

Today's Light Discussion Questions for January–March 2020

The material here is linked to the January–March issue of *Today's Light*, a quarterly magazine designed to lead God's people as they read through the Bible in two years.

We've tried to include enough discussion starters for about 45 minutes of study. In addition to the questions, you'll find Leader Notes to guide discussion. Feel free to duplicate the questions and use them with *Today's Light* readers.

Suggestions for Using *Today's Light* Discussion Questions

- You could gather a group of *Today's Light* readers during Sunday-morning Bible class time.
- You could invite all *Today's Light* readers in your congregation to a midweek home discussion.
- You could make the questions available to all *Today's Light* readers and encourage them to partner with one or two other people over lunch once a week.

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January Week 1 Discussion Questions

January 1–5; Genesis 1–8

1. What is the first record in God's Word of something God identifies as "not good"? See Genesis 2:18.
2. Recognizing their sinfulness, Adam and Eve hid from the holy and righteous God (Genesis 3:8). In what ways do people seek to hide in the security of their sin when confronted with God's judgment?
3. Apply God's warning to Cain (Genesis 4:7) to yourself. Explain the aptness of this description of sin. Relate 2 Timothy 4:18 to your situation when confronted with sins that desire to overtake you.
4. Review Genesis 6:11–19. Identify God's judgment and His saving grace in these verses.

January Week 2 Discussion Questions

January 6–12; Genesis 9–19

1. Explain the value of each human life as you reflect upon Genesis 9:6.
2. In what ways has God blessed all the peoples on earth through Abram (Abraham)? See Genesis 12:1–9 and Galatians 3:16.
3. Read Genesis 13:8–9. Then read 1 Timothy 6:17–19. Describe evidence of the Spirit of God at work in the life of Abram.
4. Review Genesis 15:1–6. Read God's words to Abram recorded in verse 1, substituting your name for that of Abram. How has God made these words true for you through Christ Jesus? See also Ephesians 2:19–22.
5. Review Genesis 17. First God gives Abram the covenant of circumcision. Then, God changes the names of Abram and Sarai to Abraham and Sarah. When God told Abraham of His plan to fulfill His promise of giving a one-hundred-year-old man and a ninety-year-old woman a child from their own bodies, Abraham laughed in temporary unbelief. When have you felt that God's promises were simply too amazingly good to be true? See also Colossians 2:13–15.
6. Genesis 19:1–29 describes the degree to which sinful lifestyles can influence the lives of the people of God. What harmful influences affect you and your desire to live your life for Jesus?

January Week 3 Discussion Questions

January 13–19; Genesis 20–30

1. Genesis 21:1 records, “The LORD visited Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did to Sarah as He had promised.” How do these words about Sarah apply also to you? See Colossians 3:1–4.
2. Review Genesis 22:1–18. Then read Hebrews 11:17–19. What additional information does the writer to the Hebrews provide to illustrate the depth of Abraham’s faith?
3. As Abraham directed his servant to go back to the land of his relatives to find a wife for his son Isaac, Abraham described the Lord, the God of heaven, as the one “who took me from my father’s house and from the land of my kindred, and who spoke to me and swore to me, ‘To your offspring I will give this land’” (Genesis 24:7). With what words might God’s people today describe God according to what He has done for us in Christ Jesus?
4. The unbelieving Philistine king Abimelech told Isaac, “Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we” (Genesis 26:16). How might Abimelech’s words have been a blessing for Isaac and his family? See 2 Corinthians 6:14–18.
5. After awakening from the dream in which he saw the stairway to heaven with angels ascending and descending upon it, Jacob responds: “‘Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it.’ And he was afraid and said, ‘How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven’” (Genesis 28:16–17). Where or on what occasion have you been moved to emotions similar to those expressed by Jacob in these verses?
6. “So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her” (Genesis 29:20). Compare Jacob’s love for Rachel with the love Christ demonstrates for His Church (Ephesians 5:25–32).

January Week 4 Discussion Questions

January 20–26; Genesis 31:1–41:40

1. Genesis 32:24–32 describes Jacob's persistence. He wrestled with God, who appeared in the form of a man, and refused to stop wrestling with Him until God blessed him. Jacob's persistence paid off (v. 29). What needs or concerns continually occupy your prayer life? How might the result God worked in Jacob's experience encourage you?
2. According to Genesis 35:1–4, how did Jacob and his family prepare for worship? What contemporary counterparts to their action might we identify in our preparation for worship?
3. Jacob dearly loved Joseph, providing him with a richly embroidered robe (Genesis 37:3). Somewhat similarly, our heavenly Father dearly loves us. With what, according to Galatians 3:26–27, has God clothed us? What is the significance of this action for us?
4. What one theme flows through Genesis 39:1–23? See verses 2–3, 5, 21–23. What encouragement can we find in these verses for those times when we feel like everything is against us?
5. As God continued to bless, equip, and sustain him, Joseph kept things in proper perspective. Review Genesis 40:8. Explain how God desires His people to regard the talents and abilities He provides us. See also 1 Peter 5:6–7.
6. After being restored to his position, Pharaoh's cupbearer forgot Joseph until Pharaoh himself had dreams in need of interpreting. Then the cupbearer remembered Joseph. Scripture records the cupbearer's words: "I remember my offenses today" (Genesis 41:9). What does 1 John 1:8–9 invite every believer to remember and confess?

January Week 5 Discussion Questions

January 27–31; Genesis 41:41–50:26

1. The names Joseph gave to his children brought to mind God's grace in his life. How do the meanings of the names of Joseph's sons (Genesis 41:51–52) remind you of God's gracious providence in your life?
2. When ill fortune befell Joseph's brothers on their trip to Egypt, they concluded that they were receiving punishment for their cruel treatment of Joseph (Genesis 42:21). Is this how God responds to us? If not, then how? See Hebrews 12:1–11.
3. Review Genesis 45:1–28. How does Joseph remind you of Jesus?
4. What roots for the nation of Israel do you see in chapters 48–49?
5. Recalling his brothers' action against him, Joseph said, "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" (Genesis 50:20). What good has God worked in your life, in spite of the evil intentions of others against you?

February Week 1 Discussion Questions

February 1–2; Exodus 1

1. Exodus 1:12 records, “The more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and the more they spread abroad.” Relate these words to the history of the Christian Church under persecution.

February Week 2 Discussion Questions

February 3–9; Exodus 2–10

1. Review Exodus 2:1–10 and Hebrews 11:24–26. God provided Moses with an upbringing that included the best the pagan Egyptian world had to offer. What did Moses, by the power and grace of God, realize about the pleasures of a world void of God? How does Moses' experience remind us of our own situation?
2. Exodus 3:1–15 reminds us that God hears the prayers of His people. In response, He might have simply destroyed the Egyptian government. Or He might have inclined the heart of Pharaoh to be favorably disposed to release the people. Instead, God worked through means; He rescued His people through the deliverance He provided by way of Moses. Through what means does God strengthen and sustain you?
3. When Moses and Aaron commanded Pharaoh to release God's people from bondage, he responded, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and moreover, I will not let Israel go" (Exodus 5:2). Comment on Pharaoh's response in light of Exodus 3:19 and John 14:15.
4. Review Exodus 7. Through God's mighty acts of judgment against the Egyptians, God made Himself known to the ungodly while delivering His people. Tell how this saving event is similar to another event still to come. See Matthew 25:31–32.
5. Review Exodus 8:22–23. What distinction always exists between unbelievers and the people of God?
6. Describe the consequences of Pharaoh's spiritual condition as referenced in Exodus 10:7.

February Week 3 Discussion Questions

February 10–16; Exodus 11–18

1. Consider Exodus 12:35–36. In what way did God provide for His people upon their departure from Egypt?
2. God assured the people of Israel of His presence and guided them with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night (Exodus 13:20–22). How does God assure His people of His presence and guide them today? See Matthew 28:18–20.
3. As the people of Israel reacted to the approaching Egyptian army with fear and remorse, Moses reminded them of God's power and protection. He said, "The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent" (Exodus 14:14). How do these words of God to His Old Testament people apply to you? What does it mean to be silent and still in the sight of God?
4. After the miracle of the Exodus, the people praised God. They sang, "The LORD is my strength and my song, and He has become my salvation" (Exodus 15:2). You can praise God with these same words. What miracle has God used to bring salvation to you (1 Peter 1:18–19)?
5. When Moses held his hand in the air, God's power brought success to the army of Joshua in the battle against the Amalekites. When Moses grew tired and lowered his arms, the enemy began to win. Then Aaron and Hur put a stone under Moses and, one on each side, held Moses' arms in the air until complete victory was realized by the people of God (Exodus 17:8–13). Whose arms are you helping to hold up?
6. Moses named his sons Gershom ("I have been a sojourner in a foreign land") and Eliezer ("The God of my father was my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh") (Exodus 18:3–4). Apply these words of Moses to yourself.

February Week 4 Discussion Questions

February 17–23; Exodus 19–31

1. Through Moses, God told His people, “You shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Exodus 19:6). Read Revelation 1:4–6. How do you receive these same designations?
2. Read God’s words about social responsibility recorded in Exodus 22:16–27. Explain these words in light of the third use of the Law (the Law as a guide). See 1 John 4:9, 11.
3. Relate the experience of the elders of Israel recorded in Exodus 24:9–11 to that of the disciples after Jesus’ resurrection (Luke 24:30). Relate it also to your encounter with God when you receive the Lord’s Supper (1 Corinthians 11:24–25).
4. God asked the people of Israel to make a tabernacle (Exodus 26), which God describes as a sanctuary. How is your house of worship a sanctuary for you?
5. Compare the priestly garments of the Old Testament (Exodus 28:1–5) with the garment of the saints in heaven (Revelation 7:13–14).
6. In Exodus 31:12–18, God commands His people to observe the Sabbath. Explain the Sabbath rest God offers His people as described in Hebrews 3:16–4:2.

February Week 5 Discussion Questions

February 24–29; Exodus 32–40

1. In their worship of the golden calf, the people of Israel attributed to the idol the works God had done on their behalf (see Exodus 32:8). How do those who have fallen away from the true God do the same today in their actions and reasoning?
2. Exodus 33:18–23 tells how God revealed His glory to Moses. Later, New Testament believers beheld the glory of God's only Son (John 1:14). How did Jesus reveal His glory and for what purpose (John 2:11)?
3. Describe God's judgment and grace as recorded in Exodus 34:5–7. Give evidence of God's grace as you have come to know it. Give evidence of God's judgment.
4. Exodus 35:20–36:7 records the generosity of God's people—everyone who was willing and whose heart was moved. What motivates God's people to give generously? See 2 Corinthians 8:9.
5. Exodus 37:1–9 describes the making of the ark of the covenant, which was to be the focal point of God's presence among His people. Why was the ark designed to be portable? What message does the portability of the ark provide to God's people today? See also Matthew 28:20.
6. The priestly breastpiece held twelve precious stones representing the twelve tribes of the Old Testament people of God (Exodus 39:8–14). Describe the full assembly of God's people as described in Revelation 7:9–10.

March Week 1 Discussion Questions

March 1–8; Leviticus 1–17

1. Consider Leviticus 1:3, 5 and 1 Peter 1:18–19. How does the animal selected for the sacrifice remind us of Jesus, the ultimate sacrifice for all sins?
2. Note the reference to sacrifices as an aroma pleasing to God (Leviticus 3:5, 16). Consider also Ephesians 5:2 and Philippians 4:18. What actions of New Testament believers are a “fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God”?
3. Leviticus 6:1–7 describes how someone who has sinned against his neighbor was to seek to make the matter right with the offended person. Similarly, as the love of Christ compels us, New Testament believers also seek to make restitution for the harm we have caused to others. What example does Luke 19:5–9 provide of the life-changing actions that result when Jesus intervenes in a person’s life? What examples can you give of similar actions on the part of God’s forgiven people?
4. Leviticus 9:23–24 describes the joy of the people when they witnessed the fire from the Lord consuming the sacrifice they had placed upon the altar. According to Psalm 51:14–17, what pleases God even more than sacrifices?
5. “I am the LORD your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy,” records Leviticus 11:44. God’s Word clearly teaches us that, on our own, we can neither be holy nor serve God in holiness (Genesis 8:21). How then has this command from God found fulfillment? See Ephesians 5:25–26.
6. Leviticus 12–15 shows that God would have His people understand how disease can spread from one person to another. Therefore, those among God’s people found to be unclean were separated from the group. What comparison might be made with the infectious qualities of sin? See Galatians 6:1.
7. Before Aaron engaged in his priestly responsibilities, he bathed and dressed in sacred garments (Leviticus 16:4). Compare Aaron’s washing and dressing with Paul’s words in Galatians 3:26–27. With what have God’s people become clothed through faith?

March Week 2 Discussion Questions

March 9–15; Leviticus 18–Numbers 6

1. What does God command in Leviticus 18:1–5 regarding the behaviors of the Egyptians and Canaanites?
2. Leviticus 22:9, 16, and 32 describe God making His people holy. How does God sanctify (make holy) His people? See 1 Corinthians 6:11.
3. God's Old Testament people offered Him the firstfruits of their harvest (Leviticus 23:9–14). In what ways do God's people today offer their firstfruits to God?
4. Leviticus 26:1–13 describes the blessings of obedience. What blessings result from obedience that is motivated by God's grace and goodness? See also James 1:22–25.
5. Numbers 1:2 describes a census that would list the people of God, one by one. What list does Jesus suggest as a source of joy for those whose names are included on it (Luke 10:20; Revelation 21:27)?
6. Aaron's blessing (Numbers 6:24–26) bestows on the people of God His keeping, His grace, and His peace. How does God's Word describe the peace that is ours in Christ Jesus? See John 14:27; Romans 5:1; and Philippians 4:7.

March Week 3 Discussion Questions

March 16–22; Numbers 7–20

1. God spoke to Moses through a voice from between the cherubim above the atonement cover on the ark of the testimony (Numbers 7:89). How has God spoken to His New Testament people? See Hebrews 1:1–3.
2. Numbers 10:9 records, “When you go to war in your land against the adversary who oppresses you, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets, that you may be remembered before the LORD your God, and you shall be saved from your enemies.” In many congregations, trumpet blasts can be heard during worship services on Easter Sunday. Reflect on Numbers 10:9 and the appropriateness of trumpet blasts on Easter Sunday.
3. Moses was incredulous when God told him He was about to provide the people with a month’s worth of meat to eat. God replied, “Is the LORD’s hand shortened? Now you shall see whether My word will come true for you or not” (Numbers 11:23). Then God indeed kept His promise. What means did He use to keep His promise (Numbers 11:31–32)? Through what means does God fulfill His promises to you? See 1 Peter 1:23; Titus 3:5; John 20:22–23; and Matthew 26:26–28.
4. After the people of Israel sinned against Him, God sought to destroy them, but Moses interceded (Numbers 14:10–19). Of whom do the actions of Moses remind you? See Hebrews 7:23–25. How do their intercessions differ?
5. The people of Israel grumbled. God responded by sending a plague among the people. Then, at Moses’ direction, Aaron ran into the midst of the assembly and offered incense and made atonement for the people. Numbers 16:48 says, “He stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stopped.” How do Aaron’s actions remind us of the saving work of Jesus? See Hebrews 2:17.
6. God did not permit Moses and Aaron to enter the Promised Land because of their disobedience at the waters of Meribah. How was God’s grace evidenced to Moses and Aaron and God’s people at the death of Aaron? See Numbers 20:22–29, especially verse 28.

March Week 4 Discussion Questions

March 23–29; Numbers 21–34

1. Numbers 21 records Israel's sin against God and against Moses, as well as the account of God sending venomous snakes to punish Israel. The account illustrates God's calling of the people to repentance so that He might turn them back to Himself and rescue and save them. Describe a call to repentance and/or redirection that God has made to you in your life.
2. When Israel fell into sin with the Moabites, Phinehas took action. God commends him "because he was jealous for his God and made atonement for the people of Israel" (Numbers 25:13). In what ways might God be calling you to demonstrate your zeal for Him in your life?
3. God told Moses, "Go up into this mountain of Abarim and see the land that I have given to the people of Israel. When you have seen it, you also shall be gathered to your people, as your brother Aaron was" (Numbers 27:12–13). When we die, we, too, will be gathered to our people. How does Revelation 7:9 picture the people to whom we will be gathered?
4. The day of firstfruits (Numbers 28:26) occurred fifty days after the feast of unleavened bread. Therefore, New Testament believers referred to it as Pentecost (meaning "fifty"). What firstfruits were gathered at the Pentecost that took place fifty days after Easter, as described in Acts 2:1–41, especially in verse 41?
5. In Numbers 31:1–2, God tells Moses to do battle against the unbelieving Midianites. After that, God would gather Moses to his people (Moses would die). In what ways might God be calling you to do battle against the forces of the ungodly before He calls you home?
6. Moses accepts a plan presented to him by the leaders of the tribes of Reuben and Gad as a pledge. He proceeds to warn them about the consequences of failing to live up to their commitment, saying, "But if you will not do so, behold, you have sinned against the LORD, and be sure your sin will find you out" (Numbers 32:23). In what ways do our sins eventually find us out?

March Week 5 Discussion Questions

March 30–31; Numbers 35–36

1. Compare Numbers 35:9–34, regarding the cities of refuge, and Hebrews 13:12–14. What is our ultimate “lasting city” (Hebrews 13:14)? In what ways do God’s people find themselves looking for that city?

2. The Book of Numbers ends with a comment about the daughters of Zelophehad, who obeyed the Lord in their choice of marriage partners and therefore secured their God-given inheritance (Numbers 36). In what ways do godly women today honor God in their selection of marriage partners?

Leader Notes

Many of the questions call for group participants to share personal insights, examples, or life experiences and applications. Answers to these questions will vary. If no one answers right away, allow a moment or two of silence so that everyone has time to think through the question. Other questions call for specific factual or analytical responses. Suggested answers for these appear below.

January Week 1 Leader Notes

January 1–5; Genesis 1–8

1. God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him” (Genesis 2:18). God created people to enjoy close relationships with Himself and with others.
2. When confronted with their sin and its consequences, people sometimes retreat into the security of their way of life, hiding from the truth under a cover of lies.
3. God’s warning to Cain applies to God’s people of all time. Sin desires to have us, but we must master it. In 2 Timothy 4:18, we are reminded of God’s power to rescue us from every evil attack and bring us safely to His heavenly dwelling.
4. Our just God destroyed the world because of its wickedness. But God is gracious; He saved Noah and his family together with two of every kind of animal.

January Week 2 Leader Notes

January 6–12; Genesis 9–19

1. Human life has value because God made people in His image.
2. God provided the Savior of the world through Abraham's family line.
3. Abram put his trust in God; by the power of the Holy Spirit, he demonstrated generosity and a willingness to share.
4. Because we have Jesus as our Savior, we need not be afraid; He is our shield and our very great reward. In Him, we who are not biologically the children of Abram have also become the people of God.
5. Amazing indeed is the fact that through faith God has made alive in Christ we who were dead in our sins and in the uncircumcision of our sinful nature. He has forgiven our sins, canceling the debt we acquired under the Law.
6. Participant responses will vary but are likely to reference the subtle and not-so-subtle ways ungodly media, neighbors, and other societal influences affect our lives.

January Week 3 Leader Notes

January 13–19; Genesis 20–30

1. Everything God in Christ has promised to us has or will come to pass. Our loving Savior invites us to set our minds on things above, knowing that even as He is risen from the dead, we will appear one day with Him in glory.
2. Abraham would have sacrificed his son Isaac, trusting that God would bring him back to life. Hebrews records that, in a way, Abraham did receive his son back from the dead. In this way, Isaac foreshadows Jesus.
3. God in Christ has also brought God's people today from a pagan life and provided us with an inheritance in His kingdom; we receive this inheritance through faith.
4. By moving away from the unbelieving Philistines, God's people were spared the influences that would have troubled them. Somewhat similarly, God's people today do well to guard against those influences that could lead us to turn our backs on God and His saving grace.
5. Responses may vary but might include occasions such as Baptisms, confirmations, weddings, and funerals.
6. Christ sacrificed Himself for us to make us His own, loving us unconditionally and without reservation or fear of the cost.

January Week 4 Leader Notes

January 20–26; Genesis 31:1–41:40

1. God invites us to be persistent in our prayers and promises to hear us. See also Luke 18:1–8.
2. Jacob's household set their hearts right before going to worship. They did this by removing those ungodly influences, in this case foreign gods, and by purifying themselves and changing their clothes. Somewhat similarly, God's people today prepare for worship by examining themselves and their spiritual condition, in a spirit of contrition and repentance, putting aside the things by which they have offended God, and by dressing appropriately.
3. All of us who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Clothed with Christ, we live under the forgiveness, new life, and salvation He has given us through grace and, empowered by the Holy Spirit, live for Him.
4. God was with Joseph even when it seemed that the circumstances of his life could not get worse. God is always in control. He invites us to trust always in Him, knowing that He will never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5–6).
5. Joseph humbly gives God credit for the ability to interpret dreams. God's Spirit enables His people to praise God for the talents, skills, and abilities He provides.
6. Recognizing our sins and confessing them are essential steps before we receive the forgiveness God offers us freely through Christ Jesus.

January Week 5 Leader Notes

January 27–31; Genesis 41:41–50:26

1. Participants' personal applications of "God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house" (Genesis 41:51) and "For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction" (41:52) will vary. Stress God's goodness to us through Jesus, our Savior, and the grace and blessings He abundantly provides through Him.
2. God punished Christ for our sin; He chastises those He receives as His children (Hebrews 12:6). God always acts on our behalf. Through discipline, He produces a "peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it" (Hebrews 12:11).
3. Just as God sent Joseph into Egypt to save His people, God sent Jesus into the world to save all people.
4. The entire structure of the nation of Israel was centered on the twelve tribes. Much of the Hebrew identity was rooted in the tribes. The number *12* carries over into the New Testament Church in that Jesus chose twelve disciples. The number is also significant in the Book of Revelation as a sign of the believers.
5. Answers will vary. Comment that God desires to work all things for the good of those who by faith belong to Him. See Romans 8:28.

February Week 1 Leader Notes

February 1–2; Exodus 1

1. As God blesses and sustains His people, the Church usually grows and thrives during times of persecution, as the history of the Christian Church bears witness.

February Week 2 Leader Notes

February 3–9; Exodus 2–10

1. Moses chose to be mistreated with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. By the Spirit's power, we, too, can regard disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of the world around us and look forward to our heavenly reward.
2. Just as God rescued us through Jesus, the Word made flesh, He strengthens and sustains us through the Word received by itself or together with bread and wine in the Sacrament.
3. Only those who know God by faith are able truly to serve and obey Him.
4. At the day of judgment, all people will recognize Jesus as the Savior. Only those trusting in Him will receive eternal life in His eternal presence. Those without faith will receive eternal punishment and be separated from God.
5. God makes a distinction between those who belong to Him through faith in Christ Jesus and those who do not. God's blessings to His people, though often unobservable with the human eye, are eternal and of great value and significance. Faith in Christ distinguishes the believer from the unbeliever.
6. Pharaoh's officials encouraged him to let God's people go. They attempted to bring him to the realization that because of his stubborn refusal to submit to God, Egypt was ruined. Similarly, refusing to acknowledge God as the Creator, Ruler, and Redeemer can only lead to the decline of the society holding that perspective.

February Week 3 Leader Notes

February 10–16; Exodus 11–18

1. “The LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked” (Exodus 12:36). Through God’s intervention, the Egyptians provided the people of God with silver and gold and clothing.
2. Today, God assures and guides His people through His Word as it is preached, received in the Sacraments, and shared among believers.
3. Just as God invited His Old Testament followers to be still and wait for His deliverance and salvation, even so today He invites His followers to trust in His deliverance and care; we don’t need to handle things on our own.
4. God has saved us through the holy precious blood and innocent suffering and death of His only Son, Jesus Christ.
5. Encourage participants to reflect on the ways they support and encourage leaders in the Kingdom through their words and actions.
6. Comment on the similarity of the meaning of the names of the sons of Moses (Exodus 18:3–4) and the meaning of the names of the sons born to Joseph (Genesis 41:51–52). We, too, are aliens in a foreign land; God is also our Helper and Savior through Jesus Christ.

February Week 4 Leader Notes

February 17–23; Exodus 19–31

1. Jesus “has freed us from our sins by His blood and made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father” (Revelation 1:5–6). In Christ, we have become the people of God who live together and serve one another.
2. Because Jesus loves us and gave Himself for us, we love and serve others, sacrificially and unconditionally, as the Holy Spirit moves and empowers us through Word and Sacrament.
3. God’s Old Testament people saw Him as they ate and drank. Similarly, the disciples recognized Jesus in the breaking of the bread. Jesus comes to us through the bread and wine we receive at His table.
4. A sanctuary is a place of refuge and protection. We find these things in the presence of God as we assemble around His Word and the Sacraments.
5. The priestly garments set God’s special servants aside for acts of service. Heavenly garments indicate that we have been set aside by the blood of the Lamb, who sacrificed Himself for us and for our salvation.
6. God invites us to find the rest He freely offers through Christ Jesus. Some have the Gospel preached to them, but it is of no value because its message is not received in faith. To those who believe, God gives true and eternal assurance and rest in Jesus.

February Week 5 Leader Notes

February 24–29; Exodus 32–40

1. Those who have fallen away from the true God today similarly attribute to themselves or to some false god or evil spiritual force the blessings and comforts of their life. At times, people attribute their prosperity and success to their own hard work; they have become their own idol.
2. Jesus revealed His glory through His miracles (chief among these is His resurrection from the dead). He revealed His glory so that people would be moved to believe in Him.
3. God describes Himself as merciful, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, and forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin. Yet He punishes the guilty and those who follow in their wicked ways in the successive generations. Similarly, God is loving, forgiving, and faithful today to all who receive Him through faith in Christ Jesus. Those who reject God's grace and favor continue to be held under the punishment of sin and its consequences.
4. God's people give generously as motivated by the Spirit of the One who gave Himself completely for us, living and dying to save us.
5. The ark was portable so that God's presence would remain in the midst of the people wherever they would go. Similarly, Jesus has promised to remain with His people always, even to the end of the age.
6. In heaven, believers will assemble in "a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb" (Revelation 7:9–10), praising and thanking Him for the salvation for which He paid the ultimate price.

March Week 1 Leader Notes

March 1–8; Leviticus 1–17

1. Jesus is the Lamb of God, a lamb without defect, who faultlessly kept God's Law in our place and whose blood was shed as a sacrifice to atone for the sins of the world.
2. Acts of love, generated by the love of God for us in Christ Jesus, are fragrant offerings, acceptable and pleasing to God through the merits of Jesus, our Savior.
3. Upon becoming a believer, Zacchaeus pledged to give half of his possessions to the poor and if he had cheated anybody out of anything, to pay back four times the amount. Additional examples will vary.
4. God desires hearts that, broken and contrite under the conviction of the Law, are ready to receive His grace and forgiveness through Christ Jesus, our Savior.
5. All who trust in Jesus for salvation have been made holy by Christ Jesus; He loved the Church and gave Himself for her. God's people receive His holiness by faith through the waters of Holy Baptism and the Word of God.
6. Although God's people are compelled to reach out to help those caught in the snare of sin, God's Word also warns against becoming influenced and enticed by sin and falling under its influence: "Do not be deceived: 'Bad company ruins good morals'" (1 Corinthians 15:33).
7. Because the priestly garments were sacred, Aaron bathed before he put them on. Paul says, "For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:26–27). By faith through Baptism, God clothes us in Christ Jesus. We are new people, equipped and dedicated for the new life He enables us to live by the power of the Holy Spirit.

March Week 2 Leader Notes

March 9–15; Leviticus 18–Numbers 6

1. God commands His people not to follow the customs and practices of the ungodly among whom they live or have lived. He calls His followers to obey His will.
2. Making holy, or sanctifying, is the work of the Holy Spirit working through Word and Sacraments, the Means of Grace.
3. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, believers today also practice stewardship, offering God gifts of time, talents, and treasures.
4. Because Christ has fulfilled the Law perfectly in our place, through faith we have the freedom to follow God's will because God has given us the desire to obey Him; obedient acts are those that contribute best to our welfare and happiness.
5. Jesus tells His disciples not to rejoice because of the power they have been given over the forces of evil, but rather to rejoice that their names are written in heaven, in the Lamb's book of life.
6. We have a comforting peace with God, vastly different from that which the world can offer (John 14:27). It is ours through our Lord Jesus Christ "since we have been justified through faith" (Romans 5:1). This peace, which passes all human understanding, "will guard [our] hearts and minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7).

March Week 3 Leader Notes

March 16–22; Numbers 7–20

1. Hebrews 1:1–2 records that “long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son.” Jesus is the very expression of God the Father, come to us in human form.
2. The sound of the trumpet during Easter services reminds worshipers of how the Lord has remembered His people and rescued us from our enemies—sin, death, and the devil’s power—as celebrated in Jesus’ resurrection from the dead.
3. God sent a wind that drove quail in from the sea, dropping them in amazing quantities around the Israelite camp. The means God uses to bring spiritual blessings to His people include the living and abiding Word of God (1 Peter 1:23); the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit in Baptism (Titus 3:5); Holy Absolution (John 20:23); and the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper (Matthew 26:26–28).
4. Moses’ intercession reminds us of Jesus’ intercessions for us before the holy throne of heaven (see Hebrews 7:25). Moses interceded for the people, even though he, himself, was a sinner and mortal. Jesus, the holy and eternal Son of God, continually intercedes with His heavenly Father on our behalf.
5. In making atonement for us, Jesus literally stood on our behalf between us and God, taking on Himself the punishment for our sins.
6. Upon the death of Aaron, God made His grace evident to the people by continuing the priesthood through Eleazar, the son of Aaron.

March Week 4 Leader Notes

March 23–29; Numbers 21–34

1. Examples will vary. Comment that God's desire through the application of His Law in our lives is ultimately for our repentance and for a rekindling of our sense of reliance upon Him.
2. Examples will vary. At times, taking a stand against sin and its manifestations in the world around us will be difficult, requiring courage in the face of opposition and unpopularity. God may also call us to serve a person or support a cause zealously for the sake of the Gospel.
3. Revelation 7:9 describes an assembly of "a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb."
4. At the Pentecost that occurred fifty days after the first Easter, the Christian Church was born, and a harvest of souls of about three thousand in number was realized (Acts 2:41).
5. Responses require personal reflection involving participants' interests, scope of influence, and roles and station in life. God has called all of us to live as His people, opposing the forces of darkness and evil around us and championing the truth of salvation, which is ours only through Christ and Him crucified.
6. Sin always brings consequences. Galatians 6:7–8 warns, "Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life."

March Week 5 Leader Notes

March 30–31; Numbers 35–36

1. By God's grace, His people live each day mindful of our eternal destiny and confidence of a citizenship in heaven that is ours even now through faith in Christ Jesus. See also Philippians 3:18–21 and Revelation 21:1–4.
2. God's people, both men and women, honor God by choosing marriage partners with whom they share a saving faith in Jesus. In 2 Corinthians 6:14, Paul warns about becoming yoked together with unbelievers. In 1 Corinthians, Paul also talks about the valuable witness believers can provide to their unbelieving spouses and thereby bringing God's gift of salvation to them (1 Corinthians 7:12–16).