

MEN'S AND WOMEN'S
BIBLE STUDY | SPRING 2022

• CHRIST IN THE • SHADOWS

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT



CHRIST
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

We have three recommended ways for engaging with "Christ in the Shadows": **dig in**, **go deeper**, and **deeper still**.

DIG IN

- If you are in a study group, join your group weekly to enjoy conversation, discuss the lesson, and talk through the study guide questions. If you are doing the study individually, work through the study guide questions at your own pace.
- Listen to or watch the teaching each week. The teaching is available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, SoundCloud, and YouTube. You can subscribe on any of those platforms or visit **christpres.org/group-resources**, where you can find all of the Bible study resources. You'll also receive a weekly email with a link to the teaching.

GO DEEPER

- Read weekly Scripture and go through the questions for personal application and study to deepen your dive into God's Word. Feel free to complete questions throughout the week or all in one sitting. If you are in a group, your group will discuss some of these questions each week.
- Read the Application Summary.

DEEPER STILL

- We recommend the book *The Unfolding Mystery* by Edmund P. Clowney as a companion to your study, or, *Seeing Jesus in the Old Testament Bible* study series by Nancy Guthrie.

CHRIST IN THE SHADOWS

AN INTRODUCTION

“How could a God that is good allow evil to enter the world?” It is a question those inside and outside the Christian faith have wrestled with for millennia. For Christians, the answer lies within the opening pages of the Bible, where we see exactly how and when the world went from good to broken. Genesis chapter 3 reveals to us the details of the crafty serpent—how he approached, deceived, and escorted Adam and Eve along the path to commit treason against their Maker.

And just like that, evil came into the world.

Why didn’t God stop it from happening? It’s a good question; it’s a fair question! And it may be a question that knows no resolution on this side of heaven. But one thing is sure, though evil entered the world, the great God, Creator, and Life-Giver *never left us without hope*. He provides the answer before we ask the question. On the heels of the fall, immediately after Adam and Eve take a bite from the forbidden fruit (Genesis 3:1-14), the Lord says to the serpent (Genesis 3:15):

¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

If you read this too quickly, you’ll miss it; this is the first pronouncement of the gospel, a promise of redemption that would come from the offspring of the woman—this is Jesus! The problem of evil and sin is as old as history itself, but God has never left us without a solution for evil.

It would take many more centuries for that solution to take on human flesh in the person of Jesus Christ, but the saints of the Old Testament looked forward to this solution just as the Church to this very day looks back to the solution. In other words, the person of Jesus Christ has been the answer for evil and sin in the Old Testament, the New Testament, and forever.

So when we read the pages of the Old Testament, we read the narrative of the Savior that is to come—no doubt, he is hidden—but he is there. The New Testament reveals that which the Old Testament keeps under a veil. Jesus said so himself:

In Luke 24, we read about some disciples on the road to Emmaus. These disciples are undoubtedly disappointed—the text tells us they are “looking sad” because they thought the recently crucified Jesus would be the Messiah. But, though they don’t realize it was him at the moment, the resurrected Jesus drew near to them and asked them about what they discussed. The disciples are astonished at the question and suggest that he must be the only one who isn’t talking about the events that took place over the last several days.

And then the miraculous happens; Jesus opens their eyes—not just to who it was standing before them—but he opens their eyes to *understand the Scriptures*. The text tells us in Luke 24:25-27:

²⁵ And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. [Emphasis mine]

Several verses later, in a similar transaction, when Jesus appears before more of his disciples, he quelled their fears as they touched his hands and side. And then again, he opened their eyes to the Scriptures, and he said (Luke 24:44-45):

*⁴⁴ . . . “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, **that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.**” ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures . . . [Emphasis mine]*

In other words, this is what Jesus is saying: “It’s all about me. Everything in the Scriptures is about me. The psalms, the prophets, the law, all of it. It’s all about me.” There isn’t a chapter, verse, or word in the Old Testament that doesn’t somehow, someway point us to Jesus. It may not always be obvious, but great reward comes with a bit of digging.

It’s our prayer, as you engage in this study, “Christ in the Shadows,” that you’ll get a taste of the joy the disciples knew when Jesus “opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.” We hope you will walk away knowing—unswervingly—that *only the God of the universe* could make a promise, quietly and subtly repeat this promise countless times across the centuries, then deliver that promise in the person of Jesus Christ.

A WORD ON OLD TESTAMENT TYPOLOGY

The Old Testament gives us types that foreshadow the New Testament fulfillment. A type is a form of analogy that is distinctive to the Bible. Like all analogies, a type combines identity and difference. David and Christ were both given kingly power and rule. In spite of the vast differences between David's royalty and Christ's, there are points of formal identity that make the comparison meaningful. Yet it is just this degree of difference that makes biblical types distinctive. The promises of God in the Bible do not offer a return to a golden age of the past. David's Son to come is not simply another David. Rather, He is so much greater that David can speak of Him as Lord (Ps. 110:1). — Edmund Clowney from *Discovering Christ in the Old Testament*

The Old Testament tells a story that only finds its completion in Jesus Christ. I did not see that Jesus is the offspring of the woman who will crush the head of the serpent. Jesus is the ark that protects the faithful remnant from judgment. Jesus is the fulfillment of all the blessings promised to Abraham. He is the greater Isaac, the beloved Son of his Father, offered as a sacrifice, who was not spared from the knife. Jesus is the stairway Jacob saw in his dream on which God comes down to earth. Jesus is the greater Joseph, the One whose suffering put him in place to become Savior to all who come to him for food amid the famine of this world.

Jesus is the reality to which all of the sacrifices and offerings and festivals point. He is the fulfillment of the Tabernacle and Temple, making his home among us. He is the greater Moses who brings his people out of slavery to sin, the greater Israel who is not disobedient in the wilderness, the greater son of David whose Kingdom will last forever, the greater Solomon who is the Prince of Peace. He is the weeping prophet, the greater Jonah who runs toward sinners rather than away from them, the Bridegroom, the Branch, Isaiah's child who is born." — Nancy Guthrie from *The One Year Book of Discovering Jesus in the Old Testament*

WEEK ONE

THE ROCK OF AGES (EXODUS 33:12–23)

Read the following passages. Ask the Holy Spirit to draw your attention to what God would have you see and jot down what comes to mind in the **Notes** section (below the Scripture).

EXODUS 33:12-23 (ESV)

¹² Moses said to the Lord, "See, you say to me, 'Bring up this people,' but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.' ¹³ Now therefore, if I have found favor in your sight, please show me now your ways, that I may know you in order to find favor in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people." ¹⁴ And he said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." ¹⁵ And he said to him, "If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here. ¹⁶ For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people? Is it not in your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and your people, from every other people on the face of the earth?"

¹⁷ And the Lord said to Moses, "This very thing that you have spoken I will do, for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name." ¹⁸ Moses said, "Please show me your glory." ¹⁹ And he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name 'The Lord.' And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. ²⁰ But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live." ²¹ And the Lord said, "Behold, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock, ²² and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by. ²³ Then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back, but my face shall not be seen."

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY AND REFLECTION

1. On what basis is Moses requesting to see the glory of the Lord? Is it simply for his own experience, or is he appealing on the basis of something else? Why is seeing God so important to Moses?
2. Exodus 33:19 is quoted in Romans 9:15, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." Based on this passage's context in Romans, why does God create a way to accommodate Moses' request? Is it because of Moses' goodness or something else?
3. Why do you suppose God could not allow Moses to see his unveiled glory? What does this tell you about the nature of God and the nature of man?

²⁵ Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through [Jesus], since he always lives to make intercession for them. (Hebrews 7:25)

4. The rock that shields Moses from the full glory of God is what ultimately preserves him yet still allows him to draw near to God. Consider the verse above from Hebrews above; how does the rock in Exodus 33 tell us something of Jesus?

⁸ Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." ⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves." (John 14:8-11)

¹⁸ And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:18)

5. Consider the verses from John and 2 Corinthians above. Will Christians, one day, be able to behold the face of God? According to these verses, how will this be possible?

APPLICATION SUMMARY

By the time we reach Exodus 33, Moses has seen the mighty hand of God move in numerous miraculous ways. From his call in the burning bush (Exodus 3), the ten plagues of Egypt (Exodus 7–11), the crossing of the Red Sea (Exodus 14), manna falling from heaven (Exodus 16), and the Lord delivering to him the law on the tablets (Exodus 20), what would be off-limits to Moses? Yet, in verse 18 of Exodus 33, Moses makes an audacious request of the Lord, “Please show me your glory.” In other words, Moses, the covenant representative of God’s people, is asking to see the face of God—to be in his unveiled presence. What makes this request nothing short of impossible is a matter of holiness. Quite simply, the Lord is holy, holy, holy, and Moses is not; he is a sinful person tainted by the effects of the fall. Holiness cannot intersect with sinfulness by the very nature of what holiness is.

Nevertheless, God creates a means for Moses to be drawn near to God. The Lord uses a rock as a barrier—or an intermediary—to bridge the gap between holiness and sinfulness. In so doing, the Lord comes near to Moses and shares a reflection of his glory, all the while preserving his own holiness and sparing the life of Moses. In the same way, Christ is the mediator who stands between us and God. Our sinfulness would keep us from the presence of the Lord, but because of the person and work of Jesus, we too can dwell with the Lord forever.

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What qualities of Christ do you see reflected in this story?
2. Describe a time when you were doing something for God, when you were confident that God’s presence was with you?
3. How is Christ’s presence with you similar to God’s presence to Moses and the Israelites in Exodus?
4. What are you facing in the future which you only want to face with God’s active presence?

WEEK TWO

AN INHERITANCE FOR THE WEAK (2 SAMUEL 9:1–13)

Read the following passages. Ask the Holy Spirit to draw your attention to what God would have you see and jot down what comes to mind in the **Notes** section (below the Scripture).

2 SAMUEL 9:1–13 (ESV)

¹ And David said, "Is there still anyone left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?"
² Now there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba, and they called him to David. And the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" And he said, "I am your servant." ³ And the king said, "Is there not still someone of the house of Saul, that I may show the kindness of God to him?" Ziba said to the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan; he is crippled in his feet." ⁴ The king said to him, "Where is he?" And Ziba said to the king, "He is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar." ⁵ Then King David sent and brought him from the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar. ⁶ And Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, son of Saul, came to David and fell on his face and paid homage. And David said, "Mephibosheth!" And he answered, "Behold, I am your servant." ⁷ And David said to him, "Do not fear, for I will show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan, and I will restore to you all the land of Saul your father, and you shall eat at my table always." ⁸ And he paid homage and said, "What is your servant, that you should show regard for a dead dog such as I?"

⁹ Then the king called Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, "All that belonged to Saul and to all his house I have given to your master's grandson. ¹⁰ And you and your sons and your servants shall till the land for him and shall bring in the produce, that your master's grandson may have bread to eat. But Mephibosheth your master's grandson shall always eat at my table." Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants. ¹¹ Then Ziba said to the king, "According to all that my lord the king commands his servant, so will your servant do." So Mephibosheth ate at David's table, like one of the king's sons. ¹² And Mephibosheth had a young son, whose name was Mica. And all who lived in Ziba's house became Mephibosheth's servants. ¹³ So Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, for he ate always at the king's table. Now he was lame in both his feet.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY AND REFLECTION

1. Briefly retell the story in your own words. What stands out to you about each of the key people in this story? (David, Mephibosheth, Ziba)

¹⁴ If I am still alive, show me the steadfast love of the Lord, that I may not die; ¹⁵ and do not cut off your steadfast love from my house forever, when the Lord cuts off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth." ¹⁶ And Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, "May the Lord take vengeance on David's enemies." ¹⁷ And Jonathan made David swear again by his love for him, for he loved him as he loved his own soul. (1 Samuel 20:14-17)

2. Based on the verse above, what promise did David make to Jonathan? How was that promise fulfilled in 2 Samuel 9?
3. David gave Mephibosheth an income-producing property which would ensure wealth for his family for generations, as well as a seat at the king's table. It would have been more expected for David to put Mephibosheth, the remaining relative of King Saul, to death. Why did David offer such kindness to Mephibosheth? What had Mephibosheth done to receive such lavish kindness from King David?
4. Where do you see a mirror of God's love for his people in David's care for Mephibosheth?

5. Reread the passage and underline the word “kindness” every time it appears. David wants to offer Jonathan’s son the “kindness of God.” What do you think of when you read the “kindness of God”? How have you experienced the kindness of God in your life?

⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Ephesians 2:4-9)

6. Read Ephesians 2:4–9 above. What is God’s gift to us? How is it described?

APPLICATION SUMMARY

The story of King David and the lame son of Jonathan is one of the most beautiful stories in Scripture. The powerful king with every reason to shun (or kill) Mephibosheth, the remaining relative of his enemy King Saul, instead uses his power and influence to ensure the flourishing of Mephibosheth and his family forever.

David had made a covenant promise to his friend Jonathan, the son of King Saul. And because of that, he shows incredible kindness to Mephibosheth. This story shows us one man showing the “kindness of the Lord,” but it also points us to the greatest kindness of God—the gift of Jesus. Nancy Guthrie writes, “So it is with those toward whom God shows his kindness. God rescues us from our shame, not because of what we’ve done, but based on his covenant with Christ made before the foundations of the world, wherein he promised to extend mercy to all who belonged to his ‘house.’ We could not come to him on our own, yet he invited us and brought us in. And he lavishes on us an inheritance and a seat at his table.”

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What qualities of Christ do you see in this story?
2. Who in your life are you needing to show grace and kindness to like David showed to Mephibosheth?
3. How does this story of David and Mephibosheth point us to Jesus?

WEEK THREE

THE BETRAYED, EXALTED BROTHER (GENESIS 37, 45:1-15)

Read through both versions of these passages several times, noting words, concepts, and ideas that stand out to you. Ask the Holy Spirit to draw your attention to what God would have you see, and jot down what comes to mind in the **Notes** section (below the Scripture).

GENESIS 37:2-8; 18-28 (ESV)

² These are the generations of Jacob.

Joseph, being seventeen years old, was pasturing the flock with his brothers. He was a boy with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives. And Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father. ³ Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his sons, because he was the son of his old age. And he made him a robe of many colors. ⁴ But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peacefully to him.

⁵ Now Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers they hated him even more. ⁶ He said to them, "Hear this dream that I have dreamed: ⁷ Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold, my sheaf arose and stood upright. And behold, your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf." ⁸ His brothers said to him, "Are you indeed to reign over us? Or are you indeed to rule over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.

¹⁸ They saw him from afar, and before he came near to them they conspired against him to kill him. ¹⁹ They said to one another, "Here comes this dreamer. ²⁰ Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits. Then we will say that a fierce animal has devoured him, and we will see what will become of his dreams." ²¹ But when Reuben heard it, he rescued him out of their hands, saying, "Let us not take his life." ²² And Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood; throw him into this pit here in the wilderness, but do not lay a hand on him"—that he might rescue him out of their hand to restore him to his father. ²³ So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the robe of many colors that he wore. ²⁴ And they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.

²⁵ Then they sat down to eat. And looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing gum, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. ²⁶ Then Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? ²⁷ Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother, our own flesh." And his brothers listened to him. ²⁸ Then Midianite traders passed by. And they drew Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. They took Joseph to Egypt.

GENESIS 45:1-15 (ESV)

¹ Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him. He cried, "Make everyone go out from me." So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. ² And he wept aloud, so that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. ³ And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence.

⁴ So Joseph said to his brothers, "Come near to me, please." And they came near. And he said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵ And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶ For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. ⁷ And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. ⁸ So it was not you who sent me here, but God.

He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. ⁹ Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; do not tarry. ¹⁰ You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, and your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. ¹¹ There I will provide for you, for there are yet five years of famine to come, so that you and your household, and all that you have, do not come to poverty.' ¹² And now your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth that speaks to you. ¹³ You must tell my father of all my honor in Egypt, and of all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here." ¹⁴ Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept upon his neck. ¹⁵ And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them. After that his brothers talked with him.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY AND REFLECTION

1. If you are familiar with the story of Joseph, what have historically been your biggest takeaways? How might those be different from the primary point of the story?
2. All Joseph had ever known was being the beloved son in his father's home. Then one day, he is mercilessly betrayed by his own brothers and becomes a slave and prisoner in a foreign land. How does this foreshadow the life of Jesus? (Further Reading: Mark 14:18–20)
3. Multiple times throughout the story of Joseph, we read that the Lord was with Joseph and made his efforts succeed. Why is this significant?

4. When Joseph's brothers bowed before him in Egypt, he surely remembered the dream he had many years before—the dream that set the entire chain of events in motion. How does this scene provide a clear picture of God's sovereignty?
5. Later in the story, Joseph says to his brothers, "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today" (Gen. 50:20). What about this reminds you of Jesus?
6. Can you think of a difficult or painful situation in your life that has tempted you to despair or question God's goodness to you? What was that experience like and what did you learn about yourself and God through it?

APPLICATION SUMMARY

For many of us, Joseph is taught as a moral example—to work hard, have integrity, suffer well, and forgive those who hurt us. While those are certainly good and godly traits, to focus on them is to miss the main point. When the story of Joseph was told to its Jewish audience, it was to prepare their hearts for the one who was to come. Like Joseph, Jesus was rejected and betrayed by his Jewish brothers. Like Joseph, Jesus left the safety and privilege of his father's home and suffered as a servant in a foreign land. Like Joseph, Jesus was exalted to the right hand of the king, and one day, everyone will bow before him in reverence and submission. Just as God worked through Joseph to save many people from physical death, he has worked through Jesus to save many more from spiritual death. From the moment Joseph is introduced, we see the sovereign hand of God ordaining the events of his life to accomplish greater purposes than he could have imagined. Not only does this offer us encouragement in the face of our own suffering, but we see that God was foretelling of his saving work long before Jesus arrived on earth.

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What qualities of Christ do you see in this story?
2. How was Joseph's suffering turned into honor?
3. What can we learn about suffering through Joseph's story? How have you dealt with suffering in your own life?
4. How does knowing that suffering is not in vain (like in Joseph's story) encourage you when you are going through challenging circumstances?

WEEK FOUR

THE KINSMAN REDEEMER (RUTH 4:1-17)

Read the following passages. Ask the Holy Spirit to draw your attention to what God would have you see and jot down what comes to mind in the **Notes** section (below the Scripture).

RUTH 4:1-17 (ESV)

¹Now Boaz had gone up to the gate and sat down there. And behold, the redeemer, of whom Boaz had spoken, came by. So Boaz said, "Turn aside, friend; sit down here." And he turned aside and sat down. ²And he took ten men of the elders of the city and said, "Sit down here." So they sat down. ³Then he said to the redeemer, "Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that belonged to our relative Elimelech. ⁴So I thought I would tell you of it and say, 'Buy it in the presence of those sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people.' If you will redeem it, redeem it. But if you will not, tell me, that I may know, for there is no one besides you to redeem it, and I come after you." And he said, "I will redeem it." ⁵Then Boaz said, "The day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the widow of the dead, in order to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance." ⁶Then the redeemer said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it."

⁷Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging: to confirm a transaction, the one drew off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was the manner of attesting in Israel. ⁸So when the redeemer said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself," he drew off his sandal. ⁹Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses this day that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and to Mahlon. ¹⁰Also Ruth the Moabite, the widow of Mahlon, I have bought to be my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his native place. You are witnesses this day." ¹¹Then all the people who were at the gate and the elders said, "We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman, who is coming into your house, like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you act worthily in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem, ¹²and may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring that the LORD will give you by this young woman."

Ruth and Boaz Marry

¹³So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. And he went in to her, and the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son. ¹⁴Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel! ¹⁵He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age, for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has given birth to him."

¹⁶Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her lap and became his nurse. ¹⁷And the women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi." They named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY AND REFLECTION

1. What questions came to mind as you read? Note them here. There are many ancient customs, practices, and laws at play in this story. Make a list or underline the formal actions Boaz takes. Why do you think these details are such an important part of this story?
2. How did the unnamed kinsman initially react to Boaz's information? What changed his mind?

Additional reading: Deuteronomy 25:5–10

3. How is God's faithfulness to Naomi and Ruth on display in this story? Look specifically at verses 11–12 and 13–14.
4. Ruth and Naomi were dependent on Boaz to redeem them and to provide an inheritance for them. While this story stands as a real historical account, it also shows us a picture of the sacrifice required for redemption. What did Boaz sacrifice for Ruth and Naomi's redemption?
5. How are we dependent on God for redemption? What kind of inheritance does he provide for us? What was the sacrifice required for our redemption?

APPLICATION SUMMARY

After Ruth and her mother-in-law Naomi returned to Naomi's home country of Moab, Naomi decided to sell the land belonging to her dead husband Elimelech. When Boaz approaches their nearest kinsman and tells him the land and Ruth must be redeemed, the kinsman defers. And so Boaz acquires the land and marries Ruth, giving Elimelech an heir through his former daughter-in-law Ruth. Boaz essentially takes on Elimelech's land and through his daughter-in-law, fathers a son to carry on Elimelech's name and land. The other kinsman was unwilling to potentially give up his own lineage. Boaz was then rewarded for his sacrifice by fathering Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of King David in the lineage of Christ.

There are many Old Testament cultural technicalities and legal references in this story, but focusing on the narrative helps us see how the marriage of Boaz and Ruth is an archetype for Christ and his bride, the Church. Boaz sacrificed his own glory and inheritance to redeem a family and ensure their flourishing. Christ does the same for us; giving up his life for ours, securing us a future in the family of God forever.

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What qualities of Christ do you see in this story?
2. How has God sustained you when you have gone through a difficult time?
3. We see God's providence in the life of Ruth. In what areas of your life have you experienced God's providence? Are there areas in your life where you struggle to trust in His providence? If so, explain.
4. How does Boaz help us to understand the concept of redemption? How does he help us to understand God's redemption of His people through Christ?

WEEK FIVE

THE TRUE AND BETTER ADAM (GENESIS 3:1-7; ROMANS 5:12-19)

Read through both versions of these passages several times, noting words, concepts, and ideas that stand out to you. Ask the Holy Spirit to draw your attention to what God would have you see, and jot down what comes to mind in the **Notes** section (below the Scripture).

GENESIS 3:1-7 (ESV)

¹Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" ²And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, ³but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" ⁴But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. ⁵For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." ⁶So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. ⁷Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

ROMANS 5:12-19 (ESV)

¹²Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned— ¹³for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. ¹⁴Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

¹⁵But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. ¹⁶And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. ¹⁷For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

¹⁸Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. ¹⁹For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY AND REFLECTION

1. What stands out to you in these passages? Is anything particularly helpful or confusing?
 2. The New Testament refers to Jesus as the “last” or “second” Adam (1 Cor. 15:45-49).
 3. Adam and Eve had known only God’s goodness, but they chose to believe the lie that he was unreasonable, restrictive and untrustworthy. In what ways are we tempted to believe the same lies about God?
 4. Read Luke 4:1 - 13. Just as he tempted Adam and Eve in the Garden, Satan tempts Jesus in the wilderness. How does Jesus respond to and counter Satan’s lies?
- “Whereas Adam and Eve allowed Satan to question, deny, add to, and twist the word of God, Jesus overcame temptation by the power of God’s sure and certain, unchanging, unimpeachable Word.” Nancy Guthrie, The Promised One, p. 79*
5. The first disobedience happened in the Garden of Eden, and the ultimate obedience happened in the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus surrendered his will to the Father (Matt. 26:39). By doing this, how did Jesus gain for us even more than Adam lost?

6. How does the perfect obedience of Jesus free us to obey God even in difficult circumstances?

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Over the past few weeks, we've looked at Old Testament figures who foreshadow the person and work of Jesus. While some connections are harder to draw, the New Testament highlights the specific ways Adam points to Jesus (Rom. 5, 1 Cor. 15). Adam lived in a perfect world, in perfect harmony with God, with his every need met, and still he disobeyed. Jesus lived in a broken world, amidst extremely difficult circumstances and intense suffering, yet he trusted God and obeyed him fully. Adam was the man of earth; Jesus is the man of heaven. Where Adam brought sin and death, Jesus brought righteousness and life. Where Adam caused separation from God, Jesus restored fellowship with God. Jesus obeyed in all the ways Adam did not, and in all the ways we cannot, and thus secured our redemption. For all these reasons and more, Jesus is and will always be the "true and better Adam."

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What parallels do you see between the story of Adam and Jesus?
2. How do you respond to temptation? What can you learn from the way Adam responded to Satan in the garden and the way Jesus responded to Satan in the desert?
3. Was the idea of Jesus being the "true and better Adam" new to you? What new ideas or thoughts did you have about Jesus because of today's lesson?
4. Are there things you are trying to do to earn God's favor? If so, explain. How can we help each other lean into God's grace and redemption for our lives?

WEEK SIX

THE LAMB CAUGHT IN THE THICKET (GENESIS 22:1-14)

Read the following passages. Ask the Holy Spirit to draw your attention to what God would have you see and jot down what comes to mind in the **Notes** section (below the Scripture).

GENESIS 22:1-14 (ESV)

¹ After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." ² He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." ³ So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. ⁴ On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar. ⁵ Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you." ⁶ And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together. ⁷ And Isaac said to his father Abraham, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." He said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" ⁸ Abraham said, "God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." So they went both of them together.

⁹ When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰ Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. ¹¹ But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." ¹² He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." ¹³ And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ So Abraham called the name of that place, "The Lord will provide"; as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided."

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY AND REFLECTION

1. What are some things that strike you about this passage? After reading this passage, what might be your primary takeaway from this account?
2. What does this account teach us about the sacrifices we bring to God? How do our sacrifices compare to how God provides for us? If God ultimately provides the sacrifice, of what value is the sacrifice we bring?

³² He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? (Romans 8:32)

3. Consider the verse from Romans above. How do Abraham's actions foreshadow the posture of God toward his own Son, Jesus Christ?

² Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:2)

4. In what ways does Isaac foreshadow Jesus Christ? Do you see any similarities in Isaac that we would ultimately see in the sacrifice of Jesus?

29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! (John 1:29)

5. Abraham told his son, Isaac, "God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering." How did God do so with Abraham and Isaac in this instance, and how does this point us forward to Jesus?

6. Do you see a comparison between the ram with his thorns caught in the thicket and Jesus? Was Jesus ever "caught in a thicket"?

APPLICATION SUMMARY

As early as Genesis 12, we can read of God's promise to Abraham that he would bless all the families of the earth through his family. Again, in Genesis 15, the Lord tells Abraham that his offspring would be as numerous as the stars in the sky. Then, in Genesis 21, we learn that Abraham is one hundred years old when his wife finally gives birth to their first son, Isaac. At last, Abraham has an heir that would fulfill God's promise. However, in the very next chapter, we read what might seem like an unthinkable request from the Lord, "Take your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering . . ." Why would the Lord ask Abraham to sacrifice the only son who—presumably—the Lord will use to bless all the families of the earth? This passage serves to show us (among other things) that God seldom operates predictably. Abraham proceeded to take the necessary steps to sacrifice Isaac, telling him, "God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." One way or another, Abraham knew that God would keep his word and preserve his son. As he commences the sacrifice, the angel of the Lord, with great haste, stops Abraham before he sacrifices his son and commends him for his faith. As Abraham lifts his eyes, he finds that God provides a sacrificial substitute—a ram caught in the thicket that Abraham and Isaac would use as their burnt offering.

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What qualities of Christ do you see in this story?
2. In Genesis 22:1 Moses the narrator says that God was testing Abraham. How do you think Abraham's faith was strengthened by this test?
3. Can you share a time when you think God has tested you? How did you respond and what did it teach you about God or yourself?
4. What does Abraham teach you about God the Father? What does this mean for you as a child of God?

WEEK SEVEN

MY LIFE FOR YOURS (ESTHER 4:11-17)

Read the following passages. Ask the Holy Spirit to draw your attention to what God would have you see and jot down what comes to mind in the Notes section (below the Scripture).

ESTHER 4:11-17 (ESV)

¹¹ "All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that if any man or woman goes to the king inside the inner court without being called, there is but one law—to be put to death, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter so that he may live. But as for me, I have not been called to come in to the king these thirty days."

¹² And they told Mordecai what Esther had said. ¹³ Then Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, "Do not think to yourself that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews. ¹⁴ For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" ¹⁵ Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai, ¹⁶ "Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my young women will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish." ¹⁷ Mordecai then went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY AND REFLECTION

1. What are some things that strike you about this passage? After reading this passage, what might be your primary takeaway from this account?
2. Similar to Esther, how is Jesus an unlikely king? What are the traits that Jesus has that we would not expect to find in the king of Kings?
3. What is the central message we find in Mordecai's statement to Esther, "For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish"? What does this tell us about the way God operates?

⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (Philippians 2:5-8)

4. Consider the verse from Philippians above. Paul is speaking here of the mind of Christ. How do Esther's actions reflect this very mindset? Detail some similarities.

³⁴ Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.—Romans 8:34

¹ My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. (1 John 2:1)

²⁵ *Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost[b] those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. (Hebrews 7:25)*

5. In the verses above, we read that—even right this moment—we have a Mediator who intercedes and advocates for us before the Father. Are you able to see similarities between Esther’s actions and what Christ is doing for us right now?

¹³ *Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. (John 15:13)*

6. How are Esther’s actions a foreshadowing of Christ’s according to the verse from John above? How did Esther lay down her life? How did Christ lay down his?

APPLICATION SUMMARY

The book of Esther is peculiar. At least in one way, it isn’t like any other book of the Bible. It is the only book of the Scriptures that has no mention of God in it—at all. So why would a book like this be included in the canon of Scripture? Perhaps it’s this: even when we think God isn’t there, he is. He is never absent, even when we don’t see him. Esther was a young girl who found herself in a unique position. She is an orphan and a foreigner—not the type of person whom anyone would expect to rise to the level of royalty. She is a Hebrew, so how did she become the queen to the king of Persia? Only by the hand of God could such a series of events occur to make this possible. And by God’s hand, Esther finds herself in the court of the king pleading for the lives of her fellow Hebrews who were facing destruction. Esther is risking her life approaching the king; to approach the king without an invitation yielded a death sentence to the one approaching (yes, even for the queen!).

Nevertheless, Esther would set her life aside—“if I perish, I perish”—and make her plea before the king, begging that he would extend her and her people mercy. The king grants her mercy, and the Hebrew people are preserved. Even when we believe God isn’t there, he is; he is in the details, and he works through the most unlikely people to accomplish his purposes. Even when we believe God isn’t there, he is; he is in the details, and he works through the most unlikely people to accomplish his purposes.

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What qualities of Christ do you see in this story?
2. Are there areas in your life where God might be calling you to sacrifice and step out in faith for the good of others? If so, share about your experience.
3. What lessons can you learn from Esther and Mordecai about being an active part in God’s providential care for His people?

WEEK EIGHT

THE RIGHTEOUS ONE WHO SUFFERS (JOB 1)

Read the following passages. Ask the Holy Spirit to draw your attention to what God would have you see and jot down what comes to mind in the **Notes** section (below the Scripture).

JOB 1:1–22 (ESV)

¹ There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil. ² There were born to him seven sons and three daughters. ³ He possessed 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 female donkeys, and very many servants, so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the east. ⁴ His sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each one on his day, and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. ⁵ And when the days of the feast had run their course, Job would send and consecrate them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, "It may be that my children have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts." Thus Job did continually.

Satan Allowed to Test Job

⁶ Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. ⁷ The LORD said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." ⁸ And the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?" ⁹ Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for no reason? ¹⁰ Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. ¹¹ But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face." ¹² And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

Satan Takes Job's Property and Children

¹³ Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, ¹⁴ and there came a messenger to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, ¹⁵ and the Sabeans fell upon them and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." ¹⁶ While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you." ¹⁷ While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, "The Chaldeans formed three groups and made a raid on the camels and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." ¹⁸ While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, ¹⁹ and behold, a great wind came across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people, and they are dead, and I alone have escaped to tell you."

²⁰ Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped. ²¹ And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

²² In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY AND REFLECTION

1. Summarize the story in your own words. What questions do you have? If you have studied or read the book of Job before, what do you think about when you think about Job?
2. How is Job described in this passage, specifically in verse 1? Why do you think its notable that Job is described this way?
3. What are some of the ways Job suffers in this chapter? If you know the story of Job, you can list some of the other ways he suffers later on. If not, you can read the Application Summary for additional details.
4. Jesus is a righteous, suffering Messiah. How is Job a type for Jesus?

Further Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:22

5. Does your picture of Jesus usually include his suffering? How does knowing our Savior suffered lead us into a deeper relationship with him?

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Job's story is devastatingly hard. We read of a good, honest man who is struck over and over again by unimaginable tragedy. He suffers deeply, yet holds on to God. Remarkably, Job's stubborn faith predates Jesus, the Messiah whose suffering guarantees our own forgiveness and resurrection, and our eternal life with God. But Job had no such assurance (at least, not at the beginning of his trials). Later in Job, he seems to know that he will one day be resurrected and healed (Job 19:26).

Job knew his redeemer lived (19:25), yet centuries later, Jesus would accomplish that work on the Cross. Job points us, in his life, actions, and words, to the true suffering Servant, Jesus. Through Jesus, we have hope through our own suffering and trials. Because Jesus suffered, we know that one day, there will be no more tears and no more trials. Praise be to God!

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What qualities of Christ do you see in this story?
2. What does this passage teach us about temptation?
3. How has God used suffering in your life to bring you closer to Him?
4. How does the temptation and the suffering of Job compare to Jesus' temptation and suffering? How can their stories encourage you when you are going through challenging times?

