for reader’s theaters
- For Extend the Lesson, option two: video or DVD of *The Ten Commandments*

### Teacher Preparation

- Make one copy of the student page, “A Reader’s Theater.” Cut the sections apart on the lines. There are 6 scripture references. Students will need to be divided into 6 groups. Each group will have one scripture reference.
- Make an overhead transparency of “The Call of Abram,” or project the page. *OR*, you may choose to make 6 copies, so that each group has its own copy.

### INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**Ask the students to share** what they know about the stories of Moses, the Israelites leaving Egypt and traveling to the Promised Land, and Joshua.

### LESSON STEPS

**1. Assign students to six groups.** Distribute the scripture references with directions that you cut apart ahead of time. Each group should read through the passage and create a one to two-page reader’s theater version of the story.

The reader’s theater might contain only narrators, or could feature biblical characters as readers. The number of readers should equal the number of persons in the group, or they may need to have two people read a part together. The theme of God’s faithfulness to the characters in the story and the characters’ faith in God should be highlighted. (*You may wish to save a few of the better reader’s theaters*

*to display next year on an overhead or project from a computer. Having examples that students wrote helps students have a better idea of what you are expecting.)*

You may wish to use the example of “The Call of Abram” page, from Genesis 12, to give students an idea of what to do. They may not be able to create their own ideas as was done in this example. Both the Abram and Sarai parts have words that are not found exactly in Genesis 12 but are true to the characters’ story. Students will probably need to stick closely to the scripture text in order to write their reader’s theaters.

**2. Present the reader’s theaters.** Give the groups time to practice their reader’s theaters, and then invite them to present them to the class.

### **EXTEND THE LESSON**

*(These activities will extend the lesson to longer than 45 minutes.)*

- **Present the reader’s theaters to others.** Students may wear costumes that complement their reader’s theaters and present them to a larger group, such as a school chapel group, a parent audience, or another grade level.
- **Watch a clip from the movie *The Ten Commandments*** and compare it to the actual biblical text. Discuss why some events were fictionalized and how it affects the biblical message. This movie is available through Amazon.com.

# Reader's Theater

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Read through the passage listed below as a group and create a one to two-page reader's theater version of the story. It can contain only narrators, or it can feature Bible characters as readers. The number of readers should equal the number of persons in your group, or you could have two people read one part together. Highlight the themes of God's faithfulness to the characters in the story and the characters' faith in God.

Exodus 1:8-22; 2:1-10

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Read through the passage listed below as a group and create a one to two-page reader's theater version of the story. It can contain only narrators, or it can feature Bible characters as readers. The number of readers should equal the number of persons in your group, or you could have two people read one part together. Highlight the themes of God's faithfulness to the characters in the story and the characters' faith in God.

Exodus 3:1-15; 4:1-17

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Read through the passage listed below as a group and create a one to two-page reader's theater version of the story. It can contain only narrators, or it can feature Bible characters as readers. The number of readers should equal the number of persons in your group, or you could have two people read one part together. Highlight the themes of God's faithfulness to the characters in the story and the characters' faith in God.

Exodus 7:14-10:29; 12:21-36

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Read through the passage listed below as a group and create a one to two-page reader's theater version of the story. It can contain only narrators, or it can feature Bible characters as readers. The number of readers should equal the number of persons in your group, or you could have two people read one part together. Highlight the themes of God's faithfulness to the characters in the story and the characters' faith in God.

Exodus 13:21-22; 14:9-31

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Read through the passage listed below as a group and create a one to two-page reader's theater version of the story. It can contain only narrators, or it can feature Bible characters as readers. The number of readers should equal the number of persons in your group, or you could have two people read one part together. Highlight the themes of God's faithfulness to the characters in the story and the characters' faith in God.

Exodus 20:1-17

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Read through the passage listed below as a group and create a one to two-page reader's theater version of the story. It can contain only narrators, or it can feature Bible characters as readers. The number of readers should equal the number of persons in your group, or you could have two people read one part together. Highlight the themes of God's faithfulness to the characters in the story and the characters' faith in God.

Joshua 1:1-18

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# The Call of Abram

(Genesis 12)

**Narrator:** Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran was the father of Lot, but Haran died before his father Terah. Then Abram married Sarai, and Nahor married Milcah.

Terah took his son Abram, his daughter-in-law Sarai, and his grandson Lot and moved away from Ur. They settled in Haran, where Terah died. He was 205 years old.

After Terah died, the Lord spoke to Abram.

**Lord:** Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.

**Narrator:** So Abram and Sarai went, as the Lord had told them; and Lot went with them. Abram was 75 years old when they departed from Haran and set forth to go to the land of Canaan.

**Abram:** I am Abram. Eventually the Lord changed my name to Abraham. I was born in Ur, then we moved to Haran. Now the Lord has spoken to me. When I speak of the Lord, I am not talking about one of the gods that people worshiped back in Haran. I am talking about the Creator of all that is—the one whose story had almost been forgotten in my time. But now the Lord has spoken to me and been revealed.

**Sarai:** I am Sarai. Eventually the Lord changed my name to Sarah. We are shepherders. We live on the dry and windy steppes, a distance away from the cities. When our animals need new grazing areas, we move. Our animals provide us with what we need: goat's hair to weave a tent, wool for our clothes, skin bags and sheeps' horns to store things in, milk, and meat. The donkeys and camels carry our things. Our life is like that of many other herders.

Yet it is not the same, for when Abram's father Terah died, the Lord spoke to Abram. Abram listened and obeyed the Lord, and we moved to the land of Canaan. When we came to Canaan, the Lord spoke to Abram again.

**Lord:** To your offspring I will give this land.

**Sarai:** So Abram built an altar to the Lord at that place. It was a beautiful moment. God has been faithful to us as we have followed God's call. We had an interesting life. You can read the rest of our story from the book of Genesis, chapters 12 to 23.

# Old Testament Review

## LESSON 4: JUDGES AND PROPHETS

### Objective

Students will learn the role of judges and prophets in the Old Testament.

**Text:** Judges 4:4-5; 1 Samuel 10:1; 2 Samuel 12:1-15; Ephesians 4:11-13

### Key Concepts

- God used judges and prophets to give messages to the Israelites.

### Essential Questions

- How does God use prophets today?

**Estimated Lesson Time:** 45 minutes

### Materials

- “Judges and Prophets” (p. 63)
- Student Bibles

### Teacher Preparation

- Make copies of the student page “Judges and Prophets,” one for each student.

## INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**“Judges and Prophets.”** Pass out the student page. Time students for two minutes, instructing them to write as many descriptive words as possible about a judge. Then repeat the timed exercise for a prophet. After time is up, ask each student to share one descriptive word until all descriptions have been exhausted.

## LESSON STEPS

**1. Look at the Bible text.** Ask students to complete the rest of the student page, using their Bibles. They should compare their first descriptions of judges and prophets with those found in the biblical text.

**2. Share findings.** After students have completed the student page, ask volunteers to share the differences and similarities they noticed between their own descriptions and those in the Bible. Explain that when Israel received a king, there was no need for judges, but that they still had prophets.

**3. Discuss judges and prophets today.** How have judges’ roles changed? Have students ever heard of a modern-day prophet?

Challenge them to consider their impressions of modern-day prophets. Often today’s prophets are met with a great deal of skepticism, as were the prophets in Bible times. People often have trouble knowing if someone’s message is truly from God until what they have described actually happens.

**4. Read Ephesians 4:11-13** together. In this list of spiritual gifts, Paul includes prophets as people appointed by Jesus Christ. Conclude the lesson by asking students to consider whether they might ever be able to be a prophet. According to the biblical text, the key concept is that prophets were regular people called by God to do the extraordinary task of sharing God’s message with the world. In this sense, all followers of God could be called to be prophets at some point in their lives.

### **EXTEND THE LESSON**

*(These activities will extend the lesson to longer than 45 minutes.)*

• **Explore the stories** of other judges and prophets. You may need to give some guidance for understanding the context of each character. Students could be asked to summarize the following stories:

#### Judges

- Othniel (Judges 3:7-11)
- Deborah (Judges 4 and 5)
- Gideon (Judges 6–8)

#### Prophets

- Elijah (1 Kings 17–19 and 2 Kings 2:1-12)
- Elisha (1 Kings 19:19-21; 2 Kings 2:1-22; 2 Kings 4-6:7)
- Isaiah (Isaiah 6:1-13 and 2 Kings 19:1-7)
- Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:1-19)

• **Imagine God’s message** for the world today. Divide the class into groups of 3-4. Students in each group will agree on one main message. Then they will outline an action plan of how Christians can act as prophets and communicate that message to the world.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Judges and Prophets

*When your teacher tells you to, write down as many descriptive words as possible for the first word in bold print. You have two minutes to complete the exercise. Later you will do the same for the second word.*

## **JUDGE**

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## **PROPHET**

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*Read each of the passages below and describe the job of a judge or prophet according to what you read in each text.*

### **Judges 4:4-5**

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### **1 Samuel 10:1**

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### **2 Samuel 12:1-15**

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## ANSWER KEY

# Judges and Prophets

When your teacher tells you to, write down as many descriptive words as possible for the first word in bold print. You have two minutes to complete the exercise. Later you will do the same for the second word.

## **JUDGE**

Responses will vary but might include:

someone giving justice,

referee, mediator,

a critic, an expert, umpire,

someone who gives a verdict, etc.

## **PROPHET**

Responses will vary but might include:

a messenger of God,

someone who predicts,

someone who foretells,

soothsayer, etc.

Read each of the passages below and describe the job of a judge or prophet according to what you read in each text.

### **Judges 4:4-5**

Deborah sat under a tree and judged cases when the Israelites came to her.

### **1 Samuel 10:1**

Samuel anointed Saul, and later David, whom God had chosen to be king.

### **2 Samuel 12:1-15**

Nathan told a parable from God that showed David how he had sinned against Uriah. He said there would be trouble and death in David's family because of his sin.

# Old Testament Review

## LESSON 5: KINGS AND THE DIVIDED KINGDOM

### Objective

Students will review the names of Israel's and Judah's kings.

**Text:** 1 Kings 11:42-43; 12:1-24

### Key Concepts

- Israel and Judah experienced rule under many kings.
- God was faithful to the Israelites even when they ignored God.

### Essential Questions

- Who ruled the Israelites after the kingdom split?

**Estimated Lesson Time:** 45 minutes

### Materials

- “Kings of Israel” (p. 67)
- “Kings of Judah” (p. 68)
- Student Bibles

### Teacher Preparation

- Make copies of the student pages, “Kings of Israel” and “Kings of Judah,” enough of each one for half of the class.

## INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**Many students will already be familiar** with the three first kings of Israel. Invite them to share stories of Saul, David, and Solomon.

## LESSON STEPS

**1. Now ask students to name the fourth king** of Israel. Most will not be able to say who it was. Explain that the kingdom of Israel was divided into two kingdoms after Solomon's reign. Read 1 Kings 11:42-43 and 12:1-24. Divide the class into two sections, naming one Judah and the other Israel. Appoint one person to be king of each group—Rehoboam of Judah and Jeroboam of Israel. This will be the spokesperson for the group.

**2. Distribute the student pages,** giving “Kings of Judah” to the group representing that kingdom and “Kings of Israel” to the other group.

**3. Share information.** After the “kingdoms” are finished listing their kings, ask them to share anything interesting they noticed as they searched through the passages. Some students might comment on the young age of some kings and that some were female. If students remark that the kingdoms went through a lot of kings, inform them that their lists span 345 years. In the United States, presidents are in office for only four-year terms, although they can serve two terms.

**Kings of Israel**

Jeroboam  
Nadab  
Baasha  
Elah  
Zimri  
Tibni and Omri  
Ahab  
Ahaziah  
Joram  
Jehu  
Jehoahaz  
Jehoash  
Jeroboam  
Zechariah  
Shallum  
Menahem  
Pekahiah  
Pekah  
Hoshea

**Kings of Judah**

Rehoboam  
Abijah  
Asa  
Jehoshaphat  
Jehoram  
Ahaziah  
Athaliah  
Joash  
Amaziah  
Azariah  
Jotham  
Ahaz  
Hezekiah  
Manasseh  
Amon  
Josiah  
Jehoahaz  
Jehoiakim  
Jehoiachin  
Zedekiah

**4. Explain that during the time of the divided kingdom,** Israel and Judah often strayed from God’s plan and fought against each other. Ask the students to consider how God might have felt as the people acted in these ways. How do the people of today’s lesson compare with those of the earlier lessons in this unit?

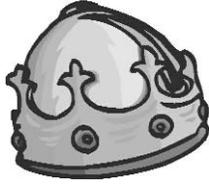
**5. God is faithful.** Remind the students that even though the Israelites went through times when their faith in God was weak, God’s faithfulness was always constant and strong. Compare this to times in our lives when we are not faithful to God. God is always faithful to us, wanting us to return to faith, and waiting to forgive us and welcome us home.

**6. Close by reciting Hebrews 11:1-3** as a class. This is the Unit 1 memory passage. Students will recite this during the next lesson as they work on their shoeboxes. If you choose to require students to work on shoeboxes at home, be sure to find another time for students to recite the verse.

**EXTEND THE LESSON**

*(This activity will extend the lesson to longer than 45 minutes.)*

• **Do special research projects** where students research a king of their choice. They should describe the king’s rise to power, ruling style, relationship to God and length of rule. This would be an excellent extra credit opportunity.



# Israel's Kings

As a group, read through the scriptures listed below to discover the names of your kings. You may divide the passages among your group so you gather a list of names as a team and one person does not have to look up every reference.

**1 Kings 12:25**

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**1 Kings 15:25**

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**1 Kings 15:33**

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**1 Kings 16:8**

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**1 Kings 16:15**

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**1 Kings 16:21-23**

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**1 Kings 16:29**

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**1 Kings 22:51**

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**2 Kings 1:17**

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**2 Kings 9:13**

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**2 Kings 13:1**

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**2 Kings 13:10**

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**2 Kings 14:23**

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**2 Kings 15:8**

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**2 Kings 15:13**

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**2 Kings 15:17**

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**2 Kings 15:23**

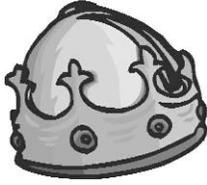
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**2 Kings 15:27**

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**2 Kings 15:30**

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# Judah's Kings

As a group, read through the scriptures listed below to discover the names of your kings. You may divide the passages among your group so you gather a list of names as a team and one person does not have to look up every reference.

- 1 Kings 12:1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Kings 15:1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Kings 15:9 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Kings 22:41 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Kings 8:16 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Kings 8:25 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Kings 11:1-3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Kings 12:1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Kings 14:1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Kings 15:1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Kings 15:32 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Kings 16:1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Kings 18:1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Kings 21:1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Kings 21:19 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Kings 22:1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Kings 23:31 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Kings 23:34 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Kings 24:8 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Kings 24:18 \_\_\_\_\_

# Old Testament Review

## LESSON 6: REVIEW PROJECT

### Objective

Students will create a shoebox scene to highlight one Old Testament story of God’s faithfulness. They will describe the story of their classmates’ scenes as a review assessment.

**Text:** Selected passages from this unit

### Key Concepts

- The Old Testament holds numerous examples of God’s faithfulness.

### Essential Questions

- How was God faithful to the characters in the Old Testament stories we studied?

**Estimated Lesson Time:** Three 45-minute lessons. *Note: You may choose to have students create the shoebox scene at home for homework. In that case, you will need part of one day for students to share the shoebox scenes and a second day for student assessment of each others’ scenes.*

### Materials

- Shoeboxes, one per student
- “Faith Heroes” (p. 71)
- Project supplies: cardboard, construction paper, markers, glue, scissors, etc.
- Assessment pages (pp. 72-73)

### Teacher Preparation

- Provide one shoebox for each student, or ask them to bring their own.
- Make one copy of the “Faith Heroes” handout for each student, and as many copies of the assessment pages as necessary to write about each shoebox scene.
- Collect project supplies.

### INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**“Faith Heroes.”** Invite students to look through their notes and think back on the stories they have reviewed in this unit. Distribute the handout. This is a list of the characters you have studied. Each student will choose one story he/she wants to portray in a shoebox scene. Ensure that the important stories are covered.

### LESSON STEPS

**1. Have students create shoebox scenes** by identifying one scene from the story they choose. By turning the open shoebox on its side, they can use the box as a theater shell and create the scene inside using the project supplies. Each student should make his/her own scene.

**2. Bible memory.** As students work on their scenes, you should invite them, one at a time, to recite the Bible memory passage, Hebrews 11:1-3, to you.

**3. Present the scenes.** Students should work on their scenes for one class period and part of the next. During the second part of the second session, invite the students to present their scenes. Remind them to highlight how God's faithfulness is evident in the story they have portrayed.

**4. Assessment.** On the third day, display the shoebox scenes, spacing them out in the room so students can describe them privately. Each scene should be numbered. Pass out the assessment sheets. Divide up the 45-minute class period evenly, so students have the same amount of time with each shoebox scene. They should move around the room as you keep time, stopping at each shoebox and answering the questions on the assessment page.

### **EXTEND THE LESSON**

*(This activity will extend the lesson to longer than 45 minutes.)*

- **Share the shoebox scenes.** Plan for students to take their shoebox scenes to other classes, presenting them just as they did for their classmates.

# Faith Heroes

Below is a list of heroes we have studied in this unit. Choose one that you would like to learn more about. Read the references about that person. There may be more information on that person at other places in the Bible and in reference books. The references below are just to get you started.

Choose one scene from the person's life, to create a shoebox scene to display for the rest of the class. You will need to clearly depict the characters and their actions in the scene. You will have a chance to share your scene with the class. During the sharing time, be sure to describe how God was faithful to the character you chose.

*Note: Make several choices, since you may not get your first choice. The class will represent some of the major stories in chronological order, so that all the shoeboxes together will give a good summary of the history of Israel.*

Abraham: Genesis 15:1-6

Sarah: Genesis 21:2-7

Rebekah: Genesis 24

Isaac: Genesis 21:1-7; Genesis 26

Jacob: Genesis 25:29-34; Genesis 27:1-29

Esau: Genesis 25:29-34

Rachel: Genesis 29:15-30

Laban: Genesis 29:15-30

Leah: Genesis 29:15-30

Joseph: Genesis 37; Genesis 4:38-45

Shiphrah: Exodus 1:8-22

Puah: Exodus 1: 8-22

Jochabed: Exodus 2:1-10

Miriam: Exodus 2:1-10; Exodus 15:20, 21

Moses: Exodus 3:1-15; Exodus 4:1-17; Exodus 7:14-10:29

Aaron: Exodus 7:14-10:29

Joshua: Joshua 1:1-18

Deborah: Judges 4:4-5

Samuel: 1 Samuel 10:1; 1 Samuel 16:1-13

Nathan: 2 Samuel 12:1-15; 1 Kings 1:32-40

King Joash: 2 Kings 12:1

King Hezekiah: 2 Kings 18:1-7

King Josiah: 2 Kings 22, 23



Name \_\_\_\_\_

## ***Assessment: Old Testament Review***

*For each shoebox scene, answer the following questions:*

***Scene number*** \_\_\_\_\_

Who are the characters in the scene?

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What action is taking place?

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How was God faithful to the character(s) in this story?

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***Scene number*** \_\_\_\_\_

Who are the characters in the scene?

---

What action is taking place?

---

How was God faithful to the character(s) in this story?

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***Scene number*** \_\_\_\_\_

Who are the characters in the scene?

---

What action is taking place?

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How was God faithful to the character(s) in this story?

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**Scene number** \_\_\_\_\_

Who are the characters in the scene?

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What action is taking place?

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How was God faithful to the character(s) in this story?

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**Scene number** \_\_\_\_\_

Who are the characters in the scene?

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What action is taking place?

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How was God faithful to the character(s) in this story?

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**Scene number** \_\_\_\_\_

Who are the characters in the scene?

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What action is taking place?

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How was God faithful to the character(s) in this story?

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