

YEAR B | QUARTER 3

8

Reminded by a Rock

Grace
We allow God's grace to transform us.

POWER TEXT

"It is the LORD your God you must follow, and him you must revere. Keep his commands and obey him; serve him and hold fast to him" (Deuteronomy 13:4, NIV).

KEY REFERENCES

- Joshua 23; 24
- *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chap. 49, pp. 521-524
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 3, pp. 102-104
- Student lesson on page 92 of this guide

OUR BELIEFS

- No. 12, The Church
- No. 3, The Father
- No. 14, Unity in the Body of Christ

OBJECTIVES

The students will:

- **Know** that we receive God's grace by seeking His will.
- **Feel** that God continually blesses them as they choose to serve and obey Him.
- **Respond** to God's grace by choosing to obey Him every day.



We respond to God's grace by obeying Him out of love.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Joshua, now an old man, reminds the Israelites of all that God has done for them. He reminds them of God's covenant with them through which God has always enabled them to be victorious over their enemies. Joshua warns them against going back to heathen practices and encourages them to serve the Lord faithfully, just as he and his house have chosen to do. He puts a choice before the people and tells them of the choice he and his family have made, and the people decide to follow Joshua's example.

This is a lesson about grace.

Just as Joshua, a type of Christ, called Israel to worship God by choosing to serve Him, so we are called today to obey Him in all we do. God forces no one; the choice is ours. As we accept God's grace into our lives, we are motivated to obedience and service.

Teacher Enrichment

Joshua's farewell speech can be summed up in two phrases: "It was the LORD your God who fought for you. . . .

". . . You are to hold fast to the LORD your God, as you have until now" (Joshua 23:3-8, NIV). He recognizes that the covenant might be broken, not by God but by His people, and offers four action steps God's people can take:

1. Give God the credit for all they have and all they are (verse 3).
2. Obey the Lord (verse 6).
3. Live a life of separation from the world (verse 7).
4. Avoid worshipping other gods (verse 7).

Some Christians today do not like the idea that life lived in relationship with Jesus has its incomplete dimension. Instead, "they would like to come to faith in Jesus and receive life as a neatly wrapped package. The business of living one day at a time, in which we grow toward wholeness in Christ, frustrates them. They want quick, easy answers, a life free of problems, and instant success" (John A. Huffman, Jr., *Joshua, The Communicator's Commentary, Old Testament* [Waco, Tex.: Word, Inc., 1987], vol. 6, p. 253).

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. Listen for the Name* *B. Create Your Own Game*	balls, spoons, newspapers, cans OR boxes
* Prayer & Praise	15-20	See page 87. Prayer & Praise may be used at any time during the program.	songbooks, world map, pushpins, Bible box (optional), index cards, pencils
2 Bible Lesson	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story Experiencing the Story Exploring the Bible	white/chalkboard, markers/chalk, paper, pencils Bibles, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk, paper, pencils Bibles, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk
3 Applying the Lesson	10-15	*Scenario*	
4 Sharing the Lesson	10-15	*Choose God*	Bibles, paper, pencils
* 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

Listen for the Name

Say: **Let's play a game similar to Simon Says. The leader quickly will give a series of instructions to obey. Instructions might include "Touch your nose three times" or "Pat your head 10 times."**

Choose one person to lead the game. Tell the class they will have to listen carefully to the leader's directions. If the leader begins a direction with their name, such as "Kelly says," the class should obey the directions. If the leader omits their name, the class shouldn't obey.

Anyone who obeys a direction not preceded by the leader's name is out of the game and must sit down until the game is finished.

Allow students to play a few rounds, choosing a new leader each time.

Debriefing

Ask: **Why was it hard to follow the directions correctly each time?** (You had to listen carefully. You had to know who you were supposed to be following.) **How was playing this game like following God's directions?** (It wasn't hard if you stayed close and paid attention to the leader.) **What was it like to have to stop playing the game after you obeyed the wrong direction? How was being separated from the game like what happens when we don't obey God?** (God doesn't send us away if we don't obey. But sometimes not following His directions will separate us from Him.) Say: **Let's say together our power text, Deuteronomy 13:4:**

"It is the LORD your God you must follow, and him you must revere. Keep his commands and obey him; serve him and hold fast to him" (Deuteronomy 13:4, NIV).

The message of our power point is that

We respond to God's grace by obeying Him out of love.

(Adapted from *First Impressions: Unforgettable Openings for Youth Meetings* [Loveland, Colo.: Group Publishing, Inc., 1998], p. 24. Used by permission.)

B

YOU NEED:

- ☐ balls
- ☐ spoons
- ☐ newspapers
- ☐ cans OR boxes

Create Your Own Game

Form groups of four to six students.

Say: **You are going to create your own game. The only materials you can use are a ball, a spoon, newspapers, and a can or box. Also think of rules and instructions for your game.** Ask for volunteers to demonstrate their games.

Debriefing

Ask: **Did you find you had to use rules and instructions? Why? Did using the rules and instructions help you win the game? How is this like or unlike the rules and instructions that God gives us for following Him?** (He created us and gave us life; He knows best what directions are needed for us to function well, just as you knew best what instructions were needed for playing your game.) Say: **Let's say together our power text, Deuteronomy 13:4:**

"It is the LORD your God you must follow, and him you must revere. Keep his commands and obey him; serve him and hold fast to him" (Deuteronomy 13:4, NIV).

The message of our power point is that

We respond to God's grace by obeying Him out of love.

Prayer & Praise

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

"It's About Grace" (see page 147)
"I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 146)
"Step by Step" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 67)

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:
- ☐ Bible box (optional)

You might use a box a Bible came in, with a slot in the top, for the offering. Remind the class that true worship means choosing to know God's will and committing ourselves to doing it. We find God's will expressed in the Bible. Giving our offerings to His work is one way of showing our commitment to following His Word.

Prayer

YOU NEED:
- ☐ index cards
- ☐ pencils

Give each student an index card and pencil, and then have all of them write a short description of an aspect of obedience to God that has been difficult for them personally. Then, in prayer, ask God for a special sense of His presence and the strength for the class members to accept God's victory in their lives. Close with a prayer for the students' joys and sorrows, for the birthday and other special event celebrants, as well as for the visitors.

Notes

2

BIBLE LESSON

Introducing the Bible Story

YOU NEED:
- ☐ white/chalkboard
- ☐ markers/chalk
- ☐ paper
- ☐ pencils

Divide the students into groups and ask them to follow the directions you have written where all can see:

Imagine that you are an employer looking for someone to be your chief accountant. You want to hire the right person for the job. Make a list of requirements (for example, qualifications, trustworthiness, experience), then, based on those requirements, write a list of questions to ask each candidate for the position.

Ask students from various groups to share some of the requirements on their lists. Say: **Today we are studying what Joshua said to the Israelites just before he died. He was instructing them about how to be true followers of God—the One who had brought them out of Egypt and into the wonderful country in which they now lived.**

Say: **Let's find out what it takes to be a true Christian who by God's grace lives in harmony with His instructions.**

Experiencing the Story

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ white/chalkboard
- ☐ markers/chalk
- ☐ paper
- ☐ pencils

Distribute pencils and paper. Say: **In your groups, read over Joshua 23 and 24 and make a list of requirements you can find that God has for someone wanting to be His follower.**

When groups have finished, or a specified time is up, ask students to tell you the qualifications they decided on as you create a master list at the front. Be sure to include such items as:

Don't serve the gods of nations that don't honor Me (see Joshua 23:7).

Recognize that I am the One who fights your enemies (see Joshua 23:9).

Look for the ways I've led you in the past (see Joshua 24:2-6).

Choose whom you want to serve (see Joshua 24:15).

Say: **Let's repeat our power text, Deuteronomy 13:4:**

"It is the LORD your God you must follow, and him you must revere. Keep his commands and obey him; serve him and hold fast to him" (Deuteronomy 13:4, NIV).

As our power point reminds us:

We respond to God's grace by obeying Him out of love.

3

APPLYING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ white/chalkboard
- ☐ markers/chalk

Exploring the Bible

Write only the texts (not the parentheses) below on the board. Organize your class into five groups, each group taking one text. Say: **Your best friend has confided that she (or he) constantly worries that she cannot obey God the way He wants her to. In your groups, read your text and then discuss and decide how you could use it to encourage your friend.**

1. Deuteronomy 30:11-14 (keep God's word in your heart).
2. Joshua 3:13, 14 (step out in faith).
3. 1 Kings 17:13-16 (put God first).
4. Psalm 1:1 (avoid evildoers).
5. Hebrews 10:16 (know God's laws).

When the groups have had time to complete their answer, call on a representative from each group to share their observations. Be sure they support their comments with scriptural references. **Let's repeat once again our power text:**

"It is the LORD your God you must follow, and him you must revere. Keep his commands and obey him; serve him and hold fast to him" (Deuteronomy 13:4, NIV).

Let's remember the power point:

We respond to God's grace by obeying Him out of love.

Scenario

Read the following scenario to the students:

Christy has been going to a series of meetings, given by a visiting pastor on the topic of how to respond to God's grace. She's actually enjoying learning more about this topic. Tonight the pastor spoke about our response to God's grace by choosing to serve and obey God. Christy comes to you for advice and to find out more about what it's like to serve and obey God.

Debriefing

Ask: **What do you tell her? How can you demonstrate and explain this to her? What kind of encouragement will you give her? What is the message of our power point?**

We respond to God's grace by obeying Him out of love.

4

SHARING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ paper
- ☐ pencils

Choose God

Invite students to share if they had a chance to tell someone about the benefits of being obedient to God. Ask: **How did you explain to someone that every day we are making choices either to love and serve God or to follow the desires of our own hearts? What experiences do you personally have of God's goodness when you chose to follow Him in obedience?**

Have a volunteer read aloud Joshua 24:14, 15. Say: **In Joshua's time a lot of people made fake gods of wood and stone.**

Ask: **How would you think of a god that is a statue made of wood or stone?**

Say: **Sometimes we pay too much attention to things that aren't really important. Sometimes those things can push God into last place in our lives.**

Ask: **What kinds of things keep you from putting God first in your life?** Encourage students to give answers.

Set out markers and scrap paper. Ask students to draw at least three pictures of the things that tempt them and use too much of their time. Ask: **Though these could be positive things as well, why is it important that everything be placed in its rightful place among our priorities?** Have them turn to a partner and share what they drew. Then have them talk about what they can do to shift their focus from these priorities to the most meaningful priority, Jesus. Have students join hands around the circle for the closing.

Debriefing

Ask: **Why is it important that we choose God as our number-one priority? What are some of the things that we need to remember to give to God daily? What did He promise if we prioritize Him?** (Matthew 6:33) **Then why not start today? If God promised to give us all the other things if we seek Him first, do we have anything to lose?**

Let's repeat the power point once again:

We respond to God's grace by obeying Him out of love.

Closing

Prayer and closing comments:

Pray: **Dear God, we want to choose You today. We're throwing away things that tempt us to forget You. Help us remember that You're our one, true God, and help us to respond to Your grace in obedience. In Jesus' name, amen.**

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: **Hannah prays for a child. We praise God whether we are happy or sad.**

Notes

Student lesson

Reminded by a Rock

Have you ever noticed the faraway look in the eyes of your grandparents when they start telling stories of long ago? This must have been the look that the old man Joshua had on his face as he began reminding the people of God's care through the years he had been alive. He was nearly 110 years old. That's a lot of years to remember God's leading!

Long ago, when Joshua had been a young man, he and his friend Caleb had been two of the 12 spies sent to check out Canaan—the land God had promised to His people.

The people had wanted to know, first of all, if the land was as rich and abundant as they had heard, if it really was "flowing with milk and honey" (Exodus 3:8). And before they started dreaming, they wanted to know if conquering it was really possible.

Of the 12 men sent on the mission, only Caleb and Joshua believed that God would give them all the wonderful things they saw—houses, well-established farms, vineyards, goat herds. It was another 40 years before God was able to give Canaan to the Israelites. This was because so few at that time believed God's promise.

But with God's help the children of Israel had finally conquered Canaan and now lived in those farms and houses on the fertile land. The Bible says that God had given them peace. Now Joshua was old and he wanted his children and grandchildren to continue to live in peace and prosperity, so before he died, he gathered everyone together near the tabernacle and offered his last words of wisdom and advice.

Joshua began by reminding the people of all that God had done for them. They had received the land of Canaan as inheritance by God's power, not their own. Jehovah had guided them all along the way.

Joshua warned the people to not make friends with the idol worshippers in neighboring countries. The best advice was to stay away from them. Then Joshua shared an important lesson with the people. Once they would become friends with evil, it would no longer seem so evil. Trying to be friends with both God's followers and Satan's followers is impossible.

Unfortunately, Satan's followers become like a trap. Joshua warned the people that those traps would lure them on for more. The evil practices would become like blinders over their eyes so they wouldn't be able to see what was wrong. Eventually the land of Canaan would return to its original owners if the Israelites forgot God.

Joshua wasn't threatening the people. He was calling their attention to the natural sequence of cause and effect. If an Israelite woman married a Canaanite man who worshipped idols, their oldest son would inherit the property when his parents died.

If that child married another Canaanite, it was not likely that they would honor and worship God. That family would gradually adopt the sinful practices of the idol worshippers. As a result they would lose their identity among God's people, choosing instead to associate with the Canaanites.

But suppose God's followers married only God's followers. Suppose all the Israelites continued to worship God and followed His guidelines for happiness. Then the land would continue to belong to God's people. The Israelites would then continue to enjoy peace, happiness, and freedom.

At the end of his speech Joshua told the people they would have to decide. They could keep the land if they chose to follow God's leading and worship only Him. But they had to get rid of the idols. Then, every day, they must decide whom they would worship—the true God, or idols.

Such decisions have two parts—facing one way and turning one's back on another way. When people follow God, they turn their backs on Satan. Then Joshua told them what his own choice would be. He and his family had decided to worship God.

The people said they had made the same choice. Then Joshua took a stone and rolled it near the tabernacle.

"'See!' he said to all the people. 'This stone will be a witness against us. It has heard all the words the LORD has said to us. It will be a witness against you if you are untrue to your God' " (Joshua 24:27, NIV).

Joshua died soon after that, at the age of 110. But if ever people had second thoughts about their decision, all they had to do was to go to the tabernacle and look at the huge stone, a reminder of their decision to worship only the living God and to follow His guidelines for happiness.

KEY REFERENCES

- Joshua 23; 24
- *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chap. 49, pp. 521-524
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 3, pp. 102-104
- Our Beliefs, nos. 12, 3, 14

POWER TEXT

"It is the LORD your God you must follow, and him you must revere. Keep his commands and obey him; serve him and hold fast to him" (Deuteronomy 13:4, NIV).

POWER POINT

We respond to God's grace by obeying Him out of love.







Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 61.

Sunday

READ Read Joshua 23 and this week's story, "Reminded by a Rock."

DRAW Draw a picture of a stone altar that Joshua might have built. In bold letters, write the power text on the altar, using "I" instead of "you."

LEARN Begin to learn the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you choose Him every day.

Monday

READ Read Joshua 24:1-28.

THINK Think about what employers look for in a good employee. List three principles from this that you think would apply to being a true worshipper of God.

TALK Talk to an adult about choices they've made in their lives. With what one choice are they the most satisfied?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you make good choices in being obedient to Him.

Tuesday

READ Read Joshua 24:29-33.

THINK Why do you think that the Israelites obeyed and honored God throughout Joshua's lifetime?

TALK Joshua recounts the history of the people of Israel, going all the way back to Abraham. Of the events described, choose three that you think were most important. Explain why.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God for the privilege of obeying Him.

Wednesday

READ Read James 1:22-25.

THINK Explain in your own words how a mirror is used in the above verses to explain the difference between obedience and disobedience.

SING Sing "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus."

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you remove the "idols" that separate you from wholeheartedly following Him.

Thursday

READ Scripture mentions stones occasionally to symbolize various things. Read the following references and identify what the stone represents in each: Genesis 28:18-22; Revelation 21:19, 20; Isaiah 28:16; Psalm 118:22, 23.

SAY Repeat the power text from memory.

WALK If you want to follow God, go for a walk and find a stone as a reminder of your covenant with Him.

PRAY Thank God for His grace and tell Him that you are willing to follow Him wherever He leads.

Friday

READ Read Romans 6:17.

WRITE Write your own definition of "wholeheartedly" in relation to obedience.

THINK Does wholehearted obedience to God mean that you can never do anything you want? Explain your answer.

REPEAT Say the power text aloud from memory.

PRAY Thank God for His amazing grace and ask Him to give you the desire to follow Him.