



VICTORIES OF GOD IN THE LIFE OF JOSHUA

LESSON TWO

Start your study time with prayer. Ask the Lord to cleanse you and fill you with the Holy Spirit; that He would teach you the lessons that He wants to reveal to you.

Day One

Read Exodus 24:12–18.

1. What did God command Moses to do and why?

2. Whom did Moses take with him, and whom did he leave “in charge?”

3. How long did the cloud cover the mountain before the Lord called to Moses? And how long was Moses on the mountain with God?

4. How did things look from the perspective of the children of Israel?

Now, read Exodus 32:15–35.

1. Describe the tablets that Moses brought back down the mountain.

2. On the way down, Joshua thought he heard the sound of war (a sound he was familiar with). Moses, however, knew it wasn't war cries. The Lord had already told him what was going on below (see Exodus 32:7–8). Despite this foreknowledge, what was Moses' reaction when he saw what the children of Israel were doing? (Verses 19 and 20)

3. What was Aaron's explanation of the event?

4. Summarize what happened next, from verses 25–29.

Terms and Definitions: Atonement

"The meaning of the word is simply at-one-ment, i.e., the state of being at one or being reconciled, so that atonement is reconciliation."ⁱ "Primarily in the Old Testament, atonement refers to the process whereby humans could make an offering to God to restore fellowship with God." Atonement in the New Testament "refers specifically to the reconciliation between God and humanity affected by the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ."ⁱⁱ

5. In verse 30, Moses tells the people, "Now I will go up to the Lord; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin." In what way does Moses try to make atonement? (Verse 32)

What is God's answer? (Verse 33) Was the people's sin atoned for? (Verse 34–35)

Scripture Memory: This week's memory passage foreshadows our study later in the week—the true atonement for our sins, found in Jesus. It is Isaiah 53:6 NKJV.

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Isaiah 53:6

Day Two

1. Exodus 24:15 says that Moses took Joshua "up to the mountain of God." Since Joshua is not mentioned again in this account it is unclear whether he also accompanied Moses "into the midst of the cloud and up into the mountain" (verse 18). While some would argue that, as Moses' assistant, Joshua would have been with Moses the entire 40 days, and would have witnessed and/or overheard the interaction between God and Moses, others would argue

that because verse 18 only mentions Moses, and not Joshua, then Joshua was left lower down on the mountain, when Moses entered the cloud. Either way, we know that Joshua was somewhere on the mountain during this time (either with Moses or some distance away) because he was unaware of what was going on down below in the camp (Exodus 32:17). While it would be interesting to know if Joshua was privy to the conversations between Moses and God, we know that, regardless, Joshua was learning things through this experience. Put yourself in Joshua's sandals and speculate what may have gone through his mind during this time. What lessons might he be learning through the example of Moses?

2. This episode is reminiscent of several places in the gospels where Jesus separated himself from the crowds, and even from his disciples, in order to have intimate fellowship with God. (Matthew 26:36; Mark 1:35; 6:46; Luke 6:12; John 6:15) What did Jesus instruct us to do, in Matthew 6:6?

3. We read in Exodus 24:16 that God called out to Moses from the midst of the cloud on the seventh day, after six days of waiting. We also learned that Moses was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights (verse 18). These numbers, Seven and Forty, are found elsewhere in Scripture and hold special significance. Choose one of the columns below (or both, if you wish) to study. Read and summarize some of these references; then conjecture what the significance of each number is.

Seven (7)

Genesis 2:2–3
Genesis 8:10–12
Genesis 29:18, 20
Genesis 41:1–54
Exodus 12:15
Exodus 29:35, 37
Deuteronomy 15:1
2 Kings 5:10, 14
Job 42:8
Revelation 2:1, 3:1

Forty (40)

Genesis 7:4, 12
Genesis 8:6
Numbers 14:34
Deuteronomy 25:1–3
Judges 13:1
1 Samuel 17:16
1 Kings 19:1–8
Jonah 3:4
Matthew 4:1–2
Acts 1:1–3

Scripture Memory: Fill in the missing words from memory.
“All we like _____ have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own _____;
and the LORD has laid on Him the _____ of us all.” _____ 53:_____

Day Three

Reread Exodus 32:17–24 and answer the following questions.

1. Contrast what the people said in Exodus 24:3 to what they said and did just 40 days later in Exodus 32:1, 6.

2. Clearly, the Israelites were a wayward and “stiff-necked” people. But are we any different? What does your memory verse for this week say? (Isaiah 53:6)

3. What do these verses say about the depravity of mankind?

Romans 3:23

Ecclesiastes 7:20

Isaiah 64:6

1 John 1:8-10

3. Coming down from the mountain, Moses reacted to what he saw in anger. Some people think that getting angry is a sin, but that is not necessarily true. Sometimes anger can lead to sin, but anger, like all other emotions, is a God-given tool, when directed appropriately. God himself hates evil and instructs us to hate it as well (see Amos 5:15 and Romans 12:9). How and why did Jesus display righteous anger in John 2:13–17?

Scripture Memory: Fill in the missing words from memory.

"All we like _____ have gone _____; we have turned, _____, to his own _____; and the LORD has laid on Him the _____ of us all." _____
_____:

Day Four

Moses said to the people, "You have committed a great sin. So now I will go up to the Lord; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin." Then Moses returned to the Lord and said, "Oh, these people have committed a great sin, and have made for themselves a god of gold! Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written." (Exodus 32:30–32)

In this remarkable passage, we find Moses interceding on behalf of the people of Israel.

Terms and Definitions: Intercession

Intercession is "the act of petitioning God or praying on behalf of another person or group." The plea of the intercessor is "compassionate; it is concerned with the well-being of others rather than his own needs. Such selfless concern is the mark of all true intercession."

1. While there are other examples of intercession found in Scripture, let's look at the ultimate Intercessor, Jesus Christ, who is "able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them." (Hebrews 7:25) Who does Jesus intercede for, and why, in each of these passages?

Luke 22:31–32

Luke 23:33–35

John 17: 1, 9–26

2. Moses wants to reconcile his sinful people with his holy God. He says to the people, "Perhaps I can make atonement for your sin." He offers his utmost: "Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written." What else could he possibly offer? Paul echoes this sentiment in Romans 9:1–3. What does he say?

3. And yet, the self-sacrifice of Paul or Moses is not enough to reconcile us to God. As sinful men they were already deserving of death and punishment. Only the blood of the Sinless One, who willingly died on behalf of all mankind, is able to reconcile us to God. Read the following passages and let them sink in. Then write out a prayer in response to this good news: Colossians 1:19–22 and Ephesians 2:13–16

Scripture Memory: Fill in the missing words from memory.

"All we like _____ have _____; we have turned, _____, to his own _____; and the _____ has laid on _____ the _____ of us all." _____
_____:

Day Five: Personal Application

1. This week we looked at how Jesus often went to be alone with His Father. In today's busy world it is easy to neglect the practice of physically separating ourselves from our family, friends, coworkers, etc. to just be alone with our Heavenly Father. Make an appointment right now for sometime in the upcoming week. Think of a place that is away from home, away from work, and away from distraction. Set a specific time to meet with God for no other purpose than to just pray and listen. Start your prayer time by meditating on the concept of atonement (at-one-ment with God). Then keep your appointment.

Meeting place: _____

Day and time: _____

Agenda: Atonement (reconciliation with God through Jesus)

Notes:

2. Aaron told Moses: "And I said to [the people], 'Whoever has any gold, let them break it off.' So they gave it to me, and I cast it into the fire, and this calf came out." (Exodus 32:24) We can laugh when we read Aaron's lame excuse because we know that the image of a calf does not just come out of the fire when one throws gold into it. Interestingly, this lame excuse is hailed as a logical and reasonable theory, or even hailed as the truth by many people today. Those who deny the existence of God claim that in the beginning, there were some raw materials that exploded, just happening to create a perfect ecosystem; that life spontaneously generated from muck and that

complex organisms evolved from “simple” ones. We know that if there is a work of art, somewhere there is an Artist. You may know some people who are “exchanging the truth of God for the lie, and worshipping the creature rather than the Creator.” (Romans 1:25). Write the names or initials of these people below and then pray for them. Pray that they would not suppress the truth that there is an Artist, and that God would make their blind eyes see.

3. Do you realize that the excuses we give for our sins sound just as feeble, in the ears of our Lord, as Aaron’s excuse? As perpetual sinners we have the tendency to minimize, justify, or cover up our wrongdoings. What excuses are you giving to God? Ask the Holy Spirit to help you search your heart for things that are not pleasing to Him. Then confront your excuses and cast them aside. Acknowledge your wrongs and ask for forgiveness. You may record these thoughts and prayers if you wish; this is not intended for sharing in your group time, but is between you and God alone.

4. In our study this week, we read examples of Moses and Jesus displaying righteous anger. When is the last time you were angry over evil? Can you say, like David, “Zeal for Your house has eaten me up”? (Psalm 69:9) If you think Christians don’t get angry, you are mistaken. It may sound unorthodox, but spend a moment in prayer asking the Lord to give you His hate. That’s right! We are commanded to abhor what is evil. Ask Him to stir you up over the wickedness you see in this world. What is the alternative but complacency and acceptance of the evil around us? Remember, though, that the object of our hate is not the person who is sinning, but the sin itself. List some things of the things in your world that should make you angry.

5. Lastly, let’s focus on intercession. Ask the Lord to bring to mind one person who could use your intercessory prayer. Write that name or initials.

Then write out some specific prayer requests concerning this person. Commit to praying for this person on a long term basis.

Scripture Memory: Try to write the entire memory verse completely from memory. Review it several times today.

" _____

_____."
_____ : _____ - _____

Day Six (Optional)

1. While Moses was up on the mountain, the Lord was giving him the Law. Most prominent among all the numerous rules and regulations are the Ten Commandments. According to Kelton Research, 35% of Americans can recall all six Brady kids from the Brady Bunch television show, 25% could name the seven ingredients of a Big Mac®, but only 14% can accurately name all Ten Commandments.^{iv} Are you among the 14%? Without looking, list as many of the Ten Commandments as you can below.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Did you do it? If not, using Exodus 20:1-17, try again. Make it a goal to commit these to memory.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Scripture Memory: Write the entire memory verse completely from memory.

" _____

_____ "

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