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## **Rivers of Living Water: A Deeper Dive into God's Holy Spirit in Life's Storms**

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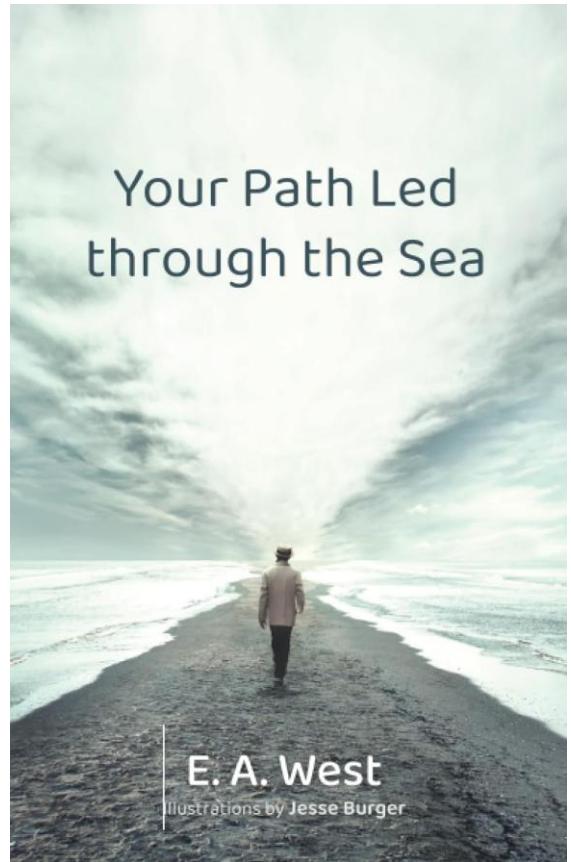
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A Bible Study inspired  
by the deep-water  
references found in a book  
entitled:

[Your Path Led through the Sea - Kindle edition by West, E. A., Burger, Jesse. Religion & Spirituality Kindle eBooks @ Amazon.com.](#)

Your Path Led  
through the Sea



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## Content

### Background

This Bible Study was inspired by the deep-water references found in a book about my personal journey and spiritual growth as a primary caregiver for my late father. The book was published by Wipf and Stock Publishers (2023). It is entitled: 'Your Path Led Through the Sea' and is available at Amazon.com. Select illustrations from the book by Jesse Berger also appear in this Bible Study.

It was through the tempests and storms associated with personal loss and grief that I was truly able to tap into those 'rivers of living water' that Jesus spoke of for those who believe in him (John 7: 37-39, NIV). The gift of God's Holy Spirit given me at salvation was, up till that time, much more of a subterranean river, running mostly beneath the surface, than a 'river of living water' flowing freely out of me. It took the dark, turbulent skies and rough, stormy open seas of loss, grief, and death to bring to the fore in my life a much fuller understanding of those deep-water references in the Bible that I love so much, verses such as:



Save me, O God, for the waters have come up to my neck. I sink in the miry depths, where there is no foothold. I have come into the deep waters; the floods engulf me. I am worn out calling for help; my throat is parched. My eyes fail, looking for my God. ~ Psalm 69: 1-3 (NIV)

He reached down from on high and took hold of me  
He drew me out of deep waters ~ 2 Samuel 22: 17 (NIV)

The epigraph section at the beginning of my book contains the following scriptures:

... and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east. . . . As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he measured off a thousand cubits and then led me through water that was ankle-deep. He measured off another thousand cubits and led me through water that was knee-deep. He measured off another thousand and led me through water that was up to the waist. He measured off another thousand, but now it was a

river that I could not cross, because the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in—a river that no one could cross... — Ezekiel 47:1— 3–6 (NIV)

Then he led me back to the bank of the river. . . . so where the river flows everything will live. . . . Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear fruit because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve as food and their leaves for healing. Ezekiel 47:7—10—12 (NIV)

Note that growth, fruit, sustenance, healing - everything will live where the river flows. This Bible Study will expand upon the deep water scriptural references found in my book as they relate to the process by which Christian believers are made holy through the work of God's Holy Spirit within. It will also explore the necessity of life's storms such as trials, tribulations and temptations in drawing up and out of believers God's Holy Spirit. Further, it will investigate the need for the Holy Spirit's torrential, unimpeded flow in order to transform both the believer's life as well as the lives of those for whom they care. Those who are also in the grip of life's raging storms.

In preparation for each study the participant should read the scripture(s) within that module, answer the questions and reflection questions prior to meeting as a group to share/discuss. Each module should take approximately 30-40 minutes to complete (some may take a bit longer others less)

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## Introduction

If you are a Christian, chances are you have a much firmer handle on who God the Father and Jesus Christ, his son, are than who or what constitutes the Holy Spirit. So, let's take a moment to explore how God's Word defines the Holy Spirit.

**Read/reflect** on the following scriptures and jot down how the Holy Spirit feels, how the Holy Spirit is treated or responds to others, and how the Holy Spirit is described in each verse (NIV) below?

Isaiah 63: 10: \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 12: 31: \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 7: 51: \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 4: 30: \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews 10: 29: \_\_\_\_\_

Nehemiah 9:20: \_\_\_\_\_

John 15: 26: \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 13: 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 8: 26-27: \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 15: 30: \_\_\_\_\_

Can you be angry, insulted, grieved or resisted by others (Isaiah 53: 10, Acts 7: 51, Ephesians 4: 30, Hebrews 10: 29)? Can others show contempt for you (Matthew 12: 31)? Do you have a will and intention to your words and actions (John 15: 26, Acts 13: 2)? Can you give directions and help others (Romans 8: 26-27)? Can you love, communicate (speak truth, encourage), testify, teach, and pray (Nehemiah 9: 20, John 15: 26, Romans 15: 30)? Of course, you can because you are a person and so is the Holy Spirit

God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit are all persons. One God, three persons. And if you think that is a concept too difficult to grasp, think of water. Water can be liquid, like a stream, solid like a glacier, or evaporate into the air as steam or vapor only to come back down to the earth again as rain. A simplistic view, surely, but concepts that are creator God-sized can often be too big for the finite mind of his creatures to fully grasp

this side of heaven. It is why God's Holy Spirit manifests himself throughout creation in the natural world (SEE Romans 1: 20) and in the Bible (God's Word) clearly (SEE John 14: 26) as well as through word pictures (SEE: Psalm 1: 1-3), symbolism (SEE John 4: 10) and metaphors (SEE Psalm 51:6-7). It is why God's Son, Jesus Christ spoke plainly (SEE Mark 10: 32-34) as well as through parables (SEE Luke 13: 18-19) and powerful manifestations of the Holy Spirit via miracles (SEE John 6: 16-21), signs (SEE Matthew 24: 3-14) and wonders (SEE John 4: 48-53). It's also why Jesus Christ sent the Holy Spirit to indwell believers after his resurrection, to help us understand those creator God-sized concepts as much as we creatures are able this side of heaven (SEE John 16: 13).

What do the following verses (NIV) reveal about where the Holy Spirit was at the creation of the world and mankind, and what the Holy Spirit's relationship is to God and Jesus Christ?

Genesis 1: 1-2: \_\_\_\_\_

Genesis 1: 26-27: \_\_\_\_\_

John 1: 1-5: \_\_\_\_\_

In Genesis use of the words 'us', 'our', 'own', and 'them' as well as the three descriptions of the Word of God in the first verse of John 14)

Further, what do the following verses (NIV) reveal regarding the Holy Spirit's role in Jesus Christ's ministry and in the life of believers?

Luke 1: 35: \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 3: 16: \_\_\_\_\_

John 14: 16-17: \_\_\_\_\_

Mark 5 and 11 and Acts 1:8: \_\_\_\_\_

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So, we see that the Holy Spirit is a person. A person who was with God and Jesus Christ before the world began. The Holy Spirit was actively involved in the creation of the world, mankind, and the conception, baptism, and ministry of Jesus Christ. He also comes to reside in us as advocate, comforter, and guide once we accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. If we think of the Holy Spirit as a person, we can better understand who, what, when, where, and how God's Holy Spirit engages with mankind.

For a person to fully know and be fully known, there must be ***relationship***. Think about relationships. Humanly speaking, there are marriage, blood, and kinship ties. There are also everything from friendships to business connections to mere acquaintances. Relationships also exist with the world around us, God's environment, and animals, as well as God's people.

**Review/reflect** on the following Old and New Testament accounts of the Holy Spirit's work of building a relationship between God and mankind (prior to the New Testament account of Jesus' impartation of the Holy Spirit within believers). Jot down the name of God's chosen, how they were anointed, and to what purpose God spoke to and through them in this unique relationship for the verses (NIV) below:

Exodus 25: 1, 28: 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Exodus 35: 30-35: \_\_\_\_\_

Exodus 31: 2-5: \_\_\_\_\_

Numbers 11: 10 and 17: \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 34: 9: \_\_\_\_\_

Judges 6: 33-34: \_\_\_\_\_

1 Samuel 3: 1-14: \_\_\_\_\_

1 Samuel 10: 1, 6-7: and 1 Samuel 11: 1-2 and 6: \_\_\_\_\_

1 Samuel 16: 1 and 13: \_\_\_\_\_

2 Kings 2: 9-14: \_\_\_\_\_

2 Chronicles 15: 1-8: \_\_\_\_\_

2 Chronicles 20: 14-19: \_\_\_\_\_

2 Chronicles 24: 20: \_\_\_\_\_

Daniel 5: 10-12: \_\_\_\_\_

Haggai 1: 14: \_\_\_\_\_

Zacharia 4: 6-9: \_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 61: 1-3: \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 1: 13 and 15: \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 2: 25-26: \_\_\_\_\_

It is safe to say that references to those God anointed with his Holy Spirit were numerous in the Old and New Testaments (prior to Pentecost). Recipients included prophets, seers, warriors, kings, shepherds, farmers, ordinary people, and all those who wrote the scriptures. People such as Moses, Daniel, Haggi, Zacheria, Ezekiel (SEE: Ezekiel 3: 4), and Micah (SEE Micah 3: 8). It also included quite a few unlikely characters such as

**Read Judges 13: 2-24.** Jot down the name of the man upon whom God poured out the Holy Spirit (anointed from birth), how God chose to anoint him, and for what purpose?

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For the entire story of this man, read Judges 13- 16 (NIV)

This Old Testament story is remarkably like a New Testament account with one very major difference. **Read Luke 1: 26-38.** Jot down the name of the man upon whom God poured out His Holy Spirit (anointed from birth), how God chose to anoint Him, and for what purpose?

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This man's story ends quite differently from that of the man in the story presented in Judges. That one very major difference made all the difference to mankind and is continuing to make all the difference today.

What did God do when those on whom the Holy Spirit was poured out in the Old Testament failed to do God's Word? SEE verses (NIV) below:

Judges 16: 20: \_\_\_\_\_

1 Samuel 15: 10-11 and 16: 14: \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 51: 1 and 11: \_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 63: 10: \_\_\_\_\_

**Also read/reflect** on the following scriptures (NIV). In what way are they prophetic regarding how God chose to pour out his Holy Spirit on his chosen people in the New Testament (i.e., pour out upon in the Old Testament versus pouring into or indwelling of in the New Testament)?

Numbers 11: 16-17 and Numbers 11: 26-29: \_\_\_\_\_

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Isaiah 42: 1-4: \_\_\_\_\_

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Isaiah 44: 1-5: \_\_\_\_\_

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Joel 2: 28-32 and Acts 2: 16-19: \_\_\_\_\_

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Ephesians 1: 3-14: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Reflection/Summary of above scriptures:**

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The word picture of God's Holy Spirit using imagery such as water and streams on dry, thirsty ground, and the growth associated with the relationship between plants that live very near a perpetually flowing source of life ~ water

In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon individuals to empower them for specific purposes of God. In the New Testament, the Holy Spirit resides within and makes Christian disciples of individuals. The emphasis is on personal transformation as well as empowerment for God-given purposes. The Christian faith is a unique conversion that allows God's fallen, sinful children the opportunity of reconciliation and relationship with a Holy God (their father) through Jesus Christ, the 'Son of God' who was also the only sinless 'Son of Man' that ever walked the earth. Therefore, it is Jesus Christ alone who makes this reconciliation possible through his sacrificial death on the cross that removed mankind's sin barrier, which kept us from a close, intimate relationship with our Holy Father. This ensuing relationship is only possible through the gift of the Holy Spirit that is poured into believers in Christ once they acknowledge their sinful condition and believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. This relationship is meant to grow deeper, stronger, and more fulfilling, but even more astonishing, it is meant to

make us like our father~ Holy (SEE 1 Peter 1: 15-16 and 2 Corinthians 3:18 (NIV). Like any healthy relationship it must be nurtured to do so.

I'll end this introduction with an excerpt from my book that will set the tone for the proceeding Bible Study:



When you pass through the waters,  
I will be with you;  
And when you pass through the rivers,  
They will not sweep over you... ~ Isaiah 43: 2

"This is one of my favorite verses in the Bible. It is also a verse whose meaning I always felt was pretty darn easy to understand, and I am not alone. Go to virtually any Bible commentary and you will find that throughout the Bible, verses representing fire or water in this fashion virtually always represent images of extreme peril and all forms of danger or trials. The faithful reader is also encouraged by them as they are often coupled with assertions of God's presence and protection therein. It is interesting to note that the psalmist states clearly that God will be with you when you pass through them, and not if you pass through them. But are these versus really so very easily understood?

After all, it is one thing to pass through water that is say, ankle deep. It is, however, quite another matter to pass through a river. Particularly if you find yourself going from ankle to knee, to hip, to chest, and to chin deep, until finally on tip toe you realize that you will soon be forced to swim for it when you can no longer feel the riverbed beneath you. What can be even more frightening is the realization that whether you stand still and brave a rising tide, attempt to actively move against it or even go along with it, you are still eventually going to experience the lack of firm footing that inevitably leads to floating, swimming or being swept over and drowning.

Let's face it, nobody gets through life without some level of passing through the waters and depending on its depth in relation to the depth of one's own personal faith, God's presence and ultimate protection may not be overly difficult to grasp. However, I would venture to say that for those of us who have had the privilege of passing through the rivers, who have learned the lessons of when to tread water, swim like mad, just let go and float, or even end up clinging to an obliging rock you've crashed into while hurdling completely out of control downstream, God's presence and protection take on an entirely different level of understanding. "

## **Module 1: Ankle Deep Waters: I've got this, Lord [JONAH]**

... and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east.  
... As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he measured off a thousand cubits and then led me through water that was ankle-deep ~ Ezekiel 47: 1-3 (NIV)

### **Read: Bible, Book of Jonah (Chapter 1)**

Have you ever read a story in the Bible and wondered how the people chosen by God could refuse to follow such simple, clear, and direct instructions? Have you ever thought that if you had been given such clear instructions by God, you would most certainly have done what was commanded? If you have, then chances are you've only been led through deep ankle water either due to ignorance or by choice. Ankle deep water represents conscious avoidance of the trials, tribulations, and temptations associated with following God's Holy Spirit and which subsequently causes stunted growth in an individual's faith. There is very little risk of being overwhelmed or drowned if you choose to walk along a beach just at the water's edge, only allowing the ebb and flow of the sea to gently tug at your feet, whether the ocean is calm, rough, or stormy, but consider:



Deep calls to deep  
in the roar of your waterfalls;  
all your waves and breakers  
have swept over me.

By day the Lord directs his love,  
at night his song is with me—  
a prayer to the God of my life. – Psalm 42: 7-8 (NIV)

The depth of divine relationship calls to the depth of our human need. Such an intimate relationship requires deep waters, not shallow, stagnant puddles, for fulfillment and growth. The reasons for resisting the Holy Spirit's leading are many and varied, but have much less to do with the simplicity, clarity or straightforwardness of God's instructions and much, much more to do with our own desires superseding God's in the matter. However, the outcome of such choices can be anything but the safe, calm, comfortable existence we think they are.

What did God tell Jonah to do (v 1-2)? \_\_\_\_\_ What was the response to 'the word of the Lord' that 'came' to Jonah (v 3)? \_\_\_\_\_

(SEE: Psalm 139: 7-10)

What happened next (v 4)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_. Who caused the storm (v 4)? \_\_\_\_\_. It is interesting to note that the sailors 'called on their gods' and attempted to increase their odds of survival by lightening the ship while Jonah did what (v 5)? \_\_\_\_\_

Jonah ignored the plight of the wicked in Nineveh and, by removing himself from the predicament on deck, was also choosing to ignore a calamity that he had brought upon those who had the misfortune of being on board the same vessel as himself.

Why do you think Jonah did not heed the captain of the ship's plea (v 6)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
The sailors drew lots to identify who or what might be the cause of the calamity they were experiencing, and the lot fell to Jonah (v 7-8). What did Jonah tell them in answer to their questions (v 9)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
The sailors were terrified and asked Jonah to tell them what to do to save the ship and themselves (v 10-11). What did Jonah tell them to do (v 12)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
The sailors were reluctant to do what Jonah, a self-proclaimed prophet of the living God, told them to do, even if he did admit that he was fleeing God and was the cause of the storm.

Why do you think Jonah did not seek his God, instead telling the sailors to do what they did? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
The sailors tried to row to land, but the sea grew rougher (v 13). What actions did they take before following Jonah's instructions (v 14)? \_\_\_\_\_ (write word for word what these men 'cried out to the Lord'): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What happened to the sea as well as these men as a direct result of their doing what Jonah told them to do (v 15- 16)? \_\_\_\_\_

(SEE: Mark 4: 35-41 and note the parallel of these two Biblical accounts of a storm, the conflicting significance of the ‘prophet’s sleep’ in each account, and the result in both accounts that those on-board ship move from fearing the storm to fearing the Lord)

This first chapter of Jonah ends with what happening to him and for how long (v 17)?

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Who ‘provided’ the fish (v 17)? \_\_\_\_\_. Why do you think the fish was ‘provided’ and Jonah was not drowned? \_\_\_\_\_

Read Matthew 12: 38-41. Jot down what you think Jesus meant by these words.

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(SEE for Jonah-Jesus parallels:

<https://www.agapebiblestudy.com/charts/The%20Typology%20of%20Jonah%20and%20Jesus.htm> )

### Reflections

Did Jonah ignore God’s directive because he wanted to sin? \_\_\_\_\_.

Read Luke 11: 15-32. If we act in word, thought or deed in a way that God opposes that is definitely ‘sin.’ We readily see in this parable that the ‘prodigal son’ was a sinner, but what about his brother (SEE v 26-29)? If we know we ought to do something God, our father, wants us to do but we adamantly refuse to do it, are we sinning? (why or why not?) \_\_\_\_\_

In both the story of Jonah and the parable Jesus told of the ‘Prodigal Son,’ there was a ‘fleeing from the father’s presence.’ Jonah flees so he won’t have to go do what God wants done. The prodigal son flees so he can do what he wants to do. And the prodigal’s brother stayed right where he was but also adamantly refused to do what his ‘father’ wanted him to do.

What does God want Jonah to do (SEE Jonah 1: 2)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What does God want the prodigal's brother to do (SEE Luke 15: 31)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What does God want us to do (SEE Matthew 28: 19-20)? \_\_\_\_\_

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In what ways do we behave like Jonah in our personal or professional life (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

Note how Jonah doesn't say 'no' to God, nor does he argue with God. Indeed, he has no dialogue with God whatsoever. He simply goes in the exact opposite direction than the one he was instructed to take.

In what ways do we behave like the prodigal son in our personal or professional life (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

Note how the prodigal son made a simple request from 'the father' for an inheritance he felt was due to him that he wanted now instead of later, to spend how he wanted, where he wanted, when he wanted.

In what ways do we behave like the prodigal's brother in our personal or professional life? \_\_\_\_\_

Note how the prodigal's brother was angry with 'the father', refused to 'go in', was inflammatory and accusatory in his dialogue with his father regarding his father's gifts and his father's treatment /gifts he bestowed upon his brother, yet the father 'came out' to him 'and entreated him.' Also, he cites all he has 'done' to earn his father's favor – self-righteous.

What God wants done has not changed since the time of Jonah (760 BC), to the time when Jesus Christ walked the earth (28 AD), until now. It is not difficult, obscure or in any way indirect and it may or may not require going to do it. What is always required is listening and obeying through God's Holy Spirit. If we choose to 'flee from God's presence' whether we do so in order to actively pursue an openly sinful lifestyle or not, or choose to do it in a literal, physical way by departure or choose to do it merely by an act of our own stubborn will while staying right where we are, what are we really doing?

**Read/reflect** on the following scriptures. Jot down the meaning conveyed in each below in answer to the question posed above.

1 Thessalonians 5: 16-22: \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 4: 29-32: \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 8: 5-9: \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5: 16-18: \_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians 6: 18-20: \_\_\_\_\_

Jonah may well have wished to avoid the trials and tribulations associated with doing what God told him to do but by running away he certainly got more than he bargained for with hair raising perils at sea culminating with being swallowed by a huge fish for three days and nights.

Though we have never had to spend time in the belly of a fish when we have grieved the Holy Spirit what rough or stormy seas have you encountered either personally or professionally that may have led to loneliness, isolation, darkness, discomfort, fear or the complete lack of control that Jonah ultimately experienced due to disobedience?

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How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

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If you've read Jonah, Chapter 1 before, is there an insight you gleaned here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?) \_\_\_\_\_

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Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

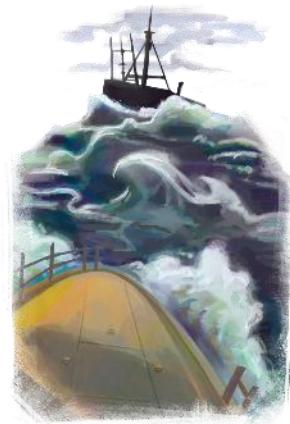
### **Read: Bible, Book of Jonah (Chapter 2)**

Jonah's choice to ignore the Holy Spirit's directive instead of leading to a safe, comfortable, relaxing seaside haven with an oceanfront view in Tarshish (Jonah, Chapter 1: 3) found him being thrown into a raging sea and spending three days and nights inside of a huge fish (Jonah, Chapter 1: 17). It took these three days and nights alone, in utter darkness, uncomfortable, undoubtedly terrified and completely out of control while traversing a vast open sea for Jonah to finally do what (Jonah 2: 1)? \_\_\_\_\_ . Indeed, the entirety of Jonah, Chapter 2 is a (v 2-9)? \_\_\_\_\_ .

"In my distress I called to the Lord,  
and he answered me.

From deep in the realm of the dead I called for help,  
and you listened to my cry.

You hurled me into the depths,  
into the very heart of the seas,  
and the currents swirled about me;  
all your waves and breakers  
swept over me." – Jonah 2: 2-3



Jonah was still inside the great fish when he prayed in verses 2-9. How was this fact significant considering what he was saying here (particularly in v 6-9)? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Read/jot down the following scriptures.** Compare/contrast with Jonah's prayer (v 2-9) above (Jonah used these words both literally as well as figuratively to express his predicament, his need and in whom he trusts for deliverance)

Psalm 18: 6: \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 18 was written by King David, a song of praise after God delivered him from the hand of Saul.

Psalm 42: 7: \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 42 is attributed to King David, a song of the dire, urgent need for worship.

Psalm 31: 22: \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 31 was written by King David, a song of trust in God during distress and trouble.

As there was no way that Jonah could have consulted a prayer book containing these Psalms in utter darkness from within a great fish what can you assume about Jonah?

SEE v 3-7. How does Jonah describe his trouble? \_\_\_\_\_

How does Jonah describe his cry to God? \_\_\_\_\_

How does Jonah describe his anticipated answer from God? \_\_\_\_\_

SEE v 8. What does Jonah finally realize regarding what resistance to God was and what such resistance produced? \_\_\_\_\_

SEE v 9. What does Jonah do after coming to this realization (in v 8)? \_\_\_\_\_

What was Jonah's 'sacrifice' made while still inside the belly of the fish? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think Jonah meant when he said that he would 'pay what he vowed' (v 9)? \_\_\_\_\_

(SEE: Deuteronomy 23: 21-23, Numbers 30: 2. As a prophet of the Lord, Jonah took an oath, solemnly promising to serve his God. It was his duty)

**Read Matthew 5: 33-37.** What does Jesus say about 'vows?' \_\_\_\_\_

All authority ultimately derives from God and no authority rests solely with mankind. There are precious few things mankind can control including our fleshly duty-bound promises to serve him in our own strength while hypocritically seeming to add weight to the undertaking through oath-taking on whatever thing you are swearing by. The only thing we can control is whether we say 'yes' or 'no' to God's spirit - trusting God to complete the work he wants done in us as well as through us.

**SEE John 5: 19.** Reflect on who said these words and how important both the speaker and the words spoken is to us in our doing for God: \_\_\_\_\_

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The final sentence of Jonah's prayer in verse 9 can be seen personally as well as nationally and conveys his complete trust before it has happened that God will most assuredly make it happen.

What happened to Jonah after he prayed to his God (v 10)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Read Revelation 3: 15-16. Reflect on the use of this imagery in God's Word used in Jonah 2: 10 and Revelation 3: 15-16. What does this convey regarding how God feels about his followers' wholeheartedness or lack thereof for his purposes? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Reflections**

Pagan sailors sought their gods in Jonah, Chapter 1 while Jonah, a prophet of the one true living God slept below deck. What did it take for Jonah to 'pray to the Lord his God' (SEE Jonah 1: 17 and Jonah 2: 1)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Reflect on what it takes either personally or professionally for you to 'pray to the Lord your God?' \_\_\_\_\_

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Jonah obviously was familiar enough with the Psalms of King David in God's Word to use them to convey his deepest need as well as express his ultimate trust in God. Reflect on your familiarity with God's Word.

Do you have a relationship of intimate communication (Bible reading) and communion (prayer) with God in your personal/professional life that would constitute 'praying without ceasing' (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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(SEE 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-19)

Jonah's prayer expressed how praise, worship and thanksgiving to God while still in the midst of trials, tribulations and temptations are 'sacrifices' we make to a God we trust.

We trust him to bring them upon us for our own good (i.e., to refine, test and stretch our faith), to help us to endure them for as long as he deems necessary and to get us out of them in his time and in his way.

Reflect on the level of trust in God you convey in your personal and professional life. Do you express praise, worship and thanksgiving to God amid life's storms or after the sea has been calmed (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

Jonah 'remembered God' (v 7) and prayed for deliverance. He obviously repented of his resistance to God and stated he would 'pay what he vowed' (v 9) - in essence agreeing to go do what God told him to do before he fled from God's presence. God responded to Jonah's prayer by "commanding the fish to vomit Jonah onto dry land" (v 10).

Have you ever 'fled' from the Holy Spirit's promptings within either personally or professionally (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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If so, have you ever repented and agreed to 'pay what you vowed' either personally or professionally (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Review Jonah 2: 10 and Revelation 3: 15-16. Though Jonah did repent, sought God's deliverance and agreed to go where God's Holy Spirit led - to do what God said, he viewed it as 'paying a vow,' a fulfillment of a promise he made to serve God (i.e., Holy Spirit poured out upon God's chosen instrument, it was his duty as God's prophet to comply). In Revelation, we read that God seeks followers who are in relationship with him, who share his passion for doing his will in Christ Jesus (i.e., Holy Spirit poured into, dwells within God's offspring; it is their privilege, indeed, it is their joy as God's children to participate in doing the will of God). Such indwelt Holy Spirit believers are expected to be 'hot' - not 'lukewarm' or 'cold.' In fact, God states he has a particular distaste for 'lukewarm' deeds done in his name for his purposes by his children.

Reflect on your own personal and professional life. Are you 'paying a vow' to God by attempting to serve him in your own strength or through the gift of his Holy Spirit within (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you think your 'deeds' would be considered 'hot', 'lukewarm' or 'cold' by God (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

If you've read Jonah, Chapter 2 before, is there an insight you gleaned here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?) \_\_\_\_\_

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Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

**Read: Bible, Book of Jonah (Chapter 3)**

Chapter three begins with “the word of God coming” to Jonah a second time after the prophet had ‘fled’ from God, was forgiven and delivered by God. What did God say (v 1)?

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**Read/review** Peter’s ‘second chance’ in Matthew 26: 34-35, Luke 22: 54-62 and John 21: 15-17. How are the verses in John 21: 15-17 similar to those God used in Jonah 3: 1?

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Peter did what he said he would do for Jesus in Matthew 26: 35 but he was only able to do so after Jesus’ resurrection upon “receiving the Holy Spirit” SEE: John 20: 22 and Acts 2: 1-4

How was the second ‘coming of the word of God’ to Jonah in chapter 3, verse 1, different from the one God gave him in Jonah 1: 2)?

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Why do you think God only gave Jonah one step to do this time saying he would then be ‘given’ the ‘message’ God wanted ‘proclaimed’ after he took that first step? \_\_\_\_\_

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What does Jonah do next (v 3-5)? \_\_\_\_\_

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The message Jonah was given to preach was that the city would be “overthrown” in forty days. SEE: Genesis 19:24-25, Lamentations 4:6 and Amos 4: 11 where this same word “overthrown” is used.

**Read and write down** what each of these scriptures say below. Reflect on their significance with what Jonah proclaimed in Jonah 3: 4:

Genesis 7:1 and 4: \_\_\_\_\_

Exodus 34: 28: \_\_\_\_\_

Numbers 13: 1-2 and 25: \_\_\_\_\_

Numbers 14: 34-35 \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 9: 25-27: \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 10: 10: \_\_\_\_\_

1 Samuel 17: 16, 32 and 50: \_\_\_\_\_

1 Kings 19: 3, 7-8: \_\_\_\_\_

1 Kings 2: 10-11: \_\_\_\_\_

Judges 13: 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 4: 1-2, Mark 1: 11-13, Luke 4: 1-2 and Acts 1: 1-3: \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 1: 1-3: \_\_\_\_\_

It appears the common denominator in these verses is both the literal number of days/nights (or years) allotted by God that also symbolize a length of time given for probation, judgments, trials, temptations, testing, divine interventions, preparations, purifications and transformations of mankind through God's Holy Spirit for his purposes. It definitely marks pivotal moments in God's Word.

SEE Hebrews 3: 7-19 where this concept is expanded upon in relation to one's personal relationship with God through belief in Jesus Christ and the action of God's Holy Spirit within believers. As the human life span is approximately 80 years (SEE Psalm 90:10) forty adult years would roughly be 'a generation,' a lifetime (Hebrews 3: 10) in which to develop a close, intimate relationship with God through the Holy Spirit.

Indeed, the entire city of Nineveh did what over forty days (v 5)? \_\_\_\_\_

How did the people's actions indicate they had more than just a mental belief in what Jonah was saying? \_\_\_\_\_

The wearing of "sackcloth" culturally at this time symbolized the rejection of earthly comforts, mourning of the dead.

When the King of Nineveh heard Jonah's proclamation from God, what did he do and why did he do it (v -9)? \_\_\_\_\_

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The chapter ends with God relenting and not bringing the disaster on Nineveh. Why

(v 10)? \_\_\_\_\_

### Reflections



Did Jonah feel his own disobedience in following God's Holy Spirit the first time disqualified him from going when 'the word of God came' a second time? \_\_\_\_\_ .

Reflect on your own personal or professional life. Have you allowed an action (or lack of action) on your part which grieved the Holy Spirit to disqualify you from following when 'the word came' again (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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Jonah agreed to do what God told him to do after his three day/three night ordeal in the belly of a great fish. But instead of the original message to Nineveh by God of "preach against it because its wickedness has come up before me" (Jonah 1: 2) Jonah proclaimed this word from the Lord instead: "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown" (Jonah 3: 4).

What do you think the significance was in God's allotment of "forty more days" to the people of the city of Nineveh? \_\_\_\_\_

It took the prophet of God three days and nights in the belly of a great fish to repent of his 'fleeing' from God. How long did it take the Ninevites to turn back to God upon hearing God's Word? (SEE v 5-6)

Reflect on your own personal and professional life. How long does it take you to ask for forgiveness from God, other people, or even to forgive yourself (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you allow others' time to do the same (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Jot down the attitude and actions of the Ninevites (from greatest to least) which led to God's relenting from destroying the city (v 5-9)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Holy God certainly did not have to relent from dispensing justice on this wicked city.  
SEE: Genesis 19:15, Ezekiel 12:17-20, and Romans 2:8. Thankfully, also see: Psalm 103:8, Exodus 34:6, Joel 2:13, and 2 Peter 3:9.

Did the fact that God relented from destroying the city due to the attitude and accompanying actions not just a belief of the Ninevites in Jonah's prophecy make him a false prophet (v 5-10)? \_\_\_\_\_ (SEE Jeremiah 18: 7-8)

If you've read Jonah, Chapter 3 before, is there an insight you gleaned here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?) \_\_\_\_\_

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Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

### **Read: Bible, Book of Jonah (Chapter 4)**

We saw in chapter one of the book of Jonah a clear ankle-deep water 'fleeing' from God by the prophet. He seemed to rally in chapter two but only after God's provision of a storm and accompanying three day/three-night ordeal in the belly of a great fish brought him to his senses. In Chapter Three, Jonah does what God commands, with the kind of results most of us would be thrilled to see happen today. However, with the unfolding of the final chapter of the book of Jonah we see exactly what kind of shallow faith walk individuals who insist on being dragged kicking and screaming into God's will, purpose and plan create for themselves.



But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the wind blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash. - Matthew 7: 26-27

God relented from bringing destruction on the great city of Nineveh because of the people's repentance and their behavior which was consistent with their belief in God's word given through his prophet Jonah. What is Jonah's astonishing reaction to God's compassion (v 1-3)?

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Jonah, a man, had no love for the people in the city of Nineveh. He wanted God to destroy them. Then a man, the Godman, the Son of Man, one greater than Jonah came into this world (SEE Matthew 12:41). Jesus saw a city too, the city of Jerusalem and he wept over it (Luke 19:41), because God loves his children. He does not want them to suffer eternal damnation.

Do you think Jonah had a right to react the way he did (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why do you think Jonah reacted the way he did? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think Jonah's anger was justified considering what occurred in answer to his prayer in Jonah Chapter 2 (why or why not?): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (SEE Jonah 2: 10)

God could have given Jonah what he asked for (Jonah 4: 3) but instead calmly asked Jonah a question in response to his unjustifiable angry tirade.

God's response to Jonah was a question. What was it (v 4)? \_\_\_\_\_

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God asks us questions so that we will search our own hearts to identify exactly why we feel the way we feel. He is the only one who has the right to question but graciously allows us to seek him by doing so and welcomes our bringing to him our thoughts, feelings and concerns.

**Read/Reflect** on the following scriptures where God asked the questions and jot down the answers given to God by his creatures:

Genesis 3: 8-13: \_\_\_\_\_

Genesis 4: 6-10: \_\_\_\_\_

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Job 38: 1-5 and Job 40: 1-5: \_\_\_\_\_

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John 6: 5-10: \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 16: 13-17: \_\_\_\_\_

Not all our thoughts, feelings and concerns directed at God and other people are justified. In fact, they are often short sighted, selfish, unreasonable and completely unjustified.

Instead of answering God's question (v 4) what does Jonah do (v 5-8)? \_\_\_\_\_

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The Lord ‘sent’ a great wind on the sea in Jonah 1: 4. What was the result?

The Lord ‘provided’ a great fish in Jonah 1: 17. What was the result?

The Lord ‘commanded’ the fish in Jonah 2: 10. What was the result?

The Lord ‘provided’ what in Jonah 4:6? What was the result? How did Jonah feel?

The Lord ‘provided’ what in Jonah 4: 7? What was the result?

The Lord ‘provided’ what in Jonah 4: 8? What was the result? How did Jonah feel?

**Review/reflect** on all God did (above) while Jonah ‘fled,’ slept, then sat and waited after finally proclaiming God’s Word to the people of Nineveh as he was instructed to do. In addition to all of the above that God did it is also important to note that God’s Holy Spirit did the saving work in the hearts of all of the Ninevites great and small (SEE Zechariah 4: 6 and Psalm 107: 19-20). All Jonah did was concede to proclaim it as he was instructed to do.

God asked Jonah a question about his ‘rights’ (again) what ‘right’ and what was Jonah’s response (v 9)? \_\_\_\_\_

What level of importance do you think Jonah was placing on his own ‘displeasure,’ personal comfort and feelings compared to God’s Word and level of compassion for his creations? \_\_\_\_\_

The final verse in the book of Jonah was God’s final response to Jonah’s selfish anger which was amazingly not to give him the death he seeks. Instead, God said (v 10):

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What do you think the lesson was that we should learn from God that Jonah obviously missed? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Further Reflections**

How was Jonah’s reaction to God’s compassion (v 1-3) hypocritical? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever been 'displeased' in your personal or professional life with what God was doing or had done either for yourself or someone else (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Did it make you 'angry' or did you perhaps react with some other emotion (what was it and why do you think you felt it)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Did you bring it to God in prayer (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Think about it, Jonah, a prophet of God spoke one sermon, and an entire city repented and was spared destruction. Yet, instead of making him joyful it made Jonah angry. We are not told if Jonah learned anything for having been pressed into doing God's will. We do know that God's infinite patience and 'provision' both good and bad shows his amazing love for his prophet as well as an entire pagan city. SEE Hebrews 12: 9-12

**Reflect on the following questions:**

Do you think that God's mercy in your personal and professional life includes his 'providing' violent storms and unorthodox rescues which may or may not include isolation, loneliness, darkness, discomfort, pain, lack of control and/or forceful ejections or rejections (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you feel that God's mercy in your personal and professional life also includes 'providing' 'scorching east winds, that cause 'heat' and 'faintness' as well as comfortable 'shades' that bring 'gratefulness' and 'happiness' (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Ankle-deep water dwellers will make what they see as safe choices by ignoring the Holy Spirit. When reluctantly agreeing to follow the Holy Spirit's lead, they insist on seeing and doing it in their own strength (flesh) they miss the point as a direct result of not seeing and doing through God's strength (spirit). When we choose to do our duty we

can often see our faith walk as hard, demanding and uncomfortable, and our God as harsh and unfair.

Do you find yourself easily angered in your personal or professional life (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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Do you sometimes feel like God is dragging you kicking and screaming into doing what he wants you to do (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future?

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Do you find it easier to pray and be joyful for yourself (or those you know and love) than for those you don't (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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When we have a real, intimate relationship with God's Holy Spirit within we are empowered to see and do through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior in God's strength (spirit). As his children we are privileged to do our father's will and find joy in our faith walk even if it can be hard, demanding and uncomfortable at times. We learn from those times. We grow closer to God through those times. We become like our father, Holy for having done so. Through this unique relationship we come to know the truth, that our God is gentle, kind, honest, merciful and forgiving.

If you've read Jonah, Chapter 4 before, is there an insight you gleaned here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?) \_\_\_\_\_

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Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

## **Module 2: Knee Deep Water, Lord, I can use some help [GIDEON]**

... and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east. ... As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand,... He measured off another thousand cubits and led me through water that was knee-deep... — Ezekiel 47:1— 3–6 (NIV)

### **Read: Bible, Book of Judges 6: 1-39 (Gideon)**

Evidence of God moving and working through his chosen vessels by the empowerment of the Holy Spirit is replete in the Old Testament. The main difference between then and now (since Jesus' sacrificial death, resurrection and impartation of the Holy Spirit to believers) is that the spirit's impartation by God was selective and temporary, given at God's discretion to certain individuals he chose to do his work. We can discern much from their accounts in scripture particularly as many upon whom God showed his favor by pouring out his Holy Spirit could hardly be considered pillars of society or morally superior to their contemporaries, a spiritual condition with which we can most certainly relate. We will compare and contrast the Holy Spirit's work in the lives of two Old Testament Judges, Gideon and Samuel, and two Kings, Saul and David. Their lifetimes of pivotal successes and failures in heeding, trying to manipulate or completely ignoring God's Holy Spirit demonstrated a move beyond merely being dragged kicking and screaming into God's plan.

Knee deep water represents going deeper in our faith walk by taking on some trial, tribulation and temptations associated with following God's Holy Spirit, and which subsequently causes new growth in an individual's faith that can only come with both the successes and failures that these challenges produce. There is some risk involved when choosing to leave the sunny, safe, dry, sandy beach to wade out into the ebb and flow of an ocean tide whether the sea is calm, rough or stormy. You can still feel the

ocean floor, but you cannot see it in knee deep waves that pull, push and cause the sandy floor beneath your feet to give way.



They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul is melted because of trouble. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he brings them out of their distresses.

– Psalm 107: 23,26 & 28

Gideon was appointed Judge of the Israelite people in the Old Testament (1195 BC – 1155BC). He was also known as Jerubbaal (meaning ‘baal will contend’). He was a military leader, judge and prophet whose calling and victory over the Midianites are recounted in the Book of Judges, Chapters 6-8.

Gideon’s story began with his people being oppressed by the Midianites for seven years. Why (Judges 6: 1)? \_\_\_\_\_ . What did they do to keep safe from their oppressors (v 2)? \_\_\_\_\_

After forty years of rest following Sisera’s defeat the Israelites became prosperous and complacent. Sound familiar? The Midianites were a nomadic tribe, descendants of Midian, a son of Abraham.

Why do you think God brought his people back into bondage and oppression (SEE v 6)?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What were the details of Israel's bondage to Midian (v 2-6)?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

In response to the cries of the Israelites for help God sent a prophet (chosen/anointed with God’s Holy Spirit) to them. What did he tell them God said (v 7-10)?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

So, was the problem the strength of the Midianites? \_\_\_\_\_. What was the real problem? \_\_\_\_\_

In answer to the cries of his people, God sent an angel to Gideon who is hiding in a winepress to thresh wheat out of sight of the Midianites. How did the angel address Gideon (v 12)? \_\_\_\_\_

Angels are heavenly beings created by God who serve him as messengers, protectors and worshippers. They exhibit God's power and benevolence to his earthly creations.

Why would this be a strange greeting considering the situation? \_\_\_\_\_

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How did Gideon respond to this greeting (v 13)? \_\_\_\_\_

Did the angel address Gideon's questions (v 14)? \_\_\_\_\_. What did he tell Gideon to do? \_\_\_\_\_

What 'strength' was the angel referring to that Gideon had?

"Pardon me, my Lord... (v 13 and 15): \_\_\_\_\_

"... but if?... but how?" (v 13 and 15): \_\_\_\_\_

"Where are all his wonders that our ancestors told us about..... he brought us out of Egypt" (v 13): \_\_\_\_\_

Gideon's response revealed what he thought the angel meant by 'strength.' How did Gideon respond (v 15)? \_\_\_\_\_

Gideon's responses revealed a humble, teachable individual who knew and believed what God had done before yet recognized his and his family's limitations in doing anything in 'his strength' alone. At no time did Gideon angrily refute, refuse or flee as Jonah had done.

The angel told Gideon he would be with him and make sure he prevailed against the oppressor. Gideon wanted proof (a sign) that the angel was who he said he was and asked him to wait till he brought back an offering, which the angel agreed to do. Gideon brought food and drink. What did the angel do (v 20-21)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Gideon thought he was speaking to another human being then recognized this being as a supernatural one. The sign given was that where God was sending Gideon he was going with Gideon. The man needs only go; God would do through him.

How did Gideon respond to this (v 22-24)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What was Gideon's response when confronted with the supernatural and with it the recognition of who he had been speaking with (v 22)? \_\_\_\_\_

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The angel reassured and comforted Gideon (v 23). Why do you think Gideon then built an altar (v24)? \_\_\_\_\_

The altar was named 'the Lord is peace' yet Gideon was being sent to war. What do you think was the significance of this altar? What did its name really mean (v 23-24)?

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SEE Luke 2: 14. How might this verse relate to Judges 6: 23-24? \_\_\_\_\_

The beginning of Gideon's ministry was NOT to gather up an army and attack the Midianite oppressors. Instead, he did what according to the word of 'the Lord' (v 25-26)? \_\_\_\_\_

Why did Gideon do this at night (v 27)? \_\_\_\_\_

What does this action reveal about Gideon's level of commitment to God's Spiritual leading to do what he was tasked by God to do, regardless of how he feels?

Why do you think this had to happen before stepping into the leadership position of taking up arms against the oppressor of God's people? \_\_\_\_\_

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The next morning what Gideon had done was revealed (v 28-32). What happened?

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Worship of Baal had become the main religion as this god was credited with being the 'god of weather' and the weather was relied upon for agricultural prosperity. It is interesting to note that the one true God, who actually was the one giving them their agricultural prosperity, would not allow them to be the recipients of all of their hard labor to produce it, instead giving it to their enemies as a direct result of their turning from him. (SEE v 2-6)

The very next time the oppressors gathered to raid God's people of their prosperity (v 33) what happened to Gideon (v 34)? \_\_\_\_\_ . Who do you think brought the people to Gideon when he called them to arms against their oppressors as a result of what happened to Gideon in verse 34 (SEE v 35)? \_\_\_\_\_ .

Gideon was able to raise an enormous number of willing soldiers in a very short period of time. Judges 7:3 tells us 32,000 men came in answer to the call.

So, even with an angel appearing to him (v 12), the miraculous sign he sought being given to him (v 20-22), his life being spared by a mob after heeding the Holy Spirit's directions regarding tearing down Baal's alter and worshiping on God's altar (v 32) and the miraculous number of soldiers turning out for him to lead (v 34-35) Gideon sought not one but two further confirmations that "God would save Israel by his hand – as he promised" (v 36)

What did Gideon ask God to do (v 36-39)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why do you think Gideon needed further confirmation at this point?

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God does NOT respond the same way to everyone seeking signs, wonders and miraculous confirmations from him in the Bible neither is he obligated to do what we ask by way of confirming his Word to us. God does what will best serve his purposes, give him the glory and enhance our spiritual growth/faith in him. See Hebrews 11: 6 for God's prerequisite to questioning him.

In Gideon's case why do you think God graciously did what he asked? \_\_\_\_\_

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### Reflections

Reflect on the reasons we contend with 'bondage' and 'oppression' in our personal and professional lives as believers. How might prosperity and complacency contribute to this spiritual condition? \_\_\_\_\_

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What is often the 'real' problem (v 1) oppressors/oppression or our level of commitment to God? \_\_\_\_\_

What could you do to combat this spiritual condition in the future?

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Reflect on the angel's greeting to Gideon (v 12). What is our response to God's view of us versus how we see ourselves personally and professionally (also SEE 1 Peter 2: 9)?

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How might you better see yourself the way God sees you both at home and at work?

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Is it false humility personally and professionally or reality to recognize our own limitations as Gideon did (v 15) when God calls us to participate in his saving work through the Holy Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_

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What would be your 'strengths' (review v 13 and 15) in participating with God through the Holy Spirit in his work? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do we know what God has done in his Word as well as in our personal and professional lives and believe that he has done it (not us)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you know and experience relationship with God more fully both personally and professionally in the future?

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Gideon respectfully asked why/ how and mostly 'how' (he did NOT argue, accuse, counter with his own plans or 'flee'). The point of his questions to God was to get to know the mind of God and his will better. When we question God in our personal and professional lives, do we do the same (why or why not)?

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How might you do better in the future?

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Reflect on the concept 'the Lord is Peace' (v 23 -24). How can we have this peace in our personal and professional lives when it feels sometimes as if we are heading out into a battle daily?

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Have you ever put a 'fleece' out for confirmation of what you thought the Holy Spirit said to you in your personal or professional life (v 36-39)?

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If so, did God graciously do what you asked (why or why not)?

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Do you need repeated confirmations from God in your walk with him (why or why not)?

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How might you do better in future?

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If you've read Judges 6: 1-39 before, is there an insight you gleaned here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?)

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Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

### **Read: Book of Judges 7: 1-24 (Gideon)**

We concluded the first part of Gideon's story with his placing a fleece out (twice) for confirmation from God that he heard him correctly, that God was going to "save Israel by his hand - as he had promised" (Judges 6: 38-39). We begin part two of Gideon's story with God's confirmation of Gideon's promise to do exactly what he is told (twice); first by a spring and then again at the water's edge. So, God could choose who would go into the battle that Gideon would be leading against the Midianites.

Gideon started out with 32,000 soldiers. How many troops did Gideon have left after God's mandate that he send home those who were afraid (v 3)? \_\_\_\_\_

How many soldiers did Gideon have left after God told him to send home those who drank from the spring 'on their knees' (v 6)? \_\_\_\_\_ .

These were the troops that God had "promised" would "save Israel by (Gideon's) hand" (Judges 6: 38-39). This was the army that would go up against the 135,000 men in the Midianite army.



Therefore, you will joyously draw water  
From the springs of salvation - Isaiah 12: 3 (NIV)

What reason did God give Gideon for sending home those who answered the call to fight if they “trembled with fear” (v 2)? \_\_\_\_\_

By what method did God choose from those who remained who would go into battle and who would not (v 5-8)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

There has been much speculation in commentaries on Judges 7 surrounding how these soldiers drank the spring water in relation to their fighting expertise and battle prowess. e.g., they drank upright from their hands, lapping with their tongues, eyes alert to their surroundings while those sent home focused solely on quenching their thirst, heads down, kneeling at the water’s edge, oblivious to any possible sudden surprise attack. But God clearly wanted the odds so bad that the victory could only be seen as his and his alone. If the reverse had been true and the majority of the soldiers lapped from their hands God would have sent them home instead. The point was not the battle readiness or expertise of the fighting men. It was on the obvious mismatch God wanted of 300 to 152,000. (SEE Zechariah 4: 6 and Psalm 20: 7)

What did the Holy Spirit tell Gideon to do next (v 9-11)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

This time, God does not wait for Gideon to ask him for confirmation of his Word but instead anticipates it, the reason for it, and allows him the option of getting any confirmation he may need from the Midianites themselves.

Why did Gideon choose to go to the outpost of the enemy army camp (v 10)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_. Why did God give him the option to go down and listen (v 11)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_. Based on how the Midianite army is described in verse 12 do you think that Gideon’s emotional state was a normal and natural one? \_\_\_\_\_

The Israel army was 1% of its original size with approximately 400 Midianites to one Israeli soldier on the battlefield.

God told Gideon to take someone with him. Who (v 10)? \_\_\_\_\_

Gideon and his servant overhear what (v 13 and 14)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What was the first thing Gideon did upon hearing what he did from the Midianite soldiers (v 15)? \_\_\_\_\_

Does Gideon believe and act upon God's confirmation (v 15-16)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Barley was eaten by the very poor. It was considered food for dogs or cattle the emblem of a despised thing. The obvious reference being if God was behind the humble, it would completely overturn and bring down the mighty.

Who were the Midianites afraid of (v 14)? \_\_\_\_\_

What did Gideon do (v 16-21)? \_\_\_\_\_

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It was an unusual battle strategy but then so was the battle of Jericho (SEE Joshua 5: 15-21). The Midianite army was awakened by what must have looked like an explosion of sounds (trumpets, shouts and breaking pottery) as well as fire above them (v 20).

What did the Lord do (v 22)? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Reflections**

Do you find it easier to give yourself or even fate credit for what God has done and is doing in your personal and professional life (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in future? \_\_\_\_\_

How does our emotions either keep us from believing in or acting upon God's Word in our personal or professional life? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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God anticipates our emotions and need for guidance, confirmation of his Word and encouragement from him. When have you sought guidance, confirmation and encouragement from God in your personal and professional life? \_\_\_\_\_

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Relationship with God also means that he too seeks confirmation (review v 15-16) of our commitment to follow through on the Holy Spirit's guidance in our personal and professional life. Do you do your part in this two-way relationship (why or why not)?

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How might you do better in the future?

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(SEE James 4: 8)

We need not go alone (v 10). Do you find it difficult to ask for help or support in your personal and professional life (why or why not)?

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How might you do better in the future?

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The Holy Spirit used a humble, frightened, faith weak, spiritually needy peasant by the name of Gideon. The Holy Spirit brought this man an army, perfected the army he brought to him and melted the hearts of the enemy ahead of Gideon's battle. In essence, the battle was won before the first trump, shout and pitcher was broken. God did it to save his people from bondage and oppression and turn their hearts back to him. What God did then he is doing today through Holy Spirit filled believers willing to take the risk of heeding his call despite the odds.

If you've read Judges 7: 1-22 before, is there an insight you gleaned here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?) \_\_\_\_\_

Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

## **Module 2: Knee Deep Water, Lord, I can use some help [SAMUEL]**

### **Read: Bible, Book of 1 Samuel 3: 1-21 (Samuel)**

Samuel was the last of the Judges in the Old Testament. He was the judge over Israel for thirty-five years and is credited as being the first prophet and priest (1090 BC – 1045 BC). His barren mother Hannah prayed for him, God heard her prayer and gave her a son. Samuel means “God heard.” He was born at a time when Israel lacked strong leadership and was experiencing spiritual crises. His mother dedicated him to the Lord before he was born and brought him to minister at the Temple alongside Eli at a very tender age just after the boy was weaned. We are told in 1 Samuel 2: 26 that Samuel grew in stature and favor with the Lord and with people.

What did Samuel do under Eli (v 1)? \_\_\_\_\_

This is the third time in God's Word it is emphasized that Samuel ministered before the Lord (SEE 1 Samuel 2: 11 and 18) just as Aaron and his sons were as priests (SEE Exodus

29: 1) and Paul and Barnabus were prior to being sent out as missionaries (SEE Acts 13: 1-2).

Why do you think the “Word of the Lord was rare in those days?” \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (SEE 2 Samuel 12-17 and 2 Samuel 27-35)

Read 1 Samuel 3: 2-4. Could this scripture be used figuratively, in reference to the spiritual condition (sight, posture and fading light) of Israel as well as have a more literal meaning here? \_\_\_\_\_

When and how did God “speak” to Samuel for the first time (v 3-4)? \_\_\_\_\_

How did Samuel respond to the voice speaking to him (v 5)? \_\_\_\_\_

Abraham (Genesis 22: 1), Jacob (Genesis 46: 2), Moses (Exodus 3: 4), Isaiah (Isaiah 6: 8) and Ananias (Acts 9: 10) all responded to the voice of God with “Here I am” recognizing immediately who it was calling to them.

What happened next (v 5-9)? \_\_\_\_\_

Eli told Samuel to do what?

verses 5 and 6: \_\_\_\_\_

verse 9: \_\_\_\_\_

Why didn’t Samuel recognize who was speaking to him (v 7)? \_\_\_\_\_

What did God do till Samuel recognized him (v 10)? \_\_\_\_\_

What was it the Lord said to Samuel (v 11-14)? \_\_\_\_\_

Tingling ears are a sign of harsh judgment. SEE 2 Kings 21: 12 and Jeremiah 19: 3.

Was this word given to Samuel a confirmation of God's word to Eli? \_\_\_\_\_

(SEE 1 Samuel 2: 27-36). What did Eli do (or not do) that sealed the fate of this Word from God? \_\_\_\_\_

Samuel goes to sleep, gets up and begins his normal duties at the Temple when Eli calls him. How does Samuel respond (v 16)? \_\_\_\_\_. Why is Samuel afraid to tell Eli the vision? \_\_\_\_\_. What does Eli ask Samuel (v 17)? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think Eli knew what the Lord told Samuel (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

Samuel told Eli what the Lord told him. How did Eli respond (v 18)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_. Do you think this response was appropriate (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

The chapter ends with the Lord blessing Samuel throughout his life and Samuel being a blessing in the lives of others through his ongoing relationship with the Holy Spirit (v 19-21)

### Reflections

Do you find it easy to hear God personally and professionally via the Holy Spirit residing within you (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think that the cause for the 'word of the Lord' and his 'visions' being "rare" (review 1 Samuel 3: 1) or nonexistent (review 1 Samuel 2: 12 and 17) both personally and professionally are the same today as they were back then (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think the time of day, posture and spiritual condition (review v 2-4) toward God (literally or figuratively) has a bearing on your ability or willingness (review v 5-6 and 9) to personally and professionally hear God (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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Do you find what God did for Samuel (v 10) a comfort considering how many times he didn't hear or misinterpreted the voice of God for someone else's? \_\_\_\_\_ . In what way might this truth build your faith both personally and professionally?

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Eli was made aware of his son's vile conduct by the people coming to the temple. He also saw what they were doing. Further, God sent Word to Eli via his prophet regarding Eli's sons and the dangerous spiritual condition they were in as priests serving under Eli and ultimately God (1 Samuel 2: 27-36). They were given time for repentance after Eli corrected them verbally and Eli too was given time to remove them as priests when they did not. Neither happened.

Have you ever been afraid to tell someone else either in your personal or professional life a vision either for yourself or them, that the Lord had given you (why or why not)?

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Has your response to a 'vision' of the Lord been like Eli's (review v 18)? \_\_\_\_\_ . Do you feel it was the right response (why or why not)?

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The definition of a vision can be a supernatural appearance that conveys a revelation such as in a dream or trance. It can also be defined as a thought, concept or object formed by the imagination or an unusual competence in discernment or perception; intelligent foresight). How might you do better in future? \_\_\_\_\_

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Is your relationship with God's Holy Spirit a blessing in your personal and professional life (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Is the Holy Spirit's work in you evident to others as well as a blessing in your personal and professional life (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in future? \_\_\_\_\_

If you've read 1 Samuel 3: 1-21 before, is there an insight you gleaned here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?) \_\_\_\_\_

Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

**Read: Book of 1 Samuel 8: 1-22 (Samuel)**

When Samuel was old, he found himself in a similar position to his predecessor Eli. In what way (v 1-3)? \_\_\_\_\_

What did the Israelites ask Samuel to do as a result of this (v 4-6)? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think Samuel was "displeased" (v 6) by the people asking for a King?

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The people rejected Samuel's choice of his successor too.

God anticipated his people's desire for a King four hundred years before they asked Samuel for one (SEE Deuteronomy 17: 14-20). This in itself was not wrong. What was wrong (v 6-9)? \_\_\_\_\_

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God had to raise up Judges, leaders to meet specific needs in time of crisis due to his people's turning away from him again and again over many years – approximately 12 Judges in all. Once the need was met, they went back to doing what they had done before being called by God. However, a King would hold office till death and the throne would be passed down to his descendants, "like all the other nations had" (v 5) who did not know and did not want to know or follow the one true living God.

Samuel does what God tells him to do and warns the people what to expect as their King's "rights" once he is installed over them (v 10-18). What are they?

v 11: \_\_\_\_\_

v 12: \_\_\_\_\_

v 13: \_\_\_\_\_

v 14: \_\_\_\_\_

v 15: \_\_\_\_\_

v 16: \_\_\_\_\_

v 17: \_\_\_\_\_

How many times in the above verses does the phrase "he will take" appear? \_\_\_\_\_ .

Verse 17 ends with, "... and you yourselves will become \_\_\_\_\_ ."

What did God say the people would eventually end up doing after they had the King they wanted to rule over them (v 18)? \_\_\_\_\_ and what did God say he would do then (v 18)? \_\_\_\_\_ . Therefore, would the people's having a King instead of a Judge break their perpetual cycle of peace/prosperity from God, their forgetting all about God, followed by bondage and oppression by men, and the need for deliverance from God in the future? \_\_\_\_\_ .

Even after being forewarned regarding what would happen when the people got the King they wanted so they could be like all the other pagan nations around them what was their response (v 19-20)? \_\_\_\_\_

What did Samuel do (v 21)? \_\_\_\_\_

What did God do (v 22)? \_\_\_\_\_ . (NOTE be careful what you ask for, you just may get it)

### Reflections

How might personal preference or nepotism adversely affect appointing individuals into professional positions of leadership (review v 1-3)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you think it is important to consult God's Word and seek Spiritual discernment when making personal and professional decisions (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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(SEE James 1: 5, Judges 18: 5, Isaiah 58: 2)

Has rejecting God as 'Lord' (i.e., not just Savior) of your life created a crisis in your personal or professional life?

\_\_\_\_\_ Have you sought to lead or appoint your own leader(s) instead of relying on God's Holy Spirit within to guide your personal or professional life? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the result of this choice? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you seek God when you are personally or professionally "displeased" (v 6)?

Do you bring your own and others' choices/decisions to God in prayer (why or why not)?

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How might you do better in the future?

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Have you ever been forewarned by God personally or professionally what would happen if you made a certain choice, and you chose to make that choice anyway? \_\_\_\_\_ .

Why do you think you made it? \_\_\_\_\_

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Did it turn out to be the "right" choice (why or why not)?

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How might you do better in the future?

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Does the perpetual cycle that the Israelite people were in (i.e., times of God-given peace and prosperity which bred spiritual complacency, followed by manmade bondage and oppression and the need for God's deliverance) seem a familiar one to you (why or why not)?

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How might such a cycle be broken personally or professionally by yourself or someone else?

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(SEE John 14: 26, John 15: 26, John 16: 13, Romans 8: 26-27, Galatians 5: 16-18, 1 Corinthians 2: 15- 16, Titus 3: 5)

If you've read 1 Samuel 8: 1-22 before, is there an insight you gleaned here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?)

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Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

## **Module 2: Knee Deep Water, Lord, I can use some help [SAUL]**

### **Read: Bible, Book of 1 Samuel 9: 15-27 (Saul)**

Samuel was told by the Holy Spirit to give the people the King they wanted though it was clearly a rejection of God. Enter Saul, Israel's first King. Saul reigned from 1095 BC – 1015 BC. The name Saul means “asked for” or “prayed for.” He was anointed King by Samuel at God's direction. Saul was from a prestigious family, the son of a man of wealth, influence and power. He was described as “choice and handsome” (1 Samuel 9: 1-2) as well as a head taller than everyone else. One day his family had lost some donkey's and he and a servant went in search of them. God had orchestrated sending Saul to Samuel in this way. Saul goes to Samuel when they cannot find the donkey's in hopes that Samuel, “the seer” will give them guidance as to where to find the lost animals.

Samuel was told by God to expect Saul before he arrived. What details did the Holy Spirit reveal to Samuel concerning the people's choice of King (v 15-16)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What did God tell Samuel about Saul so that there would be no mistake regarding whom he was to anoint King (v 17)? \_\_\_\_\_

Saul and Samuel meet. What did Samuel tell Saul (v 18-20)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How did Saul respond (v 21)? \_\_\_\_\_

Was this statement true or was it false modesty (SEE 1 Samuel 9:1)? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think Saul said this? \_\_\_\_\_

Saul eats with Samuel and those he invited and stays with Samuel (v 22-25). How was Saul honored at this banquet (v 22)? \_\_\_\_\_ The next day what did Samuel say to Saul (v 27)? \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Read: Book of 1 Samuel 10: 1-27 (Saul)**

What did Samuel pouring oil on Saul and kissing him signify (v 1)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Samuel tells Saul where to go (v 2) and what to expect (v 3-5). What happened to Saul next (v 6)? \_\_\_\_\_ (SEE Numbers 11: 25 and Isaiah 11: 2).

What was Saul to do after this happened to him (v 7)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What do you think was the purpose of Samuel giving Saul such detailed information (v 2-5) all of which came to pass exactly as Samuel said it would? \_\_\_\_\_

(SEE v 9)

Samuel said he would meet Saul later to worship and sacrifice burnt offerings to God at which time he would also tell him what to do. How many days was Saul instructed to wait for Samuel (v 8)? \_\_\_\_\_ . After Saul had the Holy Spirit poured out upon him by God, what did the people who knew him before this say about him (v 11-13)?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What do you think they meant by this? \_\_\_\_\_

The definition of prophecy is the inspired declaration of divine will and purpose.

After being anointed by Samuel as King of Israel, having a “change of heart” (v 9) and experiencing “the spirit of God powerfully upon him” (v 10) what did Saul do (v 14-16)?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think Saul did not tell his uncle everything that happened to him? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Samuel calls the people together to give them the King they want, Saul (v 17-19). He reminded them of what? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Samuel has all of the tribes of Israel come forward and by lot Saul is confirmed as their first King even though he'd already been anointed by Samuel. This was done to demonstrate to the people that the decision to make Saul King was not just Samuel's but God's (v 20-21). What happened next (v 21-24)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think Saul did this? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think people thought about Saul as a result of his doing this? \_\_\_\_\_

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What did Samuel do that added validity, support and credence to King Saul (v 24)?

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Samuel then puts into writing the “rights and duties” of the King and dismisses the people (v 25). What did God do for Saul even after such a disastrous start to his reign (v 26)?

\_\_\_\_\_ (SEE Deuteronomy 17: 14-20)

What did man do for Saul after such a disastrous start to his reign (v 27)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you think Saul was God’s choice or God giving the people who they wanted and would have chosen (v 23- 24)? \_\_\_\_\_ (SEE 1 Samuel 16: 7)

Still, Saul had been given God’s Holy Spirit, the support of Samuel (anointed by him and confirmed to the people by lot through him) and the support of most of the Israelite people. He was given even more support by God of the valiant men whose hearts God had touched to serve him before he’d done anything to warrant their loyalty.

### **Reflections**

Has the Holy Spirit ever given personal or professional insight to you regarding another person or circumstance before it happened? \_\_\_\_\_. Why do you think God might do this? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever exhibited false modesty in an effort to conceal fear, confusion or lack of confidence in someone else’s expectations of you personally or professionally (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you recognize the difference between true humility and false modesty?

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Have you ever had your anointing (i.e., mark of God’s choice, presence of favor) by God confirmed by another believer? \_\_\_\_\_

How have you changed personally and professionally as a direct result of God’s Holy Spirit indwelling you? \_\_\_\_\_

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How have those who knew you best personally and professionally reacted to the change that the Holy Spirit has made in you and through you? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever kept your personal faith or testimonies of how the Holy Spirit is working in your life from friends and coworkers (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Has God ever given you what you asked for personally or professionally and then reminded you of exactly what you were told to expect from him when it comes to pass (review 1 Samuel 10:17-19)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever “hidden” from personal and professional God given responsibilities? If so, why (review 1 Samuel 10: 22)? \_\_\_\_\_

Compare and contrast the people’s choice of King Saul’s Holy Spirit encounter and subsequent behavior, attitude and actions with that of God’s choices as Judge, Giddeon and Samuel. What did man see as strengths in King Saul? \_\_\_\_\_

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What did God see as strengths in Giddeon and Samuel? \_\_\_\_\_

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Relationship is enhanced through listening, speaking to God not just about what he wants but how he wants it done before doing anything for him; two-way communication that humbly recognizes your own limitations while fully trusting in and following through with God’s limitless provisions when we act on his Word in faith through his spirit. Reliance on the Holy Spirit and not our own perceptions, thoughts and strengths build intimacy with God.

If you've read 1 Samuel 9: 15-27 and 1 Samuel 10: 1-27 before, is there an insight you gleaned here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?) \_\_\_\_\_

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Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

**Read: 1 Samuel 11: 1-15 (Saul)**

This chapter begins with an Israelite city being surrounded by an enemy and given the option of surrender or be conquered (v 1). Instead of the Israelites humbling themselves before God and seeking help they see their only option as surrender to the invading army. So, they ask Nahash for terms of peace and are told they would all be allowed to live if every man had his right eye 'put out' (v 2). Why do you think Nahash of the invading Ammonite army made this a term for peace? \_\_\_\_\_

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The name Israel means “struggles,” SEE Genesis 32: 28-29. The name Nahash means “serpent” or “snake.” SEE Luke 10: 17-20, Revelation 12: 9 and Revelation 20: 2.

How did the Israelites answer Nahash (v 3)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why do you think Nahash gave the Israelites the seven days they sought to find help before surrendering? \_\_\_\_\_

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What happened when word came of the besieged city’s plight to the Israelites living elsewhere (v 4-5)? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think that this was the reaction that Nahash had been hoping for? \_\_\_\_\_

What did God do through Saul as a result of this situation (v 6-8)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Saul was in the fields plowing (v 6) and not in a royal palace when he received this news. The option of doing nothing was not an option where righteous anger for God’s cause was concerned. SEE Numbers 32: 23) What were the messengers told to report to the people under siege (v 9)? \_\_\_\_\_

What did the Israelites in the besieged city tell the invading army (v 20)? \_\_\_\_\_

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The ambiguous wording was used so as not to give the enemy any advanced warning of the 330,000 troops God was sending to save them in battle the next day.

The following day, Saul’s Israelite army defeated the army of Nahash (v 11). This began the true reign of King Saul as the people rallied to him in force. Saul chose not to exact revenge on those who initially opposed him as King (v 12-13). Why was that the right thing to do in the circumstances? \_\_\_\_\_

Who did Saul give the credit for this victory (v 13)? \_\_\_\_\_

This chapter ends with Saul’s Kingship being renewed (v 14-15). It began with an anointing by Samuel at God’s behest and was followed by the Holy Spirit falling on Saul and confirmation of God’s choice to his people. However, it took a Holy Spirit-

empowered call to action, subsequent righteous leadership and victory in battle which saved God's people to sufficiently rally the Israelites to solidify Saul's Kingship.

**Read: 1 Samuel 13: 1-15 (Saul)**

This chapter begins with Saul forming Israel's first regular army (v 1-2). Saul's son Jonathan lead an attack against the Philistines and mustered the troops for further conflict (v 3-4). The Philistines also assembled their troops for battle (v 5). What happened when the newly formed Israeli army saw the strength of their seasoned opponents (v 5-7)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How long was Saul to wait for Samuel (v 8)? \_\_\_\_\_. What happened when Samuel was 'late' (v 8)? \_\_\_\_\_

What did Saul do when Samuel did not come at the appointed time (v 9)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What do you think motivated Saul to do this? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think Saul should have done before taking any action? \_\_\_\_\_

What did Samuel ask when he arrived just as Saul finished making the burnt offering he was to make (v 11)? \_\_\_\_\_

How did Saul respond to Samuel's question?

(v 11) "When I saw" \_\_\_\_\_

(v 12) "I thought" \_\_\_\_\_

"I felt compelled to" \_\_\_\_\_

It was not Saul's place to make the sacrifice. He was not a priest; Samuel was. His instructions by God were to wait for Samuel.

How did Samuel respond to Saul's reasons for doing what he did (v 13-14)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Samuel then left and Saul counted the men (v 15). Did Saul achieve what he wanted by making the sacrifice to God that Samuel was supposed to make? \_\_\_\_\_.

Saul began with 3000 soldiers and had 600 remaining. In the chapter that follows, God routed the larger enemy army with 600 Israelite men as he did for Gideon, but the battle and victory belonged to Jonathan, Saul's son, not to Saul.

**Read: 1 Samuel 15: 1-31 (Saul)**

This chapter begins with Samuel, a former Judge, God's spiritual leader (prophet) giving Saul, the people's choice (God's sanctioned) King and military leader very clear direction on what to do (v 1-3). What did the Lord (through Samuel) tell Saul to do and why (v 2-3)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (SEE Exodus 17: 14-16 and Deuteronomy 25: 17-19)

God spoke through his Holy Spirit directly to Jonah, Gideon, and Samuel. He chose now to speak to Saul through Samuel. It is Samuel with whom God continues to speak directly. Why do you think that is? \_\_\_\_\_ (SEE 1 Samuel 13: 11-14)

Saul prepared for battle wisely. He even showed mercy to the Kenites before launching the attack by telling them to leave so they are not destroyed with the Amalekites as they showed mercy to Israel when they left Egypt (v 4-6).

Though Saul attacked the Amalekites (v 7), did he do as God commanded? Where did Saul deviate from God's command to "completely destroy" them?

v 8: \_\_\_\_\_

v 9: \_\_\_\_\_

It was a common custom for armies to plunder those they defeated in the ancient world and the Israeli army was no exception. However, in this instance, the battle was an appointed judgment from God. It was also a test of Saul's commitment to follow God wholeheartedly, particularly after his earlier obedience failure. SEE 1 Samuel 13: 8-14)

After the battle, God spoke to Samuel again. What was the Word of the Lord to Samuel and what was Samuel's response (V 10)? \_\_\_\_\_

What did Saul do next (v 12)? \_\_\_\_\_

Why was this particularly offensive to God? \_\_\_\_\_

What did Saul say to Samuel (v 13)? \_\_\_\_\_

Was this statement true (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (SEE v 14-15)

Do you think the reason Saul spared the best of the spoils was so that he could “sacrifice to the Lord your God” (v 15)? \_\_\_\_\_

Samuel confronted Saul and called him out on his disobedience to God’s directives (v 18-19). Instead of owing to his failure to obey what did Saul insist happened?

v 20: “But I did obey” \_\_\_\_\_

v 21 “I went” \_\_\_\_\_

“I completely destroyed” \_\_\_\_\_

v 22 “The soldiers took” \_\_\_\_\_

Where Saul fell short of following through on God’s commands as well as how the soldiers are blamed for not completely destroying all of the animals but for a good purpose, of course, sacrificing them to God. So, in Saul’s mind (and too often in our own minds as well), the ends justified the means. This ‘explanation’ mirrored the one presented in 1 Samuel 13: 11-12 in that it was rooted in worldly thinking, human reason, unrighteousness, where self-gratification and self-preservation were concerned, arrogance, pride and fear of man more than fear of God. Unfortunately, this was a theme in Saul’s reign.

What was Samuel’s reply to this ‘explanation’ (v 22-23)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(SEE Psalm 51: 15-17, Romans 12: 1)

Saul finally confessed his sin (v 24-25). He ultimately blamed his fear of the men for coming up short of obeying God fully and though this was part of the reason, it really went much deeper than that as evidenced by his behavior when Samuel refused to go with him to sacrifice to God (v 26).

What happened when Samuel turned to leave, and Saul tried to stop him (v 27-28)?

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Why did Saul insist on Samuel coming with him to sacrifice to God (v 30-31)?

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Did Saul's behavior indicate shame and remorse at his disobedience and lie to cover it up?

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What did Saul's insistence that Samuel 'honor him before the elders and Israel' (v 30) say about his priorities? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think Samuel went with Saul? \_\_\_\_\_

Saul was given another opportunity to follow God wholeheartedly in this chapter after failing to do so (SEE 1 Samuel 13: 8-14). However, Saul repeated the same mistake he'd made then and would continue to make throughout the remainder of his now rescinded reign. Saul half-heartedly followed God. He allowed his own interests, his emotional state, his perception of himself or how others perceived him as well as his fear of man, to drive his attitudes and actions. In short, he had one foot firmly planted in this world and the other on God. This is why God said of Saul, "I regret I have made Saul King because he has turned away from me and has not carried out my instructions" (1 Samuel 15: 10) and "The Lord has torn the Kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to one of your neighbors – to one better than you (v 28). Samuel did not see Saul again, though he mourned for him (v 36).

### Reflections

Have you ever felt personally and/or professionally as if you were trapped in a humiliating situation from which there was no way out (review 1 Samuel 11: 1-3)?

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What did you do (why)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Has the righteous anger of the Holy Spirit ever empowered you, spurring you on to action (review 1 Samuel 11: 6-8) toward accomplishing God's purpose personally and/or professionally (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever personally and/or professionally chosen not to exact revenge (review 1 Samuel 11: 12-13) on those who oppose you (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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Have you ever allowed your feelings (review 1 Samuel 13: 11-12) regarding what you saw or thought about a person or situation (personally or professionally) to compel you to act without consulting God (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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Have you ever thought something 'good' (i.e., the best that worldly life had to offer) that God thought 'despicable' and 'weak' or vice versa (i.e., God thought 'good' that the world thought 'contemptable' and 'low') in your personal or professional life (review 1 Samuel 15: 7-9)? \_\_\_\_\_

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(SEE Isaiah 55: 7-9, James 2: 2-4, James 2: 5-7, 1 John 2: 15-17, James 4: 4, Romans 12: 2, Colossians 3: 2, Matthew 5: 1-12, Matthew 6: 24)

Have you ever spared the "total destruction" of an attitude or behavior either personally or professionally that the Holy Spirit gave very clear direction on eliminating entirely? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in future? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you been guilty of half-heartedly following God personally or professionally (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have you given God similar 'excuses' to Saul's (i.e., defensively telling God or someone else that you did do what God said (review 1 Samuel 15: 24-25)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Did you ever own an obedience failure either on your own or after having been called out on it (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have your motives, either personally or professionally, like Saul's (review 1 Samuel 15: 30) ever been devoid of shame or guilt (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever struggled with making the same mistake over and over again in regard to wholeheartedly following the Holy Spirit's direction in your personal or professional life (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future?

\_\_\_\_\_

If you've read 1 Samuel 11: 1-15, 1 Samuel 13: 1-15 and 1 Samuel 15: 1-31 before, is there an insight you gleaned here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

## **Lesson #2: Knee Deep Water, Lord, I can use some help [DAVID]**

### **Read: 1 Samuel 16: 1-13 (David)**

David was King of Israel for over thirty-five years (1015 BC – 970 BC). He was the second King of Israel and united all the tribes of Judah under a single monarchy. He reigned seven years in Hebron and thirty in Jerusalem. God selected David to replace Saul who was the people's choice, calling David, his choice "a man after his own heart" (SEE 1 Samuel 13: 14 and Acts 13: 22). The name David means "beloved." David loved God (SEE

Psalm 63: 1-8) and was beloved by God. David is mentioned over 1000 times in the Bible, more than Abraham, Moses or any other man in either the Old or New Testaments. It is no accident Jesus was not called the Son of Abraham or Moses but rather the 'Son of David' (SEE Matthew 9: 27). God promised David that it was through his lineage that the Messiah would come (See 2 Samuel 7: 10, 1 Chronicles 17: 11-14, 2 Chronicles 6: 16 and Matthew 21: 9).

God spoke to Samuel telling him that the time for mourning Saul was over. He told Samuel to go and anoint one of Jesse's son's as King in Saul's place (v 1). How did Samuel's respond to God (v 2)? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think Samuel responded this way? \_\_\_\_\_

What did God tell Samuel to do (v 3)? \_\_\_\_\_

Did Samuel do exactly what God told him to do? \_\_\_\_\_ (SEE v 4)

How did the elders of the town react to Samuel's coming (v 4)? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think they reacted this way? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (SEE 1 Samuel 15: 33)

What did Samuel do next (v 5)? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think Samuel thought the next King God wanted him to anoint was Jesse's oldest son Eliab (v 6)? \_\_\_\_\_

How did God respond to Samuel's thoughts regarding Eliab? \_\_\_\_\_

After Jesse's sons, seven of them were presented to Samuel, what was God's verdict regarding them (v 8-10)? \_\_\_\_\_

When Samuel asked Jesse if these were all the sons he had (v 11) what was his response? \_\_\_\_\_

The youngest child was not thought significant enough to even be at the gathering or be called by his name. Keeping sheep was a servant's job and a lowly one at that! Yet, even

before David was anointed King by Samuel God had been preparing him for his plan. (SEE Psalm 78: 70-72)

Samuel instructed him to send for the youngest stating that they would not sit down till he arrived. How was the youngest son of Jesse described (v 12)? \_\_\_\_\_

What were God's instructions concerning him (v 12)? \_\_\_\_\_

Did Samuel do exactly as he was instructed (v 13)? \_\_\_\_\_

What happened to the youngest son of Jesse (David) as a result of his being 'anointed of God by Samuel (v 13)? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Read 1 Samuel 23: 1-14 (David)**

In the chapters between 1 Samuel 16 and 1 Samuel 23 we get a glimpse of David's 'heart for God' (SEE 1 Samuel 17: 32- 37) as well as his friendship with Saul's son Jonathan, his growing popularity, success in battle, continued relationship with and subsequent growing favor with God, Saul's increasing malignant fear and jealousy of David, and his attempts to kill him. The stark contrast between King Saul's declining dynasty and the rise of David's dominion can be best understood by a comparison of their individual relationships with God and characters. David sought God as a shepherd well before being anointed as Israel's King (SEE

<https://www.biblecharts.org/oldtestament/acomparisonbetweendavidandsaul.pdf> ).

Each time David sought God's counsel, God not only gave it, but he also rescued, delivered, encouraged, corrected, forgave, strengthened and comforted depending on what his beloved child needed at the time. David not only took from God guidance for himself, but he also gave to God his undying loyalty, praise and worship not out of a sense of duty but rather because David loved God. We have a living chronicle of David's relationship ups and downs with his God through the Book of Psalms of which he is credited to have written 73-150 of these songs of praise.

1 Samuel chapter 23 picks up the narrative where David was fleeing for his life from Saul. When David was told the Philistines were attacking and looting the Israelites in Keilah, what did he do first before taking any action (v 2)? \_\_\_\_\_

It was Saul's job as King of Israel to serve and protect the Israelite people but instead he was using his military to find and kill David and secure a dynasty that he had been told by Samuel was most certainly going to be taken away from him by God. SEE 1 Samuel 15: 26- 29) So, who do you think Saul was ultimately fighting against throughout his declining reign? \_\_\_\_\_ . What did the Lord tell David to do (v 2)? \_\_\_\_\_

How did David's men respond to this directive from God (v 3)? \_\_\_\_\_

David only had 400 men and they were being pursued by a vast army led by King Saul)  
What did David do next and what was he told to do again (v 4)? \_\_\_\_\_

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This was a defining characteristic of David that Saul sorely lacked. Indeed, David "inquired of the Lord" nine times not counting the prophetic counsel he sought out or merely received when sent by God through his Prophets. SEE 1 Samuel 23: 1-3, 4-5, 10-11, 12-14 and 30: 8-9, 2 Samuel 2: 1-2, 5: 17-21 and 22-25 and 2 Samuel 21: 1. When David received instructions, he also followed through wholeheartedly with God's plan.

So, David and his men attacked the Philistines according to God's Word and the Holy Spirit gave them the victory (v 5-6). What happened next (v 7-8)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Saul would not go to Keilah to save his people, but he would go to try to kill David. This was evidence of how fear, jealousy, hatred and selfishness can warp the mind and soul. Saul tried to kill David 10 times, SEE 1 Samuel 19, 23 and 26, before dying in a battle in which he took his own life so as not to be slain by the enemy.

What did David do next before taking any action (v 9-12)? \_\_\_\_\_

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An 'ephod' was a ceremonial garment worn by high priests that symbolized the presence and authority of God. Was David angry at God for leading him to a place where he could be killed and the city he'd just saved destroyed by Saul? \_\_\_\_\_ Do you think David was exactly where he was supposed to be (i.e., in the center of God's will) despite the danger he now faced after doing what God told him to do (why or why not)?

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(SEE Philippians 1: 12-18)

Why do you think David chose to leave Keilah instead of staying to fight Saul? \_\_\_\_\_

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What did Saul do as a result of David's action (v 13)? \_\_\_\_\_

What did God do for David (v 14)? \_\_\_\_\_

### Read: 1 Samuel 26: 1-25 (David)

David spared Saul's life twice. The first account is recorded in 1 Samuel 24. The second instance is discussed below. In 1 Samuel 24 we see that David refused to take the life of a man that God had anointed. Saul had no such scruples. In this first encounter, David vowed not to kill off all of Saul's descendants or wipe out his father's family name and he kept his word. Saul also wept and acknowledged how badly he had treated David. He even recognized David's coming Kingship at this first confrontation and yet he continued to pursue David and repeatedly tried to kill him. Saul's 'righteousness' was much like our own (in the flesh)- inconsistent. For example, he expelled mediums and spiritualists from the land (SEE 1 Samuel 28: 3) then later sought their counsel to try to communicate with a now deceased Samuel when God refused to communicate any further with him (SEE 1 Samuel 28:7). Saul neither had nor understood the single-minded devotion of heart that David possessed, and which was necessary for true relationship with God. (SEE James 1: 5-8)



But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do. – James 1: 6-8

1 Samuel 26 begins with Saul once again tracking down David and taking 3,000 troops in pursuit to kill him. David, in turn, sent out scouts to locate Saul's army when he found out they had followed him (v 1-4). When David found out where Saul's army was camped. What did he do (v 5-7)?

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Saul goes back on his emotional public repentance speech for the murderous plots he'd made against David the first time his life was spared. SEE 1 Samuel 24: 16-21.

David was given a second opportunity to kill Saul. What did David do (v 5-11)?

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Abishai offered to do what David knew he should not do. David could have said that he was not the one to kill God's anointed if he'd cared to have a loophole out of doing the deed himself. He would have solved the Kingship problem and made his life a whole lot easier in the bargain, but he was a man of integrity and refused to do it. SEE Romans 12: 19.

Had David allowed Abishai to kill Saul with his own spear, the one Saul tried to kill David with (SEE 1 Samuel 18: 10-11 and 1 Samuel 19: 9-10), it would have, humanly speaking, appeared to have been a perfectly justifiable thing to do. David, however, decided to wait for God to handle the situation in his time and in his way. In the meantime, what was God doing through all of the trials and tribulations in David's life (SEE 2 Samuel 3: 1, 2 Samuel 5: 10 and Psalm 145, a psalm written by David)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What did David do instead (v 12- 13)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Who aided David by putting Saul's men into "a deep sleep" (v 12)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What did David's words to Abner, Saul's Commander-in-Chief, imply (v 14-16)?

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What did the taking of Saul's spear and jug of water prove? \_\_\_\_\_

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Saul recognized David's voice (v 17). What words are used by David in speaking to Saul that reflect humility (v 18-20)? \_\_\_\_\_

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David requested that Saul consider the facts surrounding his pursuit and desire to kill him without actually accusing Saul of anything. This allowed Saul to do what (v 21)?

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(SEE Galatians 6: 1)

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Do you think Saul's repentance speech here (v 21) and the one he made the first time David spared his life (SEE 1 Samuel 24: 16-21) were sincere (why or why not)?

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Do you think David trusted that Saul's repentance was sincere this time (v 22-24)?

\_\_\_\_\_. In whom and what did David

place his trust (v 23-24)? \_\_\_\_\_

Note that David wanted not just the throne but God's blessing. He also understood the principles of God that would secure both. SEE Psalm 18: 20-27 and Matthew 7: 2.

### **Reflections**

Have you ever been told by the Holy Spirit that you have mourned over a personal or professional disappointment or loss long enough that it was time to move on (review 1 Samuel 16: 1)? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you respond (why)? \_\_\_\_\_

Were you able to do exactly what God had told you to do (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future?

Have you ever been afraid to do what you knew the Holy Spirit was prompting you to do (review 1 Samuel 16: 2) either personally or professionally (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever personally or professionally not known exactly what God wanted you to do but were prompted by his Holy Spirit to step out in faith and await further instructions (review 1 Samuel 16: 2-3)? \_\_\_\_\_

Did you do it? (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future?

Have you ever personally or professionally thought you knew what God's choice or plan would be only to find out you were wrong (review 1 Samuel 16: 6-7)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Did you seek God on the matter (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What did you do and why? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you think differently and heed more fully the Holy Spirit's guidance in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you seek God (review 1 Samuel 23: 2) before rushing into action when a concerning or perilous personal or professional situation arises (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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When given clear direction via the Holy Spirit as well as opposing reasonable counsel on a personal or professional situation what do you do and why (review 1 Samuel 23: 3-4)?

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How might you do better in the future?

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Have you ever felt angry at God for leading you to a place of seeming chaos or even danger when you've done what the Holy Spirit had led you to do, either at home or at work (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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Have you ever felt that you were exactly where you are supposed to be (i.e., in the center of God's will) despite any chaos or danger that resulted from following the Holy Spirit's lead (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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Have you ever felt hounded and threatened either personally or professionally simply for doing or being what God wants you to do or be (review 1 Samuel 23: 7-14)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you fight or retreat in such situations (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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Have you ever found yourself pursuing by any human means possible to get or keep something that you felt you deserved either personally or professionally (review 1 Samuel 26: 1-2)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Was it worth the struggle, or in the end did you just find yourself fighting against God (review 1 Samuel 26: 21)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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Have you ever personally or professionally given someone grace and forgiveness only to be wrongly accused and/or abused by them again (review 1 Samuel 26: 18-20)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Did you humbly confront them, leaving any 'vengeance' to God (review 1 Samuel 26: 22-24) or did you seek retribution (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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Have you ever repented of something, either personally or professionally and then gone back on what the Holy Spirit impressed upon you to change (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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If you've read 1 Samuel 16: 1-13, 1 Samuel 23: 1-14 and 1 Samuel 26: 1-25 before, is there an insight you gleaned here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?)

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Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

**Read: 2 Samuel 7: 1-29 (David)**

David struggled to stay alive for 15 years before he became King. It happened only after Saul was dead and not by his hand (SEE 2 Samuel 5: 1-4 and 1 Chronicles 12: 23- 40).

David's new capital was built and bore his name as the 'City of David' (SEE 2 Samuel 5: 9-12) because God was with him. David, in turn, continued to seek God and wholeheartedly followed the Holy Spirit's lead (SEE 2 Samuel 5: 22-25), which insured his continued favor with God and subsequent success. 2 Samuel 7 recounts God's covenant relationship with David and David's prayer of thanksgiving

After David's kingdom was secure and he was settled in his palace, the Lord also gave him rest from his enemies (v 1). What did David say to God's Prophet Nathan (v 2)?

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What was the Prophet Nathan's response to David (v 3)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Nathan did not inquire of God before responding to David the way he did. He as well as many of us would obviously think David's idea would be one God was in favor of without question.

What do you think was "in David's heart" (why)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Later that night, the Word of the Lord" (revelation) came to Nathan (v 4), which he reports to David (v 17). What was it (v 5-18)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you think God was in any way angry with David for wanting to build a Temple for him (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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God promised to 'build a house' for David beyond the earthly one he now had (v 16).

What two things did God promise David? \_\_\_\_\_

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Who did God tell David would build a house on earth for him (Temple)? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think David was shamed, disappointed or cast down by the second Word of God from his Prophet Nathan (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Did David question God's Prophet Nathan regarding his second Word to him (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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David went before God and prayed (v 18- 29) after receiving the Word of God. What did he say?

v 18- 19 begins with what attitude on the part of David? \_\_\_\_\_

v 20-21 glorifies God by recognizing that God is, what? \_\_\_\_\_

v 22 reiterates God's what? \_\_\_\_\_

v 23-24 recognizes Israel as God's \_\_\_\_\_

v 25-26 magnifies the promises of God \_\_\_\_\_

v 27 states David's belief in God's revelation \_\_\_\_\_

v 28 heralds the trustworthiness of God's \_\_\_\_\_

v 29 praises the blessings of God \_\_\_\_\_

Did David pray to God and ask him about the Temple building project? \_\_\_\_\_ . After being told that he was not to build the Temple after all what was the focus of David's prayer \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think we can learn anything from David's prayer when we seek to do something for God that may not necessarily be something God sanctioned us to do? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Read: 2 Samuel 12: 1-23 (David)**

2 Samuel Chapter 8 documents the military might and growing influence of King David's dynasty. 2 Samuel Chapter 9 records King David's kindness to his deceased friend Jonathan's surviving crippled son by giving his family estate (King Saul's) and servants back to him. He also invites him to eat at his table treating him like a son. In 2 Samuel Chapter 10, King David attempts reconciliation and peace with former enemies who instead insult and humiliate his emissaries leading to an armed conflict that David is given a decisive victory over through God's favor. In 2 Samuel Chapter 11 we begin to

see how privilege, power, wealth and ease begin to adversely affect David as he does as King something he would not have thought of doing as shepherd or even as Saul's personal assistant, warrior or son-in-law.

While King David was strolling one evening on his palace rooftop instead of leading his troops in battle, he saw a beautiful woman bathing who was married to one of his soldiers. This soldier, Uriah, was not an Israelite yet chose to defend God's King and God's people. He was even listed among David's thirty elite 'mighty men' (SEE 2 Samuel 23: 30). David had Uriah's wife, Bathsheba, brought to him and slept with her. David quickly learned the meaning of "... and you may be sure that your sin will find you out" (Numbers 32: 23) when Bathsheba sent him word that she was pregnant. David then sent for her husband and conspired to have him spend time with him and presumably go home to his wife in hopes that his sin could be concealed by this man, believing that he was the father of the child Bathsheba was now carrying. But Uriah proved to have more integrity than David and refused to go home and sleep with his wife till the battle was won. Thus, David sent him back to the front where the battle was fiercest and conspired with his General to make sure that Uriah was killed there. 1 Samuel Chapter 11 ended with King David sending for Bathsheba and making her his wife.

We pick up the narrative in 2 Samuel Chapter 12 when God, who was "displeased" with David's adultery and murder of this woman's husband (SEE 2 Samuel 11: 27), sent his Prophet Nathan to David to speak to him. What does Nathan say to King David (2 Samuel 12: 1-4)?

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Why do you think the Prophet Nathan chose to use a parable when speaking to David?

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What was Nathan's story an allegory of?

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What was David's response to Nathan's parable (v 5-6)?

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Do you think David's response was a morally correct interpretation of the story?

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Do you think David's punishment of the rich man in Nathan's story fit the crime?

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The irony in the fact that David, like us, are quick to identify moral failures in others and dispense severe punishment for them that we choose to ignore or pronounce much more lenient penalties for if we do them or if we do even worse things.

What was Nathan's response to David (v 7)? \_\_\_\_\_

Was this a dangerous thing for Nathan to say to David (why or why not?) \_\_\_\_\_

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What Word of the Lord did Nathan give David (v 7-12)

v 7 God did what for David? \_\_\_\_\_

v 8 God gave David what? \_\_\_\_\_

v 9 David did what to God? \_\_\_\_\_

v 10 God's judgement was \_\_\_\_\_

v 11-12 God's punishment was \_\_\_\_\_

Note who David was told he had ultimately sinned against.

What was David's response to Nathan's 'Word of the Lord' to him (v 13)? \_\_\_\_\_

(SEE Proverbs 28: 13)

How was King David's response to being called out on his sin different from that of King Saul? \_\_\_\_\_

(SEE 1 Samuel 13: 8-14 and 1 Samuel 15: 20-24 and Proverbs 28: 9) What was Nathan's Word of the Lord concerning David's immediate shame and admission of guilt (v 13-14)?

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Why do you think David's sin, made as King and ruler of God's chosen people was considered a particularly heinous crime by God? \_\_\_\_\_

There are sometimes consequences to sin even if God forgives the sinner.

What happened next (v 15-17)? \_\_\_\_\_

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On the seventh day what happened to the child born to David by Uriah's wife (v 18)?

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David's attendants were afraid to tell him what happened (why)? \_\_\_\_\_

When David saw them whispering, he asked them directly if the child was dead and they told him the truth (v 19). What did David do next that shocked his attendants (v 20)?

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Why do you think David's behavior in this situation was particularly baffling to his attendants? \_\_\_\_\_

The usual attitude of one in deep mourning in the ancient world was to refuse food, prostrate oneself, and wear sackcloth. How did David explain his actions to his attendants (v 21-23)?

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How was David's attitude and behavior toward God's judgment and punishment in stark contrast with those exhibited by Saul? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (SEE 1 Samuel 18: 8-9, 28-29, 1 Samuel 20: 30-33)

Both David and Saul had moral failures. In fact, by human standards, David's sins of adultery and murder were greater than Saul's sins of selfishness, pride, and seeking the approval of man over the favor of God (i.e., halfhearted devotion to God). What made David a man "after God's own heart" was NOT that he was perfect or sinless but rather that he was truly repentant when confronted with his sin and not just sorry but sorry enough to admit it, quit it and make restitution for it (if possible). That should tell you something about God's standards versus our own.

The remainder of King David's reign was fraught with the consequences of his sin. Nathan's Word of the Lord on this matter came to pass but David continued to respond to the trials and tribulations they wrought by never wavering in humility, a truly sincere, heartfelt repentance and pursuit of a continued relationship with God no matter what. David's Psalm after being confronted by Nathan with his sin said it all:

Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your unfailing love;  
according to your great compassion  
blot out my transgressions.  
Wash away all my iniquity  
and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions,  
and my sin is always before me.  
Against you, you only, have I sinned  
and done what is evil in your sight;  
so you are right in your verdict  
and justified when you judge.  
Surely I was sinful at birth,  
sinful from the time my mother conceived me.  
Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb;  
you taught me wisdom in that secret place.

Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean;  
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.  
Let me hear joy and gladness;  
let the bones you have crushed rejoice.  
Hide your face from my sins  
and blot out all my iniquity.

Create in me a pure heart, O God,  
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.  
Do not cast me from your presence  
or take your Holy Spirit from me.  
Restore to me the joy of your salvation  
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

Then I will teach transgressors your ways,  
so that sinners will turn back to you.  
Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God,  
you who are God my Savior,  
and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.  
Open my lips, Lord,



and my mouth will declare your praise.  
You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it;  
you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.  
My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit;  
a broken and contrite heart  
you, God, will not despise. – Psalm 51: 1-17 (NIV)

### Reflections

Have you ever felt as if you were struggling to understand why the Holy Spirit was taking so long to lead you where you knew he wanted you to be personally or professionally (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever recognized the trials, tribulations and temptations you've gone through along the way toward your personal or professional objectives as a 'training ground' provided by God's Holy Spirit to equip you (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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Once God settles you (personally or professionally), provides you with security, safety and rest (review 2 Samuel 7: 1-2) are you grateful to God and seek to reciprocate by doing something for God (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What is in your "heart" at times like these (review 2 Samuel 7: 3)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Is what is in your "heart" evident to others? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in future? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever wondered why the Holy Spirit would thwart some things you see as 'good' from becoming part of your personal or professional life that are also perfectly acceptable or even praiseworthy by God as well (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Does it make you angry at God (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you question God about it or align your will to his and praise him for it (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

Is what God gave to David (review 2 Samuel 7: 5-11) something he can and does offer to us as well? \_\_\_\_\_

(SEE 1 Corinthians 3: 16-17, Romans 8: 38-39, Matthew 28: 20, Psalm 23: 4, John 3: 16, Psalm 138: 7, Luke 10: 19, Matthew 11: 28, Hebrews 4: 9-11, John 14: 1-4)

Review the following New Testament scripture and relate it to those found in the Old Testament (Review 2 Samuel 7: 12- 16):

Acts 2: 26-29: \_\_\_\_\_

Review David's prayer (SEE 2 Samuel 7: 18-29) and then create your own personal or professional prayer regarding a 'Word of God' that you received in which a particular something 'good' for God you wanted to do was thwarted and replaced with something by God that he wanted done.

v 18- 19 begin with what attitude on your part? \_\_\_\_\_

v 20-21 glorify God by recognizing that God is, what? \_\_\_\_\_

v 22 reiterate God's what? \_\_\_\_\_

v 23-24 recognize Christians as God's \_\_\_\_\_

v 25-26 magnify the promises of God \_\_\_\_\_

v 27 state your belief in God's revelation \_\_\_\_\_

v 28 herald the trustworthiness of God's \_\_\_\_\_

v 29 praise the blessings of God to you \_\_\_\_\_

Who or what should be the focus of your prayer to God? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever been confronted personally or professionally by a Christian (or non-Christian) regarding a moral failure (review 2 Samuel 12: 1-4)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Was it done gently or harshly? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you respond (why)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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Have you ever confronted a brother or sister in Christ with a moral failure (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, did you do it gently or harshly (why)? \_\_\_\_\_

How did they respond? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future?

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Are you quick to identify moral failures in others at home or work? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you have the same standards for your own moral failures as you do for others (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you personally and professionally judge and/or punish others with more severity than you do yourself (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future?

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When we sin at home or at work, who are we really sinning against? \_\_\_\_\_

When the Holy Spirit within or through other people calls you out on a moral failure (review 2 Samuel 12: 13- 14) are you quick to admit guilt and seek forgiveness (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you think moral failures by persons in positions of leadership are particularly heinous to God (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

(SEE James 3: 1, Romans 2: 21-24)

Do you think there are sometimes consequences to sin even if God forgives the sinner (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

(SEE 1 Corinthians 3: 13-15, Galatians 6: 7-8)

What is your attitude and behavior to God when his Holy Spirit convicts/corrects your sin? \_\_\_\_\_

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Is your relationship with God closer or more distant after such encounters (why)?

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Is your “heart” more like David’s (review Psalm 51) or Saul’s in regard to God’s standards (why)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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If you’ve read 2 Samuel 7: 1-29 and 2 Samuel 12: 1-23 before, is there an insight you gleaned here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?) \_\_\_\_\_

Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

### **Module 3: Waist Deep Waters: But my feet still touch bottom [MOSES]**

... and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east. . .  
As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand,... He measured off another thousand cubits and led me through water that was up to the waist... — Ezekiel 47:1— 3–6 (NIV)

#### **Read: Bible, Book of Exodus 3: 1-22 (Moses)**

Knee high water represented going deeper in our faith walk by taking on some trials, tribulation and temptation risks associated with following God's Holy Spirit, and which we saw subsequently caused new spiritual growth in the lives of Gideon, Samuel, Saul, and David.

In Gideon's Holy Spirit encounter, we saw how his responses revealed a humble, teachable spirit, a man familiar with scripture who believed what God had done in the past he could surely do again. Yet, while Gideon recognized his own limitations, he trusted God to do what would best serve God's purposes, give God the glory and enhance his spiritual growth/faith in the process (inclusive of God-given confirmation and encouragement when and where it was needed) just so long as Gideon followed through with God's plan. The result was beating incredible odds in a battle that gave God's people victory over their oppressors and freedom. In Samuel's case, we learned how prayer, scripture, posture, attitude, circumstances and time enhanced his relationship with God and his ability to hear the Holy Spirit. The result was an unusual competence in discernment, perception and intelligent foresight that grew with Samuel's experience seeking, recognizing, and fully obeying the voice of God. In King Saul we saw the folly of a 'righteousness' (of flesh) that proved to be in total opposition to his having and maintaining a true, lasting relationship with a Holy God (of spirit). Saul neither had understood nor particularly wanted the single-minded and wholehearted devotion to God that David possessed. Yet even David, whom God called "a man after his own heart" and to whom God promised a Kingdom that would never end, was not immune to the worldly trappings of fame, fortune, power, success, luxury and the

subsequent spiritual complacency they engendered that greatly grieved God's Holy Spirit.

Enter our final Old Testament character, Moses. God himself "came down in a pillar of cloud" and said the following of his chosen servant Moses when accusations were made against him by his own brother and sister:

"Listen to my words:

"When there is a prophet among you,

I, the Lord, reveal myself to them in visions,

I speak to them in dreams.

But this is not true of my servant Moses;

he is faithful in all my house.

With him I speak face to face,

clearly and not in riddles;

he sees the form of the Lord.

Why then were you not afraid

to speak against my servant Moses?" – Numbers 12: 6-8

Moses was one of the men who met with Jesus on the mount of his transfiguration (Matthew 17: 1-6, Luke 9: 28-38 and Mark 9: 2-13). He also foreshadowed the coming of the Messiah. Moses was prophet of the old covenant, Jesus of the new. Moses gave God's law, Jesus gave grace and truth (SEE John 1:17 and <https://www.agapebiblestudy.com/charts/Typology%20of%20Moses%20and%20Jesus.htm> )

Waist-deep water represents delving further into our faith walk by choosing to embrace even more challenging trials, tribulation and temptations associated with an unyielding pursuit of God's Holy Spirit which subsequently causes mature growth in an individual's faith that can only come with the victories and defeats that these tests produce. There is added risk involved when we choose to leave waves that are knee high and a sandy ocean floor which is firm beneath us to venture further out into calm, rough or stormy seas. You will no longer see or feel the ocean floor, you may even need to dig your toes more deeply into the seabed to stay upright as the tide grows stronger and stronger, threatening to topple you, relentlessly pulling you away from the safety of the shore and out into the open sea.

**Read: Bible, Book of Exodus 3: 1-22 (Moses)**

Exodus Chapters 1 and 2 outline the enslavement of the Israelites by the Egyptians, the Egyptians' fear of the Israelites and the birth and early life of Moses.



Indeed, the name Moses in Hebrew means to "to draw out" or "to pull out" which was how Moses was saved from Pharaoh's edict at the time that all Hebrew male children were to be killed. Moses was drawn out of the water of the Nile River by Pharaoh's daughter and raised as an Egyptian.

As an adult, Moses saw the ruthless, harsh, bitter labor and treatment of his people by their oppressors and killed an Egyptian who was beating an Israelite. He flees Egypt fearing exposure and ends up living as an exile in the land of Midian, where he marries, has a family and works as a shepherd with his father-in-law for 40 years.

Exodus Chapter 3 begins with Moses tending his father-in-law, the priest of Midian's flock near Horeb the mountain of God (Exodus 3: 1). What extraordinary thing happened to Moses there (v 2- 3)?

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What did Moses do before God spoke to him (v 4) \_\_\_\_\_. (NOTE God called Moses by name) How did Moses respond to God's voice (v 4)? \_\_\_\_\_. Why did God tell Moses not to come any closer and to remove his sandals (v 5)? \_\_\_\_\_ . How did God establish a relationship? How did he introduce himself to Moses (v 6)? \_\_\_\_\_ . How did Moses respond to God's Word (v 6)? \_\_\_\_\_ .

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What does God say to Moses next (v 7-10)

v 7 I have seen & heard \_\_\_\_\_

v 8 I have come down \_\_\_\_\_

v 9 I care that... \_\_\_\_\_

v 10 So, I am... \_\_\_\_\_

Who did God say would deliver the Israelites (v 8)? \_\_\_\_\_

Who was God choosing to work through to deliver the Israelites (v 10)? \_\_\_\_\_

What was Moses' response and why do you think he responded in this way (v 11)?  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Forty years earlier, Moses thought he knew who he was: the son of Pharaoh's daughter, a prince of Egypt, deliverer of an Israelite being beaten, and killer of his oppressor. Now he was a fugitive from Egypt and a shepherd for his father-in-law in Midian.

God's response to Moses was to take the focus off of himself and to put it where it should be, on God. What did God tell Moses (v 12)?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Moses responded with another question in anticipation of what he assumed the Israelites' response would be to him when he told them that he was sent by God (v 13). What did God tell Moses to say to them (v 14)?  
\_\_\_\_\_

What do you think God is conveying with this 'name' to Moses?  
\_\_\_\_\_

(SEE Isaia 40: 28-29, John 8: 58)

God further elaborated on who he was. What did he also tell Moses to say to the Israelites (v 15)?  
\_\_\_\_\_

This was the promise God made to the Israelites 400 years prior. It took 400 years for them to get to the point where they, as a people, turned back to God and cried out to him for help. Were circumstances favorable or dire before they came to this point?

\_\_\_\_\_. What does this pattern of backsliding and waywardness from God on the part of humanity over time, which occurs with fame, fortune, luxury and/or excessive ease, safety, and leisure after being delivered by God, suggest to you?  
\_\_\_\_\_

(SEE Proverbs 30: 7-9, Psalm 119: 9-11, Romans 8: 5-9)

God then told Moses exactly what to expect from the Elders and the Egyptians. What did he tell Moses would happen (v 18-20)?  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

God instructed Moses to tell Pharaoh that the Israelites only wanted a 3-day journey into the wilderness to worship him so that the appeal would be easy to accept, and Pharaoh would have no reason to refuse it. God also knew that Pharaoh would refuse any appeal under any circumstances that Moses presented. God planned from the start to use Pharaoh's hardness of heart for his glory, Egypt's punishment, and the ultimate deliverance of his people out of bondage and into paradise in a miraculous way.

Why did God tell Moses that when Pharaoh did finally agree to let his people go they would not be going empty-handed (v 21-22)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(SEE Deuteronomy 15: 12-14)

### **Read: Bible, Book of Exodus 4: 1-17 and 29-31 (Moses)**

Moses asked God what to do if the Israelites or Pharaoh doubted God's appearing to him (Exodus 4: 1). The Lord answered Moses' question with 'signs' he could use to prove to anyone who doubted him that God had spoken to him and sent him (v 2-8)

v 2-5: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

God chose to use what Moses had in his hand, what he was using to tend sheep with and not anything associated with his former life as an Egyptian Prince. It also took faith to grab a snake by the tail, which was dangerous as he was instructed to do by God, but he did it)

v 6-7: \_\_\_\_\_

v 8-9: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(The first two signs were transformative in nature, displaying God's power to restore symbols of evil (snake) and corruption (disease) back into goodness, usefulness, and purity; the last was a sign of judgment not intended to be restored by God if it went unheeded by those who witnessed it.

At this point, Moses does not question God's ability. However, he doubted his own. Moses, albeit respectfully, then chose to focus on his lack of speech-making abilities (v 10). He suggested that God never enabled him to speak well, as he stated he "has never been eloquent" in the past and then intimates that God did not miraculously enable him to speak better now either. What was God's response to this?

**v 11** who gave? \_\_\_\_\_

Who makes? \_\_\_\_\_

Who gives? \_\_\_\_\_

**v 12** now go! I will \_\_\_\_\_

and I will \_\_\_\_\_

Who did God point Moses back to? \_\_\_\_\_ .

To whom did Moses stay focused on (v 13)? \_\_\_\_\_

When did God become angry with Moses (v 14), and why do you think God became so at this point?

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God was NOT angry in Exodus 3: 11, Exodus 3: 13, Exodus 4: 1or even in Exodus 4: 10.

What did God do for Moses (v 14-17)? \_\_\_\_\_

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This is hardly the first time that God made concession for a lack of willingness on our part due to perceived inabilities, insecurities and fears (SEE Judges 4: 8-9)

Moses and his brother Aaron did go to Egypt and Moses performed the signs God gave to the Elders, who believed that God sent him and worshiped God (v 29-31).

### **Read: Bible, Book of Exodus 5: 1-23 (Moses)**

Exodus 5 begins promisingly enough, with Moses and Aaron going to Pharaoh and asking him to let their people go and to worship God. However, Pharaoh's response was, "Who is the Lord that I should obey him...I do not know him.... I won't let Israel go

(Exodus 5: 2). So, instead of letting God's people go, Pharaoh increased the burden of work upon them by forcing the Israelites to gather their own straw in addition to making the usual number of bricks. They had to maintain their daily quota of bricks despite the additional work, and this led to increased suffering for the people.

Who did the Israelites "appeal to" instead of God or even Moses and Aaron (Exodus 5: 15-16)? \_\_\_\_\_ . What did Pharaoh tell them (v 17-18)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Moses and Aaron were waiting to meet the Israelite overseers when they left Pharaoh. What did they say to Moses and Aaron (v 19-21)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What did Moses do first before taking any further action (v 22-23)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you think Moses' questions to God were justifiable (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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(SEE Exodus 3: 19-20)

### **Reflections**

Has God ever used unusual or extraordinary circumstances (even a spectacular phenomenon) to get your attention either personally or professionally (review Exodus 3: 2-3)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Did you stop and give your full attention to what God revealed to you (review Exodus 3: 4) so that he could speak (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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When God calls at home or at work (review Exodus 3: 4) are you available to Him (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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Do you have a personal and professional awe and reverence regarding the Holiness of God (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you have a personal and professional appreciation for the relationship (review Exodus 3: 6) offered to you by a Holy God (why or why not)?

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Describe a time that you knew personally or professionally that God saw, heard, cared, had a plan to do something and that this plan included sending you (review Exodus 3: 7-10):

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Was your initial response like that of Moses (review Exodus 3: 11)?

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Did God help you to 'refocus' on who was going to be doing the work through you (review Exodus 3: 12)? . Why or why not?

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How might you do better in the future?

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Has God ever personally or professionally needed to shift your focus off of yourself and onto him (review Exodus 3: 12)?

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Have you ever personally or professionally anticipated what others might say or do if you followed through on where the Holy Spirit was leading, and then questioned God about it (review Exodus 3: 13)?

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If so, did God respond by answering your question(s) or by simply reminding you of who he is?

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Have you ever noticed personally or professionally a pattern over time of backsliding or wandering from God after receiving favor or deliverance by God (why or why not)?

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How might you do better in the future?

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Has God ever provided you with information in advance, either at home or at work, regarding what to expect when you follow through with His Holy Spirit's guidance (why or why not)?

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Has God ever used other people's 'hardness of heart' to complete the personal or professional plans he had for you (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever personally or professionally asked God what to do "if" (review Exodus 4: 1) when prompted by the Holy Spirit to act (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Has God ever given you a "sign" (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Signs from God manifest in various ways, such as through scripture, prayer, worship, nature, others, and personal experiences that resonate deeply and guide, confirm or encourage faith and trust in God's presence or plan.

Have you ever respectfully declined God's directive to act either personally or professionally due to perceived inadequacies, insecurities or fears (review Exodus 4: 13)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Has God initially ever made concessions for your perceived lack(s) to achieve his purposes and grow your personal or professional faith in the process (review Exodus 4: 14-17)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you believe God can get done through you both personally and professionally what you are willing to allow him to do with you, inadequacies, insecurities, fears, and all (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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When things got worse instead of better either at home or at work have you ever “appealed to” your oppressor (review Exodus 5: 15-16) instead of God for help (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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Have things ever gotten worse instead of better at home or at work after you’ve done what God told you to do? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever been blamed for trials or tribulations at home or at work that resulted from doing things God’s way (review Exodus 5: 19-21)? \_\_\_\_\_

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If so, did you question God about it (review Exodus 5: 22-23)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you think your questions to God were justifiable (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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If you’ve read Exodus 3: 1-11, Exodus 4: 1-17 & 29-31 and Exodus 5: 1-23 before, is there an insight you gleaned here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?) \_\_\_\_\_

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Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

### **Read: Bible, Book of Exodus 6: 1-12 (Moses)**

Exodus Chapter 6 begins with God's answer to Moses' protests that, after he came and did what God told him to do, things had gotten worse instead of better for the Israelites. What did God tell Moses (Exodus 6: 1)

**v 1** now you will \_\_\_\_\_ v 1

because of \_\_\_\_\_ Pharoah will \_\_\_\_\_ v 1

because of \_\_\_\_\_ Pharoah will \_\_\_\_\_

Essentially, who was God telling Moses was in control here? \_\_\_\_\_

God tells Moses the patriarchs knew him as "God Almighty" (all-powerful but distant). However, Moses and his generation would come to know God as "Lord" (personal, intimate, loving Father as well as all powerful) [Exodus 6: 2-3]. Further, God tells Moses

that he made a covenant (promise) with the patriarchs that he was going to fulfill now (v 4-5).

Therefore, what was God going to do for them as Lord (v 6-8)

v 6 I will \_\_\_\_\_

v 6 I will \_\_\_\_\_

v 6 and I will \_\_\_\_\_

v 7 I will \_\_\_\_\_

v 7 and I will \_\_\_\_\_

v 7 then you will \_\_\_\_\_

v 8 and I will \_\_\_\_\_

v 8 I will \_\_\_\_\_

Why did God say he would bring them to the land he promised (Canaan- a land flowing with milk and honey) and give it to them “as a possession” (v 8)? \_\_\_\_\_ .

Each of these verbs was in the Hebrew ‘past tense’ instead of ‘future tense.’ So, God viewed them as having already been accomplished.

What was the Israelites’ response when Moses reported this to them (v 9)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_. Why did the Israelites respond to Moses in this way (v 9)? \_\_\_\_\_ .

Do you think their response was reasonable (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

The people knew of God’s promises to their patriarchs. However, they are experiencing bondage and oppression now. They even cried out and prayed for God to intervene but then, when he showed up, they chose to believe in their situation instead of God.

Commentators on these verses state that the “centuries of slavery produced ‘slavery thinking’ whereby God’s people thought like slaves instead of the ‘people of the covenant’ that they were. They saw “Pharaoh as bigger than God.” Also, Moses had made things worse for them once already.

Despite the Israelites’ response and reasons for their response, what did God tell Moses to do next (v 10-11)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Moses was as discouraged as the people at this point and blamed not God but himself for both Pharaoh's attitude toward them and the people's response to his delivery of God's Word. So, how did Moses respond to God's Word here (v 12)? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Read: Bible, Book of Exodus 7: 1-6 (Moses)**

God tells Moses, yet again, exactly what he and his brother Aaron are going to do, how they are going to do it, how he is going to deal with Pharaoh, the Egyptians and Egypt, how Pharaoh is going to respond to it all, and ultimately how everything he's told Moses is going to come to pass (Exodus 7: 1-5). What did Moses and Aaron do next (v 6)? \_\_\_\_\_

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God did not chastise Moses for being discouraged by Pharaoh or the people. He encouraged Moses by telling him that he would be a 'god to Pharaoh like God was to him' and his brother would 'speak as his prophet' if Moses was concerned about how he spoke. What was necessary was that they do exactly what God said to do and say exactly what God told him to say, which he did. How old was Moses when he confronted Pharaoh (v 7)? \_\_\_\_\_ .

The remainder of Exodus Chapter 7, all of Chapter 8, 9, and 10 recount the plagues that God wrought upon Egypt. Each of the first eight plagues that the one true God brings upon Egypt were purposeful, designed to show that the one true God is greater than all of the Egyptian (manmade) gods; Khnum (god of creation and the waters, guardian of the Nile), Hapi (spirit of the Nile, annual flooding of the Nile), Osiris (who had the Nile as his bloodstream and was thought to be a protector of the crops and god of the afterlife), Heqet (the frog-goddess of fertility), Hathor (a cow-like mother goddess of the Pharaoh), Imhotep (the god of wisdom, texts and medicine) and Nut (goddess of the sky, stars, cosmos). The first eight plagues of the one true God had to be halted by him as well for none of the Egyptian gods could turn water into blood, bring frogs, lice, flies, livestock pestilence, boils, hail, and locusts any more than they could get rid of them. However, it was with God's last two plagues; the plague of darkness, a darkness that can be felt, and the death of the firstborn that he brought Pharaoh and all of Egypt to its knees and foreshadowed the coming of God's Son and dispensation of His Holy Spirit.

### **Read: Bible, Boo, of Exodus 10: 21-29 (Moses)**

With each of the first eight plagues brought on by Pharaoh's stubborn refusal to allow God's people to leave, we see repentance with the suffering but no follow-through on the part of Egypt's ruler once God stops the devastation. Sound familiar? God repeatedly held up his end of the bargain each time Pharaoh asked Moses to 'pray to the Lord,' yet each time Pharaoh reneged on his word once the agony ceased. We pick up the narrative in Exodus 10: 21-29 with the plague of darkness. It was not forewarned to Pharaoh and was a precursor to the final plague that would result in Israel's freedom from bondage and a hint of ours in the future.

Then the Lord said to Moses, what (Exodus 10: 21-23)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What do you think "darkness which may even be felt" (v 21) means? \_\_\_\_\_

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(SEE Isaiah 60: 2, Joel 2: 31, 1 John 1: 1-5, John 5. The Egyptians had a 'sun god' named Ra that was unable to provide them with light.

How many days did the darkness plague the Egyptians (v 23)? \_\_\_\_\_

(SEE Matthew 27: 45-54)

After eight devastating plagues which destroyed the land of Egypt, Pharaoh was willing by this time to 'compromise' with the onslaught of this darkness plague. What did he say to Moses (v 24)? \_\_\_\_\_

Moses refused. Pharaoh was angered and ordered him to leave and not return, or he would be killed. Moses agreed (v 25-29).

### **Read: Bible, Book of Exodus 11: 1-10 (Moses)**

God reminded Moses of what he said in Exodus 4: 21-23 that this last plague would compel Pharaoh to let his people go (Exodus 11: 1). He also told Moses to have the people ask the Egyptians for articles of silver and gold. God did what for his people

(v 3)? \_\_\_\_\_

Did God make a distinction between low-born and high-born Egyptians and Israelites (v 4-6)? \_\_\_\_\_

Did God make a distinction between his people (the Israelites) and the Egyptians (v 7)

---

The Egyptians had brought God's people to their knees under cruel bondage, causing them to cry out to him, and now God was going to bring the Egyptians to their knees and cause them to do what (v 8)?

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What happened next (v 9)? \_\_\_\_\_

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God knew what Pharaoh was going to do, and God used Pharaoh's attitude and behavior to manifest his glory. What did Pharaoh do to God and his people in Exodus 7:13? \_\_\_\_\_, Exodus 7: 22? \_\_\_\_\_, Exodus 8: 15? \_\_\_\_\_, Exodus 8: 19? \_\_\_\_\_, Exodus 8: 32? \_\_\_\_\_, and Exodus 9: 7? \_\_\_\_\_ before God did this to Pharaoh in Exodus 9: 12? \_\_\_\_\_, Exodus 10: 20? \_\_\_\_\_, Exodus 10: 27? \_\_\_\_\_ and Exodus 11: 10? \_\_\_\_\_.

The nine plagues touched all of man's natural surroundings as well as every level of human life and society.

### **Reflections**

When things get worse instead of better at home or at work after you stand up for or on God's Word (review Exodus 6: 1), do you think that means you must be out of God's will (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think it is due to your own inadequacies, insecurities or fears and NOT God's Word (review Exodus 6: 12) when things get worse or do not change (why or why not)?

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Do you think God is in control (review Exodus 6: 1) even when things do not change or get worse (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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Do you know God only as "God Almighty" or as "Lord" (review Exodus 6: 2-8)?

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What is God going to do for you as Lord (review Exodus 6: 6-8 and the following New Testament scriptures):

**v 6** I will \_\_\_\_\_ (SEE Matthew 11: 28-30)

**v 6** I will \_\_\_\_\_ (SEE John 8: 36)

**v 6** and I will \_\_\_\_\_ (SEE Galatians 3: 13)

**v 7** I will \_\_\_\_\_ (SEE Romans 8: 14-17)

**v 7** and I will \_\_\_\_\_ (SEE 1 Peter 2: 9)

**v 7** then you will \_\_\_\_\_ (SEE Romans 8: 16)

**v 8** and I will \_\_\_\_\_ (SEE Revelation 21: 1-4)

**v 8** I will \_\_\_\_\_ (SEE John 8: 58)

Does your “thinking” personally or professionally sometimes impede you from knowing God more fully, as “Lord” (review Exodus 6: 9)? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, why? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Does God ever need to repeat his Word to you at home or at work (review Exodus 7: 1-2) because your focus is on your inabilities, insufficiencies, fears or your circumstances instead of on God, his promises, and power (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you ever think you are too young, too old, too immature in your faith or too inadequate, ill equipped or fearful in some way to heed God’s Holy Spirit when God speaks (review Exodus 7: 6-7)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (SEE 1 Timothy 4: 12, Psalm 92: 12-14)

How might you do better in the future?

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Have you ever found yourself personally or professionally not following through after repenting once God removed the uncomfortable, painful or devastating circumstances (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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Have you ever considered that some uncomfortable, painful or devastating situations at home or work may well be God's way of exposing and eliminating idols in your life (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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An idol extends beyond the worship of images and false gods. It is a matter of the heart associated with pride, self-centeredness, greed, gluttony, and love for possessions (SEE Philippians 3: 19 and Matthew 6: 24)

Have you ever experienced a "darkness which may even be felt" (review Exodus 10: 21)?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(SEE Isaiah 60: 2, Joel 2: 31, 1 John 1: 5, John 5)

How did the Word of God shed light? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever tried personally or professionally to 'compromise' with God while undergoing an onslaught of darkness in your life (review Exodus 10: 24)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever gotten angry with God when he refused to allow 'compromise' (review Exodus 10: 25-29)? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future?

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Has God ever had to remind you personally or professionally of something he'd told you when circumstances remained seemingly unchanged (review Exodus 11: 1-2)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Has God ever given you favor in personal or professional situations that surprised you (review Exodus 11: 3)? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, in what way? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever found yourself making distinctions between persons based on human economic, social, or even (good or bad) moral criteria instead of on God's Word at home or at work (review Exodus 11: 5)? \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_ (SEE Romans 2: 11-16)

How might you do better in the future?

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What are your thoughts regarding God's use of 'hard hearts' to manifest his glory, further his Kingdom and ultimately correct or bless his people (review Exodus 11: 9-10)?

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(SEE Proverbs 16: 4, Proverbs 19: 21, Genesis 50: 15-21, Colossians 1: 16, Psalm 115: 3, Romans 11: 33, Acts 5: 39, and James 4: 14-15)

If you've read Exodus 6: 1-12, Exodus 7: 1-6, Exodus 10: 21-29 and Exodus 11: 1-10 before, is there an insight you gleaned here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?) \_\_\_\_\_

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Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

### **Read: Bible, Book of Exodus 12: 1-13 & 29-31 (Moses)**

What God did for his people was of such importance that he tells them to do what (Exodus 12: 1-2)? \_\_\_\_\_

What did God want Moses to tell the entire community (v 3-4)? \_\_\_\_\_

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The animals must be (v 5): \_\_\_\_\_ (SEE John 1: 29, 1 Peter 1: 18-19)

The animals then must be (v 6): \_\_\_\_\_

By caring for the lamb for 14 days, it would become part of the family, precious, something cherished to be then sacrificed (SEE Romans 8: 32)

Then some of the blood must be (v 7): \_\_\_\_\_

The placement over the door of the blood in the shape of a cross (SEE Ephesians 1:7, Romans 5: 9, Colossians 1: 20, Hebrews 9: 1-12)

Then must be eaten (v 8-11), how? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (SEE Hebrews 11: 28, John 6: 53-59, Matthew 26: 17-18 & 26-29, Acts 20: 28)

God stated he would strike down firstborn males, bringing judgment on the Egyptians but when he saw the blood, he would pass over the Israelites. None of the destructive plague would touch them (v 13). Moses did all that God told him to do as did the Israelites under his direction (v 14-28). Then, what happened at midnight (v 29)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What did Pharaoh do next (v 30-31)? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Read: Bible, Book of Exodus 13: 17-22 (Moses)**

When Pharaoh let God's people go, God did not lead them along the easiest or the shortest way. Why (Exodus 13: 17-18)? \_\_\_\_\_

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When the people left Egypt, Moses took the bones of Joseph with them. Why (v 19)?

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To read Joseph's entire story, go to Genesis Chapters 37-50 (SEE Genesis 15: 18, Genesis 50: 24-26, Hebrews 11: 22)

How did God go before them (v 21-22)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why do you think God chose to manifest himself to his people in this way (SEE Psalm 105:39 and Psalm 84:11-12)? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Read: Bible, Book of Exodus 14: 1-31 (Moses)**

Was it not you who dried up the sea,



The waters of the great deep;  
Who made the depth of the sea a pathway  
For the redeemed to cross over? ~ Isaiah 51: 10

God did something extraordinary by human standards by NOT leading his people the easiest or shortest route out of Egypt. He then did something even more remarkable when he told them to then turn back and camp between Migdol and the sea (Exodus 14: 2). Why did the Lord tell Moses to do this (v 3-4)? \_\_\_\_\_

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It was interesting to note that Pharaoh said, “Why have we done this?” and “we have let the Israelites go and lost their service!” considering the ten compelling reasons (plagues) that God had done prior to his final release of them (v 5). So, after Pharaoh hardened his heart again against both God (i.e., what have ‘we’ done) and his people (‘we’ have lost our slaves), God also again used Pharaoh’s attitude by permitting his ‘hardness of heart’ to create the arrogance and anger which emboldened his behavior to “pursue the Israelites who were marching out boldly.” The Israelites acted at the direction of their God and in complete defiance of Pharaoh and his gods (v 8) with all the strength God had to offer. A strength proven to have just completely destroyed Egypt. Pharaoh in response, angrily and arrogantly mustered the best military in ancient history (v 6-7), who, at his direction, prepared to go up against the one true Lord God Almighty with all the strength that humanity had to offer.

What was the Israelite's response upon seeing the army of Pharaoh hotly pursuing them (v 10-12)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why do you think even after the ten plagues of Egypt (which completely destroyed the land), particularly the last one (inclusive of the Passover), that God's people responded in this way? \_\_\_\_\_

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The Israelites were now facing the most fearsome army of the ancient world on one side and a raging, open, seemingly uncrossable sea on the other.

How did Moses respond to both the situation and the people's response to it (v 13-14)?

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What did the Lord tell Moses to do next (v 15-18)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What did God do next (v 19-20)? \_\_\_\_\_

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(SEE Psalm 77: 16-20)

Moses did what he was told (v 21) and as a result, what did the Israelites do (v 22)?

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The Egyptians then pursued them as God said they would (v 23) and God did what (v 24-25)? \_\_\_\_\_

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God told Moses to stretch out his hand over the sea again (v 26) and what happened (v 27-28)? \_\_\_\_\_

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So, God parted the Red Sea, allowing his people to escape from their pursuers on dry ground but brought the sea down upon the Egyptians, leaving no survivors (v 29-30). After this, how did the Israelites respond (v 31)? \_\_\_\_\_

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As we wrap-up our deeper dive into waist high waters and head into the New Testament for our final study on rivers no one can cross, those waters that Jesus referred to as “rivers of living water” that would “flow out from the heart” of those who believed in him (John 7: 37-39) it is worth noting that the same Moses God spoke to face to face as a man speaks to his friend (Exodus 33: 11) was the same Moses that God prohibited from entering the promised land after he’d led the people to it under God’s direction (Deuteronomy 3: 23-29). It was the same Moses who struck a rock in anger that God had instructed he speak to in order to bring forth water for the people (Numbers 20: 10-13) thus forfeiting his entering the promised land. What was the reason God gave Moses for this chastisement (SEE Numbers 20: 12-13)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Moses did not reflect the heart and character of God by his attitude and behavior before the people. The Word of a Holy God needs no help on the part of mankind to bring it to pass.

### **Reflections**

Has the importance of what God has done for you when he covered you with the blood of the lamb, Jesus Christ, changed every calendar day of every year and reached into every aspect of your personal and professional life (review Exodus 12: 1-13), why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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Has becoming a Christian made you feel ~ a part of a family; the incredible love of Christ Jesus as someone precious and cherished; and/or compelled to sacrifice like Jesus did (review Exodus 12: 5-11) in every aspect of your life? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you, like Moses, faithfully carried out all of God's instructions at home and work, God's way and in his time when he has called upon you to do so (review Exodus 12: 12-28)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better? \_\_\_\_\_

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Has God ever chosen NOT to lead you either personally or professionally along the easiest or the shortest way through the difficulties of life (review Exodus 13: 17-18)?

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Why do you think God chooses to lead through hardship over long distances? \_\_\_\_\_

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(SEE Psalm 119: 71, Romans 5: 3-5, Romans 8: 17-18, Romans 12: 1-2, 1 Peter 4: 1-2, 1 Peter 4: 12-13, 1 Peter 4: 19, James 1: 2-4, Hebrews 4: 14-16, 1 Peter 2: 19-25)

How do you respond to God when taking the longer, harder way? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you have the faith of Joseph, which extended over 400 years beyond his own life in regard to trusting in God's Word (review Exodus 13: 19)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever felt the comfort of knowing you were being protected (cloud covered) and guided (by light or fire) even through life's deserts by God both day and night (review Exodus 13: 21-23)? \_\_\_\_\_

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(SEE Psalm 97:1-4, Matthew 17: 5, Luke 21; 27-28, Revelation 1: 7, 1 Thessalonians 4: 17 and Psalm 119: 105, John 8: 12, Proverbs 4: 18, Isaiah 60: 1, Matthew 5: 14, Matthew 17: 1-2, 2 Corinthians 4: 6, 1 Peter 2: 9)

Has God ever told you to turn back, stop, and camp (or stand your ground) in the face of personal or professional pursuit by the enemy with seemingly no human way (either forward or in retreat) open to you of escape (review Exodus 14: 2)? \_\_\_\_\_

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If so, did you comply (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why do you think God instructed you to do this (review Exodus 14: 3-4)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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Have you ever changed your mind (review Exodus 14: 5) after God clearly demonstrated both his power and purpose in a situation when the results proved to be loss of personal or professional comfort(s) or service(s) you'd become accustomed to having?

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What did you do and why? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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When would 'marching out in boldness' be a good thing (review Exodus 14: 8)?

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When would anger-fueled, arrogance-induced boldness be a bad idea (review Exodus 14: 6-7)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever felt fear in the face of personal or professional situations in which there appeared to be, humanly speaking, no way out (review Exodus 14: 10-12)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How did you react (attitude and behavior) when faced with such fearful situation(s)?

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Why do you think you reacted emotionally in this way (perhaps even as you were simultaneously 'crying out to God' spiritually)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better (review Exodus 14: 13- 14)? \_\_\_\_\_

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(SEE Psalm 23: 4, Psalm 46: 10, Isaiah 26: 3, Isaiah 41: 10, Philippians 4:7, John 14: 27, Hebrews 13: 5)

Have you ever cried out to God in prayer again even after you'd been told what to do (even perhaps what to expect) when action was needed (review Exodus 14: 15-18)?

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Have you ever prayerfully acted upon God's Word to you (review Exodus 14: 21-28) either personally or professionally (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What was the outcome? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future?

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Have you ever felt the glory of God - his protection (angel(s) and/or cloud(s)- where darkness (judgement) to the enemy was on the one side and a source of light (salvation)

to you either personally or professionally was on the other (review Exodus 14: 19-20)?

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What principles can be derived from a review of Exodus 14: 29- 31 that apply to our ultimate victory today? \_\_\_\_\_

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(SEE 1 John 5: 4-7, 1 Corinthians 15: 56-58, Psalm 20: 6-8, Romans 8: 35-39, Philippians 4: 13, Psalm 108: 12-13)

If you've read Exodus 12: 1-13 & 29-31, Exodus 13: 17-22 and Exodus 14: 1-31 before, is there an insight you gleaned here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?)

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Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

## **Module 4: A River I Can Not Cross: Lord, not without you**

... and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east. ... As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he measured off another thousand, but now it was a river that I could not cross, because the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in—a river that no one could cross... — Ezekiel 47:1— 3–6 (NIV)

### **Rivers of Living Water**

**Read: Bible, Book of Acts 1: 1-9 and select Old & New Testament verses (Jesus)**

If waist deep water represented delving further into our faith walk by choosing to embrace more risk and an unyielding pursuit of God's Holy Spirit then a river deep enough to swim in — a river that no one can cross implies that choice and pursuit on our part has been completely lost. You can't touch the river's bottom; you can no longer see the safety of the shoreline, all that is left in calm, troubled or outright stormy seas is a complete abandon to the ebb and flow of the tides; to trust oneself fully to the ruler of the waves.

You rule over the surging sea;  
when its waves mount up.  
You still them ~ Psalm 89:9

They were terrified and asked  
each other, "Who is this?  
Even the wind and the waves  
obey him!" ~ Mark 4: 41



**Jesus walks on water**



But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the lord. He is like a tree planted by the waters that sends out its roots toward the stream. It does not fear when the heat comes, and its leaves are always green. It does not cease to produce fruit.

~ Jeremiah 17: 7-8 (ESV)

### **Read: Bible, Book of Acts 1: 1-9 (Jesus)**

The book of Acts in the Bible is attributed to Luke as its writer and God's Holy Spirit as its source. Luke was a gentile (non-Jew), a physician and devoted companion of Paul (SEE Colossians 4: 14, Philemon 1: 24, 2 Timothy 4: 11). "This book could be titled 'The Acts of the Holy Spirit' because it is his power that resonates from nearly every page"

(<https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/who-wrote-the-book-of-acts.html>). The book of Acts begins with Luke's reference to his "former book," which was the Gospel of Luke (v 1). He is writing to "Theophilus" whose name, interestingly enough, means "God-lover." What did Luke's "former book" detail about Jesus (v 1-2)?

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Prior to Jesus' ascension into heaven through whom did he give instruction to his chosen apostles here on earth (v 2)? \_\_\_\_\_ .

After his suffering and death on the cross for our sins, Jesus presented himself to his disciples and gave them many convincing proofs (SEE 1 Corinthians 15:6) that he was alive (Acts 1: 3). He appeared to them over a period of how many days (v 3)? \_\_\_\_\_ . Jesus then instructed them to stay in Jerusalem to await what (v 4-5)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What did Jesus' disciples ask him when they saw him after his resurrection (v 6)?

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What was Jesus' response to this question (v 7)? \_\_\_\_\_

What did Jesus tell them would happen to them after his ascension (v 8)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(SEE Isaiah 43: 10, Acts 8: 1-12, Acts 13: 1-28)

After Jesus said this, He ascended into heaven (v 9). What hid him from their sight (v 9)?  
\_\_\_\_\_. (SEE <https://utmost.org/modern-classic/the-life-that-lives/> )

God spoke the following Word in the Old Testament via his Holy Spirit through the prophet Isaiah at the time of the Israelite's exile in Babylon (587 BC), well over 500y before Christ was born:

As the rain and the snow  
come down from heaven,  
and do not return to it  
without watering the earth  
and making it bud and flourish,  
so that it yields seed for the Sower and bread for the eater,  
so is my word that goes out from my mouth:  
It will not return to me empty,  
but will accomplish what I desire  
and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. - Isaiah 55: 10-11

A 'metaphor' is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase that ordinarily designates one thing is used to designate another, as in 'a sea of troubles.' Note how these verses use the natural growth process of watering the earth as a metaphor to underscore how spiritual growth is also achieved through God's Word and his Holy Spirit going forth in it.

This Word of God as well as many others in the Old Testament were fulfilled with the birth of Jesus Christ in 6 or 5 BC (SEE John 1: 1-4, 14 and 16-18), his life, sacrificial death and resurrection (6 or 5 BC - 30 AD) and dispensation of the Holy Spirit upon his disciples after Christ's ascension into heaven (30 AD - present). Indeed, Isaiah began Chapter 55 with "Come, all you who are thirsty, Come to the waters... (Isaiah 55: 1).

In the New Testament, Jesus also said, what (SEE John 7: 37 and John 6: 35)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

God also spoke the following Word via his Holy Spirit through Ezekiel in the early years of the Israelite exile between 590 and 570 BC,

Then he led me back to the bank of the river. . . . so where the river flows everything will live. . . . Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month, they will bear fruit because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve as food and their leaves for healing.  
Ezekiel 47:7—10—12 (NIV)

In the New Testament, Jesus also said, what (SEE John 7: 38)? \_\_\_\_\_

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The above scriptures speak of how God's Word thus far had been made manifest through Christ and the Holy Spirit upon his creation. God later spoke the following Word via his Holy Spirit through the Apostle John in the Book of Revelation (around 95 AD), detailing what will come to pass with Christ's return,

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. — Revelation 22: 1-3

What else does the Holy Spirit reveal regarding what is to come in Revelation 21: 6-7?

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And in Revelation 22: 17? \_\_\_\_\_

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Clearly God's vision of his kingdom on earth: "the New Jerusalem" (SEE Hebrews 11: 13-16, Hebrews 12: 22-24, Hebrews 13: 12-14) and "restoration of the Kingdom of Israel" (Acts 1: 6) was much bigger than the Jewish people, Christ's apostles and his early disciples could fully grasp.

### **Read: Bible, Book of John 16: 7-11 (Jesus)**

What three things did Jesus say that the Holy Spirit 'proves the world wrong about?'

**v 9:** \_\_\_\_\_ (SEE John 14: 6)

**v 10:** \_\_\_\_\_ (SEE Romans 3: 21-24)

**v 11:** \_\_\_\_\_ (SEE John 5: 22- 25)

Who was 'the prince of this world' that Jesus was speaking of (v 11)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (SEE 1 John 3: 8, 1 John 5: 19, 2 Corinthians 4: 4)

Jesus had a lot to say about the Holy Spirit throughout his ministry and later through his disciples on the role of the Holy Spirit in the ultimate fulfillment of God's plan for his creation:

<b>Scripture</b>	<b>Scripture meaning:</b>	<b>Work of Holy Spirit</b>
Mark 12: 35-37		
John 16: 13		
John 14: 26		
John 6: 63		
John 3: 5		
Matthew 10: 19-20		
Mark 13: 11		
Luke 12: 11-12		
Matthew 12: 28		
Matthew 28: 18-20		
Luke 11: 13		
Luke 12: 10		
1 Corinthians 2: 10-16		
2 Corinthians 3: 12-18		
2 Corinthians 1: 21-22		
Ephesians 4: 29-32		
Ephesians 1: 17-19		
Ephesians 1: 13-14		

For each of the scriptures listed above, write out the verse's meaning and identify in the last column the work of the Holy Spirit listed below:

**Testifies of Jesus/Teaches Truth:** Seals believer as child of God & his witness

**Fosters Spiritual Growth/Fulfillment/Satisfaction:** Importance in the believer's life

**Equips/Empowers/Emboldens:** Fits Believer for service/ God's work



May the King be like rain falling on a mown field,  
like showers watering the earth... may the righteous  
flourish and prosperity abound... ~ Psalm 72: 6-7

Read the following Old Testament (OT) and New Testament (NT) water and spirit verses. Reflect on their literal and metaphoric meanings in relation to the "pouring out" of God's Holy Spirit like water. Jot down your reflections on these meanings (their "**life-giving**" properties, purposes, and importance to humanity's earthly (mortal) and spiritual (divine) need for growth.

OT verses	Mortal Reflections	NT verses	Divine Reflections
Isaiah 44: 3-4			
Isaiah 41: 17-20			
Proverbs 1: 23			
Joel 2: 23 -29			
Ezekiel 36: 25-27			
		Luke 24: 44-49	
		Galatians 4: 6-7	
		Romans 8: 9-17	

Water sources such as rivers, streams, springs, rain and showers hold significant symbolic and practical importance throughout the Bible. They are often seen as sources of life, growth, sustenance, refreshment, provision, and divine blessing.

Prophetically they depict the life-giving and healing power of God's presence as well as his abiding faithfulness)

**Read: Bible, Book of Luke 12: 8-12 (Jesus)**

What do you think 'blasphemes against the Holy Spirit' means (v 10)? \_\_\_\_\_

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The dictionary definition of blasphemy is 'insulting or showing contempt for; lack of reverence for God). How do you think this is done to the Holy Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_

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(SEE Hebrews 10: 26-31, Galatians 5: 16-18, 1 Corinthians 2: 14, Zechariah 7: 12)

Why do you think anyone who 'blasphemes against' the Holy Spirit 'will not be forgiven' (v 10) yet 'denying publicly' or 'speaking against' Jesus at this time (prior to his death, resurrection and ascension) Jesus told them was 'forgivable'?

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Luke 12 versus 11-12 implied future persecution from religious and secular ruling authorities for ones faith in Christ. Jesus instructed his followers regarding what to do when this happened. What gives us a clue as to why blaspheming against the Holy Spirit would be the only unforgivable sin (SEE v 12)?

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(SEE Hebrews 6: 4-8)

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What do you think Hebrews 6: 4-8 means? \_\_\_\_\_

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The metaphoric use of words like the 'land drinking rain' that is 'often falling on it' and the 'crop production' associated with the process of natural growth used here to underscore this point - spiritually speaking, that it is those upon whom the Holy Spirit of God falls and waters that over time produce a crop 'useful' for 'those for

whom it is farmed' (namely, God). They are the ones who receive God's blessing (v 7). SEE: Deuteronomy 32: 1-4.

In light of Hebrews 6: 4-8, what do you think Jesus meant in Matthew 7: 15-29?

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The use of words such as 'fruit', 'grapes', 'figs', 'thornbushes' and 'thistles.' The process of natural growth in producing a 'good' crop' that is used here to underscore this point – spiritually speaking, in regard to who can be recognized as having true relationship with Jesus, namely those upon whom and within whom the Holy Spirit flows over time who produce a good, useful crop through the supernatural process of spiritual growth and NOT those producing no fruit, 'bad fruit' or even those who are presumably doing the work of God by performing miracles, driving out demons or prophesying in Jesus' name but have no true relationship with him through the Holy Spirit.

**Read: Bible, Book of 2 Corinthians 5: 1-10 (Jesus)**

What practical application can this truth make to your own personal and professional life? \_\_\_\_\_

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Our 'eternal home' is NOT built 'by human hands.'

**Reflections**

If Jesus, the Son of God, "gave instructions to his chosen through the Holy Spirit" (review Acts 1: 2) how might that inspire us in our personal and professional lives (Also review John 16: 7-15 and 2 Peter 1: 21)?

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What do you think Jesus meant when he made the distinction between water and Holy Spirit baptism (review Acts 1: 5)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (SEE Acts 2: 38, Romans 6:4, John 3: 5- 8, John 3: 34-36)

What do you think Jesus meant when he urged his disciples to “wait on the Holy Spirit” (review Acts 1: 4-5 and 8)? \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_ (SEE John 14: 15-17, John 14: 25-27, and Acts 5: 29-32)

Jesus wanted his disciples to focus on the individual “power, peace, security of divine kingdom place (i.e., identity in Christ) and the boldness to preach Christ” that the Holy Spirit would give each of them as well as the furtherance of God’s kingdom through this power working in them and through them until he returned instead of concentrating on the worldly national power they humanly sought that is the “restoration of the kingdom of Israel” on earth. SEE Acts 1: 6-7) In other words, Jesus first came to put the kingdom of heaven into a human not merely to put a human into the kingdom of heaven. When he returns it will be to bring the kingdom his disciples were anticipating when he walked this earth the first time. It is this kingdom Jesus’ disciples today, now equipped with the Holy Spirit, should be working with him through the Holy Spirit to set the stage for, prior to his second coming in much the same way that that John the Baptist did for Jesus at his first.

**Read: Bible, Book of Matthew 3: 11- 12 (Jesus)**

What did John the Baptist preach via the Holy Spirit concerning the first coming of Jesus Christ, the Messiah? \_\_\_\_\_

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If you’ve read Acts 1: 1-9 and the select Old and New Testament scriptures presented here before, is there an insight you gleaned here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?) \_\_\_\_\_

Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

## Fountains versus Broken Cisterns

... and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east. . . . As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he measured off another thousand, but now it was a river that I could not cross, because the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in—a river that no one could cross...  
— Ezekiel 47:1— 3-6 (NIV)

**Read: Bible, Book of John 4: 7-42 (The Woman at the Well) and select Old and New Testament verses**



My people have committed two sins:  
They have forsaken me, the spring of living  
water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken  
cisterns that cannot hold water.

~ Jeremiah 2: 13

A cistern can be described as a man-made hole dug into the ground made of either rock or clay used for collecting rainwater. Ancient cisterns could only hold a limited supply of water and were prone to drying and cracking between long bouts of drought when there was no rain. Once cracked, they could no longer hold water properly. They either became at best, mud infested with little, fouled drinking water or, at worst, dry, empty, useless holes in the ground containing no viable drinking water at all. In contrast, fountains are springs of flowing water. Fountains have an unlimited supply of fresh, clean water. In ancient times fountains needed a source of water higher than the fountain to make the water flow or jet into the air. In the Bible fountains are associated with God's divine care, sustaining and life-giving power, purity, provision and protection.



The words of a man's mouth are deep waters;  
the fountain of wisdom is a bubbling brook. ~ Proverbs 18

## Read: Bible, Book of Jeremiah 2: 3- 13 (The Woman at the Well)

What two sins had God's people committed (v 13)? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think the 'spring of living water' was that God's people had 'forsaken' (v 13)? \_\_\_\_\_

In what way did God's people dig 'broken cisterns'?

**v 5:** they \_\_\_\_\_

**v 6:** they \_\_\_\_\_

**v 7:** you \_\_\_\_\_

**v 8:** the priests \_\_\_\_\_

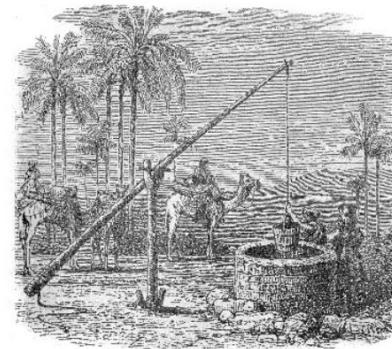
those who deal with the law \_\_\_\_\_

the leaders \_\_\_\_\_

the prophets \_\_\_\_\_

Wells differ from cisterns or fountains. A well is a pool of water fed by a spring. In this instance, men dig down into the ground to tap this source of existing water. Ancient wells in the Bible were also locations where the community gathered as well as places which served as key landmarks of survival particularly in hot arid countries of the middle east. They were important in the daily life and culture of the people.

"Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water?" — John 4:11



### **Read: Bible, Book of John 4: 7-42 (The Woman at the Well)**

Jesus tired from a lengthy journey stops to rest at Jacob's well in a town in Samaria (v 4-6). There he does what (v 7-8)? \_\_\_\_\_

What happened next (v 9)? \_\_\_\_\_

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The woman came to the well around 12N at the heat of the day which was not usual. Women usually came in company later in the day when it was cooler suggesting this woman's 'outcast' status within the community. It was also not culturally acceptable for a man to speak to a woman in public let alone a Jewish man to a despised Samaritan woman.

Jesus' conversation with this woman was a particularly intriguing one. It was a style of conversation repeated again and again with groups and individuals throughout Jesus' earthly ministry. Jot down the key points of this conversation and reflect on how key the gift of God's Holy Spirit is in understanding the things of God through relationship with him (SEE John 8: 12-58 and John 6: 35-66 for similar exchanges between Jesus who was speaking of spiritual things to those following him and the ruling Jewish leaders who are simultaneously hearing/speaking of earthly things in response)

Jesus then tells the woman to go for her husband (v 16). She responds she has no husband (v 17) and Jesus identifies her hidden sin by simply stating the truth about her life. What is the truth (v 18)? \_\_\_\_\_

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There is no condemnation in Jesus' statement. There is also no condoning or ignoring of the truth that Jesus forced her to face about herself.

How does the woman respond to Jesus' statement of truth about her life (v 19)?

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Instead of then addressing the sinful truth of her own life, the woman tried to turn the conversation into a religious debate on where Samaritans and Jews chose to worship God (v 20)

Jesus then shifts the conversation from religion (earthly things regarding where humans chose to worship God) back onto true worship (spiritual things regarding where and how God chose humans worship him) by stating what (v 21-24)?

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The woman responded to this by stating that “she knows the Messiah is coming” and that he will explain all things when he does (v 25). Jesus responded to this spiritual statement of truth, the only one that she makes in this entire exchange with him, with a spiritual declaration of truth of his own. What does Jesus tell her (v 26)?

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Just then, the disciples return, and though surprised Jesus is speaking to this Samaritan woman they don’t ask any questions (v 27). The woman responded to Jesus’ declaration of truth about himself by doing what (v 28- 29)?

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The town folk turned out to see Jesus based on the woman’s testimony (v 30). Meanwhile, his disciples urged Jesus to eat something (v 31) and when Jesus tells them that he has food that they know nothing about (v 32) he is treated to another conversation in which spiritual and fleshly exchanges make comprehension impossible until Jesus explained in more literal language what he meant to his disciples (v 33- 34). Jesus then told the disciples what (v 35-38)?

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Yet again Jesus’ use of words like ‘sowing’ and ‘reaping’, ‘fields and ‘harvest’ as metaphors for the work of God’s Holy Spirit [a spring of water welling up to eternal life, (v 13) which over time fulfills God’s purpose of ‘growing’ a useful crop unto eternal life.

As a result of Jesus’ interaction with the woman at the well, what ultimately happened (v 39-42)?

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Oswald Chambers wrote, “In the life of a disciple, there is an amazing wellspring of originality all the time; the Spirit of God is a deep well, bubbling up, always new, always fresh. If we are drawing from this inexhaustible source, we know that it is

God who engineers our circumstances. We never grumble or whine about what we have to face; we simply take what- ever comes with a reckless abandonment to Jesus" (SEE <https://utmost.org/modern-classic/consecrated-to-him/> )

### Reflections

Have you ever forsaken the 'spring of living water' in either your personal or professional life (review Jeremiah 2: 13)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever dug 'broken cisterns' in either your personal or professional life (review Jeremiah 2: 5-8):

review v 5: \_\_\_\_\_

review v 6: \_\_\_\_\_

review v 7: \_\_\_\_\_

review v 8: \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in future? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever felt personally or professionally 'fouled', dry, empty, useless or otherwise sorely lacking when trying to draw on the necessary spiritual strength needed in a particular situation? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why do you think this happened? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in future? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever felt personally or professionally refreshed or abundantly supplied when trying to draw on the necessary spiritual strength needed in a particular situation? \_\_\_\_\_

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Reflect on how this was achieved? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever felt confused or frustrated either personally or professionally when attempting to understand God's Word to you via the Holy Spirit through Bible reading or the prayerful navigation of life situations (review John 4: 2-15)?

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Why do you think this happens? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

Has the Holy Spirit ever identified and stated truth to you personally or professionally about sinful attitudes or behaviors (review John 4: 17-18)?

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Have you ever tried to shift focus from an unpleasant truth about yourself, either personally or professionally, that the Holy Spirit has identified as needing to be addressed (review John 4: 19)?

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Why do you think this happens? \_\_\_\_\_

Has the Holy Spirit ever had to shift focus back onto what God desires you to address either personally or professionally to align with his will for your life (review John 4: 21-24)?

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How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

What can you expect to happen to you personally when your spirit listens and responds obediently to God's spirit as you read the Bible and prayerfully navigate life (review Luke 4: 25-26 and 28-29)?

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What can you expect to happen to you professionally when your spirit listens and responds obediently to God's spirit as you read the Bible and prayerfully navigate life (review Luke 4: 30, 35-42)? \_\_\_\_\_

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If you've read John 4: 7-42, The Woman at the Well, and select Old and New Testament verses presented here before, is there an insight you gleaned here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?) \_\_\_\_\_

Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

### **White Water Rafting: Without the boat**

... and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east. . . . As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he measured off another thousand, but now it was a river that I could not cross, because the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in—a river that no one could cross...  
— Ezekiel 47:1— 3-6 (NIV)

**Read: Bible, Select New Testament verses and Acts 9: 10-30 (Paul & Ananias, and Peter)**



“Lord, if it’s you,” Peter replied,  
“tell me to come to you on the  
water.”

“Come,” He said.

### **Jesus bids Peter to Walk on Water**

Oswald Chambers wrote, “If you do not cut the moorings, God will have to break them with a storm and send you out. Launch all on God, go out on the swelling tide of his purpose, and you will have your eyes opened. If you believe in Jesus, you are not to spend all your time safe inside the harbor, full of delight. You have to get out

into the great deeps of God and begin to know for yourself. You have to develop spiritual discernment." (SEE <https://utmost.org/modern-classic/determine-to-know-more/> )

Read the following New Testament (NT) scripture verses and identify the impact of the Holy Spirit on a believer's inward transformation, then reflect on how this transformation produces outward 'fruit' in the lives of believers:

<b>NT Scriptures</b>	<b>Holy Spirit inward transformation</b>	<b>Holy Spirit's fruit' (thoughts, attitudes, behavior)</b>
Galatians 5: 22-25		
2 Corinthains 5: 16- 17		
2 Timothy 1: 7		
Romans 8: 1-5		
Romans 8: 26- 27		
Ephesians 4: 1- 3		
Ephesians 4: 21- 24		
Ephesians 5: 18		
Philippians 1: 6		

Paul was an apostle of Christ who by his own admission, was abnormally born (1 Corinthians 15: 8). Unlike Peter, John and James, he did not know Jesus as a man or walk with him on this earth. Yet he was one of the most influential leaders of the early Christian church and played an important role in the spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ amongst the Gentiles (non-Jews). He was considered to have been the instrument through which the Holy Spirit wrote 13 books of the Bible. But before his conversion Paul approved the stoning of Stephan (Acts 8:1) and actively hated, persecuted, and killed Christians.

#### **Read: Bible, Book of Acts 9: 10-30 (Paul & Ananias)**

Paul (also known as Saul) was on his way to Damascus to find, arrest and ultimately incarcerate or kill followers of 'The Way' also known as Christians (Acts 9: 1-2) when suddenly a bright heavenly light flashed around him, making him fall to the ground. He heard the voice of the Holy Spirit say, "Saul, Saul why are you persecuting me (Acts 9: 3-4)?" Paul asked the Lord who he was and was told it was

Jesus whom Paul was persecuting (Acts 9: 5). He is then told to get up, go into the city and there he would be told what he must do (v 6). Those traveling with Paul heard the sound but saw no one. When Saul got up he was blind and had to be led into Damascus, where he stayed for three days, not eating or drinking anything (v 7-9).

Was Paul given specific or vague directions regarding where he was to go (v 6)?

\_\_\_\_\_.

Was Paul given specific or vague direction regarding what he 'must do' (v 6)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

Meanwhile, in Damascus, a conversation between a disciple of Jesus Christ by the name of Ananias and his Savior and Lord was conducted through the Holy Spirit via a vision.

Scripture verse	Holy Spirit speaks	Disciple (Ananias) answers
v 10		
v 11- 12		
v 13- 14		
v 15- 16		

Review the relational dialogue exchange above and answer the following questions below:

Was the direction given by God to Ananias specific or vague? \_\_\_\_\_.

Was Ananias told by God to do from a purely human perspective, something dangerous or not? \_\_\_\_\_.

Do you think God needed to be told by Ananias what 'reports' were being circulated about Paul and his dealings with Christians? \_\_\_\_\_.

What clues were we given that Ananias was in no real danger from a purely Godly perspective to “go” to Paul as the Holy Spirit directed:

**v 11** he is \_\_\_\_\_.

**v 12** in a vision he has seen \_\_\_\_\_.

**v 15** this man is \_\_\_\_\_.

**v 16** I will show him \_\_\_\_\_.

What happened next (v 17-19)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Ananias addressed Paul by what relationship term (v 17)? \_\_\_\_\_.

In addition to regaining his physical ‘sight’, what did Paul receive after Ananias laid his hands on him and prayed (v 17- 18)? \_\_\_\_\_.

What happened to Paul next (v 20-22)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Review what the Lord said of Paul in Acts 9: 18. Read/reflect on the following scriptures and identify in what way this Word of God came to pass initially at Paul’s conversion as well as throughout the rest of his life:

**v 23- 25:** \_\_\_\_\_

**v 26-28:** \_\_\_\_\_

**v 29- 30:** \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 1: 12-14: \_\_\_\_\_

2 Corinthians 11: 23-28: \_\_\_\_\_

If Paul had not heeded the Holy Spirit throughout his life he would not have suffered for Christ’s sake, but he would also not have been imprisoned and subsequently we would not have the following books of the Bible: 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Philippians, Galatians, Romans, Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus.

Read the following scriptures and jot down what Paul accomplished through Holy Spirit transformation within being made manifest in his life and 'work in Jesus':

Acts 16: 4-5: \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 16: 6-10: \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 16: 23-26 \_\_\_\_\_

... added because you just can't do this or 'reap' this result without the Holy Spirit!

Acts 19: 4-6: \_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians 2: 1-5: \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 20: 17-24: \_\_\_\_\_

Paul's life excelled in evangelizing, church building and leadership, exhorting, encouraging and teaching about how to live a holy life in Christ through the life-changing power of the Holy Spirit and how doing so produced the 'fruit' of that spirit.

In contrast to Paul, who was a man of wealth, a highly educated speaker and scholar of prominent social standing as a Pharisee in the Jewish culture, Peter was a poor, rough and rowdy Jewish fisherman with a temper (See John 18: 10-1). By examining Peter's life following Jesus in his own strength, we can see how greatly the Holy Spirit impacted him after Jesus' death, resurrection, ascension, and the impartation of the Holy Spirit, which came to reside in Peter after these events occurred.

Peter follows Jesus in his own strength:

Peter pledges undying loyalty to Jesus (SEE Matthew 26: 33, 35)	Peter denies he even knows Jesus three times (SEE John 18: 15-18, 25-27)
Peter walks on water at Jesus' behest (SEE Matthew 14: 25-29)	Peter sinks in the storm requiring Jesus to save him (See Matthew 14: 30-31)
Peter boldly proclaims Jesus is the Son of God and Jesus states he will be the 'rock' upon which his church shall be built	Peter is rebuked by Jesus for insisting he would not die on the cross (SEE Matthew 16: 21-23)

(SEE Matthew 16: 13-19)	
Peter attacks a man in the Garden of Gethsemane in defense of Jesus' arrest	Peter calls down curses on himself while denying he ever even knew Jesus after his arrest
(SEE Matthew 26: 50-56)	(SEE Matthew 26: 69-75)

Indeed, Peter recognized his own shortcomings (SEE Luke 22: 62) and by all accounts, hid in fear (SEE John 20: 19) and went back to fishing (SEE John 21: 3) after Jesus' death. Thankfully, Jesus didn't leave Peter there. He restored him by steadfastly loving him right where he was and by helping Peter to forgive himself (SEE John 21: 15-17). Jesus anointed Peter to be the "fisher of men" (SEE Mark 1: 17) he originally called him to be through the power of the Holy Spirit (SEE Acts 4: 7-12).

After Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit (SEE Acts 2: 1-3) his service reflected the change from 'doing work for Jesus' in his own strength with very inconsistent results to 'doing work in Jesus with God's strength through the Holy Spirit's empowerment.

Read the following scriptures and jot down what Peter accomplished through Holy Spirit transformation, within being made manifest in his life and work in Jesus':

Acts 2: 14-41: \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 3:1- 10: \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 4: 1-22: \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 5: 12-16: \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 9: 36- 42: \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 10: 9- 48: \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 12: 1-17: \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 12: 5-17: \_\_\_\_\_

.. added because you just can't do this or 'reap' this result without the Holy Spirit 😊

Peter, like Paul, faced persecution, torture, imprisonment and threat of death for heeding the Holy Spirit throughout his life. Both men were eventually executed for their faith in Christ Jesus and both led lives worthy of the calling they received (SEE Romans 12: 1-2)

We can learn a lot about the work of the Holy Spirit by examining their lives (SEE: <https://christiancelebrities.net/apostle-peter-vs-apostle-paul/> ), particularly how each man's totally disparate life experiences and characters were transformed and used to advance the Kingdom of God. The link above depicting a table of Paul and Peter's lives side by side is a comprehensive and informative one, but it should be noted that these men were not 'celebrities' by God's standards. They were followers of Christ who spent their lives heeding the gift of the holy spirit within which was given to them.

### **Read: Bible, Book of 1 Corinthians 3: 3- 9 (Paul)**

In Paul's letter to church leaders in Corinth who are squabbling over whom they 'follow' he used Jesus' word picture on how natural growth occurred and how spiritual life in him was to be achieved in a similar manner (SEE John 15: 1-10). Why do you think Paul used these words to solidify to the Corinthians what their speech, attitude and behavior should be as Christ followers (SEE 1 Corinthians 3: 3- 9):

How does Paul describe himself and Apollos (v 5)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What role does Paul ascribe to himself and Apollos (v 6)? \_\_\_\_\_

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To whom does Paul ascribe spiritual growth (v 6- 7)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What does Paul tell the Corinthians in regard to what constitutes true, mature 'service to God' (v 8- 9)?

**v 8:** 'co-workers' in God's role? \_\_\_\_\_

**v 8:** 'co-workers' in God's service expectation? \_\_\_\_\_

**v 9:** 'co-workers' in God's service product? \_\_\_\_\_

Paul urged the inner transformation of the Holy Spirit, likening it to being God's 'field.' He also urged Christ's followers to become 'co-workers' in God's 'field' through this same spirit.

## Reflections

Review the NT verses in the table on pages 122-123. Identify the impact of the Holy Spirit on your own inward transformation, then reflect on how this transformation produces outward 'fruit' in your own personal and professional life. \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

Has the Lord ever called you in a vision (review Acts 9: 10)? \_\_\_\_\_

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The definition of a vision can be a supernatural appearance that conveys a revelation, such as in a dream or trance. It can also be defined as a thought, concept or object formed by the imagination or an unusual competence in discernment or perception; intelligent foresight.

When the Lord has spoken to you via the Holy Spirit through scripture, prayer, others or situations in life, how do you respond (review Acts 9: 10)?

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Why did you think you responded in this way? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you feel that the direction given via the Holy Spirit to you, either personally or professionally, is specific or vague? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why do you think that is? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever felt either personally or professionally, from a purely human perspective the Lord tell you to "go" and "do" something you felt frightening or dangerous in some way (review Acts 9: 13-14)?

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Was what you were told to "go" and "do" either personally or professionally from a purely Godly perspective truly something to be feared or dangerous in any way (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever felt the need to tell the Lord why his direction for your personal or professional life did not make human sense (review Acts 9: 13-14)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why do you think you felt compelled to do so? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever "gone" and "done" what the Lord told you to do either personally or professionally even when you did not fully comprehend God's ultimate purpose (review Acts 9: 17-19)? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, what was the result? \_\_\_\_\_

If not, why didn't you? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

What can you anticipate happening as a direct result of your obedience when you follow the Lord's direction for your personal and professional life (review Acts 9: 20-22)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you view difficulties, challenges, trials, temptations or suffering in either your personal or professional life as indicators that you are not in God's will or that you in some way must have misunderstood the Holy Spirit's leading in your life (review Acts 9: 18, 20-22 & 23-30)? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

Is Peter's attitude and behavior following Jesus prior to being indwelt with the Holy Spirit something you can identify with personally or professionally (review table on page 126)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever experienced either personally or professionally 'suffering' akin to what Paul and Peter experienced for your faith in Christ or adherence to the Holy Spirit's leading (review Acts 9: 18)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What do you think your personal and professional attitude and behavior should be as a 'follower of Christ' (review 1 Corinthians 3: 6-9)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What do you think constitutes true, mature 'service to God' in your personal and professional roles, service expectations and product (results) as a 'follower of Christ' (review 1 Corinthians 3: 8-9)? \_\_\_\_\_

If you've read the select NT verses presented here and Acts 9: 10-30 (Paul & Ananias) before, is there an insight you gleaned here that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?) \_\_\_\_\_

Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

### **Learning to Float with My Mouth Closed**

... and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east. . . . As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he measured off another thousand, but now it was a river that I could not cross, because the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in—a river that no one could cross...  
— Ezekiel 47:1— 3-6 (NIV)

**Read, Bible, Book of John 15: 1-10 and select New Testament verses (Jesus is the Vine, Philip & the Ethiopian Eunuch, Simeon & Anna, and Jesus Tempted in the Wilderness)**



“Forget the former things;  
do not dwell on the past.  
See, I am doing a new thing!  
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?  
I am making a way in the wilderness  
and streams in the wasteland. ~Isaiah 43: 18-19

Springs are often depicted as symbols of renewal and divine blessings. In the Psalms, God is praised for turning the desert into pools of water and parched ground into flowing springs. This imagery reflects God's ability to bring life and transformation to barren places. In prophetic literature, springs are often associated with the outpouring of God's Spirit and the renewal of his people. Isaiah speaks of God guiding his people and making their bones strong, likening them to a well-watered garden and an unfailing spring (Isaiah 58:11). This imagery conveys the sustaining and life-giving presence of God among his people (SEE [https://biblehub.com/topical/r/rivers,\\_fountains,\\_pools,\\_and\\_springs.htm](https://biblehub.com/topical/r/rivers,_fountains,_pools,_and_springs.htm) )

### **Read: Bible, Book of John 15: 1- 10 (Jesus is the Vine)**

Before Jesus' crucifixion, death and resurrection, he leaves his disciples with these parting words, a word picture of how life in him was to be achieved. What do you think Jesus meant when he stated (v 1- 4):

**v 1:** I (Jesus) am \_\_\_\_\_

my father (God) is \_\_\_\_\_

**v 2:** He (God) \_\_\_\_\_

**v 3- 4:** You (disciples of Jesus) \_\_\_\_\_

The metaphoric use of words such as 'vine', 'gardener', 'branch', 'fruit' and 'prune' in Jesus' words used to describe how his followers would grow spiritually in him, much the same way that fruit is produced through the natural growth process. Also note that the 'work' is done through the vine and by the gardener.

What did Jesus state was the role of the 'branch' in producing the 'fruit' of the spirit (v 3-4)? \_\_\_\_\_

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According to Jesus, what is the only way to 'bear much fruit' (v 5)? \_\_\_\_\_

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According to Jesus, what can you do 'apart from him' (v 5)? \_\_\_\_\_

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According to Jesus, what will happen to 'branches' that 'do not remain in him' (v 6)?

\_\_\_\_\_ (SEE Matthew 5: 30)

According to Jesus, why should 'his words' remain within his disciples (v 7-8)?

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Jesus goes on in this chapter to command his chosen (John 15: 16) disciples to love each other as he loves them (John 15: 9-15) and to warn his followers to expect hatred and persecution from those who do not know God nor wish to be reconciled with him (John 15: 18-26)

Jesus ends the chapter stating that (John 15: 26- 27):

**v 27:** When \_\_\_\_\_

Whom I will \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_

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He will \_\_\_\_\_

**v 27:** And you also must \_\_\_\_\_

Note again how the role of the disciple of Christ is NOT to speak for Jesus but rather to testify about him and only in agreement with what the Spirit of truth testifies. The 'work' is to be done through the Holy Spirit. Our role is to remain in Jesus (v 5), remain in his love by keeping his commands (v 10), and to allow him to bear his spiritual 'fruit' in and through us, fruit that will last (v 16). This can only be done through the gift of God's Holy Spirit working out our salvation (through our Lord Jesus Christ) in us. SEE Philippians 2: 12-13.

As human beings, we tend to want to do and speak for Jesus in our own strength because we don't truly understand the spiritual things of God. In many respects, they are in direct opposition to material things of which we are very well

acquainted. Indeed, it was not until the Holy Spirit was imparted upon those who walked with Jesus and were closest to him that they were able to even begin to grasp that he had not come to restore the earthly kingdom of Israel but rather to save the people of this world (SEE John 3: 16) and ready them for the ultimate coming of his heavenly kingdom (SEE John 3: 3 and Revelation 11: 15, Revelation 21: 1-2).

Jesus gave us the key to fruitful spiritual living when he explained our role as a 'branch.' The role of a branch is to be in a continual relationship with the vine in order to grow and to submit oneself entirely to the Gardner's tender loving care in the planting, protecting, watering, pruning and even cutting off limbs (SEE Matthew 5: 30) that are non-productive if necessary to produce abundant (plentiful), ripe (fully mature) 'fruit.' Below are just a few scriptural examples of how, as 'co-workers' with Christ in God's 'garden', we are to most fully live out this amazing truth.

**Read: Bible Book of Acts 8: 26-40 (Philip & the Ethiopian Eunuch)**

Philip the evangelist was one of the seven men who were appointed to help administer food to needy gentile widows (SEE Acts 6: 1-6). He preached in Samaria (Acts 8: 4-13) and along the Mediterranean coast as far as Caesarea (Acts 8: 40). He also had 4 unmarried daughters with the gift of prophecy (Acts 21: 8-9).

When an angel of the Lord told Philip to go down to a specific desert road (v 26) what did he do and who did he meet (v 27)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Did Philip ask the angel why he was being sent there? \_\_\_\_\_

Did Philip give the angel reasons (personally or circumstantially) why he could not or should not go? \_\_\_\_\_

What word was used to describe how Philip got to the chariot (v 30)? \_\_\_\_\_

We are told that on his way, Philip met an 'important treasury official,' a Eunuch who was traveling this road home because he had gone to Jerusalem to worship (v 27). What was the Eunuch reading in his chariot on his way home (v 28)?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

A Eunuch in ancient times was a castrated man who was employed as an attendant of rich men's harems.

What did the holy spirit tell Philip to do next (v 29)? \_\_\_\_\_

Did Philip question, balk, argue or ignore the holy spirit's prompting? \_\_\_\_\_

What did Philip do (v 30)? \_\_\_\_\_

Was what Philip asked the Ethiopian Eunuch prompted by the holy spirit? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think Philip felt compelled to ask the Eunuch this question (v 32- 33)?  
\_\_\_\_\_

What did the Eunuch ask Philip (v 34)? \_\_\_\_\_

Philip began with this scripture and told this man the 'good news' about Jesus (v 35). As they travelled together, the Eunuch expressed to Philip a desire to be baptized (v 36-37). He ordered the chariot to stop, and he and Philip went into the water (v 38).

What happened next (v 39-40)?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Though being 'suddenly taken away' by the holy spirit is a rare occurrence in God's Word it happened to Enoch in Genesis 5: 24, to Elijah in Kings 2: 11-12, to the disciples' boat in John 6: 20-21 and will happen to the church when Jesus returns (SEE 1 Thessalonians 4: 15-18)

### **Read: Bible, Book of Luke 1: 29-56 (Elizabeth & Mary)**

Mary, the mother of our Lord was visited by an angel who foretold her role in the birth of the Messiah (Luke 1: 26-33). When Mary asked "how" this would happen to her (v 34); not questioning biologically if it could happen or explaining to the angel all of the reasons why it shouldn't happen, but "how," what did the angel tell her (v 35)?  
\_\_\_\_\_

The angel also told Mary what (v 36-37)?  
\_\_\_\_\_

What was Mary's response to this revelation (v 38)? \_\_\_\_\_

Did Mary, who was a virgin and engaged to be married, have reason to balk at this Word of God? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think Mary responded the way she did? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think Mary went to see Elizabeth (v 39-40)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What happened to Elizabeth when she heard Mary's greeting (v 41) and why? \_\_\_\_\_

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What did Elizabeth do next (v 42-45) and why? \_\_\_\_\_

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Upon whom did Mary's response to Elizabeth focus (v 46-56)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What do you think prompted Mary to respond to her cousin this way? \_\_\_\_\_

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Where can all the descriptions of God that Mary used to praise and worship him be found? \_\_\_\_\_

(SEE 1 Samuel 2: 1-10, Job 22: 29, Psalm 107:9, Psalm 118: 16-17, Proverbs 30: 5-6)

### **Read: Bible, Book of Luke 2: 25-38 (Simeon & Anna)**

What does the Bible say about Simeon?

**v 26:** he was \_\_\_\_\_

he was \_\_\_\_\_

and \_\_\_\_\_

What had been revealed to Simeon by the holy spirit (v 27)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why did Simeon go into the temple courts on the day Mary and Joseph were dedicating their newborn son, Jesus (v 28)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What did Simeon do (v 29)? \_\_\_\_\_

What did Simeon say (v 29- 32)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What do you think prompted Simeon to say these words about Jesus to his parents and everyone present in the temple court? \_\_\_\_\_

Mary and Joseph marveled at what was said about Jesus by Simeon (v 33).

What else did Simeon say to Mary (v 34)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What do you think Simeon meant when he said, “the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed, and a sword will pierce your own soul too” to Mary (v 35)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Who was Anna (v 37- 38)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

This woman also came upon Mary and Joseph while they were in the Temple Court. What did Anna say and do (v 38)? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think Anna also said this about Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(SEE Deuteronomy 17:6, Deuteronomy 19: 15, John 5: 31-47, 2 Corinthians 13: 1)

### **Read: Bible, Book of Matthew 4: 1-11 (Jesus Tempted in the Wilderness)**

Who led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil (v 1)? \_\_\_\_\_

What did Jesus do in the wilderness, for how long, and what was the result (v 2)?

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Fasting, depriving oneself of food or anything else, is done to take one's eyes off of the things of this world to focus completely on God. For this reason, the practice is often linked with prayer. It is a way to demonstrate to God and us that we are serious about our relationship with him. It is designed to draw us closer to God.

Jesus demonstrated for us in this exchange between the Holy Spirit and the devil's evil spirit exactly how we are to respond when tempted:

<b>Scripture verse</b>	<b><i>Earthly</i> temptation (satan)</b>	<b><i>Spiritual</i> response (Jesus)</b>
v 3		
v 4		(SEE Deuteronomy 8: 3)
v 5- 6	(SEE Psalm 91: 11-12)	
v 7		(SEE Deuteronomy 6: 16)
v 8- 9		
v 10		(SEE Deuteronomy 6: 13)

- In the first temptation, Satan appeals to man's hunger as well as challenges Jesus to prove his deity through a miraculous sign and wonder in feeding it.
- In the second temptation, Satan appeals to man's pride. He also uses the Word of God to tempt Jesus into proving his deity through a miraculous sign and wonder. Why do you think Satan used the Word of God in this instance?

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Jesus' Word of God response was short and to the point. It was also scriptural.

- The third temptation appeals to a man's lust of the eyes. Were the world and all the splendor therein really Satan's to give Jesus (v 8- 9)? \_\_\_\_\_

(SEE Isaiah 13: 13-14, Genesis 1: 28-30)

What happened next (v 11)? \_\_\_\_\_

How can we effectively resist temptation in the same way Jesus did? \_\_\_\_\_

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Oswald Chambers said, "I have called you friends" (John 15:15). If we are friends of Jesus, we will deliberately and carefully lay down our lives for him. It is difficult—and thank God it is! Salvation is easy for us because it cost God so much. It is only right that putting salvation to work in our lives should be difficult. God saves us and gives us the Holy Spirit, then asks us to work out what he has worked in. He asks us to remain loyal to him, though everything around us would make us disloyal. Remain loyal to your friend and always remember that his honor is at stake in your life. (SEE <https://utmost.org/modern-classic/what-do-you-make-of-this/> )

### Reflections

Do you see your personal and professional life as a 'branch' of God's tree meant to produce mature, abundant 'fruit' via connection with the vine (Jesus) through the gift of the Holy Spirit within (review John 15: 3-5)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Does the Word of God remain within you (review John 15: 7-8)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you 'testify about Jesus' in your speech, attitude and behavior personally and professionally (review John 15: 26-27)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

When prompted by the Holy Spirit personally or professionally do you 'run' to act or do you question, balk, argue or ignore it (review Acts 8: 26- 30)? \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_ If you do act do you crawl, walk or 'run' (why)? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you intentional in your personal and professional spiritual walk in seeking out or being watchful for opportunities to serve or meet the spiritual needs of others (review Acts 8: 33- 35)? \_\_\_\_\_

Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

When the Holy Spirit prompts you personally or professionally to act do you find yourself asking questions rooted in disbelief (either in yourself or God) or trying to explain why acting on God's Word should not be done (review Luke 1: 34-37)?

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Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you be able to respond the way Mary did in the future (review Luke 1: 38)? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever personally or professionally experienced a quickening of God's Holy Spirit within which led you to either speak up or praise and worship God (review Luke 1: 41-46)? \_\_\_\_\_

Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever prayed or worshipped using scriptural descriptions of God found in the Bible? \_\_\_\_\_

Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

Has the Holy Spirit ever 'revealed' anything to you either personally or professionally (review Luke 2: 26)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever felt the Holy Spirit within you so strongly as to 'move' you toward a place, some word or action that furthered testifying to or joining in God's Kingdom 'work' (review Luke 2: 27, 29-32)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever 'marveled' at what God had done for you through his son and abiding gift of the Holy Spirit in your personal and professional life (review Luke 2: 33)?

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Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you, like Mary also felt 'a sword pierce your own soul' as a result of God's incredible spiritual gift (review Luke 2: 34-35)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Did the experience draw you closer in a relationship to God or not? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you, like Anna, experienced disappointment, loss or poverty yet felt compelled by the Holy Spirit to 'never leave' God's presence (relationship) but rather to fast, pray, worship him continually, and joyfully witness to others about the Messiah (review 2 Luke 37-38)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Fasting, depriving oneself of food or anything else, is done in order to take one's eyes off of the things of this world to focus completely on God. For this reason, the practice is often linked with prayer. It is a way to demonstrate to God and us that we are serious about our relationship with him. It is designed to draw us closer to God.

Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

Has the Holy Spirit ever led you into a 'wilderness' (temptation)? \_\_\_\_\_

What did you do and why? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever 'fasted and prayed' (why or why not)? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

Has 'the tempter' ever appealed to your fleshly 'huners', pride or desire for worldly splendor at home or at work (review Matthew 4: 3-8)? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you resist such spiritual attacks? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever used God's Word to resist a spiritual attack (review Matthew 4: 4, 7 & 10)? \_\_\_\_\_

Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

Has the devil ever tried to use God's Word to either tempt you or make you think God needs to prove himself to you through miraculous signs and wonders (review Matthew 4: 3, 5-6)? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you resist such spiritual attacks? \_\_\_\_\_

How might you do better in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

What can you anticipate happening when your response to personal or professional spiritual attacks are based on God's Word, short and to the point (review Matthew 4: 10-11)? \_\_\_\_\_

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If you've read John 15: 1-10 (Jesus is the Vine) and the select New Testament verses: Philip & the Ethiopian Eunuch, Elizabeth & Mary, Anna & Simeon, Jesus Tempted in the Wilderness presented here before, is there an insight you gleaned that you may not have seen before? (If so, what?) \_\_\_\_\_

Pause and pray about any insights gleaned for yourself or others.

It seems fitting to end this study with scripture from the book of Ezekiel:

I will show the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Sovereign Lord, when I am proved holy through you before their eyes. For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. Then you will live in the land I gave your ancestors; you will be my people, and I will be your God. ~ Ezekiel 36:23-28