
SERIES 2: FAITH IN LORD & MASHIACH
BOOK 1: Faith in the Promised Seed
Genesis 1-49

Book 1:

Introduction

In Genesis, God reveals to you the reality of who He is, who you are, and what He wants for His creation. Surprisingly, you will find that God's revealed reality is something you will easily recognize as the most natural and fitting life for which you were created! Don't be deceived by the millennia of *man-made religion* which sells you on a strange, artificial view of reality full of pomp and propriety—religion was invented to keep the religious class employed and dusty libraries stocked. But, you will see in Genesis that God's created reality is meant to be our common human experience which every person longs for, family togetherness. For, you will see even in Genesis 1 that God Himself exists as a family unity of Father, Son, and Spirit. And, He creates our family line of Adam and Eve to be his "sons" who are brought into His family through His coming Redeemer, the Mashiach. So, read Genesis to see how we lose our place but then are rescued back into the family of God through God's promised redeemer, our coming Mashiach. So, we learn to live by *faith* in this Redeemer rather than in fleshly unbelief—the natural inclination to isolate ourselves in human selfishness!

STEPS of a *Devoted Disciple*:

Your *Devotion* matters to the Lord. For, there is only one Lord and God, and He deserves creation's highest honor and praise. So, you were made to give yourself to the Lord God in loving devotion of heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30). In this same devotion to the Lord, Jesus Christ calls you to follow Him as His disciple. These short devotionals guide you in the Word to cultivate a heart devotion to the Lord as His disciple.

- First, **discover** what His life-giving Word has to say to you personally, being careful to write down your insights to share with others.
- Then, **discuss** His Word with those closest to you: your family, your friends, and in your home fellowship group (your spiritual family).
- Next, **dialogue** to compare views on key passages with a partner—either another disciple, or an older mentor or younger mentee.
- Finally, **develop** key skills as you abide in the Word by applying it to your life as you read the devotional, notes, and footnotes.

START HERE: Humble Yourself in Prayer:

Devote yourself to the Lord to hear and do His Will for you.

Do I want to humble myself under the Lordship of God by faith?

Or, will I live as my own Lord, relying on my own understanding?

PRAYER OF DEVOTION

Lord God, I devote my life to you today. I offer you my soul to live humbly under your Lordship; my mind to seek your will and Spirit; my heart to love you and others; and, my strength to obey your Word and Will!
Amen.

Chapter 1: FAMILY PURPOSE OF GOD: God is Head, Heir, and Holy Spirit
Genesis 1:1-2:3

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God’s Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.*

a. Preview Genesis 1:1-2:3

Family Purpose: God (*Elohim*) is One. God reveals Himself as the *Head* of all things created, but His Headship and purpose over all creation is rooted in His family oneness. So, read Genesis 1:1- 2:3 to see how the *family oneness* of God as *Elohim* is revealed in His creative work and his purposes for man!

From the very *beginning* of God’s creation of the heavens and the earth, starting in his *revealed name of God—Elohim--* we see the *family oneness of God to create* (1:1-7). For, *Elohim* is not *elohe*, a singularity, nor is God *yachid*, a *single unit* but *echad*, a family oneness (Gen. 2:24; Deut. 6:4). And, it is the deep purpose of God as a *family oneness* to share His *likeness* with Man as a **family resemblance** (1:26-31). For, God purposes to raise up His very own *people* for Himself, a *holy* people to *share* in His *family rest* from all His work! (2:1-3).

b. Prayerfully Read Genesis 1:1-2:3 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How does God work together as a family oneness to create the heavens, the earth, and man as male and female?

Q2: Why does God agree as a family to share His image and likeness with man as his family resemblance?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How does God create all things as a family oneness? (Genesis 1:1-7)

1. Family Oneness of God to Create: We see that in the *beginning*, God created the *heavens and the earth* (1). As the one at the Head (*b'reishit*) of the *heavens and the earth*, God stands as the only One. Yet, God is *one* (*echad*—Deut. 6:4) as *Elohim*, a unity, rather than a singular entity (not *elohe*) in solitary isolation (not *yachid*). So, we see God continue to *create* as *Elohim* in a perfect oneness, a unity. For, when God as Head *commands*, “let there be an expanse” (6), then in obedience God as Heir *obeys His command*: “so God made the expanse” (7). We see this *family oneness* of God not only reflected in the *family oneness* of the first man and woman who are *basar echad*, “one flesh” (Gen. 2:24) but also imprinted in the names of Mashiach, who bears the name of both the “Everlasting Father” and also the “Prince of Peace” (Is. 9:6).

Q2. For what purpose does God share His likeness with his creature Man? (1:26-31)

2. **Family Resemblance:** Our Likeness. As God continues to create as a *family oneness*, God agrees to share this family life with Man, saying “Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness” (1:26). As God established in creation, to share such a *likeness* is to be of the same *kind* (1:11), so this sharing of *likeness* is to pass on a family *resemblance* as well as a blessing (28). So, God creates Man for the purpose of one day partaking in God’s *family oneness*. God would one day include man into his family as “sons of God” (Gen. 6:2).

Q3. Why does God rest on the seventh day and make it “holy”?
(2:1-3)

3. **Family Rest:** Holy and Blessed Time. The heavens and the earth are *keyed* to the story of humanity, which sets *time* to the Earth’s *standard day*. And, God’s work of creation is completed when He creates and populates the Earth with Man, a creature *bestowed* with God’s likeness to one day *be accepted* into God’s family. So, completing the necessary elements of His family purpose, God then *rests* on the seventh day, creating a *holy and blessed* time of rest to share with those who would inherit the “heavens and the earth” as His chosen “generations,” His people, the co-heirs of His Firstborn Heir, the Mashiach.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Family Purpose of God: Sharing in Family Oneness. At the very beginning, God reveals himself as the Head of all things, the creator of heaven and earth. But, who is this *God*, whose very person makes all things for His purpose? For generations, readers have wrongly seen God as an *isolated* and detached deity, distant and alone. But, the Scriptures neither present God a *lonely deity*, for He is not *elohe*. Neither is He forever in *isolated*, for He is not *yachid*. Such an isolated, lonely God is simply the *stuff* of man's fleshly *religious imagination*, which seeks to occupy with rules and human philosophy the vacuum of a *detached, distant God*. In *actuality*, God is *Elohim*, existing eternally in a *loving* (1 Jn. 4:8) *family unity* of Father, Son, and Spirit (Matt. 28:19) or, as reflected in the name of Mashiach, "Everlasting Father," "Prince of Peace," and "Wonderful Counselor" (Is. 9:6).

In love, God as Father makes His Son the Firstborn Heir of all in heaven and on earth (Ps. 2:7-8; Col. 1:15-20). And, if the Firstborn Son, then He is the brother of His *house of sons* for God (Ps. 22:22; Rom. 8:29), the "generation" who will inherit the "heavens and the earth" with him (Gen. 2:4). So, will you fulfill your purpose and take your place in the family of God as a *son*, following your Mashiach as the Head of our family? (John 1:12-13).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
	Differ
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes¹: One God: Of all Noah’s son’s only the family of *Shem* retained the original language to remember God as *Elohim*. For, in the first three words of the Bible, *b’reishit bara Elohim*, we see that God is both a *plurality* as a family (Elohim is a plural noun) yet acting as a perfect oneness (bara is a singular verb). Only the Hebrew language can convey this mystery, of God as a *family unity*. For, Islam imagines a *god of lonely isolation*. And, the Gentiles imagine a pantheon of selfish individuals. Only Elohim exists as *echad*—not a lonely isolate but a *family oneness* (Gen. 2:24).

¹**Footnotes: Our Image and our Likeness:** When God agrees with God to share “our image” and “our likeness” with Man, He passes on to him the capacity to share in His holy life and nature. So, after God populates the earth with Man, both male and female, He then creates the single family line of Adam and Eve to share in His “breath of life” to make them *hai nefesh, living souls* to be enlivened by His very Spirit (Gen. 2:7). Thus, the story of the Bible from the beginning is how God, the Father, sends God, the Son, as Mashiach—the Seed of David, to restore this *spiritual life* to Man though they have been ruined and rendered spiritually dead in sin! God’s story is a family story of redemption!

Chapter 2: CHOSEN FAMILY: Resting in Lord God

Genesis 2

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview **Genesis 2**

Chosen Family: Resting in Lord God. After God prepares a holy time of rest for His people (Gen. 2:3), He introduces us to the *chosen family line* and its “generations” to inherit the “heavens and the earth” (4). So, read Genesis 2 to discover the story of our *family line* of Adam and Eve, chosen by God to rest and receive His gracious provision and rest in humble subjection to God as our Lord! First, learn of our *story as the chosen generations of the heavens and earth*. Though all earth's human population was made in the *image* of God, only our first parents were made to know the *Lord God as living souls (hai nefesh)* (2:1-9). Under God's *Lordship*, we were *provided for* and rested in His peace. Yet, to know God as Lord meant that we *were humbled to obey God as our Lord* concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (2:10-17). Finally, living under the Lordship of God, we *reflected the family unity of God* as one (Deut. 6:4), for man and woman become *one flesh* in marriage (2:18-24).

b. Prayerfully **Read Genesis 2** and **Write** your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: *Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.*

Q1. What did God do for the first man and woman as their Lord?

Q2. What were we required to do to honor God as our Lord?

Step 3: Dialogue: *Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.*

Q1. How does God set apart for Himself His chosen family to inherit the heavens and the earth?

1. Chosen Generations of Heaven and Earth: Made to Know God. After announcing the “generations” to inherit the “heavens and the earth” (2:4) as the people of the “Seed of the woman,” (3:15) that is, Mashiach, the Lord God intimately creates the founder of our line, *Adam*, breathing *his very life* into his nostrils (2:7), making him a creature of both *dusty flesh* but also *heavenly spirit, a living soul* alive in the Lordship of his God.

Q2. How were our first parents meant to live with God as their Lord? (2:10-17)

2. Obeying God as our Lord: Humble Faith in Lord God. Our first parents were created to live by faith in the Lord God. For, the Lord God “commanded” the man to freely eat of any tree except the tree of *unbelief*. Why was the tree of the “knowledge of good and evil” the tree giving us the choice between *faith and unbelief*? Not only did the Lord God command us not to eat, thus making the choice to *sin* the natural result of first *ignoring God’s command* by rejecting His authority and place of Lordship in our lives. But, the tree itself bestowed on Man the possibility to *know Good and Evil* apart from the Lordship of God. That is, to determine for Himself what is good and evil, taking upon ourselves the mantle of Lordship and Self-rule. This Self-Rule is unbelief—to distrust the Lord in order to trust self.

Q3. Under the Lordship of God, how did our first parents *reflect His family unity?* (2:18-25)

3. Reflecting Family Unity of God: One Flesh. Covered by the Lordship of God's grace and peace, our first parents enjoyed a spiritual life with God as *living souls* (2:7), alive to God in body and spirit. In this ideal world, the Lord God made the woman from the man so that they shared *flesh and bone* (23). So, in the act of marriage, the man and woman were to become *one flesh*, and this unity as a *family* reflected God's own *oneness* as Elohim (Deut. 6:4). For, *one flesh* is *basar echad*, reflecting in *fleshly body* the same kind of unity characterizing God who was *one, echad, as Father, Son, and Spirit*.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Faith in the Lord God: *Our natural state.* Because we have only known this dark world of sin, we are accustomed to our fleshly unbelief. But, we were made for the garden of God's Lordship, so *faith* should be our natural state. In the garden of God's Lordship, we *rested* in the grace and abundant provision of our Lord God. For, His Lordship gave us the command to *eat of every tree*, to live freely in this world under His grace (2:16). So, when Jesus Mashiach restores us by *faith* to the garden of God's Lordship, we again recover our *freedom* to live freely by His grace (Rom. 5:17). Originally, *faith* positioned us to *receive all we needed* from the Lord God, starting with the *Spirit* to breathe into us God's heavenly life (2:7). In this way, the Lord Mashiach *breathed on* His disciples, sending them the *Holy Spirit* to fill them with new spiritual life (Jn. 20:22; 1:12-13). So, *faith* in Jesus returns us to our original *faith* in the Lord Mashiach, restoring us as *God's sons* whose "generations" inherit the "heavens and the earth" (2:4).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change ?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

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What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes²: These are the Generations: *Elle Toledot*: When the Bible announces, “these are the generations” as in Gen. 2:4, it highlights the *chosen line* which would one day focus as the “generations of Perez” to become the Lord Mashiach’s chosen house. So, this chosen line of Mashiach begins with the “generations of heaven and earth” whose Firstborn Heir would be the *Seed of the Woman* (Gen. 3:15). The ancient rabbis saw this line proceed from Genesis to Ruth, where the chosen chosen house of *Perez* (Ruth 4:18) would be headed by its rightful Heir, the Son of David, Mashiach (2 Sam. 7:12).

² **Footnotes: Promised Seed: Zera.** When God announces the “generations,” the sons and heirs of His chosen line, He then designates Mashiach as the promised “Seed” to be the Heir of that house. So, Mashiach, the *Seed of Woman* is to be the Firstborn of the “generations of heaven and earth” (Gen. 2:4), God’s holy family; as the Seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the “generations of Terah.” The Seed of Judah, that is, the Seed of David, Mashiach, would be the Firstborn Heir of Jacob’s “generations” (Gen. 37:2).

Chapter 3: FALLEN HUMANITY: Faith in Family Seed

Genesis 3

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.*

a. Preview Genesis 3

Fallen Humanity: Faith in family Seed. The Lord God made our *family line* of Adam and Eve to share in His blessed life under His Lordship, but our first parents fell into unbelief and sinned against God, exchanging life for death. So, read Genesis 3 to understand our *fallen human unbelief and dead flesh*, which can only be restored by our promised family Seed, Mashiach. Importantly, Jews should realize that our first parents' desire to be *like God* in establishing their own self-understanding and fleshly righteousness is mere *idolatry and unbelief*. We cannot *know everything* "like God." We cannot aspire to be *self-righteous* through our own efforts "like God," who is the only one "righteous" in Himself. The only way for our *dead flesh* to be revived is in the Seed, Mashiach. Israel, furnished from the law, remains *dead flesh* even until the last days, when it remains *dried bones and lifeless flesh* until it turns to Jesus Mashiach to receive His reviving Spirit (Ezek. 37:8-11; Zech. 12:10-14). First, discover how the *deceiving serpent enticed* our first parents (and all humanity) to *fall to idolatrous unbelief* by promising that they would be "like God" (3:1:1-5). Then, understand the *fallen condition of dead flesh* which we know all inherit as the children of Adam and Eve (3:6-10). Finally, see how our only hope to be revived is *faith in God's promised Seed to overcome serpent's power*, for those who are of dead flesh, like that army of dry bones, have no life in themselves for revival even if furnished with God's Law—a Law that requires *redemption and faith in Mashiach* as our only hope for righteousness and a spiritual redemption (Gen. 3:14-

19; 15:6; Ex. 20:2).

*b. Prayerfully **Read Genesis 3** and **Write** your insights to share*

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: *Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.*

Q1. What is the problem with the *serpent's* enticement that we humans can be "like God" to be *righteous* to determine "good" and "evil" for ourselves?

Q2. Why are human efforts to *righteous* by our own works useless to reverse our condition of being *dead flesh* due to our sin?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How did the serpent deceive our first parents to leave faith in the Lord God? (Gen. 3:1-5)

1. Falling to Idolatrous Unbelief: Becoming Like God. The serpent's deception promised the man and woman that they would be "like God"—that is, "*as or equal to God.*" (3:5). So, the source of all sin is *unbelief*—the human desire to *displace God from His "holy" and "high" place of Headship over all to take God's place* as the final authority and power. For, God alone has the right to *determine* (know) "good" and "evil"—for He alone possesses a *righteous life*. So, when humans step into an *idolatrous unbelief* to place human understanding as the decider of "good" and "evil" to establish a *human Self-righteousness* (not a righteousness by faith). Consider the steps to such an idolatrous unbelief (and how Israel takes these steps over time):

- ❑ **Unbelieve** God's Word by adding to it (3). (God gave Torah, Israel *wrote oral torah.*)
- ❑ **Trust** in **human ability** (5). (Abraham believed God but Jews trust in their own teachings and traditions to be *righteous before God.*)
- ❑ **Understanding good and evil** by establishing a human *righteousness* to command good and evil. (Jews established *human authorities, rabbis* (great ones) whose words command how the Torah should be understood and obeyed).

Q2. How did our first parents irreversibly fall from the *spiritual life they shared with the Lord God?* (Gen. 3:6-10)

2. Fallen condition of dead flesh: Afraid of God. The Lord God made our first parents *alive* by His very Spirit of life (Gen. 2:7) but warned that they would die if they *sinned* and turned from Him in unbelief (2:17). So, when Adam and Eve sinned, they *died* as God had promised. Once alive to God, their *fleshly bodies* are now *naked*—uncovered of any spiritual life (10). Without God's spiritual life, not only are we *naked flesh* in our bodies, we are spiritually dead (Is. 9:2). So, our natural human condition after Adam and Eve's fall into unbelief and sin is to be *spiritually dead* in the *flesh*. This spiritual death was not only the result of sin but also *lives in this sin*. Remember, *unbelief*-- the exalting of human understanding to create a *self-righteousness*, is the original source of all sin. So, taking the Law of God to create a *human self-righteousness* and a self-made religion is just as sinful as *breaking that Law*. As a result, this dead flesh in Jews *produced* the sinful works of unbelief and self-righteous religion, apart from faith in God's promised Mashiach. So, the Jews have remained in this *deadness of flesh* even when they received the Law but recoiled from God in fear (Ex.20:19) in the same way that Adam recoiled in the garden (Gen. 3:10) up until the last days, when they are depicted as *flesh* without the Spirit (Ezek. 37:8, 11).

Q3. What was the Lord God's only hope for our fallen family when He judged the serpent? (Gen. 3:14-19)

3. Faith in promised Seed: Overturning serpent's power. To decide "good" and "evil" is the right of Headship. Originally, the man and woman by faith submitted to the *headship* of God as their Lord. However, when they chose to *know* "good" and "evil" according to their own understanding, they declared themselves their own *Self-rulers*, rejecting the headship of the Lord by abandoning faith by *ignoring the commands of God*. However, they gave the serpent *headship* over their lives and their world, for he is the one who convinced them to rebel. So, reversing their condition is no simple matter of returning to faith. Remember, no faith was possible for the Israelites under Pharaoh's oppression (Ex. 6:9). In this way, no faith is possible when a spiritual power greater than Pharaoh is the *head* of humanity. So, the Seed of Woman, Mashiach, must "crush" the serpent's head first before His people, so freed, can return by faith to God (Ex. 20:2; Is. 9:2-7; Ephesians 2:1-10).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Family Redemption: Faith in Promised Seed. The serpent deceived the first man and woman with this simple lie, that you will be “like God” (Gen. 3:5). Yes, man and their generations could aspire to take the *place of God*, for the unbelieving *mind* like Job is boundless in its *lawless imagination*, expecting to *approach God “like a prince”* (Job 31:37). To speak as God to command what is “good” and “evil.” To even suppose *its human words* carry the weight of *Torah*, that is, oral Torah. Yet, human *aspirations* to “be like God” fall short in two ways. First, to be “like God” means to *take His place of Headship* as “Lord” (Gen. 1:1), to command *reality* and see even “light” (1:1) and distant galaxies obey (Job 38:31). Yet, Israel in all its *rabbinic conjurings* could not keep itself out of *exile* (2 Chron. 36:20), much less *spiritual death* (Is. 9:2). Second, to be “like God” means to have a *holy, righteous life* of eternal Spirit (Gen. 6:3) at its source rather than being a mere recipient (Gen. 2:7). But, despite its long tradition of Jewish teaching and self-made righteousness, Israel has never been filled by the Spirit of God (Ezek. 37:8, 11). For, even furnished by the Law, its people have still shared *dead flesh* with the rest of humanity, so that they recoiled at the presence of the Lord (Exodus 20:19).

So, the Law does not *infuse life into spiritually dead flesh*. Instead, the Law promises Mashiah as the Seed to *crush the serpent's headship over humanity*. So that those who *trust Him and His accomplished redemption* to “put an end to sin” by “atoning for iniquity” to bring “an everlasting righteousness” (Dan. 9:24; Jer. 23:6). So, from the decree of Artaxerxes to *restore Jerusalem to lawful repentance* in 450 BCE to Jesus Mashiah's sacrifice on the cross in 33 CE, 69 weeks (483 years elapsed). So, both Jews and Gentiles who turned to Jesus Mashiah in faith received the

promised Holy Spirit and his rebirth into new life (Titus 3:5) and the attesting signs (Joel 2:28-29).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes³: Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil: Self-

Understanding/ Righteousness: If trees are the *source* of fruit, then the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil* shifts the source of knowing good and evil from God, who has the right *b'reishit* — from the beginning as the most high Head—to command what is *good* and *evil* by His Lordship, which humans were to respond to by faith. To shift from this faith to *unbelief*—making human understanding the *source of knowing good and evil*, thereby putting Man as his own *self-ruling Head* to devise a Self-righteousness. From *hedonistic paganism* to *rabbinic Judaism*, man would create his own self-justifying religion, determining what good to do and evil to refrain from in order to be *self-righteous*.

But *faith* realizes that only God has a *spiritual, righteous life* because only God understands all things in heaven and earth, spiritual and earthly. To aspire to have an understanding “like God” to know all things and to determine good and evil for oneself is the height of unbelief and rebellion. So, the most *righteous thing* the human mind can imagine is the most sinful and depraved thing—*idolatrous, unbelieving, rebellious Self-righteousness*.

³ **Footnotes: Serpent:** From this first encounter with the *serpent*, we learn several fundamental lessons. First, the serpent is “crafty” to deceitfully hide its trickery from the guileless humans (Gen. 3:1). Second, the *serpent* is bold, fearlessly diminishing God’s name and rebelliously deny His Word blasphemously (4). Third, the *serpent* encourages rebellion against God by *enticing the woman to sin* (5). By denying God’s Word and promising a better outcome than God’s Word, the serpent seeks nothing short of taking God’s place as the *lord* to whom the man and woman listen. Once they do as it says, they transfer their loyalty to this creature of the earth.

Chapter 4: PLEASING OFFERING: Sacrificial Faith

Genesis 4

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself
then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview **Genesis 4**

Pleasing Offering: Sacrificial Faith. Following the fall of humanity into unbelief, Adam and Even now see that life in *their spiritually dead flesh* gives them two ways to respond to God: *self-serving Flesh or sacrificial Faith*. So, read Genesis 4 to discover the way in which the next generation of our chosen line chose to respond to God, whether to pursue *selfishness and sin or sacrificial faith*.

First, consider the life of *Abel*, to see that **sacrificial faith offers God what is first and finest**. For, Abel offered God sacrifices which were costly and precious, for he offered to God the *firstborn* of his flock as well as their *fat portions*, a sacrifice acceptable to God (4:1-7). Then, consider that **self-honoring flesh gives in to consuming sin**, for Cain does not honor God with his produce, choosing to keep the best for himself, but this leads to sin, which consumes all he has (4:8-16). Finally, see how Adam and Eve **hope for Seed from God** from whom the Mashiach would be raised up (4:25-26).

b. Prayerfully **Read Genesis 4** and **Write** your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How does Abel demonstrate a sacrificial faith which pleases God?

Q2: Why is Cain's offering not accepted by God, and how does this reflect his hear choices?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How does Abel demonstrate a faith which pleases God by its self-sacrifice? (Gen. 4:1-7)

1. **Sacrificial Faith: Offering Self.** As Abel demonstrates, *faith* honors the Headship of God by *sacrificing* what is a valuable and a precious part of life. So, Abel brought to God an offering from the *firstborn* of his flock, his prime possessions reflecting his life's work as a shepherd. And, of his possessions, Abel gave what was most valuable, the *fat portions* of what he had. By offering God *sacrifices* that were costly to him, involving the *matters* of his life, Abel demonstrated a *faith surrendered* to God as Lord. Abraham would demonstrate a similar faith, *entrusting his life and future* to the Lord God by his hope in the promised Seed, Mashiach (Gen. 15:6). How unlike *modern flawed views* of faith as an *apathetic assent* that simply acknowledges God's existence—much like Cain's *selfish unbelief*.

Q2. How does Cain's fleshly choice lead him to sin? (Gen. 4:8-16)

2. Self-honoring Flesh: Consumed by Sin. Unlike Abel, Cain was not *sacrificial but self-serving*. If Abel offered to God the *firstborn* of his flocks, Cain should have offered his *first-fruits* of his harvest. Instead, he brought ordinary fruit, likely what he had no use for. So, the Lord “had no regard” for what Cain brought. To *accept* a defective or *worthless* offering would dishonor God. So, we see that Cain’s *flesh* was self-serving, preserving his *earthly possessions and standing* and minimizing God and what was not of this earth. Such a fleshly reliance on *self-made* Cain *self-justifying*, feeling “angry” that he was not regarded. Self-righteousness cares more for one’s human reputation rather than God’s honor. This self-righteousness and anger led to the sin of murder.

Q3 How does Eve express her faith in God? (Gen. 4:25-26)

3. Hope for Seed from God: Continued Line of Mashiach. God had promised Eve that her Seed would one day *crush the headship* of the *serpent*. However, following Cain's murder of righteous Abel, there was no hope for such a *redeeming Seed*. Abel was dead. And, no *worthy Seed* would come from Cain's line, a tree destined to bear *bad fruit*. So, when the Lord grants Eve "another Seed" (25), her hope is renewed in God's work to one day *raise up* a Seed to crush the serpent's head.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Sacrificial Faith or Fleshly Sin: Offering Lives to God. Faith determines our heart attitudes in approaching God, whether to honor him as Lord or to *ignore his Lordship* in favor of our own Self-interests. Dangerously, *faith* today resembles the latter, for people approach God with an apathy and *fleshly self-focus* that resembles Cain's unbelief rather than Abel's *self-sacrifice*. If you believe that you have the faith of Abel rather than the unbelief of Cain, test yourself with these three essential questions:

First, your actions will answer this question: "Who is worthy?" By his actions, it is clear to see that Cain was *self-serving*, preferring his own interests above God. So, his actions showed that he honored and viewed himself worthier than God. But, Abel feared God, honoring him as *God* and recognizing that His *worth and glory* far exceeded his own. So, Abel's *faith* was thus *sacrificial*—he gave in a way that showed His honor for God at great cost to himself.

Second, your responses will answer this question: "Who is righteous?" When the Lord God had no regard for Cain's *selfish sacrifice*, Cain's response was "anger" rather than *contrite repentance* (4:5). That is, Cain trusted in his own actions to maintain a *self-righteousness*, and when his *rightness* was questioned, even by God, Cain reacted in anger. Instead, Abel's faith relied on God to *regard him as righteous*, knowing that God alone was the only one having a truly righteous life. So, the Lord "had regard for Abel" (4:4).

Third, your obedience will answer this question: "Who is your Lord?" The highest authority in your life, *your "Lord,"* is the one you are ultimately putting your faith in. So, though the Lord warned Cain about the *crouching sin*, he in the end *listened to his own flesh* and chose to sin, without any remorse or sign of repentance. Thus, Cain trusted in himself as his own *Self-Lord*.

But, Abel served the Lord God, paying for his service with his own blood. Abel's *sacrificial faith* in the Lord God was *authenticated* by his sacrifice of blood.

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁴: Selfish Flesh: Consumed by Sin: Because Cain positions himself *in unbelief*, defending his own Self-righteousness, he does not *heed* the Lord's instructions to resist *sin*. Instead, he gives in to his fleshly *self-righteous anger* and slays his brother (8). So, we see this sinful pattern: a) *elevating our Self* feeds our unbelief so we are *deaf* to the words of God, so we become self-righteous to do what is *right* in our own eyes. b) because we are *self-justifying* by our own morality or religion, we obey the *flesh* and its desires—whether to sin or to act in unbelief, ignoring the Words of God. c) so, we *obey* the flesh, the world, or man-made religion as our master.

⁴ **Footnotes: Offering: Fleshly or Firstborn:** Whatever occupies the highest *place of "god"* in our lives, we will honor and give our lives to this. Whether this God is the Lord, whom Abel sacrificed *his first and finest possessions*, or it is *Self or the idols of this world, such as comfort, money, ambition, pride, or social standing*. The *fleshly life* seeks advancement and treasure in this earthly life, while *faith seeks God and His righteousness* to sacrifice good in this life.

Chapter 5: WALKING BY FAITH OR FLESH:

Righteous Noah

Genesis 6

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.*

a. Preview Genesis 6

Righteous Noah: Faith not Flesh. The *fleshly nature* we received from our first parents is incompatible with the life of the Spirit of God, so we can choose to *walk* in this *weak and corruptible flesh* or by *faith* in the righteous God. So, read Genesis 6 to see that *righteous* Noah walked with the Lord God by faith, while the entire world was *corrupted in the flesh* to incur God's judgment. First, consider the different ways that we can live on this earth, either *walking in fleshly wickedness or in the favor of God*. For, even though Adam's line was chosen to be the *sons of God*, most walked in fleshly wickedness as did the rest of earth's people. However, Noah walked in God's favor (Gen. 6:1-8). Next, consider the outcome of walking either *by the flesh* or by *faith*. We see that the *flesh is corrupted but Noah walks by faith in righteousness*. But, Noah's faith is not based on his own virtue but *his dependent trust in the Lord God*, which results in righteousness (Gen. 6:9-13). Finally, we see the reward of Noah's faith, for Noah *lived by obedient faith in covenantal relationship* with the Lord God. And, we who are the *generations* of righteous Noah still benefit from this covenant! (Gen. 6:18-22)

*b. Prayerfully **Read Genesis 6** and **Write** your insights to share*

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: *Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.*

Q1. Why does *unbelieving flesh and its way of life* inevitably lead to corruption? What in the *flesh* is incompatible with God's Spirit?

Q2: How does Noah live by faith in the Lord God? How does this *faith* lead to his righteous life?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. In our human condition in the flesh, how can we choose to walk? (Genesis 6:1-8)

1. **Choosing to Walk:** Flesh or Favor of God. Once humanity sinned and became *naked*, that is, spiritually dead in flesh, then they became *incompatible* with the Lord's Spirit and its heavenly life (6:3). So, in this *fleshly condition*, men and women have two ways to walk. Dead flesh is *innately Self-honoring and unbelieving*, so the first way to walk is to simply pursue a *Godless, evil path on earth* (6:5). Pursuing such wickedness grieves the Lord God, making him regret ever making man. However, a select few, like Noah, choose to *reject* this innate *dead flesh* to honor the *Lord God*. Walking by faith, Noah "found favor in the eyes of the Lord" (6:8).

Q2. What is the outcome of walking either by the flesh or by faith? (Gen. 6:9-13)

2. Outcome of Walking: Corrupted in Flesh or Righteous by Faith. When humanity, even the *chosen "sons of God" from Adam's line*, followed their *fleshly life of spiritual deadness*, they chose what is "wicked" in the eyes of the Lord (6:5) and so became increasingly "corrupted" (11). Following *dead flesh* is the most natural state for us, for our first parents chose to live in this world *relying on their own understanding* so that *unbelief* and a Self-reliant life is our natural state. However, Noah chose to walk with God *by faith*, so was regarded by God as "righteous" and "blameless in his generation" (6:9).

Q3. What is the reward of walking with the Lord God by faith?
(Gen. 6:18-22)

3. Covenantal Relationship: Living by obedient Faith. As we saw with Abel and will see again in Abraham, those of *faith* humble themselves in order to *honor* God as their Lord, so they *obey all that God commands* (6:22). Because Noah honored the Lord God by faith, God establishes a *covenant* with Noah and his family. That is, God seals with his formal promise an assurance of a *relationship of steadfast love* covering Noah and his family. Such covenant faithfulness *preserves this family* in the midst of God's worldwide judgment.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Walking by Faith: Rejecting Corrupting Flesh. Following our first parents' fateful choice to *know "good" and "evil" based on their own understanding rather than faith*, humanity's natural state is *spiritually dead flesh* which in its unbelief is *incompatible* with God's life of the Spirit (Gen. 6:3). Because *dead flesh* is our natural human condition, we all find this to be the *natural way of life* in this world, to rely on our own *Self-Rule* to do what is *right* in our own eyes and to disbelieve God, seeing His *commands* as an intrusion in the reality of our lives. For some, *living in their dead flesh* means to give in to its selfish desires, so Cain gave in to the *consuming desires of Sin*. In this way, the whole world fell to *wickedness and evil* continually, becoming increasingly *corrupted by this sin*. However, the survivors of this *world-wide cleansing* would give in to the *flesh* and its far more subtle deception. For, the *families* of Noah's generations would "know God" but would still want to *live by their own human understanding and unbelief*. So, they devised *religions* which would *justify* their own Self-righteousness. From the *pagan pantheons of Europe* to the *isolated deity of Islam*, earth's families insisted on their own *self-righteousness*. Yet, even when furnished with the Law of the true God, *Israel* ignored God's way of righteousness, to have *faith in the redemption of His promised Mashaich* to "atone for iniquity" (Dan. 9:) by being "disciplined" for sin (2 Sam. 7:14; Is. 53:10) to *provide Israel with a "righteousness in the Lord"* (Jer. 23:6). Still in *dead flesh* even at the Law's introduction (Ex. 20:19), *Israel* insisted on *law-keeping* as a means of establishing their own *Jewish righteousness* based on their own works, even though such righteousness proved to be incomplete and unclean, like *filthy rags* (Is. 64:6) which left *Israel* still in its *dead flesh* even to the last days (Ezek. 37:8, 11). To this day, the *remnant* of *Israel* who have indeed *approached God* by faith in the *redemption* of *Jesus Mashiach* (Is. 53:16) to be the one to finally "crush" the

serpent's head to restore life to God's children (Gen. 3:15) are *reborn with a spiritual life* (Ps. 110:3), having the faith of Noah are made *righteous* by faith in the Seed, like Abraham (Gen. 15:3).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
	I Differ
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁵: Unbelieving Flesh: When our human family *lost our life with God as “hai nefesh,”* living souls (Gen. 2:7) to become merely *naked flesh*—that is, flesh *whose spiritual life has died*, leaving us naked and afraid (Gen. 3:10), we left our natural state of *faith in the Lord God* to “know good and evil” based on our own unbelieving understanding (Gen. 3:5), usurping God’s place by aspiring to be “like God.” So, *unbelieving flesh* seeks to establish our own righteousness—from a *pagan idolatry* to a Jewish *Law-based self-righteousness* that avoids God’s promised means of redemption, Mashiach.

⁵ **Footnotes: Covenantal Relationship:** For those who walk by *faith*, God promises a *covenantal relationship* of steadfast love. However, when the *generations* leave the basis of such a covenant, a *faith* in the Lord God, then their reliance on *unbelieving flesh breaks the covenant*, requiring a New Covenant based on the righteousness which God provides (Jer. 31:32-34).

Chapter 6: SEED OF NOAH AND SONS: Saving Faith

Genesis 8-9

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.*

a. Preview *Genesis 8-9*

Seed of Noah and Sons: Promised Peace. The Lord God destroyed all the earth and its people, but He preserved Noah's family of the *chosen* line of Adam and Eve. So, read Genesis 8-9 to discover how the Lord blesses our family with His covenantal promise and provides the plan by which all the families of the earth will return to His blessing through Shem, the line of the promised Seed of Noah and his sons, Mashiach.

First, see how the our father Noah's *pleasing sacrifice* moved the Lord God to ***promise peace and protection to Noah's family.*** Through the three sons of Noah and their families, God *blesses and multiplies* humanity throughout the earth, promising his continued favor despite the *inclinations of humanity's dead flesh* (Gen. 8:20-9:7). Then, see that the Lord God's covenant of peace for Noah and his sons is secured in God's ***promised covenant with Seed for Noah and his sons.*** For, the promised Seed, Mashiach, is for all of Noah's sons and will secure God's covenant to all their generations (Gen. 9:8-13). Finally, this promised Seed will come through the line of Shem, who builds a ***promised spiritual house for his brothers to return to God*** (Gen. 9:18-28).

*b. Prayerfully **Read Genesis 8-9** and **Write** your insights to share*

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: *Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.*

Q1. How did God respond to Noah's offering?

Q2: Why is it important that the promised Seed, Mashiach, is the designated Heir of God's covenant for all the sons of Noah?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How does the Lord God respond to Noah's pleasing offering?
(Gen. 8:20-9:7)

1. **Promised peace and protection to Noah and family:** Noah's faith, shown by his offering of *every clean animal*, was a "pleasing aroma" to the Lord because Noah offered these after he and his family had already been delivered from the flood. Noah was now on safe ground, yet he still chooses to honor God with this pleasing sacrifice. Thus, Noah shows that true *righteousness* honors the Lord God not just for His deliverance but because Noah fears the Lord God as holy!

Q2. How does God ensure that He will continue His favor to Noah and his sons to their future generations? (Gen. 9:8-13)

2. Promised Covenant with Seed for Noah and sons: Normally, the Lord God *promises* the Seed, Mashiach, to a *father*, with his generations included in the blessing. But, the Lord God promises the Seed, the family redeemer, to all three sons of Noah—to Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Though Mashiach comes through the *line of Shem*, he belongs to all three families of the earth—to the generations of Shem, of Ham, and of Japheth.

Q3. How will the families of Noah return to God's blessing?
(Gen. 9:18-28)

3. **Promised Spiritual House:** God of Shem. When Noah pronounces his *blessings* on his three sons, he indicates the plan of God's redemption of the entire family. First, he denounces the *foolish rebellion* found in Shem's line, that is, Canaan. So, assigning him to humbling *service* of his brothers may lead to a repentance, that he may one day "be the servant" of the "God of Shem" (Gen. 9:26). Noah blesses the Lord as "the God of Shem." That is, Shem, his Firstborn, would be the one to remember God in the original tongue as *elohim*, as a family unity of Father, Son, and Spirit (Is. 9:6). Through Shem, Mashiach would build a spiritual "dwelling" for the brothers to return home to God and His blessing. Thus, Japheth, the youngest, would multiply and find refuge in this dwelling of Mashiach.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Saving Grace of God: Blessed in World/ Dead to God.

After Adam's sin, the world was desolated by the *judgment* of God, for the *cursed ground* reflected the *spiritual deadness of his naked flesh*. Cut off from God's *goodness*, *fleshly humanity* plunged into evil and wickedness that brought God's judgment.

But, Noah's *pleasing sacrifice* returned God's favor and blessing to Noah and we, his family. Now, we live in a world shows us God's goodness and blessing, even as our *naked flesh* in its spiritual desolation yearns for God and His life.

Now, God promises to show his *goodness* in this world with "seedtime and harvest" continuing (Gen. 8:22) even though *man's flesh seeks "evil"* (21). For, God gives both the "evil" and the "good" a blessed world to live in (Matt. 4:45), for in His kindness the Lord leads us to repentance (Rom. 2:4).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question Differ
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁶: Seed of Noah and His Sons: Though God promises His *favor* upon Noah and his sons, this covenant of favor would be secured in the person of the Seed of Noah and his sons, the Mashiach. For, in the eternal life of Mashiach, God's favor and peace would come to the family of Noah, bringing peace not just to the world but as a spiritual rebirth restoring our family to the household of God.

⁶ **Footnotes: God of Shem:** From the three sons of Noah, the survivors of the Flood, all the families of the earth would multiply and occupy their places in the world. Consider how each brother's generations spread through the earth, becoming powerful empires. Shem, the oldest, retained the knowledge of the true God by the original Hebrew tongue, so God (elohim) is the God of Shem. From Shem, the Semitic people took their inheritance in the *original homeland*, and rising up as the empire of great Babylon. From Ham, the Hamite people took their inheritance as they migrated south, inhabiting Egypt then the African continent. The Egyptian empire epitomized the strength of Ham. Finally, the Japhethite peoples proceeded from their homeland and migrated north, then west and east, populating much of the world. The Persian empire arose from the sons of Japheth as a mighty power.

As each family migrated, they remembered the true God only faintly. So, it is Shem, whose line led to Abraham and then the redemptive household of David, the family of Mashiach, who would build a spiritual house to bring all families of the earth back home to God and His blessing!

Chapter 7: FAITH IN SEED: Faith in Promised Seed

Genesis 15

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.*

a. Preview Genesis 15

Faith in Seed: Firstborn Son. Because our *human condition of naked flesh* inclines us to rely on our own *self-understanding* to know “good” and “evil” (Gen. 3:5) to walk in our own *self-righteousness*, God *favors those who walk by faith* in His promised Seed to restore life to us. So, read Genesis 15 to see Abraham trust in God's promised Seed to *restore life and hope* to him since his own flesh was *powerless and dead*.

First, see how Abraham becomes our example of *faith in God's promised Seed, Mashiach*. Abraham knew that in himself, he had no hope in his own *weak flesh* to acquire the “great reward” which God had planned for him, so he *trusts in God's promise of the Seed* to be multiplied as a holy people (Gen. 15:1-6). Then, notice how the Lord God even promises Abraham *deliverance for his earthly Seed, sojourners and servants in the land* (Gen. 15:13-15).

Finally, the Lord God gives Abraham's *Seed, Mashiach, the promised land from Egyptian river to Euphrates*. Because this land is promised to Mashiach, He is the one to secure for Abraham's generations a land in an eternal kingdom which exceeds the national borders of Israel (Gen. 15:18-20).

b. Prayerfully Read Genesis 15 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: *Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.*

Q1. Why is Abraham's faith, which is counted to him as righteousness, a faith fixed on the Lord God's promised Seed, Mashiach?

Q2: How will Abraham's Seed, Mashiach, secure for Abraham and his sons a "great reward"?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. Why is Abram accounted righteous by God? (Gen. 15:1-6)

1. **Faith in God’s promised Seed, Mashiach:** Abram is accounted *righteous* by God because he humbles himself to trust the Lord’s Seed to do what he cannot do for himself— to secure a lasting legacy of children and a people. This *self-surrender*, giving up the *fleshly need* to be *self-righteous*, pleases God so that He accounts Abraham “righteous” (15:6). In this way, those who similarly *have faith* in God’s Seed, Mashiach, will also be *accounted righteous* through the Branch of David, for the “Lord” will be their “righteousness” (Jer. 23:5-6).

Q2. What else does God promise regarding Abram’s earthly Seed? (Gen. 15:18-20)

Deliverance for *earthly Seed, sojourners and servants:* In response to Abram’s request for a confirmation that he will possess the land, the Lord God gives him a prophetic promise regarding his *future offspring*. His earthly descendants would be both “strangers” and “servants” in the land, but the Lord God would deliver them from the hand of their oppressors. So, they will acquire “great possessions” (14).

Q3. What inheritance does God give Abraham's Seed, Mashiach?
(Gen. 15:18-20)

3. Abraham's Seed promised land: From Egypt to Euphrates. When the Lord God formalizes His covenant with Abram, He promises His Seed, Mashiach, the land from the "river of Egypt" to the "river Euphrates," a territory which far exceeds the boundaries ever occupied by the people of Israel. For, while Abram's earthly seed, the people who *sojourned and served* in the land of their current territory, the Lord God promises Mashiach a future land which far exceeds Israel's national boundaries.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Desperate Faith: Helpless and Hopeless Flesh. The flesh will never admit helplessness. For, the serpent's first appeal was to the *flesh of our parents* and its high view of human ability: you will be "like God" (Gen. 3:5). So, *unbelief*, the imaginings of the *flesh* to acquire life on its own terms, will never accept God's pronouncement that *relying on human understanding to know "good" and "evil"* is death. And, for such a spiritual death of this scope, *under the Serpent's headship*, there was only one solution, God's promised Seed, Mashiach.

Abraham understood the *deadness* of his flesh, as he lamented to the Lord God that he was "childless" with no "heir" of his own (Gen. 15:2). But the Lord God promises that *he would indeed* inherit a people, for God would *multiply* his Seed, Mashiach, into a *host* like the heavens (5). Recognizing his own *helpless flesh*, Abraham entrusted all his life's legacy and his future hopes entirely to God, so *he believed God and His promised Seed*, so God counted him "righteous" (6).

Thus, *the righteousness of faith* is not simply a vague hope for good. Rather, the faith of Abraham *abandons reliance on human ability* to trust the Lord God entirely for *His* provision, which is always the Seed, Mashiach.

So, the Lord God has *promised the Seed* to all who would turn to him in this *life-surrendering faith*. To hopeless Adam and Eve who have lost all to sin, God promises the Seed of Woman to restore God's blessing. To Noah and his sons who witnessed the destruction of their world, God promises the Seed of Noah and sons to ensure God's covenant of peace. And, to childless Abraham, God promises the Seed of Abraham, the Heir who would multiply sons like the

heavens to inherit an eternal homeland stretching from Egypt to the Euphrates.

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
	I Differ
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

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What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁷: Seed Mashiach, Seed People: When the Lord God promises Abraham a future legacy, He promises to *multiply His Seed* to become a host like the *heavens* (15:5). This Seed that is *multiplied* will also *be the source of blessing to all nations* (22:18). To this Seed, Mashiach, the Lord God gives a lasting homeland stretching from Egypt to the Euphrates. So, this promises to this Seed, Mashiach, far exceeds what God allocated to Abraham's *earthly descendants*, a people who would inherit the land of their *sojournings* (15:13), occupying the territory of modern-day Israel. So, God distinguishes between Abraham's *earthly people* and the *promised Seed*, the one to inherit a lasting legacy.

⁷ **Footnotes: Counted as Righteousness:** Consider the *opposite of being counted righteous* by the Lord God. Isn't it to take matters into one's own hand, using your own *understanding* to "know good and evil" (Gen. 3:5) to establish your own *self-righteousness*? So, both the *pagan Greek* who offers *oblations* to *Zeus* and the pantheon, thinking his actions make him *right* with his gods and the Jew, who follows all the *halakah* detailed in his people's *oral Torah* according to the Law of God also considers himself *right* according to his tradition. Yet, the Law of God from the garden until the exilic prophets commands *one way* of righteousness, to have the *faith of Abraham* in God's promised Seed, Mashiach, to secure a righteousness which at once *crushes the power of unbelief* (Gen. 3:15) and *atones for sin* (Dan. 9:24) so that the Lord himself becomes the *righteousness* of His people (Jer. 23:6) rather than having his people establish their own *fleshly way to righteousness*. Ultimately, such a self-righteousness based on human understanding is the same *understanding* by which our mother Eve *came up with three good reasons to justify her decision to sin* (Gen. 3:6-7).

Chapter 8: SEED OF ABRAHAM: Families of Earth

Blessed

Genesis 22

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.*

a. *Preview Genesis 22*

Seed of Abraham: Families of Earth Blessed. The Lord God purposes for Abraham to be the *father* of God's Seed, Mashiach, and his blessed host of multiplied sons. So, read Genesis 22 to see how Abraham's faith was rewarded with his Seed, Mashiach, who would become a *host of sons* to bless all the nations of the earth!

First, see how Abraham's *faith was tested, as he entrusts all to the Lord God* (Gen. 22:1-3). Such a fully surrendered faith qualifies Abraham to pass on such faith to his Seed, who come after him.

Then, see how Abraham's *tested faith waits and surrenders to the Lord's response*. Though Abraham does not *understand* God's command to sacrifice Isaac, he knows that God will "provide for himself the lamb" (Gen. 22:4-8). Finally, see how Abraham's *tested faith is rewarded by God's promised Seed to bless all nations* (Gen. 22:9-19). God multiplies not just Abraham's Seed but also the fully-surrendered faith which Abraham places in the Lord God. So, read Genesis 22 to find out how Abraham becomes the father of those who have *faith in Mashiach* for their righteousness!

b. Prayerfully Genesis 22 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: *Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.*

Q1. Why does the Lord God test Abraham's faith by asking for his son Isaac's life in sacrifice?

Q2: How will Abraham's Seed, Mashiach, bless all the nations of the earth?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How does Abraham show that he has faith in the Lord God? (Genesis 22:1-3)

1. **Faith entrusts all to the Lord God:** Testing scope of faith. When the Lord God commanded Abraham to “offer” his son Isaac as a burn offering, He tested the full extent of Abraham’s faith. First, was willing to *trust and entrust all things*, including his most precious son, *to the Lordship of God*? Second, was Abraham’s *faith choice* to regard the Lord God only as *holy* and able to command everything in his life, even when the commands would seem most *maddening* to his fleshly understanding? In both respects, Abraham’s faith was total and complete, for he obeyed the Lord’s command even if it made no sense to his fleshly mind.

Q2. How do Abraham's actions prove his faith? (Genesis 22:4-8)

2. Faith waits and surrenders to the Lord's response: Testing surrender of faith. Proving that Abraham's faith entrusts all things to the Lordship of God, Abraham's actions exhibit a complete surrender and dependence on the Lord to act. So, as Abraham takes steps to obey the Lord God—instructing his servants in hope; traveling with Isaac to Mount Moriah; and, answering his son's innocent requests—he *waits on the Lord* in full surrender to His will, entrusting the outcome to the Lord and His mercy.

Q3. How does the Lord God reward Abraham's faith? (Genesis 22:9-19)

3. Faith rewarded by God's promised Seed: Faith Rewarded and Multiplied. When the Lord God does deliver Abraham by *providing the sacrificial lamb*, He approves his faith as pleasing and perfect. So, the Lord promises re-affirms His promise that he would multiply his *Seed, Mashiach*, to be a countless host, sons who share in his same faith. To this Seed, he would give *power* over his enemies and the mission to *bless all nations of the earth*.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Faith of Abraham: Seed multiplied as the stars. While Mashiach is promised as *humanity's deliverer* as the Seed of Woman and the *assurance of peace* to all the sons of Noah as their Seed, this promised Seed is notably the Seed of Abraham, the Heir of his line to multiply sons who share in the same faith as their father Abraham. For, it is Abraham, of the line of Shem who *remember God* as Elohim, the *family oneness* of God, whose faith becomes the standard for his household.

Will you prove yourself a *son of Abraham* by having the same faith as your *father*? Not relying on your own understanding to *know* “good and evil” on your own human terms—whether it is a self-reliant righteousness of *humanistic values and ethics*, or a *Law-based religion of command-observance*, or a *tradition of halakah and kesher*, but of the *surrendered faith that God' accounts as righteous* (Gen. 15:6) because it is the very righteousness purchased by the Lord Mashiach himself (Jer. 23:6).

If you are a true *son of Abraham*, multiplied from the very life of Abraham's Seed, Mashiach, then you will triumph over your enemies and spread the blessing of Mashiach to all the nations of the earth!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁸: Offer your Son whom you love: Because faith *surrenders to the Lord God* in all things, it entrusts all matters of this life into His Headship. So, Abraham did not consider even his most precious son as being outside the Headship of the Lord God. So, Abraham was willing to *offer* up even His Son to the Lord because his *fear of the Lord* exceeded his *love for his Son*.

⁸ **Footnotes: Seed multiplied as the stars of heaven:** The Lord God himself would be the one to *multiply* Abraham's Seed, Mashiach, into a multitude of sons sharing in the same faith as Abraham. Thus, Mashiach is one, but He is multiplied into a host like the heavens.

Chapter 9: SEED OF JUDAH/DAVID: Raised Up Redeemer

Genesis 38, Ruth 4, 2 Samuel 7

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.*

a. Preview **Genesis 38, Ruth 4, 2 Samuel 7**

Seed of Judah/ David: Raised up Redeemer. God promised a family redeemer from the line of Abraham to bless all nations of the earth, so the Lord God promises to *raise up* this Seed in the house of David. So, read Genesis 38, Ruth 4, and 2 Samuel 7 to see how Judah's tribe becomes the *house* from which the Lord God raises up Seed as humanity's kinsman-redeemer.

Starting with Judah himself, we see that the ***Seed must be raised up to restore the broken line***. According to the *law of duty* (yibbum), the Seed raised up in this way becomes the son of two fathers (Gen. 38:6-11). Then, the story of Boaz and Ruth shows that the ***Seed is raised up as the family Redeemer, to restore life to the generations of Perez***. So, Boaz *raises up Seed* for the deceased according to his *right* of redemption—that is, *geullah* (Ruth 4). Finally, the Lord God himself promises to ***raise up Seed for David as the Family Redeemer***—the Son of David and the Son of God. God must raise up the Seed of David, Mashiah, in this way after David passes away, to restore the *line of David broken at Jeconiah* during Judah's exile (2 Sam. 7:11-16; Jer. 22:30, 23:5-6).

b. Prayerfully Read Genesis 38, Ruth 4, 2 Samuel 7 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: *Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.*

Q1. Why is it important that the Seed of David, Mashiach, is not born of the natural way but must be *raised up by a family redeemer*?

Q2: What is the role of the Seed of David as the *Kinsman-Redeemer* raised up as the Son of David and the Son of God?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How is the line of Judah restored after it has been corrupted and broken by sin? (Genesis 38:6-11)

1. Raising up Seed to restore broken line: Son of two fathers. Judah's line of David is God's *chosen family of redemption*, the household and direct paternity of his *long-promised Seed*, the redeemer. Characteristic of this *redemptive line*, Seed must be *raised up* for the line to continue. So, Judah's line is corrupted and desolated by Er's sin (Gen. 38:7), so Judah commands his brother to "raise up Seed" for the deceased. Here, there is a *duty* (yibbum) to *raise up Seed* to continue the line. However, when Judah himself *raises up Seed*, this Seed is the son of two fathers—the deceased (Er) and the *one who raised up Seed* (Judah).

Q2. Why does Boaz *raise up Seed* for the deceased Mahlon?
(Ruth 4

2. Raising up Seed as the family Redeemer: Restoring Life to the generations of Perez. When there is no *brother* to “raise up Seed” for the deceased, a family-Redeemer can take up the *right of redemption* (*geullah*) to *raise up Seed* as does Boaz (Ruth 4:9). As *redeemer*, Boaz “raises up the name” (4:10) of the deceased in his *heir* so that the “house” may be built up (11). So, when Boaz takes Ruth and raises up Obed to be his *successor as the family-redeemer*, it is now this Son’s responsibility to be a *restorer of life* (15). In this way, Judah’s line of *redemption continues* from Perez to Obed to David, the *father* of God’s long-promised Seed, Mashiach.

Q3. How does God promise to restore life to David's broken line after he has died? (2 Samuel 7:11-16; Jeremiah 22:30, 23:5-6)

3. God raise up Seed for David as Family Redeemer: The Son of David/ the Son of God. As with Judah, then Boaz, now God Himself must *raise up Seed* for David (2 Sam. 7:12) as the family's *Kinsman-Redeemer*. For, fourteen generations after David, *Jeconiah's wickedness* would cut off the Davidic line (Jer. 22:30), necessitating God himself to *take up the redeemer's right to raise up for David* the redeeming Seed for the household (Jer. 23:5-6). So, the Lord God promises to *raise up his Seed*, coming from his own body (genetic material) who would be both the Son of David (2 Sam. 7:12) and the Son of God (14), the one who *raises up Seed* by His Spirit (Matt. 1:18). This Seed would be the *Kinsman-Redeemer* not just for David's House but, through him, but for all of humanity, whose nations would be *blessed in this Seed*, Jesus Mashiach (Gen. 22:18). This Kinsman-Redeemer, Mashiach, would be *disciplined for sin* to make atonement for his family (14), to *build an eternal house for David and God* (11, 13), to *establish his eternal throne* from which to *rule His Kingdom forever* (16).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Redemptive Seed: Raised up as the Son of David and the Son of God. God's chosen family of His promised Seed, Mashiach, traces its line of inheritance from the *generations* (toledot) of Adam and Eve (Gen. 2:4) to culminate in the redemptive line of Judah (Gen. 37:2, 38:8) and the *generations* of Perez (Ruth 4:18) and the house of David, whose Seed is both the Son of David (2 Sam. 7:12) and the Son of God (2 Sam. 7:14) by God's redemptive right (*geullah*) to *raise up Seed for David* (12). For, only such a Seed, *raised up according to the right of redemption* (*geullah*), can take His place as the family's Kinsman-Redeemer. The one designated to redeem not just the house of David, and not just the sons of Abraham, but all the families of the earth who were to be "blessed" by the Seed of Abraham (Gen. 22:18) and to be brought back to God's blessing by the *spiritual house* built by Shem's line (Gen. 9:27). This Seed of David, of the line of Judah, is your *Kinsman-Redeemer* to atone for your sins to bring you an eternal righteousness before God! (Dan. 9:24; Jer. 23:6). So, entrust your life to this Seed by faith, as did Abraham, that God may account your righteous of his name's sake! (Gen. 15:6)

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change ?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁹: Raising Up Seed for deceased: Duty (Yibbum) and Redemptive Right (Geullah): The act of *raising up Seed* for the deceased is both *commanded as duty* (yibbum) by Torah-Law (Deut. 25:5) and assigned as a *redeemer's right* (geullah) by the precedent set by Judah (Gen. 38:8), Boaz (Ruth 4:10) to find its fulfillment in God's own promise to act as David's Redeemer (Ps. 19:14) to *raise up Seed* for him (2 Sam. 7:12), our family Redeemer, Jesus Mashiach.

⁹ **Footnotes: Paternity of Seed:** the Son of David, the Son of God. According to the Law of Duty (yibbum), a brother *raises up Seed* for the deceased so that the Son belongs to the deceased, as his heir. However, when this *duty* is the *right* of a family relative to redeem (geullah), then the Seed raised up has a dual paternity, being the Heir and Son of two fathers—the *deceased*, whose name is *raised up*, and the redeemer who has raised up seed for the deceased. In this way, God raises up Jesus for David, so that Jesus is the direct son of both God and of David! (Matt. 1:18-25).

Chapter 10: LION OF JUDAH: Slain Lamb Worthy to Rule

Genesis 49, Revelation 5

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.*

*a. Preview **Genesis 49, Revelation 5***

Lion of Judah: Slain Lamb worthy to Rule. God appoints God as His Son and Heir (Ps. 45:6-7), the *Firstborn* to multiply sons as the stars of the heavens (Gen. 22:18). So, read Genesis 49:8-12 then Revelation 5:1-10 to see that this Son of God, Mashiach, rules on this eternal throne as the powerful *Lion of Judah* because He is worthy as the *Lamb of God* who gave His life to *redeem* home a household of sons to God by His blood.

First, read *Israel's* ancient prophetic blessing to designate the **Lion of Judah** to take up the **scepter of rule** over the *nations and his own brothers* (Genesis 49:8-10). Then, see that this *ruler wears garments stained with blood* to indicate his **sacrificial service**, for David's Mashiach is to be *disciplined for iniquity* (2 Sam. 7:14) in his role as the *family redeemer* (Gen. 49:11-12). Thus, when we see that in the eyes of heaven only Mashiach is worthy to rule over the Kingdom of God, for He alone is **powerful as the Lion of Judah** for *Kingdom rule* because *he is worthy as the Lamb* who *ransomed his people by His blood* (Revelation 5:1-10).

*b. Prayerfully **Read Genesis 49, Revelation 5** and **Write** your insights to share*

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: *Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.*

Q1. What inheritance does God give Mashiach as His Firstborn Heir?

Q2: Why must the Lion of Judah also be the Lamb of God to prove Himself worthy of the Kingdom?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How does Israel prophetically bless the tribe of Judah and its designated Firstborn Heir? (Genesis 49:8-10)

1. Lion of Judah: Heir to Ruling Scepter. Of all the tribes of Israel, Judah will be given the scepter of *rule* over his brothers and the nations, a rule which will take shape as the throne of David upon which the Seed, Mashiach, will sit. So, among the tribes (Gen. 49:9) and even among the nations (Num. 24:9, 17), the Heir of Judah arises as a powerful Lion to rule with a God-given scepter.

Q2. What is the sacrificial service that this *Heir of Judah* must perform which *stains his garments with blood*? (Genesis 49:11-12; 2 Samuel 7:14)

2. Sacrificial Service: Blood-stained Garments. Though exalted with the scepter of God's rule, the Lion of Judah, the coming Heir of the family, is also marked by sacrifice. So, his garments are *stained* by the *blood of grapes* (49:11). For, God's promises of the coming Seed, Mashiach, have always indicated that Mashiach would be *injured in His sacrificial service for his family*: "bruised" on his heel to crush the serpent (Gen. 3:15); *disciplined for iniquity* (2 Sam. 7:14); even *pierced for transgressions* (Is. 53:5; Zech. 12:10) and "cut off" to bring an everlasting righteousness to his family (Dan. 9:24, 26).

Q3. What makes Mashiach worth to inherit and rule God's eternal Kingdom? (Revelation 5:1-10)

3. Ruling Lion of Judah- Worthy Lamb of God: Blood-Ransom for Family. The rule of Mashiach is not simply a right to power but a family responsibility to *redeem* His people, freeing them from the *Serpent's power* (Gen. 3:15) by ransoming them from their sins by His blood (Rev. 5:9). Thus, the Lion of Judah is worthy to take the scroll of the Lord God's Kingdom inheritance because He is also the Lamb of God, who shed His own blood to ransom a people for His Kingdom to serve God as a kingdom of priests (5:10).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Lion of Kingdom, Redeeming Lamb: Worthy to unseal Scroll. As the Son of God, Mashiach does not take His inheritance of an eternal Kingdom rule as simply his right, even though God (*elohim*) anoints God (*elohim*) to rule on his eternal throne (Ps. 45:6) because He is the Son of God *entitled* to earth and its kingdoms (Ps. 2:7-8). Nor does Mashiach seize the Kingdom throne by force because He is the unstoppable *Lion of Judah*. Judah's Heir is called the *Lion of Judah* because the Lord has given Him the power over His enemies (Gen. 22:17) and the *irresistible power* of the Lord's name (Jer. 30:9). Rather, Mashiach, the Seed of David, is *deemed worthy* of the Kingdom of God because he was "slain" and "ransomed" with His blood a people to share in His rule as *kings* and *priests* (Rev. 5:9-10). That is, *Mashiach is worthy to inherit and rule* His eternal kingdom because He is the *Family-Redeemer*, whose sacrificial love of the Father strengthened him to *redeem His family*. This is the true power behind Mashiach's Kingdom, a *sacrificial and righteous love* shared by the Father and the Son, which *anoints* His throne with an unstoppable joy!

So, will you share the Lamb's *sacrificial, righteous love for the Father*? To share in His sacrifice is to *share in the power of His anointing as a King and Priest* in the Father's Kingdom!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
	Differ
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes¹⁰: Lion of Judah/ Worthy Lamb Slain: The *revealed power of the Lion of Judah* resides in His willingness to obey the Father's will even to death, being sent out by the Father to be the "Lamb" slain to ransom the children back home into the Kingdom as *priests and kings*.

¹⁰ **Footnotes: Worthy of the Kingdom:** The Lord God has always planned to multiply the Son of God as the multitude of "generations" to inherit the "heavens and the earth" (Gen. 2:4) with Him, that the Mashiach might be the Firstborn of *many brothers* (Ps. 22:22).

Prayer Requests:

Prayer Request/ Date	Answered Prayer/ Thanks

Journaling:

What is God teaching you?	How are you growing?

Sermon Notes:

Sermon Notes/ Date	Applying it to my life

Notes:

SERIES 2: PERSONAL FAITH IN GOD

BOOK 2: *Psalms 1-74*

Book 2: Psalms

Introduction

As you read Psalms 1-75, you will learn of the blessed way of righteousness, as you walk with your Lord God by faith. The psalms express the heart-cry of God's people to their Lord, so read these not as simple words of instruction but essentially, *guidelines for your heart*. For, as you read this first movement of psalms, you will see how the Godly have drawn near to seek the Lord for generations. You will see how you are called to testify of the Lord's faithfulness and steadfast love to a *godless* world denying the very existence of God! And, you will see your final vindication, as the Lord exalts you and all His people at His coming, proving your words of testimony to be right and true. So, learn to seek the Lord and shelter in His steadfast love, even as the whole world turns against you because you belong to your Lord God!

STEPS of a Devoted Disciple:

Your *Devotion* matters to the Lord. For, there is only one Lord and God, and He deserves creation's highest honor and praise. So, you were made to give yourself to the Lord God in loving devotion of heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30). In this same devotion to the Lord, Jesus Christ calls you to follow Him as His disciple. These short devotionals guide you in the Word to cultivate a heart devotion to the Lord as His disciple.

- First, **discover** what His life-giving Word has to say to you personally, being careful to write down your insights to share with others.
- Then, **discuss** His Word with those closest to you: your family, your friends, and in your home fellowship group (your spiritual family).
- Next, **dialogue** to compare views on key passages with a partner—either another disciple, or an older mentor or younger mentee.
- Finally, **develop** key skills as you abide in the Word by applying it to your life as you read the devotional, notes, and footnotes.

START HERE: *Humble Yourself in Prayer:*

Devote yourself to the Lord to hear and do His Will for you.

Do I want to humble myself under the Lordship of God by faith?

Or, will I live as my own Lord, relying on my own understanding?

PRAYER OF DEVOTION

Lord God, I devote my life to you today. I offer you my soul to live humbly under your Lordship; my mind to seek your will and Spirit; my heart to

love you and others; and, my strength to obey your Word and Will!
Amen.

Chapter 1: FAITH OF THE RIGHTEOUS: Known by Lord
Psalm 1, 4, 5

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God’s Word for yourself then **Write Insights to Share** with others.

a. Preview Psalm 1, 4, 5

Faith of the Righteous: Known by the Lord. The Psalms give voice to the heart of the Righteous Ones as they call out to the Lord by faith. So, read Psalms 1, 4, and 5 to see how the *faith of the Righteous* binds the Righteous with their Lord in an active relationship!

First, see how the Righteous actively **know the Lord** by His Word and are known by the Lord, resulting in abounding spiritual fruit in the lives of the righteous (Psalm 1). Then, see how the Righteous **trust in the Lord God** by faith, and this faith enables them to *offer right sacrifices* to the Lord. And, when the *righteous* sacrifice, offering up the ways and wealth of this world, they receive in return a *heavenly joy* that far exceeds worldly rewards! (Psalm 4). Finally, when the Righteous walk by faith in the Lord, the Lord God not only *knows their way* but also **leads them** in the **way of “righteousness”!** (Ps. 5)

b. Prayerfully Read Psalm 1, 4, 5 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p>	

What lesson can I apply to my life?	
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Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How do the *righteous ones* relate to the Lord?

Q2: How does the Lord work in the lives of His righteous ones?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How do the Righteous know the Lord and His ways? (Psalm 1)

1. Know the Lord: By His Word. The *righteous* do not simply know *about the Lord*. Rather, they know and experience the Lord in their whole lives by faith, like a *well-watered tree* knows the refreshing streams it draws on for life (3). And, what is the source of *life* that draws the righteous near to God? It is the very *Law of the Lord*, God's Word that is given with the authority and voice of the Creator. When the righteous *delight* and *meditate* on the Lord's

Words, they soak in the Life of the Lord to know him and be known by Him.

Q2. How do the righteous live with the Lord by faith? (Psalm 4)

2. Trust in the Lord God: By Faith. The faith of the righteous is not simply a *passive agreement that God exists*. Rather, the *righteous* trust God for all things, having put their entire lives into His hands as a *right sacrifice* (5). The righteous even trust God to *be their righteousness* (1), forsaking the *fleshly* self-righteousness which comes from our original *unbelief* to take God's place of Lordship to *define* "good" and "evil" for ourselves (2:17). And, the *righteous* have a *sacrificial faith*, entrusting themselves to the Lord even as they *trust* Him to answer and work in their lives.

Q3. How does the Lord actively work in the lives of the righteous as they walk with him by faith? (Psalm 5)

3. Leads in Way of Righteousness: Known by Lord: Family.

When the righteous draw near to the Lord by faith even from the day's earliest moments (2-3), the Lord *bears* and reveals His *steadfast love* to them (7). In love, the Lord leads the righteous and gives them

safe refuge (8, 11). So, the Lord actively leads the righteous in the pleasing way, because He knows them in love.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God’s Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Faith of the Righteous: Mutual Delight. Sadly, many who have faith in their own Self-righteousness are deprived of the *delightful and deep* life of faith enjoyed by the *righteous* and their God. Instead, the *faith* of the *Self-righteous* is simply a disguise for their own *way of sin* (Ps. 1:1), as the unrighteous cling to certain truths about God to *justify* their own *Self-Way* to become righteous by their own hand. So, the *faith* of the Self-righteous is necessarily dry, flimsy, and easily dismissed as *chaff* in the judgment (1:5). But, if you *trust in the Lord* even for your own *righteousness* (Ps. 4:1), knowing that the Lord is the only sure source of *life* and righteousness (Jer. 23:6). Then, your *faith* will focus not on any flimsy and *fleshly* good-deeds or right beliefs you may wish to cover yourself with. But your faith hydrates you in the “streams of water” of God’s Law, as you delight and nourish your soul on it (1:3). Because the faith of the righteous involves *all of their lives*, they gladly *offer right sacrifices* of their very lives along with their faith, entrusted to the Lord for His work. If you delight in the Lord by such faith, you will be filled with the Lord’s spiritual “joy” beyond anything material which can reward you! (7).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
↓ Differ	
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change ?	

DIFFER: Disagree

What insight or Bible
verse to **differ**?

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/
mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes¹: Law of the Lord: The Lord's Word is *Law* because these are the very words of the Creator, whose mere voice created all that is seen and unseen. Because the righteous delight in the Lord God's word of power, they are well-nourished like a fruitful tree. And, by delighting in the Law of the Lord, they become familiar with this God and His ways. Thus, the Law of the Lord is delightful because it acquaints the righteous with the very life and heart of God!

Added Notes: Stand in Judgment/ Congregation: The righteous and their ways are "known" by the Lord (1:6), because *their faith* draws them into a mutually delightful relationship with the Lord. So, because the Lord knows the *righteous*, *He becomes their "righteousness"* (Jer. 23:6). For, to claim a self-righteousness *apart* from God is to lift up the human Self as a worthy replacement of the Lordship of God. Those who claim a *Self-righteousness* will not "stand in God's holy judgment, being earthly creatures of mere flesh. Nor, will they stand in the *congregation* of God's spiritual people, for their own *fleshy life* is mere chaff in the wind.

Chapter 2: REFUGE IN LORD: Safe Throne and Temple

Psalm 9, 10, 11

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then **Write Insights** to Share with others.

a. **Preview Psalm 9, 10, 11**

Refuge in the Lord: Afflicted in the World. In this world corrupted by the *fleshly godlessness* of humanity (Gen. 6:), the Lord God's *righteous ones* are afflicted. So, read Psalms 9, 10, and 11 to discover how the Lord's presence in His Throne and Temple are a refuge for His righteous ones.

First, see how the Lord's ***throne of judgment*** provides a secure refuge for the *righteous*, for at the throne of God the Lord *reveals* His justice to humble man before His presence! (Ps. 9). Then, see how the *righteous* are afflicted in this life by the *arrogance of the wicked*, who shamelessly reject God and boast in their own fleshly security. Though the wicked cannot imagine being called to give an *account* for their actions, the righteous ***wait for king's justice***, knowing that the Lord is *king* and will satisfy the desires of his afflicted ones! (Ps. 10). Finally, we see that the *righteous* must endure *affliction* from the ungodly as even the very *foundations of earthly life* are shaken, because the Lord *tests* the righteous to see that they take ***refuge at His throne and temple***, so proving by their deeds they share in His righteous life to see His *face* in the end! (Ps. 11).

*b. Prayerfully **Read Psalm 9, 10, 11** and **Write** your insights to share*

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. *Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.*

Q1: How can the righteous find safety in this ungodly world of affliction?

Q2: Why does the Lord allow the righteous to be afflicted while the ungodly appear at ease?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 Where will the righteous find safety from their enemies? (Psalm 9)

1. Throne of Judgment: Secure Refuge. The righteous will be *afflicted* by this world's *ungodly people, enemies* who seek to kill and destroy the righteous. However, the *righteous* can still exult in the Lord, at whose *presence* the Godless turn back and perish (3). For, even if the world is filled with enemies who live as the *lords* of this earth, the *righteous* draw near to the throne of God. As they draw near, they know that the Lord is *enthroned forever* (7) and is a *stronghold* when the righteous are oppressed. Enthroned, God is resolute in his purpose to judge and remind the nations they are “but men”! (20).

Q2. How should the righteous respond to the wicked deeds of the ungodly? (Psalm 10)

2. Waiting for King's Justice: Righteous Lord. Though the righteous are *safe* in the presence of the Lord and His throne, they still must endure the *outrageous offense* of the wicked who live as if “there is no God” (4) and fearlessly imagine they will never be brought before the Lord in judgment (13). Yet, the righteous wait for the Lord, who is enthroned as *king forever and ever* (16). Though the nations and their rebels will one day *perish*, the Lord comforts the afflicted and gives His justice to the “oppressed” (18).

Q3. How can the righteous survive testing when even the foundations are destroyed? (Psalm 11)

3. Refuge at throne and temple: Enduring Tests. One day, the godlessness of this world will come to its evil fruition, as the *wicked* destroy the very *foundations of life and righteousness*. In this time of rampant *lawlessness*, how will the righteous be preserved as their faith in the Lord is tested? The righteous will find refuge in the Lord God and His sheltering presence, for as they *worship* in times of testing, *they find rest in His holy temple* (4). And, as they draw near for mercy and grace, they present themselves before the Lord's *heavenly throne*. When the *righteous and their deeds* are proven genuine, even when tested, the Lord will accept and love their *righteous deeds* and the righteous will see His face! (7).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Refuge in Affliction: Throne and Temple of Lord. In this world, you will face opposition and affliction from the *ungodly* and *wicked* people of this world. How will you endure such opposition, knowing that as wickedness increases, the very *foundations* of life and society are “destroyed” (3). But the Lord God provides you relief even as your enemies multiply and the very *foundations* of a just society are destroyed!

First, be sure to *find refuge* in the *presence of God*, where His burning holiness causes your enemies to *turn back, stumble, and perish* before Him (Ps. 9:3). For, life and its hardships may rise and fall, but the Lord *sits enthroned forever*, unchanging as a stronghold of grace for His people! (7). Then, pour your *desires* for *righteous justice* before Him (Ps. 10:17), knowing that the Lord will strengthen you and soon give you justice! (18).

Finally, know that the world’s *afflictions* are meant to *test you*, to see if your heart will rest in the Lord’s *temple* in worship and toward the Lord’s *throne* in pleas for grace and mercy! For, when you pass this world’s test, you will “behold his face” in righteousness! (Ps. 11:7).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)		
✓ Agree	? Question	! Differ
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?		
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?		
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?		

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes²: Throne of God: The Throne of God is His seat of *rule*, from which He renders just decisions for His people. The Lord is *enthroned forever*, and this *throne* stands at the *head* of all in heaven and earth, material and spiritual. Although the throne of God is hidden to *earthly eyes*, it is not inaccessible. Rather, the *righteous approach His throne to rest* in the Lord's *stronghold* (Ps. 9:9) and His *holy presence* as their *refuge* (Ps. 11:1).

Added Notes: Testing: Loving Righteous Deeds: The Lord alone is *righteous*, being the source of His eternal, righteous life (Ps. 11:7), so He loves the *righteous deeds* of His afflicted ones when they are tested by this world's ungodliness and unrighteousness. For, when the Lord's people hold to the Lord in *faith*, He works through their humility and brokenness to produce the *righteous deeds which He loves*. At the end of their test, these *faithful ones* shall "behold His face" (Ps. 11:7).

Chapter 3: SECURE IN LOVE: Treasuring Lord’s Salvation

Psalms 16, 17, 18:31-50

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God’s Word* for yourself then **Write** *Insights to Share* with others.

a. Preview Psalms 16, 17, 18:31-50

Secure in Love: Treasuring Lord’s Salvation. The Lord’s saints are His *precious and holy ones, the people of His own possession*. So, read Psalms 16, 17, and 18 to see how the Lord and His saints mutually treasure one another, for they share a *kindred, steadfast love*.

First, walk in the ways of David, to ***treasure the Lord as your beautiful inheritance***. In this world you will be tempted by those who follow *bloody idols*, but set your heart only on the Lord as your portion, for His way alone leads to life (Ps. 16)! Surely, this world is full of dangers, but you are ***secure in the Savior’s kindred steadfast love***, for the Lord shares this love with you because you are *precious to Him* and part of His family (Ps. 17). So, ***lovingly respond to the Lord’s saving, steadfast love*** which He shows to His family, to David and His Seed forever (Ps. 18:31-50).

b. Prayerfully Read Psalms 16, 17, 18:31-50 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. *Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.*

Q1. How can you treasure the Lord as your portion in this life?

Q2: Why does the Lord God share His steadfast love with His people?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. *Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.*

Q1. How should you value the Lord like David? (Psalm 16)

1. Treasure the Lord as your beautiful inheritance. King David treasured the Lord and saw Him as the most valuable and important person in His life on earth! This value runs through Psalm 16, and it should inspire you to regard the Lord God as holy. Nothing in this world should compete with His high value in your eyes! So, the Lord is the very reality of “good” for David (2). He is regarded as David’s “portion and cup”—his sustenance, pleasure, and future “inheritance” (5-6). If you treasure the Lord, He will treasure you!

Q2. How does the Lord God feel toward those who value Him?
(Psalm 17)

2. Secure in Savior's steadfast love: Kindred Affections. God highly regards his people who value Him, and He “tests” their hearts to know their genuine affections for Him. For, He “wondrously” shows His *steadfast love* to those who honor him in this way: seeing them tenderly as precious (8), defending them (13), and revealing His “face” with them, for they share His likeness as members of His own family (15).

Q3. How will you respond to the Lord's saving, steadfast love?
(Psalm 18)

3. Lovingly respond to the Lord's saving steadfast love: Because you will see the Lord' faithfulness as you are faithful to him, then respond in love to His *steadfast love!* David exclaims, “I love you, O Lord, my strength... my rock and my fortress, my deliverer” (2). The Lord is not a distant, anonymous deity. He is yours, for you have made the Lord your portion and possession! So, exult in His tender faithfulness to you, because He considers you His own.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God’s Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Family Love: Grace. This world is full of *dazzling treasures*, but will you choose to *treasure God* as your life’s true portion? For, the Lord longs to value you as you value Him! Your *spiritual forefather David* treasured the Lord as his only “good” (Ps. 16:2), seeing God as His own “portion and cup” (5). So, the Lord made his *inheritance beautiful*, a rare and joy to find “life” in the “presence” of God himself! (11).

For, if you treasure the Lord, He *surrounds you with His steadfast love* to be your Savior (Ps. 17:7)! Valuing you as the “apple of His eye” (8), He now considers you His own. Not only will He share His family love with you, but you will one day awake to behold his “face” as you share His very likeness (15)!

So, be strong in this life and fight the Lord’s battles, for your Lord is your faithful “rock” to exalt Himself to save you! (Ps. 18:46). For, you are a member of the Lord God’s family, headed by the Son of David, Mashiach, and enveloped in His steadfast love!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes³: Lord is my portion and cup: David begins Psalm 16 by telling the Lord, “I have no good apart from you” (2). David realizes that all “good” and his very “life” itself is all from God, so he resolves to make the Lord his “portion and cup” (5), the sustenance, the joy, and the inheritance he hopes for. Honoring the Lord in this way, rather than resorting to the world’s rewards, marks David as a man after God’s own heart!

Added Notes: Apple of His eye: If you are the “apple of His eye,” the Lord looks upon you tenderly as one who is most precious to Him. For, to touch you is to touch the very *tender part* of God Himself, incurring God’s quick response and protective salvation!

**Chapter 4: INSTRUCTIVE LORD: Covenant
Friendship
Psalm 19, 25, 27**

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview Psalm 19, 25, 27

Instructive Lord: Covenant Friendship. When the Lord God calls you by His steadfast love to join the people of His very own possession, He prepares you to be part of His family. So, read Psalms 19, 25, and 27 to see how the Lord Himself will instruct you to live a life pleasing to Him!

First, be **revived by the Law of the Lord** to walk in the light of His wisdom and perfection, so that your very words and heart mediations please Him, your redeemer (19:7-14). Then, **be taught and led in the friendship of the Lord**, for He draws you near in His covenant of steadfast love (25:1-14). Finally, as the Lord draws you ear to Himself in a tender relationship of mutual trust and loyalty, know that you are **called to seek the Lord's face**. As His servant, the Lord shares with you the secret counsel of His heart (27:4-14)!

b. Prayerfully Read Psalm 19, 25, 27 and Write your insights to share

SEEING What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas	
LEARNING What does it mean? What is it teaching me?	
DOING What lesson can I apply to my life?	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why does the Lord want to instruct His people?

Q2: How can you please the Lord as His people?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How can my soul be awakened to hear the Lord and His words? (Psalm 19:7-14)

1. Revived by the Law of the Lord. The Law of the Lord has the power to revive your “soul” (Ps. 19:7) because it reveals to you the very *life of God* which He first breathed into our first parents, Adam and Eve. This Law will make your soul awaken to the Lord by *cleansing it by the fear of the Lord* (9). The Lord’s commands will *enlighten your eyes* to see the truth in His Word regarding the Lord and His purposes (8). And, as the Lord Himself *testifies to you* of what is true, you will revive as you receive the *wisdom* from God (7).

Q2. How will the Lord relate to me as one of His people? (Psalm 25:1-14)

2. Taught and led in the friendship of the Lord: Com. The Lord God revives your soul by His Law, teaching you to *fear the Lord*, so that He might draw near to you in *friendship!* (14). For, the Lord is not interested in casual or careless worshippers. Rather, He draws you into a *covenant relationship with Himself*—permanent; binding; and, mutually committed! So, in this covenantal commitment, the Lord invests in you by *teaching you* His paths upon which you will walk with him; and, *leading you* in His truth (4-5).

Q3 How will the Lord call out to my heart? (Psalm 27:4-14)

3. Heart called to seek the Lord's face. When you grow accustomed to the Lord and His friendship, being careful to “walk in His ways” (Ps. 25:4), then you will learn to hear His voice calling to your soul, to the deepest secrets of who you are. And he calls, “Seek my face” (27:8). So, let your *heart* respond to Him, giving Him your heart desires and affections, your tender moments to know Him face-to-face by faith!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God’s Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Heart-fellowship with the Lord: Instructed and Led. When the Lord God calls you into fellowship with Himself, He does not stand far off. Testifying through the glories of the heavens and earth. Rather, the Lord God draws near to you in friendship. You are precious to Him, so He invests His heart and words in you! When the Lord draws near to you, your heart may still be unresponsive and hardened to His call. So, the *Law of the Lord* will revive your soul! (Ps. 19:7) Just as when the Lord God breathed life into the nostrils of our father Adam, the words of His Law breathe into your soul so that you might hear and see His glory! And, changed by the power of His *lawful Word*, you will begin to *fear Him—exalting Him to His highest place and humbling yourself at His service!* (9).

So, as you *honor the Lord by fearing His name*, He draws near to you in the *friendship of fellowship* (Ps. 25:14). Allowing you access to His private thoughts, the Lord *teaches you His ways* and leads you in His truth (4).

In friendship, the Lord will call to your soul, “Seek my face” and your heart will respond, “Your face, Lord, do I seek” (Ps. 27:8) until the day when you finally meet your Lord at His throne, gazing at His *face* that sets creation right!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁴: Law of the Lord: The *glory of God expresses the power of His nature*, so the heavens first in their High Rule over the affairs of earth display God's glorious power in creation. However, the Law of the Lord most perfectly reveals the powerful glory of the Lord. For, Gods Word is as *Law*, for it expresses the commanding authority of God's glory to *conform all reality* to His purposes. So, to *bow to the Law* is *purifying* (8), freeing you from sin's domination (13) to transform the words and meditations of your heart! (14)

Added Notes: Seek my Face: Although the Lord God inhabits the highest heavens in glory, He amazingly draws near to you if you approach Him by faith. For, by faith, as His Word and Spirit speak to the quiet of your heart, will draw you close as the Lord says to you: "Seek my face"! (8). So, to obey God's call by faith, you will draw near to Him and be bathed in the glory of His presence, as you draw to Him, face-to-face, heart-to-heart. Until you are transformed (Ps. 17:15; 2 Cor. 3:18).

Chapter 5: HEART FOR LORD: Desires Fulfilled

Psalm 32, 36, 37

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then *Write Insights to Share* with others.

a. Preview Psalm 32, 36, 37

Heart for the Lord: Secured in Steadfast love. You are precious in the Lord's eyes, so He cares deeply about the yearnings of your heart, for it is with your heart that you present yourself first to the Lord! So, read Psalms 32, 36, and 37 to find out how you might cultivate a *heart for the Lord* whose desires are fulfilled in him!

First, know that a ***contrite heart finds Lord's forgiveness.***

Because you are still in the flesh, your heart is yet to be perfected, so you will fall into sin, but see how a contrite heart is open to the Lord's gentle rebuke and instruction to return to him (Ps. 32, 51:10)! So, as you learn to *heed the Lord and follow His ways, your upright heart finds the steadfast love of Lord.* Inexhaustible and *high*, yet His love is near to your heart, to be your precious experience (Ps. 36:5-12). Finally, find that a ***heart delighting in the Lord has its desires fulfilled*** (Ps. 37).

b. Prayerfully Read Psalm 32, 36, 37 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How can you be sure that your *heart is contrite*, even when you sin against God?

Q2: How should you approach the Lord God if He has limitless *steadfast love for you*?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. Why does the Lord want us to have a contrite heart when we sin? (Psalm 32, 51:10)

1. Contrite heart finds Lord's forgiveness. Because you are blessed in God's grace, the Lord is quick to forgive you if only you are quick to confess and turn from your sin. The Lord wants to cultivate in you a heart that He can instruct (8). So, He wants your heart to be first *contrite*—which is quick to “acknowledge your sin” to the Lord (5). Contrition bases your relationship with the Lord on honesty and a desire to have a healthy relationship. And, a contrite heart is *yielding* and not stubborn like an ignorant beast. Rather, the Lord wants to counsel you that you listen and change your life to obey Him (8).

Q2. Why should we have an upright heart before the Lord?
(Psalm 36:6-12)

2. Upright heart finds the steadfast love of the Lord. When the Lord finds those who will come to Him with a contrite heart, He is willing to *know them* and get to know them. For, your *contrite* heart means that you are *upright* (10), willing to *receive and be changed by His righteousness!* So, those whom the Lord knows, He shows His steadfast love and great faithfulness! Rather than stooped in sin and hiding from the Lord’s presence, walking *upright* means that you will walk with the Lord in confidence!

Q3. Why should I delight in the Lord with my heart? (Psalm 37)

3. Heart delighting in the Lord has its desires fulfilled. When you draw near to know the Lord with a contrite and upright heart, you will find Him to be the answer to all of your heart’s hopes and desires! For, to *know the Lord* is to be *changed to resemble the Lord*, having your heart renewed as you draw near to delight in the Lord! Living your life as *seen and pleasing to the Lord*, you will discover that the Lord “knows” your days and ways, as you walk in blamelessness. And He gives you an eternal “heritage” (18)!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to **read** Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

A Heart to Know the Lord: Walking with the Lord in Delight.

There are a great many things in this world to know, but the Lord searches the earth for the *fully committed* heart which seeks to *know the Lord* (2 Chronicles 16:9). So, if you want to know the full joy and delight of committing your heart to know the Lord, then learn from Psalms 32, 36, and 37!

If you want a *heart to know the Lord*, then first humble yourself to have a *contrite heart*. For, the Lord longs to *instruct you* in a growing relationship with Himself. For, if your heart is *contrite*, you will be always honest with the Lord, even when you fail and sin against Him. And, to know the Lord is to *walk with Him with an upright heart* in righteousness, for He longs to show you His limitless *steadfast love and faithfulness* (36:10)!

So, if you set your *heart to know the Lord*, then you will choose to *delight* in Him and entrust your *desires* to Him (Ps. 37:4). Then, you will know His vast reward and He reveals Himself to you!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁵: Acknowledged my Sin: Those whose hearts are *hardened by sin* are cut off from God, but the Lord regards those who offer to him a “broken and contrite heart” (Ps. 51:17), for only such a heart is ready to *know the Lord* and to understand His way and instruction (Ps. 32:8).

Added Notes: Delight in the Lord: When you choose to *delight yourself in the Lord*, you confess that He is the truly *worthy Lord* whose presence is most delightful and desirous in all the earth! By cultivating a heart that delights in the Lord, you will see the Lord reveal Himself and lavish upon you His limitless *steadfast love, faithfulness, and righteousness!*

Chapter 6: HOPE IN HELPLESSNESS: Head of Household

Psalms 38, 39, 44

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then *Write Insights to Share* with others.

a. Preview Psalms 38, 39, 44

Hope in Helplessness: Lord's Deliverance. If you live a righteous life on this earth, you will be *confronted* by all the world's opposition and godless threats. So, read Psalms 38, 39, and 44 to see how your Lord God gives you hope in your feelings of hopelessness in this world!

First, come before the Lord honestly, presenting your ***helpless longing to the Lord for his Salvation***. Though you are in no position to save yourself, the Lord will answer you (Ps. 38; 50:23).

Then, consider that your ***mortal hope must only be in Lord***, for our lives our fleeting but the Lord is the One who delivers us. And, this deliverance first starts with our own sin (Ps. 39)! So, we must be steadfast to put ***our only hope is in our God and King, who saves us and comes with fire*** (Ps. 44; 50:3).

b. Prayerfully Read Psalms 38, 39, 44 and Write your insights to share

SEEING What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas	
LEARNING What does it mean? What is it teaching me?	
DOING What lesson can I apply to my life?	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How do we feel *helpless* in this world, especially as we seek to live a righteous life of faith?

Q2: How does the Lord God give us hope even in our helpless state in this world?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. What should I do when I feel helpless in this world? (Psalm 38; 50:23)

1. Helpless longing to the Lord for His salvation: If the Lord is your God, then you are called to live a righteous life of faith. You realize that in the *“flesh,”* there is no “soundness” or ability to deliver you (3). Not only has *the corruption of sin* made you incapable of doing anything “good” to help yourself (4), but you are vulnerable to the *sinful actions* of the world around you! So, in your “feeble” state, be honest and present all your “longings” and “sighing” before the Lord’s altar! (8). In this helpless yet thankful position, you allow the Lord to act! (50:23)

Q2. Why should we hope only in the Lord and not ourselves?
(Psalm 39)

2. Mortal hope must only be in the Lord: In our humbled condition in the *flesh*, we must never place our hope in this *mortal life*, which is “fleeting” (4). Your days on earth are “measured out” by the Lord, and they will certainly “end.” And, our *mortal flesh* is prone to transgress against the Lord (8). So, our hope is only in the “Lord” upon whom we wait (7).

Q3. What is our only hope? Why? (Psalm 44; 50:3)

3. Our only hope is in God our King who saves: Family. Though we are weak in this world, and even our own *strength* cannot deliver us (44:3), it is only the Lord God, our King, who has the power to “win the land” for us—that is, our rightful portion in this life. Therefore, we should set our hope only on the Lord and His authority over us as our King. Hope in the Lord, and know that He returns soon to save you! (50:3).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Hope in the Lord: In this world, you are taught that only the strong survive. But, as the Lord instructs you in His ways, you soon realize that in the *flesh*, we have no strength to rely on, for there is no “soundness” nor “health” in our human condition, which has been corrupted by sin (Ps. 38:3-4). So, we find ourselves *vulnerable* in this world and easily crushed (8).

Yes, you are right to despair of any hope in the *flesh* in this life. But your hope must be in God alone! First, come to the Lord honestly, in the weakness of your flesh. Pour out before His altar all your “longings” (9)—all your desires for good which you are powerless to achieve in your own strength. Then, offer to Him all your “sighing” (9). Your feelings of helplessness, desperation, and disappointment at the unrelenting opposition to you in this world.

For, when you put your *hope* in the Lord, He will certainly “deliver” you (Ps. 39:8), starting first from your *sin and transgressions!* Then, know that your God and King is the one who fights for you, saving you (Ps. 44:3) and winning for you your *land* in this life, your portion on earth and your inheritance in His eternal Kingdom!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁶: My longing is before you: When you seek the Lord in honest prayer, you come before Him at His altar. Before Him at His throne, we present our life, our prayers, our praise, and our possessions as pleasing offerings to Him. However, before Him, we also bring Him our “longing” and “sighing” (Ps. 38:9). The deepest unfulfilled desires, the bitterest of hardships in which we struggle, these we bring before the Lord for His mercy.

Added Notes: Our God comes...before him is devouring fire: We do not serve a powerless or indifferent God, one who will forever watch us from afar. Rather, our God comes in retributive vengeance, repaying to all. To His faithful saints, who have endured patiently the hardships of this world, the Lord takes up their just cause to give them final relief at His coming. Devouring as fire all that is unrighteous and unworthy of His presence. So, sighing becomes a shout of joy!

Chapter 7: LORD OVER NATIONS: Enthroned in Joy

Psalms 46, 47, 48

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview Psalms 46, 47, 48

Lord over Nations: Enthroned in Joy. The Lord God calls His people to be bold in Him, though all the earth and its peoples clamor with human rage. So, read Psalms 46, 47, and 48 to learn to be still before the Lord as He subdues the kings of the earth and their peoples in order to make His Mount Zion the joy of the whole earth! First, learn to ***be still in the Lord who shelters from warring nations***. For, the Lord of Hosts himself is with us as our *fortress* (Ps. 46). Then, know that the Lord Most High is the only one who deserves to be *feared*, for our ***God reigns as King over Nations***, and one day He will be the one to gather the *princes of the peoples* as His people (Ps. 47). Finally, in the end, ***God's Mount Zion becomes the joy of Earth*** (Ps. 48).

b. Prayerfully Read Psalms 46, 47, 48 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How can the people of God rest in the Lord when the Nations rage?

Q2: What is the Lord God's final purpose for earth's nations and their princes?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How can we live in the midst of warring nations? (Psalm 46)

1. Be still in the Lord who shelters from warring nations. In the midst of the *roaring waters* of the tumultuous nations, God is our “refuge” and our “strength” (Ps. 46:1). For, the “rage” of nations (6) do not shake the only one who “makes wars cease” (9) and commands His people to “be still” in their confidence that He alone is “God” (10). Despite human opposition, the Lord God *will be exalted among the nations* and in the earth.

Q2. How does God relate to the nations? What is His plan? (Psalm 47)

2. God reigns as King over Nations. Despite the earthly grandeur and power of the nations, God should be the *only power to be feared* (Ps. 47:2). For, God is the “King” of all the earth (7), subduing people and nations for the sake of His own people (3). The very strength of nations, their “shields,” belongs to God Himself, so He is the one to gather the “princes” of people as His own people of Abraham (9).

Q3. How does the Lord God bring peace to the nations in the end? (Psalm 48)

3. God’s Mount Zion becomes the you of Earth. In the last days, the Lord God makes Mount Zion, His city, the “joy” of the whole earth (Ps. 48:2)! For, the glory of the Lord’s own mountain panics and disperses the earth’s *assembled kings* (4-5). In those days, the Lord will be praised in all the earth, as His people of Mount Zion rejoice. For, God is known as “our God” through the generations (14).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Lord's Rule over the Nations: Joyful Exaltation of Zion.

Although you may be shaken by the roaring rage of the nations and their kings, your Lord God commands you, "Be still and know that I am God" (Ps. 46:10)! For, your God has a plan for the nations, and He is the only one to rule over them in peace!

Know that your God is the *King of all the earth* (Ps. 47:7), for His *holy throne* has the power and sway over all the nations (8).

According to His plan, *the princes of the peoples* will one day come together as His very own people, the people of the "God of Abraham."

One day, the Lord God will raise up His *people*, Mount Zion, as His "holy mountain" in all the earth, for in the "city of God" resounds His praise, spreading joy throughout the whole earth (Ps. 48:1-2)! For, the "great King" will rule from Mount Zion, *humbling earth's kings* (6) and revealing from generation to generation that He alone is God! (13-14).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
↓ Differ	
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁷: God is the King of all the earth: Despite raging and rebellious words of earth's kings to this present day, it is the Lord God who *possesses the* "shields of the earth" (Ps. 47:9), the very basis of their rule. For, the Lord God's *holy throne* extends its rule over all the "nations" of the earth, for He is their one true King (7-8).

Added Notes: Mount Zion: Mount Zion refers to the city of God, the habitation in which Lord Jesus Mashiach reigns over all the earth. So, this *holy mountain* is raised up over all the mountains of the earth, for it represents the very people of God whom the Lord makes a *joy* in all the earth!

Chapter 8: SAVED FROM FOES: Exalting God in Opposition

Psalms 53, 55, 59

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview Psalms 53, 55, 59

Saved from Foes: Exalting God. The people of the earth have all turned from God, denying Him and falling into a foolish opposition to God and His people. So, read Psalms 53, 55, and 59 to see how the Lord God saves His people so they can exalt His steadfast love, even in the midst of their enemies!

First, see that *godless evildoers prey upon God's people* because they have no regard for God. They work evil in ignorance and foolishness, but the Lord works to *restore and sustain his people* (Ps. 53; 54:6-7). So, the *Godly call on God to redeem souls in safety*. For, even *companions* will turn against the Godly, but the Lord is the only one who is faithful to carry their burdens (Ps. 55:9-23; 56:8). So, the *Godly exalt God as wait in safety for His steadfast love* (Ps. 57:5; 59).

b. Prayerfully Psalms 53, 55, 59 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why should the Godly not put their trust in the people of this world, even those who appear to be friendly?

Q2: How will the Lord God work in the lives of His Godly ones amidst the treachery of this world?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 How should the Godly expect to be treated in this world? (Psalm 53; 54:6-7)

1. Godless evildoers' prey upon God's people. When the people of this world deny God in their godlessness, they become "fools" in their hearts (Ps. 53:1). In their *folly*, they are incapable of doing any "good" that would please God and lead to life. So, the godless work "evil" without the knowledge of God, *consuming* the people of God and all that they have in their folly. But the Lord is the one to *restore* the portion of the Godly (6), despite the threat of the ungodly.

Q2. How should the Godly respond to the threats of this world?
(Psalm 55:9-23; 56:8)

2. Godly call on God redeem their souls in safety. Because the *ungodly* people of this world opposed God and His people, they attack the people of God, even if they appear to be *friendly* (12-13). So, the Godly suffer loss at the hands of the ungodly. But, God “redeems” their souls (15) to deliver them from threat to safety. For, the Lord calls you to “cast your burden” upon Him that He might give you relief (22).

Q3. What does God’s steadfast love and salvation allow the Godly to do? (Psalm 57:5, 59)

3. Godly exalt God as wait in safety for His steadfast love. In His steadfast love, the Lord God gives the righteous victory over their enemies (Ps. 59:10), for He not only protects them as a fortress but he also *delivers out of their hand* (1). For, the Lord reveals His steadfast love through His protection and deliverance, so that His people are free to praise Him (10) and rejoice in His “steadfast love” (17)!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Delivered from Enemies: God's Steadfast Love. When the Lord God calls you to be His own, you now experience with Him the opposition of the ungodly who live as if “there is no God” (Ps. 53:1). In their self-imposed delusion, they deny God because they want to live in unrestrained *corruption*.

And, in their rebellion against God, they will seek to “*eat up*” the people of God as if we are mere “bread” to satisfy their own *sinful appetite* (4).

But, *know that your God delivers you from their hand!* For, the Lord is your salvation, and He will “restore” your rightful portion (6).

And, as this world enslaves you and takes your life, the Lord God will “redeem your soul in safety” (Ps. 56:18), replacing this world's *enslavement* with His freedom and deliverance!

So, as your faithful God delivers you by His steadfast love, be sure to “sing aloud” and praise Him who is your Strength! (Ps. 59:17).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change ?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁸: Foolish Godlessness: The people of this earth who have fallen and strayed from God live in the delusion that “there is no God” (Ps. 53:1). Convincing them of this most *fundamental lie*, they are “foolish” in heart. And, this foolishness leads to *corruption* and every evil deed against the people of God!

Added Notes: Redeemed Soul: The world and its ungodly “fools” (Ps. 53:1) conspire to consume the “souls” of the Godly—to swallow them up and jealously deprive them of the life and portion God has prepared for them. So, the Lord God himself redeems their “souls” so that they have the integrity and wholeness to praise the Lord for His steadfast love!

Chapter 9: DESIRING GOD: Soul Seeks Lord

Psalms 63

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview Psalms 63

Desiring God: Soul Seeks Lord. Your soul was made for life, and your God is the only source of life that will satisfy its deepest thirst! So, read Psalm 63 to discover how David satisfied the desire of His soul in the Lord God, so you can find the same satisfaction!

*First, see that the **seeking soul is satisfied in Lord alone.*** Your soul is the *deepest part of your Self*, designed to come alive only by the breath and presence of God Himself. So, it is only satisfied in the life of God (Ps. 63:1-4). Then, see how the **dependent soul clings to the Lord for sustenance** by continually seeking the Lord for His help (5-8). Finally, the **joyful soul rejoices in God's anointing, for David rules as king by the affirmation of God alone.** Even so, the Lord strengthens you to fulfill all his purposes for you (9-11)!

b. Prayerfully Read Psalms 63 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How do we see David seeking the Lord?

Q2: Why does David say that His *soul is satisfied*?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. What satisfies the soul of the worshipper? (Psalm 63:1-4)

1. Seeking soul is satisfied in Lord alone. Worshipers like King David have a deep devotion and loyalty to “their God” (1), and this deep desire for their God drives them hungrily into His presence. They are not apathetic or self-satisfied. Rather, they realize that *their God alone* is the one to satisfy their deepest *soul-need*. So, seeking the Lord is like “thirsting” and “fainting” for God and the life which He alone can give.

Q2. What sustains the worshipper's soul? (Ps. 3:5-8)

2. Dependent soul clings to the Lord for sustenance: Com.

While the souls of the people of this earth hunger and seek a world full of idols, the worshipper of the Most High God cling to their God alone for the strength He gives. They cling with a stubborn devotion to Him, knowing that the Lord will tenderly “uphold” them with His “right hand,” showing them the preference and the priority of his precious and holy people!

Q3. How does God affirm the worshipper? (Psalm 63:9-11)

3. Joyful soul rejoices in God's anointing. God abandons those who seek to *destroy* the lives of His people, letting them sink to the “depths” of the earth to be devoured by rabid animals (9). But He draws the true worshipper near to Himself, first establishing David as His King and then anointing His people with the affirming call of His Spirit!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Desiring God Alone: Hungry Seeking. Your soul thirst for the very presence of God Himself, for from the very beginning, we were *living souls* breathing in the very breath of God as our life. So, seek God with a soul thirsting for God's presence, for there is no other source of life in all this dry earth.

For, when you come into the Lord's *sanctuary* to meet with Him, you will behold His *power and glory* (63:2). And, you will sing for joy as you know His *steadfast love* and its exceeding richness!

Your God is not a *strange God that* stands aloof and far off. Rather, He is the satisfying richness for your soul, filling your lips with joyful praise (5) and the comforting help to which your soul clings (8).

So, draw near to God, who affirms His blessing upon you like the royal crown that made David king!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
↓ Differ	
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁹: Satisfied Soul: Your soul is designed to be alive both bodily and spiritually, being fed by the very breath and presence of God (Gen. 2:7) as *hai nefesh*, a living soul. But we live only as *naked flesh* without God's spirit following the sin of our first parents. So, seek the Lord for your soul's full satisfaction!

Added Notes: Earnestly I seek you: Worshippers seek God for any number of reasons. For religious *obligation*, for personal affirmation, or for social standing. But David sought the Lord hungrily, for his very life depended on meeting and clinging to God!

Chapter 10: WORLDWIDE PRAISE: Lord's Coming Rule

Psalms 66, 67, 68

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then *Write Insights to Share* with others.

a. Preview *Psalms 66, 67, 68*

Worldwide Praise: Lord's coming rule. The Lord God allows His people to be tested in this godless and hostile world, that they might maintain their faithful witness of the Lord *steadfast love!* So, read Psalms 66, 67, and 68 to see how the confirms their witness at His return, causing the entire earth to break out in joyful worship and fruitfulness!

First, see that *the faithful witness of God's people draws all the earth into joyful worship of God!* God's people are not tested in vain, for they have maintained their testimony of God's steadfast love and salvation even as the whole world turned against them (Psalm 66)! Then, discover that *when God and his judgments are known, the nations sing for joy and bear fruit in the fear of God!* (Psalm 67). Finally, see that *the Lord dwells among and exalts His people, the needy and weak, to scatter their enemies!* (Psalm 68).

b. Prayerfully Read Psalms 66, 67, 68 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How does the tested witness of God's people lead to the worldwide worship that breaks out at God's return?

Q2: Why is God exalted in His people at His return?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 What is the result of the faithful witness of God’s people? (Psalm 66)

1. Faithful witness draws all the earth into joyful worship of

God. In this current age, the Lord God tests His people in this ungodly world (10-12), letting their enemies *abuse and oppress* them. But, by the Lord’s mercy, His people still faithfully *offered themselves* to the Lord and witnessed of His steadfast love, even when their lives were threatened. So, the Lord confirms their faithful witness by His coming, showing the nations that He is indeed loving and merciful!

Q2. How do the nations respond to God and His judgments when they are revealed? (Psalm 67)

2. God and His judgments are known: Nations sing joyfully and bear fruit in fear of God. Starting with humanity’s original rebellion, the people of earth and their nations have *not dishonored God* and lived in the delusion that He did not exist. However, at His coming, the Lord reveals Himself and His irresistible judgment—so, the nations learn to “fear the Lord” (Ps. 57:7). But, once they repent, the nations discover the joy of praising the Lord and experiencing His fruitful blessing!

Q3. What does the Lord do for His needy and weak people?
(Psalm 68)

3. Lord dwells among and exalts his needy and weak people to scatter their enemies: When the Lord God “arises” to “summon His power,” (Ps. 68:1, 28), He first lifts up the oppressed and overlooked of His people. So, He shows His mercy to the “fatherless” (5) and “solitary” (6), even letting His *company of women* proclaim His glory (11) as He scatters their foes. For, when He dwells and exalts His people among all the nations of the earth, He humbles earth’s people and reveals His steadfast love for all generations!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Faithful Witness and Worldwide Harvest: Lord's mercy: As a witness of the Lord your God, you may feel at times that your testimony is lost in this dark and godless world! You *have* endured suffering as the godless people of this world have scorned you, as they have scorned your God. Only by God's grace has your life been preserved on this earth!

But, know that God's future plans for the world involve your endurance and testimony of the Lord's steadfast love! For, the Lord God will soon confirm your word to prove the whole world wrong, at His coming. If not for your *testimony*, the people of this earth could have pleaded ignorance, but now they have no excuse.

For, the Lord soon *arises* to reveal His glorious presence and righteous judgments to this rebellious world. Affirming His love for you, as He lifts up His people as the Mountain of His presence!

Then, at once, the people of the earth will shift from *open rebellion* to the fear of the Lord, as His praise spreads like fire throughout the earth! And, the Lord will be glorified through you as your humility turns to glory!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes¹⁰: All the Earth worships you: The prophet Habbakuk proclaims that the earth will be filled with the *knowledge* of the glory of God as the waters cover the seas (2:14)—that is, completely. For, the Lord will rule in His holy mount Zion, exalting His downtrodden people as His favored ones throughout all the earth, that its people may humbly rejoice before the Lord!

Added Notes: Let all the earth fear Him: When the people of this earth first fell into *unbelief* and *sin* by denying the ascendancy and holiness of God, they have lived as “fools” to deny His relevance in this earthly realm, claiming, “There is no God” (Ps. 53:1). But, on the Day the Lord returns to reveal His power through His Mashiach, the people of this earth will learn to “fear the Lord” in a moment, as His presence and power of His judgments are known throughout the earth! Then, the faithful witness of His people will be finally vindicated!

Prayer Requests:

Prayer Request/ Date	Answered Prayer/ Thanks

Journaling:

What is God teaching you?	How are you growing?

Sermon Notes:

Sermon Notes/ Date	Applying it to my life

Notes:

SERIES 2: NEEDING REDEMPTION

BOOK 3:

Joshua – 2 Kings

Book 2: *Joshua – 2 Kings*

Introduction

From the very beginning of the Lord God's work to gather a people from which would emerge His *holy house*, the family from which He would raise up His promised Seed, Mashiach, God has chosen and *empowered* His servants to bear His name, to speak His words, and to fulfill His will.

These *neviim*, or *prophets*, speak and act on God's behalf for the entirety of Israel's history until its *exile to Babylon*. Even then, the Lord's prophets give the people God's plan to raise up His Mashiach and to bring about the events of the *last days* and the culmination of history under earth's final Kingdom, ruled by Mashiach and His *household*.

So, read the *early prophets* of the *Neviim*, starting with the *early foretelling glimpses* of Mashiach in the life and ministry of the first of the *neviim*, Joshua, whose very name Yehoshua portends the very name of humanity's coming Redeemer, Yeshua, the one *raised up* to "save His people of their sins" (Matthew 1:21). From Joshua through the prophet Samuel and ending with the last of the Davidic kings in 2 Kings, we see the *picture, the promise, and the predicament* necessitating God's promise to supernaturally *raise up Seed* for David to be born in the fulfillment of time as Jesus Mashiach (Matthew 1:18).

STEPS of a Devoted Disciple:

Your *Devotion* matters to the Lord. For, there is only one Lord and God, and He deserves creation's highest honor and praise. So, you were made to give yourself to the Lord God in loving devotion of heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30). In this same devotion to the Lord, Jesus Christ calls you to follow Him as His disciple. These short devotionals guide you in the Word to cultivate a heart devotion to the Lord as His disciple.

- First, **discover** what His life-giving Word has to say to you personally, being careful to write down your insights to share with others.
- Then, **discuss** His Word with those closest to you: your family, your friends, and in your home fellowship group (your spiritual family).
- Next, **dialogue** to compare views on key passages with a partner—either another disciple, or an older mentor or younger mentee.
- Finally, **develop** key skills as you abide in the Word by applying it to your life as you read the devotional, notes, and footnotes.

START HERE: *Humble Yourself in Prayer:*

Devote yourself to the Lord to hear and do His Will for you.

Do I want to humble myself under the Lordship of God by faith?

Or, will I live as my own Lord, relying on my own understanding?

PRAYER OF DEVOTION

Lord God, I devote my life to you today. I offer you my soul to live humbly under your Lordship; my mind to seek your will and Spirit; my heart to

love you and others; and, my strength to obey your Word and Will!
Amen.

Chapter 1: YESHUA ANOINTED: Joshua's Concentration to Lead *Joshua 1:1-18; Matthew 3:13-17*

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself
then **Write** *Insights to Share with others.*

a. Preview Joshua 1:1-18; Matthew 3:13-17

Yeshua Anointed: Foretold by Joshua. As the first of the early prophets, Yehoshua (Joshua) foretells for us the coming Mashiach, Yeshua, who will deliver His people. So, read Joshua 1 to see how the Lord consecrates and sends Joshua to bring his people into their inheritance, as one day Yeshua would be anointed to win for His people their inheritance in God's Kingdom!

First, see how the Lord ***gives the promised inheritance*** first to Joshua, who represents the entire people who will receive their inheritance through him. For, the entire land promised to Abraham is now ready for him and his people to claim, just as a *kingdom* has been given to Yeshua and His people (1:1-4). But there is strong opposition to God and to the inheritance he passes to His people, so Joshua is then ***strengthened to give out the inheritance*** to God's people (1:5-9). Finally, God also gives the people ***hearts of obedience*** so that they might follow the one consecrated for them to receive their own inheritance! (1:10-18).

b. Prayerfully Read Joshua 1:1-18; Matthew 3:13-17 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How does the Lord prepare Joshua to secure the promised inheritance?

Q2: Why must Joshua be strong and strengthened by God's Word to bring the people into their inheritance?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 How does the Lord distribute Israel's promised inheritance? (Joshua 1:1-4)

1. Joshua given promised inheritance: Picture of Promise. The Lord gives Joshua the land promised to Abraham. So, the *soles of his feet* will claim all that the Lord has promised. God promises the land “to you”—first to Joshua, who receive the promise, and then to “all of you,” the generations of Abraham, who are the *heirs of His promise*. But, Joshua is the first to *hear* and *responsible to deliver* this inheritance to His people. In this way, Jesus (Yeshua) is given all the

inheritance promised by God to *distribute* this to His people. For, our inheritance is only in Jesus (Ephesians 1:11).

Q2. How does Joshua fulfill his mission to bring the people to possess their inheritance? (Joshua 1:5-9)

2. Strengthened to give out inheritance: Picture of Anointing.

Joshua (Yehoshua) does not simply plunge into this *great mission* to secure the land as an inheritance for God's people. Rather, God *strengthens and sends* him first so that he goes in the power and mission of God. Later, this *strengthening* and *commissioning* would be shown in the act of *anointing*. So, Jesus (Yeshua) is also *strengthened* and *commissioned* as the *Anointed One* (Mashiach), given the Holy Spirit as the embodiment of God's *power* and *wisdom* (Is. 11:1-3; 61:1-3).

Q3. How do the people put their faith in Joshua to receive their inheritance? (Joshua 1:10-18)

3. Hearts of Obedience: Picture of Faith. When the people recognize that the Lord has sent Joshua to go before them, they trust and obey Him as they would Moses or the Lord himself (1:17). For, they realize that the One sent by God bears the *mission* and *authority* of God (that is, His *anointing* to show that "God is with him"). So, this is a picture of how the people of Jesus Mashiach should respond to him—placing their faith in Him as they would God himself. For, Mashiach comes in the

“name” of his father’s so that His people obey and serve Him as “the Lord their God” and “David their king” (Jer. 30:9).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God’s Word as a Growing Disciple to **read** Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Secures an Inheritance: Joshua Commissioned. The Lord promised to Abraham and his *generations* a land, but this promise was not simply *parsed out to individuals*. When God finally brings His people into their inheritance, He first commissions *Joshua* (Yehoshua) as the one in whom all Israel would come into their possession. So, Joshua is *commissioned* and the people *pledge their faithful obedience* to him.

In this way, the Lord God promises you an *eternal inheritance* of the “heavens and the earth” (Gen. 2:4) if you are in *Jesus* (Yeshua). For, the Lord God gives all things to Jesus as His Firstborn Son of this creation and its resurrected future (Col. 1:15-20; Heb. 1:1-3). So, He anoints Jesus as the Mashiach (Matt. 3:16; Is. 11:1-3; Is. 61:1-3) to *secure this* eternal inheritance by His death on the cross and resurrection from the dead (Matt. 28:18; Phil. 2:5-11). So, pledge your *faith* and *obedience* to serve Jesus Mashiach, and you will inherit all things in Him! (Eph. 1:11)

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

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Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

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(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

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Notes¹: Possessing the Land: Brothers first. The Reubenites, Gadites, and tribe of Manasseh would arrive first at the land to receive their inheritance, but Joshua commands them to continue to fight until all the brothers receive their inheritance. Then, they may “take possession” of their land once their brothers have their land. Likewise, we who have been brought into the Kingdom first will not *take possession* of it until all the land has been conquered that all the brothers may inherit the land together! Thus, we are satisfied in the promise of our possession until we all take hold of it!

Added Notes: Be strong and strengthened: Anointing by Spirit: When God commands Joshua, “be strong and be strengthened” to fulfill his calling (1:9), he reminds Joshua that he is *dependent* on the Lord and His grace for strength. Therefore, he must be continually strengthened as He relies on the Lord. In this way, Jesus is *strong* and *continually strengthened* by His *anointing*, the Holy Spirit who gives him the Lord’s *wisdom and power* (Is. 11:1-3). So, we who serve Jesus also share in His *anointing* by the Spirit, that we too may be “strong” and “strengthened” to serve the Lord!

Chapter 2: YESHUA SAVES: Faith of Rahab
Joshua 2; Matthew 1:20-21

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God’s Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.*

a. *Preview Joshua 2; Matthew 1:20-21*

Yeshua Saves: Faith of Rahab. When God’s Mashiach was born to a virgin of the house of David, the Lord named Him “Jesus” (Yeshua), for he would save His people from their sins. So, read Joshua 2 to see how Joshua foretells this *saving Yeshua* as Rahab places her faith in him for salvation.

First, notice that Rahab *entrusts her welfare to Yeshua with an active faith*. For, those who come to Yeshua must not simply see Him as a convenient option but as their only hope for survival (Joshua 2:1-10)! Then, see how Rahab is a picture of *trusting in the mercy of Yeshua for salvation* (Joshua 2:12). Finally, as Rahab tied a *scarlet cord* in her window, realize that those who come to Yeshua are also *covered by the scarlet promise of redemption* (Joshua 2:14-20)

b. *Prayerfully Read Joshua 2; Matthew 1:20-21 and Write your insights to share*

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. What does Rahab's faith teach us about how we should trust in the Mashiach, Yeshua, for deliverance?

Q2: What does the scarlet cord tell us about how Jesus Mashiach delivers us?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 What does Rahab teach us of how we should approach Mashiach for deliverance? (Joshua 2:1-10)

1. Trusting Yeshua with an active faith: Rahab's actions.

Rahab's actions toward Joshua and his men reveals to us what it means to have an active faith in Yeshua for salvation. Rahab's faith first fears God (9), so her faith in Joshua for deliverance is an expression of this first fear of God. Then, Rahab's faith is life-saving because she is willing to *act on her faith*, trusting Joshua and his men not just in word but in actions that involve her whole life. Such life-entrusting faith is *saving*.

Q2. What should our heart attitude be toward Yeshua, as shown by Rahab? (Joshua 2:11-13)

2. Trusting in the mercy of Yeshua for salvation. Rahab is an example of faith in Yeshua because it is *heart-rending in its humility*. Rahab knows that she and her people face imminent destruction because they are completely powerless and needy before the Lord God and His works. So, from this utter humility and powerlessness, she has “no spirit” of Self-reliance left, so she trusts entirely in the *mercy* of Joshua. So, we should come to Yeshua in complete humility, relying only on His mercy to save us!

Q3. What does Rahab cling to for deliverance, and what sign of redemption are we promised in Yeshua? (Joshua 2:14-20)

3. Covered by the scarlet promise of redemption: Rahab’s red cord. You can be sure that Rahab and her family hid under the *red cord* for dear life, especially as the sounds of battle and death surrounded her! For, this *red cord* symbolizes the *scarlet promise of redemption* which Jesus Mashiach gives us by His blood (Luke 22:20), which seals for us His covenant of redemption!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God’s Word as a Growing Disciple to **read** Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Jesus Saves: Joshua saves Rahab. When God brings His Mashiach into this world by the Holy Spirit, He commands that his parents name Him “Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins” (Matt. 1:).

So, the Lord gives us a picture of how Jesus Mashiach saves His people when His namesake, Joshua, saves Rahab from the coming onslaught that destroys Jericho. Will you have the *faith of Rahab*, who knew that her life could only be saved through an act of *redemption*—for the spies promised her “life for life” (Johua 2:14). This is the basis of redemption, that lives are entwined, so that a *life given* results in a *life redeemed*.

So, like Rahab, you are to trust entirely in the mercy of Jesus Mashiach for your salvation and deliverance from death’s threat (12). For, if you come to Jesus Mashiach for His salvation, He covers you in the scarlet promise of His covenant. Not a cord of red, to which Rahab clung (18), but the *blood of the covenant* which was poured out for the forgiveness of all your judgment-incurring sins! (Matt. 26:28).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
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SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
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Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

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Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

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(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

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Notes²: Promised Redemption: Our life for yours: The men sent from Joshua express the promise of *redemption* when they say, “Our life for yours” (Joshua 2:14). For, Yeshua would give His life for ours, providing the “ransom” needed to atone for our sins (Dan. 9:24; Mark 10:45).

Added Notes: Scarlet promise of redemption: When Rahab is instructed to hide under the *red cord* and its promise of deliverance, she gives us a powerful picture of the scarlet promise of redemption which the shed blood of Jesus Mashiach poured out for us on the cross (Colossians 1:20).

Chapter 3: YESHUA EXALTED AS DELIVERER: Head of Households

Joshua 3-4; Isaiah 61:1-3; Matthew 4:12-17

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview **Joshua 3-4; Isaiah 61:1-3; Matthew 4:12-17**

Yeshua exalted as deliverer: Head of Households. The Lord God *consecrates* Yeshua as His Mashiach to empower Him to accomplish the deliverance of His people so that they make take hold of their inheritance. So, read Joshua 3-4 to get a picture of Yeshua's *anointing* as deliverer as pictured by Joshua's *exaltation* and *campaign* to deliver Israel to secure for them their inheritance in the land!

First, see that the **Lord God anoints Yeshua for His service and confirms Him with signs of power**, just as Joshua was *consecrated to his mission of deliverance* so that the people could walk by faith and claim their inheritance (Joshua 3:1-13; Matt. 4:12-17). Then, learn that **Yeshua baptizes in the Jordan to delivers His people to new life**, as foretold when Joshua made the people pass through the Jordan into their promised land (Joshua 3:14-17; Matthew 3:11-12). Finally, see that the **deliverance of Yeshua is remembered in the Lord's Passover**, just as Joshua set up memorial stones for each tribe to remember the Lord's salvation (Joshua 4:1-10; Luke 22:15-20).

b. Prayerfully Read Joshua 3-4; Isaiah 61:1-3; Matthew 4:12-17 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why does the Lord God need to consecrate Joshua/ anoint Yeshua before they deliver their people?

Q2: How do Joshua's actions foretell Yeshua's future work of deliverance?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 What does Joshua's consecration foretell us about the coming Mashiach? (Joshua 3:1-13)

1. God anoints Yeshua for His Service: Confirms with signs of power. Before Joshua begins his work of deliverance to bring Israel into their promised land, the Lord God *exalts* Joshua in the eyes of the people that they may know that the Lord has sent him. That is, the Lord works His deliverance *through* Joshua (Joshua 3:7). For this same reason, the Lord God *anoints* Yeshua as His Mashiach, showing that Yeshua delivers *on behalf* of and not separate from the Lord God. To ignore Yeshua is to ignore the Lord and His deliverance.

Q2. How does Joshua bring the people into the land, and how does this picture Yeshua's future deliverance? (Joshua 3:14-17; Matthew 3:11-12)

2. Yeshua baptizes in Jordan to deliver His people: New Life.

For the people of Israel, the Jordan is the threshold at which they pass from their wandering into the promised land. So, Joshua sends the *ark of the covenant* before them and memorializes their passing with stones for every tribe (3:11). In this way, Jesus and his disciples *baptize* His people in the Jordan, testifying of their passage from *sin and death* into the spiritual rebirth into the Kingdom of God (Matt. 3:11-12).

Q3. How is *deliverance* to be remembered? (Joshua 4:1-10; Luke 22:15-20)

3. Deliverance of Yeshua remembered in Lord's Passover: To remember the Lord's deliverance, Joshua sets up the memorial stones, taken by each of the twelve tribes of Israel. These stones are a reminder of the Lord's great deliverance. In this way, Jesus Mashiach celebrates the *Passover* with His disciples to commemorate the Lord's deliverance of His people, sealing their entrance into the Kingdom by the New Covenant, symbolized in the Passover cup (Luke 22:15-20).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Exalted Deliverer: Passing into Promised Land. The Lord God promised to *anoint* His Mashiach with His Holy Spirit (Is. 61:1-3), exalting and empowering Him to bring His people out of the land of death and darkness (Is. 9:2) and into the peace of His eternal Kingdom. But this deliverance transferred His people from this sin-corrupted world into the spiritual *Kingdom of God* (John 3:3; Col. 1:13). To understand more deeply how Jesus Mashiach is exalted by God to deliver you, consider how the Lord first exalted Joshua to bring his people into the promised land and Kingdom of Israel. First, the Lord promises to *exalt* Joshua before all of Israel (Josh. 3:7) and confirm with *signs* (13) to assure the people that God is with him. In this way, the Lord God *anointed Jesus* as Mashiach, calling Him “My beloved Son” (Matt. 3:17) and confirmed His ministry with *signs of power* (John 3:2) so that you might know that He is your deliverer! Then, as Joshua brought Israel through the Jordan into the promised land, Jesus *baptizes* in the Jordan and by the Holy Spirit to bring His people into the new life of the Kingdom! (Matt. 3:11). Finally, as Joshua celebrated the Lord's *Passover*, Jesus Mashiach fulfills the Passover by giving His life on the cross as the nation's *Passover Lamb*, who purchased your pardon by His blood to bring you into God's Kingdom! (Rev. 5:8-10).

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Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

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Notes³: Consecrated for Service: Anointed by God. The Lord God *consecrates* Joshua and *anoints* Jesus as Mashiach because His servants go before Him “in the name of the Lord” (John 5:43). For, the deliverance is not theirs but the Lord God working through them to deliver His people into their land.

Added Notes: Commemorating Covenant of Passover: When the people of Israel enter their promised land of inheritance, they ate the *fruit* of the land. In this way, Jesus Mashiach ordains that the Passover is a commemoration of the *deliverance* of God’s people into the Kingdom, for the bread and wine of Passover which they eat as a memorial will be eaten in the new reality of the Kingdom when it is finally established on the earth! So, Jesus Mashiach awaits the day He will *drink of the fruit of the vine* anew in His Kingdom! (Luke 22:18).

Chapter 4: YESHUA REDEEMS: Circumcises Flesh **Joshua 5- 6:7; Romans 6:5-6; Matthew 26:17-25**

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

- a. Preview **Joshua 5- 6:7; Romans 6:5-6; Matthew 26:17-25**

Yeshua Redeems: Circumcises Flesh. As the human family's Firstborn Son, Mashiach has the duty and right to *redeem* a people out of this world's spiritual *darkness and death* (Is. 9:2) by freeing them of *the penalty of their sinful flesh* to give them an eternal *righteousness* before God (Daniel 9:24). So, read Joshua 5-6:7 to see Joshua as a *foreshadowing* of Mashiach's spiritual redemption. First, Yeshua calls His people to *repent* to prepare for the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 4:17), so see how Joshua foretells this by ***sanctifying the people by circumcising the flesh to remove their shame***. For, ever since the Fall, the *flesh* represents the godless and sinful life in this world, *naked and* uncovered of God's spiritual life (Joshua 5:1-9; Rom. 13:14). Then, Yeshua gives His *life as the Passover Lamb* to pay the ransom to free His people of their sins, making atonement. So, Joshua leads the people to ***celebrate the Lord's Passover as the people enter the Land and enjoy its fruit*** (5:10-12). So, Mashiach not only gives His life to *ransom His people*, but He also *rises from the dead* in ultimate power to save His people. In this way, Yeshua is also *foretold* as the ***Commander of Lord's Hosts giving His people their possession*** (5:13-6:7).

b. Prayerfully Read Joshua 5- 6:7; Romans 6:5-6; Matthew 26:17-25 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How does Joshua's work foretell the way Jesus Mashiach redeems His people?

Q2: Who is the Commander of the Lord Hosts, and why does He require Joshua to remove his sandals?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 Why does Joshua circumcise the people, and how does this foretell the redemption of Mashiach? (Joshua 5:1-9; Rom. 13:14)

1. Sanctifying people to remove shame: Sign of Circumcision.

The Lord God Abraham the sign of circumcision to uniquely mark His people as His holy possession. Unlike the nations of the earth, the Israelites were to *put off* their old lives *led entirely by the flesh*, as depicted in the foreskin. So, Joshua circumcises the people so that they *put off their old life* of shameful enslavement (Joshua 5:9). In this way, Jesus Mashiach calls people to “*repent,*” to put off the old life of the flesh, corrupted by sin and Godlessness, so that they might live anew in His Kingdom! (Rom. 13:14).

Q2. Why does Joshua command the people to celebrate the Passover as they eat the fruit of the land, and how does this anticipate Mashiach's work of redemption? (Joshua 5:10-12)

2. Celebrating Lord's Passover: Eating fruit of the land . The Lord's Passover is not meant to simply be an isolated event but a passage into a new life of blessing. So, Joshua led the people to celebrate the Passover and then taste the goodness of their new land. In this way, the *redemption of Jesus Mashiach* is not simply a religious observance but a passage from a *fleshly state of hunger* into the abundant life of the Kingdom of God, in which one's soul is expected to *taste and see* the goodness of the Lord and His spiritual fruit of the Kingdom—"righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Romans 14:17).

Q3. How does the Commander of the Lord's Hosts foretell the powerful redemption of Jesus Mashiach? (Joshua 5:13- 6:7)

3. Commander of Lord's Hosts gives people their possession.

The redemption of Jesus Mashiach does not simply leave the *people alone* to fend and provide for themselves. The Lord Jesus is *with* His people as their gracious Lord even until the “end of the age” (Matt. 28:20). And, this accompanying and irresistible presence is depicted in Joshua's campaign as the “Commander of the Lord's Hosts” (Joshua 5:14). Because this “commander” embodies the *very presence of the holy God* and so is worshipped by Joshua (14-15). Likewise, Jesus Mashiach is “Immanuel, God with us” (Matthew 1:23).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God’s Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Yeshua Redeems: Joshua circumcises people. Because we all are in *naked flesh, uncovered of God’s life* (Gen. 3:5), we are naturally *corrupted by and deadened by our sin* (Gen. 6:5, 12-13), so God calls Abraham and the people of faith to *circumcise the flesh*—repent of our natural inclination to live in Godless sin—in order to live a new life of *faith in God*. But Joshua shows us that we need God’s powerful redemption to live anew. As Joshua circumcised the *flesh* to remove Israel’s shameful sinfulness (Joshua 5:2,9), so too, Jesus Mashiach redeems you by first *removing your sin* by crucifying your flesh with him on His cross! (Rom. 6:5-6). For, as your *Passover Lamb*, Jesus Mashiach has been *sacrificed for you* to “celebrate” new life in God eternal kingdom (1 Corinthians 5:7-8), as pictured by the “fruit of the land” of Canaan (Joshua 5:12). But Jesus Mashiach redeems your life *not just as a Lamb but a Lion*, for His resurrection power is at work in you to expand His Kingdom, just as Joshua *took Jericho* for God. For, Mashiach come as also the “commander of the army of the Lord” (Joshua 5:14) with the sword of the Spirit to establish God’s will on earth (Revelation 1:16; Eph. 6:17).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
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Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

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(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁴: Circumcising the Flesh: Circumcision is a picture of the *putting off of the flesh* in repentance. For, when one turns in faith to the Lord Jesus Mashiach, repenting of his sinful and godless flesh, he becomes Spirit-born, which sets his true nature against the old nature of the flesh. So, disciples of Jesus Mashiach are called to “walk by the Spirit” and not “gratify the desires of the flesh” (Gal. 5:16).

Added Notes: Commander of the Lord’s Hosts: The Lord God sends the “Commander of the Lord’s Hosts” to help Joshua and Israel conquer their enemies to take the land for Israel. In this way, the Lord of Hosts, Jesus Mashiach, also accompanies us as we seek to extend the Kingdom of heaven.

Chapter 5: YESHUA INHERITS LAND: Gives Inheritance

Joshua 1:3; 14:6-15; 15:13-32; Colossians 1:13-18

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview *Joshua 1:3; 14:6-15; 15:13-32; Colossians 1:13-18*

Yeshua inherits land: Gives Inheritance. The Lord God makes Yeshua His Firstborn Heir, giving him an inheritance which He distributes to His brothers (Colossians 1:13-18). So, read Joshua 1:3 and 6:6-7:13-32 to see in Joshua's distribution of the Lord's inheritance how Yeshua will one day reward His people with their own portion and inheritance.

First, see how *people come to Joshua for their promised portion, as faithful and obedient followers of the Lord*. This is a foretaste of how the Lord Yeshua promises to reward His faithful followers at His return (Josh. 1:3, 14:6-15; Luke 19:11-27). Then, continue to read as Joshua *gives His people their portion and strengthening them to take hold of it*. (15:13-19). Finally, see how Joshua *gives inheritance according to their families, clans, and tribes*. In this way, Lord Mashiach is the one who distributes our inheritance according to the people God has given to us (15:20-33; Ephesians 1:11-14)!

b. Prayerfully **Read** *Joshua 1:3; 14:6-15; 15:13-32; Colossians 1:13-18* and **Write** your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why does the Lord God promise Israel's inheritance to Joshua first? What does this tell us about the inheritance Mashiach will give His people?

Q2: Why are the people assigned their inheritance by their family and tribe?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 Why must they come to Joshua (and Mashiach) first for their inheritance? (Joshua 1:3; 14:6-15; Luke 19:11-27)

1. People come to Joshua (and Mashiach) for their promised portion: As faithful and obedient followers. The family history of Israel's sons and their clans and tribes shows that when each tribal *head* and *family seeks its own interests*, the resulting strife can be murderous. So, the Lord God makes the people come only to their *Head*, Joshua, to receive their inheritance. In this way, God commands Israel to *humbly approach* Mashiach for their rightful inheritance, who rules the tribes as their Firstborn Head, the rightful Heir of heaven and earth to prevent *entitled rivalries*.

Q2. How does Joshua (and Mashiach) give their people their portion and then strengthen them to take hold of it? (Joshua 15:13-19)

2. Giving people their portion and strengthening them: Taking Hold of promise. Joshua remembers the faithful sacrifice of Caleb, his only surviving *fellow spy* who alone supported his faithful testimony to Israel on the day of its rebellion. So, he gladly grants Caleb his desired land of Hebron (13). Likewise, Jesus Mashiach promises to one day reward the faithful labor of His servants who stood with Him to maintain their true testimony in the face of *earth's fleshly rebellion*. To those who were faithful to the end, He gives a portion and share of His Kingdom as *kings* on this earth (Revelation 5:10).

Q3. How does Joshua (and Mashiach) distribute their inheritance among God's people? (Joshua 15:20-33; Ephesians 1:11-14)

3. Giving Inheritance to families, clans, and tribes. In the same way that Joshua distributes Israel's inheritance according to families, clans, and tribes, so in the Kingdom of Jesus Mashiach, the strong bonds of kinship in the Gospel work are beautified and strengthened in the eternal Kingdom. So, the "inheritance" of the first workers of the Gospel (Eph. 1:11) involves those who *follow* from their testimony, "sealed" by the Spirit so that they might be praise-worthy reward of those who labored for them!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to **read** Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Inheriting Kingdom: Joshua gives Inheritance. God's ways are not our ways, for in the *beginning*, the Lord God created the world through the Son of God, Mashiach, so He made Him the Firstborn Heir of all creation (Hebrews 1:2). So, Mashiach is first the Firstborn Heir, and we, His family, were created for Him as sharers in His portion. God illustrates this when God gives Joshua first the land as his possession, which he then distributes to Israel (Joshua 1:3). So, all your inheritance rests securely in your Mashiach, Jesus.

So, the people of Israel came to Joshua alone for their promised portion (Joshua 14:6). However, Israel did not learn this lesson. For, when God raised up Jesus as David's promised Seed (2 Sam. 7:12, Matthew 1:18), Israel refused to come to Him (John 1:11). Instead, Israel imagined that God's inheritance was theirs alone, grasped by their own hand of Self-righteous Torah observance (Mark 12:7). Because they *cut off* Jesus, their own Mashiach, God *cast them off* once again to dark and desolate exile (Daniel 9:26).

So, look at the example of *righteous Caleb*, the ancestor of David and his Seed. Driven by his faith in God's promise, Calebe came to Joshua and trusted him to give him his promised inheritance! (Joshua 15:6). So, come to Jesus your Mashiach that He may give His portion of the Kingdom of *heaven* and *earth*! (Matthew 5:3, 5).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question Differ
SUPPORT: Agree	

What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁵: Soles of your feet will tread: The Lord God honors the walk of His people, to whom He gives as their inheritance all the land which the “soles of your feet will tread” (Joshua 1:3). For, like their ancestor Abraham, God walks with His holy ones. So also, the Lord God beautifies even the *feet* of those who bring the “good news” of Mashiach and His coming Kingdom to this earth (Is. 52:7). By their battle-ready walk, the followers of Jesus Mashiach bring the “gospel of peace” to those afflicted in this war-weary world (Eph. 6:15).

Added Notes: Inheritance of the tribe of the people of Judah according to their clans: As we see with Caleb, who claims his inheritance amidst the people of Judah, the Lord God assigns His inheritance according to families, clans, and tribes. This illustrates the future organization of the world-to-come, for from God’s name, “every family in heaven and on earth is named” (Ephesians 3:15). It will be seen in the eventual Kingdom inheritance that God’s name is the basis for every family, for He organizes His people in their eternal blessing according to lines of kinship and relationship, so that the growth and relationships begun on earth continue in heaven.

Chapter 6: GOD’S ANOINTED: David and His Seed
2 Samuel 2:1-7; 5:1-16; Revelation 4:9-10

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God’s Word* for yourself then **Write Insights** to Share with others.

a. Preview 2 Samuel 2:1-7; 5:1-16; Revelation 4:9-10

God's Anointed: David and His Seed. God chose Mashiach, the Firstborn Heir appointed to redeem the human family from this dark world and its enslaving power over our *sinful flesh*, so read 2 Samuel 2:1-7 and 5:1-16 to see how David's anointing as king and His consolidation of power foretells Jesus Mashiach's path of Lordship.

First, notice that a *faithful remnant is first to anoint David as King*, which foretells the way that only a remnant of Israel received Jesus as Mashiach at His coming (2 Sam. 2:1-7; Is. 63:16). But, in the fullness of time, the *entire nation recognizes Mashiach as King, remembering the Lord's Word of promise*. Israel eventually recognized David as their own "flesh and bone," and the nation will also recognize Jesus as their *long-abandoned* Firstborn Son (2 Sam. 5:1-5; Zech. 12:10). Finally, in the same way that David as *Mashiach takes Jerusalem to establish His House, as the Lord God of Hosts is with him*, so will Jesus Mashiach establish His Kingdom by re-taking Jerusalem and the holy land (2 Sam. 5:6-16; Rev. 4:9-10; Zech. 14:4-5).

b. Prayerfully Read 2 Samuel 2:1-7; 5:1-16; Revelation 4:9-10 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
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<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why do only kindred few recognize and affirm God's anointing of David (and his Seed) at first?

Q2: What does the entire nation realize of David (and His Seed) that they affirm God's anointing?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. Why is only a faithful remnant willing to anoint David (and His Seed) as King at first? (2 Samuel 2:1-7; Is. 63:16)

1. Faithful Remnant is first to anoint David (and his Seed) as King. Though the Lord God had already anointed David through the prophet Samuel, it took the elders of David's own people, the tribe of Judah, to affirm His anointed rule as King. In this way, Jesus was revealed as Mashiach through the baptism of John. And, He gathered to Himself His twelve apostles to testify of His identity as the Lord's *Mashiach*. For, the witness of these loyal few testifies to the *unbelieving majority* of the Lord's truth and convicts them of their own hardened hearts.

Q2. How does the entire nation come to recognize David (and his Seed) as Mashiach? (2 Samuel 5:1-5; Zechariah 12:10)

2. Entire nation recognizes David (and his Seed) as Mashiach:

Remembering Word of Promise. The faithful witness of the *remnant* of those recognizing the Lord's choice of His Mashiach is finally confirmed in the eyes of the entire nation, which experiences a sudden turning with the recognition that David (and His Seed) have a kindred right to their *support*. Israel recognizes David as their own "flesh and bone," while in the last days, their generations will see Jesus Mashiach as their *lost "Firstborn Son"* (Zech. 12:10).

Q3. What does David (and His Seed) do once He has the support of His entire people? (2 Samuel 5:6-16; Revelation 4:9-10; Zechariah 14:4-5)

3. Mashiach takes Jerusalem: Establishing House and Kingdom.

Once David (and His Seed) secure the support of the entire nation, then he takes Jerusalem as his place to settle his *house* and to establish his *throne*, to rule his rightful *kingdom*. In this way, Jesus Mashiach will see the entire Jewish nation recognize Him and mourn in repentance. So, He will return to Jerusalem as its rightful king, stepping foot and splitting the Mount of Olives as He disperses His enemies to establish His eternal rule! (Zechariah 14:4-5).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Jesus Mashiach: God's Anointed! When God raises up David's Seed as the Son of David (2 Sam. 7:12) and the Son of God (14), He calls Him by the names of His fathers: "David" and "the Lord God" (Jeremiah 30:9). So, Jesus Mashiach is both David's "son" and his

“Lord” (Psalm 110:1). But, in David’s life, we see how Israel comes to recognize and follow God’s anointed King.

First, only the *men of Judah* recognized God’s work to raise up David, so they are the ones to *anoint* David king over the people of His own household (2 Sam. 2:4). In this way, only a *chosen remnant* recognized Jesus Mashiach as God’s anointed redeemer, starting with his own mother (Luke 1:38) and the family of John the Baptist (69), who would be used by God to anoint Jesus as Mashiach (Matthew 3:14-15). So, the first followers of Jesus Mashiach were the Jewish remnant, starting with His apostles (Matthew 16:16) which continues as a believing remnant even to this day (Isaiah 63:16), which will continue their testimony of Jesus as Mashiach until He comes (Matthew 10:23).

But, in the same way that Israel recognized David as their Mashiach, their own “flesh and bone” (2 Sam. 5:1), one day Israel will look upon Jesus as Mashiach and realize that He has always been the “Firstborn Son” whom they had rejected and lost (Zechariah 12:10), finally repenting and welcoming Him as their Shepherd!

And, once all Israel follows Jesus as Mashiach, He will take back Jerusalem for Himself as the throne of an eternal Kingdom (Zechariah 14:4-5) in the same way that His father David began to reign from Jerusalem.

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
	! Differ
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	

DIFFER: Disagree

What insight or Bible
verse to **differ**?

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/
mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁶: We are your flesh and bone: Mourning for Firstborn Son. The nation of Israel ceased its resistance to David as its rightful king once it realized the *kindred relationship* binding the nation with its king. Similarly, this *kindred recognition* washes over Israel when they “look upon the one they have pierced” and mourn over a lost “only child” and “firstborn” (Zech. 12:10).

Added Notes: Mount of Olives: The Lord Mashiach returns with the “clouds of heaven” (Daniel 7:13; Revelation 1:7) who are the “people” of Mashiach accompanying him on His “day of power,” arrayed in “holy garments” and reborn in the “dew” of resurrection (Ps. 110:3). With this “great and powerful people” (Joel 2:2), the Lord’s “army” (11), Jesus Mashiach returns and touches upon the *Mount of Olives*, causing it to split to create a refuge for embattled Israel.

Chapter 7: JESUS, SEED OF DAVID: Raised up by God

2 Samuel 7:4-17; Jerem. 23:5-6; 30:9; Luke 1:68-

71

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God’s Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview **2 Samuel 7:4-17; Jerem. 23:5-6; 30:9; Luke 1:68-71**

Jesus, Seed of David: Raised up by God. Rather than a *wooden house* built by a natural-born ruler, the Lord God promises David an eternal Mashiach to protect His people forever. So, read 2 Samuel 7:4-17, Jeremiah 23:5-6, 30:9, and Luke 1:68-71 to see how the Lord God Himself *raises up* Mashiach as David's Seed to build a house, establish a throne, and rule a kingdom forever!

*Unlike David, the Lord God's first purpose is **not a House of Cedar but a shared Household of David and God***, for He will raise up a Son who will rule in the name of both David and God (2 Sam. 7:4-11a; Jer. 30:9). Only by His *redemptive right* (like Boaz- Ruth 4:10) and *duty* (like Judah- Gen. 38:8) that the **Lord God raises up Seed to be both the Son of David and God**, who alone has the right to build a combined house, a unified throne, and an eternal kingdom (2 Sam. 7:11b-13; Luke 1:68-71). For, only the **Seed of David as the Son of God can be disciplined for iniquity to establish House and Kingdom forever** (2 Sam. 7:14-17; Jer. 23:5-6).

b. Prayerfully **Read 2 Samuel 7:4-17; Jerem. 23:5-6; 30:9; Luke 1:68-71** and **Write your insights to share**

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p>	

What does it mean? What is it teaching me?	
DOING What lesson can I apply to my life?	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. What is the purpose that is dearest to God's heart, which He shares with David?

Q2: How will the Seed as the Son of David and God build an eternal House and Kingdom which cannot be corrupted and undermined by sin?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. What is God's purpose and plan which He shares with David? (2 Samuel 7:4-11a; Jeremiah 30:9)

1. Not a House of Cedar but a shared household: of David and God. While David's heart was set on building an earthly edifice to honor the Lord God's name, God had a more lasting and eternal purpose in mind. Rather than a *house of cedar*, the Lord God promised a dynastic house, a family spanning heaven and earth to join the lines of God and David into a single household (2 Samuel 7:11, 12).

Q2. What does the Lord God promise to do to find an Heir of both God and David? (2 Samuel 7:11b-13; Luke 1:68-71)

2. Lord God raises up Seed to be both the Son of David and

God. For God's purpose of an eternal household for David and God to be fulfilled, the Lord God needed to *raise up* an Heir who was both the Son of David and the Son of God in order to inherit the redeemer's rights. Such a paternity was only possible by the *raising up of Seed* according to the Law of duty (*yibbum*) and redemptive right (*geullah*) as was practiced by both Judah and Boaz in David's prior lineage.

Q3. Why can only the Son of David and the Son of God establish an eternal House and Kingdom? (2 Samuel 7:14-17; Jeremiah 23:5-6)

3. Seed of David as Son of God disciplined for iniquity: Builds eternal House and Kingdom. Building a lasting Household was impossible due to the *sin* which corrupted all flesh, including the sons of Abraham. So, for the promised Mashiach to build an eternal, incorruptible Household to establish God’s throne and Kingdom, Mashiach would need to *redeem* His people of their sins, granting them an eternal righteousness (Jer. 23:6). This He did by offering His *eternal life* as the Son of God as a ransom for atonement (Dan. 9:24) and allowing Himself to be “pierced” and “disciplined” for sins (Zech. 12:10, 2 Samuel 7:14) as the Son of David (Man).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God’s Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Raising up Seed for David: God as Redeemer. God has an eternal heart for you and all His people, wanting to “appoint a place for my people Israel” to “plant them” in a world filled with *fleshly enemies* (2 Samuel 7:10). But what will satisfy His heart’s desire—the *human efforts* of King Solomon to build for God a “house of cedar” (7) and

to remain enthroned in righteousness? Solomon’s line of kings eventually to “evil” and was cut off at Jeconiah (Jer. 22:30), and this *house of cedar* was destroyed along with Jerusalem by Babylon (2 Kings 24:10). No. The Lord God promises to raise up and establish His own Mashiach by His own eternal power!

First, notice that the Lord God promises to “raise up Seed” for David long after David is dead and buried (2 Samuel 7:12). Solomon was born naturally, but only *Jesus* was raised up by God through the Spirit from *seed* of David’s own body (Matt. 1:18). So, the Lord God raises up for you your rightful Redeemer *who is both the Son of God* by the Spirit’s work (2 Sam. 7:14) and the *Son of David* (Man) from David’s own body (12)!

Second, only such a *raised-up-Redeemer* of His unique paternity has the right to “build a house for God’s name” (13) and for David (11)—a house of sons whose “generations” inherit in Mashiach all the “heavens and the earth” (Genesis 2:4)! So, Jesus Mashiach is the “Son” over God’s “house,” into which you have been reborn by the Spirit of God! (John 1:12-13).

Finally, though David’s line at Jeconiah lost the throne through an unrighteousness which started even with Solomon (1 Kings 11:4; Jer. 22:30), Jesus Mashiach gives you an *eternal righteousness* (Jer. 23:5-6) which He obtained by His own atonement (2 Sam. 7:14; Daniel 9:24). For, you are a member of the Household which will establish the *throne* of Jesus Mashiach’s *Kingdom* forever! (16)

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree	

What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	
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Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/
mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁷: Raising Up Seed for David: To “raise up Seed” is the very specialized act by which a *brother or close relative* takes his “right” as redeemer *to impregnate a woman of the house* to conceive a “Seed” who himself would redeem and restore the broken family lineage. This “duty” (yibbum) and “right of redemption” (geullah) was established by legal precedent (Boaz and Judah).

Added Notes: House Establishes Throne of a Forever Kingdom: As Judah and its Elders were the first to anoint David as King, so God establishes the throne of Jesus Mashiach’s eternal Kingdom by His Household, a *heavenly host of sons made righteous by the Lamb’s atonement!* To become heaven’s might host!

Chapter 8: HOUSE FOR LORD: Solomon Prays *1 Kings 8-9:7; John 8:31-36; Daniel 7:9-14*

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God’s Word* for yourself
then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. **Preview** *1 Kings 8-9:7; John 8:31-36; Daniel 7:9-14*

House for Lord: Solomon Prays. When Solomon prays to dedicate the Temple, he mistakenly believes that he is the one who has fulfilled God’s promise to his father David. So, read 1 Kings 8-9:7, Daniel 7:9-14, and John 8:31-36 to see that Solomon’s prayer and life actually foretell God’s chosen Seed, for Solomon’s natural line of succession would eventually become corrupted and rejected for the throne (Jer. 22:30).

First, know that the *glory of the Lord like a cloud foretells the glorified people of Mashiach* (1 Kings 8:1-11; Daniel 7:9-14).

Then, see that the *Lord God’s promise is not fulfilled by natural-born, fleshly seed but by His eternal Mashiach* seated on His throne, who is the Son of God (1 Kings 8:22-30; 2 Sam. 7:14-16; Jer. 22:30, 23:5-6). Finally, know that *Solomon and his earthly line were later banned from sitting on the eternal throne, but God raises up the Seed for David to rule forever*, the child who was to be called by the names of God: “Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.” (1 Kings 9:1-7; 2 Sam. 7:12; Jer. 22:30; 30:9; Is. 9:1-6).

b. Prayerfully 1 Kings 8-9:7; John 8:31-36; Daniel 7:9-14 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p>	

What does it mean? What is it teaching me?	
DOING What lesson can I apply to my life?	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. *Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.*

Q1. How does the glorious cloud filling the temple foretell a “cloud” of Mashiach’s own people?

Q2: Why can God’s promise of Mashiach as an eternal ruler not be fulfilled by Solomon or any other natural-born king?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. *Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.*

Q1 What does the glorious cloud filling the Temple foretell? (1 Kings 8:1-11; Daniel 7:9-14)

1. Glory of the Lord like a cloud: Mashiach's glorified people.

When the cloud fills the Temple at Solomon's inauguration, the worshippers were unaware that such glory was passing and would eventually depart this *house of cedar* at its destruction at the hand of the Babylonians. Rather, this "cloud" filling God's *house* was itself the dwelling of God, for the cloud accompanies Mashiach before the Ancient of Days (Dan. 7:9-14) and returns with Mashiach as His host of glorified holy ones (Rev. 1:7).

Q2. How is the Lord God's promise of Mashiach as an eternal ruler fulfilled? (1 Kings 8:22-30; 2 Sam. 7:14-16; Jer. 22:30, 23:5-6:)

2. Lord God’s promise not fulfilled by natural-born, fleshly seed but by His eternal Mashiach:

When Solomon presumes to fulfill God’s promise of sitting on an eternal throne with his natural descendants, he overlooks the weakness of his own *flesh* to resist sin and corruption. For, even Solomon at the end of his days was enticed by his foreign wives to *stray from the Lord in his heart* (1 Kings 11:3). Eventually, the line of kings running through Solomon was *banned from the throne* at Jeconiah (Jer. 22:30).

Q3. What was the final outcome for Solomon and his earthly line? (1 Kings 9:1-7; 2 Samuel 7:12; Jer. 22:30; 30:9; Is. 9:1-6)

3. Solomon and his earthly line later banned from throne.

Unable to maintain the *righteousness* needed to secure the right to God’s throne, David’s line at Jeconiah was corrupted by evil and incurred the judgment of God, who banished this line of Jeconiah and his Seed from ever sitting on the throne (Jer. 22:30). This is the reason why God in his prescience promised to “raise up Seed” himself for David (2 Sam. 7:12).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply *God’s Word as a Growing Disciple to **read** Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.*

God’s Eternal House: Lasting House, Seed, and Kingdom. When Solomon prayed and dedicated the Temple, he expressed the hope of the Jewish people for an earthly embodiment of God’s glory, a *place for His presence*, the *kavod*—the heaviness of God’s glory filled the Temple like a cloud (1 Kings 8:11).

The *magnificence* of this scene portends a greater and eternal glory, for God’s *presence* would one day depart this earthly house (Ezek. 11:23). However, God gave Daniel a vision of the “clouds of heaven” accompanying Mashiach, the Son of God, as He receives an eternal kingdom (Daniel 7:13-14).

Yes, the *glory of the Lord* will one day return to an *eternal temple* built by Jesus Mashiach in the last days (Ezekiel 43:4), but this Temple and Jerusalem will be secured in Mashiach’s eternal Kingdom. And, this Kingdom is ruled by His powerful throne, established by the “house” He has redeemed—not a mere *earthly house*, but a *house of heaven and earth* (Gen. 2:4), a house of sons (Psalm 22:22) who uphold the King of Glory as the “hosts” of His Lordship (Psalm 24:10), who radiate His glory as the “clouds of heaven” (Dan. 7:13), and who are His “great and powerful people” executing “His Word” on the earth (Joel 2:2, 11)!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change ?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁸: Clouds: The glorious clouds filling the Temple revealed God’s permanent *house and His eternal dwelling*, for the Lord God dwells among His holy people, who are like a “cloud” reflecting the glory of His presence. Like the “dew” reborn by the resurrection (Ps. 110:3) to coalesce into the “clouds of heaven” accompanying Mashiach to the throne of the Ancient of Days (Dan. 7:13)

Added Notes: Eternal Throne: Who is worthy to sit on God’s eternal throne? Only Jesus Mashiach, the “Lord of righteousness” (Jer. 23:6), has the right to God’s eternal throne. For, when the Psalmist considers the eternal rule of Mashiach, he states, “You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness” (Ps. 45:6). For, the throne is established in righteousness (Ps. 89:14).

Chapter 9: JOSIAH’S REFORMS: Renewing Righteousness

2 Kings 23:1-30; Jeremiah 23:6; Daniel 9:24

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God’s Word* for yourself then **Write Insights** to Share with others.

a. *Preview 2 Kings 23:1-30; Jeremiah 23:6; Daniel 9:24*

Josiah's Reforms: Renewing Righteousness. Mashiach's Mission is to make His people righteous (Jer. 23:6). So, consider how Mashiach's forbear Josiah foreshadows the messianic mission to renew His people to righteousness, even at great cost to himself! First, see how ***King Josiah renewed the people to their covenantal walk with the Lord***, which presages the way that Mashiach will establish a new covenant of grace and forgiveness to establish an eternal peace between God and His people (2 Kings 23:1-20; Jer. 31:31-34). Then, see how the ***King commanded the people to keep the Passover*** to keep the commands of the Law, even as Jesus Mashiach fulfilled the Passover by giving His own life to establish the new covenant for the forgiveness of sins (2 Kings 23:21-27; Matt. 26:17-29). Finally, as ***the King was slain in his war against the enemy***, so Jesus Mashiach was *pierced* to be the Seed to crush the *deceiving serpent* and redeem His people (2 Kings 23:28-30; Gen. 3:15; Daniel 9:24, 26; Zech. 12:10).

b. Prayerfully Read 2 Kings 23:1-30; Jeremiah 23:6; Daniel 9:24 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p>	

What does it mean? What is it teaching me?	
DOING What lesson can I apply to my life?	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why is Josiah so committed to present His people righteous before the Lord?

Q2: What does Josiah do as the Righteous Reformer which foretell the ministry of Mashiach?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 What is the first way the King Josiah renews the righteousness of his people? (2 Kings 23:1-20; Jer. 31:31-34)

1. King Josiah renews people's covenant walk with the Lord.

When King Josiah re-discovered the buried Law, he realized the urgent need to restore the righteousness of the people, who were under the threat of God's imminent judgment. So, he reminds the people of the covenant joining them with their God. However, Jesus Mashiach does more than just remind the people. Instead, Jesus *renews* the Old Covenant, weakened by the *fleshly weakness* of the people.

Q2. How else does King Josiah renew the righteousness of the people? (2 Kings 23:21-27; Matthew 26:17-29)

2. Commands people to keep the Passover: Because the Passover Celebration points to a greater deliverance than from Egypt into Canaan, Josiah's celebration of the Passover did not instill any lasting righteousness in the people. Instead, Jesus Mashiach is the one to enact the true Passover in His sacrifice on the cross. Only Jesus makes righteous (Jer. 23:6) through the atonement for sins which was accepted

Q3. How (2 Kings 23:28-30; Gen. 3:15; Dan. 9:24; Zechariah 12:10)

3. King slain in war against his enemy: In His quest to secure safety and salvation for His people, Josiah inadvisedly went to war against Pharaoh Neko, losing his life. This unfortunate incident shows Josiah's commitment to give his utmost in his struggle for his people. Likewise, Jesus Mashiach gives His life willingly in the Kingdom warring struggle against the world. For, He is the Lamb of God who won the redemption of His people (Rev. 5:9-10)

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Righteous King: Josiah's Reforms. As *Elohim enthroned* (Ps. 45:6), Mashiach reflects his Father God's heart, for He "loves righteousness and hates wickedness" (7). This deep love for His Father's righteousness drives Him to sanctify you and His people to present you all *holy* before God. Truly, Jesus Mashiach is named, "The Lord

is our righteousness” (Jer. 23:6). So, consider Mashiach’s heart can be seen in the life of His predecessor, King Josiah, whose heart was aflame for the righteousness of his people.

Imagine Josiah’s horror, when the Law revealed God’s judgment against the *rampant idolatry and sin of His people* (2 Kings 22:11-13). So, Josiah renews the covenantal relationship between God and His people (23:2). But Jesus Mashiach renews the Covenant itself, knowing that the *holy expectations* of God’s Law cannot be met by a *people of naked flesh*—for God’s people have never achieved a righteousness by the Law. Neither through the *Davidic dynasty* (Jer. 22:30), into exile (Ezekiel 9:9), and not even to the last days (37:11). So, Jesus Mashiach establishes a New Covenant in which “iniquity is atoned for” (Daniel 9:24) so that the people can be “forgiven” their “iniquity” and their sins forgotten (Jeremiah 31:34).

Like Josiah who fought for his people, Jesus Mashiach pays with His life to secure for you an eternal righteousness. For, the Seed of David was “bruised” to “crush” the serpent’s “head” (Gen. 3:15), he was “disciplined” for your iniquities (2 Sam. 7:14), and he was “cut off” to bring you an “everlasting righteousness” (Daniel 9:24, 26). So, press on to “know” God without fear! (Jer. 31:34).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree	

What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	
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Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁹: New Covenant: While Josiah attempted to restore his people to a covenant relationship with God, within several generations, his descendants and the nation would return to their evil ways and be exiled from the land. So, Jesus Mashiach restores His people to the Lord by renewing the Covenant itself, securing an “everlasting righteousness” (Daniel 9:24) by becoming the eternal source of “righteousness’ for His people (Jer. 23:6), having redeemed them to take their sins and give them righteousness and forgiveness in a covenant of grace (Jer. 31:31-34).

Added Notes: King Slain: The death of heroic Josiah resonated with the promise that Mashiach himself would be “bruised” in securing salvation and righteousness for His people, for the Seed of the Woman would be “bruised” (Gen. 3:15); the *Mashiach* bringing an “everlasting righteousness” (Dan. 9:24) would himself be “cut off” (26), the Firstborn Son coming to save Israel will have been already “pierced” (Zech. 12:10)—a “piercing” Mashiach endured “for our transgressions” (Is. 53:5) as an “offering for guilt” (10).

Chapter 10: NEEDING YESHUA: Joshua Exiled 2 Kings 24-25; Luke 1:67-75; 2 Corinth. 5:21; Jer. 22:30, 23:5-6

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God’s Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview **2 Kings 24-25; Luke 1:67-75; 2 Corinth. 5:21; Jer. 22:30, 23:5-6**

Needing Yeshua: Judah Exiled. Some in Israel may have mistaken Solomon to be the *Seed* whom God promised to *raise up* for David as the *Redeemer* of His people (2 Sam. 7:12), but not only did the Davidic line of rulers end with the Babylonian exile, but the *house of cedar* which Solomon had built was also destroyed. So, read 2 Kings 24-25 to see why the Lord God had promised to *raise up Seed* for David long after David had died (precluding Solomon) to restore the line *banished* at Jeconiah (Jer. 22:30), to build a *spiritual household* for both David and God (2 Sam. 7:11, 13), and to secure an eternal throne to rule an enduring Kingdom!

First, see that ***Jeconiah and his Seed are cut off from David's throne***, requiring God to *raise up Seed for David* by the Holy Spirit, named Jesus to deliver His people from their sins (2 Kings 24:1-9; Jer. 22:30; Matt. 1:20-21). Then, the ***Lord's House in Jerusalem is destroyed***, so *Yeshua must rebuild the Household of the Lord* (2 Kings 24:10-20; Luke 1:67-73). Finally, ***Jerusalem is destroyed for the sin of the people***, so *Yeshua must redeem and make His people righteous* (2 Kings 25; Luke 1:74-75; Jer. 23:5-6; Rom. 3:23-25; 2 Cor. 5:21).

b. Prayerfully Read 2 Kings 24-25; Luke 1:67-75; 2 Corinth. 5:21; Jer. 22:30, 23:5-6 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	

<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	
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Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. What is the result of Solomon's and the Jewish people's self-effort to *secure an eternal throne* apart from God's promise of Mashiach?

Q2: Why is Mashiach needed to accomplish what David's natural-born Seed cannot?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. Why had God promised to "raise up Seed" for David rather than rely on David's natural-born seed? (2 Kings 24:1-9; Jer. 22:30; Matt. 1:20-21).

1. Jeconiah and his Seed cut off from David's throne. As was the case with Judah, the corruption and termination of a righteous line can only be restored when the corrupt line is terminated and a righteous Seed is raised up. So, when David's line through Solomon is *corrupted* by sin, God needed to *terminate the corruption at Jeconiah* (Jer. 22:30) and to then *raise up Seed using David's own material* to reintroduce a righteous Seed into the line. So, God raises up Jesus as the Seed of David by the Holy Spirit to re-introduce David directly back into the line, (Matt. 1:20-21) in the same way that Judah's Seed was re-introduced into the line following the sin of Onan and Er (Gen. 38:8).

Q2. Why must Mashiach establish an eternal house in Jerusalem? (2 Kings 24:10-20; Luke 1:67-73)

2. Lord's House in Jerusalem destroyed: As an earthly house of cedar, the Temple proved to be far from the “eternal house” promised to David by God (2 Sam. 7:16). Rather, Jesus Mashiach multiplies Himself as the hosts of heaven by becoming the “righteousness” of His people (Jer. 23:6) to make them into a house both for David (2 Sam. 7:11) and for God (13).

Q3. Why is Jerusalem destroyed, and what is its greatest need which only Mashiach can provide? (2 Kings 25; Luke 1:74-75; Jer. 23:5-6; Rom. 3:23-25; 2 Cor. 5:21)

3. Jerusalem is destroyed for the sin of the people. It was the sin of God's people, crouching irresistibly at the *fallen flesh* inherited from Adam (Gen. 4:7). So, even well-intentioned Solomon could not keep his own heart from turning away from the Lord to other “gods” (1 Kings 11:4). So, the greatest need of the people was to receive an “everlasting righteousness” obtained by “atonement for iniquity” (Dan. 9:24) secured by the redemption of Jesus Mashiach who alone saves His people from their sins (Matt. 1:21)

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Needing Jesus Mashiach: Exile and Desolation. When Jehoiachin (that is, Jeconiah or Coniah) ruled in Jerusalem, the Lord saw that he did “evil” as his fathers had done too (2 Kings 24:9). So, the king of Babylon destroyed Jerusalem and removed Jehoiachin from the throne (10-12). With this decisive act of judgment, the Lord God

pronounced that Coniah and his “seed” would be banished from the “throne of David” and its rule, so ending the hope of Solomon and the Jewish people to seat a “man” on the “throne of Israel” by their own righteous “walk” before the Lord (1 Kings 8:25).

Not only were David’s *fleshly descendants* cut off from before the Lord due to their evil deeds (2 Kings 24:9), but both the Temple (13) and the city of Jerusalem (14) were destroyed.

So, only Mashiach, *raised up from David’s own body* (2 Sam. 7:12), would have the Lord’s rightful anointing to build a *true* household for the Lord and David (11, 13) and to rule forever on David’s throne over His Kingdom (16).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes¹⁰: Evil in the sight of the Lord: Although has long aspired to be righteous before the Lord God, earning the right to *sit forever* on David's throne, its kings, even starting with David and Solomon, could not help but fall into the adultery and idolatry which they had long-despised in their lives. For, Israel's aspirations for righteousness bypassed God's ancient promise of a chosen Seed who alone could accomplish what Israel's *weak flesh* could not: crush the power of tempting sin (Gen. 3:15); multiply Seed to be a blessing to all the nations (Gen. 22:18); and, even sit in righteousness on David's throne forever (2 Sam. 7:16).

Added Notes: Cast out from His presence: Israel and Judah endured the Lord’s punishment for their unrighteousness, being “cast out” from the Lord’s presence. First, by the disciplining rod of Babylon. Next, by the Roman armies which destroyed a rebuilt Jerusalem (Dan. 9:26). For, without the “righteousness” which only its Mashiach could provide (Jer. 23:6), Israel was vulnerable to its own fleshly sin despite its Torah-observant efforts.

Prayer Requests:

Prayer Request/ Date	Answered Prayer/ Thanks

Journaling:

What is God teaching you?	How are you growing?

Sermon Notes:

Sermon Notes/ Date	Applying it to my life

Notes:

***SERIES 2: WALKING BY FAITH IN JESUS
CHRIST***

BOOK 4: Following Jesus Christ as Lord
Matthew 8-16

Book 4: Following Jesus Christ as Lord
Introduction

As Matthew continues His Gospel of the words and works of Jesus Christ, He focuses on how disciples must *follow* Jesus Christ as their Lord. For, as we see later in this section, there are many who *disqualify themselves* from following Jesus because they have little interest in knowing Jesus in His fullness as Lord, being quite satisfied with their own *Self-Lordship* and Self-justifying religion. But, if you are *resolved to follow Jesus Christ as His disciple, then learn from these next chapters 8-16 in the Gospel of Matthew.* As a disciple, you must follow by *faith* in Jesus Christ as your Lord. Great faith *focuses on Jesus Christ* fully in His power and Lordship, while *little* faith diminishes His power to *rely on the flesh.* But, those who follow Jesus Christ by faith experience the *fullness* of His power and Kingdom! For, you are called as a disciple not merely to *abide* in His Kingdom but to *advance it* by your testimony, gathering the lost sheep back home. So, follow Jesus *sacrificially to take up your cross*, fulfilling the Lord's purpose for your life!

STEPS of a Devoted Disciple:

Your *Devotion* matters to the Lord. For, there is only one Lord and God, and He deserves creation's highest honor and praise. So, you were made to give yourself to the Lord God in loving devotion of heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30). In this same devotion to the Lord, Jesus Christ calls you to follow Him as His disciple. These short devotionals guide you in the Word to cultivate a heart devotion to the Lord as His disciple.

- First, **discover** what His life-giving Word has to say to you personally, being careful to write down your insights to share with others.
- Then, **discuss** His Word with those closest to you: your family, your friends, and in your home fellowship group (your spiritual family).
- Next, **dialogue** to compare views on key passages with a partner—either another disciple, or an older mentor or younger mentee.
- Finally, **develop** key skills as you abide in the Word by applying it to your life as you read the devotional, notes, and footnotes.

START HERE: Humble Yourself in Prayer:

Devote yourself to the Lord to hear and do His Will for you.

Do I want to humble myself under the Lordship of God by faith?

Or, will I live as my own Lord, relying on my own understanding?

PRAYER OF DEVOTION

Lord God, I devote my life to you today. I offer you my soul to live humbly under your Lordship; my mind to seek your will and Spirit; my heart to love you and others; and, my strength to obey your Word and Will!
Amen.

Chapter 1: FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST: Humbled under Authority

Matthew 8:1-17

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview **Matthew 8:1-17**

Faith in Jesus Christ: Humbled under Authority. God sent Jesus Christ into the world as the light which we as his disciples would look to by faith. So, read Matthew 8 to discover why Jesus Christ is the perfect object of our faith, bring God's healing kingdom to us! First, see how Jesus Christ **responds to the faith** of those who turn to him. Notice specifically his welcoming heart, as He receives our faith gladly! (8:1-4).

Then, observe how the *centurion* who approached Jesus for his sick servant becomes for us a model of faith, for the Lord commends this man because he was **humbled under authority by faith**. Not only does this man respond to Jesus by faith, but he understands the *source* of his power, for Jesus too is *subject* to the Father's authority by faith (8:5-13). Finally, see how all who come to Jesus for help, including Peter's mother-in-law, are **restored by faith** (8:14-17).

b. Prayerfully **Read Matthew 8:1-17** and **Write your insights to share**

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How does Jesus respond to the *leper who comes to him by faith*?

Q2: What does Jesus Christ see as the *remarkable* faith of the centurion, and how can we have such an outstanding faith?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How does Jesus Christ respond to the *leper who draws near to him by faith*? (Mt. 8:1-4)

1. Responds to Faith: Willing Heart. Our faith must have a *person* in whom we trust. When we come to the Lord Jesus in faith, we see that He responds to us with a willing heart in warm welcome! Notice that the *leprous man* who came to Jesus by faith knew two things—that the Lord was *able* to cleanse him, but also that it depended on the Lord’s *willingness*. So, Jesus Christ displays a *willing heart* to help those who draw near to him by cleansing the leper. Also, this act of mercy was not driven by a *selfish interest*, for Jesus asked that the man “say nothing” except what was proper (4).

Q2. Why does Jesus Christ commend the centurion for his faith?
(Mt. 8:5-13)

2. Outstanding Faith: Humbled under authority. Again, the centurion who approaches Jesus comes to him with an expectant faith, because he clearly understands that Jesus is *Lord* (6). And, his *clear understanding* of Jesus as Lord gives him an outstanding faith. The centurion understands that Jesus is *Lord* because He is under the surpassing authority of His Father. So, not only is Jesus *subject to authority*, but also those who come to him by faith also *subject themselves* to the Lord's authority.

Q3. How does the Lord God work in those who have faith? (Mt. 8:14-17)

3. Restored by Faith: Freed from Oppression. Faith is the only appropriate way to respond to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, because the *disciple* who comes to Jesus by faith recognizes His Lordship in both *earthly* but also the most inaccessible matters of *spirit*. For, we can be afflicted not just by *bodily weakness*, like Peter's mother-in-law, but more dangerously, by *spiritual oppressors, demons* which can only be driven out by the Lord's power. So, in our vulnerability and weakness, we can only have *faith* in the One who is Lord over all!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Walking by Faith: Restored and Freed by Lord. As a disciple, you are called to walk with the Lord Jesus Christ by faith. For, faith opens your eyes and life to the power of His *good* and *restorative Lordship!*

Your *faith* as a disciple will draw you near to the Lord Jesus with confidence, for you know that He is a *willing Lord*. Like the *leper* of our story, come to the Lord Jesus as one without any earthly hope, yet recognizing that the Lord has the power to *cleanse*. Like the leper, there are *areas of uncleanness in our Selves and in our lives*—areas broken and untouched by the Lord's kingdom rule. So, to ask for *cleansing* is to ask for the Lord's power to change you and your life, sanctifying you under His rule. For this reason, the centurion had a great faith to recognize that the *Lordship* of Jesus exceeded *his own person*, for Jesus is Lord as one *under the full authority of His Father God*. So, Jesus exercises His Lordship humbly, to please the Father who has given him “all authority in heaven and on earth” (Matt. 28:18). So, by faith, you also put yourself under this authority of the Lord, living in subjection, by faith, to the rule of Heaven.

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
!	Differ
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes¹: Commended Faith: Faith begins with a humble turning to Jesus Christ as Lord. So, the centurion displays such faith, for himself *subjects himself under the authority* of the Lord by faith. However, such a *subject faith* also highlights the possibility of *weak faith* which does not see Jesus as the Lord under authority. Rather, weak faith may doubt the *Lordship* of Jesus because it questions the source of his authority. It may even doubt the choices of Jesus to respond because he is simply a religious figure acting on his own authority. But, a Lord under the authority of His God and Father does not please himself, nor does He exercise His Lordship arbitrarily. Rather, He is a humbled Lord who calls His disciples to show a similar humility of faith, subject to His Lordship and the Will of His Father.

¹ **Footnotes: Oppressed by demons:** In the same way we do not see the Lordship of Jesus as separate from the Father's Rule, we do not see the ministry of Jesus apart from the Kingdom of God's state of being *free and cleansed of* this world's demonic oppression and uncleanness. So, the Lord's ministry to "heal" and to "cast out" is to bring people into His Kingdom by giving them a foretaste of the Kingdom's restoration.

Chapter 2: FOLLOWING JESUS CHRIST: Counting the Cost

Matthew 8:18-34

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview **Matthew 8:18-34**

Following Jesus Christ: Counting the Cost. The Lord Jesus is the Anointed Son of God and the Son of Man, so His disciples should be prepared to *believe in His Fullness to Follow Him Faithfully*. So, read Matthew 8:18-34 to discover how Jesus encouraged His first disciples to *know the reality of His Lordship* to follow Him faithfully as His disciples!

First, Jesus Christ encouraged *disciples* who see him merely as a *teacher* of religious truths and doctrines to understand *the Son of Man's Poverty*, for He had given up His rights to fulfill the Father's will to restore the *family of man* to God's blessing (8:18-20; Phil. 2:4-11). For *disciples* who rightly view Him as their *Lord*, Jesus exhorts them to share the *Lord's Primacy* which takes priority over the concerns of this life (8:21-22). Finally, disciples who view Jesus as *simply a man* must understand the *Son of God's Power*, especially in the spiritual reality of the Kingdom as it displaces the *unclean* presence of demons. (8:23-34).

*b. Prayerfully **Read Matthew 8:18-34** and **Write** your insights to share*

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why does Jesus reveal Himself to His disciples as the *Son of Man*?

Q2: How should you follow Jesus Christ as your *Lord*?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. Why does Jesus reveal Himself as the Son of Man? (Mt. 8:18-20)

1. Son of Man's Poverty: Cautioning the Casual. Some early disciples of Jesus saw him merely as a human *teacher*. Those who follow an earthly teacher can still *control* their earthly lives and cling to life's *comforts and convenience*. However, Jesus Christ cautions these disciples against such a *casual faith* which seeks to simply *learn ideas* from Jesus but keep His life and influence far from their own experiences. So, Jesus Christ reminds them that He is the Son of Man, *humanity's Heir* who gave up all His rights to bring humanity back home to God's blessings.

Q2. Why does Jesus Christ challenge His disciples to make Him their highest priority? (Mt. 8:21-22)

2. Lord's Primacy: Challenging the Disloyal. Other disciples called Jesus *Lord*, but they neglected the *Lord's Primacy* as their highest priority. For, Jesus Christ calls His disciples to follow Him first, putting His call to follow above every other concern of this life. The Lord Jesus can call for such obedience because He is the life-giver, and following Jesus as His disciples is the call to live with Him in life and to see one's old life in the world as *irrelevant* as death.

Q3. How does Jesus Christ rebuke those who see Him mainly as a man? (Matt. 8:23-34)

3. Son of God's Power: Rebuking Unbelief. Even though some of the disciples of Jesus called on him as *Lord* (25), they imagined His Lordship as having limits, for they viewed him as merely a “man” (27). However, the Lordship of Jesus covered both the *earthly realm* of the storm and seas (26) as well as the *spiritual realm* in which the *opposing demons* were powerless against him, being forced to obey Him because He is “the Son of God.” So, Jesus *rebukes* the unbelief of His disciples who had “little faith” and a diminished view of His Lordship! (26).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Following Jesus as Lord: Clear-eyed Faith: Your devotion to follow Jesus Christ as His disciple *will strengthen or weaken* depending on your faith, whether you see Jesus clearly as the *strong Lord* over the heavens and the earth or with unbelief, a mere man who teaches good ideas.

Be sure that you don't merely see Jesus Christ as a teacher, who only passes on *good ideas* and *teachings* to you. If Jesus is simply *teacher*, then it is up to you to be your own *Self-Lord*, *seeking to gain nothing from Jesus but ideas and doctrines which will support your life on earth*. But, the reality is that Jesus Christ is the *Son of Man*, mankind's heir who gives up His rights in order to *rescue* God's people home to His blessings.

Rather, fix your faith on Jesus Christ as Lord, the only *life-giver* who saves you from this world's sin and death into a new spiritual "life" (8:22). Jesus has the Lord's right to ask you to follow Him *first*, for He has all authority over earth and heaven, over the stormy seas (8:26) and the *oppressing demonic spirits* (32).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)		
✓ Agree	? Question	! Differ
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?		
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?		
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?		

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes²: The Son of Man: The Christ, that is, Messiah, is humanity's Heir. So, as the appointed *Firstborn Son*, Jesus is the Head. As "the Son of Man," Jesus is Lord over all *sons of Man*. Because Jesus is the human family's *Firstborn*, God designates him to bear the family responsibility of *redemption*—to forsake all his rights in order to *atone* for His people to restore them to God and His blessing.

² **Footnotes: The Son of God:** Messiah was also anointed as *the Son of God*, again, the Firstborn Heir of the *sons of God* whom He redeems from the kingdom of darkness (Is. 9:2-6; Phil. 1:13-14). As the Son of God, Jesus is the eternal God through whom the Father created the heavens and the earth (Heb. 1:1-3). So, the Lord Jesus simply utters a word to calm the stormy seas (26) and cast out the unclean spirits (32).

Chapter 3: RESTORED BY THE SON OF MAN: New Life

Matthew 9:1-31

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview **Matthew 9:1-31**

Restored by the Son of Man: New Life. God promised Messiah to be the one to *crush the works of Satan* to restore God's people to their original life with God (Gen. 3:15). So, read Matthew 9:1-31 to see how Jesus Christ is the long-promised *Son of Man* (that is, Seed of the Woman (Gen. 3:15) and humanity's Firstborn Heir (Ps. 8:4-6) to overturn Satan's works and restore people to the Lord's blessing! First, notice the ***Son of Man's Authority to Restore***. This restoration is not merely a physical but also a spiritual restoration. (Matt. 9:1-8) Then, see how Jesus calls people to reject the *sin* and *brokenness* of this world's godless age. For, Jesus is the ***physician who calls to repentance***. In this way, Jesus welcomes sinners to come to Him that they might be healed of their *soul sickness* of sin (9:9-13). Finally, Jesus is the ***bridegroom who is the cause for celebration*** of His people, for He gives them the *new wine* of a restored, Kingdom life! (9:14-31).

*b. Prayerfully **Read Matthew 9:1-31** and **Write** your insights to share*

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why does Jesus refer to himself as “the Son of Man”? (Ps. 8:3-6).

Q2: Why does Jesus compare himself to a *bridegroom*?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. What does God authorize the Son of Man to do? (Matt. 9:1-8)

1. the Son of Man's Restoring Authority: From our very first fall into sin, the Lord God promised to raise up one of us, a *Seed of Woman* (Gen. 3:15) to restore what sin and death had taken away. Over the course of unfolding scripture, we see that this promised Seed of “Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” is the Mashiach, humanity's Firstborn Heir as “the Son of Man” (Ps. 8:3-6). As the Heir of humanity and its *appointed redeemer*, Jesus as the Son of Man is authorized by God to restore what the serpent had snatched away.

Q2. Why is Jesus like a physician? (Matt. 9:9-13)

2. Physician Calls to Repentance Because Jesus is the Son of Man, he takes responsibility for the sons of man, ruined and broken by sin. Unlike the *accusatory* Pharisees, Jesus views the *sinner*s gathering around him with the *healing heart* of a physician, whose mission is to heal and restore the damage of sin. In the same way that a physician does not *shy away* from the sickness of his patients, neither does the Son of Man shrink from the sin of his people. Rather, He *calls* the sinners by His *mercy* (33) to leave their life of sin to enjoy new life in Him!

Q3. Why does Jesus compare Himself to a *bridegroom*? (Matt. 9:14-31)

3. The Bridegroom: Cause for celebration. When the disciples follow Jesus, they are not simply following a set of religious rules or a collection of teachings. Rather, the disciples of Jesus Christ are drawn to the One who is humanity's appointed "Son of Man," its Redeemer who restores the human family to the blessings of God! So, this Son of Man is not just humanity's Savior but also its Heir, who inherits an eternal Kingdom from God! So, the disciples of Jesus celebrate Him as the *new wine of their devotion* lavishly overflows the *new wineskins* of the Kingdom of God! So, Jesus as the Kingdom's Bridegroom is the cause of the disciples' celebration!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Restoring Rule: Relating to Son of Man. Human religion imagines a Messiah fashioned in its own institutional image, a wise scholar or a catchy celebrity, an anonymous face of the institutions of power. But, Jesus Mashiach comes to you as someone who has an ancient bond of connection, older than any man-made institution. For, He is the *human Seed*—to be raised up directly from a *woman* (Gen. 3:15) to be the Son of Man (Psalm 8:4, 6), our *designated Heir* to restore us from *cursed sin* to the *grace of God*. So, when Jesus approaches the *paralytic*, He calls to him as a *parent who has finally found his lost child*, saying: “Take heart, my son!” (Mt. 9:2). And, He *restores* not just his current *paralysis* but first his ancient, shared affliction, the guilt of his sin, saying: “Your sins are forgiven” (2). For, the same faith that turned the paralytics eyes to Jesus for healing will also draw his heart to the Savior’s cross, upon which his sins would one day be carried. So, when you turn your faith to Jesus as your promised Messiah, a spark recognizes that He is the one you have waited to know all your life! For, his is the *ancient right* to restore you. The physician who calls you from *fatal sin* to a *forgiven life!* The bridegroom whose *new wine* celebrates the coming of a new kingdom!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes³: Bridegroom: The parable is told of a King who gives a wedding feast for His Son and Heir (Matt. 22:2), which foretells the coming celebration when the Kingdom of Heaven is established on this earth with great joy and celebration! The Kingdom is like such a wedding celebration, because the *reason* for this celebration is the Son Himself, whom His Father wishes to honor. In this way, the Kingdom is not like *earth's* joyless religions, which celebrate empty rituals and man-made practices. Instead, the Kingdom and its joy are always centered on Jesus as her Mashiach!

³ **Footnotes: New Wine: Celebrating New Life.** When Jesus likens the joyous life of celebrating His presence to *new wine*, He shows how different it is from the *old life* of *fleshly religious practice*. For, the *pharisaical followers of old religion* perform such religious activities as *fasting* for the sake of their *tired* human traditions and man-made rationale. But, the disciples celebrated Jesus Mashiach himself, the promised *ancient* Messiah whose presence would bring a new age of His joyful Kingdom. And, the King himself is among us! So, the only fitting container for this new wine is a *fresh wineskin*, a newly-sacrificed life to contain this new Kingdom life poured out!

Chapter 4: FOLLOWING SHEPHERD: Gathering Lost Sheep *Matthew 9:35-10:42*

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview *Matthew 9:35-10:42*

Following Shepherd: Seeking Lost Sheep. The mission of Jesus Christ is to gather the *lost sheep* of Israel and the world back home to God's flock. So, read Matthew 9:35-10:42 to discover how the disciples of Jesus share in His *shepherding ministry*, along with the persecution and sacrifice that accompany the task, to share in its rewards. First, consider that Jesus Mashiach has a ***Shepherd's Heart for Lost Sheep***. When the Lord looks upon the people of this world who wander through life without a *shepherd*, his heart is moved with *compassion* to both pray and to send us as shepherds to the lost sheep. (9:35-10:14). However, rescuing these lost sheep comes with a great cost, so we ***disciples share with Shepherd in His persecution***, which proves our *relationship as the disciples of the Shepherd* (10:16-25). Finally, to walk with the Shepherd as his servants is a privilege given only to the faithful, we we must ***follow the Shepherd in sacrificial service*** (10:26-42).

b. Prayerfully Read Matthew 9:35-10:42 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why does Jesus Christ see people as *sheep without a shepherd*?

Q2: How should we view people in the world who are outside the Kingdom of God?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How does Jesus Christ feel about people who are outside the Kingdom of God? (Matt. 9:35-10:14)

1. Shepherd's Heart for Lost Sheep. Jesus Christ came to earth not to be served but to serve (Mk. 10:45), proving that He is the *rightful Heir* of the family of man, the *anointed Shepherd* who is *rightful owner* of the sheep (Jn. 10:14). So, when Jesus Christ gazed upon the helpless people of this world, his heart felt compassion for them, for they were *sheep without a shepherd*, unprotected and wandering in this world. This heart of compassion drove Jesus to point out the *readiness* of people to be *brought into the Kingdom* (9:38). So, Jesus sends His servants first to the *lost sheep of Israel* (10:6), for the promises of God were given to their forefathers first.

Q2. What should disciple expect if they seek to walk with Jesus as their Shepherd? (Matt. 10:16-25)

2. Disciples Share in Shepherd's persecutions: For the disciples of Jesus, being associated with their great Lord and Messiah is enough reward. For, there is no greater name in heaven and earth than the name of Jesus Christ. And, there is no more precious mission than our Father Lord's sending of *laborers into earth's fields of lost sheep*. So, we disciples should be willing to not share in the name but the *sufferings and hardship* to which our Lord was subjected, for we are not greater than him. *If humiliated for his sake; forced to witness before all; delivered and betrayed; hated and persecuted*. Then, so be it, for our Lord Shepherd will soon *come on His Day* to confirm our *little testimony* with His *great appearing* to Israel to save! (23; Zech. 12:10).

Q3 Why is it personally costly to serve the Shepherd in His rescue mission? (Matt. 10:26-42)

3. Following Shepherd in sacrificial service. We do not lose heart in our *sacrificial service* of our Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ. For, *He values our service* enough to entrust His words to us in secret, that we may proclaim them in public! (27) And, He values our testimony so that when we *acknowledge Him* before men, He promises to claim us before His Father in heaven! (32). So, hold fast to the Lord alone, for He counts you as *one to represent Him to this world*. Do not dread your cross to lose *this earth's passing life*, but know that what you *sacrifice* only wins for you a glorious reward!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to **read** Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Sacrificial Shepherding: Grace. Consider the Shepherd's devotion for His sheep. Though clearly the Shepherd's life is more precious than *the beasts* assigned to His care, the good Shepherd willingly *lays down his life* for His sheep! (Jn. 10:11) For, these are *His sheep*, precious ones entrusted to Him by His Father (Jn. 10:29) So, when the Lord Messiah sees the *world's crowds* of lost people, he sees them with *compassion and* a shepherd's *longing* for those who belong under His protective care! If our Lord and Messiah gives His life to rescue this world's *lost sheep*, will you join Him in His mission? Sacrifice marks the life of a shepherd, so will you as His disciple take up your cross to *endure* to bring these *lost sheep* home to the Father? The Day is coming when we servant-shepherds resume the Lord's original mission to *go to the lost sheep of Israel* (Mt. 10:6). At that time, the Church's witness will give way to the *sons of Israel* who will once again go through the towns of Israel (23) to proclaim Jesus and His coming Kingdom. As they go, the Lord Himself will *affirm their testimony* by His coming and great salvation of Israel! (Zech. 12:10).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
! Differ	
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

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What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁴: Sheep without a Shepherd: In our natural human condition in *sinful flesh*, we are truly like *sheep* who have gone astray. Like *errant* and *self-absorbed* sheep, we all have “gone our own way” (Is. 53:6). So, the Lord God mercifully sends to us a good shepherd who *carries* our own weaknesses to bring us back to the Father’s safe home!

⁴ **Footnotes: Lost Sheep of Israel:** When Jesus Mashiach first sent His disciples to proclaim the *Kingdom of God* to the lost sheep of Israel, they rejected Him, thus hurling themselves into a two-thousand year *exile* in the nations. Now gathered back to the land of Israel, the *lost sheep of Israel will once again bear the Shepherd’s call*. For, in the last days, the Church’s witness will give way to a revived remnant of Israel, whose sons will once again proclaim Jesus as Lord throughout the towns of Israel. As they witness, the *birth pains* (Mt. 24) will lead to the *Day of the Lord* and His return to save Israel, at which point Israel will gaze upon the face of their Shepherd and repent! (Zech. 12:10).

Chapter 5: CALLED TO KINGDOM: Learning from
 Humble King
Matthew 11

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then **Write Insights** to Share with others.

*a. Preview **Matthew 11***

Hearing the Kingdom's Call: Resting in Mashiach. When Jesus Messiah comes as light to this earth, He establishes the Kingdom of God by His *ruling presence*. So, read Matthew 11 to see how God prepares the way for Jesus Messiah to call people into the Kingdom of God and discover how we can respond to His call.

First, see how God ***prepares people for the Lord and His Kingdom***. John the Baptist goes before the Lord Jesus to *prepare people* for His way, yet his *earthly ministry* soon gives way to the spiritual power and *greatness* of the Kingdom for respond to the Lord's call and enter it (11:1-19). Then, discover how ***resisting the Kingdom leads to certain judgment*** (Matt. 11:20-24). Finally see that those who ***receive the Kingdom rest as little children***. For, God the Father reveals *His Kingdom* to little children, who are willing to *come to Jesus* as the Lord who carries their burdens (Matt. 11:25-30).

*b. Prayerfully **Read Matthew 11** and **Write** your insights to share*

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How is the Kingdom of God *greater* than any earthly religion or practice?

Q2: Why must we come to God and Jesus as *little children* to enter the Kingdom of heaven?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. Why does John the Baptist go before Jesus Messiah? (Matt. 11:1-19)

1. Preparing for Lord and His Kingdom. Jesus teaches and preaches to proclaim His Kingdom. But, John the Baptist prepared people to hear Jesus by preaching a “baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins” (Mark 1:4) to make people aware of their need for forgiveness. And, as people prepared for new life by *forsaking their flesh* with its sinful deeds, they also were pointed to Jesus as the “greater” one to give new life by the Holy Spirit (1:8). That is, the people of the Kingdom realized that *new life* was not simply refraining from this world’s corrupting flesh. But, *new life* in Jesus required them to be *reborn into a spiritual life* and to abide in not simply earthly religion but in the heavenly *kingdom* (11), which was truly greater.

Q2. What happens when people resist the Kingdom? (Matt. 11:20-24)

2. Resisting the Kingdom: Certain Judgment. Some people and their communities reject the message of the Kingdom, refusing to repent (20) even after seeing the “mighty works” of the Kingdom (21). Sadly, these communities were even more resistant than the people of the past, who would have repented if mighty miracles were done in their midst (21). Because they are unrepentant, these people face an even severer judgment (24).

Q3. How does one enter the Kingdom of Heaven? (Matt. 11:25-30)

3. Receiving Kingdom rest as little children: Coming to Jesus.

The Kingdom comes in the person of Jesus Messiah, so those who are full of Self-Worth, whether by their own wisdom, understanding, or righteousness will have no need or desire for Jesus and the promise of His redemption. Thus, the Father reveals the glory of His Kingdom only to those who humbly receive all of the riches of the *heavenly kingdom*. For, those who are *little* need a greater one to comfort them. So, Jesus invites everyone to rest in him, allowing His power to restore them in His Kingdom.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Receiving the Kingdom: As Little Children. Life in the flesh is solitary, filled with many whose lives are filled with their own self-interest and understanding. So, Jesus Messiah brings an entirely new Kingdom unified under one Father and ruled by one Lord. So, it is the Father who *reveals* the Kingdom to *little children*, whose hearts are open to this Kingdom and the Lordship of its Father (25). Likewise, the children of the Kingdom realize their own weakness in the Kingdom, having no spiritual power of their own making or design. Rather, all they have they've *received* (25) from the Father and *learned* from their *humble and lowly* Lord (29). Oddly, these humbled ones of the Kingdom, like their *lowly and humbled Lord*, are *great* in the true reality of the Lord's Kingdom.

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁵: Violent take Kingdom by force: The Kingdom of God was *established through violent suffering*, taking its place in a world *deeply opposed* to its very existence. For, this *dark world* of ungodly rebellion and *fleshly self-interest* is naturally threatened by the realm ruled and resting under the Lord God's peaceful rule. But, not only has it *suffered violence* (Mt. 11:12), but it is the *violent* who *take hold* of the Kingdom by force. For, the Kingdom is not advanced by the *lukewarm and non-committals musings of fleshly intellects*. Rather, the Kingdom's Lord comes with passion and resolve, and He gathers to himself men of action accustomed to *overcoming obstacles* with resolute faith in the Lord.

⁵ **Footnotes: Resting in the Lord:** As the *shepherd* concerned about the welfare of His sheep, the Lord Jesus draws His *followers near to Himself* to unburden them, not oppress them. For, He calls them from His *gentle and lowly heart*, for their own good. Indeed, the Kingdom is not filled with *anonymous slaves to be abusively driven* but by the Father's *children*, called as it future *heirs* to rest in their Mashiach to *grow to reflect His* servant leadership!

Chapter 6: SPIRIT-ANOINTED SERVICE: Advancing Kingdom

Matthew 12

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview **Matthew 12**

Spirit-anointed Service: Faith in Messiah. Jesus Messiah advances the Kingdom of God not by *fleshly force* or coercion but by the testimony empowered by the Spirit of God. So, read Matthew 12 to discover how Jesus as Messiah has the right to work powerfully by the Spirit to testify to both the unbelieving and the believing. First, Jesus as the Lord's *anointed* has the right to act freely as the *Son of Man*, but instead He chooses to serve humbly because His ***Spirit-anointed ministry invites faith***: (12:1-21). So, as Jesus ministers as God's *Spirit-anointed Messiah*, the people respond either with the recognition of faith or a ***Spirit-denying unbelief preventing faith***: some see Him as the *Son of David* while the critics trace his power back to *the devil* (12:22-32). Finally, see that Jesus as the ***Son of Man testifies to unbelieving but welcomes believers as family*** (12:38-50).

b. Prayerfully **Read Matthew 12** and **Write** your insights to share

SEEING	
What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas	
LEARNING	
What does it mean? What is it teaching me?	
DOING	
What lesson can I apply to my life?	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How does the Spirit support the ministry of Jesus as God's Messiah?

Q2: What is the danger of *denying the Holy Spirit*, and why does Jesus gravely warn against such words?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How does Jesus minister to people as God's chosen Messiah? (Matt. 12:1-21)

1. Spirit-anointed Ministry invites Faith: Humble son of Man. As the *Son of Man* and the Son of David, Jesus as Lord has the right to act freely (12:8). However, God anoints Him by the Spirit to *proclaim justice* with truthful power, yet to do so humbly and without quarreling. For, Jesus does not *overpower* His opposition by sheer force. Rather, His display of the Spirit's work and a clear proclamation of justice and truth is meant to *elicit faith in His bearers*.

Q2. Why do people respond differently to Jesus Messiah and His Spirit-empowered ministry? (Matt. 12:22-30)

2. Spirit-denying unbelief prevents faith: Son of David or Devil?

The Messiah's ministry is surprising because His *full rights* and irresistible power of the Holy Spirit do not lead to him overpowering His opponents. Rather, He uses His power to free people from Satan's bondage (12:29). So, while the full force of the Kingdom's power is used to *oppose the* spiritual work of darkness, its good effects on earth allow people to either *deny the Spirit's work* in unbelief (24) or to *draw near* to Jesus in faith (23). Often, those who deny the Spirit's power are threatened by *His freeing ministry*, thus proving their complicity with Satan to *keep people in unbelief*.

Q3. How does Jesus Messiah respond to the unbelieving and believers? (Matt. 12:38-50)

3. Son of Man testifies to unbelievers: Welcomes believers as Family. Again, Jesus Messiah does not wield His *spiritual power* to directly war against fleshly opposition and unbelief. Rather, he patiently waits for the *tree* to prove its goodness or badness by its *fruit* (33), realizing full well that the day of judgment will hold all people accountable for every “careless” word (37). So, to unbelievers, Jesus testifies of His *death and resurrection* as proof enough of the Spirit’s witness. For believers who “do the will” of the Father, He welcomes into His family (50).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to **read** Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Ministry of the Spirit: Winning Faith. In all of His ministry, Jesus Messiah shows a gracious and respectful witness, even to those who oppose Him. Though adorned with the *rights and privilege* of His Lordship as the Son of Man and the Son of David, Jesus still seeks to bring His people gently into God's *rest and restoration* (8). Jesus is gentle in His witness, for He that the *people* He seeks for the Kingdom are like *bruised reeds*, bent and oppressed by this world's enslaving power of Satan (29). And, many are like *smoldering wicks* whose flame of faith can either *ignite* with recognition, realizing that this may be "*the Son of David*" (23). So, Jesus continues His witness even to *his* most entrenched critics, testifying of the *proof* of His impending *death and resurrection* (12:40). However, He also solemnly warns His critics of their *casual blasphemy* against the Spirit, which is unforgivable (31). For, those who intentionally *blind* themselves to the Spirit's work—whether His work to *reveal Christ in the Word of God* or signs to verify the witness of Christ—will set them on an unbelieving path that leads to certain judgment.

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

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What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁶: Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit: The human heart is deceitful and *desperately sick* (Jer. 17:9), so its deceit can darken the “eye” (Mt. 7:) and influence how a person interprets the *signs and works* of the Spirit. Because the hearts and eyes of the Pharisees were darkened, they chose to see the “good” works Jesus did on the Sabbath (Matt. 12:12) and the *demon-oppressed freed* (12:22) as indications of *Satanic power* (24). Such blasphemy *deprives the blasphemer* of any pathway to faith, however, for the Spirit testifies of Jesus Mashiach by the Word of God and by the works of the Kingdom. So, to deny both makes saving faith and forgiveness impossible.

⁶ **Footnotes: The Son of Man/ the Son of David:** Lord of the Sabbath. The Mashiach is promised to be the Firstborn Heir of heaven and earth. As the Son of Man, Mashiach is to be *the son* from among the “generations” of sons of Man to inherit the “heavens and the earth” (Gen. 2:4). As the Son of David, He is *first* among David’s *sons* and the one to inherit an eternal kingdom and throne (2 Sam. 7:16). So, as the Heir, Messiah possesses the original right to the family of man and the redemptive house of David, bringing salvation to all people, both Jew and Gentile.

Chapter 7: GROWING KINGDOM: Serving the King

Matthew 13

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview **Matthew 13**

Growing Kingdom: Future Harvest. Jesus Messiah reveals the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven to His disciples through parables. So, read Matthew 13 to discover the secrets of how the Kingdom of God so that you might serve the Lord in advancing His Kingdom with spiritual insight into how the Kingdom grows, culminates in a harvest, and is received by people even though it is hidden but soon to come.

First, understand the **heart conditions for Kingdom Growth** which determine how the Word of God takes root and either languishes or produces lasting spiritual fruit for the Kingdom (13:1-23). Then, consider how a final **harvest tests Kingdom readiness** (13:24-43), so both the true and the false will grow up in the kingdom until the day of judgment reveals the *suitability of one's fruit for the Kingdom* (13:24-43). Finally, consider the different responses of people to the Gospel of the Kingdom, as the **Hidden Kingdom is Treasured or Turned From** (13:44-58). For, those who treasure the Kingdom by faith receive its rewards, while those who turn from it in unbelief are themselves cast out.

*b. Prayerfully **Read Matthew 13** and **Write** your insights to share*

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. What are the different heart conditions that either prepare you or harden you to the Word of God?

Q2: How do the *wheat* and the *weeds* differ, and how can you tell them apart?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. What does the parable of the sower reveal about Kingdom growth? (Matt. 13:1-23)

1. Heart conditions for Kingdom Growth: The Kingdom of God is *hidden* and grows secretly in the spiritual reality, so the Lord's servants must never imagine they can *control* the *Kingdom* by fleshly means. Rather, we take responsibility for what we can do, which is to *sow the Word of God* freely (13:3, 19). However, the hidden, *spiritual condition of the heart* of its hearers, will shape how the Word of God grows or does not. The heart conditions for the Kingdom are: *good hearts* which are open to *hearing* and *understanding* (that is, responsible to act on) the Word of God. *Hard hearts* choose not to change nor understand the Word (19). *Selfish Hearts* still have hard parts untouched by the Word, so are temporary (21). *Worldly Hearts* are more influenced by the world's affairs than the Word so are choked (22). But, *Good Hearts* are surrendered to the Lord and His Word to bear fruit (23).

Q2. Why does God allow the wheat and the weeds to grow up together? (Matt. 13:24-43)

2. Harvest tests Kingdom Readiness: Weed or Wheat. The Kingdom of God involves both *sowing* but also a final *harvest*. That is, on earth, those who enter the Kingdom of God are expected to bear its *fruit*, as *the Word of God* changes them and as the new life of the Lord grows in them. So, those who are truly in the Kingdom grow from its “good seed” (37). However, there are those who also *grow*, but as the “weeds” (38) whose home is the world and whose source is the devil. Only the final Harvest will show the true nature of the growth, whether “wheat” of the Kingdom or the “weeds” of the world (41). The mark of someone being of the world is a harvest of “sin” and “lawbreaking” (42).

Q3. How do people respond differently to the Kingdom? (Matt. 13:44-58)

3. Hidden Kingdom Treasured or Turned From. On earth, the Kingdom's treasured value is hidden, like a *treasure buried in field* (44). However, the sons of the Kingdom will recognize its glorious treasure and prioritize their life on earth to sacrifice for the Kingdom and to *reveal its riches* to those who would hear. However, the world blinds people by their Godless unbelief to the Kingdom's value, so even Jesus, the King of His Kingdom, was not honored by those familiar with him, for they were blinded by *fleshly appearance* to His *heavenly glory*.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to **read** Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Growing Kingdom: Sowing and Harvest. As a Servant of Jesus Messiah, you are called to work to advance His Kingdom on earth until the day of Harvest, when the Lord's rule will cover the earth. So, these parables of the Kingdom will help your labor. First, know the *hidden reality* of the Kingdom requires you to walk and advance it by faith, keeping from relying on your own *fleshly ability* to seek to control its growth. As a *farmer, you sow and wait*. There are certain things beyond your control, such as the state of the *heart* of your hearers. So, so freely, then gather the ones showing Kingdom growth!

Labor, knowing that the *inevitable* Day of Harvest will reveal the true state of the crop. Beware, because in this life, wheat and weeds may look alike in their growth. But you keep faithful in planting the Seed of the Word and let the Lord test fruit in the end. Finally, check your own heart to *ensure that* the Lord and His Kingdom is your highest treasure! Honor Him always as your Lord and so abide in His Kingdom power to spread its growth! For, one day its glorious treasures will be yours to enjoy!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
!	Differ
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁷: Mustard Seed and Leaven: Small/ Hidden to Large: The Kingdom comes in small and hidden ways, for it operates in the *realm of the Spirit*. So, do not overlook the small, the secret ways that you are to serve in the Kingdom which the Lord will show you. Do not shirk sharing with the stranger, or the lonely, or the poor. Do not despise what is little. For, the flesh despises the *little* to seek the great and the glorious. But, the Kingdom's way moves from small to great!

⁷ **Footnotes: Well-trained Scribes:** The Kingdom's treasure is conveyed by the Word of God. So, train yourself as a *handler of the Word* in both the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament. You will learn to *bring forth* from your storehouse "old" treasures, as the *promises in the Hebrew Scriptures of Mashiach and His coming Kingdom* are brought to light to illuminate the current reality. Then, *bring forth* "new" treasures, as the direct Words of Jesus become a reality as the Kingdom unfolds in your current experience and reality!

**Chapter 8: SERVING IN THE WORLD: Faith in the
Son of God
Matthew 14**

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.*

a. Preview Matthew 14

Serving in the World: Faith not Flesh. Jesus Messiah brings His Kingdom *subtly*, as the Word of God is sown and grows in the hearts of it people, but the world seeks to limit and oppose the Kingdom's growth. So, read Matthew 14 to see how Jesus and His servants accomplish the work of the Kingdom even as fleshly people and the world seek to limit its growth!

First, see how Jesus and His followers faced ***worldly opposition from people of lawless flesh***. Herod uses his worldly power to satisfy the fleshly whims of people, so persecutes John the Baptist (14:1-12). Then, see how the disciples face shortages which seemingly prevent them from doing good, but find that their ***limited resources are enough for Kingdom Purpose***. For, the Lord shows his disciples how to offer what they have to God for his blessing (14:13-21).

Finally, Peter discovers that ***obeying Lord's Command by faith gives Kingdom Power***. For, Peter is able to walk on water to *obey* the command of the Lord (14:22-32).

b. Prayerfully Matthew 14 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How does the world and its fleshly people seek to *oppose or limit* the Kingdom work of Jesus Christ?

Q2: Why do we receive a spiritual power enabling us to obey the commands of Jesus Messiah?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How does the world oppose the work of the Kingdom?
(Matt. 14:1-12)

1. Worldly Opposition: Lawless Flesh. Herod and Herodias exemplify how fleshly people oppose the Kingdom of God and overlook Jesus as the world's rightful Messiah. When John the Baptist rebuked Herod for his *lawless* behavior, Herod did not repent but instead retaliated and put John in prison. Herodias herself begrudged John for this rebuke, and finally asked for his head on a platter. Thus, the rulers of this world neither *fear God* nor *heed His Laws*, so they persecute those who stand for righteousness.

Q2. How can the Servants of Jesus Christ advance the Kingdom when they have limited resources in the world? (Matt. 14:13-21)

2. Limited resources enough for Kingdom Purpose: Sacrificial Offerings Blessed. Servants of Jesus can also be influenced by the *flesh*, which judges according to the *world's equations and realities*. So, the disciples see no *possible* solution to the shortage of food facing the great crowd of more than *five thousand people*. But Jesus sees the higher kingdom purpose, so commands the disciples to act. Notice how the Kingdom addresses *worldly limitations*. First, the disciples are encouraged to *sacrifice to Jesus what little they have* (18). Then, Jesus asked God to *bless* this small amount. Finally, Jesus and the disciples *gave away* what they had, which was enough to feed the crowd. Only by sacrifice and giving is the Kingdom advanced!

Q3. How do the Servants of Jesus Christ experience His Kingdom power? (Matt. 14:12-32)

3. Obeying Lord's Command by Faith for Kingdom Power: The exceeding Kingdom power of the Lord Jesus is made available to His servants when they simply obey His commands! When Peter saw Jesus standing on the seas, he knew that it was impossible for him to also walk on the water. So, he knew that his only hope was to *obey the Lord's commands, so he says: "Lord... command me to come to you"* (28). Because Jesus is the Lord of all authority, He gives power to all those who wish to obey His commands! So, Peter walked on the water by faith in the Lord and His Word of command!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Serving in the World: Kingdom Power and Purpose. As servants of Jesus Christ, you are called to advance His Kingdom work in a world which opposes you, threatening your life and discouraging your faith. Currently, the world's *lawless* powers respond to God's law as a personal *insult*. So, Herod threw John the Baptist in prison and Herodias asked for his head. Yet, their threats could not stop the purposes of Jesus (12). So, the Word *instructs* the servants of Jesus in two ways to minister in this dark world.

First, *sacrifice* all that you have to the Lord, that He might in turn offer your sacrifice to the Father, who blesses and multiplies your work to meet the needs of your people (20). So, the disciples *gave Jesus* all they had—five loaves and two fish (17). Jesus *takes* and gives this offering to God, that He might bless it so that the Father might use it to feed the hungry crowd. (19)

Second, *obey the Lord's command* to experience His authority and power, which will strengthen you to finish His work for you. In this way, people *obeyed the Lord's command* and walked on water.

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁸: Lord... command me: The *simple choice* to obey the Lord's commands is the key that unlocks His Kingdom power and rule to strengthen those who obey him! For the Lord's Word of Command transcends this world's material limitations. To respond to the Lord's command by faith operates in the realm of the Kingdom, allowing the *over-ruling power of heaven* to intervene in earth's sphere of matter. So, when the Lord *commands* Peter to come to him, Peter's act of *faith* and focus on the Lordship of Jesus supersedes such worldly realities of *water buoyancy and gravity*. But, the world can stifle faith, so Peter's fear turned him away from Jesus.

⁸ **Footnotes: you give them something to eat...:** The world naturally *stifles faith* by remind the disciples of Jesus that they are constrained by their *powerlessness and poverty* in this world. However, Jesus knows that the Lord God's work is not limited by the world, so He simply asks His servants to *offer him what they have*, that God might multiply their works to bear fruit!

Chapter 9: HARDENED HEARTS: Defiled by Unbelief

Matthew 15-16:12

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview Matthew 15-16:12

Hardened Hearts: Defiled by Unbelief. Jesus Messiah proclaims His Kingdom Gospel through His servants, but this message will provoke the hearts of the world's people. So, read Matthew 15-16:12 to hear the instructions of the Lord to confront hard hearts that resist His Words of truth.

First, understand that the fleshly people, especially those who seek to hide behind their own *self-righteousness*, will develop **detached and defiled hearts** which give an appearance of faith but actually rely on empty words and lifeless *commands* of men (Mt. 15:1-20). In contrast, the heart of faith turns in *self-less surrender* to the Lord, for **desperate hearts turn to the Lord** (15:21-31). But those caught up in *their own self-righteousness* will not come to the Lord for mercy, for **fleshly teaching deadens hearts and eyes to the Shepherd** (15:32-16:12).

b. Prayerfully Read Matthew 15-16:12 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. What are signs that your heart is growing cold to the Lord?

Q2: How can you avoid the *self-righteous unbelief* that will harden your heart to Jesus and His Gospel?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How does *self-righteous* and man-made religion harden the hearts of *fleshly people*? (Matt. 15:1-20)

1. Detached and defiled heart: Worthless words. The Pharisees accused the disciples of Jesus of *breaking the commands of the Elders* (15:3), for the Jewish people held to a *self-righteousness* before God based on their traditions and *religious teachings*. However, did such a *self-righteousness* produce the fruit which God required? In actuality, Jesus showed that *self-righteousness* based on human teachings actually *abrogates* the commands of God (6) and leads *hearts away from God* (8). The reason why *fleshly religion* rather than *faith in Mashiah* leads to Godlessness is a) the *commandments of men* have no spiritual power (9); b) to rely on *fleshly understanding* necessarily displaces the *Word of God* as authoritative due to the desire to replace, to be “like” God (Gen. 3:5); c) *fleshly religion* have no impact on *defiled hearts* (18) but simply *justify errant hearts*.

Q2. What hearts will receive the Lord by faith? (Matt. 15:21-31)

2. Desperate hearts turn to the Lord: Self-less surrender.

Unlike the Pharisees and scribes, who were protective of their own *self-righteousness*, this Canaanite woman cares little for her *self-reputation*. So, when Jesus compares the Jews to *hungry children*, she does not hesitate to recognize she has no rights or status before him (27). Such *surrender* before the Lord Jesus recognizes as “great faith”—the forsaking of any *self-righteousness* to depend entirely on the mercy of the Lord. Thus, we see the deceptive allure of *human religion* to dilute faith in Mashiach—the *self-righteous* have no need for mercy, being justified by their own words and traditions.

Q3. What will *fleshly teaching* affect the heart and eyes that view the Shepherd? (Matt. 15:32-16:12)

3. Fleshly Teaching deadens hearts and eyes to Shepherd:

Leaven of Unbelief. When the Pharisees and Sadducees ask Jesus for a “sign from heaven” (16:1), Jesus correctly points out that their problem is not the *sign* but their unwillingness to *see and interpret* the signs correctly. Behind this *interpretive and willful blindness* is their “teaching,” which Jesus calls the “leaven” (6). That is, the teaching of the *Pharisees* is like *leaven*, because has the *appearance of growth* but is insubstantial, full of emptiness. In this way, the *voluminous* words which the Pharisees produce may appear to be productive, but they are lifeless. Worse, their *fleshly unbelief* hardens the heart and blinds their eyes to Mashiach and His salvation!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Hearts Hardened to the Kingdom: Religious Unbelief. As a servant of Jesus Mashiach, your biggest *foe* on earth is the most *insidious*—fleshly human religion and the Self-righteousness it produces.

If *great faith* surrenders to Jesus as its merciful *Lord and Mashiach*, fleshly human religion completely *undermines* such surrender by propping up *human self-sufficiency and righteousness*, which needs neither God nor His salvation.

So, *diagnose the signs of fleshly religion* and its *self-righteous fruit*. Look no further than the heart of the worshipper. Does their heart *condition to God draw back* to remain at a distance, even while their lips honor him? Are their hearts *defiled* by passions of the flesh, growing in a Godless vacuum? And, do they find ways, through their *religious, self-justifying language, to break the commands of God*?

If so, discern the *roots of this unbelief*. Jesus warns against the *leaven of the Pharisees*, that is, their teaching. Because the Pharisees rely on their own *words and understanding*, their words have no *spiritual power* (Matt. 7:29). Rather than drawing men closer to God, their teachings create a distance, with a focus and faith placed in *human religion* and teachings.

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)		
✓ Agree	? Question	! Differ
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?		
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?		
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?		

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁹: Commandments of Men: Deceptive *fleshly teaching of the Bible* bears the fruit of a) alienation from God (Matt. 15:8) and *neutralizing the commanding authority of the Word* (6). Fleshly teaching shifts the *authority* from God to human teachers. How do the *commandments of men* get such power? As we see in Satan's first *deception*, 1) ***ambiguation***: doubt is cast on the plain meaning of the Word and its command (Gen. 3:1); 2) ***addition***: the message of the Word is diluted by *human insertions* that may run parallel with the Word (3); 3) ***amending***: presuming to know the mind of God, the Word is replaced with a more convenient reading (4-5). The result of this shifting authority is *unbelief*: humans take the place of God as having the *final say* on meaning, becoming "like God" (5), having the God-like power to define reality, creating a "good" and "evil" to create a *self-righteousness* (e.g. a Jewish sense of self-righteousness by being *Torah-observant*).

⁹ **Footnotes: Honoring with Lips:** People claiming a Self-righteousness will adopt the language of Scripture to justify their own righteousness. Thus, their Words are simply a means to sound holy. Of course, such discourse involves *talking about God* in an *honorable way*. However, the honor which God regards is *sacrificial*, surrendering self-righteous comfort to obey at great costs. For, only such sacrifice reveals a heart of worship, one that values God over any other possession.

Chapter 10: FOLLOWING CHRIST CRUCIFIED:

Sharing in Suffering

Matthew 16

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then **Write Insights** to Share with others.

a. Preview Matthew 16

Following Christ Crucified: Denying Self. Only those who know the fullness of Jesus Christ and the sacrifice of His cross can truly follow Him. So, read Matthew 16:13-38 to see how Jesus reveals Himself and His purpose to those willing to share with Him in His cross of sacrifice.

First, *fleshly people* who are only willing to trust in Self and set their own experiences and understanding as the standard for their lives are blinded to Jesus, for disciples are those willing to **follow Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God** (Matt. 16:13-20). Yet, even His disciples must reject *fleshly values and purposes* to follow **the purpose of God, not man**. (Matt. 16:21-23). Finally, disciples of Jesus Christ must choose to share their Lord's view of *life itself* as not something to *protectively hold*. Instead, they must choose to *deny* not *save* self by taking up their own cross. For, **sharing in the Lord's Cross of Self-Sacrifice forsakes Self-Protection** (Matt. 16:24-28)

b. Prayerfully Read Matthew 16 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How will clinging to one's own *fleshly understanding* blind you to the real identity of Jesus?

Q2: How must the disciple of Jesus *deny* himself and take up *his cross* like Jesus did?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How must disciples see Jesus in order to follow him? (Matt. 16:13-20)

1. Follow Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God: Revealed by God.

To follow Jesus Christ as the Son of God, you must first surrender your own *understanding and experience* to know Him, instead relying on the Father to reveal His *blessed Son* to you (16:17). So, Peter was able to see Jesus as the Christ/ Messiah in the fullness of His glory as the “Son of God” yet also humbled as the “Son of Man” (13, 16)—*gloriously humbled* to please the Father.

Q2. Why is it impossible to follow the purposes of man and also the purpose of God? (Matt. 16:21-23)

2. Follow the purpose of God, not man: Saving Self. To follow Jesus Christ as the One sent from God, you must first surrender your own *fleshly and worldly purposes* to Him, setting your mind entirely on the *things of God* (16:23). It is impossible to serve the *purposes of man*, because the sole purpose of the *flesh* is to preserve and exalt human life. *However*, the Son of Man came to serve the Father by *giving His life as a ransom* (10:45). So, you cannot serve the Lord to save others while also seeking to save your own life.

Q3. How can disciples share in the life of Jesus Christ as their Lord? (Matt. 16:24-38)

3. Sharing in Lord's Cross of Self-Sacrifice: Forsaking Self-Protection. To follow Jesus Christ and His ministry of the Cross, you must first surrender your own *life* and *self* to Him, denying yourself so that you can take up His cross daily—every day seeking not self but sacrificing to serve. The *cross is not an instrument of total loss but of exchange*. At the cross, we give up what is *fleshly and selfish* to gain and give a *lasting life* for ourselves and others! For, whoever “loses his life for my sake will find it!” (25). Consider the inverse. You can gain the whole world, yet still lose your “soul”—your very self. But, to give up your Self in surrender, you gain life and the Kingdom of *heaven and earth* as well (Matt. 5:3-5).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Following Jesus Christ by Sharing His Cross: Deny Self. Over the generations of the Church, many have aspired to follow Jesus Christ as His disciples, but few have succeeded. For, as we see with Peter's own experience, the *fleshly urge* imprinted in us to *Save our Self* seeks to derail our discipleship at every turn. For, unless we *crucify* our *Self* on the cross (Gal. 2:20), we will be blind to the *person of Christ*, mistake the *purpose of Christ*, and fail to share in the *life of Christ* as we choose self-understanding, self-protection, and self-safety to abandon Christ's cross of salvation.

So, the Church has often *diminished* the Lordship of Christ, the Son of God, because it *elevated* human understanding over *revelation* (17) and its own *theology* over a pure knowledge of the *heavenly man*.

And, *seeking to protect* its institutions and way of life, the Church has often mistaken *human interests* for the *things of God*. So, resolve to set your mind on God's purposes, as *humble, inconvenient, and perplexing* though they might appear!

Finally, the *people of Christ's Church* have been weakened by their desperate clinging to their *way of life*, fearing loss as an irrecoverable mistake, counting their lives with earth's *fleshly calculus*. But the cross proves that *earthly loss of Self* means a *heavenly gain of Life*. So, do not fear sacrificing your life for your Lord Jesus Christ, whose salvation come through sacrifice!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes¹⁰: Things of Man: To focus on the *things of man* is to seek what the *flesh* life desires. The *flesh* is our *earthly self* that seeks to live without God (Rom. 8), exalting the human Self above all else in the place of God. Naturally, the *flesh* seeks the human purposes of Man, which may seem *religious* but are entirely *Godless*—God is dethroned that man may be exalted. Ultimately, the *things of man* will become more and more distanced from God, for the *hearts of man* will be on *man* and not God.

¹⁰ **Footnotes: Deny Self/ Take up Cross:** To *take up your cross* with Jesus is to commit yourself to the path of *surrendered sacrifice*. That is, you resolve to give up what is *fleshly* and *Self-led* in this world in order to fulfill the purposes of the Father and to accomplish the Lord's life-giving mission.

Prayer Requests:

Prayer Request/ Date	Answered Prayer/ Thanks

Journaling:

What is God teaching you?	How are you growing?

Sermon Notes:

Sermon Notes/ Date	Applying it to my life

Notes:

SERIES 2: RIGHTEOUS BY FAITH

BOOK 5:

Romans

Book 5: Romans

Introduction

When you come to Jesus Christ for salvation, a great new reality is opened to you, the Kingdom of God! God and His Son, Jesus Christ, rule over an eternal Kingdom which will one day transform heaven and earth, and you are invited to be a part of this family as a member of God's own family, the sons of God who will inherit with the Lord Jesus Christ all of heaven and earth!

So, the book of Romans takes you on a transformative journey through the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It reveals first your starting point, for we all are born into *unbelieving flesh* that has wandered from God and His blessings. But this book then brings you to Jesus Christ and the redemption he has won for you on His cross. So, when you join Him in His death to sin, repenting of your fleshly ways, He gives you a new birth by the Holy Spirit! Now, His spiritual life sanctifies you to become more and more like Him in righteousness. Until the day when His Kingdom renews all creation!

Note: Choose to read Romans by Faith not Self-Understanding:

<p>Self-understanding: I must know and understand everything. If it doesn't fit what my own mind can grasp fully:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I doubt it. Or, I will change its meaning; • It is wrong, so I will reject what is said, or change it for my life. <p>Because I know best.</p>	<p>Faith: God knows everything, because only God has perfect understanding. He is greater than me. I will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust that he is right; • Receive and do His Word even if I may not understand it fully. <p>Because God knows best.</p>
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STEPS of a Devoted Disciple:

Your *Devotion* matters to the Lord. For, there is only one Lord and God, and He deserves creation's highest honor and praise. So, you were made to give yourself to the Lord God in loving devotion of heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30). In this same devotion to the Lord, Jesus Christ calls you to follow Him as His disciple. These short devotionals guide you in the Word to cultivate a heart devotion to the Lord as His disciple.

- First, **discover** what His life-giving Word has to say to you personally, being careful to write down your insights to share with others.
- Then, **discuss** His Word with those closest to you: your family, your friends, and in your home fellowship group (your spiritual family).
- Next, **dialogue** to compare views on key passages with a partner—either another disciple, or an older mentor or younger mentee.
- Finally, **develop** key skills as you abide in the Word by applying it to your life as you read the devotional, notes, and footnotes.

START HERE: *Humble Yourself in Prayer:*

Devote yourself to the Lord to hear and do His Will for you.

Do I want to humble myself under the Lordship of God by faith?

Or, will I live as my own Lord, relying on my own understanding?

PRAYER OF DEVOTION

Lord God, I devote my life to you today. I offer you my soul to live humbly under your Lordship; my mind to seek your will and Spirit; my heart to

love you and others; and, my strength to obey your Word and Will!
Amen.

Chapter 1: GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST: Grace for Godless *Romans 1:1-2:13*

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then **Write Insights** to Share with others.

a. Preview Romans 1:1-2:13

Gospel of Jesus Christ: Power of God. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is God's power for all people to be saved, first for the Jew and then for the Gentile. So, read Romans 1 to find out how God gives Jesus Christ as the only *way for our salvation* so that all might be saved from the wrath of God, for both Jew and Gentile have sinned and done evil in God's eyes.

First, discover that God's *Gospel (good message) of life* is given to us in the person of Jesus, the only Savior who both appears in the *flesh* as descended from David but is also the Son of God, raised in power by the Holy Spirit to be our Lord and Christ. (1:1-7). Then, discover how Gentiles need the Gospel of Jesus Christ because they turned from God in ignorance, falling under the *Wrath of God* (1:18-32), Then, see how the Jewish people also need the Gospel of Jesus, having the Law yet also having *unrepentant hearts as evil-doers* to judge *the Gentiles*. (2:1-13)

*b. Prayerfully **Read Romans 1:1-2:13** and **Write** your insights to share*

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why does God's Gospel of Salvation focus entirely on Jesus Christ as the Son of David and the Son of God?

Q2: How are both Jews and Gentiles both guilty and in need of the Gospel of Salvation in Jesus Christ?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. What is the focus of the saving Gospel of God? (Rom. 1:1-7)

1. Gospel of Jesus Christ: Obedience of Faith. God gives us His *gospel*, the good news of new life, in the person of Jesus Christ (Messiah). Only Jesus is qualified to fulfill Mashiach's redemptive mission, for only Jesus is the Son of David in the flesh (3; 2 Sam. 7:12) and the Son of God by the Holy Spirit (4; 2 Sam. 7:14). And, we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord by His *resurrection* from the dead (4). No other person in human history bears this distinction and so

sits as Lord to give life to those who come to Him in *humbled, obedient faith* which confesses and relies on the reality of His person!
Q2. Why does every person need the Gospel of Jesus Christ?
(Rom. 1:18-32)

2. Wrath of God: Needing Gospel of life. Our first human flaw *presumes* that we are *righteous* in our own humanity, lifting ourselves up to replace God as the *deciders* of “good and evil” (Gen. 3:5). Such *ungodliness* which replaces “God” with “human choice” leads to a human, fleshly Self-righteousness which denies the full *truth* of God and invites God’s fullness of wrath. For, separating ourselves from God in ungodliness, we *insist* that a *human self-righteousness* equals

the *righteous life of God Himself*, which is actually the most corrupt form of unrighteousness (Rom. 1:18).

Q3. Why do Jews and those with the Law still need the Gospel of Jesus Christ? (Rom. 2:1-13)

3. Unrepentant Heart: Persistent Evil-doing. All people, whether Jew or Greek, have the same *flesh* from our first parents, which by nature is *ungodly* (Rom. 1:18), positioning the human *Self* to take God's place to determine "good" and "evil" for ourselves (Gen. 3:5). So, when Jews also seek to achieve by their own fleshly, Self-efforts, a *self-righteousness* by using the Law of God, they are *still condemned* (2:1). Though the Law gives them a *basis* for *judging others*, it still does not achieve a *righteous life* which can replace God's *heavenly, spiritual life of perfection*, free from evil. Such *righteousness* belongs only to the Lord (Jer. 23:6) and is given freely to those who *repent* of

their ungodly Self-Rule to come to Jesus Christ in the *obedient surrender of faith* (Rom. 1:5).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Gospel of Jesus Christ: Life from God. God speaks *life* to us by His Gospel of His Son, Jesus Christ. Because God is the Most High, appointing Jesus as the risen Lord of all (1:3), our *natural state* to have life with God is to live in *obedient faith* to be counted *righteous*, sharing the same holy life which comes from God himself (5). Faith is *obedient*, for when we come to God as the only *righteous Lord*, our only response is *humble surrender*. Recognizing that we are *not* God, nor can any of our human mortality *replace God* as Lord—neither Self-Rule, Self-Understanding, nor *Self-Righteousness*. Sadly, our entire *human history* has witnessed our fleshly attempts to *live apart from God* (ungodliness) to establish our own *right* way of living (unrighteousness) (1:18). Gentiles replaced God's truth with their own *fleshly imaginings* (1:21), seeking to find *life* by giving into to their *fleshly passions* in this *material world* (24-25). Furnished with the Law of God, Jews likewise *established* a life of Self-Righteousness by their own *fleshly* (albeit prodigious) *efforts*, a Jewish Life based on their long history of *rabbinic teachings*. Yet, their determined *self-righteousness* which they clung to with a Job-like resolve (Job. 31:37) resulted in the people's *desolation and exile to Babylon for their sins* (2 Chron. 36:17) and their continued *desolation and death* (Ezek. 37:11). For, in their *self-righteousness*, the Jews rejected God's *redemption in Jesus Mashiach*, who will be the one to finally give them and all people a *righteousness* from God to those who *surrender to Him in Faith!*

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes¹: Gospel of Jesus Christ: From our very first act of *ungodliness*, the Lord God has always promised to restore us to Himself through His promised *Seed*, Mashiach (Gen. 3:15). So, God has always ordained that we have *faith* in His promised Seed, Mashiach, for our redemption and righteousness (Jer. 23:6). Abraham himself was *counted righteous* by his faith in God and His promised Seed (Gen. 15:5-6), for Mashiach, the “Seed of Abraham,” would be multiplied like the stars.

Added Notes: Obedience of Faith: Accounted Righteous: God always talk about *righteousness* as a matter of life and death, for to be “righteous” is to embody the very spiritual life of God. So, the question remains: can a person be “righteous” apart from God and His will?

God ordains that His Mashiach, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Son of David, would be the means by which all people obtain His *righteous life* (Rom. 1:16). So, *faith requires us to surrender* our own ways and abilities to reason and construct our own righteousness, to humbly receive Jesus as God’s way of righteousness.

Chapter 2: RIGHTEOUS BY FAITH: SEED OF ABRAHAM

Romans 3:1-4:25

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then **Write** *Insights to Share with others.*

a. Preview *Romans 3:1-4:25*

Righteous by Faith: Seed: Redeemed by Jesus. Corrupted by our *unbelief and fleshly sin*, no one is righteous, so God sends Jesus as our redemption so that we can be made righteous by his grace, freely! So, read Romans 3-4:25 to discover how we are all freely made righteous by the blood of Jesus Christ!

First, remember that *no one is righteous in their unbelief*, which turns us from God to trust in ourselves in unbelief. For, when we trust in our own understanding above all else, we *dishonor God* and lose our “fear of God” (*Rom. 3:9-18*). Then, discover the grace of God which gives you the gift of righteousness freely, if you have *faith* in Jesus Christ, for his *redemption makes us sinners to be righteous* (*Rom. 3:21-31*). Finally, learn of how *Abraham* is our example and father of our faith. Like Abraham, our *faith is counted to us as righteousness* (*Rom. 4:1-25*).

b. Prayerfully Read Romans 3:1-4:25 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why are you unable to be *righteous* apart from God, by your own works?

Q2: Why must Jesus Christ redeem us so that we can be *righteous*?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. Why can no one be righteous on their own, apart from God? (Rom. 3:9-18)

1. No one righteous in their unbelief: Fearless and Godless. All people, whether Jew or Gentile, are guilty of wandering away from God to trust in their own understanding. This is called *unbelief*—trying to live life apart from God on our own. By turning away from God, who is the only one to have the *perfect, righteous life*, we have become lifeless and “worthless” (12), doing only evil because we live in idolatry. We do not fear God as our Most High Creator but want to live by our own human works.

Q2. How can God make us sinners become righteous? (Rom. 3:21-3)

2. Redemption makes us sinners to be righteous: By Faith. Remember, in *unbelief*, we have strayed away from God. So, for all who are willing to return to God by faith, *seeking Him* and regarding Him as the only one to save us, then He gives us the *redemption which Jesus Christ* accomplished by His blood. For, in our sin, we fall short of God’s glory. But Jesus Christ redeems us by His shed blood, so that He takes our *sin* and He gives us His *glorious righteousness* (23).

Q3. How can we live by faith? (Rom. 4:1-25)

3. Faith is Counted to us as Righteousness: Like Abraham. Let's consider how Abraham lived by faith, so that we too can have a faith which is counted to us as *righteousness* (3). First, Abraham considered himself "dead"—powerless in his own *flesh* to obtain what God had promised (17). For, Abraham *trusted not in his own weakness* but placed his *faith and entrusted his life* to God, who alone "gives life to the dead" and creates what does not yet exist. Finally, we *believe in God* even if we don't see an answer yet with our own eyes "in hope against hope" (18). We know that it is God who "raised from the dead Jesus our Lord" (24), who then gives us this righteous life of resurrection!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to **read** Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Freely Made Righteous: Redeemed by Faith in Jesus Christ our Lord. As a human family, we have all wandered from God to *seek out life apart from God—in* unbelief. But God has freely made a way for us to come back to himself, to be forgiven and made righteous, if only we put our *faith in Him, as did Abraham!*

Like *aged Abraham*, we should view our *flesh as dead* and powerless, having no life in us (4:19). But, when you realize that God is the one to give you life, He opens your eyes of faith to see Jesus Christ! For, Jesus Christ paid by His own blood to *redeem you*. To take from you all your sin and unrighteousness, and to give you freely His perfect righteousness (3:23-25)!

But you may ask, what happens to the Law of God? In Jesus Christ, the righteousness which God gives you fulfills all the demands of the Law. For, the Law *shows us Abraham*, whose faith was counted to him as righteousness (Gen. 15:6).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	! Differ
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

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Key lesson to learn?

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Notes²: Propitiation- Payment by His blood: Jesus Christ is able to *redeem you*—giving you a new life by taking your *sinful life* to

give you His *righteous life*. Because, He *pays for your sins by His own righteous life*, sacrificed to pay the ransom debt of your sins! Propitiation is the payment of a ransom, which He did on the cross by his shed blood.

Added Notes: Justification- made righteous: At the tree of temptation, our first parents trusted in themselves to be “righteous” by their human *flesh* rather than by relying on God by faith. This desire to be “Self-righteous”—to be right in our own selves drives us to be continually *self-justifying*. We want to be seen as “righteous” in the eyes of other people. But, if we give up trying to Self-Justify ourselves, instead trusting in God, we become truly righteous by faith!

Chapter 3: ALIVE IN RIGHTEOUSNESS: Peace and Grace

Romans 5:1-6:14

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then *Write Insights to Share* with others.

a. Preview Romans 5:1- 6:14

Alive in Righteousness: Peace and Grace. When God gives you the *righteousness* of Jesus Christ when you put your faith in Him, this righteousness makes you come alive to live a new life! So, read Romans 5- 6:14 to discover how this *righteous life* of Jesus Christ will give you a new life with God!

First, learn that your *righteous of faith gives you Peace with God through Jesus Christ*. God no longer sees you as a guilty, condemned sinner but rather as having a perfect righteousness. This righteousness is poured into your heart as *love* by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:1-11)! Then, discover His purpose for this righteousness, for *Jesus Christ makes you alive in righteousness to rule in life* (Rom. 5:12-21). Finally, this righteousness of God is yours because your life is now part of the life of Jesus Christ! You have been *joined with Jesus Christ in death to be united in His Resurrection Life* (Rom. 6:1-14).

b. Prayerfully Read Romans 5:1- 6:14 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How will you live differently now that you have a lasting peace with God through Jesus Christ?

Q2: What does it mean for you to share with Jesus Christ a resurrection life?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How does the gift of His righteousness change my relationship with God? (Romans 5:1-11)

1. Righteousness gives you peace with God: Through Jesus Christ. When Jesus Christ makes you *righteous*, you enter a permanent *peace* with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. You are accepted in Jesus forever! And, by faith, you also live in God's *grace*—your heavenly father will give you all that you need to live a righteous life here on earth! As you live in grace and peace, God will also fill your heart with hope, as this righteous life will draw you increasingly closer to God. For, the Spirit pours out God's own love for you into your heart! (5:5).

Q2. What is God's purpose for you in your righteous life?
(Romans 5:12-21)

2. Jesus Christ makes you alive in righteousness to rule in life.

When you were straying from God, you were enslaved by your *flesh* to the world and its powers. But, when you *submit to Jesus by faith* and receive His righteous life, you can now “rule” in your life! That is, you have the freedom from sin to live and make the right choices for your life. Choices that are part of your new righteous life in God's Kingdom and Family! For, one day, you will *rule with Christ* when His Kingdom transforms this world!

Q3. How should we now live in this life? (Rom. 6:1-14)

3. Joined with Jesus in Death to be United in His Resurrection

Life. When you come to Jesus Christ by faith, your *righteous life* which grows in you should shape how you live! You have already been joined with Jesus Christ in His *death-to-sin*, so your flesh should no longer control you. (If you do sin, confess and repent immediately- 1 Jn. 1:9). Now, you are to live *united in His Resurrection Life*. That is, you and Jesus Christ now share a new life together. When He rose from the dead in power, this powerful life is now yours! (6:5). So, present yourself to Jesus to do the *right things* He has planned for you!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to **read** Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Alive in Righteousness: Sharing Life with Jesus Christ. In your old life in the flesh, dead in sin, you lived a solitary life. You were alone, separated from God and robbed of His peace and joy. But you have now come to the Lord Jesus Christ by faith, so you have exchanged your *lonely life* for a *shared life with Jesus Christ!* In this new life in Jesus Christ, you relate to God in the same way that He enjoys the Father! Your *righteous life* secures for you a lasting *peace* with God. No longer fearful or condemned, you enjoy the peace of the Father's loving embrace! And, the Father opens his heart to you, give you all things by His grace to live his righteous life! What gives your *Father* joy? To see you "rule" in your life through the *righteous life* of Jesus Christ. For, He will answer the prayers of your heart, so that you see Him work and transform those around you. As the world's opposition gives way to God's good will for you! So, abandon your old life of Selfish isolation. Rather, give yourself *freely*, like a gift, to Jesus Christ and the righteous life He wants to live *through you!*

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
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Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

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Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

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Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes³: United with Jesus in death and life: When you came to Jesus Christ, you were *baptized into Him—that is*, you were joined with both *his death to sin* and also His *resurrection* into new life by the Spirit of God! (Gal. 2:20). Your old name, your old self, and your old plans are now washed and resurrected into His all-enveloping new life!

Added Notes: Present your Self to Righteousness: God gives you back your life, when you come to Jesus Christ by faith. So, consider your life as a *gift*, which you can either squander on your Self, or you can give back to God for His righteous purposes! When you choose to present your life to the Lord as a sacrifice for His righteous life to be expressed through you, you will enjoy the fullness of this spiritual life—its peace, grace, love, hope, and joy! (5:5).

Chapter 4: ALIVE IN CHRIST: Walking in Righteousness

Romans 6:15- 7:25

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview Romans 6:15- 7:25

Alive in Christ: Walking in Righteousness. Live your New Life in Jesus Christ by walking with Jesus Christ in righteousness. So, read Romans 6:15-7:15 to see that your new life in Jesus Christ calls you to offer yourself to Him to live obediently by *serving in the Spirit* and not according to *condemning rules*, for you are not *compelled by the flesh* but by the Lordship of Jesus Christ!

First, view your new life as a gift, so *give your Self to obedient Righteousness*, so that you are empowered and led by this righteous life as you go through the process of sanctification (Rom. 6:15-23). But, this sanctifying work of *righteousness* is accomplished not by the *Law's condemnation* but by *Serving in the Spirit*, for just following rules distances you from God, so serve freely by the Spirit (Rom. 7:1-6). You will still struggle as the *flesh is sanctified*, so *you must forsake the flesh to be saved by the Lord Jesus Christ* (Rom. 7:7-25).

b. Prayerfully Read Romans 6:15- 7:25 and Write your insights to share

SEEING What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas	
LEARNING What does it mean? What is it teaching me?	
DOING What lesson can I apply to my life?	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. *Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.*

Q1. Now that you are in Christ, why should you present yourself to do what is righteous? What will be the result?

Q2: What will happen if you give yourself over to the flesh, to do what is lawless?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. *Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.*

Q1. How should you now live in Jesus Christ? (Rom. 6:15-23)

1. Give yourself to obedient righteousness. Even though you are now covered by God's grace and forgiveness in Jesus Christ, you still have the choice to sin. Faced with this temptation, choose to live by *giving yourself* in obedience to Jesus Christ to live His righteousness through you! To give yourself is to *surrender, to say "yes" even when your flesh says "no" to Jesus* and His righteous life!

Q2. How should you forsake your old life but live in newness of life? (Rom. 7:1-6)

2. Don't live by Law's condemnation but by Serving in the

Spirit: One of the *old ways* that people will try to resist their *sinful flesh* is that they will fall back on *rule-behavior*, whether the rules of God's Law or human rules. But, the problem with *rule-behavior* is that you still rely on the flesh—on your own human power, to overcome the flesh. Don't fight the flesh in the power of the flesh, on your own. Instead, simply surrender to the Spirit and rely on the Lord to bear *spiritual fruit* to God!

Q3 How will you be delivered from the allure of your flesh? (Rom. 7:7-25)

3. Forsake the flesh: Saved by Lord Jesus Christ. When you rely on your own strength, you are secretly hoping that there is some *ability* in your Self, your *fleshly life*, to be good apart from God—on your own terms. But the reality is that “there is nothing good” dwelling in your flesh (7:18). You need to give up on your fleshly ability, crucify it with Christ (Gal. 2:20) so that the Lord alone can display His saving power in your life!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God’s Word as a Growing Disciple to **read** Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Power for Life: Sanctification. Now that you have been reborn by the redemption of Jesus Christ, you have a choice between “old” and “new.” Your flesh, which you’ve lived with all your life, will want to drag you back to your old way of *lawlessness*. Lawlessness is how you lived *isolated from God*—you let your Self do whatever it wanted, completely ignoring what God commanded. You lived *lawlessly* in the flesh. When you act lawlessly, you *hide from God* in the darkness of sin and the world. Do you remember the cold water of baptism you were submerged under? Living in *lawless darkness* is to live *under water*—you don’t belong there!

But, when you *give yourself to the Lord* to let him live His *righteous life through you*, you will at first feel a clash of your *will*. The good and righteous things the Lord wants will go against what your *flesh naturally wants*—but relax, and give in to the Lord. When you *surrender and obey the “righteousness” at work in you*, you will be “sanctified” (6:19)—literally, made more and more holy. The *old parts of your life* will be transformed, as the Lord claims them as “holy and precious” to him. As you are sanctified, you become more like Jesus!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
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Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

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What is the *big idea* of this passage?

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Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

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What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

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Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁴: Nothing Good in Flesh: Enslaved to Sin. Paul says that we have no *spiritual life* in our *flesh* because it is “sold,” it is

“dead,” it is *enslaved to sin* (7:8, 14-15). Once sin has killed us in the flesh, we have no *life* in the flesh. That is, we have no power or vitality to resist sin. So, stop relying on the flesh!

Added Notes: Belonging to Jesus Christ: When Jesus Christ pays for your sin-indebted life by His blood, He gains the rights to your life. That is, He becomes the absolute power and authority over your life. But, what his desire for you, then? He has purchased you from death that you might be “freed” from death, so that you might “bear fruit for God” (7:4).

Chapter 5: LIFE IN THE SPIRIT: Sons of God

Romans 8

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then **Write Insights** to Share with others.

a. Preview **Romans 8**

Life in the Spirit: Sons of God. Disciples of Jesus Christ have two paths in life to take, which follow powerful laws of *deadly sin* or life-giving Spirit. So, read Romans 8 to discover the Lord's family path for you in the Spirit as a son of God growing to resemble Jesus Christ!

First, understand that there is a powerful spiritual process at work in you, for the *law of the Spirit's Life freed you from the law of sin and death*. So, to live by the *growth law of the Spirit requires that you* give in to the Spirit's leading (Rom. 8:1-13). For, the Spirit gives you the spiritual life and power to live in the family of God, for the *Spirit leads us as sons of God*. Though we suffer hardship in this world, our true nature as His sons and heirs will soon be revealed (Rom. 8:14-25). So, God's family purpose for you guides the Spirit's work, for *God uses all things to form Christ's Righteous Image in us as brothers* (Rom. 8:26-38).

b. Prayerfully **Read Romans 8** and **Write** your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How will your life look if you *give in and follow the flesh*? If you *follow the Spirit*?

Q2: What is God's family purpose for you in Christ Jesus?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. What is the Spirit's Law of Life at work in you to free you from the Law of sin and death? (Romans 8:1-13)

1. Law of the Spirit of Life freed you: From the Law of sin and death. When the Holy Spirit gave you a new birth when you turned to Jesus Christ in faith, you received his *righteous life* to make you a spiritual being. This *Spirit-life* in you follows a *law of life*—life grows, matures, and becomes fruitful to reproduce itself. That law is at work within you, because it freed from an *old law operating in your flesh*. When you sinned, that sin brought *death to the flesh*. So, don't give in to the flesh, to let this *old law* keep perpetuating. Instead, give yourself to the Spirit's Law to grow up in Jesus!

Q2. How does the Spirit accomplish God's family purpose for you? (Rom. 8:14-25)

2. Spirit leads us as Sons of God: Com. The Spirit of God not only *births* but also *affirms* our relationship with God as *His sons and heirs* (8:15), for the Spirit within us calls to God, "Abba! Father!" As the Spirit gives us the *power* to be freed from the *flesh*, from the corrupting Sin that *ruins the entire creation*, the creation witnesses the Lord Jesus's redemption at work in our bodies, and this redemptive work promises to transform all of creation into the *freedom* we now enjoy! (23)

Q3. To what family purpose does the Spirit work in us? (Romans 8:26-38)

3. God uses all things to form Christ's righteous image in us as brothers. Amazingly, the Lord God purposes Jesus Christ to be the "Firstborn" Son among many "brothers" (Rom. 8:29). But, how can we, as children of this *earth*, share in the righteous image of Jesus Christ himself to be considered "brothers"? God uses "all things" to work for this *good purpose*, so that His patient and good grace works in your life to sanctify you to be worthy of the family of God!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Spirit of Sonship: Becoming a Brother. The *righteous new life* Jesus Christ gives you is not simply a *new way of thinking* or a *religious practice*. No, your new life is a *spiritual reality* to live in a new, heavenly reality—the family and kingdom of God! So, you are now a *person of two natures*. You are still in the *flesh*, for you live in this world as a material body. However, you also inhabit a spiritual reality, for the Spirit of God has begun a *new law* at work in your life, the *law of the Spirit of Life!*

First, know that your *new life of the Spirit* secures you *in Christ Jesus* (8:1), so you will never be “condemned” nor ever separated from God and His love (8:38-39).

Then, know that the Spirit in you will lead you through this earthly life as a *son of God*, as you call out to God as your “Father, Abba!” (15), setting your mind on the things of the Spirit and your heart on God’s Law (7).

For, as you endure this world’s hardships by the Spirit, putting to death the deeds of the body (13), you will be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ, the Son of God (29) so that Christ will be the firstborn among many brothers!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁵: Freedom of the Children of God: The world has only known sin and death, which corrupts not just the *flesh* with death (6) but also the entire creation (21). But, the work of redemption which Jesus Christ finished on the cross began a *law of the Spirit of Life* that takes root in the sons of God, its *first fruits of the Spirit* (23) but then spreads its freedom across all of creation! (23)

Added Notes: Conformed to Image of His Son: Firstborn among brothers. When the Spirit begins His life-giving work in you, a child of God, this life first emerges in your life as Christ's righteous life sanctifying the flesh so that you begin to resemble Jesus Christ himself. This work, which starts in this earth's trials and hardships, will grow into a full "glory" as you reflect Jesus Christ directly at His coming!

Chapter 6: ABRAHAM'S SEED MULTIPLIED: Sons of Faith

Romans 9

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then *Write Insights to Share* with others.

a. Preview Romans 9

Abraham's Seed Multiplied: Sons of Faith. The Lord God promised to multiply Abraham's Seed, Mashiach, as the host of heaven. So, read Romans 9 to see how God's promises is fulfilled as the children of faith, not necessarily the earthly offspring, are multiplied in Jesus Messiah!

First, *God multiplies children of faith as part of Abraham's Seed*, as He promised to Abraham in Genesis 22:17-18. This promised Seed of Abraham, Messiah, would *bless all the nations* of the earth as children are multiplied from both Jews and Gentiles (Rom. 9:1-18). Though *Abraham's earthly offspring are a multitude but only a remnant of Faith are Saved*, for those who belong to the promised Seed, Mashiach, must have the same faith of Abraham and not a self-righteousness of works (Rom. 9:19-29). For, *Israel pursued own Self-righteousness by their works not by faith* (9:30-33; 10:3). Those who insist on trusting in their own self-righteousness have no share in God's promised Seed, Messiah.

b. Prayerfully Read Romans 9 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How does God fulfill His promise to Abraham that his Seed, Messiah, would be *multiplied* like the stars of heaven?

Q2: Why is pursuing your own *self-righteousness* against the faith shown by Abraham?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How does God fulfill His promise to Abraham regarding his Seed, Messiah? (Rom. 9:1-18)

1. God multiplies children of faith from Abraham's Seed: When God promised to *multiply* the Seed of Abraham, Mashiach (Gen. 22:17), he was not merely promising the increase of Abraham's earthly offspring, the people of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—that is, Israel. For, His promise to *multiply Messiah* as the host of heaven specifies *children of Messiah* himself, who would be of the same *kind* as Abraham. They would be children of *faith* to be accounted *righteous*, for Abraham believed in God's promised Seed, Mashiach, and not in his own Self-righteousness.

Q2. Will all Abraham's earthly offspring be saved? (Rom. 9:19-29)

2. Abraham's earthly offspring multiplied, but only remnant of

faith saved: God's original promise of the redeeming Seed, given first to Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:15) then affirmed through the line of Shem (Gen. 9:27) and then promised through Abraham (Gen. 22:17-18) was the redeemer of the whole human family, not just Abraham's house. However, God promised this Seed to *multiply* into a multitude for him. A multitude not simply of *earthly children* but those who would be of the same kind as Messiah, who takes after his father Abraham in *faith*—relying not on his own self-righteousness but God's promise. Earthly offspring who refuse to live by such faith prove themselves unworthy of both Abraham and His Seed, Mashiach.

Q3. Why were the Gentiles made righteous but not Israel? (Rom. 9:30-33, 10:3)

3. Israel pursued own Self-righteousness: Family. The original sin of our human family was unbelief, relying on our own *fleshly condition and understanding* to establish our own “righteousness” of what is “good” and “evil” in place of God (Gen. 3:5). So, when Israel refuses to submit to the Lord God’s provision of righteousness by *faith* in His promised Seed, Mashiach (Gen. 15:6), they reject God’s *righteousness* for their own, thus disqualifying themselves as Abraham’s true heirs and the kindred of the Messiah.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply *God's Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.*

Children of Faith: Messianic Seed multiplied. God promises a multitude of sons for Abraham, but not simply a host of earthly offspring. Rather, God promises to *multiply Messiah himself* (Gen. 22:17-18), so that Abraham would have *children* who follow in his way of faith. For, Abraham *believed in God's* promised Seed, Mashiach, so was accounted as righteous. His children must also have such a faith, in order to be *reborn* as the *offspring of Messiah!* (John 1:12-13).

So, the *earthly children of Abraham*, the Jewish nation of Israel, might protest that they have a right to God's promises as the children of Abraham. However, the Law is replete with examples that God is indeed *sovereign* and chooses those to whom He shows mercy. Also, we have examples that sinners *forefeit a promise previously made*. So, Adam and Eve were promised the garden, but their *unbelief and sin* against God disqualified them from *the Lord God's prior blessing*. So, God has no obligation to those who reject Him and exalt themselves above His name.

And, this is exactly what the *earthly children of Israel have done*. Rather than recognize God's promised Seed, Messiah, as His rightful Heir and humanity's Redeemer, the Jewish people have *claimed* God's inheritance "for the Jews," assuming that they are entitled to all His blessings. Rather than accept *God's provision of righteousness* by faith, they have *insisted on their own self-righteousness* (10:3). Thus, forcing God to accept a human "righteousness" as being *justified in their sin and rebellion* (Gen. 3:5). May this never be!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

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What is the *big idea* of this passage?

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Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

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What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁶: Stumbling Block: Faith in Mashiach. God’s way of righteousness is only His Seed, Mashiach. For, rebellious humanity, from our first taste of using *human understanding to “know” good and evil* (Gen. 3:5) to the Jewish people insisting on using the Law to attain a *self-righteousness* of their own working (though the Law requires faith in God’s promised Seed for righteousness—Gen. 15:6, Jer. 23:6-7). Thus, Mashiach is the “stumbling block,” being the only way to God’s righteousness by His atonement. To believe in God is to trust the One he sends, Mashiach.

Added Notes: Establishing Self-Righteousness by fleshly works:

By misusing the Law of God, which from the beginning of Genesis (3:15) promises the coming Seed, Mashiach, as the redeemer of humanity, the Jewish people have insisted that they can attain a *Jewish righteousness* based on Law-observance and obedience to God’s commands. However, the entire Jewish history proves otherwise. From the monarchy to its exile to Babylon, the Jewish people devolved into wickedness and sin to incur God’s judgment. Their “righteousness” like filthy rags” (Is. 64:6). From Babylon even to the present day, the Jewish people have not found “life” from God and languish, even to the last days (Ezek. 37:11). For, they have rejected God’s way of righteousness, the appointed Heir of God and the family’s redeemer, Messiah (Jer. 23:6-7).

Chapter 7: ALL ISRAEL SAVED: Grafting in Gentiles

Romans 10-11

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview Romans 10-11

All Israel Saved: Grafted in Gentiles. Relying on their history as a people and Jewish understanding, Israel mistakenly supposed that they could *achieve a righteousness* by keeping the Law, yet they were blind to the *corruption* of their own flesh, which enslaved them to sin (Rom. 7:14) and made them *recoil from God* even when they were given the Law (Exodus 20:19). So, read Romans 10-11 to discover how Israel, in the end, will be saved.

First, God's only way of ***salvation is confessing Jesus Christ as Lord***, for both the Jew and the Gentile. For, faith admits that we have no power to save ourselves, so God sends us a Messiah who both descended from heaven and rose from the dead, apart from any *fleshly action* (Rom. 10:1-21). By God's grace, the Gentiles received Jesus as God's Messiah, so the ***Gentiles were grafted into tree by faith, Israel cut off for unbelief***. Sadly, the *tree* of God's planting runs through the house of Israel and David, so the Jews were *naturally* inclined to come to Jesus, but they rejected him for their own self-righteousness (Rom. 11:11-21). But, in God's merciful plan, ***after the fullness of Gentiles comes in, All Israel will be Saved!*** (Rom. 11:22-27).

b. Prayerfully Read Daniel 7 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. *Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.*

Q1. Why is Christ God's only way for salvation, and never by the fleshly works of humanity, whether Jew or Gentile?

Q2: When will Israel be saved?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. What is God's only way of salvation? (Romans 10:1-21)

1. Salvation is confessing Jesus Christ as Lord. In his deepest heart, God loves the Son of God and appoints Him the Heir and Firstborn Redeemer of all humanity. This *purpose* precedes the foundation of the world (1 Peter 1:19-20). So, even before Abraham or the people of Israel existed, God purposed for salvation to come only through His Son, Jesus Christ, and faith in Him as Lord. No *human purpose*, nor any work of Law-observance, has any power to *reverse humanity's condition of dead flesh*, nor can it supplant God's promise that only the Seed, Messiah, would be the one to "crush" the *serpent's enslaving corruption* (Gen. 3:15) and bring God's blessing to all nations (Gen. 22:17).

Q2. Why were the Gentiles given God's righteousness before the Jews? (Romans 10:11-21)

2. Gentiles grafted into tree by faith: Israel cut off for unbelief.

When Jesus was revealed to Israel as God's chosen Messiah, its people were already enamored and committed to their own *self-righteousness*, exalting the Jewish life and its traditions and learning as its only means of self-justifying righteousness. So, Israel had no need of God's redemption in Messiah, being blind in their unbelief. So, when Gentiles turned in faith to Jesus as Messiah, they were grafted in. Yet, in these last days, the tables turn as Gentiles *fall to their own self-made religion and unbelief*, a Christless "churchianity," while Jews rediscover Jesus and a uniquely Jewish faith in him!

Q3. Will the Jewish people be saved? (Rom. 11:22-27)

3. After fullness of Gentiles comes in: All Israel Saved. Though hardened, the tree of Israel is dormant but not dead, for there remains and will grow into full abundance in the last days a remnant of Israel *alive* in Jesus Mashiach! Coming to Jesus as the entirety of the Law and prophets puts them on the path of a *natural faith*, this Jewish remnant will *witness of Jesus* to their brethren until the Lord himself appears to affirm their witness (Matthew 10:23; Zech. 12:10).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to **read** Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Salvation in Mashiach: Times of Fruitfulness. Deluded by a fevered unbelief, humanity imagines that it can be “like God” to use *human understanding* to “know good and evil” (Gen. 3:5). So deluded, our first parent Even *reasoned* that there were good reasons to *sin and abandon God* for a Godless life in this world (6-7). Since then, the heirs of God's promises, the Jewish people, imagined that they *needed only their* Jewish wisdom and *works to obey the Law* to establish their own self-righteousness. Making them no different from the self-justifying religions of the world, whether the *indulgent pagans, ascetic Buddhists, or* similarly legalistic Muslims.

But, only God's appointed Messiah has the saving power to redeem humanity and give life to its people, *enslaved and dead in their flesh*. For, only the Son of God has *descended* from the heavens for our salvation (Rom. 10:6), and only Jesus Messiah has risen from the *abyss of death* to give new life to those who believe (7).

So, the only hope of the world is this Jesus, humanity's only Firstborn Son and Redeemer. Confess with your mouth that only He is your “Lord” (8), and *believe in your heart* that God raised Him from the dead. Only then will you be saved!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
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DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

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What is the *big idea* of this passage?

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Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

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Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁷: Cultivated Olive Tree: Natural or Grafted in. The Jewish people can be rightfully offended, as the *nations* are grafted into God's "tree," the house of Israel by faith in Jesus Messiah. For, the children of the house were raised by the nourishing promises of the Law. Rightfully observing its precepts. However, they overlooked the Law's most fundamental instruction—to *have a faith like Abraham* placed in the promised Seed, Messiah (Gen. 15:6). One day, these *natural branches* will repent and embrace forever their Firstborn Son, the Heir of their house, Jesus Mashiach! (Zech. 12:10).

Added Notes: Fullness of Gentiles/ All Israel Saved: In the wisdom of God, the Gentiles were allowed into the Kingdom by placing their faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Yet, as this number of Gentiles reaches its fullness in the last days, as the *corruption* of religious unbelief and self-righteousness hardens hearts, Israel will rediscover its faith in its *appointed Heir, Jesus Mashiach*. In the Day of the Lord, Jesus Himself will reveal Himself to Israel, and its people will look upon the face of their Firstborn Son and weep for their *self*-inflicted wound of unbelief. Thus, all Israel will be saved!

Chapter 8: LIVING SACRIFICES: One Body in Christ

Romans 12

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then *Write Insights to Share* with others.

a. Preview Romans 12

Living Sacrifices: One Body in Christ. The redemptive work of Jesus Christ to sanctify by the Spirit many sons for God's family will result in the freedom from corruption for all of creation! So, read Romans 12 to understand your fitting response to the great mercy of God shown to you in Christ Jesus!

First, we should *present our bodies as living sacrifice in spiritual worship to God* so that we not conform to the world but be transformed to do the will of God (Rom. 12:1-2). Then, worshipping our God together in the Spirit, we *live as one body in Christ as members of one another*, serving the Lord with the spiritual gifts given to each (Rom. 12:3-13). Finally, blessed by the Father together as His people on this earth, we *live in peace with all people* (Rom. 12:14-21).

b. Prayerfully Romans 12 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. *Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.*

Q1. How should we live in the *body*, now that the Lord God has shown us His mercy in Christ?

Q2: How do we live together on this earth as the members of Christ?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. *Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.*

Q1. How should we respond to God's great saving mercy to us in Jesus Christ? (Romans 12:1-2)

1. Present our bodies as living sacrifices: Spiritual Worship to God. Enslaved by the flesh to this dark world's corruption, we were never free. But, when Jesus Christ saves us by His *redemption and righteousness*, we now have back our very lives! But, what should we do? Will you squander your life again in the *flesh*, following your own selfish pursuits? Rather, give your *redeemed life* back to God as a *living sacrifice*, transformed by His word to do His will!

Q2. How should we live together as worshippers of our God?
(Romans 12:3-13)

2. Live as one body in Christ as members of one another:

Serving with Spiritual Gifts. Rather than worshipping in isolation, the Lord Jesus brings us together as members of His *one body*, sanctified out of this corrupted world to do His will and accomplish His purposes in the world. Though still living in weak bodies, we are empowered by the same Spirit who gives each one gifts for service!

Q3. How should we live as God's people in the world? (Rom. 12:14-21)

3. We live in peace with all people: Family. Though our bodies in this life are still weak, being sanctified of the *fleshly stain of sin* to be members of Christ's body on earth. So, even in persecutions, we "bless." In conflict, we live and testify to God's peace which is ours in Christ Jesus. When shown evil, we act honorably. When injured, we leave to God our very defense. So, we live blamelessly on this earth!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to **read** Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Living Sacrifices: Members of One Body. What a great mercy we have been shown by God! Separated from God and dead in our corrupted flesh, we had no hope and no life in this corrupted world. Yet, in His great mercy, God sent His Son Jesus Christ to rescue us on the cross, redeeming us from our *enslavement* to become His very *sons*, sharing the same *life and Spirit* as our Lord Jesus Christ, counted even as His *brothers* and fellow heirs!

How can we respond to such mercy, but to present all we have in our bodies to our God as *living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to Him!* (Rom 12:1-2). No longer living for our own *selfish flesh* but for the family purposes of God and His coming Kingdom!

Together, as His worshipping *sons*, we live as *members* of one another, joined as the *holy body of Christ* in this earth, working together by the Spirit to serve with His gifts! In this way, the peace of God binds us together and bears witness to the world of God's grace, for we "bless" even we are persecuted (14).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
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Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

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(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

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Notes⁸: Living Sacrifices: Spiritual Worship. Sacrifices offered to God are completely consumed by His holy fire, yet we are to be *living sacrifices*—encompassed by the fire of the Holy Spirit, yet not consumed. Like the bush burning with God’s holiness that revealed God to Moses!

Added Notes: Members of One Body: Our *spiritual worship* to God is not solitary and isolating but a *family unity*, for together we worship as members of one Body, the *body of Jesus Christ on this earth!* Sanctified by the Spirit and given to the glory of God, we serve together by one Spirit with varied gifts but one heart, to glorify the One who had mercy on us!

Chapter 9: PUTTING ON CHRIST: No Provision for Flesh *Romans 13*

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then *Write Insights to Share* with others.

a. Preview Romans 13

Putting on Christ: No Place for Flesh. By His great mercy, the Lord Jesus Christ shares His holy life with you as a member of God's family. So, read Romans 13 to discover how you can *put on the Lord Jesus Christ*, walking as He walked on this earth, without feeling a need to provide for your own flesh!

First, as the Lord Jesus exemplified, ***be humbly subject to authorities*** because they are appointed by God, for Jesus lived as one *under authority*, even though He is the Heir of heaven and earth (Rom. 13:1-7). Then, be ***indebted to Love each other, as Fulfilling the Law*** (Rom. 13:8-10). Finally, be sure to ***put on Lord Jesus Christ with no provision for flesh***, for Jesus brings the *light of God* to this dark world. The *night* of over-ruling darkness has ended, and the *day of His kingdom* has come upon the earth! (Rom. 13:11-14).

b. Prayerfully Read Romans 13 and Write your insights to share

SEEING What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas	
LEARNING What does it mean? What is it teaching me?	
DOING What lesson can I apply to my life?	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. *Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.*

Q1. How should we live in this life as our Lord Jesus Christ had lived?

Q2: What does it mean to “put on” the Lord Jesus Christ, without leaving any place for the *flesh*?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. *Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.*

Q1. How should we live on this earth to *follow our Lord’s way of life*? (Rom. 13:1-7)

1. Humbly subject to authorities. The Lord Jesus Christ lived as a *man under His Father’s authority*, so for His sake, He was subject to the *governing authorities* in the world (Rom. 13:1). Though He would be Lord of all in *heaven* and on *earth* as the Heir and Firstborn Lord, Jesus did not *abuse this privilege* while humbled on earth in his fleshly body but lived *meekly* out of His fear of God. In this way, we also live humbly on this earth in the *fear of God* and as subject to the authorities of this world.

Q2. How does the Lord Jesus call us to live with one another?
(Romans 13:8-10)

2. Indebted to Love: Fulfilling the Law. In the Lord Jesus Christ, our debt to sin and death has been canceled by His *redemption on the cross* (Rom. 7:4). Yet, there is still a *debt* which remains unpaid, the debt we owe one another in Christ to *love one another*. For, *God himself is love* (1 Jn. 4:8), so we also must love without *end* or ceasing. To love one another in such an unceasing way *fulfills the Law* because we prove ourselves to be *in Christ, who himself “fulfills” the Law and the Prophets* (Matt. 5:17) by His own *righteous life* (20).

Q3. How should we live, now that we are changed by the Lord's holy life and work in us? (Rom. 13:11-14)

3. Put on Lord Jesus Christ: No Provision for Flesh. When we are included *in Jesus Christ* through baptism into His death and resurrection to now *abide* (dwell) in Him (John 15:7), we certainly *abide* in His pre-eminent Lordship. That is, we are *in* the One who has been resurrected to be Lord of all in heaven and earth. By sharing in His *resurrected life*, we are also included in His Lordship, which:

- **Subjects** us to the full extent of His rightful rule in our lives;
- **Surrounds** us with all aspects of His righteous life, which is ours in the Beloved;
- **Surrenders** to us all things which must also surrender to His Lordship, including all that opposes His will and Kingdom on this earth, such as *demonic opposition*, hardened hearts, or obstacles to the Gospel!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply *God's Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.*

Putting on the Lord Jesus Christs: Leaving no Room for the Flesh. As God's Messiah, the Heir and Redeemer of Heaven and Earth, the Lord Jesus Christ lived in an odd contradiction of two realities. On the one hand, He embodied the glorious and eternal life of God, possessing all rights and authority as the Son of God. Yet, He was humbly *born* in the flesh to *redeem His people*. So, the glory of His rights as the earth's Lord were hidden. Instead, God's will called him to live humbly on earth, *being subject to the weak and passing authorities of this world*.

In this way, we who are the servants of Jesus Christ and *sons of God being conformed to His image* (Rom. 8:29), we too must live in this dual reality. *Having a reborn nature His our Lord*, we experience the *light* and *power* of God's Kingdom at work in us, as the Lord Jesus works to draw many into the Kingdom's saving light. We may experience the Kingdom's power and the glory of the Lord even now, but we are called to *live in humble subjection* in this world, as did our Lord. Clothed in the "Lord Jesus Christ" means to be *covered under His authority*—which advances His kingdom and sanctifies our flesh, but which wins us no advantage or privilege in this life. Yet, we rejoice in this light of the Kingdom, knowing that its love and righteousness will one day fully dawn over the earth!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁹: Put on the Lord Jesus Christ: Our souls come alive only when *the nakedness of our flesh*—that is, the weak and dependent nature of our material, bodily life—is clothed with the life of God. So, by *putting off* the corruption of the *flesh* by rejecting the *surrender* to its *lawlessness*, we must then *put on* or *surrender to the* greater and more compelling life *of our Lord Jesus Christ*, to put on His:

- **Authority as Lord** of the resurrection;
- **Righteous Person as Jesus**, the Son of Man;
- **Redemptive mission as our Christ**, the Son of God and Kingdom ruler.

Added Notes: Night is Gone/ Day is at Hand: When you are clothed in the “armor of light,” (13:12), the light of the Lord’s life and salvation has changed you. For you, there is no “night” in which the darkness of sin rules. Rather, you are in the “day” of His ruling Kingdom, which will dawn over the entire world.

Chapter 10: KINGDOM LIVING: Judged by the Lord

Romans 14-15

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then **Write Insights to Share** with others.

a. Preview Romans 14-15

Kingdom Living: Judged by the Lord. In this life, we are to live together in the Kingdom of God on earth. So, read Romans 14-15 to see how life in the Kingdom of God elevates our lives together. First, we live with one another in great *patience* and understanding, for we *belong to the Lord in life and death and will all stand before His judgment seat* (Rom. 14:1-12). So, by the grace of God, we *live in Kingdom's righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit*. Rather than focusing on what can be seen and handled, we live by faith in the hidden reality of the Kingdom, letting the Spirit bear good fruit through us! (Rom. 14:13-23). So, we make it our goal to *serve one another in Christ, just as our Lord came to serve and give His life as a ransom for many* (Rom. 15:1-21).

b. Prayerfully Read Romans 14-15 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why should we accept and not judge one another?

Q2: How are we to live by the Spirit's power in the Kingdom?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How should our relationship with the Lord shape how we live with one another? (Romans 14:1-12)

1. Belonging to the Lord in life and death: Merciful as those giving an account. We must live together in patience and mercy with one another, *bearing with the weak in faith* (14:1) and not judging one another (4). The reason for this mercy we show to each other is that we all “belong” to our Lord Jesus Christ, so we have no “right” over each other and must not usurp the Lord’s rights (4). Instead, we live as those who will need to answer for our actions before the Lord himself one day (12).

Q2. How should we live together in this material world, in this hidden Kingdom? (Rom. 14:13-23)

2. Living in Kingdom's righteousness, peace, and joy in the

Holy Spirit: Rather than focusing on earthly matters of the flesh, such as “eating and drinking” (17), but on the spiritual life of the Kingdom which we inhabit together by the Holy Spirit. In the Kingdom, what matters are the *hidden* ways that the Spirit works among and through us to live out its “righteousness, peace, and joy” in fellowship with one another. By serving the Lord Jesus Christ in this way pleases God and is “acceptable” to people (18).

Q3. How are we to live together, reflecting how Christ treated us? (2:)

3. Serving one another in Christ: Welcoming and Serving. As the people of His Kingdom, we should live together in ways that reflect our Lord's character and heart for us. Consider that when we were still His enemies, Jesus Christ *welcomed us home* (15:7) and also *served us* (8) to bring us God's salvation on the cross. So, we must also live this way with one another, serving one another in Jesus Christ!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply *God's Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.*

Kingdom Life Together: Serving our Lord. As you live together in fellowship with other disciples of Jesus Christ, your life together can focus on the hidden realities of Christ and His Kingdom, or you can concern yourself with the *visible and pressing* matters of this life. So, Paul reminds you all, the *hidden Kingdom of Heaven* is not a matter of “eating and drinking” but of the “righteousness, peace, and joy” we have in the Holy Spirit! So, be sure that your fellowship not is not side-tracked by concerns that *do not matter* in view of the Kingdom.

First, don't let differences in your *faith experiences* and personal righteousness divide you as you pass judgment on one another (14:1). Rather, *welcome and serve* one another, knowing that it is your Lord who rightfully rules each one, and to your Lord each will answer (12).

Second, don't see your *life of fellowship* as mainly revolving around human needs and concerns, matters of “eating and drinking” (17). Rather, be sure to let the Spirit fill all of you together with His “righteousness, peace, and joy”!

Finally, live patiently with each other, being quick to show mercy and love, knowing that the Lord Jesus himself has always treated you with *acceptance and grace* (7-8). Dare we live any differently with our brothers and sisters?

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

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What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes¹⁰: Kingdom of God: Righteousness, peace, and Joy in the Holy Spirit. As Jesus Christ instructed, the Kingdom of God is like a buried treasure (Matt.). So, we live in the Kingdom together by faith, knowing the true reality which can easily be overshadowed by the obvious matters of this life. Because the Kingdom is hidden, we must never let the *visible matters of life* define the Kingdom realities. Reality, the value and power of the Kingdom should shape how we live and organize the matters of this life.

Added Notes: Building others Up: As servants honoring a common Lord, we should live with one another out of respect for our Lord Jesus Christ. For the sake of Christ, we choose to serve one another in the Kingdom, making one another successful in their service to the Lord. And, we don't compete with one another or act in self-interest, knowing that all our interests are now devoted to the Lord and His Kingdom purpose!

Prayer Requests:

Prayer Request/ Date	Answered Prayer/ Thanks

Journaling:

What is God teaching you?	How are you growing?

Sermon Notes:

Sermon Notes/ Date	Applying it to my life

Notes:

SERIES 2: JESUS REVEALED TO CHURCHES

BOOK 6:

Revelation 1-5

Book 2: *Revelation 1-5*

Introduction

In the overview of the book of Revelation, you saw that the Lord God gives this prophetic book to the servants of Jesus Messiah to know the timing of future events, that they might serve their Lord wisely.

Consider the major phases of Revelation as God reveals it to us:

Current Church Age (7 churches) → Birth Pains leading to Israel's Rebirth (7 seals unbroken) → Israel Witnesses to World (7 trumpets) → Antichrist Rules (7 bowls of judgment). In this booklet, we see the Church Age unfold as seven notable movements in the Church. However, as the Church Age draws to a close, the last two churches take very different paths. The last church chooses to serve its own *worldly interests*, seeking success in this life by abandoning Christ. Sadly, this church remains on earth as the time of birth pains and testing begins. The sixth church, with the faithful of the other churches as well, are caught up to be with the Lord. So, the people of the churches witness Jesus Christ in His resurrected glory, praising Him as He readies His Kingdom to restore peace on earth!

STEPS of a Devoted Disciple:

Your *Devotion* matters to the Lord. For, there is only one Lord and God, and He deserves creation's highest honor and praise. So, you were made to give yourself to the Lord God in loving devotion of heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30). In this same devotion to the Lord, Jesus Christ calls you to follow Him as His disciple. These short devotionals guide you in the Word to cultivate a heart devotion to the Lord as His disciple.

- First, **discover** what His life-giving Word has to say to you personally, being careful to write down your insights to share with others.
- Then, **discuss** His Word with those closest to you: your family, your friends, and in your home fellowship group (your spiritual family).
- Next, **dialogue** to compare views on key passages with a partner—either another disciple, or an older mentor or younger mentee.
- Finally, **develop** key skills as you abide in the Word by applying it to your life as you read the devotional, notes, and footnotes.

START HERE: *Humble Yourself in Prayer:*

Devote yourself to the Lord to hear and do His Will for you.

Do I want to humble myself under the Lordship of God by faith?

Or, will I live as my own Lord, relying on my own understanding?

PRAYER OF DEVOTION

Lord God, I devote my life to you today. I offer you my soul to live humbly under your Lordship; my mind to seek your will and Spirit; my heart to

love you and others; and, my strength to obey your Word and Will!
Amen.

Chapter 1: JESUS REVEALED: God’s Gift to Servants

Revelation 1:1-8

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God’s Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.*

a. Preview Revelation 1:1-8

Jesus Revealed: To His Servants. God reveals Jesus Christ first to His servants to show them the kingdom future which will soon take place in Him! So, read Revelation 1:1-8 to see the prophetic purpose of God as it is revealed in the life of His Son, Jesus Christ, the Heir of the Kingdom future to soon take place!

First, be prepared to hear and understand the *blessed prophecy revealing Jesus Christ*. As His servants *read aloud* and *hear* God’s coming purpose for God’s coming future in Jesus Christ, they can act as the time *nears* (1:1-3). Then, find out that the coming *future is the inheritance of Jesus Christ*, who is the *firstborn of the dead* and the *ruler* of earth’s kings (1:4-5). Finally, discover our place as His servants in this coming future, for we are *redeemed for God’s family and kingdom* by the blood of Jesus Christ to *return with him as the clouds of heaven!* (1:5-8).

b. Prayerfully Read Revelation 1:1-8 and Write your insights to share

SEEING What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas	
LEARNING What does it mean? What is it teaching me?	
DOING	

What lesson can I apply to my life?	
-------------------------------------	--

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why does God give His prophetic purpose of the future by revealing His plan in Jesus Christ, His Son?

Q2: How do we become part of this coming Kingdom Family through Jesus Christ?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 What does God promise in this book? (Rev. 1:1-3)

1. Prophecy Revealing Jesus Christ: Soon Events. In the book of Revelation, God reveals His Son Jesus Mashiach through the events recorded in this book of prophecy. This book is *prophetic* because it is revelatory, given from the *heavenly* and *eternal* vantage of *heaven* rather than limited by earthly time. Instead, Revelation spans great stretches of earthly time as a countdown for the coming of Jesus Mashiach to rule on earth: seven churches; seven seals broken; seven

trumpets; seven bowls of wrath, all leading to the full revelation of Jesus!

Q2. What is God's future for Jesus Christ? (Rev. 1:4-5)

2. Future Inheritance of Jesus Christ: Firstborn of Dead. Jesus Christ (Mashiach) is God's Son and Heir, so the coming future His servants receive is the story of Jesus Mashiach taking possession of all in heaven and on earth, to the glory of His Father. Having completed His mission of *witness* as the Mashiach, Jesus is now the Firstborn of the *dead*, the Heir of God's coming future of a *resurrected people!* For, as Jesus Mashiach *overthrows* the power of

death once-for-all, He inherits an *eternal rule* over the “kings on earth” (5).

Q3. What place do we as His servants have in this coming future of Jesus Christ? (1:5-8)

3. Redeemed for God’s Family and Kingdom: Returns with Clouds. Most amazingly, this Heir of heaven and earth, Jesus Mashiach, “loves us” and so “frees us” from our sins by His blood! (5). So, we who are His servants have a place in His future Kingdom and Family, for He *blood redeems* His own family members as their Kinsman-Redeemer. And, brought near into His House, we serve our God and Father as *priests*, with the loyal intimacy of children honoring and serving their own dear Father. Having been redeemed and brought near to God, we will one

day *surround* Him as the *clouds of heaven*, reflecting His glorious power at His return to earth, to the *desolation of its people* who have long-denied and resisted His rule! (7)

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Revealing Jesus Mashiach: Heir of God's Kingdom Future. This book of Revelation will only terrify you if you do not yet bow in service to Jesus Mashiach as your Lord. For, God reveals Jesus Mashiach in all His soon-coming glory so that His servants might prepare themselves for His coming. So, if you are a servant of Jesus Mashiach, this perfectly-timed revealing of the Son of God should not only give you a certain hope, but it should fortify you to *suffer* for this coming Lord and to endure for your service to continue as the *tribulations of earth* transition into the *glories of His Kingdom!* First, see your Lord Jesus as the One inheriting God's future Kingdom, ruling a people *never-to-be-touched* by death's sting (5), a glorious future which follows His own *resurrection from the dead*. Then, see yourself as one who *serves* your Lord Mashiach from the *holy and beloved place* of a "son" of His house (6) over the Kingdom He inherits as the Son of God (5). So, endure with Him this world's tribulations for the Kingdom, that you may share in His glorious rule to come!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree	

What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	
---	--

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/
mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes¹: Made us a Kingdom: Priests: God’s original promise of Mashiach to His friend David foretold a *Kinsman-Redeemer* who would build a “house (hold)’ for God (2 Sam. 7:13) and David (11), to establish a “throne” and rule an eternal “kingdom” (16). And, all these feats scaffold one upon the other. For, Jesus Mashiach suffers for sin to redeem us (14) into God’ very Household, so that we as His household might *establish the throne of His Kingdom* through the word of our witness. So that in the end, we share in His Kingdom rule as *servants* who fulfill His Word of command in all the earth!

Added Notes: Coming with the Clouds: Seen by All Eyes. Because we have been *redeemed* by the precious blood of Jesus Mashiach, we are one day *clothed* in fine garments of *resurrection glory* (Rev. 19:14) and as purely glorious as the *crystal sea* surrounding the throne of God (Rev. 4:6). So, when we, as this bright and glorious *sea of His people* surround Him as *reflecting His power*, we are the *clouds of heaven’s armies* which reveal the Lord Mashiach’s surpassing power as He returns to Earth!

Chapter 2: KINGDOM TRIBULATION: Enduring for Jesus

Revelation 1:9-20

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then *Write Insights to Share* with others.

a. Preview Revelation 1:9-20

Kingdom Tribulation: Partnering in Jesus. The servants of Jesus Messiah are called to *partner and endure tribulation* for the sake of Jesus and His coming Kingdom. So, read Revelation 1:9-20 to discover the ways that the Lord supports His servants as they *partner and endure tribulation* to advance His Kingdom on earth! First, we who serve the Lord Jesus Mashiach are called to ***partner in the tribulation and kingdom in Jesus***, for the Lord is working even now through His churches to gather the lost into the safety of His Kingdom through our Gospel witness amidst great opposition! (1:9). But Jesus is not absent but walks among us. So, the Lord opens the eyes of His witness John to ***see One like a Son of Man but glorified*** (1:10-16). Finally, our ***Lord of Life*** gives us a ***letter*** through His servant John which helps us *time* our works as His Kingdom draws near (1:17-20).

b. Prayerfully Read Revelation 1:9-20 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How are we called to partner in Jesus for the Kingdom of God?

Q2: What does Jesus reveal about Himself that comforts you in your labor for him?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How are we called to live as servants in our Lord? (Rev. 1:9)

1. Partnering in the tribulation and kingdom: in Jesus. As servants, we are *in Jesus*, whose Lordship shapes our lives and experiences in this world. Because we are *in Jesus*, we are *tested* in the world by tribulations and afflictions, for this *ungodly world and its people* are determined to deny the truth of God to live in lawless rebellion. But, by *testifying* of the Lord Jesus Christ and His Gospel, we advance His Kingdom as our lost brothers and sisters *find life* in Jesus!

Q2. How does Jesus reveal Himself as the One who walks among us? (1:10-16)

2. Seeing One like a Son of Man: Glorified. Jesus is revealed to John as one *like a Son of Man* (13), that is, taking the *form* of a human like us. However, He is *like us* in his humanity, but he is not fully like us, for we as the *sons of man* are clothed in weak flesh. Now, this Jesus is revealed to John in the *glory of His resurrection from the dead* (18). And, it is this *glorified Son of Man* who now walks among us to support us. In perfect wisdom and purity and with the *clearest vision and judgment* (14), our Lord guides us. And, having overcome all this world's *opposition* by His witness, and speaking the Word of God in power, He advances His Kingdom! (15)

Q3. How does our Lord help us know the unfolding of His work?
(1:17-20)

3. Letter from Lord of Life: Kingdom Timing. The Lord Jesus reminds us that He is the Lord of Life, whose power *releases* the captives from Death and Hades (18). So, He has the power to advance His Kingdom to bring life to those *captivated by Death* in this dark world.

Thus, the Lord gives us this *letter* through John's *writings* so that we may know His plan to establish His Kingdom on earth. First, John writes of the *vision* of Jesus which He has seen, testifying that this letter is from the Lord Jesus himself. Then, Jesus commands John to record "those that are." Finally, ending with "those that are to take place after this" (19). So, we are to see these main *eras* of the kingdom. Starting with this *vision of Jesus*, there will be the existing movement of the churches, running from its first to its seventh phase. After the church age, a time of *testing will seize the earth and its people* (3:10).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Family Mission of Kingdom: Revealing Lord Jesus. As a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, you are called to join our Lord and His host of servants to bring His Kingdom of Life to this world *ensnared by death and Hades!* Our mission is no less than life over death, and we partner to rescue all our *family* who will share in the coming Kingdom of our Lord Jesus and its unfading glory! So, prepare yourself for this *kingdom mission* by knowing this: First, know that you are not alone, for we have been partnering to reveal *our Lord Jesus Christ* to this world across generations, distances, and *family cultures!* As the current age draw to a close, we are a host of saints who bear the name of Jesus! But, know that our opposition in this *ungodly world* and by its *dark master* has not lessened. Rather, as the day of our Lord draws near, the enemy has become desperately unrestrained, so the *tribulation* we face has also intensified. So, endure! For, know that the Lord Jesus in *his resurrection glory* walks among us now—first with His churches, then in the heat of the *tribulation* as His coming draws near. May the grace of our Lord sustain you in your *testing!*

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes²: One like a Son of Man: Recognizably Human.

When John sees Jesus, he describes him as “one like a son of man” (1:13). That is, he recognizes his *human form*.

However, this is not a human being clothed in *typically* weak flesh. This is Jesus resplendent in His *resurrected glory*, being the One who is “alive forevermore” (18). Interestingly, this glorious visage is *human* yet beyond human weakness, so John can only describe Him by comparison. His face is like the *sun*, his eyes like *fire*, and his voice like *the roar of many waters* (14-16). We cannot *stand* before such a Lord, but one day we will share his *resurrected glory!*

Added Notes: Write the Things that you have seen... Jesus gives us through John the main two phases of the Kingdom on earth. First, he instructs John to show us “those things that are” (19). That is, at the time of this vision, what was the existing reality of the Kingdom? It was of course the *seven golden lampstands* (12) among which Jesus was walking! That is, the current reality of the Kingdom at the time of John’s writing and continuing until its end is the Church Age. Once the Church Age is completed, then “those things that are to take place after this (Church Age)” will commence. Once the church is taken, the Antichrist is revealed and the time of testing begins! (2 Thess. 2:6-7).

Chapter 3: FIRST CHURCHES: Love and Testing

Revelation 2:1-11

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview **Revelation 2:1-11**

Foundational Faith: Love and Faithfulness. Jesus Mashiah launches His Church age with His first churches, whom He give a *foundational faith*. So, read Revelation 2:1-11 to learn of the first lessons which the Lord Jesus gives to these early *servants* at the very dawn of the *seven churches*.

First, see how the *First Church of Ephesus* both **falls from and returns to its First Love, Jesus Mashiah himself**. As you hear the lessons to this church, understand that Ephesus corresponds with the Jewish Church, established by the *apostles* which disappeared in 70 CE with the fall of Jerusalem and re-emerged in the early 2000's with the revival of the Messianic Church (2:1-5). To this Church, Jesus promises the most *fundamental treasure* given to His saints, who are **rewarded by Fruitful Life in Paradise**. For, Jesus establishes His Kingdom to *recover the* fruitful garden paradise our first parents *lost* by their unbelief and sin (2:6-8). Finally, see that the Lord Jesus requires His *saints and churches* to be **faithful in testing to be crowned by Life**. For, the churches and their saints are meant to inherit the Kingdom with Jesus, so it is only fitting that they are *crowned with life* as the affirming seal of their future rule (2:9-11).

b. Prayerfully Read Revelation 2:1-11 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why does the Lord Jesus urge the church of Ephesus to return to their first love?

Q2: Why is it important that we remain *faithful* to the Lord even unto death?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 How did the first church of Ephesus fall and then return?
(Rev. 2:1-5)

1. Fallen from/ Returning to First Love: The first Church of Ephesus reveals a *danger inherent* in our communal life together in Christ. Charged with establishing Messiah's church on earth, the *first church at Jerusalem*, the church founded by the Jewish apostles, worked hard to *test truth and falsehood* (2), to endure, and to bear witness to His name (3). But, in this busy work of the church, its people *abandoned* their *first love* for Jesus. Instead, a *loving devotion* to the Lord should be the heartbeat of their *faithful service*. So, when the Jewish Church revived in the last days, they *returned* to the Lord as their Kinsman-Redeemer, appealing to Israel to return to their *Firstborn Son, the one* rightfully deserving of their love (Zech. 12:10).

Q2. What is the reward which Jesus promise His churches that overcome the world? (Rev. 2:6-8)

2. Rewarded by Fruitful Life: In Paradise. In the Lord God's design for humanity, *life* has always been the perfect target and destination for man. For, the heavens and the earth were created for man's "good"—the perpetuation of his life on earth. And, the Lord God placed our first parents in His garden to *share* a holy life with them (Gen. 1:3). So, the best promise that the Lord gives His first churches is the promise of a *restored life* to be shared with the Lord God in His fruitful paradise (7).

Q3. How does Jesus expect His Church to respond to tribulation?
(Rev. 2:9-11)

3. Faithful in Testing: Crowned with Life. Because Jesus Mashiach calls us as His servants to *walk by faith* and not by sight, He calls us to *see* our tribulations through His Kingdom perspective. So, the *Persecuted Church of Smyrna*, which endured ten *rules* of hostile Caesars, were *instructed* to view themselves in the Lord's reality as being *rich*, though on this earth they were *tested, impoverished, and slandered* (9). And, by *being faithful* to death's end, they would receive the *crown of life*—the glorious reward of His resurrection which they share along with his sacrifice and death.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Foundational Faith: First Churches. When the Lord Jesus established His first churches, He ensured that they were established on a foundational faith which would be passed on across the Church Age.

To *Ephesus*, the Lord Jesus rebuked their *fall* from their *first love of Him*, and urged them to *return* to this first love (5). As a *marriage* without love is a mere shell, so a church abandoning its first love for Jesus cannot stand. So, Ephesus, standing for the first *Jewish Church*, had its “lampstand removed” with the fall of Jerusalem and the scattering of the Jewish people in 70CE, only to see its re-emergence and *recovery* of its *first love* in the Messianic Jewish Church in recent times.

To *Smyrna*, Jesus encouraged this *greatly tested church* to remain *faithful to Him unto death* (10). So, this persecuted Church, tested across the *ten days* of the ten hostile Roman Caesars, remained faithful for more than two centuries, across generations of faithful disciples.

Thus, *love* and *faithfulness* are the foundations of our communal lives with the Lord, for these *crown us with His fruitful life of grace and qualifying us for a place in His eternal Kingdom!*

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes³: Notes: First Love: The first church was built on the witness of the *apostles* of Jesus, men who affirmed their *love* for the Lord by laying down their own lives to *shepherd His sheep* (Jn. 21:17). But, as the Jewish Church in Jerusalem was busy with building the church and testing between the *true* and the *false* (2:2), they *abandoned* their first life—finding that it had no bearing on their work of the church. Mercifully, the Lord displaced and replanted this Jewish Church (5) in the last days, when the *witness* of this first church to Israel has *rekindled* its zeal and love for their Lord Mashiach, their promised Kinsman-Redeemer.

Added Notes: Faithful unto Death: Crown of Life: The Church of Smyrna, that is, the *Persecuted Church*, endured the Roman persecution for generations of believers. Tested and impoverished, the Lord affirmed that they were in reality *rich* and *crowned with life* (2:10), for they showed all the churches that we must be *faithful to the Lord unto death*. That is, our sacrificial devotion to the Lord should encompass the entirety of our lives, for we are to love the Lord with our whole being! (Mk. 12:30).

Chapter 4: FLESH-HINDERED CHURCHES: Tempted by Unfaithfulness **Revelation 2: 12-29**

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview **Revelation 2: 12-29**

Flesh-hindered Churches: Tempted by Unfaithfulness. As the external opposition to the Church of Jesus Christ subsided, the next set of Churches faced threats from within, through the fleshly practices of their own people. So, read Revelation 2:12-29 to see how the Churches of Pergamum—the *Orthodox Christian movement*--and Thyatira—the Roman Catholic movement—were tested from within!

First, consider that *fleshly teaching led to weakened unfaithfulness* in the Orthodox Church. Within the church, there were teachers that resembled Balaam whose idolatrous teachings weakened the faith of many (2:12-15). But the Lord reminds these churches that He is the **Son of God with fiery eyes and feet of bronze** – He sees both their against *false teachers* yet also supports their faithful witness of His name (2:16-18). Finally, in the church of Thyatira, *fleshly leaders stole devotion from the Lord*. That is, the church and its teachers began to make a name for themselves, which would lead many to stumble (2:19-28).

b. Prayerfully Read Revelation 2: 12-29 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How do *fleshly practices* weaken how the churches relate to the Lord Jesus?

Q2: How does Jesus Christ respond to the *fleshly practices* of His churches?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 How does fleshly teaching affect the faith of people? (Rev. 2:12-15)

1. Fleshly Teaching: Weakened Unfaithfulness. In the Church of Pergamum, which refers to the Orthodox movement of the Church, witnesses like Antipas were still giving up their lives for their faith. However, *fleshly teachers* also arose like Balaam, the false prophet. For, they used familiar spiritual forms to serve *fleshly purposes*. In this way, the *spiritual food* they fed their people was really *sacrificed to worldly idols* and not suitable for building up faith. As a result, the people became guilty of “immorality”—devoting themselves to illegitimate idols rather than to God.

Q2. How does the Son of God reveal Himself to *churches struggling with fleshly practices*? (Rev. 2:16-18)

2. Son of God: Fiery Eyes and Feet of Bronze. To the people of his churches struggling against the flesh, Jesus reminds them that He is the *Son of God* who has a spiritual authority and life. As the Son of God, his eyes are like fire—he can see beyond the *outward appearance* to the *fleshly motives* of the heart. He sees the damage which false teaching *produces* and the idolatrous immorality that results. But He is also *present in power* in their faithful witness and service.

Q3. How do *fleshly leaders* weaken the church? (Rev. 2:19-28)

3. Fleshly Leaders: Stealing Devotion. In the church of *Thyatira*, the *Roman Catholic Church* forms from the *broader Orthodox Church*. And, the Son of God sees the spiritual fruit of *love, faith, and service* in its people. However, this church also faces a *fleshly threat* as its spiritual leaders set out to *make a name for themselves*. As the Church, the *people of God* are simply referred to as the “Bride” of Christ. However, spiritual leaders who seek to make a name apart from Jesus are labelled as *Jezebel*, the unfaithful woman. So, *fleshly leaders* “seduce” God’s people in this church to divide their devotion between the Church and its Lord. Those who devote themselves to this human institution will enter the time of great testing.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Fleshly Churches: Weakened by the World. The people of Jesus Mashiach are called to live by faith, to know and serve their Lord according to the *truth of His Word* that commands a devotion to Him and His Kingdom, though they *remain hidden* to the world's eyes and its rewards. So, Jesus Mashiach reminds His churches that He is the *Son of God*, the all-power of heaven who sees with *eyes of fire* and walks among them and their *own fiery trials*. Yet, as the churches move from their early movements to the more settled *Orthodox* and *Roman Catholic* movements, some in the churches grow discontent with the *hidden realities of the Kingdom*. Instead, they seek to approach the Kingdom with fleshly eyes and abilities to gain *human* and *worldly benefits*.

So, learn the lessons of the *fleshly churches*. You must forsake all hope of *fleshly advantage* or worldly benefit for the sake of Jesus Mashiach and His Kingdom (Gal. 2:20; Luke 9:23-25). Rather, set your way to honor the Son of God, whose power you will know by faith. Knowing that He sees you with fiery vision and walks with you through the hot crucible of your trials!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁴: Food sacrificed to Idols and Sexual Immorality:

Balaam's trickery disguised pagan offerings in the form of Hebrew altars for sacrifice. In this way, the flesh will use the *package* of faith to smuggle in false food devoted to the flesh or worldly purposes. So, social standing, academic or theological imaginings, religious institutions, financial gain, or political power will all *drain teaching of any spiritual nourishment*, suiting it only for this world and its purposes. Spiritual teaching comes at a cost because it bears the Lord's cross of sacrifice.

Added Notes: Thrown into Tribulation: When the church replaces Jesus as the focus of worship and devotion, it becomes the worst case of unfaithfulness. In fact, such spiritual *harlotry* forms into the true villain opposed to Jesus Christ. Not the Antichrist, who is but a mere trifle. But, the whoring *humanistic religion* of Babylon. For, *human religion* and its need for a *fleshly self-righteousness* is the unbelieving root of all sin (Gen. 3:5). So, those who "commit adultery" with this *false Jezebel* will be left behind at the Lord's coming to go through "great tribulation" with the rest of the world (Rev. 2:22).

Chapter 5: FALLEN ASLEEP AND FAITHFUL CHURCHES: Dead or Serving *Revelation 3: 1-13*

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then **Write** *Insights to Share with others.*

a. *Preview Revelation 3:1-13*

Fallen Asleep and Faithful Churches: Dead or Serving. Jesus Christ walks among His churches and tests them to determine their spiritual health or weakness. So, read Revelation 3:1-13 to see the difference between a spiritually *dying* church and a *healthy and fruitful* church. Previously, we saw that *fleshy* teachings or leadership will weaken the church. Now, we see the result of a *fleshy* practice is a self-justifying religion which calls itself “alive” but is dead.

First, see that churches may have gained *earthly recognition* but *may be hindered by spiritual weakness* (3:1-3). In contrast, the faithful church beholds the *holy and true Lord opens the doors of David's Kingdom*, for they recognize that they are weak in themselves but have a powerful Lord who holds the key (3:4-7).

Finally, notice the Lord' promise to this church, that their *faithful service delivers from the testing* that comes upon the whole world (3:8-13).

*b. Prayerfully **Read Revelation 3:1-13** and **Write** your insights to share*

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. What was causing the Church at Sardis to *fall asleep* and fall into *deadness*?

Q2: How was the Church at Philadelphia proving itself to be faithful to the Lord?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 What did Jesus point out as a weakness of this Church at Sardis? (Revelation 3:1-3)

1. Earthly Recognition but spiritual weakness: The Protestant Church movement. As the churches entered the modern age, the spirit of *humanism* drew the focus of this reformation church to the affairs of man. Sadly, a *human reputation* of spiritual life masked a deeper *deadness* (3:1). The church was *falling asleep* (3) by forgetting the *unchanging truths of the spiritual kingdom* and the demands of its risen Lord. These worshippers needed the “white garments” of the *righteous life of Jesus* rather than the academic life achieved by their *fleshly theology*.

Q2. How does the *faithful church at Philadelphia see Jesus Christ?* (Revelation 3:4-7)

2. Holy and true Lord opens doors of Kingdom: Key of David.

Seeing the *dangers of elevating human religion*, the *outreaching Church of Philadelphia* focused on its mission to make Jesus known. So, the Lord Jesus reveals Himself to this church as the One who is precious in his “holiness” and “true” as revealed in His Gospel (3:7). This simple church knew Jesus in these two ways, as it *kept His Words* to share in his holiness, and as it testified of His truth as revealed by His Gospel. To this simple church, Jesus opened a *door for the Kingdom* which no one was and is able to shut, even to this day!

Q3. What does the Lord Jesus Christ promise to His faithful servants of this church? (Revelation 3:8-13)

3. Faithful service delivers from Testing: Taken out of worldwide testing. This sixth, second-to-the-last of the Churches, labors in the last days before the return of Jesus Christ. So, to these simple servants, Jesus “opens a door” for service that no one shuts. In their simplicity, this church testified of Jesus to the Jewish people (9), so the Lord Jesus Christ affirms their word of testimony by *keeping them out of the world-wide trial* to soon fall on humanity (10). For, the Lord himself returns in the clouds to take this church and all the saints who belong to him (1 Thess. 4:16-17).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Sleep or Service: Opening the Kingdom. Before the seventh, rejected Church, two modern churches rise up before the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. For, as the seven churches rise up and spread their *movements* through the earth, the countdown until the Lord's return approaches the last one.

The Church of Sardis was birthed in the *great European age of humanism*, which shifted ancient thinking to a *empirical*, scientific view of reality. However, this church's humanistic founders trusted in our *human ability* to know the Word and matters of God, which became an area of religious discussion. Like the Pharisees before them, exalting *human understanding* weakened the Word of God and its powerful authority. So, many in this movement *slept, clinging to human reputation and teachings*.

However, the Church of Philadelphia was admittedly "weak" with "little power" (8). For that reason, Jesus entrusts to them an "open door" for the Kingdom's progress—to testify of Jesus to even the Jews. To these servants, Jesus says, "I am coming soon" (11)!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
	! Differ
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

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Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁵: Reputation of Being Alive but Dead: Self-Righteousness. The self-proclaimed “Reformation” or “Revival” Church of the Protestant Era was confident in its religious vitality. However, the Lord sees that they lack the spiritual substance that comes with simple belief and obedience.

Added Notes: Little Power: When we are weak, then we can be strong in the Lord Jesus. For this reason, Paul “boasted” in His weakness because the weaker we are, the more the Lord is glorified by displaying His glorious power through unworthy vessels (2 Corinthians 3:5-6; 4:7).

**Chapter 6: LUKEWARM CHURCH: Rich in World
without Christ
*Revelation 3:14-22***

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then **Write** *Insights to Share with others.*

a. Preview Revelation 3:14-22

Lukewarm Church: Rich in World without Christ. The Last Church bears the fruit of *human-centered religion*, for it is rich in worldly advantages but tragically without Christ Himself, who has been shut *outside* this church. So, read Revelation 3:14-22 as a cautionary lesson to discover how a community can abandon *the spiritual riches* of Christ and His Kingdom for the fleeting *prosperity* of the world.

First, see that the Lord Himself testifies against this church as the ***faithful and true witness supported by the testimony of Churches***. Jesus is the final "Amen," the affirmation of the centuries' long testimony of His churches, but this last church *testifies only of itself* (3:14). For, this ***false church is worldly rich but cut off from Christ***. Because Jesus is *outside* the Church, He expels this church from His Body (3:15-19). But the ***faithful Lord appeals to individual Hearts*** to repent, even though the entirety of this *Prosperity Church* movement is rejected (3:20-21).

b. Prayerfully Read Revelation 3:14-22 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. What does it mean for this church to be *lukewarm*, near “hot” nor “cold”?

Q2: What does this Church celebrate and boast in? How did it come to this place, do you think?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 How does Jesus Christ reveal Himself to this lukewarm church? (Revelation 3:14)

1. Faithful and True Witness: Amen affirms testimony of Churches. Jesus Christ reveals Himself to this *final church as the* “Amen,” the “faithful and true witness” (14). That is, in every single church from its very beginning has preached Jesus Christ as the “true witness” from God to bring eternal life, to which Jesus Himself affirms, “Amen.” However, this last church has *preached* its own welfare and prosperity, seeking to “create” a different spiritual reality than what was handed down. But only Jesus is the “beginning” of God’s creative work, no other.

Q2. Why does this Church consider itself as successful?
(Revelation 3:15-19)

2. Worldly Rich but cut off from Christ: Truly Pitiabile. This final church and its people has so *absorbed* the fleshly view of the world and its human-centered thinking, that it is convinced that it is “prosperous” and needs “nothing,” not even Jesus Christ himself nor the spiritual life that He brings (3:17). So, Jesus rebukes this church to show that in reality, they have nothing: no *faith*, so they must go through “fire” to be refined (18); no *righteous life of the Spirit*, for they are still in *naked flesh* without the Spirit, so they should seek the *righteousness* only Jesus supplies by His redemption; and, no Spirit of God, so they need to be reborn, anointed by the Spirit’s baptism (19).

Q3. How does our Faithful Lord approach the people of this Church? (Revelation 3:20-21)

3. Faithful Lord appeals to Individual Hearts. The Lord Jesus has only compassion for the people of this church, who have nothing and are about to be cast out of the Churches into the world-wide tribulation coming upon the world. So, Jesus approaches individuals in the Church, imploring them to “open the door” of their hearts to let him in. So, He knocks and offers Himself to individual hearts, that some might awaken and realize that Jesus Christ is worth far more than the earthly prosperity—whether monetary or religious—which they’ve accumulated.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to read Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

The Last Church: A Cautionary Tale. If you are reading of this Last Church, you are already in the waning days of the Church Age. Perhaps you may even come from this *Worldly Church* and have suddenly come to realize that Christ's spiritual reality has come upon you. You and your people have sided with the world. Now, you are left with the world to face the *testing* which will force your choice. Will you now choose Jesus as your Lord and Christ? Or, will you stay with the world, and its coming world leader, the Antichrist? Will you humble yourself before the true God of heaven and earth? Or, will you honor with your life and choices the false god of this world, Satan?

This final church of Laodicea was seduced by this world's allure. But now, its people with the rest of the world enter the new phase of history, the time of *spiritual reality*. No longer will human fictions be the only voice defining reality. Now, the Words of Christ have proven to be "faithful and true" (3:14). Will you now, at long last, finally listen to Him? Then, hear His "knock" on the door of your heart. Open the door, and welcome the Lord into your life for a time of fellowship!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁶: Lukewarm: Neither hot nor cold. This last church is lukewarm because it is neither “hot” with life nor completely “cold” in death. It is neither *reborn by the Spirit’s fire* nor is it as “cold” as those idolators who do not name Christ. Rather, this church calls itself Christian yet has *shut Christ out of its church-life*.

Added Notes: Spit out of Christ’s Mouth: All churches through the centuries have been members of the Body of Christ, naming Him as their Lord. While many struggled with *flesbly temptations*, it was an undisputed truth that the Church belonged to Christ, the Church’s Lord, and the Church gathered the people belonging to Christ. However, this *Christless Church* has no place in the community of churches, for it neither claims Christ as its Lord nor does it view its Church life and advances as ever belonging to Christ. Rather, the church has *achieved a level of* religious advancement by its own *progress* and *enlightened* choices to follow the world lockstep. So, it is left behind when the Lord Jesus gathers his people, banished to the earth as the world enters testing.

Chapter 7: THRONE IN HEAVEN: Gathered Family

Revelation 4:1-6a

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then **Write Insights** to Share with others.

a. Preview **Revelation 4:1-6a**

Throne in Heaven: Gathered Family. Once Jesus Christ gathers His churches to Himself, ending the Church Age, He now gathers His people to their glorious home in the presence of the Father. So, read Revelation 4:1-6a to witness our glorious family reunion, the first thing we will experience as we enter our glorious and eternal future!

First, see ***God's heavenly throne of life and peace*** as we gaze upon Him who is all life and reality for us, our Most High God and Heavenly Father (Rev. 4:1-3)! Then, see how we take our place in this *heavenly kingdom, with our **twenty-four family elders enthroned*** near the very throne of God (Rev. 4:4)! Then, consider the entirety of God's holy people, now glorified, with the ***seven Spirits of God and His Holy Sea*** of glorified saints spread out before Him as the innumerable *sands of the seashore and the stars of heaven* (Rev. 4:5-6)

b. Prayerfully Read Revelation 4:1-6a and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why is God, seated on His glorious throne, the first thing we see when we enter heaven?

Q2: What is our place in the Heavenly reality, and what does this tell you of God's plan for us in Christ?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. What is our first view of Heaven? Why? (Revelation 4:1-3)

1. God's heavenly throne: Life and Peace. It is fitting that our first view of heaven is the throne and the One seated on the throne, for all in heaven and earth depend on the will of God to exist. So, God has the appearance of *red stone*, carnelian and jasper, representing *life-blood*, for God is the source of life for all things. And, around God wraps an emerald rainbow, to show again that God is the source of all life and fruitfulness. Yet, in the midst of His great judgment, He remembers His mercy.

Q2. What place do we occupy in Heaven, and what does this indicate of God's plan for our family? (Revelation 4:4)

2. Twenty-four family elders enthroned: It is not surprising that at the center of Heaven is the throne of God. But, remarkably, around this seat of all-power gather twenty-four thrones, upon which are seated our *family elders*. They are so *boldly placed* because they are *elders* of His family, the family brought near to God in the Beloved. So, these family elders are clothed in white garments to share in the Son of God's righteousness and wear golden crowns, sharing in His all-encompassing authority.

Q3. Where are God's people in this heavenly family reunion? (Revelation 4:5-6)

3. Seven Spirits of God and His Holy Sea: Glorified Saints. As the holy presence of God breaks forth as *lightning* before His throne, God beholds before Him the *holy fire* of His One Spirit, *burning as seven torches of flame*, forever burning as heaven's *sacrificial fire* of worship. For, before this fire are a sea of God's *worshippers*, His holy people glorified like a pure *sea of glass, like crystal* to reflect perfectly the *righteous glory of God*. At rest, this *host of heaven* is a vast sea. Soon to be at war, this host becomes the *clouds of heaven* to follow their Lord of Hosts into *righteous battle*.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Family at Home: In God's presence. When you open your eyes and see the throne of God in heaven, you will know that you are finally home with the Family! You will understand your time on earth was mere wandering through a *land* far from home, but now you are forever home!

To outsiders, this is a fearful scene, a terrible concentration of fire and judgment, with the *holy presence of God* consuming all that doesn't belong. But, to us, His family, we draw near only in Christ, the Beloved. Clothed in the white garments of Christ's blood-bought righteousness, we gather in the most holy of places without fear, in perfect peace and acceptance.

And, to stand for us, twenty-four of our family elders surround God Himself, His faithful sons brought near to His throne to know the Father's will.

Finally, our *family* presents itself to the Father as a great and crystal sea filling His view, His heavenly hosts over which He rules as their Lord.

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁷: Throne of God: The most sacred and fundamental aspect of heaven is the *throne of God*, which is placed at the Head of all in heaven and earth, invested with all authority and power from the very *beginning*. God sits on His throne in crimson *majesty*, And, crowning His throne are twenty-four thrones upon which sit His sons, the *heads* of His heavenly family.

Added Notes: Sea of Glass: The Lord of Host does not preside over a multitude of strangers. Rather, the Host of Heaven, the Lord's formidable and unstoppable army (Joel 2:2), consists of His Family, His holy people, arrayed in their ranks and families as the *body arranged by God Himself*. A family formed through the generations; a body tested to *do God's will perfectly by faith* in the harsh conditions of a rebellious earth. These who fulfilled God's will in their weak flesh now advance His purposes in the glory of their resurrected power!

Chapter 8: WORTHY LORD GOD: Created All Things

Revelation 4:6b-11

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then *Write Insights to Share with others.*

a. **Preview Revelation 4:6b-11**

Worthy Lord God: Worshipped as Creator. Heaven focuses on God and His glorious throne at the head and center of heaven and earth, so it is right that true worship of the Lord God of heaven begins in heavenly glory! So, read Revelation 4:6b-11 to see how all of heaven, representing all creation, glorifies the Lord God as its worthy Creator!

First, the great ***angelic creatures praise the holy Lord God.***

Representing all that is living, each creature depicts the creatures of great authority: the *lion over all the wild creatures*; the *ox* over all creatures of the fields; the *man* over all *humanity*; and, the *eagle* over the flying creatures of the heavens (4:6-8). Responding to this great praise of the *holy Lord God Almighty*, the ***family elders fall before throne in worship.*** They worship the eternally living One, in whose life they share and depend (4:9-10). So, they affirm in their worship the fundamental nature of God's glory—the ***Lord God is Worthy as Creator of all things*** (4:10-11)

*b. Prayerfully **Revelation 4:6b-11** and Write your insights to share*

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. For what do the creatures and the elders worship God? Why do they choose to worship God for this?

Q2: What do the human Elders reveal through their acts and words of worship about how they relate to God?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 What do the great angelic creatures do? (Revelation 4:6-8)

1. Angelic creatures praise the holy Lord God. In the very presence of the Lord God and His throne, the great angelic creatures worship God as “holy, holy, holy” (8). That is, the Lord God is holy and separate from His creatures, possessing a “holy” life of His own. And, He rules as the Lord God Almighty. Finally, the angelic beings worship God “who was and is and is to come” (8). God has existed from eternity, exists now, and will “come” to dwell among His people one day!

Q2. How do the *family elders* respond to this angelic praise?
(Revelation 4:9-10)

2. Family elders fall down before throne in worship: When the praise of God is proclaimed, the *family elders fall down* before the throne of God, showing that though they are called the “*sons of God*,” they are all the reason to be worshipfully subject to God, being like the Son of God who, “being in very nature of God” (6) did not grasp for *equality* but *emptied himself as a servant* (7). In this way, though glorified on thrones, these elders recognize that they are always *emptied* and *worshipfully honoring of the Father as God*.

Q3. For what do the elders worship God? (Revelation 4:10-11)

3. Lord God is worthy as creator of all things. The elders also *cast their crowns* before the throne of God, acknowledging that all the authority and power they have been granted is from the Lord God, for they serve as those *under authority*. They themselves also praise *their* Lord and God (11) for His place as the Head, the Creator whose “will” sustains the existence of all things! This makes Him worthy of all praise.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Our Worthy Lord and God: The natural response of creation to the resplendent glory of God is worship. Imagine worship beginning at the throne of God, given by the most powerful of created beings who have the capacity to see God and His fullness. Next, see the worship of those called to be close to God, to share His holiness. With the worship of these beings nearest the throne of power, we can see glory of God at its most direct form.

First, the worship of God's *covering angels* speaks for all the living in *heaven and on earth*, for they have the power and insight to experience God in the fullness of His glory. So, they worship the Lord God first for His *three-times repeated "holiness"*—for the Father is holy; God the Son is holy; and God the Spirit is holy. And, He is the Lord of all authority, the God of highest place, and the Almighty of all power. This one is self-existent in past, present, and coming future!

Second, the worship of God's holy "elders" speaks for God's own holy people. They speak as those having the most intimate relationship with "their" Lord and "their" God. His place even in His own family is that of "Lord"—the one whose *word of command* is irresistible; and "God," the source and Head of all things, especially their family. So, these Elders "cast down their crowns" to recognize that their place of *authority* is only in relation to their Lord and God. Only their Lord God is worthy of all "glory, honor, and power" (11). For, He is the only Self-existent creator!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁸: Four Living Creatures: These four living creatures have appeared before, notably in Ezekiel’s vision of the Lord (Ezekiel 1:5) as well as in Isaiah’s vision in the temple (Isaiah 6:2), in which they are called *seraphim*. These creatures are charged with proclaiming the “holiness” of God with a power that *shakes* the very foundations.

Added Notes: Worthy Creator: When the *elders fall down and worship God*, they proclaim His *worthiness* as their “Lord” and “God” (Rev. 4:11). The worthiness of God which gives him all rights is the truth that He “created all things” and that their very existence depends on His will. In this way, no creature is *self-existent*. All depend on the will of God to exist and be created.

Chapter 9: LION OF JUDAH CONQUERS: Kingdom's Lamb of God *Revelation 5:1-10*

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then *Write Insights to Share* with others.

a. Preview Revelation 5:1-10

Lion of Judah: Kingdom's Lamb of God. If the Kingdom of God comes as a family, then its Firstborn Heir, Messiah, has the right of redemption to establish the Kingdom by restoring His House. So, read Revelation 5:1-10 to see how all heaven and earth recognizes that the Lion of Judah is the Kingdom's only rightful Redeemer! First, ***all in Heaven and Earth unworthy to bring God's Kingdom***, for all creation is in bondage to the corrupting sin and darkness that has tainted reality from the beginning (Rev. 5:1-4; Rom. 8:21). The reason all in creation is unworthy to bring the Kingdom is that only the Lion of Judah, the Seed of David (2 Sam. 7:12-16), has been promised the Kingdom so is its only rightful Redeemer. So, only the ***Lion of Judah has power to bring the Kingdom of God*** (Rev. 5:5). But what is the power by which this Lion conquers to bring God's Kingdom? It is the power of resurrection, for the ***Lamb slain and exalted is Worthy to receive Kingdom*** (Rev. 5:7-10).

*b. Prayerfully **Read Revelation 5:1-10** and **Write** your insights to share*

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why must all creation be freed to enjoy a new age of resurrection from the dead? (Rom. 8:21; Col. 1:15-20).

Q2: Why is the Lion of Judah the only one worthy to bring the Kingdom of God?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 Why is no one in heaven or earth worthy to bring God's Kingdom into reality? (Revelation 5:1-4; Rom. 8:21)

1. All in heaven and earth unworthy to bring God's Kingdom:

Into this current age of Sin and Death, Jesus was born as the "Firstborn of all creation" (Col. 1:15), this current creation, so that He might be the one by the "blood of His cross" to "reconcile all things to himself" to make peace (20). Thus, there is only one rightful redeemer to restore this current creation, the promised Messiah—the Son of David and the Son of God. So, only Jesus Messiah is worthy to bring God's Kingdom, which ushers in the New Age of freedom and resurrection life "from the dead" (18) to overturn the previous age of sin and death forever.

Q2. Who is the only one worthy take and open God's Kingdom scroll? (Revelation 5:5)

2. Lion of Judah has power to bring Kingdom of God: Right of Conquest. Again, only Messiah, the Son of Davide and the Lion of Judah, has the *redeemer's right* as the "Firstborn" (Col. 1:15) to restore all creation by His redemption on the cross (20). So, the Lion of Judah is the Kingdom's rightful ruler because He is the Kingdom's only Redeemer.

Q3. How did the Lion of Judah overcome with power to bring the Kingdom of God? (Revelation 5:7-10)

3. Lamb slain and resurrected worthy to receive Kingdom: It is an ancient darkness which corrupts this current creation by its sin and death. So, the Lion of Judah, Jesus Mashiach, conquers not by powerful force but by *sacrificial service*, giving up His life as a "Lamb slain" in order to *put away sin and its power of death* to win a *resurrection life*. It is this resurrection life which the Lamb then gives His family as the *first fruits of the Spirit-born Kingdom* (Rom. 8:23). And, it is this resurrection life that *frees the entirety of creation* to bring the Lord's eternal Kingdom uniting Heaven and Earth.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Lion of Judah/ Lamb of God: Kingdom's Right and Redemption.

When the apostle John *weeps* at creation's utter helplessness to bring God's future Kingdom of life and peace, he grieves for all of us who groan in the disappointment of this current creation. At once touched by the glory of God but defaced by the *ugly darkness* which brings sin and death. For, even at the *beginning* of God's creation of the earth, *darkness* touched the deep even as God's creative light bathed this world in glory (Gen. 1:2).

But there is a *prior love* which overturns this primordial darkness, for God has loved the Son from the "beginning," appointing Him both the "firstborn" of this current creation and also the "firstborn of the dead" (Col. 1:15, 18). That is, creation's Heir to accomplish her redemption, and the Kingdom's Heir to empower its resurrection, for He is both the powerful Lion of Judah and the obedient Lamb of God, our perfect redeemer. So, worship this Lion and the Lamb, the One who wins for God and brings you into His eternal Kingdom Age by His resurrection!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)		
✓ Agree	? Question	! Differ
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?		
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?		
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?		

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁹: Scroll: To understand the scroll in the hand of the Lord God Almighty, realize that all creation is divided into two *eras*—the time of darkness and the time of resurrection. When God made “heaven and earth” in the beginning (Gen. 1:1), he then finished the “earth” once “man” was created, bearing God’s image (Gen. 2:1). In this era of *man*, “darkness” opposed to God’s creative “light” was already in existence. This darkness to shape and corrupted man by *sin*, but always was finally defeated by the *cross of Jesus Christ, who was then raised from the dead*. Thus, Jesus establishes in himself a new people and age “from the dead,” of which He is the Firstborn and Heir to this new reality (Col. 1:15-20) to be established by the coming Kingdom of God. Thus, the scroll is the unleashing of this new Kingdom Age, which commences when the Jews are *resurrected from the Death of Sin into the Kingdom’s new life!*

Added Notes: Between the throne and living creatures/ among the elders. Lamb as if slain. When Jesus Messiah is presented to heaven and earth as the only Worthy Heir and Redeemer of Creation and the Rightful Ruler of the Kingdom, he is first shown “between” the throne and the living creatures. For, He has by His “blood” reconciled to the *enthroned God all things “on earth” and “in heaven”* (Col. 1:20). But, this redeeming Lamb also stands “among the Elders,” His *redeemed brothers* who are the first to welcome and celebrate Him as the rightful Head of their family, the multitude who are the Lord’s Hosts of Heaven.

Chapter 10: ALL CREATION WORSHIPS: Worthy Creator and Lamb *Revelation 5:11-14*

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then *Write Insights to Share* with others.

a. Preview Revelation 5:11-14

All Creation Worships: Worthy Creator and Blessed Lamb:

When the Lion of Judah proves Himself worthy as the Lamb of God to bring God's Kingdom to earth, He is worshipped by a myriad of angels who begin a chorus of praise to the Lamb and His Father, seated on the throne. So, read Revelation 5:11-14 to discover the blessings which the Lamb will inherit in His new Kingdom!

First, heaven honors the coming Rule of the Lamb as the *praise of Angels affirms Lamb Worthy to Receive the Kingdom*. From the high vantage point of heaven, the Lamb is worthy of the Kingdom's blessings (Rev. 5:11-12). Then, all creatures honor the Rule of the Lamb, as the *praise of all creatures of Heaven and Earth Exalts Creator and Lamb* (Rev. 5:13). Finally, the highest beings appointed by God, the *powerful living Creatures and Elders fall and Worship* (Rev. 5:14).

b. Prayerfully Read Revelation 5:11-14 and Write your insights to share

SEEING What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas	
LEARNING What does it mean? What is it teaching me?	
DOING What lesson can I apply to my life?	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why is the Lamb worthy, according to the angels? All creatures in heaven and earth? The living creatures and elders?

Q2: What will the Lamb receive in His coming Kingdom?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1 What do the angels affirm about the Creator and the Lamb? (Rev. 5:11-12)

1. Praise of angels affirms Lamb worthy to receive Kingdom.

The angelic multitudes affirm the Lamb's sacrifice and perfection, have secured an eternal Kingdom and its blessings. So, as the overcoming Redeemer of the Kingdom, the Lamb is worthy to receive the Kingdom's *power to rule all of heaven and earth* (Mt. 28:18); the Kingdom's *wealth* in all of heaven and earth (Mt. 5:3, 5); and all the Kingdom's wisdom (Is. 11:1-3); its might, honor, glory, and blessing!

Q2. How do all creatures in heaven and earth honor the Lamb?
(Revelation 5:13)

2. Praise of all creatures in heaven and earth: Exalt Creator and Lamb. Following the angelic blessing, all living creatures in “heaven and earth” ascribe to the Creator and the Lamb all “blessing, honor, glory, and might” (13). That is, all creatures give to the Lamb what is due to him in sacrificial worship—“blessing” Him as the *Blessed One of God*; honor as creation’s only redeemer; glory as the Son of the Father; and, “might” as the Kingdom’s Lord.

Q3. How do the most mighty beings respond to Creation’s
praise? (Revelation 5:14)

3. Powerful living creature and elders fall and worship. When *angelic beings and all* living creatures give themselves in praise to the Lamb who was slain, these four powerful living creatures and God’s *holy family elders affirm this worship and reward of the Lamb, saying “Amen.” With this affirmation, the elders fall down and worship the Lamb!*

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Receiving and Giving Glory: Worthy Creator and Lamb of God.

Although the full purpose of the sacrifice of Messiah on His cross of redemption was long-hidden from the world. Now, at the dawn of the coming Kingdom of God in its fullness, all creation in heaven and on earth recognizes and receives the Lamb of God as the perfected *Lord and Heir* of the coming Kingdom Age.

So, the angelic myriads are the first to proclaim the Lamb as the worthy Heir of the Kingdom, fitting him to receive all the *blessings* and *power* and *prestige* inherent in the Kingdom. Next, the people of the Lamb now sacrifice to Him their simple praise, blessing the Lamb for all that He has rightfully taken as part of His Kingdom.

Now is the time for you to give the Lamb your sacrifice of worship to honor His redemptive sacrifice on the cross!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)		
✓ Agree	? Question	! Differ
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?		
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?		
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?		

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes¹⁰: Worthy is Lamb who was slain: Even at the highest level of inheritance, the Lord God recognizes that not every heir is worthy of the inheritance. However, since the Lamb of God sacrificed His life to pay the ransom for His inheritance, He simply has purchased the redemption of His people, house, and kingdom.

Added Notes: Blessing, honor, glory, and might: When all creatures in heaven and earth finally praise the Creator and His Lamb of God, they *bless* Him as the *one* embodying the blessed life of God; they *honor* Him as having the highest honor as the resurrected Lord; and, they *glorify the Lamb* as the one who won the salvation of His brothers in the humility of His cross.

Prayer Requests:

Prayer Request/ Date	Answered Prayer/ Thanks

Journaling:

What is God teaching you?	How are you growing?

Sermon Notes:

Sermon Notes/ Date	Applying it to my life

Notes:

SERIES 2: FAITH IN PROMISED SEED

BOOK 7:

Book 7:

Introduction

We have already seen in Torah that there is a legal necessity for Mashiach. Now, the Ketuvim reveal that there is a *life necessity* for Mashiach as well! The *Ketuvim* are the expression of the life of God's people, recording the musings of the *soul* of the people in worship (Psalms), testing (Job), and history of shared experiences (Lamentations, Chronicles). These *Ketuvim* reveal that Mashiach is needed to fulfill the *life* of God's people! (see book 1.2 for the soul's hope for Mashiach in the Psalms). To understand why Mashiach is needed to fulfill the *life* of God's people, let's consider first what our life as *living souls* was meant to be. The Lord God made us as *living souls*—*hai nefesh* as beings of earthly *flesh* but also his spiritual life (Genesis 2:7). But, when our first parents sinned, this spiritual life "died" as God warned (2:17) and we were left as *naked flesh*, uncovered and dead to God's *spiritual life*, making us fearful in his holy presence (3:10). In this *fleshly death*, God's Spirit cannot *abide* in us (6:3), nor can we work to reverse this death, for we are still *naked flesh* even when furnished with the Law and its commands (Ex. 20:19). So, what is our only *life* in this world, as *fleshly beings* uncovered of spiritual life? Like Abraham, we are to live by *faith* in God's promised *Seed*, Mashiach, to be made

righteous (Gen. 15:6). In both our *personal lives* and our shared *family life* as the people of God, we trust in Mashiach not ourselves for life!

In our personal lives, we need Mashiach to redeem us from our *fleshly* inclination to be *self-righteous*! Although Job was upright, he justified himself as *self-righteous* when tested. Only God's wisdom secures for us His *spiritual life* (Proverbs), so only His promised Seed of David redeems us to deliver us from death to life for His Kingdom (Ruth- 2 Samuel 7). Collectively, Israel was helpless in their sin, incurring God's judgment (2 Chronicles). So, God promises Mashiach as the one to restore life (Daniel), who comes at the appointed time fixed to the decree of Artaxerxes (Ezra).

Personal Life:

1. Job 1: Upright Heart
2. Job 2: Intent on Worship
3. Job 3: Self-Justification Rebuked
4. Prov. 1, 3. Need Wisdom and Spirit.
5. Ruth 4, 2 Sam. 7. Only Mashiach Redeems: Son of David + Son of God

Family Life:

6. 2 Chron. 1. Family- national Sin:
7. Daniel 1: Holy Spiritual Reality.
8. Daniel 2a. Family Sin and Guilt.
9. Daniel 2b. Only Mashiach brings atonement for Rule.
- 10: Ezra 7. God works in Israel as Firstborn Sons.

STEPS of a Devoted Disciple:

Your *Devotion* matters to the Lord. For, there is only one Lord and God, and He deserves creation's highest honor and praise. So, you were made to give yourself to the Lord God in loving devotion of heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30). In this same devotion to the Lord, Jesus Christ calls you to follow Him as His disciple. These short devotionals guide you in the Word to cultivate a heart devotion to the Lord as His disciple.

- First, **discover** what His life-giving Word has to say to you personally, being careful to write down your insights to share with others.
- Then, **discuss** His Word with those closest to you: your family, your friends, and in your home fellowship group (your spiritual family).
- Next, **dialogue** to compare views on key passages with a partner—either another disciple, or an older mentor or younger mentee.
- Finally, **develop** key skills as you abide in the Word by applying it to your life as you read the devotional, notes, and footnotes.

START HERE: Humble Yourself in Prayer:

Devote yourself to the Lord to hear and do His Will for you.

Do I want to humble myself under the Lordship of God by faith?

Or, will I live as my own Lord, relying on my own understanding?

PRAYER OF DEVOTION

Lord God, I devote my life to you today. I offer you my soul to live humbly under your Lordship; my mind to seek your will and Spirit; my heart to love you and others; and, my strength to obey your Word and Will!
Amen.

Chapter 1: FEAR OF GOD: Knowledge of the Lord

Job 1:1-2:9 (Prov. 1:7)

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then *Write Insights to Share with others.*

a. Preview Job 1:1-2:9 (Prov. 1:7)

Fear of God: Knowing the Lord by Faith. The Lord considered Job as His distinguished *servant* in all the earth. So, read Job 1:1-2:9 to see how Job pleased God by his worshipful *fear of God*, even when he was tested.

Notice first that Job's *fear of God* was the foundation for His worshipful life on earth. For this very reason, Job's *fear of the Lord* was tested by Satan. (1:1-12). Then, notice that Job held to his *fear of the Lord* even when he was **tested by adversity** and the loss of his possessions, even his most precious children. For the man of God, worship does not depend on his possessions. (13-20). Finally, Job held to his *worshipful fear of God* even when he was **tested by suffering**. Even in suffering, Job did not value his own life over his worship of the Lord. (2:1-10).

b. Prayerfully Read Job 1:1-2:9 (Prov. 1:7) and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How would you define the *fear of the Lord God* which set Job apart?

Q2: Why was the Tempter so intent on proving that Job's *fear and worship* of God was bought with a price and could easily be abandoned?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How does Job please God as being blameless? (Job 1:1-12)

1. Fear of God: Knowing God by Faith. God values Job as His servant because he is His “servant” who “fears God” and “turns from evil” (8). This “fear” of God enables him to live a “blameless” and “upright” life on earth. God values Job’s heart to “fear God”—that is, to know by *faith* that God is Holy and alone worthy to be worshipped as God. Because God so values Job’s “fear of God,” he allows his heart to be tested (9).

Q2. How does Satan test Job's "fear" of God? (1:13-20)

2. Tested by Adversity: Because Satan hates God and the honor which His servant Job gives to him, He seeks to blaspheme His name by showing that Job's "fear" is *cheap* because God indeed does not deserve such worship. Rather, Job's worship is simply *bought* by the possessions which God has lavished on Job. However, Job still fears and worships God even when he has lost everything (21).

Q3. What is Satan's final test to shake Job's "fear of God"? (Job 2:1-10)

3. Tested by Suffering: Losing your Life: Satan's final, failing attempt to shake Job's "fear of God" so that He would deny God and abandon his worship tested Job's very life and health. But, when Job's very life was afflicted and he suffered painful affliction, he still refused to "curse God" but still honored God as holy, having the right to give both "good" and "evil" (10). This attributing God the right to "good" and "evil" shows that he does not share in Adam's sin to determine "good" and "evil" as a human right (Gen. 3:5).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to **read** Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Faith and Fearing God: Are you regarded by God as His *servant*, who, like Job, “fears God and turns from evil”? (Job 1:8) God regarded Job as His servant, for his “fear” of God sustained his *worship of God* through all his trials. For, even as Satan robbed him of his possessions and family (1:19) and even his vitality and health (2:7), Job still *worshipped God* (1:20) and refused to *curse* or deny God of His place of honor (2:10). Will you also be found as one who “fears” God for the simple reason that He is worthy to be worshipped and regarded as *holy*, regardless of what you receive or are deprived of by His hand, or whether or not your life is healthy or afflicted? God values those who fear Him for His own sake, for their *faith* repents of the original sin of our first parents who *diminished* God's *Lordship* to elevate humanity to be “like God” to seize the right to *determine* “good” and “evil” for themselves (Gen. 3:5). Though Job maintained his *faith* when tested with both loss and affliction, he let himself be provoked by pride to justify himself. Job mistook his own *faith* as the source of his righteousness, so began to claim a *self-righteousness* which diminished God. Rather, it is never our faith but the *object of our faith*, God and His Redeemer (Job 19:25; Is. 44:6), that is the source of our *righteousness*.

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes¹: Source of Righteousness: Righteous Acts or Redeemer's Vindication. Abraham was seen as *righteous* by God (Gen. 15:6) not because his *faith* and *fear of God* earned him a righteousness as a Self-accomplishment. Such self-righteousness fuels our original *rebellion* to think that we earn the right to be "like God" as being worthy in ourselves (Gen. 3:5). Rather, Abraham's *faith* approached God helplessly, clinging only to the *promised Seed* (5) to arise as his redeemer to secure for Him *righteousness* as an inheritance!

¹ **Footnotes: Faith and Fear: Self-Justification or Redemption:** Job's initial *fear of God* pulled His heart to find refuge in His *Redeemer* alone (Job 19:25) as he worshipped and still surrendered to God the *right* to determine "good" and "evil" for him (2:10). But, due to the provocation of his friends, Job began to see his *faith* and acts of righteousness as a Self-Righteousness that enabled him to approach God with demands for *good* (30:26).

Chapter 2: SELF-RIGHTEOUS: Fleshly Temptation to Justify Self *Job 23, 31, Prov. 3:5-6*

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then **Write Insights** to Share with others.

a. Preview *Job 23, 31, Prov. 3:5-6*

Self-Righteousness: Fleshly Temptation to Rebel. Because Job's friends accuse him of unrighteousness deserving of punishment, Job instead argues that he is *blameless* and *righteous*, forgetting his place of faith, worship, and his need for God's redemption. So, read Job 23 and 31 to discover the all-too-common way that our own *naked flesh* deceives us to think that our *faith* and its acts of righteousness secure for us a *Self-righteousness* that entitles us to approach God without fear, as fellow determiners of "good" and "evil."

First, see how Job's *fleshly imagination* entices him to fall into a **fearless disrespect** of God's holy power, thinking that his human righteous acts allow him to argue with God (23:1-7). Then, see how Job mistakenly **presumes familiarity** with God, assuming that God thinks and acts as he does (8-17). Finally, Job harbors a **bold rebellion** to imagine that he could come before God based on his own merits and righteousness (31:35-40) due to his own fleshly acts of righteousness (31:1-4).

b. Prayerfully Read Job 23, 31, Prov. 3:5-6 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How does Job's own sense of Self-righteousness warp the way that he sees God and how to relate to him?

Q2: Why is it dangerous to assume that your human actions earn you the right to approach God fearlessly, as an equal, to make demands on him?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. Why does Job start to lose his *fear of the Lord*? (Job 23:1-7)

1. Fearless Disrespect: Job shares humanity's *fallen flesh* which makes its own Self-experiences *righteous, judging* "good" and "evil" based on self-interest, even God's actions. So, as Job continues to talk with his friends to defend himself as *righteous*, his *Self-rightness* inflates as God becomes a mere *means to his own vindication*. No longer the Judge to be feared, Job presumes to know God as *powerless* in the face of his complaint. So, Job imagines God as *defenseless* against his arguments (4), *simple and predictable* in his thinking (5), and *powerless* but to "acquit" him based on his own righteousness (7).

Q2. What makes Job think that he is completely familiar with God? (23:8-17)

2. Presuming Familiarity: Intimate Relationship: As the servant of the Lord, Job has enjoyed an intimate relationship with God, walking in faithfulness (11), obeying His commands (12), and treasuring His words. However, such intimacy causes Job to view God as a familiar equal. So, Job presumes to “know” the mind of God and to *predict* his certain acquittal from God, based on his own Self-righteousness (10). Though Job is “terrified” of God, he also claims a *presumptuous* familiarity, like a friend being treated unfairly by his equal.

Q3. How does Job view himself and his rights before God?
(31:35-40)

3. Bold Rebellion: Fearless Flesh. When Job's heart turns from worship of God to defending his *self as righteous*, his growing confidence in his fleshly Self and its rights turn his *fear of God* into a fearless rebellion. No longer faithful to God despite his experiences, Job separates himself and sees God as his *adversary* (35). Furnished with a *fleshly righteousness*, Job imagines himself now as a lofty *prince* who approaches God without fear (37). Like Job, all who cultivate and defend their own *Self-righteousness* will find that their fleshly loyalties separate themselves from God until they view themselves as "princes" to whom God must respond!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Dangerous Presumption: Fruit of Fleshly Righteousness. Job's life cautions us that when we rely on *human flesh*, even the most *blameless* ones will inevitably slide from *pleasing worship* to *bold rebellion*—a shift which Israel experienced as a nation as its early devotion (Jer. 2:2) devolved into *national unbelief* and exile.

Considering our fleshly weakness, Job and Israel's life experience highlights our need for faith—not in our fleshly ability to do right, but faith in Mashiach who redeems us to be freed from sin and have an everlasting righteousness (Jer. 23:6; Dan. 9:24). From Job, we see:

- **Faith** seeks no **Self-justification**: Initially, Job cared little for his own *reputation* to hold to his *fear of God in worship* (2:9-10) but relies on final judgment of Redeemer (19:25-27).
- **Self-Righteousness** isolates from God: Job's initial *fear of God* drew him near in dependent worship (1:20). But, as he *defended* his "Self" as *right*, he focused on his own *fleshly choices* apart from God, becoming increasingly adversarial (31:35-7).
- **Self-Righteousness** diminishes God to exalt the Self: In the end, Job's *fleshly imagination*, driven by *self-righteousness*, boldly usurped God's right to judge (23:10) and inflated him as a *prince* on equal footing with God! (31:37).

Mercifully, God rebukes Job and eventually Israel for their Self-Righteousness and its terrible fruit of *blasphemous imagination* and *bold rebellion!*

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

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What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes²: Self-Righteousness: Religious Sin: At the heart of our *fleshly sin* which all humans share, both Jew and Gentile, is deep-rooted need to be *Self-sufficient* in our human life, to be *like God* so that we are free to live and devise our own “righteousness.” Such desire for Self-righteousness is the origin of all human-reliant religion, from *rabbinic Judaism* to *norse mythology*— systems which justify our *fleshly lives and values*.

² **Footnotes: Justifying Self by Denouncing God:** Original Unbelief: Our *original choice* to choose *fleshly reasoning and life over faith-devotion to God* at the tree (Gen. 3:6-7) necessarily diminishes God’s “Lordship” so that we might be “like God” — that is, equal to God (5) in devising our own Self-Righteousness, choosing “good” and “evil” *not by submissive faith* but by human imagination, for Eve came up with three good reasons to sin against God. Even so, an entire system of *rabbinic Judaism* which blinds its followers to their need for Mashiach, relying instead on a *fleshly redemption*, is false.

Chapter 3: RIGHTEOUS GOD: Rebuking Human Rebellion

Job 38, 40-41, 42

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then **Write** *Insights to Share with others.*

a. Preview *Job 38, 40-41, 42*

Righteous God: Rebuking Fleshly Imagination. Job's inflated sense of Self-Righteousness before God, puffed up as he defends his *rightness* to his friends, shatters in the righteous reality of his Creator! So, read Job 38, 40-42 to see how the Lord God dispels Job's *fleshly delusions* to lead him to repent and be restored to a healthy faith in the fear of God!

First, read Job 38 to see God reveal Himself as the ***matchless God*** to whom no *creature of flesh* has any basis to dare compare themselves. For, God alone has the eternal experience and unstoppable authority to command all things in heaven and earth. (38). So, Job has no choice but ***surrender Self*** and all his rights, claims, and deeds, as lacking any substance to claim before God. In fact, all the words he has gathered in his defense, he abandons to only repeat the words God has spoken (40). In the end, Job ***repents of his deluded ability*** (41-42), realizing that if his *fleshly imaginings* have no bearing on earthly things, how much less do they matter regarding *heavenly matters of the spirit!*

b. Prayerfully Read Job 38, 40-41, 42 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How does God remind Job of the reality of His divine nature as it compares to Job's fleshly nature?

Q2: From what does Job repent after seeing the reality of God and His power?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. What does God reveal as He questions Job? (38)

1. Matchless God: Relating to Man. God's words to Job immediately dispel all his *fleshy delusions*: "Who are you?" (2). Deluded by his inflated sense of Self-righteousness, Job imagined that he would stand as an equal to God. But God reminds Job he has neither the *experience* of exiting from the beginning (4) nor the power of purpose (5) to compare himself to God. His words have neither the power of *command* (12) nor His *ability* the power to influence reality in either heaven or earth (31).

Q2. How does Job revise his view of himself after hearing from God? (40)

2. Surrendered Self: From its very beginning in the Garden, *fleshly human talk* sets the human Self as the center of its reasoning, determining “good” and “evil” based on selfish interest. By such fleshly talk, Eve *reasoned* that there were good reasons to sin (Gen. 3:6). Setting up the Jewish Self as the standard of righteousness, the Pharisees accused Jesus of blasphemy to claim God as His Father (Matt. 26:65). And, the fleshly talk of Job and his friends provoked Job to defend his own *Self* as right. But, confronted by the only Righteous God, Job admits he is of “little account” (40:4) and even “despises” his Self (42:6).

Q3. How does Job repent of his foolish delusions about God and his own *Self-righteousness*? (41-42:)

3. Repenting of Deluded Ability: God mercifully reveals to Job the folly of human imaginations, which are mere delusions. Job's *fleshly mind* could effortlessly imagine making *Leviathan* his own plaything, but such thoughts are mere delusion when confronted by the reality of his own powerlessness (8). How much more delusional are Job's *imaginings* of the spiritual realm and its *righteousness*? Yet, humans are still enamored by the *fleshly imagination*, assuming that human doctrines, human good works, or relativistic morality have any bearing on God's spiritual reality and the substance of his righteousness. So, the *rabbinic tradition* may accrue generations of doctrines on the Mashiach, it did little to prevent Judah from going into exile and to prepare Israel for the coming of its Mashiach, Jesus. But Job repented of his folly, as will Israel at the Lord's appearing!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Righteous God: Grace. From our very creation, man has only had access to the *righteous life* by receiving this *spiritual life* from God. But, when our first parents sinned, we became mere creatures of *flesh*, naked and cutoff from this *righteous life*, though our fleshly minds imagine that we can be “like God” (Gen. 3:5) to achieve the *righteous life* on our own. Such an *illusion of Self-Righteousness* is actually cultivated through human discussion, for we conjure *good reasons* for righteousness in the same way that Eve arrived at three good reasons to sin.

But God alone is *righteous*, and He gives His *righteous life* only to those who humbly surrender to him by faith, fearfully worshipping Him as their only God and Lord. But, when God's *righteous presence* is revealed to fleshly men like Job, who was deluded by his own righteousness, and one day to the nation of Israel, also deluded to seek a *Jewish righteousness* rather than the one promised to them by the redemption of their Mashiach, Jesus. And, this righteous presence will dispel all *fleshly imaginings* and human efforts to build a self-righteousness!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
!	Differ
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

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Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

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What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes³: Dispelling Delusion: Self-Justification of *fleshly talk*:

The underlying folly of our first parents at the tree was to *reason* that there could be any source apart from God for *life* and *goodness*. Presuming that mere human *reasoning* had any *impact* on the spiritual realities of life and righteousness apart from God, fleshly people have relied on human religion and its delusions through all our generations. But Self-made religion that *deprives God* of the fear and worship that are his due and is blind to the *righteousness* secured by the Lord Mashiach's redemption is ultimately worthless!

³ **Footnotes: Repenting in Dust and Ashes:** Job “repents” in “dust” and ashes to remind him of his earthly nature and the limitations of his *dusty flesh*. Because Job, Jews, and we all have inherited the *naked flesh* of Adam and Eve, uncovered of God's spiritual life and righteousness, we have no access in the flesh to the righteous life of God. Furnished with the life-giving Law, Judah and its people were still of *naked flesh*, so they sought to keep the Law not by *faith* but as an end to Self-righteousness. The Law dictates faith in the Lord God and his redemption before any act of obedience (Exodus 20:2), and this redemption relies on Mashiach alone as the source of its “righteousness” (Jer. 23:6). But, Israel instead grew exalted in the flesh to presume that their words, the Oral Torah, were equally life-giving as any revelation from God. So, their words neutralized the Law's command to trust in the Seed for their righteousness. As Job repented, so Israel must repent of their lofty Self-righteousness.

Chapter 4: WISDOM OF FAITH: Fearing the Lord

Proverbs 1, 3

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then **Write** Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview **Proverbs 1, 3**

Wisdom of Faith: Fearing the Lord. As the King blessed with God's insight, Solomon instructs the future generations of God's people on the life of *wisdom and instruction* which is opposed to the folly of fleshly life. So, read Proverbs 1 and 3 to discover the wise life God intends for His people.

First, learn the **Wisdom of Fearing the Lord** (1:1-7), for it begins with the humility to "receive instruction," for such wisdom is revealed by God and received by faith as His divine character of *righteousness, justice, and equity* (Jer. 9:24). So, true *wisdom* begins with the "fear of the Lord" which gives the Lord the highest place of authority as "God" (1:2-7).

Second, Godly wisdom rejects **self-harming sin** which will cost the sinners their own lives. For, if God is the giver of true life, rejecting God by choosing sin is to forsake one's life and to invite death and desolation (1:8-19). Finally, *the wisdom from God* is only given by God because it is *from His Spirit of Wisdom*, from His very life which He gives to those who receive His grace by faith. For, those who are filled with their own "ways" and *wisdom* have no need of God's wisdom and life and so embrace *death* which separates from God. But, those of faith do not rely on their own *understanding* but God's leading. (1:20-33; 3:1-8)

b. Prayerfully Read Proverbs 1, 3 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why does God's wisdom and instruction begin with the *fear of the Lord*?

Q2: Why is human wisdom unable to achieve true *righteousness and equity*?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. Why is the *fear of the Lord* the beginning of knowledge and understanding rather than folly? (R)

1. Wisdom of Fearing the Lord: To *fear the Lord* is the beginning, *at the “head,”* of acquiring all knowledge and wisdom, for the Lord God is the source of all wisdom, for He has alone has *headship*, the right to *instruct*. For, true wisdom has a spiritual life that is inherent in his *character*, his love of “righteousness, justice, and equity” (1:3; Jer. 9:24). But, to seek to *know or establish a wisdom* apart from God, based on human, fleshly experience, is *folly*. For, such Self-reliant and fleshly thinkers reject the Lord’s *instruction*.

Q2. What is the end result of *fleshly understanding*? (1:8-19)

2. Self-harming Sin: Selfish Flesh. Those in the world, who are led by their own *fleshly thinking*, think and speak in enticing and attractive ways (1:10). For, the *flesh* is entirely Self-interested, seeking mainly to benefit itself even at the cost or harm to others (12). So, the *flesh* in the world is shrewd and self-enriching or self-advancing, but in the eyes of the Lord, the *flesh* leads to “sin” (8) which must be judged. In the end, those who live by the flesh pay the price of their own “lives” (18), for the wages of sin is “death” (Rom. 6:23).

Q3 What will the Lord do for those who seek *wisdom* from Him?
(1:20-33; 3:1-8)

3. Spirit of Wisdom: Receptive Faith. Solomon portrays *the Lord's Wisdom* as a solitary voice calling out to humanity (20). Those who turn from this world's *easy, flesbly way* in order to *trust* the Lord in faith, *fearing and worshipping Him alone*, to these God gives His *words* and His *Spirit of life* (1:23). Because they rely not on their own *flesbly understanding*, the Lord leads them by His wisdom for their "healing" and their "refreshment" (3:5-8).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Fearful Worship or Fleshly Folly: Spiritual Life or Death. As our first parents were given the choice of life with God or death in their *naked flesh*, so you must choose either the way of *wisdom* with God or *folly* by your own Self-understanding.

You must understand that true *wisdom from God* is life-giving, for it proceeds from His eternal *Spirit* and *righteous character*. So, the Lord God stands at the *head*, at the beginning and source of all wisdom and life. For, to *fear the Lord* is to bow to, surrender to this *authoritative life* of the Lord in humbled worship.

But *foolish flesh* rejects the Lord's *instruction*, being Self-satisfied in its own human understanding. Instead, *foolish flesh* seeks its own *Self-interest* and enrichment in the world, even if it means oppressing others. In the end, fleshly sin costs the sinner his own *life* (1:19).

So, choose the path of *wisdom* by ever submitting to the Lord God and his instruction. Relying on the Lord by faith, you will find His Spirit and His hand on your life, making your paths straight! (3:5-6).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)		
✓ Agree	? Question	! Differ
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?		
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?		
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?		

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

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What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

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What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁴: Wisdom: Frustratingly, the human flesh is incapable of acquiring nor controlling the *wisdom* of God by its human understanding and experience. For, the *wisdom* of God is life-giving, *breathed out* and given to those who fear Him as his *spiritual life* and *righteousness*. Such life and righteousness is always under His *authority*, so only those who fear the Lord and bow under His Lordship have access to such wisdom and life!

⁴ **Footnotes: Faith to Receive:** Accounted as Righteous. Again, human *flesh*, which is *Self-interested*, cannot generate for itself the *wisdom* and *righteous life of God*, even if it is furnished with the Word of God. For, self-interested flesh does not submit to the Lordship of God, nor can it be instructed. Rather, the flesh seeks to devise its own *righteousness* that suits its own interests. So, *traditional rabbinic Judaism* devises a righteousness aligned with Jewish interests using the Word of God. However, since this *fleshly system of righteousness* does not submit to the Lord God's instruction, needing to *add* an entirely different *oral Torah*, its approach to the Word of God is *unbelieving* in the same way that the Serpent quoted but abused God's Word to deceive. So, the person sharing Abraham's faith fears God and submits to His means of *righteousness*, the promised redemption of Mashiach.

Chapter 5: PROMISED REDEEMER: Wisdom from God

Ruth 4- 2 Samuel 7

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then **Write Insights** to Share with others.

a. Preview Ruth 4- 2 Samuel 7

Picture of Redeemer: Promised Seed. By God's Wisdom, he promises a Redeeming Seed to secure forgiveness and righteousness for His people, a kinsman Redeemer coming from the line of Judah. So, read Ruth 4 and 2 Samuel 7 to discover the clearest view of this promised Seed, the Davidic Mashiach who redeems a house to establish His Kingdom!

First, read Ruth 4 to get a picture of the ***redeemer's right and responsibility***. Following the pattern of Judah and Tamar (4:12), Boaz first *secures* his right to redeem Ruth because he is willing to take responsibility to *pay the price* for her redemption. (1-8). Then, see how the ***redeeming Seed*** is to ***build up the house***. Here, God's long-promised *Seed* is finally seen as the Redeemer raised up to build his *house*. (4:9-22). Finally, let's see the final fulfillment of this *promised Seed* as God ***raises up Seed for David*** so that this promised Mashiach is to be both the Son of David and the Son of God, charged with *redeeming his house* to establish the throne of his eternal kingdom! (2 Samuel 7:12-16)

b. Prayerfully **Read Ruth 4- 2 Samuel 7** and **Write** your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why must Boaz raise up a redeemer? What will the redeemer do?

Q2: Why must the long-promised Seed be raised up by God, who acts as a redeemer himself, as did Judah and Boaz? (Does God have a right to fill this role as a redeemer of David's house? (Ps. 19:14).

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How does Boaz prove to be the *suitable redeemer* of Ruth? (4:1-8)

1. Redeemer's Right and Responsibility: As we see in Ruth 4, the *kinsman-redeemer* of a house does not only have the *privilege or right* to acquire the inheritance of a deceased member, but he has the *responsibility* to pay the price in order to *build up the house*. This responsibility involves *sacrifice*, which Boaz was prepared to make but for which the relative was unwilling, because he did not want to "impair" his own inheritance (6). What a perfect picture of *Mashaich* as the coming redeemer of God's household, who had both the *right* of redemption but was also willing to *pay the most sacrificial price* in order to build up his own household!

Q2. What will the Seed do, raised up by Boaz, the designated kinsman-redeemer? (2:9-22)

2. Redeeming Seed: Builds up House: The death of Elimelech and his sons threatened the future of the *generations of Perez* (18), so Boaz acted as the house's *redeemer* to *raise up the Seed* who would himself be the Kinsman-Redeemer. Serving as a picture of Mashiach's role as our *Kinsman-Redeemer*, we see the redemptive promises fulfilled by Mashiach, the Son of David:

- Redeemer raises up Seed (6,9) → God acts as Redeemer (2 S.7:12).
- Raises up "name" of deceased* (10) → i.e. for David (2 S. 7:12) as the *Son of David* and also bears name of God (14; Jer. 30:9) as the *Son of God*.
- Redeeming Seed builds house (12) → builds house for David (2 Sm. 7:11) and God (13), a royal house of heaven and earth.

Seed restores life to his people (14-15) → Seed *disciplined for iniquity* to give us God's righteous life (2 Sm. 7:14; Is. 53:4-6; Jer. 23:6).

*Note: according to Torah, if a brother raises up seed (e.g. Onan), then Seed is the *Son* of the deceased. But, if a kinsman *raises up seed* (e.g. Judah, Boaz, God), then Seed is son of both fathers.

Q3. How does God raise up Seed for David? (2 Samuel 7:11-16)

3. Raised up Seed for David: God the Redeemer. God knew that David's line would be corrupted at Jeconiah (Jer. 22:30) as it had with Er (Gen. 38:7). So, God himself promises to act as the Redeemer *to raise up Seed* for David (7:12), using (genetic) material from David's own body. So, this long-promised Seed, would fulfill the role of Mashiach by being both the Son of David (12) and the Son of God (14) by the duty of *yibbum* and the right of *geulah* (redemption):

- Suffers for sin to *redeem* a people from *death* to give them God's righteous life (7:14; Is. 53:10-12; Dan. 9:24).
- Builds these *redeemed ones* into a unified house for David (7:11) and God (13).

Establishes upon this house the *throne* of His *rule* over an eternal Kingdom (13, 16).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Family Redeemer: Davidic Mashiach. If you have come to Jesus as your Mashiach, you are redeemed into God's great *house* and given an eternal future in it! God helps us all understand how His redemptive plan through His promised Seed has always been a story of family rescue, so He focuses His promises of the coming Seed in the family drama of Judah, whose line was threatened from the very start! See, God intends to build a house of "heaven" and "earth" whose "generations" will establish Mashiach's *throne* and *kingdom rule* forever! (Gen. 2:4; 2 Sam. 7:16). However, how can God share a house with *fleshly humanity*, corrupted by sin and lacking the righteous life in which His Spirit could *abide* forever? (Gen. 6:3). So, God *promises to "raise up Seed"* for David (2 Sam. 7:12) using David's own bodily (genetic) material, which the Holy Spirit did to *conceive* Jesus in Mary's womb (Matt. 1:18). According to the laws of *duty* (yibbum) and *redemption* (geullah), such a Seed is both the Son of God (7:14), able to pay with his divine life the infinite debt of our sin, and the Son of David (12), a man able to suffer for sin (14) to offer his soul to make atonement (Is. 53:10, 12). Given his *righteous life* (Jer. 23:6), you now share in his house and kingdom!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
! Differ	
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁵: Raising up Seed: A *redeeming kinsman*—whether a brother or close relative, has the right and responsibility to impregnate the *wife* of the deceased in order to *raise up Seed, that is, a male offspring*, who himself can fill the role of *redeemer* to restore the line and house threatened with *extinction*. According to the laws of duty (yibbum- Deut. 25:5-6) and redemption (geullah- Ruth 4:10), the *offspring* raised up by a kinsman-redeemer (non-brother) is the Son of both the one *raising up Seed and the* deceased one.

⁵ **Footnotes: House, Throne, Kingdom:** In God's purpose, He appoints Mashiach as the Heir and Head of all things in heaven and earth (Col. 1:16; Matt. 28:18-20). As the Heir of God's *house*, Mashiach is multiplied to be the *Firstborn Son* of many *brothers* (Gen. 22:17; Rom. 8:29). So, as with his ancestor David, Mashiach establishes the *throne* of His Kingdom by *gathering a House* to rule with Him in His eternal Kingdom (Rev. 1:6). So, Mashiach redeems a *house* to establish a *throne* to rule a *kingdom* forever (2 Sam. 7:16).

Chapter 6: LIFE-RESTORING REDEMPTION:

Needing Mashiach

2 Chronicles 36

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then **Write** *Insights to Share with others.*

a. Preview 2 Chronicles 36

Life-Restoring Redemption: Hardness Rebuked. Like Job, Judah was rebuked by the Lord God for its Self-Righteous rebellion, which hardened its heart to God's wise instruction to invite exile. So, read 2 Chronicles 36 to see how Judah's generational fall into *fleshly corruption* led to God's rebuke and also necessitated the coming of Mashiach to redeem the people from their sins to bring an eternal righteousness!

First, read of how the increasingly **corrupted line** of David made it an unworthy branch of the promised Seed, Mashiach, so God *cuts off* the line at king Jehoiakim (that is, Jeconiah) as recorded in Jer. 22:30. The unbelief of both the kings and their people invited God's wrath (1-16). Then, see how God pours out his **righteous judgment** against Judah by exiling them to Babylon. (25-26) However, even in judgment, the Lord God remains **faithful to His Word** to return the people to Jerusalem so that His promised Mashiach might one day build His *house* at Jerusalem (22-23; Dan. 9:24-27).

b. Prayerfully Read 2 Chronicles 36 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. What did the people of Judah and their kings do to invite God's wrath?

Q2: Even in the midst of judgment, how does God remain faithful to His promise of David's Seed who would build a House for God and David?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How does Judah and its kings invite the wrath of God? (2 Chron. 36:1-16)

1. Righteous Judgment: Hardened by Unbelief. As we saw in the life of Job, our *fleshly natures* will easily turn our *worshipful fear of God* into a *self-righteous, fearless rebellion*. So, as the people of Judah and their kings forgot God and His instruction, their generations of *Davidic kings* became increasingly *evil* and incurred God's *judgment of Jeconiah* (5; Jer. 22:30). Likewise, full of their own *fleshly Self-pursuits and interests*, the people despised "his words" by "scoffing at his prophets" (16). So, people and kings invited God's wrath.

Q2. How does the Lord pour out his *righteous judgment* on Judah and her kings? (17-21)

2. Righteous Judgment: Loss and Exile. God's judgment is like a mirror, reflecting back to the people of Judah how their lives opposed him through their generations. As Judah and its kings had *hardened their hearts* to God and His Word, God brings to them a *hard people* while also feeling "no compassion" for them (17). In the same way that the people refused to humble themselves to honor God as their Lord, so God imposes upon them *harsh masters* who forced them to become "servants" (20)

Q3. How does God's Word give hope to the people of Judah in their Babylonian exile? (22-23)

3. Faithful to His Word. Despite the horrors of Judah's exile, the Word of God reminded the people of God's faithful plan for them. For, God had already promised David that his Seed, Mashiach, would one day build an eternal *household* for David and God (2 Sam. 7:11-13). So, as God had spoken through Jeremiah, Judah would return to their land after seventy years of exile (Jer. 29:10). More importantly, though David's line was ended by the cutting off of Jeconiah (Jer. 22:30), God would himself *raise up* the Son of David who would himself give them an everlasting "righteousness" to shield them from God's wrath (Jer. 23:6).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to **read** Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Judah's Judgment: Fallen Flesh. Wisdom begins when you *submit* to the *headship*, the authority of the Lord God and his word (Prov. 1:7). But, do you think that you possess a *human wisdom* apart from God, that you can do the *right* and *good* think on your own? Consider the nation of Israel.

Perhaps you are relying on your own *Godly heritage* to be considered *wise* and *righteous* in the eyes of God. Consider Jehoiakim, whose ancestor was King David himself, the *man after God's own heart*.

This *son* of David ruled in Jerusalem, but he still did "evil in the sight of the Lord" (36:5). Or, perhaps you are relying on the Word of God to make you righteous. However, the people of Israel and Judah had been given the Torah by God himself, yet the people had *neglected and ignored* the Word of God for generations (34:14).

Soon, the people even "despised" the Word of God (36:16)

Judah fell from *devotion* to *despising the Word*, just as Job fell from *fearing God* to *fearless presumption*, because they and we all share a *naked flesh*, which relies on its own *dead* understanding, which started when our first mother Eve came up with good reasons to sin against God! (Gen. 3:6-7). Human self-righteousness inevitably *falls* to self-interested rebellion. You need the *righteousness* which the Lord alone gives you by Mashiach's redemption! (Dan. 9:24; Jer. 23:6; Rom. 1:17).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁶: Evil in sight of the Lord: Jehoiakim or Jeconiah is the last surviving king of Judah whose *offspring* could have continued the line of David. However, like *Er* before him (Gen. 38:7), the Lord prevented him from passing on the line through his sons. Not by death as in the case of *Er*, but by a *pronouncement banning* any of his *Seed* from “sitting on the throne of David” (Jer. 22:30), thus explaining the need for the Lord’s promise to David that He himself would one day “raise up *Seed*” from David’ own “body” to be anointed as Mashiach (2 Sam. 7:12).

⁶ Footnotes: Despising the Word: When the people of Judah end up “despising the Word” of God (2 Chron. 36:16), their actions prove that they share *naked flesh* with all humanity—a nature which uplifts *human understanding* and *righteousness* to equal God himself, seeking to be “like God” (Gen. 3:5). Ignoring God’s *Lordship* in her life, Eve used her *fleshly reasoning* to come up with three reasons to sin against God (6). So, even furnished with the Law at Sinai, the people of Israel *recoiled from God* in their *naked flesh* (Ex. 20:18). This *naked flesh* enticed Israel and eventually Judah to *scoff at His prophets* (Chron. 36:16) to choose the *great teachers* of their own Jewish tradition and to *despise His words* to heed the words of their own *talmidim* and *midrashim* (scholarship and interpretation). However, like Job, their *fleshly imaginings* were met with the harsh reality of God’s judgment (17).

Chapter 7: MOST HIGH GOD: Ruling over Nations

Daniel 7

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then **Write Insights** to Share with others.

a. Preview **Daniel 7**

Promised Kingdom: Comfort in Exile. In their exile, God sends Judah an encouraging vision through Daniel, an exile in Babylon. So, read Daniel 7 to discover how God assures the Jews of His heavenly rule and the inevitable Kingdom of Mashiach even as the kingdoms of earth rise and fall.

First, Daniel saw the rise and fall of earthly kingdoms as a procession of *great beasts* coming out of humanity's *sea*. Terrifying as they are, God, the *Ancient of Days*, was the only one to sit on His **eternal throne** to wield the ultimate power over the kingdoms of the earth, even over the *beast*, the epitome of humanity's blasphemous rebellion against God (Dan. 7:1-12). Then, see how God gives **Mashiach an everlasting rule**, for He is God's Heir, the Son of David and the Son of God (2 Sam. 7:12, 14), the Heir of Heaven and Earth. (13-14). Then, see how the **futile rebellion** of earth's final world-kingdom gives way to the *everlasting kingdom* of the Mashiach. (19-27).

b. Prayerfully Read Daniel 7 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How does Daniel describe the Most High?

Q2: Why are the descriptions of the Most High and the coming rule of His Mashiach a comfort to the exiles?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How does Daniel's vision explain the relationship between the Most High and earth's kingdoms? (Dan. 7:1-11)

1. Eternal Throne: Ruling Earthly Kingdoms. In Judah's Babylonian exile, Daniel's vision reminds that the Most High still rules over the earth and its kingdoms. The earth's kingdoms are depicted as *great beasts*, powerful and terrifying, yet without wisdom or purpose. As beasts, they differ from *man*, made in the image of God. These beasts rise and fall as they have power over God's people: the *lion*, Babylon; the *bear*, Persia; the *leopard*, Greece; and, the *last beast*, Rome and its final form which rules the entire earth. Yet, over all of these, the Ancient of Days was the only one enthroned in *heavenly power* with burning fire (9).

Q2. Why does the Son of Man inherit the rule of heaven and its everlasting dominion? (Dan. 7:13-14)

Mashiach's Everlasting Rule: Son of Man, Son of God. Unlike the *beasts of the earth*, Mashiach bears God's image as one *like a Son of Man*. Pictured here in heavenly glory, He is accompanied by the "clouds of heaven" because He is also the Son of God. For, God promised David that Mashiach is both the Son of David (Man) and the Son of God (2 Sam. 7:12, 14). So, the Ancient of Days appoints him the Heir of an "everlasting dominion" for He is the Heir of both heaven and earth, an inheritance promised to his "generations" from the very beginning (Gen. 2:4). Thus, Jesus returns as Mashiach with his *armies*, the clouds of heaven, to rule (Rev. 1:7; 19:11-16).

Q3. How does the last of earth's kingdoms seek to overturn God's plan? (Dan. 7:19-27)

3. Futile Rebellion: Defeats Saints. The fourth beast and its ruler embody the Godless efforts of *fleshly humanity* to throw off God's dominion and seize the inheritance of God's people. (Ps. 2:3). So, the boastful *words* of this beast's "horn," its most prominent and blasphemous leader, revolt against God and his people. Importantly, this beast succeeds in over-ruling the entire earth, even overcoming the "saints" (7:25) but still is "destroyed in the end" (26). Thus, God's people never have any *power* in the flesh to resist the world and its kingdoms. But God gives them the kingdom due to Mashiach's right and power.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Eternal Kingdom: Fleshly Weakness, Future Rule. Like the Jews in Babylon, you may feel discouraged by the success of the world's ability to thwart the purposes of God and seemingly unravel God's promise to give His people and their Mashiach an eternal inheritance. So, God gives you the vision of Daniel to deepen your view of His plan. Yes, the nations of the earth are truly terrifying as they exercise their great power over earth's peoples. Human flesh gives way to the *devouring* Babylon; the *massive* Persia; the *predatory* Greece; and, the *unstoppable* Rome and its revived form at the end of days (7:7). But, none of these *great kingdoms* has the mandate of heaven. For, only the *Son of Man*, who also leads the *clouds of heaven* as the Son of God, receives from God an "everlasting dominion" (7:14). So, if you are one of God's *holy ones*, though you suffer oppression in your earthly flesh, know that your Mashiach overcomes to rule!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
!	Differ
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁷: One Like a Son of Man: The Mashiach is *like* a Son of Man in appearance (13) because He is also the Son of God in heavenly glory. For, God’s promise to David is that Mashiach resembles two fathers—David, from whom Mashiach takes on fleshly life from David’s own body (2 Sam. 7:12), and God, from whom Mashiach is *begotten* of Spirit (Ps. 2:7) and is given the name of dominion, “the Lord God” (Jer. 30:9).

⁷ **Footnotes: The Fourth Beast: Worldwide Kingdom:** Before Mashiach comes with the “clouds” of *heaven’s armies* to establish God’s everlasting dominion on the earth, the rebellion against God by humanity and its kingdoms will come to its final culmination. Beginning in the garden when our first parents exalted their *human understanding* above God’s word of command to “not eat” of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:17), using *fleshly reasoning* to justify their sin and rebellion against God, human pride now reaches its pinnacle in earth’s final kingdom and its *horn*, the ruler who will rule for 3.5 years (a time, times, and half a time). This fourth kingdom revives the *people* who crucified Jesus on the cross, the Roman empire, which will over-rule the entire earth and Israel before it is destroyed by Mashiach.

**Chapter 8: RETURNING TO GOD: Prayerful
Repentance
Daniel 9:1-19**

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview Daniel 9:1-19

Timely Prayer: Honest Confession. Daniel realizes that the time had come for the Lord to restore the Jewish people to their homeland, so he seeks the Lord on behalf of his people for mercy. So, read Daniel 9:1-19 to see how Daniel expresses to God the heart of the Jewish people and their desire for restoration. Learn from Daniel's heart to reject the underlying unbelief and *self-righteousness* which led to their exile, and be sure that you share in such humility! First, notice the way that Daniel **confesses Sin** by taking responsibility and expressing all that the Jewish people had done to provoke the Lord. By confessing his and the people's sins, Daniel re-establishes how they should view God and themselves, a relationship which had been distorted by their sin. (1-8). Then, Daniel rightly reviews and interprets the afflictions and sufferings of the Jewish people. By **accepting the judgment** of God as being right and just, Daniel understands that it is their *rebellion* which was judged. (9-15). Finally, Daniel admits to the helplessness and complete dependence of the Jewish people upon the Lord and their need for salvation. So, he **pleads for mercy** (9:16-19).

*b. Prayerfully **Daniel 9:1-19** and **Write** your insights to share*

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. Why does Daniel feel a need to *confess the sins* of the Jewish people and to *accept the judgment* of God as just?

Q2: What lessons can you learn from Daniel about how to pray for your people with the proper heart attitude?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. What does Daniel confess, and why is it important to do so? (Dan. 9:1-7)

1. Confess Sins: Restoring Fear of God: Daniel's confession admits and re-affirms the reality of God and the Jewish people, a reality which they abandoned due to their sin. So, Daniel's confession re-affirms that God has always been *faithful* to the "covenant" and *steadfast* in His love for His people (4). However, the Jewish people *sinned, did wrong, acted wickedly, and rebelled* against God by turning from his commands (5). Notably, we recognize such actions as typical of *naked flesh* from the very beginning. Deluded by *fleshly understanding*, our first parents *reasoned* that sin was "good" and useful to acquire "wisdom" (6). Like Job, the Jewish people rebelled, convinced that they were still *self-righteous* (Job 31:37). So, Daniel's *confession* restores the *fear-of-God* relationship between the Lord and his people, admitting to the reality of their sin. In this way, there is a day coming when the Jewish people will see the *delusion* of their self-righteous rejection of Jesus as their Messiah (Zech. 12:10) and will confess with weeping (11-12).

Q2. Why is it important that Daniel *accepts* the judgment of God on Judah? (Dan. 7:8-15)

2. Accepting Judgment: Submitting to God's Will. If confession restores the *Lordship-servant* relationship between God and His people, *accepting His judgment* submits to rather than resists His will. Daniel admits that the Jewish people have not *obeyed the voice* of the Lord by walking in His laws (10). So, he then admits that God is right to *pour out* on the people all the consequences foretold in the Law (11), his judgments of *great calamity*. Following Daniel's writings, have the Jews now turned to *obey the voice of the Lord* to walk in His Laws? As we have seen, the Law *leads* to a necessary faith in Mashiach. And, as we will see, God reveals that Mashiach was to come and complete His work by 33 CE, that is, 483 years after the decree of Artaxerxes to restore Jerusalem (Daniel 9:24, 26). In that year, Mashiach would be "cut off" by the people of the fourth kingdom, Rome, who would then destroy Jerusalem (26). In fact, Jesus was crucified in 33 CE. But, the Jews have not *obeyed the voice of the Lord* to trust in Jesus as their Mashiach, neither have they walked in the *way* of His Law which would lead them to see His necessity.

Q3. How does Daniel *plead for the* Lord's mercy and what does He expect? (Dan. 9:16-19)

3. Pleading for Mercy: Resting by Faith. Daniel understands that the Lord's *anger and wrath* remain on the Jewish people (16), but the time is also fulfilled for this *wrath* to be averted. So, he *pleads for God's mercy* (17). Such pleading is the final step to shift the *resistant hearts* of the people to a place of *rest and faith*, for to plea is to recognize that there is nothing left to do but wait on the Lord, who bears the sole responsibility to show mercy and give relief. Rest is the evidence that *faith* has finally replaced a Godless unbelief. In this way, there is a day awaiting Israel and Judah when their repentance and submission to God's will fills them with a *spirit of grace and supplication* to plead for God's relief to avert His burning anger (Zech. 12:10-14). On this day that Israel is restored to her Redeeming Mashiach, "all Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:26).

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Restorative Grace: From Wrath to Mercy. When Daniel comes before the Lord to pray at the completion of God's appointed *seventy years of wrath* against the people of Judah, he embodies in his prayer the people's way back to the Lord and His *restorative grace*. For, only the Lord can move from a *burning wrath* to a *healing mercy*.

If you are a son of Israel, know that your people have to this day not yet walked in this path of restoration, as laid out by Daniel's prayer. In fact, this exile was followed by a *longer desolation*, which followed the *cutting off* of your Mashiach and then the destruction of Jerusalem by the people of earth's *final kingdom*, the Romans (Dan. 9:26). So, even to this day, your *house* is still as *dried bones*, for you are cut off you're your Mashiach (Ezek. 37:11). But the Lord God will *raise you* on that Day and put His Spirit in you (13-14), on that Day when you repent, surrender to the Lord's will for you in Jesus Mashiach, and plead for His mercy as He reveals Himself to you as your long-forsaken Son! (Zechariah 12:10).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

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What is a key idea?

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Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

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Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁸: Confession: When Daniel *makes confession* to the Lord God (4), He re-affirms the reality of God's *steadfast love* but the Jewish people's *sin, wrong-doing, and rebellion* (4). Such an honest admission of the current reality marks the repentance of His people from unbelief to worshipful faith, recognizing God as Lord to recover a *healthy fear* of the Lord.

Added Notes: Resting in Faith: Pleading for Mercy. When Daniel *pleads for the Lord's mercy*, he recognizes that he and his people have no other option but to plead and wait for the Lord to act. This restful recognition that they are powerless but the Lord is merciful to act in His *steadfast love* is evidence of a surrendered faith, the same faith by which Abraham *believed in God* and was counted as *righteous* (Gen. 15:6). And, it is the same spiritual awakening which will wash over all Israel and Judah when the Lord pours out "a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy" to cause His people to *look upon* the face of their coming Mashiach, Jesus. The Son from whom they had been cut off (Zechariah 12:10)

Chapter 9: PROMISED MASHIACH: Fully Redeemed

Daniel 9:20-27

Step 1. Discover: *Preview and View God's Word* for yourself then **Write** *Insights to Share with others.*

a. Preview Daniel 9:20-27

Promised Mashiach: Fully Redeemed. Responding to Daniel's prayer of repentance, the Lord God gives him and the Jewish people a promised timeline for their redemption! So, read Daniel 9:20-27 to discover how God ordained *seventy weeks* (of years—that is, 490 years) for the *Mashiach* to make redemption and to end the *desolating rule of earth's kingdoms*.

First, understand that God's promise of *seventy weeks* (of years) is a ***timeline leading to the Redeemer***. So, find out not just when the redeemer would be *raised up* for the Jewish people but also *how* he would redeem them (9:20-24). And, this timeline of *seventy weeks* (i.e. 490 years) would not start at some distant future time but with an event they themselves could observe, *for it starts with the Decree to restore Jerusalem*. (9:25-26). Finally, the Mashiach would be *cut off* to fulfill his mission of atonement, resulting in yet another painful exile for the Jewish people, culminating in the ***ending of desolation*** with earth's final *flesbly kingdom* and its destruction (9:27).

b. Prayerfully Read Daniel 9:20-27 and Write your insights to share

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How will the Mashiach redeem His people from their greatest enemy, their own sin and self-righteous unbelief? (9:24).

Q2: Recalling God's earlier promise in Daniel 7, how does the desolating fourth kingdom ruling the earth end? (Dan. 7:13-27)

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. What do the seventy weeks promise about the Mashiach and his mission? (Dan. 9:20-24)

1. Timeline to Redeemer: Seventy Weeks (490 years). As Daniel had prayed, the *most dangerous enemy* of the Jewish people was their own sin and deluding Self-righteousness, which left unremedied would lead to yet another exile. So, the Lord God gives His Jewish people a *seventy week* timeline leading to Mashiach and his work of redemption. Within the seventy week time-span, Mashiach would be *cut off* (26) to *put an end to sin* by *atoning for iniquity* to give the Jewish people an *everlasting righteousness* (24).

Q2. What will signal the start of the seven + sixty-two weeks until Mashiach is cut off? (Dan. 9:25-26)

2. Starts with Decree: Cut off for Redemption. God's promised timeline until Mashiach and His sacrificial work of redemption to be "cut off" (26) begins with the royal decree to "restore" Jerusalem (25). Ezra records this decree when Artaxerxes sent out letters for the restoring of Jerusalem (450 BCE). So, from that time, seven plus sixty-two weeks (69 weeks = 483 years) would elapse until the Mashiach was "cut off" (26) in order to redeem His people with an eternal righteousness (24; Jer. 23:6). That year would be 33 CE, the year Jesus Mashiach was crucified and rose again.

Q3. What happens in the final week* destined for God's people?
 (Dan. 9:27)

3. Ending Desolation: Destroying Earth's Final Kingdom.

Remember Daniel 7, a final *flesbly kingdom* led by a most blasphemous of leaders would rule the earth. So, a remaining week of 7 years is ordained for this *rebellious ruler* to make desolate the earth. First making a *covenant* with God's people which he breaks after half-a-week (3.5 years), this *Beast* defiles the Temple by setting up an abominable idol in it. Yet, Mashiach, the Son of Man, returns with his *clouds* of heaven's armies (Dan. 7:13) to remove his dominion to set up God's eternal kingdom (7:26-27).

*Note: From the point at which Mashiach is "cut off" to redeem His people (26) to the final 70th week, there is a gap in the timeline. God's timeline stops after the 69th week, year 33 CE, for not only is Mashiach "cut off" but His Jewish people are likewise "cut off" themselves, for they are blinded to Him by their *self-righteous unbelief*. Only when the Jewish people *look upon* and recognize Jesus as their Firstborn Son, their Mashiach, does the final week begin!

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to **read** Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

Redemption Timeline: Fleshly Failure- Eternal Purpose. Over this world ruined by *fleshly rebellion*, the Lord God reigns eternally and His purposes prevail! So, as earth's *beastly kingdoms* become increasingly savage, the Kingdom of Mashiach promises a righteous dominion! (Dan. 7). Likewise, the *seventy weeks* of Daniel portend an equally tragic cycle of *sinful rebellion* and painful exile. But, the Lord's redemption through Mashiach prevails! (Dan. 9). In the Lord God's timeline for the Redemption of His Jewish people, seventy weeks are ordained, starting with the decree of Artaxerxes to *restore Jerusalem* in 450 BCE (Dan. 9:25) and reaching sixty-nine weeks (483 years ahead) to the year 33 CE when Mashiach is *cut off* and has *nothing* (9:26). For, not only was Jesus Mashiach *cut off*, being *pierced for sins* on the cross to give up his life (Is. 53:5, 12) only to be *raised up* by God as Lord (Jer. 30:9; Phil. 2:8-11). But he also *lost his people*, as the Jewish nation rejected him. For, the very *fleshly sin* which plunged the Jews into Babylonian exile also *blinded them*, by a *fleshly self-righteousness* and Law-based piety, to reject Jesus as their Mashiach. If you are a Jew, know that the Lord God's plan prevails despite your unbelief. For, in His *sacrifice on that 69th week*, in the year 33 CE, Jesus Mashiach by his sacrifice on the cross accomplished a great redemption—he *put an end to sin* by *atonement for iniquity* and secured an *everlasting righteousness* for His people (9:24), which will all be yours on the Day when you *look upon the one you have pierced and mourn for him* (Zech. 12:10), finally realizing that this one is indeed the Firstborn Son given to you for your redemption!

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
! Differ	
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
QUESTION: Modify What to question or change?	
DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

Personal Study Notes: Understanding the Passage:

Write and share notes with your partner/ mentor/ mentee.

What is the *big idea* of this passage?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

- key verse:

What is a key idea?

Teaching Preparation Notes: Sharing the Passage:

Share lesson with partner, family, or group.

What is the *big lesson* to learn in this passage?

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes⁹: Ending Sin: Atoning for Iniquity- bring in everlasting righteousness (9:24). The true enemy of the Jewish people is their *fleshly unbelief* which leads them to sin and inviting God's wrath—first casting them into Babylonian exile and then *scattering them throughout the nation* because they rejected Jesus as their appointed Mashiach, who accomplished their *great redemption* as God promised Daniel in 9:24 exactly sixty-nine weeks (seven + sixty-two weeks) or 483 years after the decree of Artaxerxes to restore Jerusalem in 450 BCE (9:25). At the right time, on 33 CE, Jesus Mashiach took upon himself the sins of Israel and the world so that His people might have a lasting righteousness! (Jer. 23:6).

Added Notes: Desolations are Decreed: Decreed End is poured out on the desolator. (9:26-27). Proving the need for Jesus Mashiach's righteous Kingdom rule (Is. 9:1-7), the procession of *fleshly kingdoms* of this earth lead to increasing desolation, until earth's final human kingdom, ruled by the "desolator," the ruler embodying the *height* of human unbelief and rebellion against God, commits the most horrible of blasphemies against God by desecrating the Temple's most Holy Place (9:27). But God's decree replaces his desolation with Mashiach's eternal rule!

Chapter 10: DECREE TO RESTORE JERUSALEM:

Timeline Starts

Ezra 7

Step 1. Discover: Preview and View God's Word for yourself then Write Insights to Share with others.

a. Preview **Ezra 7**

Decree to Restore and Build Jerusalem: Restorative Law. God promise of Mashiach begins with the decree of Artaxerxes to restore the Lord's house at Jerusalem by *teaching* God's Law, so read Ezra 7 to discover how the Lord prepared Ezra in the Law in order to fulfill this command, thus beginning in year 450 BCE God's countdown to Mashiach and his cross of redemption in 33 CE.

First, notice that the Lord chose Ezra to *restore* His house at Jerusalem by giving him a **heart for the Law**, so that he would be able to *teach it* in Israel (1-7). In this way, Jerusalem would not just be *physically built*, as Nehemiah would do later, but the *people of its house restored to repentance*. Then, see how King Artaxerxes makes a **free offering to God** of a people and treasures for worship (11-20). Finally, **obedience to the Law** is commanded out of a *fear of the Lord* and His wrath. (21-28),

b. Prayerfully **Read Ezra 7** and **Write your insights to share**

<p>SEEING</p> <p>What is this Bible passage about? Key words, ideas</p>	
<p>LEARNING</p> <p>What does it mean? What is it teaching me?</p>	
<p>DOING</p> <p>What lesson can I apply to my life?</p>	

Step 2. Discuss: Share Viewpoints. Read the Passage and Discuss Questions with Family, Friends, and Fellowship Group.

Q1. How do Ezra and Artaxerxes seek to *restore* Jerusalem and its people beyond simply *rebuilding its walls and structures*?

Q2: How can the Lord God's *lawful Word* restore a shattered people like Israel as well as your own life?

Step 3: Dialogue: Compare Viewpoints as Disciples. Answer, share, & compare insights with partner, mentor, or mentee.

Q1. How is Ezra equipped to carry out the *decree of King Artaxerxes* to restore Jerusalem and its people? (Ezra 7:1-10)

1. Heart for the Law: Study, Keep, Teach. Earlier, King Cyrus had ordered the rebuilding of Jerusalem. Now, King Artaxerxes decree to *restore* Jerusalem and its people to repentance by an *adherence to the Law of God* (7:25) initiates the prophecy of Daniel's *seventy weeks* (Dan. 9) because Ezra has arisen as a servant able to *teach* the Law because his *heart was set to study the Law of the Lord* (7:10). In this way, Ezra found favor not just with King Artaxerxes but from the Lord his God, whose "hand was on him" (Ezra 7:11-20).

Q2. How does Artaxerxes support Ezra and his effort to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem? (Ezra 7:11-20)

2. Offering to God: People and Treasures. The decree of Artaxerxes supports the restoration of Jerusalem by first restoring its proper worship of the Lord. First, Artaxerxes gives the Jewish people in his realm the freedom to offer themselves to the Lord to go and serve the Lord at Jerusalem (13). Then, the King and his counselors offer gifts which will support *offerings* to the Lord God in His “house” in Jerusalem (17). And, he makes provision for any future needs of the house from his own “treasury” and possessions (20). In this way, the King and his council personally commit themselves to make offerings given to the Lord God and available to *restore* His proper worship in Jerusalem.

Q3. How does the King prove His fear of the Lord? (Ezra 7:21-28)

3. Obedience to the Law: Fearing His Wrath. The reason for King Artaxerxes' support of Ezra and his mission to restore the *house of the Lord* in Jerusalem is a healthy *fear of the Lord*, for he knows of the *wrath* of the Lord which could be direct against himself as the *king* and against his sons, which the book of Daniel records over the course of his service in the royal courts of the kings of Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Persia (23). Moreover, this *fear of the Lord* moves him to promote an adherence to the Law of God (25), which he correctly understands as the basis by which the Lord's house at Jerusalem will be firmly established.

Step 4: Develop: Review & Apply God's Word as a Growing Disciple to *read* Devotional, Notes, and Footnotes.

History-changing Sacrifice: Obeying God's Law. In the Lord God's seventy-week timeline ordained for God's Jewish people, the decree to restore Jerusalem stands as the cornerstone, anchoring God's plan in the human year 450 BCE. And, at the heart of this event is simply a servant of the Lord who *set his heart to study the Law of the Lord* (Ezra 7:10). For, the decree to *restore the house and people of Jerusalem* was the act of *teshuva* (Dan. 9:25), to reverse the lawlessness that had invited God's wrath to bring them in repentance back to the *fear of the Lord*, which could only be accomplished by God's Law and its teaching.

If you are a Jew who realizes that your people must still be *restored to repentance* by forsaking fleshly lawlessness to return to a *fear of the Lord*, then may the Lord's "good hand" be upon you as you set your heart to *study*, do, and *teach* the Word of God to Israel! (Ezra 7:10).

Respond to Devotional: (mark passage above)	
✓ Agree	? Question
SUPPORT: Agree What insight or Bible verse to add ?	
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DIFFER: Disagree What insight or Bible verse to differ ?	

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Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

- verse:

Key lesson to learn?

(write a question for people to discover this lesson)

Notes¹⁰: Marking Seven + Sixty Two Years: From Restoration (450 BCE) to Mashiach's Cross (33CE): Unlike the earlier decree of Cyrus to simply *build* Jerusalem, the decree of Artaxerxes as delivered by Ezra in 450 BCE provides for the *restoration of the people and house of Jerusalem to repentance* through the adherence and teaching of God's Law (Ezra 7:25-26). From this point, 69 weeks of 483 years led to the year Mashiach was "cut off" and had "nothing" at his crucifixion in 33 CE (Dan. 9:26).

Added Notes: Restoration of Jerusalem: Decree to Restore: Although Artaxerxes decreed that Jerusalem be *restored*—that is, to repentance by the teaching of the Law (Dan. 9:25, Ezra 7:25-26), only the *redemption of Mashiach*, "cut off" on the cross, "pouring his soul out to death" (Is. 53:12) would be able to make an "offering for guilt" (10) which would finally "make many be accounted righteous" (11; Jer. 23:6). But, since the Jewish people rejected this redemption and were themselves "cut off" and scattered through the nations, they will only be fully *restored at His coming* when Israel fully repents (Zech. 12:10) in the last days when the Lord God gathers them and gives them life (Ezek. 37:14).

Prayer Requests:

Prayer Request/ Date	Answered Prayer/ Thanks

Journaling:

What is God teaching you?	How are you growing?

Sermon Notes:

Sermon Notes/ Date	Applying it to my life

Notes: