

3

Nobody Understands

Grace
We find comfort in God's grace.

POWER TEXT

"For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known" (1 Corinthians 13:12).

KEY REFERENCES

- Job 3-37
- *Education*, chap. 16, p. 155
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 6, pp. 169-172
- Student story on page 42 of this guide

OUR BELIEFS

- No. 7, The Nature of Humanity
- No. 11, Growing in Christ
- No. 8, The Great Controversy

OBJECTIVES

The students will:

- **Know** that God doesn't stop loving them when they raise questions about Him.
- **Feel** secure in God's love.
- **Respond** by continuing to grow in their friendship with God.

POWERPOINT

God's love remains the same even when we fail to see the big picture.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Job and his four friends discuss their understanding of who God is and how He relates to His children on earth. It becomes clear that Job and each of his friends know only a little about God; they are not correct in their theology. But God is patient and waits for the best time to clear up the misunderstandings. We learn from this experience that it is OK to explore our relationship with God and to continue to learn about Him.

This is a lesson about grace.

God's love for us does not change even when we don't understand Him or what He is doing in our lives.

Teacher Enrichment

"This is the story of a man finding his way back to normal life after a series of terrible, unexplainable reverses. The elements in the background that make the situation dramatic are (1) the contrast between Job's prosperity and his degradation, (2) the suddenness of his calamity, (3) the problem posed by the philosophy of suffering common in his day, (4) the cruelty of his friends, (5) the depth of his discouragement, (6) the gradual ascent to trust in God, (7) the dramatic appearance of God, (8) the repentance of Job, (9) the humiliation of his friends, (10) the restoration of Job.

"No single statement is sufficient to cover the complex teaching of the book. Many minor themes fit into the larger theme, making the book as a whole resemble a symphony of ideas. One of the grandest contributions of the book is its picture of God. Never have the glory and profundity of God been more eloquently expressed, except in the person of Jesus Christ Himself" (*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 494).

What is my understanding of who God is? How can I best reveal His character to those in my world? When is it OK to question God?

Welcome

Welcome students at the door and direct them to their seats. Ask them how their week has been. Encourage learners to study their Sabbath School lesson regularly, and use several minutes to debrief students on the previous week's lesson. Ask: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find the most helpful? Which activity was the most fun?** Invite students to share their experiences and/or the handiworks they created for Sabbath School during the week. (The leader should be familiar with the previous lesson to be able to direct the discussion.) This is also a good time to have students recite the power text.

Have students begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.

Program notes

LESSON SECTION	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS NEEDED
Welcome	Ongoing	Greet students at the door. Ask about their week.	
1 Readiness	10-15	*A. Not the Whole Picture*	students prepared in advance
		B. Why Did That Happen?	pictures or video of tragedies/natural disasters
* Prayer & Praise	15-20	See page 37. Prayer & Praise may be used at any time during the program.	songbooks, world map, pushpins, gift box with slit; colored strips of paper, glue, tape OR staples, pens/pencils, OR markers
2 Bible Lesson	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story	four copies of *Net Kids* script (p. 147)
		Experiencing the Story	Bible, table lamp, markers; for each student: a hairpin, half sheet dark construction paper
		Exploring the Bible	Bibles, chalk/whiteboard, chalk/markers
3 Applying the Lesson	10-15	*Scenario*	
4 Sharing the Lesson	10-15	*Pass the Hope*	Slips of paper, pens/pencils, chalk/whiteboard, chalk/markers
* Closing		A. Prayer and Closing Comments	
		B. Reminder to Parents	
		C. Coming Up Next Week	

1

READINESS ACTIVITIES

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

A

YOU NEED:
- ☐ students prepared in advance

Not the Whole Picture

Ask two of your more popular or outspoken students to prepare to discuss a topic of current interest taking opposite views (For example, "Is it in harmony with God's law to attend school on Sabbath?" "What types of food represent the best diet?" "What entertainment options are acceptable for a Christian?") At the designated time, allow them to start their debate, where one of the students defends one position and the other argues for the opposite view. What they say does not have to be what they really believe. Allow the other students to react naturally without your intervention.

Debriefing

Ask: **What did you think about your classmates' ideas? How did you feel when they persisted in talking about something about which you felt they were obviously wrong, according to Christian beliefs?** (uncomfortable; distressed; amused) **Do you think God ever feels the same way toward us?** (Maybe. God understands that we do not yet see the whole picture of who He is and how steadfast His love is.) **Let's say together our power text, 1 Corinthians 13:12:**

"For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known" (1 Corinthians 13:12).

Say: **God expects us to learn all we can about Him from His Word. But even then we may not understand everything completely. Our power point this week is:**

God's love remains the same even when we fail to see the big picture.

B

YOU NEED:
- ☐ pictures OR video of tragedies/natural disasters

Why Did That Happen?

Show the students the pictures you have brought depicting various tragedies: earthquakes, sick people, car accidents, floods, plane crashes. Then ask: **Why does God let these things happen?**

Ask the students to discuss what the reaction of those who don't believe there is a loving God might be. Have a scribe record their responses. Then ask them to discuss what the reaction of those who believe in a loving God might be. Have a scribe record their responses.

Debriefing

Ask: **How do you think God feels listening to skeptics or doubting Christians?** (The same. He loves us even when we question Him.) **God knows all about us, and He is patient as we learn more about Him and His love for us. Let's say together our power text, 1 Corinthians 13:12:**

"For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known" (1 Corinthians 13:12).

Say: **Our power point this week is:**

God's love remains the same even when we fail to see the big picture.

Prayer & Praise

Notes

Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). If they have given you permission, share one or two special items from students' Bible study during the week. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

"You Are My Wholeness" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 90)
"You Are My Everything" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 44)
"You Are My Hiding Place" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 96)
"Awesome God" (*Praise Time*, no. 51)
"He's Ever Over Me" (*Praise Time*, no. 62)

Mission

YOU NEED:
- ☐ world map
- ☐ pushpins

Use *Adventist Mission for Youth and Adults* (go to www.juniorpowerpoints.org and click on MISSION) or another mission report available to you. Using a world map, have the students identify and mark with pushpins the location where the mission story is taking place.

Offering

YOU NEED:
- ☐ gift box

Say: **Giving ourselves to Jesus means making a commitment to tell others. One way we can do that is by giving an offering to help with mission work here and around the world.**

Prayer

YOU NEED:
- ☐ prayer-chain materials

Continue adding links to the prayer chain that was started on the previous Sabbath based on the directions given in the previous lesson. Have the students pray silently as they write and attach their links to the chain. Close with a prayer for the students' joys and sorrows, for the birthday and other special event celebrants, as well as for the visitors.

2

BIBLE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ four copies of *Net Kids* script (p. 147)

Introducing the Bible Story

***The* Net Kids**

(Note: The *Net Kids* are an imaginative way to introduce the Bible story. If you prefer not to use this imaginary element, read over the script yourself and introduce the lesson concept in your own words. Refer to Lesson 2 for background and setup information.)

Make four copies of the *Net Kids* script found on page 147 of this guide. Distribute to the students you have selected as early as possible. Allow practice time before using this activity.

Present the skit.

Debriefing

Say: **Our story today is about Job and some of his friends who came to comfort him. They didn't understand what was happening to Job any more than he did. Probably even less. But God was patient with them all, waiting for the right time to clear up all the misunderstandings.**

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bible
- ☐ table lamp
- ☐ markers
- ☐ for each student:
  - a hairpin
  - half sheet dark construction paper

Experiencing the Story

Before class, remove rubber ends from hairpins. Plug in the lamp, and place it in one corner of the room. Keep the lamp turned off for now. Darken the room slightly. Gather students around the lamp, and place the Bible, markers, hairpins, and half sheets of construction paper beside you.

Say: **Our lesson today is about the conversations Job and his friends had after they had sat in silence for seven days and seven nights. It was obvious from their discussion that none of them knew all the truth about God. But God still loved them and was patient with them. He was waiting for the right time to shed some light on their misunderstandings.**

Sometimes we have problems and worries, as Job did, that make us feel as if we are in the dark. Maybe these problems and worries make us feel as if no one loves or cares for us. Have you ever felt that way? Pause for responses, then encourage the students to tell about times they have had worries or fears that have made them doubt God, or feel unloved or alone.

Say: **Job 3:37 records Job's and his friends' incomplete pictures of God. Let's read from a place in the Bible that tells about God's love and grace, and how God's love can help us through the worries and problems we have.**

Read aloud 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, first part. Say: **This was written for people who needed to know that God's love is never-ending. In fact, God's love is there for us in good times and bad and whether we're happy, sad, or even having doubts.**

Hand each student a half sheet of dark construction paper and a hairpin. Challenge them to think of their greatest worry or fear and to "draw" or "write" it on the sheet of construction paper by poking holes through the paper with hairpins.

After they have finished with their designs, darken the room and turn on the table lamp.

Say: **We can think of God's love as a bright light. His love shines through the darkest problems or fears we have.** Have students take turns holding their paper to the lamp and letting the light shine through the holes. **Job and his friends could see about as clearly as you can see by looking through your paper on your own. But God was about to let His light shine through the problems and fears Job was facing.**

Our power point reminds us that

God's love remains the same even when we fail to see the big picture.

3

APPLYING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ chalk/whiteboard
- ☐ chalk/markers

Exploring the Bible

Write the following texts where all can see:

1. Ephesians 1:18, 19
2. Philippians 4:7
3. 1 John 5:20

Say: **Without talking to anyone else, choose one of the texts on the board and find it in your Bible.** Wait until all have had a chance to find one of the texts. Assist those who may need help. Say: **Now I would like all those who found the first text to form Group 1, all who found the second text to form Group 2, and all who found the third to form Group 3.** Allow time for groups to form. Help students divide honestly and peacefully.

Say: **I would like you to discuss what your text has to do with our power point for today.**

God's love remains the same even when we fail to see the big picture.

Allow time for discussion. Provide an adult facilitator for each group, if possible.

Say: **Beginning with Group 1, please read us your verse and tell us what your group discovered about God.** Allow each group to express their conclusions.

Debriefing

Ask: **God's love for us doesn't change when we lack understanding of Him and His ways, but what more does He want to do for us?** (He wants to help us understand so that we can know hope and His great power—Ephesians 1:18, 19.) **What has He already done for us?** (sent Jesus to give us understanding—1 John 5:20) **What has God given us that is even greater than understanding?** (peace—Philippians 4:7). Say: **Let's say together our power text, 1 Corinthians 13:12:**

"For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known" (1 Corinthians 13:12).

Accommodations for students with special needs

Have students with visual impairments sit close to the board for this activity. Alternatively, have a handout for them with the list of Bible references.

Scenario

Read the following scenario aloud to your students:

Sal approaches you after Sabbath School and says, "These Sabbath School lessons are great. If God loves me even if I don't understand Him, I guess I don't have to come to Sabbath School or worry about reading my Bible anymore."

Debriefing

Ask: **Based on what we have just been studying, what would you tell Sal?** (Encourage students to feel secure in God's great, accepting love, but also to want to continue building a relationship with Him through Jesus that will transform and empower their lives.)

Our power point reminds us that

God's love remains the same even when we fail to see the big picture.

4

SHARING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:

- ☐ slips of paper
- ☐ pens/pencils
- ☐ chalk/whiteboard
- ☐ chalk/markers

Pass the Hope

Allow time for students to share with the class if they had the opportunity to share Bible promises with someone who doesn't understand why God allows bad things to happen in his/her life.

Write the following texts on the board.

- Jeremiah 29:11 ("I know the plans I have for you . . .")
- Jeremiah 31:3 ("I have loved you with . . .")
- Psalm 37:7, 9 ("Be still before the LORD . . .")
- Psalm 55:22 ("Cast your cares . . .")
- Psalm 139:16 ("Your eyes saw my unformed body . . .")

Distribute bookmark-sized slips of paper and pens or pencils. Have the students write out one or more of the texts as neatly as possible. When they are finished, encourage them to put the slips of paper in hymnals and Bibles (not personal ones) when they go into church service, without letting anyone see them.

Say: **Let's say together our power text:**

"For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known" (1 Corinthians 13:12).

Our power point reminds us that

God's love remains the same even when we fail to see the big picture.

Closing

Prayer and closing comments:

Pray that God will make your students feel secure enough in His love, that they will seek to have a deeper friendship with Him, full of peace and power.

Reminder to parents:

Say: **Check out the student Bible study guide to find Parents' Pages for your use in family worship, or however you wish to use them to spiritually guide your children. You may listen to the podcast of the lesson online at www.juniorpowerpoints.org/podcast.php?channel=1.**

Coming up next week:

Say: **Job learns who God really is. God not only created us, He takes care of us.**

Notes

Student lesson

Nobody Understands

Have you ever felt that your whole world was falling apart and that even those closest to you were against you? And to make things worse, you felt that everyone was watching you? Welcome to Job's world.

By the time Satan was finished attacking Job, this man had lost everything—his home, his livestock, his wealth, his children—and now his health was gone. He was covered with oozing, painful, smelly sores.

One day three of Job's friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, came to visit him in the city dump, where he sat all day. For a week they all sat together silently. The three friends followed the custom of the time and waited for Job to speak first.

Finally Job said, "May the day of my birth perish. . . . That day—may it turn to darkness" (Job 3:3, 4). "Why did I not perish at birth, and die?" (verse 11).

Eliphaz couldn't help blurting out, "If someone ventures a word with you, will you be impatient? But who can keep from speaking? Think how you have instructed many, how you have strengthened feeble hands. Your words have supported those who stumbled; you have strengthened faltering knees. But now trouble comes to you, and you are discouraged; it strikes you, and you are dismayed" (Job 4:2-5). "Blessed is the one whom God corrects; so do not despise the discipline of the Almighty" (Job 5:17).

"How painful are honest words!" exclaimed Job. "But what do your arguments prove? Do you mean to correct what I say, and treat my desperate words as wind?" (Job 6:25, 26).

Bildad chimed in, "Does God pervert justice? Does the Almighty pervert what is right? When your children sinned against him, he gave them over to the penalty of their sin.

"But if you will seek God earnestly and plead with the Almighty, if you are pure and upright, even now he will rouse himself on your behalf and restore you to your prosperous state. Your beginnings will seem humble, so prosperous will your future be" (Job 8:3-7).

"He alone stretches out the heavens and treads on the waves of the sea. . . . He performs wonders that cannot be fathomed, miracles that cannot be counted," replied Job (Job 9:8-10). "How then can I dispute with him? How can I find words to argue with him? . . . He is not a mere mortal like me that I might answer him" (verses 14-32).

"Are all these words to go unanswered?" questioned Zophar (Job 11:2). "If you put away the sin that is in your hand and allow no evil to dwell in your tent, then, free of fault, you will lift up your face; you will stand firm and without fear. You will surely forget your trouble, recalling it only as waters gone by" (verses 14-16).

Job replied, "Keep silent and let me speak; then let come to me what may. . . . Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him" (Job 13:13-15).

In spite of his pain and his friends' reproving words Job remained faithful to God. He found the strength to affirm: "I know that my redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth" (Job 19:25).

The three old friends retreated into silence. A younger man named Elihu had listened to what was being said. Because of his age, he had to wait until everyone else finished speaking.

"Are God's consolations not enough for you," he questioned, "words spoken gently to you? . . . What are mortals, that they could be pure . . . ?" (Job 15:11-14).

None of these men understood what had happened between God and Satan. Each one understood only a little about God, and even what they knew they didn't completely understand. But God knew them and loved them. He knew that He would be able to help them understand more of the picture at the right time.

KEY REFERENCES

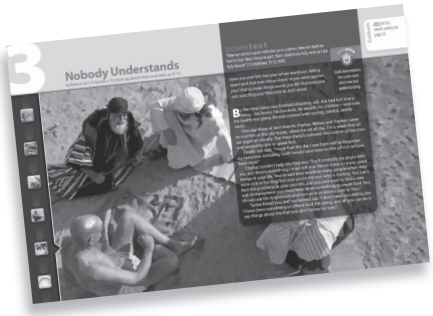
- Job 3-37
- *Education*, chap. 16, p. 155
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 6, pp. 169-172
- Our Beliefs, nos. 7, 11, 8

POWER TEXT

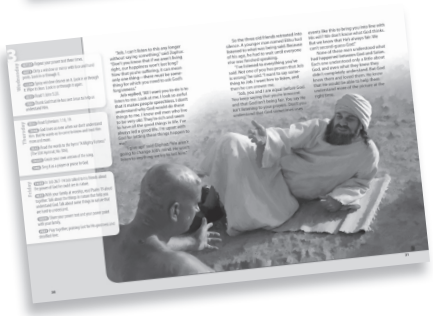
"For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known" (1 Corinthians 13:12).

POWER POINT

God's love remains the same even when we fail to see the big picture.







Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 32.

Sunday

READ Read Romans 5:3-5 and this week's story, "Nobody Understands."

LEARN Begin to memorize the power text.

PRAY Praise God for His love even when you doubt.

Monday

READ Read Psalm 23:4.

THINK What are some of the things you don't understand about your life?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to lead and comfort you, even though you cannot clearly see the big picture of where He is leading you.

Tuesday

READ Read Psalm 31:7.

THINK Why do you think Job's friends didn't understand him? What can you learn from this story about being understanding toward others when you cannot see the big picture of why they are struggling?

WRITE In your Bible study journal, write about what it feels like to be misunderstood.

SHARE Share Bible promises with someone who doesn't understand why God allows bad things to happen in his/her life.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to take away the pain of being misunderstood. Praise Him for His love.

Wednesday

READ Read 1 John 5:20.

CLEAN Make handprints on a window or mirror. Look in or through it. Then spray window cleaner on it. Look in or through it. Wipe it clean. Look in or through it again.

WRITE In your Bible study journal, write about how this experience helped you understand the power text better.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God that Jesus helps us understand Him.

Thursday

READ Read Ephesians 1:18, 19.

THINK God loves us even when we don't understand Him. Yet He wants us to come to know and trust Him.

SING Read the words to the hymn "A Mighty Fortress" (*The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, no. 506). Sing it as a prayer to God.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Praise God for His protection against the forces of evil.

Friday

READ Read Job 26:7-14 and Psalm 19.

DISCUSS With your family at worship, talk about the things in nature that help you understand God. Talk about some things in nature that are difficult to understand.

SHARE Share with your family the power text from memory.

PRAY Pray together, praising God for His greatness and steadfast love.