

# LEARNING FROM

the ancient believers



WALK WITH GOD'S PEOPLE THROUGH GOD'S WORD

PART 1



# CONTENTS

Page No

Introduction	5
How to understand Biblical narrative	6
<b>Week 1: A faith-Commitment made by God</b>	
Personal Study	11
Group Discussion	16
<b>Week 2: Unwavering faith</b>	
Personal Study	21
Group Discussion	25
<b>Week 3: Faith amidst adversity</b>	
Personal Study	31
Group Discussion	35
<b>Week 4: I am who I am</b>	
Personal Study	41
Group Discussion	45
<b>Week 5: I want more, show me Your glory!</b>	
Personal Study	49
Group Discussion	54

<b>Week 6: The Judges (Deborah, Gideon and Samson)</b>	
Personal Study	59
Group Discussion	63
<b>Week 7: Faith and Dedication (Naomi, Ruth and Boaz)</b>	
Personal Study	69
Group Discussion	73
<b>Week 8: Obedience vs Disobedience (Samuel and Saul)</b>	
Personal Study	79
Group Discussion	83
<b>Week 9: David, a man after God's own heart</b>	
Personal Study	89
Group Discussion	94
Resources	99

# INTRODUCTION

People often argue that the Old Testament is only stories and therefore it is not applicable to the lives of believers today. However, there is no cut-off between the Old Testament and the New Testament. When Jesus came to this earth, there was only the Old Testament from which Jesus read, studied, and then taught, preached, and healed throughout the land of Israel. History cannot be separated. The Word of God is the history of His Plan for Salvation from Genesis to Revelation.

By studying the stories of the ancient believers, as we find them written in the Old Testament, we will be able to learn important lessons from their lives. By studying the stories of a number of biblical characters, we can identify the breaking points in their lives. Not everyone has had the same experiences, everyone's path is unique. Some of these people's lives are so broken, that everything seems to be destroyed. And then God intervenes and changes their circumstances into a growth opportunity.

God does not speak to everyone in the same way, yet He speaks to everyone. We trust that this study will help you to understand the breaking points in your life and how to change your life to follow God's ultimate plan for you.

***Soli Deo Gloria***

## HOW TO UNDERSTAND BIBLICAL NARRATIVE

A narrative is a message that tells the particulars of an act or occurrence or course of events. Biblical narratives are historical narratives with more emphasis on information. It records what actually have happened, not necessarily what should have happened or what ought to happen every time. Many of the characters in them are far from perfect and their actions aren't too.

The first seventeen books of the Old Testament (Genesis to Esther) are basically narratives. In these narratives, we find both dramatic history as well as conversations. Most narratives (stories) have plots. The plot is the way in which the story develops and serves to keep the interest of the reader. This helps us to understand the significant events and help us to understand the message intended by this story.

There are three keys essential to understanding the message of biblical narrative:

1. The content of the story: You need to read the full story. It is only by reading the whole story that you can find the message that the author intended.
2. Identify different parts of the story: By identifying the introduction, the plot, the solution, and the outcome,

you will be able to understand the different aspects of the story.

3. Now you can draw your conclusions on the basis of the story's content.

In combining these three steps with the SOAP Bible study method, you should be able to identify the absolutes that were meant for the people of the Old Testament AND be able to apply those absolutes to your life.

It is always helpful to use a notebook in which you can journal what you have learned from the Word of God.





# LEARNING FROM

the ancient believer

## Week 1

# A Faith-Commitment Made by God

### Memory Verse:

*Do not be afraid... I am your shield, your very great reward.*

*Genesis 15:1b*

WALK WITH GOD'S PEOPLE THROUGH GOD'S WORD



## **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:**

When we walk with God's people through His Word, there is no better example of a man of God than Abraham, the father of all believers. God chooses people - normal people - with an address, a history and a lifestyle for His plan with the world. Abraham was not someone special, "out of this world." Abraham was just an ordinary man, walking with God. But that is what set him apart and opened the door for God to deal with him. This normal person is moved by God and God began a journey with him.

*It began with* THE CALL OF Abraham,  
*was followed by* GOD'S PROMISE / COMMITMENT,  
*came to effect through* ABRAHAM'S OBEDIENCE  
and it *resulted in* life filled with GOD's BLESSING.

God gave no securities, no detail directions or end address - only a distant destiny. This was a calling into an unknown and in humanly terms unsure future for him and his whole household. God asked of Abraham - 'Give up all your securities and in turn I only give you a promise'.

Right from the word “Go” Abraham had to depend on only ONE security - Gods WORD. Which means it could also be anyone of us: anyone who has a living relationship with the Living God can hear His voice and thus be called into action and lifechanging service to God! Because God works with people. Normal people. Like us!

## **PERSONAL STUDY**

**Read the following Scripture during the week:**

Genesis 12

Genesis 15 & 16

Genesis 17

Genesis 18:1-15

- Use the “SOAP” principle below to help you to better understand what happened in the life of Abraham.
- Read the Scriptures with patience and pay close attention to details.
- Compare other Bible translations with your translation of choice.
- As we study different stories throughout the weeks, you may find that the space provided is not enough. Therefore, it may be helpful to use a notebook to journal what you have learned.

**Scripture:** (Read the piece of Scripture and write down the following: List the main characters in this story. What is the plot (problem) of this story? What is the solution to the problem? What is the main lesson learnt in this story?)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Observation:** (What do you observe about the passage? About the characters, events, and claims being made? What did you find interesting about the Scripture? What did you learn?)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

.....  
.....  
.....

**Application:** (How can you apply this passage to your life? What challenges or encouragements does it have to offer?)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Prayer** (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

## **Additional Questions to help you understand better:**

1. How did God call Abraham? What was the implications of God's calling?
2. What was the covenant that God made with Abraham? WHO was the Initiator of the covenant? What was the first and most important requirement to adhere to the agreement? What were the promises God undertook to warrant?
3. What was the sign that God prescribed as part of keeping the covenant, and to whom was it applicable?

# GROUP DISCUSSION

## Prayer

### Memory verse:

*Do not be afraid... I am your shield, your very great reward.*

*Genesis 15:1b*

### Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

### Scripture Reading:

Genesis 15:7-21 and Genesis 17:1-27



## Discussion questions

Read Genesis 15: 1-5: What surprises you the most about this God-moment in Abraham's life? God speaks to his followers in different ways - which ways did He use here?

---

---

---

Read Genesis 15:6 and compare it with Hebrews 11:6. These are two pivotal Bible verses. What do you learn from God's Word?

---

---

The only faith that is recognized as faith and makes a difference, is the faith that takes God on His Word. That is the only faith that pleases God and that God can use.

Read Genesis 17:1 and 3. Who was the Initiator of the covenant? What was the first and most important requirement to adhere to the agreement?

---

---

Read Genesis 17:2, 4-8 and 19-21. What were God's promises?

---

---

---

---

Read Genesis 17:9-14. What was the sign that God prescribed as part of keeping the covenant, and to whom was it applicable?

---

---

Is the covenant still applicable to believers today? How does it affect your faith life?

---

---

---

**Close in prayer**

# LEARNING FROM

the ancient believers

# Week 2

## Unwavering faith

### Memory Verse:

*God himself will provide the lam for the ... offering.*

*Genesis 22:8a*

WALK WITH GOD'S PEOPLE THROUGH GOD'S WORD



## **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:**

Anyone who acquires knowledge or masters a skill or a challenge, gets tested. Every person who has a relationship with God will be tested, because according to John, *sin* is that attitude and action that spoils a good relationship with God or makes such a relationship impossible.

God had invested 25 years in building the faith and character of Abraham - whom He had chosen to be the ancestor of His chosen people. Now it was the time to test the quality of his Faith/Character. And what a brutal test - zooming in on his soft spot, his OWN BLOOD. Genesis chapter 22 is an account of Abraham's actions, written for the church to learn from.

## **PERSONAL STUDY**

**Read the following Scripture during the week:**

Genesis 21

Genesis 22

Genesis 23

Genesis 24

Genesis 25: 1-11

- Use the “SOAP” principle below to help you to better understand what happened in the life of Abraham.
- Read the Scriptures with patience and pay close attention to details.
- Compare other Bible translations with your translation of choice. Use your notebook for the different stories.

**Scripture:** (Read the piece of Scripture and write down the following: List the main characters in this story. What is the plot (problem) of this story? What is the solution to the problem? What is the main lesson learnt in this story?)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Observation:** (What do you observe about the passage? About the characters, events, and claims being made?)

What did you find interesting about the Scripture? What did you learn?)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Application:** (How can you apply this passage to your life? What challenges or encouragements does it have to offer?)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

.....  
.....

**Prayer** (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....



# GROUP DISCUSSION

## Prayer

## Memory verse:

*God himself will provide the lam for the ... offering.*

*Genesis 22:8a*

## Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

## Scripture Reading:

Genesis 22:1-19 and Hebrews 11:1, 17-19

## Discussion questions

Compare Genesis 17:19 and 21 and Genesis 22:2 and describe the test that Abraham was given.

---

---

How did Abraham react?

---

---

Those were ancient times. They could not just start the car, hook the trailer, go to Bunnings and off they go. Write down what you think went into preparing to journey very far in those days (especially without knowing how long) in order to go and perform such a specific task?

---

---

Read Genesis 22:7-12. Abraham needed time alone with his son, and Isaac needed answers from his father. Can you imagine what went through their minds? It must have been very hard! Can you see how Abraham guide his son through a difficult and unfair situation on how to hold on to faith alone? Write down your assumptions of how they might have felt. What strikes you of Abraham's UNWAVERING FAITH?

---

---

Compare Genesis 22:12b and Hebrews 11:6b. Write God's reply and acknowledgement of Abraham's devotion in your own words, and try to describe what it means to FEAR God (to please God).

---

---

Read Hebrews 11:17-19. What made it possible for Abraham to pass this test?

---

---

Read Hebrews 11:1,2,6. What is faith?

---

---

Abraham was not the only father who had to look His Son in the eye when he could not provide another outcome. Compare the many similarities found in Genesis 22:5-8 and Matthew 26:36-39 and especially pay attention to Genesis 22:7 and Matthew 26:39b - each of them beginning with the form of address: "(My) Father" or in their

language: “Abba”. Discuss the importance of these similarities to your faith.

---

---

---

---

**Close in prayer**

# LEARNING FROM

the ancient believers

## Week 3

# Faith amidst adversity

### Memory Verse:

*So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God.*

*Genesis 45:8a*

WALK WITH GOD'S PEOPLE THROUGH GOD'S WORD



## **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:**

Joseph is the fourth generation – the great-grandson of Abraham. His story differs from that of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, because God never spoke to Joseph directly and angels never spoke to him either. He received dreams and was given the interpretation of dreams.

When we look at the story of Joseph, we see that it progresses from him being the favourite son, being sold to slaves, being in jail to being the chief in the ministry of the Pharaoh and saving his families' lives.

In his book, *Unlocking the Bible*, David Pawson says: *The story of Joseph is the vital link, explaining how Jacob and his family migrated down to Egypt. It links us with the next part of the Bible. When the Bible tells us about Joseph, it is remarkable to see that nothing is told about his weaknesses... There is no trace whatever of a wrong attitude or reaction in Joseph's character... Joseph is a man who seems to have no concern for himself, but a deep concern for everyone else... Joseph becomes what is known as a "foreshadowing" of Jesus. It is as if God is showing us in the life of Joseph what he is going to do with his own son.*

# PERSONAL STUDY

Read the following Scripture during the week:

- Genesis 37
- Genesis 39
- Genesis 40
- Genesis 41
- Genesis 42-45

- Use the “SOAP” principle below to help you to better understand what happened in the life of Joseph.
- Read the Scriptures with patience and pay close attention to details.
- Compare other Bible translations with your translation of choice. Use your notebook for the different stories.

**Scripture:** (Read the piece of Scripture and write down the following: List the main characters in this story. What is the plot (problem) of this story? What is the solution to the problem? What is the main lesson learnt in this story?)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Observation:** (What do you observe about the passage? About the characters, events, and claims being made? What did you find interesting about the Scripture? What did you learn?)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Application:** (How can you apply this passage to your life? What challenges or encouragements does it have to offer?)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Prayer** (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

# GROUP DISCUSSION

## Prayer

### Memory verse:

*So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God.*

*Genesis 45:8a*

### Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

### Scripture Reading:

Genesis 45:1-28

## Discussion questions

During the week you read through all the chapters regarding Joseph's life. What were your first impressions of Joseph? Discuss in the group.

---

---

---

---

From favourite son to naked in a pit - and then carried away as a slave. From slave to mansion to prison – to chief of the ministry of Pharaoh. Each of these events brought a turning point in Joseph's life. Have bad circumstances brought about a significant change of course in your life? What was the role that the Lord played in this?

---

---

---

---

What difference can the Lord's presence make in a person's deepest need? Why do we not always experience it as Joseph did? Have you ever experienced that your connection with the Lord made difficult circumstances bearable? Discuss in the group.

---

---

---

---

Read Genesis 45:5 and 8. These are the core texts of the whole story. What led Joseph to come to this conclusion?

---

---

---

---

Can you think of your own circumstances as the preparation for better things? Are you willing to acknowledge God's hand in your circumstances? Explain your answer.

---

---

---

---

As a group, try to find ways the story of Joseph reminds you of Jesus.

---

---

---

**Close in prayer**



# LEARNING FROM

the ancient believe

# Week 4

## I am who I am

### Memory Verse:

*God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.' "*

*Exodus 3:14*

WALK WITH GOD'S PEOPLE THROUGH GOD'S WORD





## **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:**

When we talk about the attributes of God, we are trying to answer questions like, Who is God, What is God like, and What kind of God is He? An attribute of God is something true about him. While fully comprehending who God is impossible for us as limited beings, God does make Himself known in a variety of ways, and through what He reveals about Himself in his Word and in his creation, we can begin to wrap our minds around our awesome Creator and God.

God is unlike anything or anyone we could ever know or imagine. He is one of a kind, unique and without comparison. Even describing him with mere words truly falls short of capturing who he is – our words simply cannot do justice to describe our Holy God.

## **PERSONAL STUDY**

**Read Exodus 3 and 4 over the next two days**

- Use the “SOAP” principle below to help you to better understand what the reason for this passage is and to whom it is directed.

- Read the Scriptures with patience and pay close attention to details.
- Compare other Bible translations with your translation of choice. Use your notebook for the different stories passages of Scripture.

**Scripture:** (Read the piece of Scripture and write down the following: List the main characters in this story. What is the plot (problem) of this story? What is the solution to the problem? What is the main lesson learnt in this story?)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Observation:** (What do you observe about the passage? About the characters, events, and claims being made? What did you find interesting about the Scripture? What did you learn?)

---

---

---

---

---

**Application:** (How can you apply this passage to your life? What challenges or encouragements does it have to offer?)

---

---

---

---

---

**Prayer** (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

---

---

---

---

---

Read as many as possible of the following references during the rest of the week.

- James 1:17
- Hebrews 13:8 and Malachi 3:6
- Colossians 1:17 and Psalm 147:5
- Job 11:7-11

Isaiah 46:9-10

Psalm 139:7-10

Romans 11:33

2 Timothy 2:13

Psalm 34:8

Romans 9:15-16 and Psalm 145:8

1 John 4:7-8

Revelation 4:8

Habakkuk 3:4

- List the attributes of God.
- In one or two sentences, write a summary about who God is. Take time this week to worship Him for who He is.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# GROUP DISCUSSION

## Prayer

### Memory verse:

*God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.' "*

*Exodus 3:14*

### Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

### Scripture Reading:

Exodus 3:1-15 and Job 11:7-11

## Discussion questions

Read Exodus 3:1-6. Who is the Angel of God? What do think was significant about God telling Moses to remove his sandals? What does it mean to you to worship a holy God?

---

---

Read Exodus 3:7-12. What do you learn from God in your situations in life? List the things you have learned about God's presence on our life's situations.

---

---

---

Exodus 3:13-15. What is in a name? What can this name of God teach us about God's character?

---

---

In closing read Job 11:7-11 and worship God.

**Close in prayer**

# Week **5**

## I want more, show me Your Glory

### **Memory Verse:**

*And the Lord said to Moses, "I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name."  
Then Moses said, "Now show me your glory."*

*Exodus 33:17-18*





## **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

Moses is mentioned more often in the New Testament than any other Old Testament figure. For Christians, Moses is often a symbol of God's law, as reinforced and set forth in the teachings of Jesus. Moses is often called the mediator of the Old Covenant. As a type of Christ, he was the mediator between the Jews and the God who freed them from the land of slavery.

Like Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant through His blood, Moses had a very intimate relationship with God. This week we will look at the consequences of such a relationship with God.

## **PERSONAL STUDY**

**Read Exodus 33 and 34: over the next three days**

- Use the “SOAP” principle below to help you to better understand what the reason for this passage is and to whom it is directed.
- Read the Scriptures with patience and pay close attention to details.
- Compare other Bible translations with your translation of choice.

**Scripture:** (Read the piece of Scripture and write down the following: List the main characters in this story. What is the plot (problem) of this story? What is the solution to the problem? What is the main lesson learnt in this story?)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Observation:** (What do you observe about the passage? About the characters, events, and claims being made? What did you find interesting about the Scripture? What did you learn?)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Application:** (How can you apply this passage to your life? What challenges or encouragements does it have to offer?)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Prayer** (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

.....  
.....  
.....

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Read the following references during the rest of the week:**

- Psalm 104:1-4
- Romans 1:20
- Exodus 15:11 and 16:7
- Exodus 24:9-11 and 40:34-38
- 2 Chronicles 5:13-14 and 7:1-3
- Revelations 4 and 5

- In one or two sentences, write a summary about Moses and his relationship with God. Take time this week to spend more time with God and ask Him to reveal Himself to you more.
- With reference to the Scriptures above describe God’s glory in a sentence or two.

.....  
.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

# GROUP DISCUSSION

## Prayer

### Memory verse:

*And the Lord said to Moses, "I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name." Then Moses said, "Now show me your glory."*

*Exodus 33:17-18*

### Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

### Scripture Reading:

Exodus 33:7-22 and Exodus 34:5-10 and 28-35

## Discussion questions

Read Exodus 33:7-11. What did the people see when Moses met with the Lord? What do you think it means that 'the Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks with his friends'?

---

---

---

Read Exodus 33:12-22. What do verses 15 and 16 say about the Christian life? What do you think Moses really wanted to see when he asked God to show him his glory? What would God's glory look like?

---

---

---

Exodus 34:5-7. How does God describe himself in verses 6 and 7? Which of these is most precious to you? If you were describing God to someone who doesn't know him, how would you do that?

---

---

---

Exodus 34:28-35. How did spending an extended period of time in the God's presents affect Moses' appearance? Can you describe any changes that have happened in your life as a result of spending time with the Lord?

---

---

---

**Close in prayer**



# LEARNING FROM

the ancient believe

## Week **6**

# The Judges

## (Deborah, Gideon, Samson)

### Memory Verse:

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart  
and lean not on your own understanding;  
in all your ways submit to him,  
and he will make your paths straight.*

*Proverbs 3:5-6*

WALK WITH GOD'S PEOPLE THROUGH GOD'S WORD



## **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:**

After Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, Joshua led them into the promised land. However, when Joshua and his generation died, so did the Israelites' knowledge of God. They began worshipping other gods. So the Lord handed them over to their enemies and used the surrounding nations to test them, seeing whether they would walk in his ways as their ancestors did.

Enter a series of tribal leaders called judges. God used these men and women to save the Israelites from their enemies and lead them back to Him. We should not understand the word *judges* in the sense of the court system. The judges were "trouble-solvers", who saved the people of God from themselves and others. God is the only judge, sorting out His people's problems, by using these heroes. The Book of Judges records this dark chapter in ancient Jewish history, noting each judge's deeds and the circumstances surrounding them.

# PERSONAL STUDY

**Read the following scripture during the week.**

Judges 4-5 – The story of Deborah

Judges 6- 8 - The story of Gideon

Judges 13 -16 – The story of Samson

- Use the “SOAP” principle below to help you to better understand the absolutes that is taught by these stories.
- Use the same principles on each story separately.

**Scripture:** (Read the piece of Scripture and write down the following: List the main characters in this story. What is the plot (problem) of this story? What is the solution to the problem? What is the main lesson learnt in this story?)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Observation:** (Which areas of the character's relationship with God is strong, which areas are being developed as the story unfolds?)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Note man's character and response to God's grace and goodness, justice and judgement.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

.....  
.....

**Application:** Which areas of your life and faith are similar to those of the judges?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Prayer** (Respond in prayer to what God has shown you and spoken to you about from the above.)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

# GROUP DISCUSSION

## Prayer

### Memory verse:

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart  
and lean not on your own understanding;  
in all your ways submit to him,  
and he will make your paths straight.*

*Proverbs 3:5-6*

### Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

### Scripture Reading:

Judges 6:1-7:25

## Discussion questions

Read Judges 6:1-6. Give a brief description of Israel's position. What gave rise to the religious decline? Did the Lord let Israel down or did Israel let the Lord down? Discuss.

---

---

---

---

There is a saying, despair leads to prayer. Is it wrong to pray when you are in distress? Discuss.

---

---

Read Judges 6:11-16. Discuss the statement: The angel at the winepress brought a breaking point to Gideon's life. Can you perhaps testify to a similar experience in difficult circumstances? Share with the group.

---

---

---

---

Read Judges 6:16-24. Gideon asked the Lord for a sign. Don't you think it was a bit premature, as he still doubted



the visitor's identity? Why was Gideon anxious to find out that he was dealing with the Angel of the Lord?

---

---

---

Read Judges 6:25-32. What was the deepest cause of Israel's misery and how is it proven in Gideon's parental home?

---

---

Why is Gideon afraid? Does human fear sometimes hold us back from making decisions about our own lives or those of our family?

---

---

Read Judges 7:1-12. The scene for a large-scale battle is set. Whose chances looked best on paper? What difference does the fact that the Spirit of the Lord took possession of Gideon make?

---

---

Our breaking point experiences are not always as drastic as those of Gideon, but nevertheless there are occasions when we know clearly that we are in the presence of the Lord. Share such moments from your life with the group.

---

---

**Close in prayer**

# LEARNING FROM

the ancient believe

## Week **7**

### **Faith and dedication (Naomi, Ruth and Boaz)**

**Memory Verse:**

*"The Lord be with you!"*

*"The Lord bless you!"*

*Ruth 2:4b*

WALK WITH GOD'S PEOPLE THROUGH GOD'S WORD



## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:

The kinsman-redeemer is a male relative who, according to various laws of the Old Testament, had the privilege or responsibility to act on behalf of a relative who was in trouble, danger, or need. The Hebrew term (*go el*) for kinsman-redeemer designates one who delivers or rescues or redeems property or a person. The kinsman who redeems or vindicates a relative is illustrated most clearly in the book of Ruth, where Boaz is the kinsman-redeemer.

The story of Ruth and Boaz begins when Ruth and her mother-in-law, Naomi, return to Bethlehem from Moab where they had been living. Naomi's husband and both sons, one the husband of Ruth, had died, leaving the women penniless and without a male protector. Upon arriving in Bethlehem, Naomi sends Ruth to glean in the fields of Boaz, a wealthy relative of Naomi to whom they, through a series of divinely appointed circumstances, appeal as their *go el*. Boaz agrees, willingly takes Ruth as his wife, and together they bear a son named Obed who became the grandfather of David, the forefather of Jesus.

# PERSONAL STUDY

**Read the following Scripture during the week:**

Judges 21:24-25 and Ruth 1

Ruth 2

Ruth 3

Ruth 4

Matthew 1 and Matthew 20:28

- Use the “SOAP” principle below to help you to better understand the story.

**Scripture:** (Describe Naomi’s situation in your own words. Write down the detail relating to the characters in chapter 1, who, when, where, why, how.)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Observation:** Looking back on the whole story, what stands out regarding the faith of Naomi, a Moabite and Ruth, a gentile? Now, reflect on why the genealogy is so important.

.....  
.....  
.....

How and why does this historical story end with Jesus. (Matthew 1, Matthew 20:28)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Observe the interaction between Naomi and Boaz and write down what this, reveals about their character.

.....  
.....  
.....

What was Boaz role in the whole story? How does this fit in with the role of the Messiah in the New Testament?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Application:** (How can you apply this passage to your life? What challenges or encouragements does it have to offer?)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Prayer** (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

.....

.....

.....

.....



# GROUP DISCUSSION

## Prayer

### Memory verse:

*“The Lord be with you!” “The Lord bless you!”*

Ruth 2:4b

### Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

### Scripture Reading:

Read the Scriptures during the Bible study.

## Discussion questions

Read Leviticus 19:9-10, 23:22 and Deuteronomy 24:19 and Ruth 2:2. What was one of the ways God provided for the poor under the law of Moses? Why did Ruth propose to glean in the grain fields?

---

---

---

Read Ruth 2:1-4. Who was Boaz? What sort of man did he reveal himself to be with his workers?

---

---

---

Read Ruth 2:5-16. What special kindness did Boaz show Ruth? What spirit does Ruth manifest in all of this?

---

---

Read Leviticus 25:23-25 and Deuteronomy 25:5-10. What was the role of the kinsman/redeemer?

---

---

Read Ruth 3:1-5. What did Naomi want to do for Ruth and how was this to be accomplished?

---

---

Read Ruth 3:6-11. What was Ruth requesting of Boaz by what she did at the threshing floor? What was it about Ruth that so impressed Boaz?

---

---

Read Ruth 4:1-12. What did Boaz agree to do before the elders and the people of the city?

---

---

Read Ruth 4:22 and Matthew 1:1-16. What well-known Bible character was descended from Boaz and Ruth? Who was their most important descendent?

---

---

In the New Testament, Christ is often regarded as an example of a kinsman-redeemer because, as our brother (Hebrews 2:11), He also redeems us because of our great need, one that only He can satisfy. As a group, compare

Boaz and Jesus as kinsman/redeemers and list the points of similarity there are.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Close in prayer**

# LEARNING FROM

the ancient scriptures

## Week 8

# Obedience vs Disobedience (Samuel and Saul)

### Memory Verse:

*Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams.*

1 Samuel 15:22

WALK WITH GOD'S PEOPLE THROUGH GOD'S WORD



## **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:**

The last public task that Samuel performed as a prophet is to anoint Saul as king. The people asked Samuel whether they can have a king, like the nations around them. They knew God is their king, but they wanted someone visible. Saul makes a good start as a king, defeating the Ammonites. However, it does not last very long.

Samuel's task was to relay the word of God to Saul, but Saul became arrogant and disobedient. He did not wait for Samuel on the battlefield, but conducted the sacrifice himself. When Samuel told Saul that the Lord commands him to wipe out the Amalekites, Saul spares the king. Samuel tells Saul that because he rejected the word of the Lord, God has rejected him as king. Ritual is no substitute for righteousness.

## **PERSONAL STUDY**

**Read the following Scripture during the week:**

1 Samuel 1:1-23

1 Samuel 1:24-2:21

1 Samuel 2:22-4:1

1 Samuel 9 – 10:16

1 Samuel 13:1-15

1 Samuel 15

- Use the “SOAP” principle below to help you to better understand the story.

**Scripture:** (Read the piece of Scripture and write down the following: List the main characters in this story. What is the plot (problem) of this story? What is the solution to the problem? What is the main lesson learnt in this story?)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Observation:** (What do you observe about the passage? About the characters, events, and claims being made? What did you find interesting about the Scripture? What did you learn?)



.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Application:** (How can you apply this passage to your life? What challenges or encouragements does it have to offer?)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Prayer** (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Special focus on 1 Samuel 13 and 15:**

1. Which instructions from the Lord did Samuel gave to Saul?
2. How did Saul follow the instructions of the Lord?
3. What was the outcome of Saul's disobedience?
4. What is the main lesson learnt in this story?

## **GROUP DISCUSSION**

### **Prayer**

#### **Memory verse:**

*Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams.*

*1 Samuel 15:22*

#### **Reflection:**

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

#### **Scripture Reading:**

1 Samuel 10:9 and 1 Samuel 13:1-15.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Read 1 Samuel 10:9. God changed Saul's heart to enable him to fulfil his mission. What is the role of Christians in leadership positions today? Is one a Christian first or a secular leader first? And how does being a leader present opportunity for God to work while also presenting huge challenges to one's faith?

---

---

---

---

How should we 'choose' which Christian leaders we 'should' follow or be influenced by (whether in church or in the secular world)? And how should this impact our personal call to follow Christ?

---

---

Read 1 Samuel 13:1-15. How did Saul disobey God's command? Why did Samuel call it rebellion?

---

---

---

---

What is the role of disobedience in your life and the lives of those around you? Is there a practise (ritualistic spiritual thinking) that we easily slip into or a temptation that is hard to avoid in terms of our belief in God or just in our daily life in the world? (e.g., we may think that we can manipulate God into doing our will by praying in a certain way (among other rituals), or we can participate in a common superstitious practise that is accepted by the world but has a negative effect on our faith). Discuss in the group.

---

---

---

---

---

Reflect on what you have learned from 1 Samuel 1-3. what do you see as key characteristics of the people who are called and empowered by God to do His work, and conversely the key flaws of those who God may have called but they failed to obey Him and so lost their opportunity to serve alongside God? Key people to look at are Hannah, Samuel, Eli, Eli's Sons

---

---

---

---

---

---

What is an area of your life that you need to (1) trust God in more, (2) be more obedient to His call on your life, (3) learn more from His wisdom, and (4) ask God for forgiveness?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Close in prayer**

# LEARNING FROM

the ancient believers

## Week **9**

# David: A Man After God's Own Heart

### Memory Verse:

*For I delight in your commands because I love them. I reach out for your commands, which I love, that I may meditate on your decrees.*

*Psalm 119:47–48*

WALK WITH GOD'S PEOPLE THROUGH GOD'S WORD





## **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:**

To understand why David was a man after God's own heart, we need to see what characteristics he had to qualify for such an exalted description. In the book of Acts, the apostle Paul speaks of God's feelings about King David: "After removing Saul, he made David their king. He testified concerning him: *'I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do'*" (Acts 13:22). David was considered a man after God's own heart because he did whatever God wanted him to do. An obvious question is how could God still call David a man after His own heart when David committed such terrible sins, including adultery and murder?

We learn much of David's character in the book of Psalms as he opened his life for all to examine. David's life was a portrait of success and failure, and the biblical record highlights the fact that David was far from perfect. But David's heart was pointed toward God. He had a deep desire to follow God's will and do "everything" God wanted him to do. He had absolute faith in God. Nowhere in Scripture is this point better illustrated than in 1 Samuel 17 where David as a young shepherd boy fearlessly slew the Philistine, Goliath. Shortly before the duel, we see direct evidence of David's faith when David says, "*The LORD*

*who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.”*

David was a man after God’s own heart because he demonstrated his faith and was committed to following the Lord. Yes, his faith was tested on a grand scale, and he failed at times. But after his sin he sought and received the Lord’s forgiveness. David loved God’s Law and sought to follow it exactly. As a man after God’s own heart, David is a role model for all of us.

## **PERSONAL STUDY**

### **Read the following Scripture during the week:**

1 Samuel 16-17 (Samuel Anoints David, David enters Saul’s service, David & Goliath)

Read 1 Samuel 18-19 (Saul Grows Fearful of David and His Growing Success & Renown, Saul Attempts to Kill David but he escapes)

Read 1 Samuel 24-26 (David Spares Saul’s Life, Samuel’s Death & Burial, David Spares Saul’s Life Again & Saul Blesses David)

Read 2 Samuel 1-2 (David Hears of Saul & Jonathan’s Deaths, David Laments, David is Anointed King of Judah, Tension Between the Houses of David & Saul)

Read 2 Samuel 7 (God’s Promise to David – The Davidic Covenant)

- Use the “SOAP” principle below to help you to better understand the story.

**Scripture:** (Read the piece of Scripture and write down the following: List the main characters in this story. What is the plot (problem) of this story? What is the solution to the problem? What is the main lesson learnt in this story?)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Observation:** (What do you observe about the passage? About the characters, events, and claims being made?)

What did you find interesting about the Scripture? What did you learn?)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Application:** (How can you apply this passage to your life? What challenges or encouragements does it have to offer?)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Prayer** (Based on your reflections, offer a prayer to God.)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

## **GROUP DISCUSSION**

### **Prayer**

#### **Memory verse:**

*For I delight in your commands because I love them. I reach out for your commands, which I love, that I may meditate on your decrees.*

*Psalm 119:47–48*

#### **Reflection:**

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

#### **Scripture Reading:**

2 Samuel 7 and Acts 13:22

## Discussion questions

Read Acts 13:22. Looking at the life of David, his godly qualities, and his well-known flaws, what can we learn about living as people after God's own heart? Does being a person after God's own heart mean that we must be perfect in our Christian discipline and/or character?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

How can we be imperfect yet forgiven sinners and grow into the likeness of Christ at the same time? How do we account for all our sins, even though we already have the Holy Spirit within us?

---

---

---

---

Read Psalm 5:7, Psalm 95:6-7 and Psalm 132:7-8. What can we learn from David about worship and intimacy with God? How can we learn to be like David in his reflective

nature while living in the hustling, bustling, non-stop world of today?

---

---

---

---

---

What can we learn about intimacy with God from David's failures and the times he turned away from Gods' call on his life?

---

---

---

---

---

Reflect on 2 Samuel 7 and God's Promise to David and his family. Not only did this promise (the Davidic Covenant) describe God's future providence over David's offspring, but it also foresaw the coming of Christ (a member of the house of David) and his taking up of the mantle of Saviour-King through His sacrifice on the cross and resurrection to new life. Jesus makes a similar promise to his followers (Matthew 28:20), that He will be with them (in Spirit) until the end of the age (the day when He returns). How does



this promise, like the one made to David, give you hope for not only our future in heaven to come but for every day between now and when Jesus returns?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Close in prayer**

## RESOURCES

Pawson, David. Unlocking the Bible, HarperCollins Publishers, London, 2015

Smit, Johan. Wanneer die lewe nuut begin, CUM Uitgewers, Kaapstad, 2011.

Smit, Johan. Abraham-Avontuur - NGKerk Uitgewers, Kaapstad, 1981

### SEVERAL RESOURCES FROM LOGOS:

- Die Bybellenium Eenvolume Kommentaar
- Warren W Wiersbe – Be obedient

Sean McLain, 'The Truly Good King', blog posted on 30th of March 2020, found online at: <https://gfcnj.com/blog/2020/03/30/a-word-from-grace-monday-edition-the-truly-good-king>

Steven J. Cole, 'A Heart After Gods Heart (1 Samuel 16 and 17)', posted on the 9th of September 2013, found online at: <https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-1-heart-after-god-s-heart-1-samuel-16-and-17>

WG Blaikie, 1888, "Commentary on 2 Samuel 7", from The Expositor's Bible Commentary, W Nicoll (ed.), found online at: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/teb/2-samuel-7.html>

ESV Global Study Bible, 'Global Message of 1 Samuel', found online at: <https://www.esv.org/resources/esv-global-study-bible/global-message-of-1-samuel>

ESV Global Study Bible, 'Introduction to 1 & 2 Samuel', found online at: <https://www.esv.org/resources/esv-global-study-bible/introduction-to-1-2-samuel/>

Matthew Henry, Commentary on the Whole Bible: 1 Samuel Chapter 15 <https://www.biblestudytools.com/1-samuel/15.html#>

John Gill, Exposition of the Bible Commentary, '1 Samuel 15:17-24', found online at: <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/1-samuel-15-17.html>

