

Back to the Beginning

Main Ideas

- The whole Bible is necessary for understanding the mystery of Jesus' death on the cross.
- The Bible has an intentional order.
- Jesus is the key to understanding the Bible.
- The solution to the mystery of Jesus and the cross begins in Genesis.
- God is the main character in the story of the Bible.

Memory Verse

He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;

—Isaiah 53:3a

Scripture for the Lesson

1. 1 Corinthians 5:6b
2. Exodus 12:34
3. Hosea 7:4b
4. Luke 24:26-27
5. Genesis 1:1

Teacher Introduction

The Jews of Jesus' day had the full canon of Old Testament Scriptures. These Scriptures had been read, studied, and pondered for years. They gave God's people an amazing breadth and depth for understanding God's character and purposes, His relationship with His people, and their desperate need for redemption. The coming of the Messiah had been clearly foretold by the prophets. But, as demonstrated by the two men on the road to Emmaus after the death of Jesus, God's people did not yet clearly see nor fully comprehend the nature of Jesus' saving work. Luke 24:13-27 sets the necessary context for this lesson.¹

Luke 24:13-27—That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem,¹⁴ and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened.¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them.¹⁶ But their eyes were kept from recognizing him.¹⁷ And he said to them, “What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?” And they stood still, looking sad.¹⁸ Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?”¹⁹ And he said to them, “What things?” And they said to him, “Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,²⁰ and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him.²¹ But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened.²² Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning,²³ and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive.²⁴ Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see.”²⁵ And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?”²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

1. Considering that this was a seven-mile journey, it is important to note that verse 27 should be understood to mean that Jesus was explaining specific, key texts, and/or themes that pointed to His identity as the Messiah and the true nature of God's saving purposes.

Back to the Beginning

Pray that the Lord would open the eyes and hearts of the students so that they would see, understand, and embrace the one and only Savior. May they be made wise and quick of heart, believing all that the prophets have spoken!

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Curriculum Resources

- **5 Questions (1A)**
- Jesus Is the Key 1-3 (2A-2C, see Visuals Packet for assembly instructions)
- Sentence Fragments 1-4 (2D-2G, cut apart)
- One God (2H, cut out)
- Bible Clue Card A (see first part of Visuals Packet for all Bible Clue Cards, which should be cut out for use over the course of this study)
- Growing in Faith Together Page for Lesson 2 (one per student)

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Other Supplies

- In the Beginning ... Jesus Banner (from Lesson 1)
- Optional: A paperback mystery book (to tear in half)
- Magnifying glass
- Whiteboard and markers
- Tape
- For Application (for each student)
 - Student Workbook
 - Pencils, colored markers and/or colored pencils

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Preparation

- **Sentence Fragments 1-4**—Cut out **Sentence Fragments 1-4** (2D-2G) along the solid lines so that you will have the following sentence fragments: A little bird; flew down; and pecked at; a warty toad
- **Bible Passages**—Look up and mark the following passages in your Bible before class so that you can easily find and read them during the lesson presentation: 1 Corinthians 5:6b; Exodus 12:34; Hosea 7:4b.

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Supplies for Optional Activities

1. Memory Verse Sentence Fragments (Choose one of the following two versions for this activity.)
 - **Memory Verse Sentence Fragments—Small Group Version 1-2** (OA-2A and OA-2B, cut out and place in a zipper-type bag for each small group)
 - OR
 - **Memory Verse Sentence Fragments—Student Version** (OA-2C, cut out and place in a zipper-type bag for each student)

Large Group Lesson

In the Beginning... Jesus Banner



(Display the **In the Beginning . . . Jesus Banner** and the **5 Questions** visual. Quickly ask the questions that follow.)

- ? *What happened here?* [Jesus died on a cross.]
- ? *Where did it happen?* [outside the city of Jerusalem]
- ? *When did it happen?* [during the Jewish Passover—about 2,000 years ago]
- ? *Did the people who were there at the time of Jesus' death truly understand who did it or why?* [No.]
- ? *Why not?* [It had been kept secret. They didn't know the whole story yet. They didn't have the whole Bible.]

Optional Illustration

Paperback mystery book

(Display the **paperback mystery book**. Choose two students to come to the front and tell the class to pretend the following scenario.)

Suppose [student's name] and [student's name] each want to read this exciting mystery story. What if I did this?

(Open the book, tear it down the middle of the binding, and give each student one half.)

Would [student's name] and [student's name] be able to solve the mystery?

- The person with the last half of the book might know “who done it and why,” but that person wouldn't know what had been done.
- The person with the first half of the book would know what was done, but not who did it or why.

In the Beginning... Jesus Banner

(Point to the bottom of the **In the Beginning . . . Jesus Banner** and remind the students that, although the mystery of Jesus' death on the cross was kept secret for long ages, it has now been revealed because we now have the **WHOLE** story. We have both the Old and New Testaments. Hold up your Bible. Emphasize that the **WHOLE** Bible is necessary for understanding the mystery of Jesus' death on the cross.)

(Remind the students that, at the end of the first lesson, they were told that they would be acting as detectives during the coming lessons—looking for clues to solve the greatest mystery of all—who killed Jesus and why He was killed. The Bible contains the “clues” and the solution to the mystery of Jesus' death on the cross.)

We are going to start looking for these clues by reading from the Bible—from both Old and New Testaments.

(Read the following passages aloud. Have the passages marked ahead of time in your Bible so you can quickly read them as if they were one continuous thought.)

... *Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? (1 Corinthians 5:6b)*

So the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading bowls being bound up in their cloaks on their shoulders. (Exodus 12:34)

... *they are like a heated oven whose baker ceases to stir the fire, from the kneading of the dough until it is leavened. (Hosea 7:4b)*

? *Was this a good way to look for Bible clues? Did what I read make sense? Why not?* [Allow the students to briefly respond.]

Illustration

Sentence Fragments

(Have four students come to the front and give each a **Sentence Fragment**. Tell the students that they are each holding parts of a complete sentence. Their job is to put the fragments together in the correct order. Give them a moment to do this. The correct order is as follows.)

A little bird / flew down / and pecked at / a warty toad

- The order in which the word sections were put together matters.

(Change the order of the Sentence Fragments, so the sentence now reads as follows.)

A warty toad / flew down / and pecked at / a little bird

- Changing the order results in a sentence with an entirely different meaning.
- This illustration can help us understand how we go about looking for clues in the Bible.
- Not only is it important to have the **WHOLE** Bible for solving the mystery, it's also important that we put the clues in their **CORRECT ORDER**.

(Emphasize that the Bible is not simply a collection of verses, people, and events tossed together at random. The Bible has a certain order to it. The Bible was written in a way that allows us to look for clues and put them in the right order.)

Bible Clue Card A

(Tell the students that you have a special clue that will help us know where in the Bible to begin to look for clues to solve the questions: "Who killed Jesus?" and "Why did He die on a cross?" Choose a student to come to the front. Show him **Bible Clue Card A** and ask him to read the clue printed on it. Note: Do not allow him to carefully study the card at a close distance. Point out that the clue isn't clearly visible ... yet. But you have a Bible verse that will help solve this problem. Have the student return to his seat and assign the class a **Sword Drill** with Luke 24:26-27. Choose a student to read the verses. There are directions for doing Sword Drills in the Appendix.)

Luke 24:26-27—"Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?"²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

? *Who is asking the question in verse 26? Go back and look at verse 15 of chapter 24 for the answer.* [Jesus was asking the question.]

(Remind the students that in our first lesson we learned of the two men who were walking together along a road near Jerusalem soon after Jesus' death. As they were walking, Jesus joined them, but they didn't recognize that He was Jesus.)

? *Why would it be shocking to them that it was Jesus talking to them?* [He was supposed to be dead.]

(Explain that Jesus spoke these words to the two men after His resurrection—after He had risen from the dead! Jesus knew that they were confused by His death. Jesus knew that they didn't understand who did it and why. So He explained it—interpreted it—to them. He revealed to them the mystery that had been kept secret for long ages.)

? *According to verse 27, how did Jesus go about explaining it to them? Where in the Bible did He begin?* ["beginning with Moses and all the Prophets"]

- "Moses and all the Prophets" refers to the men God used to write down His words in the Old Testament.
- Jesus was explaining to the two men that the Old Testament Scripture was filled with clues about Himself and His death on the cross.
- Jesus explained to them what the clues were, where they were found, and how they explained the mystery of His death on the cross.

Jesus is the key to understanding the Old Testament and its clues. We need Jesus to understand what the clues are and what they mean.

Jesus Is the Key
visual

(Display the **Jesus Is the Key** visual and quickly recall the themes presented thus far.)

- We need the **WHOLE** Bible to understand the mystery of Jesus' death on the cross.
- The Bible contains the **CLUES** to the mystery.
- We need put the clues from the Bible in the **CORRECT ORDER**—beginning with the Old Testament.
- **JESUS IS THE KEY** to understanding the clues.

? *Exactly where in the Old Testament should we start looking for the clues?*

Bible Clue Card A,
magnifying glass,
Jesus Is the Key
visual

(Give a student **Bible Clue Card A** and a **magnifying glass**. Instruct him to insert the Bible Clue Card into the slit above the red window on the **Jesus Is the Key** visual. The words on the Bible Clue Card should now be visible. The magnifying glass can help with this.)

Start at Genesis 1:1.

Whiteboard and
markers

(Ask if any of the students can recite Genesis 1:1 from memory, and then have them turn to Genesis 1:1 in their Bibles and read the passage together.)

Genesis 1:1—In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

(Write the following headings on the **whiteboard**.)

Who? What?

Back to the Beginning

Whiteboard and markers

? *Who is the only Person mentioned in this verse? [God] Is anyone else mentioned? Does it say “gods”? No! There is only one God.*

- The Bible begins by telling us something very important: The Bible is about the one God. The Bible is His Word and His story.
- Solving the mystery of Jesus’ death on the cross begins with God.

(Write “One God” under the “Who?” heading.)

? *According to Genesis 1:1, what did God do? [He created the heavens and the earth.] Who alone created the heavens and the earth? One God did.*

- There is only this one God, and He alone is the Creator of everything.

(Write “Created” under the “What?” heading.)

? *If this one God is the Creator of everything, then He alone was never created—He alone had no beginning. There is a special word that is used to describe this. What word means God had no beginning? [God is eternal.]*

(Write “Eternal” under the “Who?” heading.)

? *When did God create everything? [in the beginning]*

- The very first sentence of the Bible provides us with the starting point of our mystery: God!
- The mystery of Jesus’ death on the cross begins with the one eternal Creator God.

One God visual

(Display the **One God** visual. Point out that the first verse of the Bible is very important for solving the mystery of Jesus’ death on the cross. But we have a long way to go yet, and many clues to discover from the Bible!...Briefly restate the main ideas presented.)

- We need the WHOLE Bible to understand the mystery of what happened on the cross.
- The Bible contains the CLUES to solve the mystery.
- We need to put the clues from the Bible in the CORRECT ORDER—beginning with the Old Testament.
- JESUS IS THE KEY to understanding the clues.
- The solution to the mystery begins in Genesis 1:1 with the one eternal Creator God.

Tape, Jesus Is the Key visual

(**Tape** the **Jesus Is the Key** visual to a wall in the front of the classroom at a height that will be easily accessible to the students. This visual will be used in future lessons.)

Small Group Application

- Choose one or more of the following suggestions for interacting with the students during this time.

Workbook

Have the students turn to Lesson 2 in their workbooks. Read the instructions written in the Clue Notebook section at the bottom of the first page. Have them fill in the missing words on the blank lines. [One, Eternal, Creator] *What do these three words tell us about God?* Read and talk about Psalm 90:2.

Psalm 90:2—Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

As we read the story of the Bible, from beginning to end, why is it important to know that God is eternal? Is the story of the Bible about someone who lived a long time ago but is now dead or will be dead in the future? How does this matter for your own life?

Have the students look at the second page and turn to Hebrews 1:1-2 and Luke 24:27 in order to fill in the missing words at the bottom of the page. [Prophets, Son, Moses, Scriptures] *How do these verses show that Jesus is the key to understanding the Bible? How do they help us in our search for clues in correctly solving the mystery of Jesus' death on the cross?*

The Bible Is True and Powerful, and Makes Us Wise for Salvation

Point out that some stories, especially mystery stories, are pretend and are not about real people or events. Is the Bible true? Why should this matter to us? Read and talk about 2 Timothy 3:15-17.

2 Timothy 3:15-17— . . . from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

The Importance of Faith

Read Hebrews 11:1, 3.

Hebrews 11:1, 3—Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen...³By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

What do the words "by faith" mean? Do you have the faith that makes you sure that God created the whole world? Is it still hard for you to understand? Can you believe something to be true even though you can't fully understand it? Is it hard for you to understand that God, and God alone, had no beginning? Can you still trust that it is true even though you can't fully understand it? Have you ever been in a situation where someone tried to tell you that the world wasn't created by God? How did you respond? Can you depend on the Bible, or should you trust other ideas that people may have? Read and discuss 1 Corinthians 2:13-14.

1 Corinthians 2:13-14—*And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. ¹⁴The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.*

What does a person need in order to understand spiritual truths? Why is this important to know?

Optional Activities

1. Memory Verse Sentence Fragments

- Read Isaiah 53:3a to the students. Recite it several times. Next, provide one set of **Memory Verse Sentence Fragments** to each small group or student. Have them place the fragments face down on the table, and randomly scatter and mix them. Give the signal to begin. Each group/student should, as quickly as possible, assemble the fragments in the correct order. To make it more challenging, have the students cut each fragment piece in half and repeat.

2. Sword Drill Practice

- Use some of the following verses:
 - Psalm 90:2
 - Hebrews 1:2
 - Luke 24:27
 - 2 Timothy 3:16

Send Home

- Growing in Faith Together Page for Lesson 2 (for each student)

What?

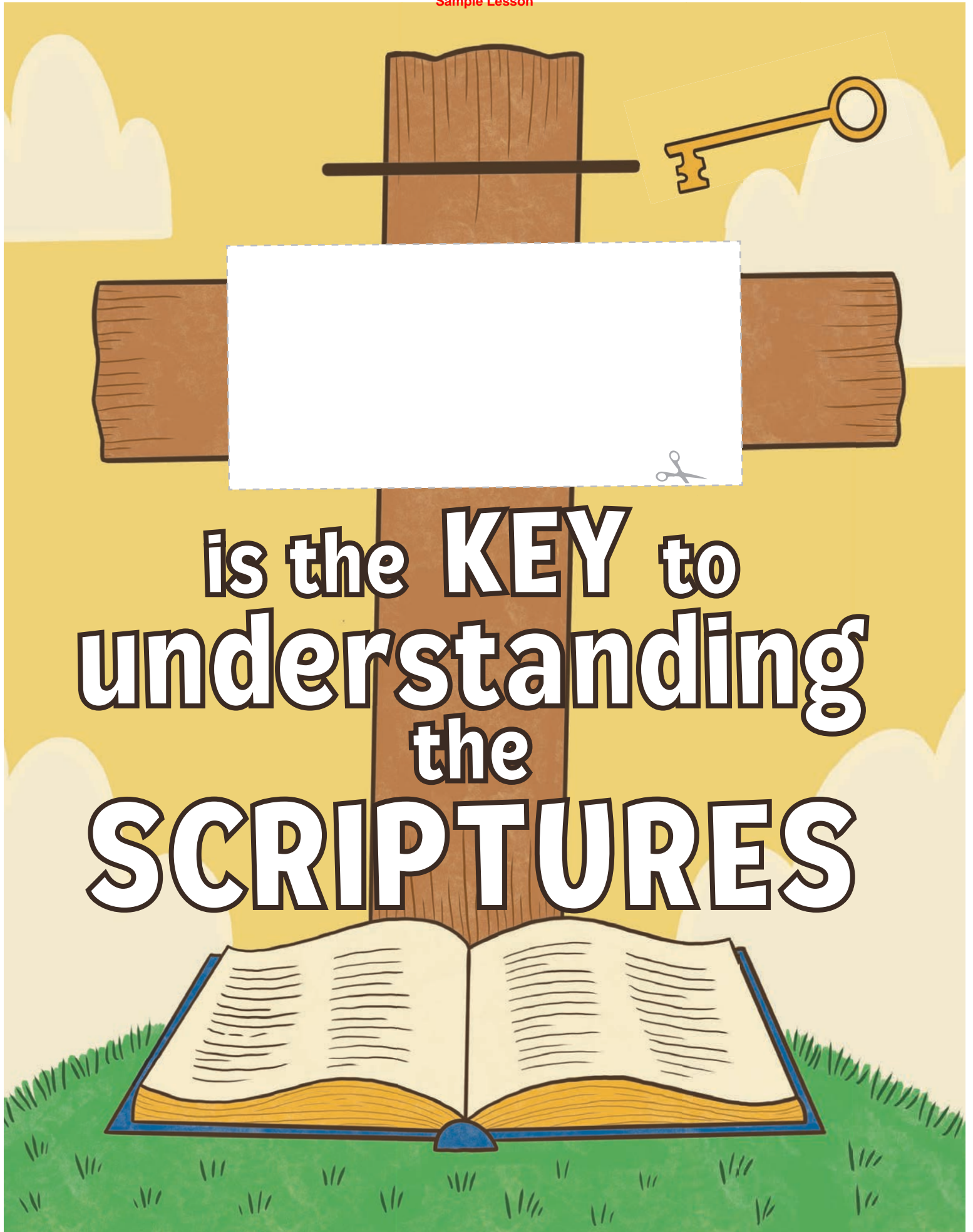
Where?

When?

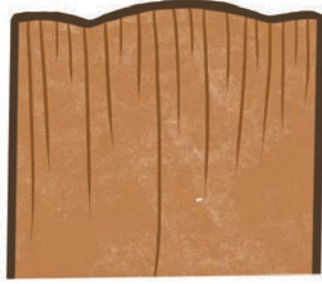
Who?

Why?





is the **KEY** to
understanding
the
SCRIPTURES

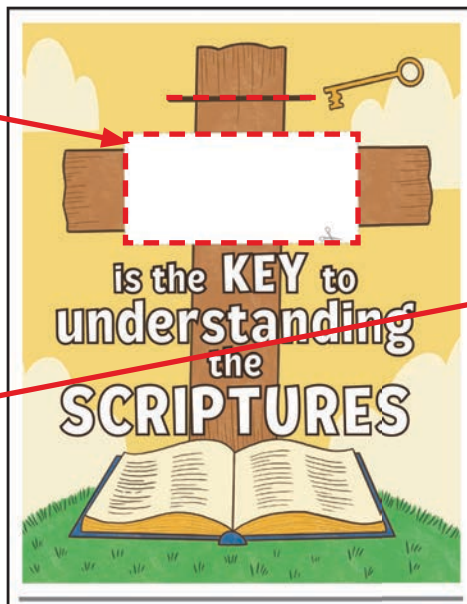


JESUS

Sample Lesson

Step 1:

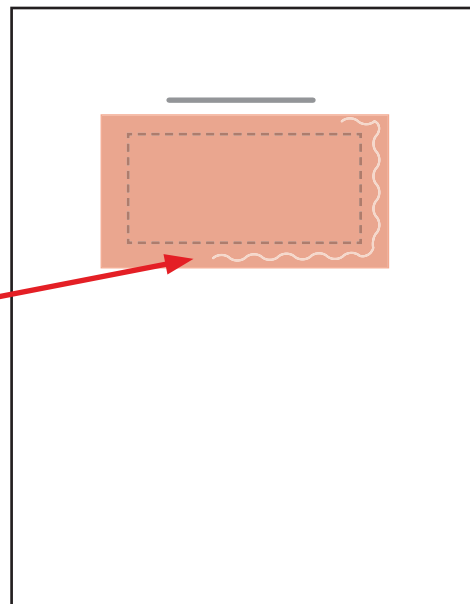
On the front of 2A, cut out the white area and the thick line as indicated by the red dotted lines.



FRONT of 2A

Step 2:

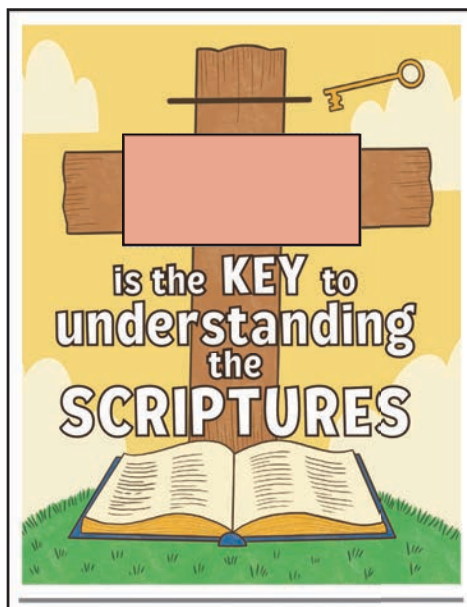
Take the red transparent sheet (provided in the Visuals Packet) and cut it into the appropriate size before carefully gluing it to the back side of 2A so that it shows through the front side in the larger window.



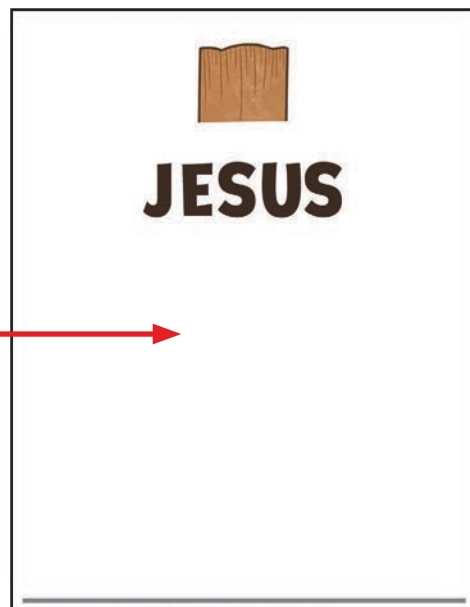
BACK of 2A

Step 3:

Place 2A directly over the front side of 2B and glue them together around the outer edges. Leave the bottom edge open so you will be able to retrieve any Bible Clue Cards that fall through the upper slit.



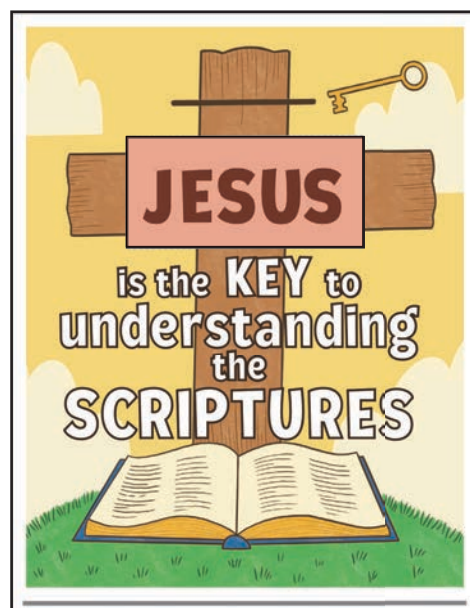
FRONT of 2A



FRONT of 2B

FINISHED:

The final result should look like this. This visual will be referred to as the **Jesus Is the Key** visual throughout the curriculum.



FINAL RESULT

A little bird

2D



flew down

2E

and pecked

2F



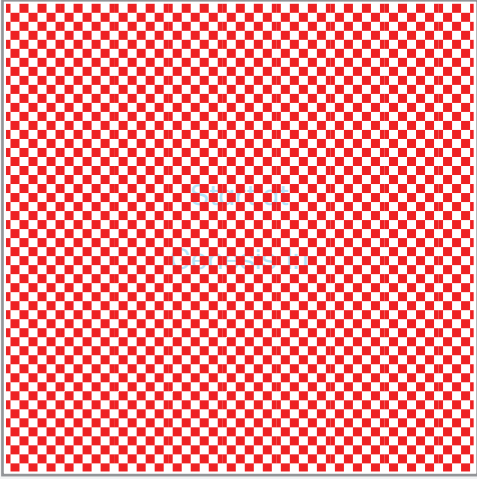
a warty toad.

2G

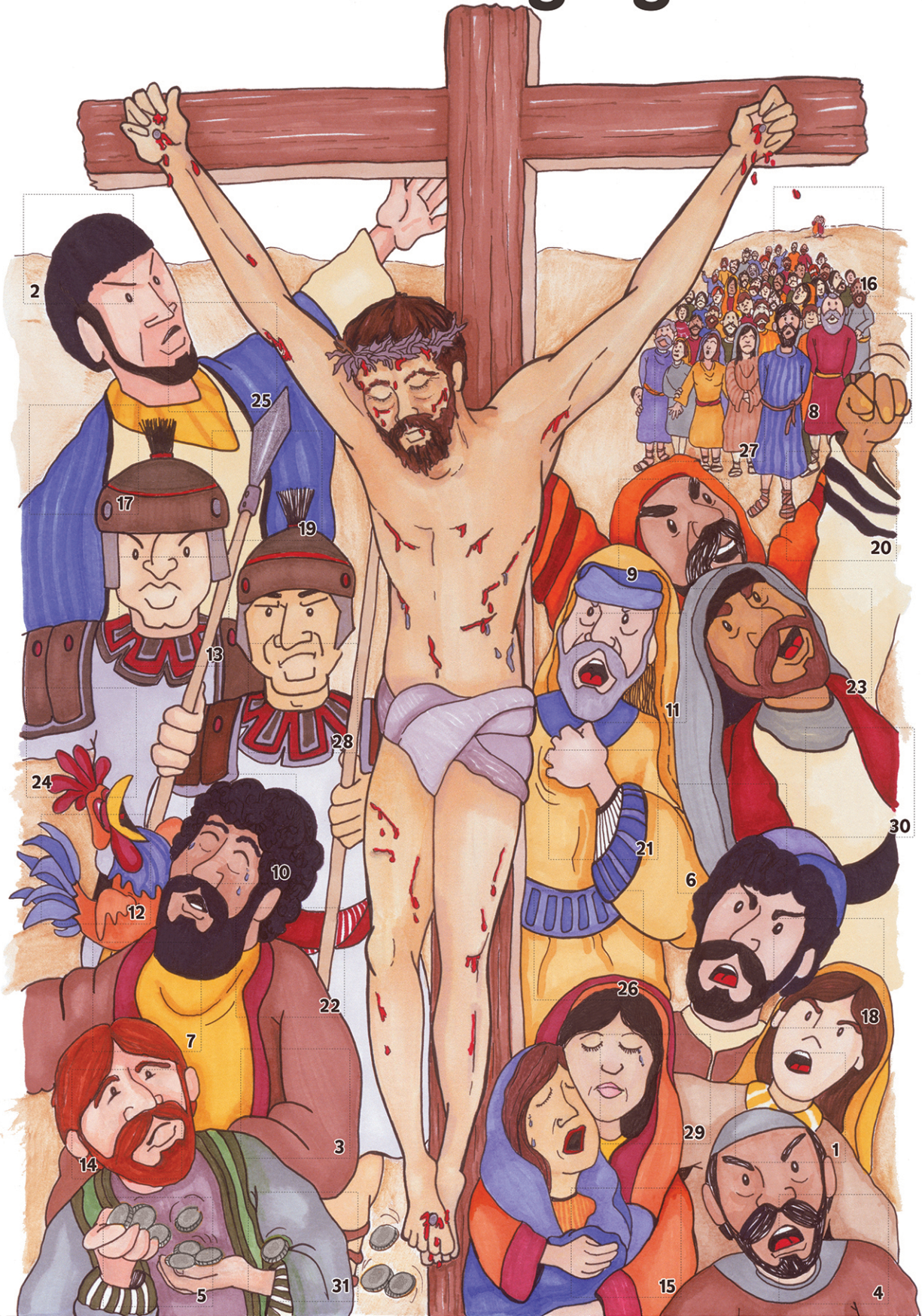


2H

**Bible
Clue
Card**



The Mystery that was Kept Secret for Long Ages . . .



Has Now Been Revealed!



Lesson 2

In the Beginning . . . Jesus

Back to the Beginning

MAIN IDEAS

- The whole Bible is necessary for understanding the mystery of Jesus' death on the cross.
- The Bible has an intentional order.
- Jesus is the key to understanding the Bible.
- The solution to the mystery of Jesus and the cross begins in Genesis.
- God is the main character in the story of the Bible.

MEMORY VERSE

He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;—Isaiah 53:3a

SCRIPTURE

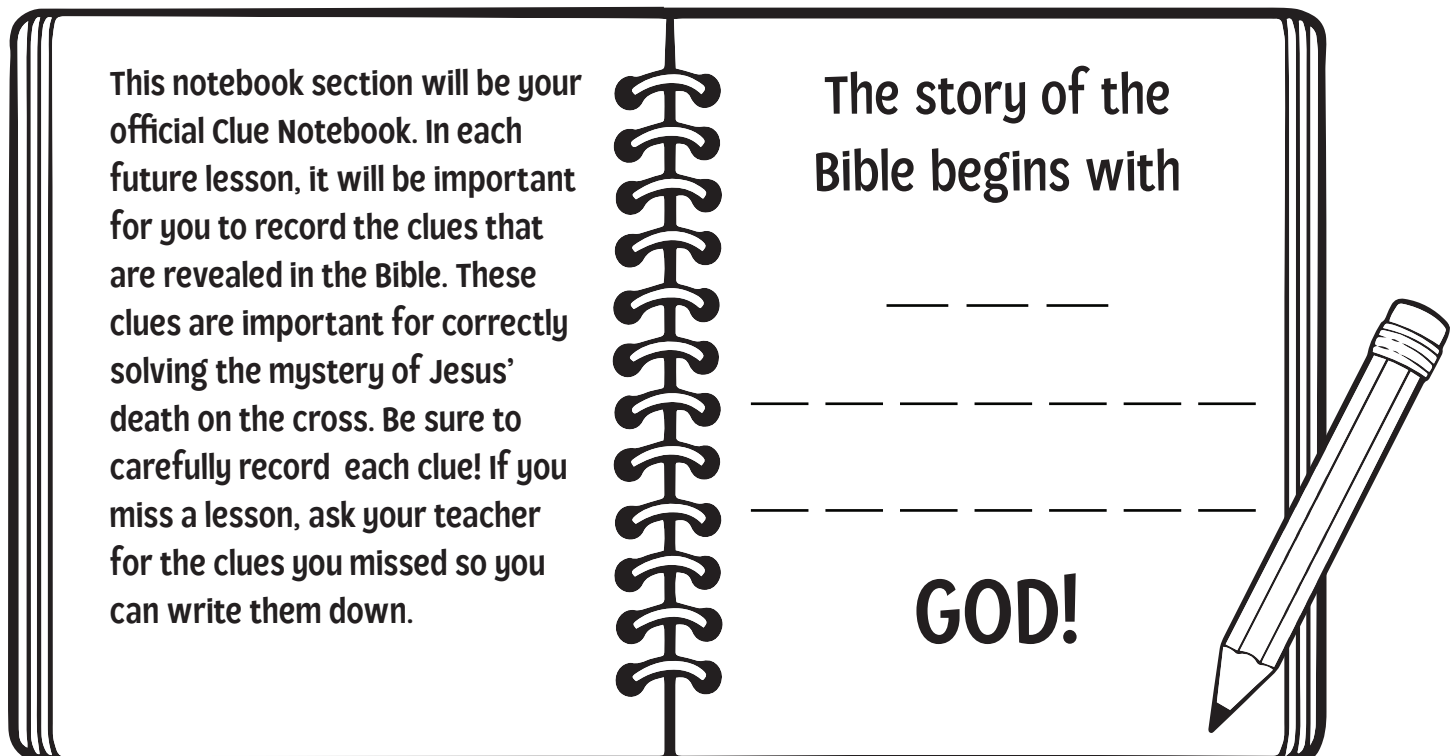
- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 1) Genesis 1:1 | 4) Luke 24:26-27 |
| 2) Exodus 12:34 | 5) 1 Corinthians 5:6b |
| 3) Hosea 7:4b | |

THE NEXT PAGE

In the notebook below, fill in the three missing words that describe God.

On the next page, look up the verses in your Bible and fill in the missing words.

Think about it: How is Jesus the "key" to understanding the Old Testament? [Hint: what do keys do?]



Jesus is the Key to Understanding the Scriptures



Hebrews 1:1-2a

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the _____, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his _____.

Luke 24:27

And beginning with _____ and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the _____ the things concerning himself.

Isaiah 53

:3a-He was

despised and

rejected by

men, a man

of sorrows

and acquainted

with grief;

Isaiah 53

:3a-He was

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Back to the Beginning



Main Ideas

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Memory Verse

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—Isaiah 53:3a

Scripture

1. Genesis 1:1
2. Exodus 12:34
3. Hosea 7:4b
4. Luke 24:26-27
5. 1 Corinthians 5:6b

As You Walk By the Way

Read together the story of Jesus on the road to Emmaus from Luke 24:13-27. (You may have already read verses 13-21 in Lesson 1.) What did Jesus do to explain to the disciples what had happened to Him on the cross? What does this tell us about the purpose of the Old Testament? What does this tell us about Jesus? How is Jesus the “key” to understanding the Bible—including the Old Testament? Read and talk about Hebrews 1:1-3 and John 1:1-3. How do these passages connect Jesus with the very beginning of the Bible?

Read Genesis 1:1 with your child. This verse is the starting point for solving the mystery of Jesus' death on the cross. What questions does this verse answer? Who is the main character of the Bible? What did He do? When did He do it? Read Psalm 90:2. What does this verse tell us about the one Creator God? [God is eternal—He has no beginning and will have no end.] As we read through the story of the Bible, why is it important to know God is eternal? Is the story of the Bible about someone who lived a long time ago but is now dead or will be dead in the future? How does this matter for your own life? How do you think this might help us to solve the mystery of Jesus' death on the cross?

Read Hebrews 11:3 with your child. What do the words “by faith” mean? (Read verse 1 for help.) Ask your child: *Do you have faith that makes you sure God created the whole world? Is it still hard for you to understand? Can you believe something to be true even though you can't fully understand it? Is it hard for you to understand God is eternal—He had no beginning and will have no end? Can you still trust it is true? Why is it important to know God is eternal? Have you ever been in a situation when someone tried to tell you God didn't create the world? How did you respond? Can you depend on the Bible, or should you trust the ideas of other people?* Read and discuss Psalm 119:89, 160; 1 Corinthians 2:13-14.



DISCOVER MORE: THE OLD TESTAMENT

In the coming weeks, we will be searching the Old Testament for clues to solve the mystery of Jesus' death on the cross. All the words in the Old Testament are God's words. God gave these words to men called "prophets," who wrote them down. The Old Testament contains 39 separate books. With the 27 books of the New Testament, these 66 books form one complete, true story—the whole Bible. Now is a good time to become familiar with the books of the Old Testament. Below you will find scrambled words. Each word, when correctly unscrambled, will spell out a book in the Old Testament. After you have unscrambled all of them, use the table of contents in your Bible to put them in the correct order. Draw a line matching each book to the correct number.

BUREMNS	_____	1
RESPOVRB	_____	2
CAMIHAL	_____	4
HISAIA	_____	6
HIJEMARE	_____	16
SIGNEES	_____	20
USHOJA	_____	23
SHOEA	_____	24
HENEHIMA	_____	28
ODEXUS	_____	39

Jesus: Great High Priest

Main Ideas

- The Old Testament appointment of a temple and priests was temporary, pointing to something much better—Jesus.
- The fullness of God dwells in the Person of Jesus.
- Jesus alone brings His people into the presence of God.
- Jesus is our great High Priest, the one Mediator between God and sinful man.

Memory Verses

Review John 1:1-15.

For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

—John 1:16

Scripture for the Lesson

1. John 2:13-21
2. Colossians 1:19
3. Hebrews 5:1-3
4. Hebrews 7:23-26
5. Hebrews 6:19-20a
6. Hebrews 9:24

Teacher Introduction

Hebrews provides a wonderful explanation of how the former things were shadows: the tabernacle and temple with the veil guarding the Most Holy Place; the priests and their rituals and sacrifices; the one high priest who alone was allowed to enter the Most Holy Place; and more. All these good provisions from God pointed to the person and work of Jesus, the true temple of God and perfect mediator between God and man.

Hebrews 6:19-20a—We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain,²⁰ where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf,

Hebrews 9:24—For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.

Pray that your students would understand that the way into God's presence is not through a special place, but through Jesus alone. May they see Jesus as a perfect and sympathetic high priest who always stands ready to intercede for all who come to Him in faith.

Curriculum Resources

- Tabernacle (36A, cut out)
- Temple (36B, cut out)
- Jesus = God's Temple (36C, cut out)
- Priests (36D, cut out)
- One High Priest (36E, cut out)
- Jesus: Great High Priest 1 (36F, cut out)
- Jesus: Great High Priest 2 (36G, cut out)
- 2 Check Marks
- For Application (for each student)
 - Workbook Picture Clues 20 and 24 (CH-31-39)
- Growing in Faith Together Page for Lesson 36 (one per student)

Other Supplies

- In the Beginning . . . Jesus Banner (from previous lessons)
- Tape
- Whiteboard and markers
- For Application (for each student)
 - Student Workbook
 - Glue
 - Pencils, colored markers and/or colored pencils

Supplies for Optional Activities

1. Picture Clue Matching Game

- 2 copies of each of the clues noted in the Optional Activities section for each small group

2. Learn and Sing

- Words and music to discuss and sing the hymn "Before the Throne of God Above" (Cook and Bancroft)

Large Group Lesson

Whiteboard and markers

(On a **whiteboard**, make two columns labeled: "Good" and "Better." Then pose the following scenarios.)

Suppose your parents have to go away for the evening, so they hire a babysitter to care for you. Babysitters are good, but your parents are better.

? *Suppose you want to read a book and you have a flashlight. A flashlight is good, but what would be even better? [a lamp]*

? *Suppose your grandparents live far away. You get a phone call from them. That would be good, but what would be even better? [a visit to see them]*

(Explain that babysitters, flashlights, and phone calls are all good things. But they are used temporarily until something better is available.)

In the Old Testament, God gave His people many good things. But some of these good things were only temporary until He gave them something better.

Tape, Tabernacle visual, whiteboard

(**Tape** the **Tabernacle** visual underneath the "Good" heading on the **whiteboard**. Recall that God promised to dwell in the tabernacle with His special presence for His people to enjoy.)

? *Was the tabernacle permanent or temporary? [temporary] How do we know that it was only temporary? [God commanded Solomon to build a temple to replace it.] Was the temple better than the tabernacle? How so? [It was a building of stone. The tabernacle was a tent. The temple was more beautiful, etc.]*

Temple visual

(**Tape** the **Temple** visual underneath the "Better" heading, directly across from the **Tabernacle** on the **whiteboard**. Draw an arrow going from the good to the better.)

? *But did the temple last? No. Why not? [It was destroyed when Babylon came and captured Jerusalem.] So it was better, but it was not the best.*

(Add a third column on the **whiteboard**. Label it "Best.")

Why isn't there a temple anymore? Why hasn't it been rebuilt since the time of Jesus?

(Explain that, as good as it was that God's people had a tabernacle and then a temple, they were only temporary. God had something much better for His people. God wanted the best for His people. What was the "best"?)

(Have the students turn to John 2:13-20. Read the verse while they follow along in their Bibles. Pause at the underlined words and have the students call out the word.)

John 2:13-20—The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. ¹⁵And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶And he told those who sold the pigeons, “Take these things away; do not make my Father’s house a house of trade.” ¹⁷His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.” ¹⁸So the Jews said to him, “What sign do you show us for doing these things?” ¹⁹Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” ²⁰The Jews then said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?”

(Explain that these verses describe Jesus cleansing the temple. The Jews wanted to know what right Jesus had to do these things in the temple. How did Jesus respond? What did His response mean? If this temple was destroyed, would Jesus really rebuild it, stone by stone, in three days?)

(Read verse 21 all together.)

John 2:21—But he was speaking about the temple of his body.

Tape, Jesus:
God’s High
Temple,
whiteboard and
markers

(**Tape** the **Jesus = God’s Temple** visual underneath the “Best” heading and directly across from the **Temple**. Draw an arrow from the better to the best.)

? *How is Jesus better than the temple, a stone building? [Allow the students to respond.] Because Jesus is the real, living, eternal God and not a place, how is He best for God’s people? [Allow the students to respond.]*

(Emphasize that the tabernacle and then the temple had been the place where God promised to dwell with His people. His special presence filled the Most Holy Place. But now that Jesus has come, the temple is no longer needed.)

(Read Colossians 1:19 to the students.)

Colossians 1:19—For in him [Jesus] all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,

- We no longer need to go to a stone building in a certain location to worship God and enjoy His presence.
- Through Jesus, we can enter into God’s presence anywhere at any time.
- Jesus is eternal and will never become old or weak or be destroyed.
- Jesus is the fulfillment of the clue that was given in the Old Testament.

Priests visual

(**Tape** the **Priests** visual directly underneath the **Tabernacle**. Priests were also good. They acted as mediators or “go-betweens” for God and His sinful people. They offered sacrifices so sin could be forgiven. They were allowed to enter the tabernacle and temple on behalf of the people.)

- ? *But what couldn't an ordinary priest do? [enter the Most Holy Place] Who was the only person who could enter the Most Holy Place? [the one high priest] Why was the Most Holy Place such a special room? [The Ark of the Covenant was there. God promised to display His awesome glory there.]*

Tape, One High Priest visual, whiteboard and markers

(Tape the **One High Priest** visual below the **Temple** and directly across from **Priests**. Draw an arrow from the good to the better.)

- ? *But could the one high priest enter the Most Holy Place in the temple any time he wanted? How often? [once a year and only for a few minutes on the Day of Atonement]*

(Divide the class into two groups and have a Sword Drill with the following: Hebrews 5:1-3 and Hebrews 7:23. Choose a student/s from each group to read.)

Hebrews 5:1-3—For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. ²He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. ³Because of this he is obligated to offer sacrifice for his own sins just as he does for those of the people.

Hebrews 7:23—The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office,

- ? *According to these verses, why weren't the Old Testament priests the best thing for God's people? What were their weaknesses? [They were sinners. They eventually died.]*

(Point out that even the high priests were sinners like all other people. They could not be continually in God's holy presence acting on behalf of God's people. They were limited in their ability to act as "go-betweens." Remind the students that the Most Holy Place was separated from the rest of the temple by a heavy veil. This was to remind the priests—even the one high priest—that they were separated from a holy God because of their sins. That is why even the high priest could only enter the Most Holy Place once a year, because he was a sinner, too.)

Priests were good, and the one high priest was even better. But God knew they were not the best thing for His people. These priests were only temporary until the "best" arrived.

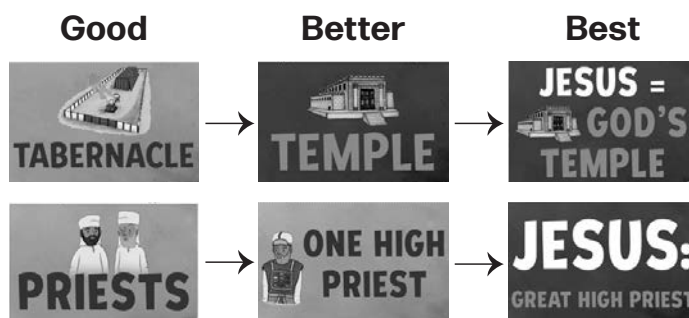
(Have the students turn to Hebrews 7:24-26.)

Hebrews 7:24-26—but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. ²⁵Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. ²⁶For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.

- ? *Are these verses talking about an Old Testament high priest? What is different about this high priest? [His priesthood is permanent. He always lives. He is holy and without sin.] What does the word "intercession" mean? [to speak on someone's behalf and be their "go-between"] Who is this great high priest? [Jesus]*

Great High Priest visual

(Tape the **Jesus: Great High Priest 1** visual underneath **Jesus = God's Temple** and directly across from **One High Priest**. Draw an arrow from the better to best. The chart will now look like the following diagram.)



(Emphasize that Jesus is God and is without sin. He is constantly in God's awesome presence. He lives forever to act as a perfect "go-between." If you are trusting in Jesus as your great High Priest, it means He is ALWAYS acting on your behalf, bringing you near to God, bringing your prayers to God, and interceding for you.)

Here is how the Bible describes how Jesus acts as the great High Priest . . .

(Read Hebrews 6:19-20a.)

Hebrews 6:19-20a—*We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, ²⁰where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf,*

? *According to this verse, where has Jesus entered? [the inner place behind the curtain] Where is that? Is it the Most Holy Place of the temple?*

(Read Hebrews 9:24.)

Hebrews 9:24—*For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.*

- The holy places of the tabernacle and temple were made by human hands and were only temporary until Jesus came.
- Jesus has entered heaven itself on behalf of His people.

(Emphasize that there is a very good reason why we no longer have human priests who act as "go-betweens" for us and God. God knew His people needed a perfect Priest—someone who could always act for God's people to bring them near to God. The Old Testament priests and high priests were only temporary until Jesus came to be the final, great High Priest.)

Check Marks,
tape, In the
Beginning...Jesus
Banner, Jesus:
Great High Priest
2 visual

(Give two students each a **Check Mark** and assign each to **tape** their mark on one of these Picture Clues on the **In the Beginning . . . Jesus Banner**: Picture Clue 20—One High Priest and Picture Clue 24—God's Temple. Then tape the **Jesus: Great High Priest 2** visual on top of Jesus: The Final Word on the In the Beginning . . . Jesus Banner. Tape it along the upper edge only so that it can be lifted up to reveal the Jesus: The Final Word visual below it.)

Small Group Application

- Choose one or more of the following suggestions for interacting with the students during this time.

Workbook

Have the students turn to Lesson 36 in their workbooks. Give each student **Workbook Picture Clues 20 (One High Priest)** and **24 (God's Temple)**. Have them glue or tape these within the Clue Notebook. Have them follow the instructions to complete the workbook page.

Jesus, God's Temple

Review John 2:19-21. *The temple Jesus cleansed in these verses no longer exists—it was destroyed soon after Jesus died on the cross and returned to heaven. It has never been rebuilt. Why is it good news that we no longer need to go to one certain PLACE to worship in God's presence? How is having Jesus as our "temple" good news? If you want to pray in the middle of the night, do you have to get up and go to some special place? Why not? When you have sinned, do you need to travel to a certain place to be forgiven? Why not?* (You might want to emphasize that worship is not about a place but a Person—Jesus.)

Jesus, Great High Priest

Discuss the meaning of the word "mediator." *Why do people need a mediator to have a right relationship with a holy God? How is Jesus a perfect Mediator?* Read and discuss Hebrews 2:17-18.

Hebrews 2:17-18—Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Why is it important that Jesus is faithful and merciful? Why is it important that Jesus can sympathize with us? Why is it important that He never sinned? Why can people who trust in Jesus be confident? Review Hebrews 7:24-26. Why is it good news that Jesus continues as High Priest forever? Do you ask Jesus to intercede for you? Do you believe He is acting, in heaven, on your behalf? In what ways?

Look to Jesus

Read 2 Chronicles 6:19-21. Before reading, remind the students that these words were spoken by King Solomon when the first temple in Jerusalem was dedicated.

2 Chronicles 6:19-21—Yet have regard to the prayer of your servant and to his plea, O LORD my God, listening to the cry and to the prayer that your servant prays before you, ²⁰that your eyes may be open day and night toward this house, the place where you have promised to set your name, that you may listen to the prayer that your servant offers toward this place. ²¹And listen to the pleas of your servant and of your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. And listen from heaven your dwelling place, and when you hear, forgive.

Read verses 19-21 again, but replace the words "this house" and "this place" with the word "Jesus." (This could also be done with selected verses from 22-40.) *How is Jesus so much better than the temple?*

Jesus, the Anchor of Our Souls

Review Hebrews 6:19-20a. *What words are used to describe the hope we have in Jesus as our high priest? What is an “anchor of the soul”? What does it mean that Jesus goes before us? What does that imply?* [that everyone who is trusting in Him will someday follow where He has first gone before us—to heaven]

Optional Activities

1. Picture Clue Matching Game

- See the instructions for the Picture Clue Matching Game in the Appendix. Use Picture Clues 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 20, 22, 24, 25, 26, 30. After all the clues have been matched, review how Jesus fulfilled each clue.

2. Learn and Sing

- Read, explain, and discuss the words of the hymn “Before the Throne of God Above” (Cook and Bancroft), then sing the hymn together.

Send Home

- Growing in Faith Together Page for Lesson 36 (one per student)



TABERNACLE

36A



TEMPLE

36B

JESUS =



GOD'S

TEMPLE

36C



PRIESTS

36D

JESUS:

GREAT HIGH PRIEST

36F



ONE HIGH PRIEST

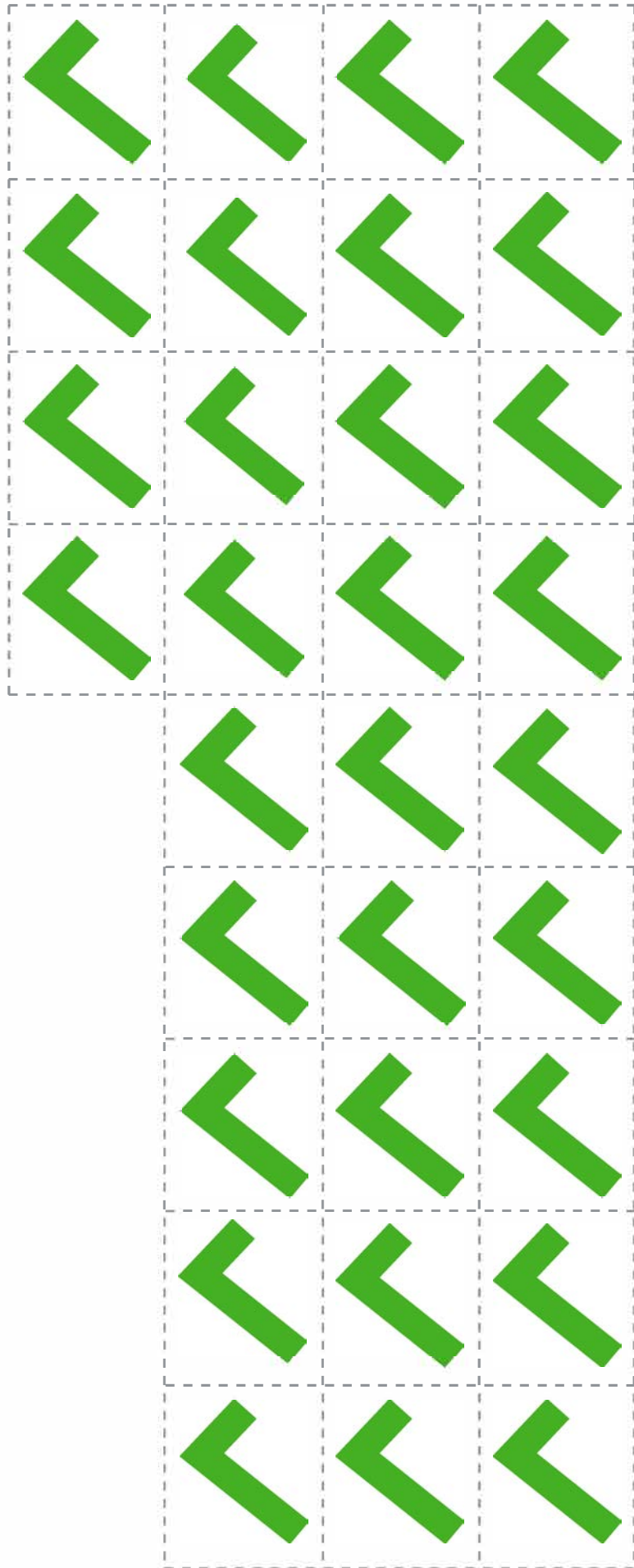
36E

**JESUS: GREAT
HIGH PRIEST**

36G



Sample Lesson





Jesus: Great High Priest

MAIN IDEAS

- The Old Testament appointment of a temple and priests was temporary, pointing to something much better—Jesus.
- The fullness of God dwells in the Person of Jesus.
- Jesus alone brings His people into the presence of God.
- Jesus is our great High Priest, the one Mediator between God and sinful man.

MEMORY VERSES (Review John 1:1-15.)

For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.—John 1:16

SCRIPTURE

1) John 2:13-21

3) Hebrews 5:1-3

5) Hebrews 7:23-26

2) Colossians 1:19

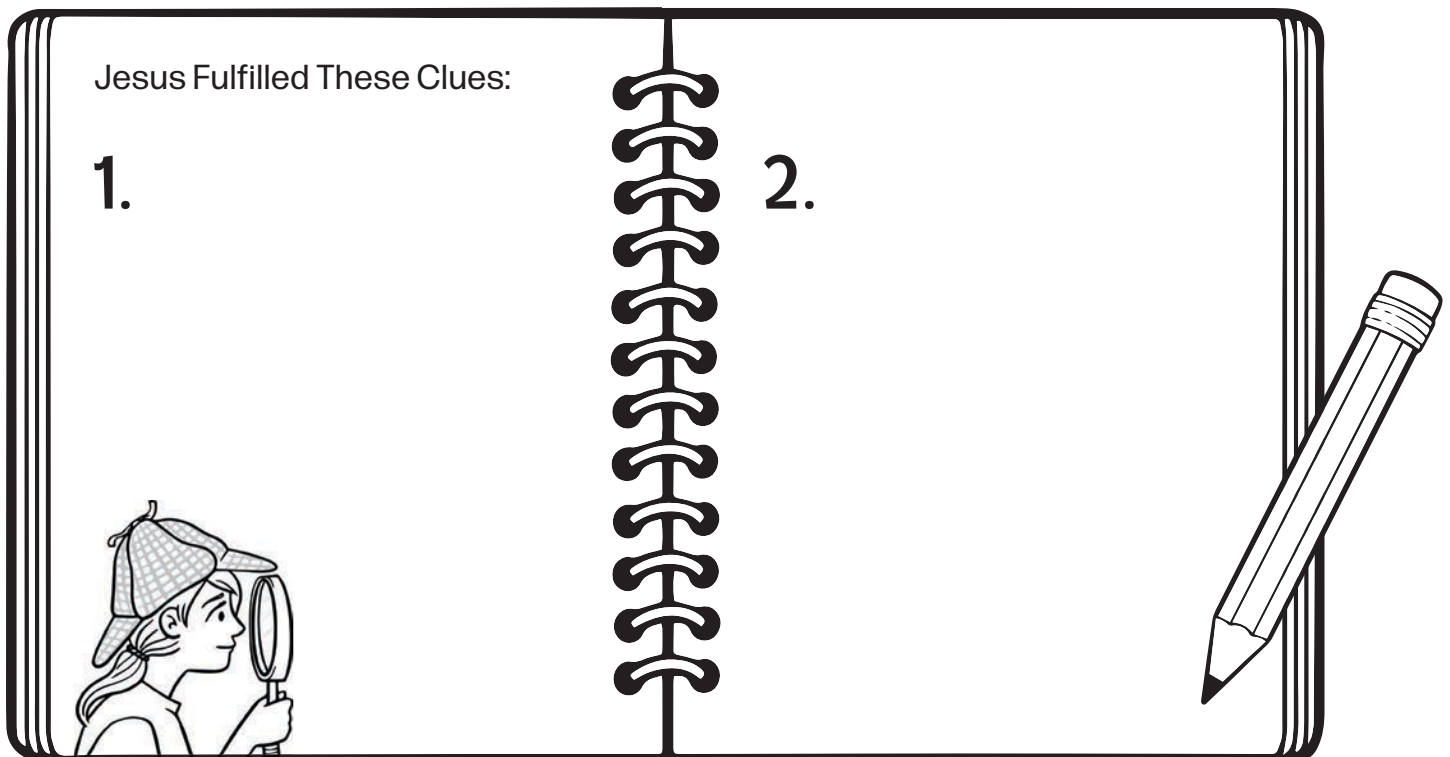
4) Hebrews 6:19-20a

6) Hebrews 9:24

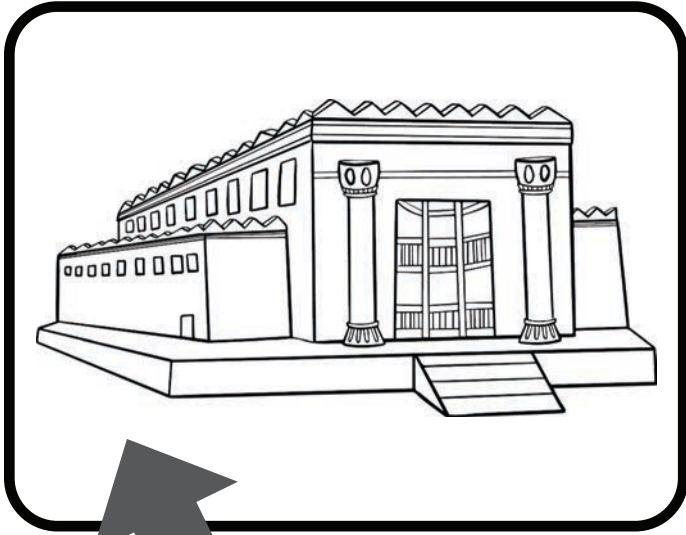
THE NEXT PAGE

In the notebook below, attach the two Old Testament clues Jesus fulfilled.

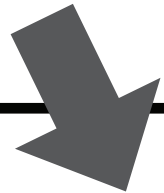
How is Jesus much better than the stone temple and human priests? Read Hebrews 6:19-20a; 7:24-26; and 9:24 for some clues. Write your answer in the box on the next page. Why is this good news for sinners? Why is this good news for you?



WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?



THEN & NOW



JESUS IS BETTER BECAUSE:

<p>Genesis 1:27a</p>	<p>Perfect Obedience</p> <p>Genesis 2:16-17</p>	<p>Genesis 3:19, 24</p>	<p>Genesis 3:15</p>	<p>Genesis 6:13-18</p>	<p>Abraham: ONE MAN BLESSING the WORLD</p> <p>Genesis 12:1-3</p>
<p>Child of PROMISE</p> <p>Genesis 21:1-3</p>	<p>ISRAEL</p> <p>God's Chosen Nation</p> <p>Genesis 35:10-12</p>	<p>LION of JUDAH</p> <p>Genesis 49:9-10</p>	<p>I AM</p> <p>Exodus 3:14-15</p>	<p>The PASSOVER LAMB</p> <p>Exodus 12:12-13</p>	<p>Bread from Heaven</p> <p>Exodus 16:4</p>
<p>God's Holy Law</p> <p>Exodus 20:1-17</p>	<p>One HIGH Priest</p> <p>Leviticus 16</p>	<p>GOD'S Prophet</p> <p>Deuteronomy 18:15</p>	<p>DAVID'S EVERLASTING THRONE</p> <p>2 Samuel 7:9-13, 16</p>	<p>GOD'S TEMPLE</p> <p>2 Chronicles 6:18-21</p>	<p>GOD with US</p> <p>Isaiah 7:14</p>
<p>A Ruler from BETHLEHEM</p> <p>Micah 5:2</p>	<p>SIN BEARER</p> <p>Isaiah 53:3-6</p>	<p>God's ANOINTED ONE</p> <p>Isaiah 61:1</p>	<p>a KING on a Donkey</p> <p>Zechariah 9:9</p>		

<p>COVERING FOR SIN</p> <p>Genesis 3:21</p>	<p>EVERLASTING COVENANT</p> <p>GOD</p> <p>Isaac & Isaac's Descendants</p> <p>Genesis 17:19</p>	<p>One Loved SON</p> <p>Genesis 22:2</p>
<p>GOD WILL PROVIDE THE LAMB</p> <p>Genesis 22:8</p>	<p>DELIVERANCE</p> <p>Exodus 6:6-8, 14:21-29</p>	<p>The BLOOD of the COVENANT</p> <p>Exodus 24:6-8</p>
<p>The BRONZE SERPENT</p> <p>Numbers 21:6-9</p>	<p>NEW COVENANT</p> <p>GOD</p> <p>God's People</p> <p>Jeremiah 31:31</p>	<p>HEALER</p> <p>Genesis 12:7a</p>

For Workbook Lesson 38



Jesus: Great High Priest



Main Ideas

- The Old Testament appointment of a temple and priests was temporary, pointing to something much better—Jesus.
- The fullness of God dwells in the Person of Jesus.
- Jesus alone brings His people into the presence of God.
- Jesus is our great High Priest, the one Mediator between God and sinful man.

Memory Verses

Review John 1:1-15.

For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.—John 1:16

Scripture

1. John 2:13-21
2. Colossians 1:19
3. Hebrews 5:1-3
4. Hebrews 6:19-20a
5. Hebrews 7:23-26
6. Hebrews 9:24

Today's Clues

GOD'S TEMPLE, ONE HIGH PRIEST

As You Walk By the Way

Discuss the word “mediator.” It may be helpful to show your child some type of electrical adapter (e.g., a three-prong to two-prong adapter) and demonstrate how it works. Point out that the adapter acts as a type of “mediator” between one thing and another. Without the adapter, there would be no way to “connect” the two objects. Why do people need a mediator to “connect” with a holy God? Read Habakkuk 1:13a and Isaiah 59:2. How is Jesus a perfect mediator? Read and discuss Hebrews 2:17-18. Why is it important that Jesus is faithful and merciful? Read Hebrews 4:14-16. Why is it important that Jesus can sympathize with us? Why is it important that He never sinned? Why can people who trust in Jesus be confident? Read Hebrews 7:23-26. Why is it good news that Jesus continues as High Priest forever? Read Hebrews 9:24. Is He only allowed to enter God’s presence once a year? Why is He always in God’s presence? Do you ask Jesus to intercede for you? Do you believe He is acting in heaven on your behalf? In what ways? Read Jesus’ prayer for His disciples in John 17:6-26 and 1 John 1:9; 2:1.

Read the story of Jesus cleansing the temple in John 2:13-16, and His words in verses 19-21. The temple Jesus cleansed in these verses no longer exists because it was destroyed soon after Jesus died on the cross and returned to heaven. It has never been re-built. Why is it good news that we no longer need to go to one certain PLACE to worship in God’s presence? How is having Jesus as our “temple” good news? If you want to pray to God in the middle of the night, do you need to go to some special place? Why not? Do you need to travel to a certain place to be forgiven for your sins? Why not? Read and discuss John 4:20-21, 23-24.



DISCOVER MORE: **HEBREWS**

Remember the last time you saw your shadow? Your shadow isn't "you," it's just a fuzzy and darkened image of you. Hebrews uses the word "shadow" to refer to the Old Testament tabernacle, priests, and sacrifices. This is because they were like faint and darkened images of something. Just as your shadow points to something much better—you—the Old Testament shadows pointed to something much, much better...Jesus! This week, read the following verses from Hebrews. Each describes how Jesus came as the one final, perfect High Priest. As you read, you will see how much better He is than the Old Testament priests, who were temporary "shadows," pointing to the coming of Jesus. Use the boxes below to compare the Old Testament priests to Jesus.

The Old Testament Priests Were Shadows Because...

Hebrews 5:1-3

Hebrews 7:23

Hebrews 9:6-7

Hebrews 10:11

Jesus the Great High Priest Is Better Because...

Hebrews 4:14-16

Hebrews 7:24-27

Hebrews 9:24

Hebrews 10:12