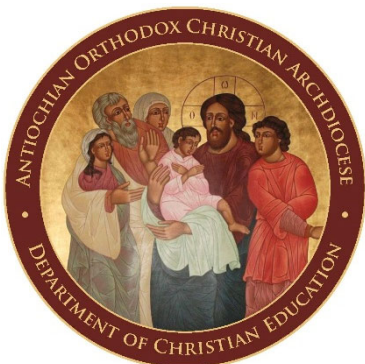




Like the Stars of Heaven

**A Book of Genesis Orthodox Sunday School Curriculum
Grades 2 - 3**



[Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of North America](#)
[Task Force for Youth & Young Adult Ministry](#)
[Department of Christian Education](#)

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Introduction

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On behalf of our Christian Education Ministry, I am pleased to present this new curriculum for our church schools centered on the book of Genesis. When His Eminence gave us the charge to bring new vitality to our youth and young adult ministry, one of our first goals was to ensure our young people were given sound fundamental teachings in the Faith centered on the person of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We decided to create a pilot program of fifteen lessons on the Gospel of Matthew with the theme “Who do you say that I am?”

Having received very positive feedback from the churches that used the curriculum, we decided to continue providing lessons each year that corresponded to the Bible Bowl. This year we will focus on Genesis with the theme: “Like the Stars of Heaven.” Our goal is for all of our young people to gain a greater understanding of who we were meant to be as human beings, the impact the fall of Adam and Eve had on us, why we were in need of a Savior, and how God began to prepare humanity for the coming Savior. With so many competing messages in our culture about what it means to be human, we felt going back to the beginning of the scriptures was the best place to go.

I am deeply grateful to all who have worked so hard to bring this curriculum to fruition. Mrs. Anna-Sarah Farha, our director of the Christian Education Ministry, has done a wonderful job of keeping all of the many moving parts running together and coordinating our dedicated team. We have a truly amazing team of writers doing the lesson the plans and devoted priests serving as theological advisors. We also must thank Fr. Stephen De Young for providing the theological vision for the curriculum.

Our prayer is for this curriculum to be a helpful tool for our church schools to inspire our young people to live with a deeper commitment to Christ, struggle to regain the pristine beauty of the image and likeness of our Creator, and live in eternal joy shining as stars of heaven with the Saints.

With love and esteem in Christ,



V. Rev. Nicholas Belcher

Chairman of the Antiochian Archdiocese Task Force on Youth and Young Adult Ministry

Acknowledgements

Like the Stars of Heaven, A Book of Genesis Orthodox Sunday School Curriculum is the work of a dedicated team led by the V. Rev. Fr. Nicholas Belcher. We wish to acknowledge the contributions of the following individuals:

V. Rev. Fr. Nicholas Belcher, MDiv, *Chairperson*
Anna-Sarah Farha, *Department of Christian Education*
Sandy Nelson, MA Curriculum & Instruction, MTS, *Editor*
Elaine Atherholt, *Editor and Layout*
Annunciation Press, *Logo Design*

Theological Advisors

V. Rev. Fr. Stephen De Young, PhD
Rev. Fr. Calinic Berger, PhD
Rev. Fr. Nicholas Long, MA

Curriculum Writers

Rev. Fr. Calinic Berger, PhD	Sandy Nelson, MA Curriculum & Instruction, MTS
Subdeacon Gregory Abdalah, DMin	Gail Meena Malaniak, MEd
Anna-Sarah Farha	Kh. Gigi Shadid
Rev. Dn. Anthony Gilbert, PhD	Donna Starke, MEd
Matthew Nelson	Kristina Wenger, MEd

Feedback

His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH declared 2021 to be the [Year of Youth](#), and appointed a new [Task Force for Youth & Young Adult Ministry](#) for our Archdiocese. ***Like the Stars of Heaven, A Book of Genesis Orthodox Sunday School Curriculum*** follows the release of ***Who Do You Say That I Am? A Gospel of Matthew Sunday School Lesson Plan*** in 2021, which was a part of the initial work of the Task Force. Feedback on this curriculum and its design from those who use these lessons is appreciated. [Please share your feedback through this form.](#)

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Feedback on this lesson plan is welcome and encouraged [HERE](#).

Title of Lesson:	Lesson Number:	Key Verse(s)	Grade Level
Introduction to Genesis	Introductory Lesson	“Then God said, ‘Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.’” Genesis 1:26	PK-1st Grade ✓ 2nd-3rd Grade 4th-6th Grade Junior High Senior High

Lesson Length: 30 minutes (main) + 15 minutes (extension)

Key Ideas in this Lesson:

- God created everything.
- We do not concern ourselves with HOW He did it, but that it was He who created it.
- We are made in His image and are called to be like Him.
- Sin entered into the world because of our disobedience, but God loves us and saves us.

Key Vocabulary in this Lesson:

- Genesis - the first “book” in the Bible; the beginning
- Image - a likeness to something (We are created in God’s image)

To prepare for this lesson, you will need:

Audio/Visual	Printed Materials	Craft/Activity Materials
Tablet/computer to play these songs: Genesis 1:1 Song https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6cWJw4ZZ2U Noah, God's Friend https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WFXqsuMg3vA Made in God's Image https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZBU1f3Lq81Y	Children’s Bible with pictures Bookmark patterns	Star stickers (Optional) Poster board (Optional) Ribbon for bookmarks Colored pencils, crayons, or markers

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Opening Prayer:

Open with prayer. Suggestions for opening include **The Lord's Prayer** or the **Prayer Before Reading Scripture**.

"Illumine our hearts, O Master Who loves mankind, with the pure light of Your divine knowledge. Open the eyes of our mind to the understanding of Your gospel teachings. Implant also in us the fear of Your blessed commandments, that trampling down all carnal desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing such things as are well-pleasing unto You. For You are the illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and unto You we ascribe glory, together with Your Father, Who is from everlasting, and Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen."

Opening Activity: (10-15 mins)

Explain to your students that we will be learning about the Book of Genesis for the next several Sundays, but before we get started, we want to know what they already know and what they want to know about the book of Genesis. Make a K-W-L chart on the board or a poster board.

K-W-L Chart:

Find out what your students **Know** about the Book of Genesis. If they are stuck, have them list the names of people in the Bible and tell you what they know about them (Adam, Eve, Noah, etc.). Write their responses on the board underneath the "Know" column.

KWL Chart		
Know	Want to know	Learned

Next, have your students tell you what they **Want** to know about the Bible and specifically about the Book of Genesis which we will be studying for the next several weeks. Write those down as well.

As a teacher, it is very important to do this exercise with your students before spending so much time on the topic. Get an idea of what they already know and build on that. In addition, knowing what they want to know will help you engage your students more effectively. You may wish to use a poster board for this activity so that you can add to it during upcoming lessons, check off things that you all covered under "want to know," and add to the **Learned** column when all of the lessons have been completed.

Lesson Instruction: (15 mins)

Bible Time:

Bring a Children's Bible with pictures and sit your students together on the carpet if you have one (or walk among the students seated at their desks), and flip through the pictures with them as a "sneak preview" of some of the stories in the Book of Genesis. Get them excited about the Bible and what you all will be learning in the coming

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weeks!

Play A Game: *Do You Want to Be a Star?* Ask the following questions and if a student gets the answer right, give them a star sticker.

Another variation of this game is **Four Corners**. This gets everyone involved as opposed to a few who know the answers. Label the four corners of the classroom with paper signs: A, B, C, and D. Ask the question and give multiple choice answers. Students then walk to the corner that they think is the right answer. This way, the teacher can see who knows and who is following or guessing, and it gets everybody up and moving.

1. What's the name of the garden that God planted for Adam and Eve?
 - a. Adam's garden
 - b. Garden of Gethsemane
 - c. **Garden of Eden**
 - d. Garden of Life
2. Who was Cain's brother?
 - a. Isaac
 - b. Joseph
 - c. Moses
 - d. **Abel**
3. In the story of Noah's Ark, how many days did the flood last?
 - a. **40**
 - b. 30
 - c. 7
 - d. 21
4. Finish this sentence: I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, _____.
 - a. Very God of Very God
 - b. **Maker of Heaven and earth**
 - c. All things visible and invisible
 - d. Who spake by the prophets
5. How old was Abraham when his son, Isaac, was born.
 - a. **100 years old**
 - b. 50 years old
 - c. 200 years old
 - d. 80 years old
6. What did Jacob dream about?
 - a. An ark with animals
 - b. A garden
 - c. A snake
 - d. **A ladder to heaven**
7. What did God create on Day 7?
 - a. Adam and Eve
 - b. **Nothing. He rested.**
 - c. Animals
 - d. Trees
8. God created Eve from _____.
 - a. The earth
 - b. The garden
 - c. **Adam's rib**

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- d. The water
9. What special gift did Jacob give to his son Joseph?
- A pet dove
 - A colorful hat
 - A farm
 - A many-colored coat**
10. What did Joseph's brothers do because they were jealous of him?
- They threw him in a well, then sold him to travelers who were on their way to Egypt.**
 - They ripped up his coat.
 - They threw him over the mountain.
 - They sold all of his sheep.

Closing Activity: (10 mins)

Before class: Print the bookmark patterns onto heavy paper or cardstock, or print and then glue them onto cardstock or poster board. Have students design the bookmarks to use for their Bibles, related to some of the stories in Genesis. For instance, they can draw animals on the ark, or the Garden of Eden, Jacob's ladder, etc. They can punch a hole at the top and add a ribbon.

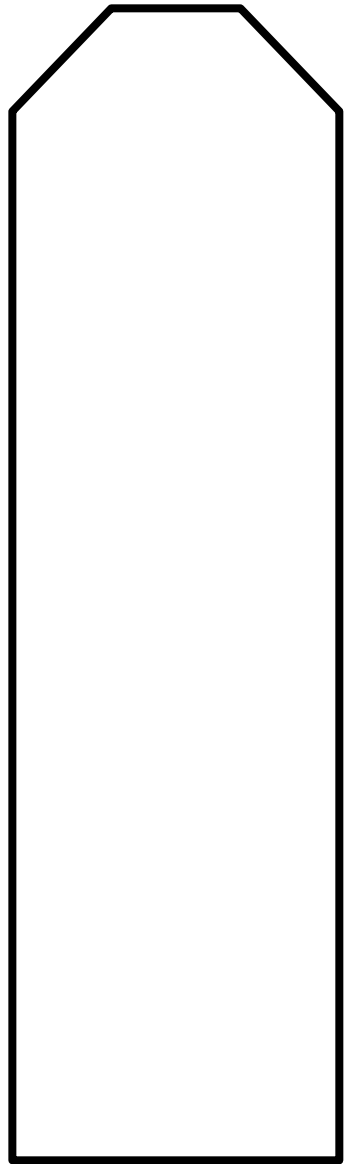
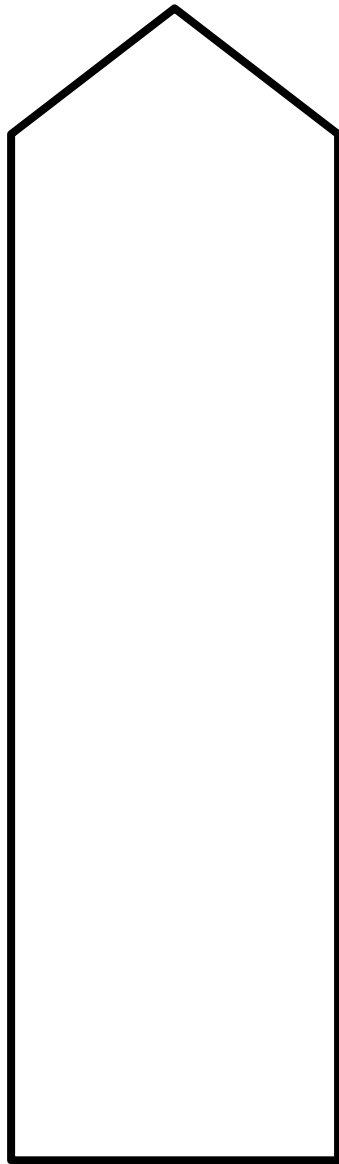
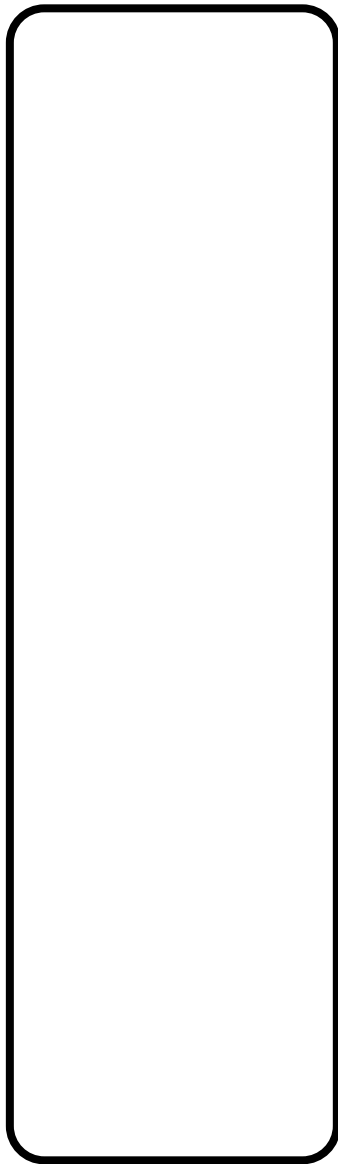
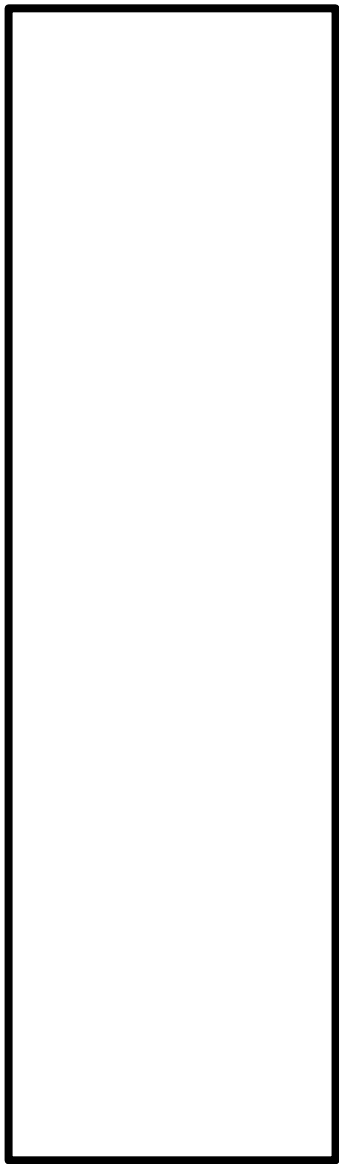
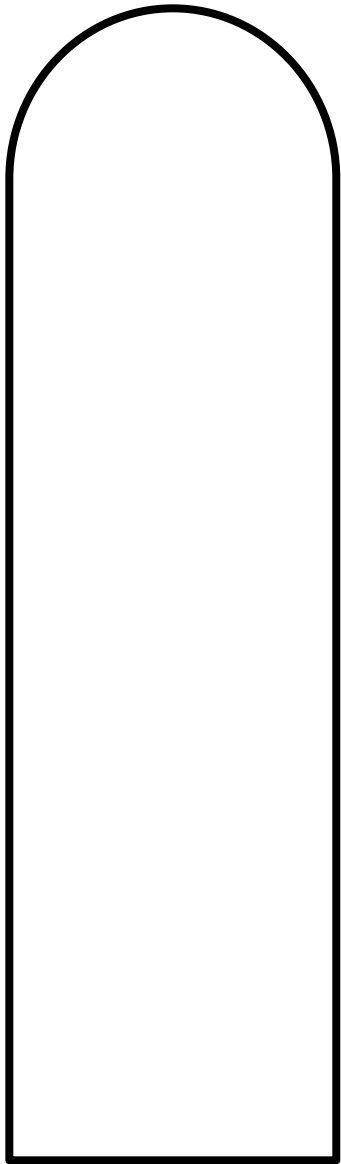
To extend this lesson for additional time...

Additional activity ideas:

1. Play the Musical Chairs game using some of the Bible songs linked in this lesson.

Background Resources for Teachers:

- Teachers may want to consult the [Book of Genesis Common or Challenging Questions and Orthodox Christian Responses](#) resource prior to this lesson.



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Feedback on this lesson plan is welcome and encouraged [HERE](#).

Title of Lesson:	Lesson Number:	Key Verse(s)	Grade Level
Giving Thanks for God's Creation	1	"In the beginning, God made heaven and earth." Genesis 1:1	PK-1st Grade ✓ 2nd-3rd Grade 4th-6th Grade Junior High Senior High

Lesson Length: 30 minutes (main) + 15 minutes (extension)

Key Ideas in this Lesson:

- We were created by the Holy Trinity.
- We are created in God's image.
- We show thanks for all that God has given us.

Key Vocabulary in this Lesson:

- Creation - God gave us all things to enjoy
- Holy Trinity - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

To prepare for this lesson, you will need:

Audio/Visual	Printed Materials	Craft/Activity Materials
Tablet/computer to play a song to reinforce the lesson: "Made in God's Image" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZBU1f3Lq81Y And to display the icons of Creation in this lesson packet	Bible for reading Genesis Chapters 1 and 2 The Creed handout, one copy per student Adam and Eve printout, one copy per student (by permission of truewaykids.com) (Optional) Print the icons of Creation included in this lesson packet	Large white construction paper (18 x 24), one sheet per student; scissors; glue. Crayons Star stickers, three per student Adam and Eve printout, one per student; craft sticks, 2 per student; scissors, glue.

Opening Prayer:

Open with prayer. Suggestions for opening include **The Lord's Prayer** or the **Prayer Before Reading Scripture**.

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"Illumine our hearts, O Master Who loves mankind, with the pure light of Your divine knowledge. Open the eyes of our mind to the understanding of Your gospel teachings. Implant also in us the fear of Your blessed commandments, that trampling down all carnal desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing such things as are well-pleasing unto You. For You are the illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and unto You we ascribe glory, together with Your Father, Who is from everlasting, and Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen."

Opening Activity: (5 mins)

Mirror Image Activity: Have students work with a partner. Ask each pair to stand up facing each other. Choose one in each pair to be the leader and one to be the mirror image. The leader will perform an activity while standing in place, such as waving an arm. The other student will imitate the activity so it looks like a mirror image. For example, if the leader waves his/her right arm, the other student would be waving his/her left arm. They should try to make it look like a mirror, keeping the pace and direction of the movement as similar as possible. After 3 activities, have the students reverse roles, so that each one has a turn at being the leader and the mirror image. After the activity, ask the class what they think it means to be created in the image of God.

Suggested Discussion ideas: How can we mirror, or be like God? How can we live like God?

Lesson Instruction: (20 mins)

Note: The students will be creating a picture during the lesson. The pattern for the lesson will be *listen, discuss, draw*.

A: Initial part of lesson

Begin by handing out the white paper, The Creed handout, scissors and glue. Ask students to fold it into fourths, so they have 4 equal squares. (2 squares on top, and 2 on the bottom.) Have them draw lines on the folds to separate the squares. For one side, they will glue a copy of The Creed handout after cutting it down to size. They will be drawing their pictures on the other side. Hand out the crayons, and have the rest of the supplies ready to be distributed as needed.

Note: As each part of the creation story is read, show students the corresponding Icon from the days of creation icons.

Ask:

Ask students to close their eyes and think about what the world was like before God created it. Allow time for responses.

Read to the class: Genesis 1:1-5.

Suggested discussion ideas: In the Creed, we refer to God as Light of Light. He is the Light.

Color: The top left box on their paper will represent the light that God created, so it will remain white. Have them color the top right box black to represent the night.

B: Second part

Continue with this format for each day of the creation:

Following verses 9 and 10: **Color:** The bottom left box will be green to represent the land. The bottom right box will be blue to represent the water.

Following verses 11 and 12: **Draw** a tree and plants in the green box.

Following verses 14-18: **Draw** the sun in the white box. **Draw** a moon in the black box with a white crayon. Give students the star stickers to place in the black box.

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Following verses 20-22: **Draw** birds in the white box. **Draw** sea creatures in the blue box.

Following verses 24 and 25: **Draw** animals in the green box.

Following verses 27 and 28: Give each student an Adam and Eve printout.

Suggested discussion ideas: Thinking about our mirror activity, how are we created? What are some ways we can be a mirror image of God? Since everyone is created in God's image, how should we treat each other?

Read Genesis 2: Have students cut out the pictures of Adam and Eve and glue them onto the craft sticks. Allow students the opportunity to think about where they will place Adam and Eve in their picture. (In the garden.) Discuss what God did on the 7th day. How do we remember and honor God on Sunday?

C: Activity/Response:

Suggested discussion ideas: We were created by the Holy Trinity. Have students highlight those parts of the creed on the back of their pictures. (I believe in One God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth. And in one Lord, Jesus Christ...by whom all things were made. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life.)

Challenge question: The Creation account is read 4 times every year in the Orthodox church. Can you name those times? (*The Nativity, Theophany, First week of Great Lent, and Pascha*)

Special needs accommodations: For students who struggle with drawing, cut out pictures of the creation for them to glue onto their paper.

Closing Activity: (5 mins)

Application: Allow students extra time to look at the days of creation icons and place them in order. Have students listen to the song, *Made in God's Image*.

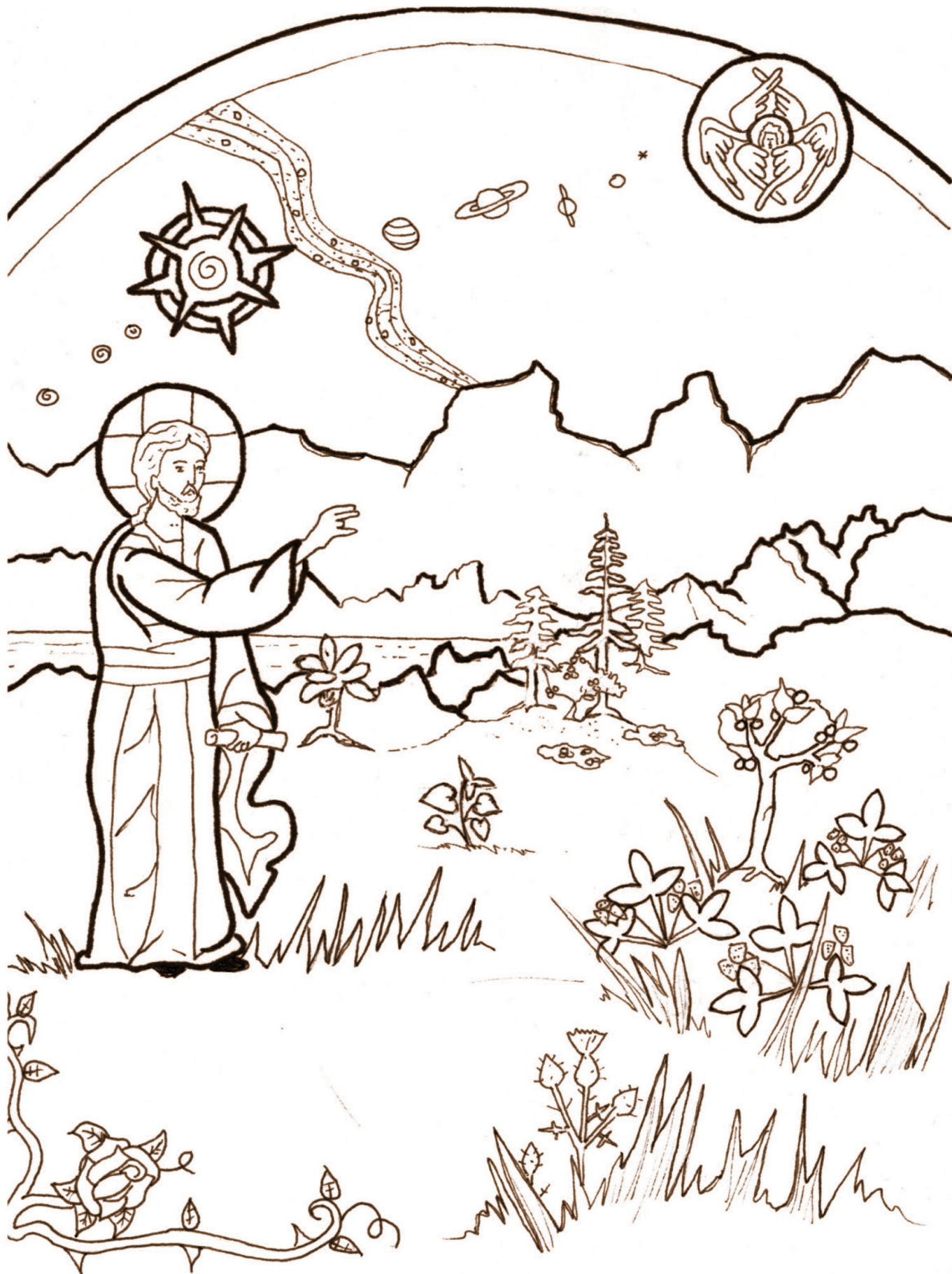
To extend this lesson for additional time...

Play the game, *God said*. (It's played like Simon says, but using various phrases God said in Genesis.) For example, God said, "Let there be light." Students would point to the light in their picture. Following the game, discuss the importance of obeying God.

Background Resources for Teachers:

- Teachers may want to consult the [Book of Genesis Common or Challenging Questions and Orthodox Christian Responses](#) resource prior to this lesson.





Thanks to <https://sparks4orthodoxkids.com/> for this beautiful coloring page of the Creation of the world!



Day One of Creation
Michael Kapeluck, Archangel Icons



Creation of the Firmament
Michael Kapeluck, Archangel Icons



Creation of Dry Land

Michael Kapeluck, Archangel Icons



Creation of the Sun and Moon

Michael Kapeluck, Archangel Icons



Creation of Sea Creatures and Birds

Michael Kapeluck, Archangel Icons



Creation of Land Animals and Man

Michael Kapeluck, Archangel Icons



Creation of Woman

Michael Kapeluck, Archangel Icons



Day Seven of Creation

Michael Kapeluck, Archangel Icons

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Feedback on this lesson plan is welcome and encouraged [HERE](#).

Title of Lesson:	Lesson Number:	Key Verse(s)	Grade Level
Adam and Eve Face Temptation	2	"And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." Matthew 6:13	PK-1st Grade ✓ 2nd-3rd Grade 4th-6th Grade Junior High Senior High

Lesson Length: 30 minutes (main) + 15 minutes (extension)

Key Ideas in this Lesson:

- Know the difference between good and evil - trusting God to help us make the right choice.
- We are created to bring honor and glory to God by obeying Him.
- What can we do when we are faced with temptations?

Key Vocabulary in this Lesson:

- Temptation - something that looks good, but it may be harmful to us and cause us to sin

To prepare for this lesson, you will need:

Audio/Visual	Printed Materials	Craft/Activity Materials
<p>Tablet/computer to display the Seventh Day of Creation icon included in this lesson packet</p> <p>And to play a song for the lesson extension: "Think About It" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J1fsq7Nx11E</p>	<p>Bible for reading Genesis Chapter 3</p> <p>(Optional) Print the icon of the Seventh Day of Creation included in this lesson packet</p>	<p>Three different sized boxes (small, medium, large). Fill the smallest box with small treats, so there is one per student.</p> <p>Toy snake</p> <p>Two signs: one that says <i>Good choice</i> with a picture of a cross, and one that says <i>Poor choice</i>, with a picture of a snake. Hang them up or display them on opposite sides of the room.</p> <p>(Optional) Four note cards on a ring, one set per student.</p>

Opening Prayer:

Open with prayer. Suggestions for opening include **The Lord's Prayer** or the **Prayer Before Reading Scripture**.

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"Illumine our hearts, O Master Who loves mankind, with the pure light of Your divine knowledge. Open the eyes of our mind to the understanding of Your gospel teachings. Implant also in us the fear of Your blessed commandments, that trampling down all carnal desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing such things as are well-pleasing unto You. For You are the illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and unto You we ascribe glory, together with Your Father, Who is from everlasting, and Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen."

Opening Activity: (5 mins)

Have each student work with a partner or in a small group. Give each group a small piece of paper. Ask them to look at the 3 boxes without touching them. Tell them to pretend each box contains a special gift, and to pretend that they could choose only one box. Have them work as a team to decide which box they would choose and write down their choice. (Small, medium, large, or you can number the boxes.)

Suggested discussion ideas: We have many opportunities in our lifetime to make choices. How did your team make a choice? What was important about the box that you chose? God teaches us to make good choices. As we read from the Bible today, think about the choices Adam and Eve made. (Let the class know the contents of the boxes will be revealed later in the lesson.)

Lesson Instruction: (20 mins)

A: Initial part of lesson

Suggested discussion ideas: God gives us the opportunity to make our own choices. When we make a good choice, we are choosing to follow God. When we make a poor choice, we are choosing to follow Satan.

Do: Divide the class into two teams. If the class is large, you may need three or four teams. (2-5 students per team works well.) Tell the class that as you read from Genesis 3, each team will need to decide if Adam and Eve made good choices or poor choices.

Read Genesis 3:1-3 aloud. Discussion topic: Eve had two choices. She could either tell the serpent the truth about what God told her to do, or she could choose to lie or be angry about it.

Activity: Have each team discuss Eve's choice and stand as a team on the good choice or poor choice side of the room to show their answer. Allow each team to explain their response. (Eve chose to tell the truth.)

B: Second part

Continue reading Genesis 3:4-6. Discussion question: What were the first two choices Eve could make? (She could obey God and not eat the fruit, or she could disobey God and eat the fruit.)

Activity: Have each team discuss Eve's choice and stand as a team on the good choice or poor choice side of the room to show their answer. Allow each team to explain their response and why they thought Eve made that choice. (Eve chose to eat the fruit.) Have each team tell what good choice Eve should have made, in order for their team to move back to the good choice side of the room.

Discussion question: What were the next choices Eve could make? (She could have told Adam not to eat the fruit, or she could have talked him into eating the fruit.)

Activity: Have each team discuss Eve's choice and stand as a team on the good choice or poor choice side of the room to show their answer. Allow each team to explain their response, and why they thought Eve made that choice. (Eve chose to talk Adam into eating the fruit.) Have each team tell what good choice Eve should have made, in order for their team to move back to the good choice side of the room.

Discussion question: What were the choices Adam could make? (He could have chosen to either not eat the fruit, or to eat the fruit.)

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Activity: Have each team discuss Adam's choice and stand as a team on the good choice or poor choice side of the room to show their answer. Allow each team to explain their response and why they thought Adam made that choice. (He chose to eat the fruit.) Have each team tell what good choice Adam should have made, in order for their team to move back to the good choice side of the room.

Discussion question: What were the choices that Adam and Eve could make? (They could choose to admit they disobeyed God and to apologize, or they could make excuses for their behavior.)

Activity: Have each team discuss Adam and Eve's choice and stand as a team on the good choice or poor choice side of the room to show their answer. Allow each team to explain their response, and why they thought Adam and Eve made that choice. (They chose to make excuses for their behavior.) Have the students all point to the cross on the sign that's on the opposite side of the room. Ask the class why the cross isn't on the poor choice sign. (Sin separates us from God.) Have each team tell what good choice Adam and Eve should have made, in order for their team to move back to the good choice side of the room. (The cross is on this side because when we choose to obey God, we are closer to Him.)

Suggested discussion ideas: Adam and Eve sinned because they gave in to temptations. Satan makes things look good to tempt us to sin. Our church helps us when we face temptations. Have students discuss some things the church provides to keep us from sin. (We can make the sign of the cross, we can wear a cross, we can pray to our patron saint, and we can receive communion to give us strength.)

Optional note card activity: (This can be done during the above discussion.) Give each student the note cards on a ring. On the first card have them write: "When I am tempted, I can ____." Have them write their three ideas on each of the other three cards. Let them take the cards home.

Challenge question: What do we say in the Lord's Prayer to ask for God's help when we are tempted? (Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.)

Closing Activity: (5 mins)

Choose students to take turns opening the boxes, starting with the largest box. Most of them will be surprised that the smallest box is the only one that had something inside.

Suggested discussion ideas: Why did you choose the largest box? Did it look more appealing? That is what Satan does – makes things look good to tempt us. If any team chose a different box, allow them the opportunity to explain their choice. Give each student one of the treats from the small box. (They may need to save it until after communion if it's an edible treat.)

To extend this lesson for additional time...

Additional activity ideas:

1. Have students sit in a circle. Pass the toy snake (Sneaky Snake) around the circle while playing music. (See the song link above.) When the music stops, the student holding the snake can share a story about a time he/she was tempted to disobey God, or tell something he/she could do when faced with a temptation.

Background Resources for Teachers:

- Teachers may want to consult the [Book of Genesis Common or Challenging Questions and Orthodox Christian Responses](#) resource prior to this lesson.



Day Seven of Creation
Michael Kapeluck, Archangel Icons

"Like the Stars of Heaven"
A Book of Genesis Orthodox Sunday School Curriculum
The Antiochian Orthodox Department of Christian Education (AODCE)

Feedback on this lesson plan is welcome and encouraged [HERE](#).

Title of Lesson:	Lesson Number:	Key Verse(s)	Grade Level
Be Like Noah – Trusting and Faithful	3	"I am setting my rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth." Genesis 9:13	PK-1st Grade ✓ 2nd-3rd Grade 4th-6th Grade Junior High Senior High

Lesson Length: 30 minutes (main) + 15 minutes (extension)

Key Ideas in this Lesson:

- Noah chose to trust God and follow Him.
- God saved Noah from the flood.
- God will protect us when we trust Him and obey.

Key Vocabulary in this Lesson:

- Sin - giving in to temptations, not following God; sin separates us from the love of God
- Covenant - a promise (God made a covenant with Noah to never destroy the earth again. God promises His protection for us.)

To prepare for this lesson, you will need:

Audio/Visual	Printed Materials	Craft/Activity Materials
	Bible for reading Genesis Chapters 6-8 <i>Be like Noah</i> role playing cards Ark coloring page, one copy per student (by permission of truewaykids.com)	Puzzle pieces (approximately 100 pieces placed in a small bin). Mark the back of one piece with a cross and mix it with the others. Blue construction paper cut into wavy strips, one per student. (Optional) Props for role play activity.

Opening Prayer:

Open with prayer. Suggestions for opening include **The Lord's Prayer** or the **Prayer Before Reading Scripture**.

"Illumine our hearts, O Master Who loves mankind, with the pure light of Your divine knowledge. Open the eyes of our mind to the understanding of Your gospel teachings. Implant also in us the fear of Your blessed commandments, that trampling down all carnal desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing such

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things as are well-pleasing unto You. For You are the illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and unto You we ascribe glory, together with Your Father, Who is from everlasting, and Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen."

Opening Activity: (5 mins)

Pass around the bin of puzzle pieces and allow each student about 20-30 seconds to look through it. Ask them to look for the piece that is different from the rest. (You may need to let them know they are looking for the piece that is different on the back.) If they find it, tell them to keep it a secret. They should mix up the pieces and pass the bin to the next person without saying anything about the different piece. Keep passing it around until everyone has had two or three chances to find the different piece, without discussing it. Remind them to keep it a secret until everyone or almost everyone has found it. Next, ask the students to tell what is different about the one piece. (It has a cross on it.) Tell them to think about what the one piece might represent, and what the other pieces might represent, while they are listening to the Bible story.

Lesson Instruction: (20 mins)

A: Initial part of lesson

Whole class activity: Read Genesis 6:1-12 aloud to the class, or watch the video about Noah's Ark.

Suggested discussion ideas: Ask students to think about the puzzle piece activity.

Suggested discussion ideas: Who do you think the piece with the cross represents? (Noah, because he followed God.) Who do the other pieces represent? (All the other people who didn't follow God.)

Choose one student to find the piece that represents Noah and remove it from the bin. Place it outside of the bin.

Suggested discussion ideas: Think about how hard it is to be the only one following God. Do you think Noah knew some of those people that were left behind? Did he try to warn them? Why do you think they didn't listen to him?

B: Second part

Read the rest of Genesis 6, then all of chapter 7 aloud to the class. (In order to save time, read a shortened version or re-tell the story in your own words.)

Suggested discussion ideas: Why did God save Noah and his family? (They were faithful to God.) What happened to the people who refused to follow God? (They were caught in the flood and not saved.) Have each student place a wavy strip of blue paper into the bin to represent the flood.

C: Third part

Read Genesis 8 and 9, or re-tell it in your own words.

Suggested discussion ideas: Discuss the concept of promise/covenant. What was the covenant that God made with Noah? (To never destroy the earth again.) What does the rainbow signify? (A sign of His covenant.)

Explain that many times in our lives we are like that one puzzle piece. When we are faced with temptations, sometimes we may be the only one choosing to follow God, while our friends or others choose to sin. It could be very lonely, but God will reward us and protect us when we follow Him.

Small group activity: Divide the class into groups of 3 or 4, depending on the size of your class. Give each group one role play card. Allow about 5 minutes for the groups to work together to decide how they will act it out. Guide them into choosing a leader for each group. (It could be the person whose Saints Day is the closest to the current day.) Have each group act out their story for the class. After each role play, discuss how the leader can be like Noah in each situation, and follow God. Discuss the possible consequences of those that chose not to follow God.

Special needs accommodations: For students who struggle with role play due to anxiety, they can be involved with

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creating or holding props.

Closing Activity: (5 mins)

Give students time to color the picture of the ark.

To extend this lesson for additional time...

Additional activity ideas:

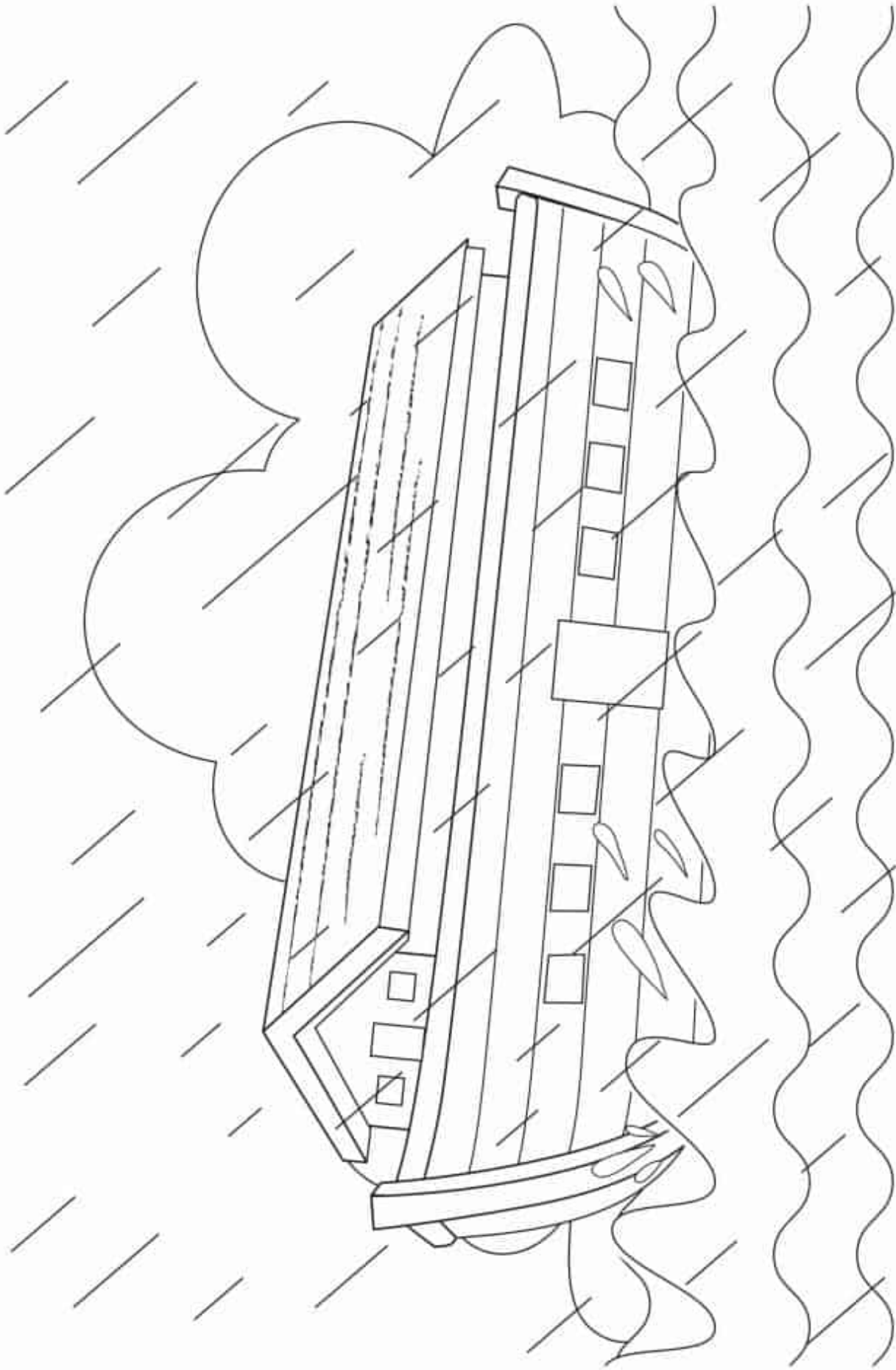
1. If possible, take the class into church to stand around the baptismal font. Otherwise, show students a picture of a font. Ask students to think about how baptism is like God protecting Noah from the flood. (God used the flood to wipe away the sinful people. In baptism, the water is blessed and our sins are washed away. We are renewed through baptism.)

Discussion questions: How many times is a person put into the water during baptism? (3, to represent the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.) Why do we put white clothes on a newly baptized person? (To represent the light of Christ.)

Allow students time to talk about a baptism they have seen, and what they observed.

Background Resources for Teachers:

- Teachers may want to consult the [Book of Genesis Common or Challenging Questions and Orthodox Christian Responses](#) resource prior to this lesson.



Be Like Noah Role Play Cards

Choose one person to be the leader. The leader will pretend to see his/her friends in the restroom at church. The friends want to hide in the restroom instead of going into church. What will the leader say to them? What will the leader do if the others try to talk him/her into hiding with them? What will the leader do when the others stay in the restroom?

Choose one person to be the leader. The group of friends pretend to be playing outside in the yard. All of the friends, except the leader, wanted to sneak into the neighbor's garden to take some food. What will the leader say to them? What will the leader do if the others try to talk him/her into taking the food too? What will the leader do when the others go into the garden?

Choose one person to be the leader. Pretend you are all at a birthday party. One of the friends dropped the popcorn bowl and broke it. Everyone except the leader wanted to lie and tell the adults they don't know how it broke. What will the leader say to them? What will the leader do if the others try to talk him/her into lying too? What will the leader do when the others tell the adults a lie?

Choose one person to be the leader. Pretend there is a new student at your school. The leader wants to invite the new student to play. The leader's friends don't want to include the new student. What will the leader say to his/her friends? What will the leader do when the others try to talk him/her into ignoring the new student? What will the leader do when the others refuse to include the new student?

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Feedback on this lesson plan is welcome and encouraged [HERE](#).

Title of Lesson:	Lesson Number:	Key Verse(s)	Grade Level
Who Do We Worship?	4	"Come, let us build ourselves a city and tower, whose top will reach to heaven. And let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth." Genesis 11:4	PK-1st Grade ✓ 2nd-3rd Grade 4th-6th Grade Junior High Senior High

Lesson Length: 30 minutes (main) + 15 minutes (extension)

Key Ideas in this Lesson:

- The Holy Trinity is the only one that is worthy of our praise and honor.

Key Vocabulary in this Lesson:

- Sinful pride - when we think highly of ourselves
- Good pride - when we are pleased with who we are in God's image and use the talents He has given us for His glory
- Babble - confused conversation

To prepare for this lesson, you will need:

Audio/Visual	Printed Materials	Craft/Activity Materials
Tablet/computer to play the Troparion of Pentecost: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BWXSzcU4Nzc	Tower of Babel mini-book (by permission of truewaykids.com) Tower of Babel activity sheet, copy one per student (by permission of truewaykids.com) Sheet music for the Apolytikion and Kontakion of Pentecost	Set of building blocks, or Jenga blocks. Large poster board, markers Pencils, coloring supplies

Opening Prayer:

Open with prayer. Suggestions for opening include **The Lord's Prayer** or the **Prayer Before Reading Scripture**.

"Illumine our hearts, O Master Who loves mankind, with the pure light of Your divine knowledge. Open the eyes of our mind to the understanding of Your gospel teachings. Implant also in us the fear of Your blessed commandments, that trampling down all carnal desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing such

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things as are well-pleasing unto You. For You are the illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and unto You we ascribe glory, together with Your Father, Who is from everlasting, and Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen."

Opening Activity: (5 mins)

Divide the class into groups of 2-3. Give each group some building blocks. Allow about 2 minutes for each team to build a tall tower. If the tower falls, they should keep trying until the time is up. The team with the tallest tower at the end of the 2 minutes is the winning team. Give each team another chance to build the tallest tower, but this time they must build their towers without speaking to each other. After the activity, discuss how difficult it was to build a tower together the second time.

Lesson Instruction: (20 mins)

A: Initial part of lesson

Whole class activity:

Have the students brainstorm what types of people they admire or idolize. Create a list on the poster board. (TV stars, sports figures, singers, etc.) Discuss why we think these types of people are worthy of our praise. (They are famous, they have a lot of money, they are talented, etc.)

Read the story of "The Tower of Babel" together, using the mini-book. Then, retell the story in your own words, leaving out a word in each sentence. Give blocks to the student who can identify the missing word. (One block for the first blank, two for the second, and so on.) Students should create a tower while they are completing the sentences orally. A different option: If you have a Jenga game, students can take turns removing a piece from the tower.

Possible Activity statements:

In the beginning, all the people spoke one _____. (language)

They planned to build a tower all the way to _____. (Heaven)

They used _____ to build the tower. (brick)

The people were building a tower to make a name for _____. (themselves)

Then _____ came down to see the city and the tower. (God)

God stopped their work by _____ up their languages. (mixing)

They stopped building the tower because they didn't _____ each other. (understand)

The name Babel means _____. (confusion)

God _____ the people all over the earth. (scattered)

Suggested discussion ideas: Sometimes we give praise and glory to other people, or to ourselves. God was not happy with their sinful pride, so he taught them a lesson. When we don't choose to follow God, we may also end up being confused. Just like in the story of Noah, the sinful people had consequences for their actions. Who is the one that is worthy of our praise? We worship the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

B: Second part

Small group activity: Have students work in groups of 2-3. Give each student an activity sheet. Allow time for the groups to work together to write words on the tower picture that tell how we give praise and honor to God. (Obey, pray, worship, be humble, love each other, give thanks, use our talents wisely.) At the top of their paper, have them write "We worship the Father, the Son, and the Holy Trinity."

Closing Activity: (5 mins)

Refer back to the list on the poster board. Remind them that we are all created in God's image. Call students up one at a time. Have each student write their name on the poster board. Next to their name, have them list a talent that God has given them. Ask them to share how they can use that talent to honor God.

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To extend this lesson for additional time...

Additional activity ideas:

1. Have the students learn the Kontakion and Troparion for Pentecost (Source: antiochian.org):

Kontakion: When the High One descended, confusing tongues, He divided the nations. And when He distributed the fiery tongues He called all to one unity. Wherefore, in unison we glorify the most Holy Spirit.

Troparion: Blessed are Thou, O Christ Our God, who hast revealed the fishermen as most wise, having sent upon them the Holy Spirit, and through them, Thou has fished the universe, O Lover of Mankind, glory to Thee.
2. Have students color the rest of their activity sheets while listening to the music. (Youtube link in Audio/Visual section.)

Background Resources for Teachers:

- Teachers may want to consult the [*Book of Genesis Common or Challenging Questions and Orthodox Christian Responses*](#) resource prior to this lesson.

Pentecostarion

PENTECOST

Troparion (A)

Byzantine Chant Tone 8

Antiochian Village Camp Version

Bless - ed art Thou, O Christ our God,
Ison
who hast re - vealed the fish - er - man as most wise,
hav - ing sent up - on them the Ho - ly Spir - it,
and through them Thou hast fished the u - ni - verse,
O Lov - er of man - kind, glo - ry to Thee.

Final ending

glo - ry to Thee.

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Rev. 1, 9/30/08

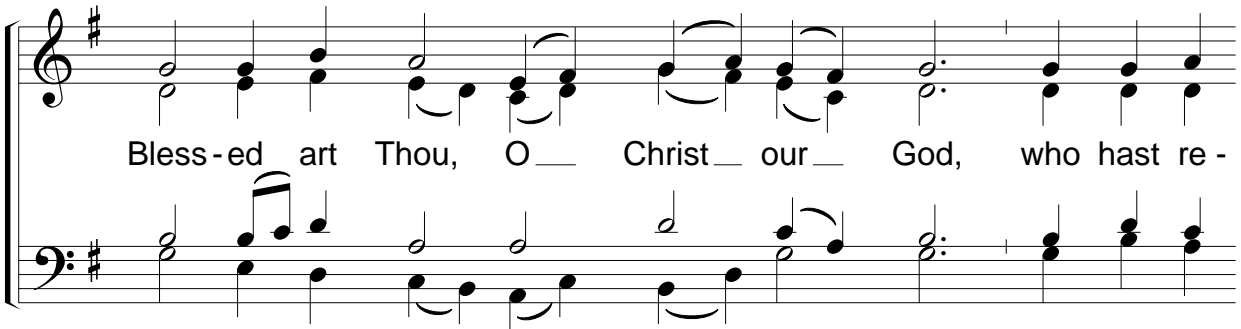
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Pentecostarion

PENTECOST
Apolytikion

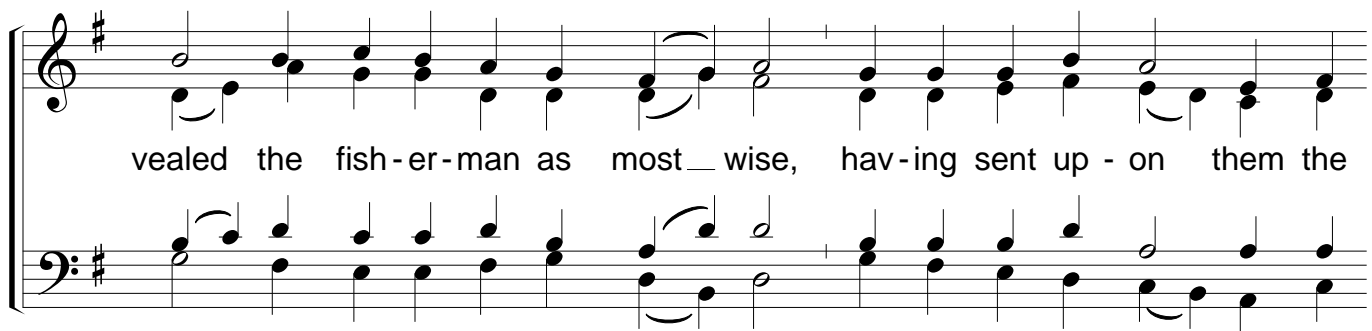
Byzantine Chant - Tone 8
Arranged by Michael G. Farrow
from the music of Frederick Karam (1926-1978)

Soprano
Alto



Bless - ed art Thou, O Christ our God, who hast re -

Tenor
Bass



vealed the fish - er - man as most wise, hav - ing sent up - on them the



Ho - ly Spir - it, and through them Thou hast fished the u - ni - verse, O





Lov - er of man - kind, glo - ry to Thee.


Pentecostarion
The Feast of Pentecost
Kontakion


Byzantine Chant Tone 8/Plagal Fourth Mode


Christopher Holwey

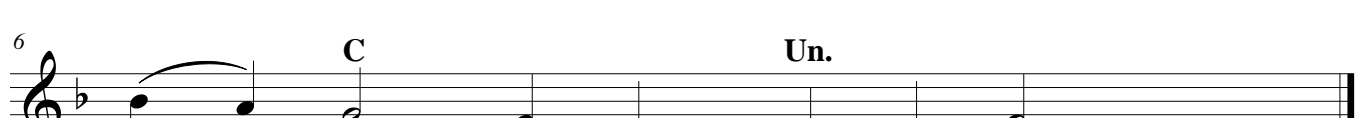
1 
 When the High One de - scend - ed, con - fus - ing tongues,

2 
 He di - vid - ed the _____ na - tions. And when

3 
 He dis - trib - u - ted the fier - y tongues He called all

4 
 to one _____ u - ni - ty. Where - fore, in

5 
 u - ni - son we glo - ri - fy the most _____ Ho - ly

6 
 Spir - it. _____

Pentecostarion
PENTECOST
Kontakion (B)

Byzantine Tone 8
Adapted by Christopher Holwey
from the music of Frederick Karam
(1926-1978)

$\text{♩} = 120$

Soprano
Alto

Tenor
Bass

When the high One de - scend - ed, con - fus - ing tongues,

he di - vid - - - ed the na - - - tions.

And when he dis - trib - ut - ed the fier - y tongues

he called all to one u - ni - ty.

PENTECOST-Kontakion (B) - 2

Where-fore, in u - ni - son we glo - ri - fy the most

rit.
Ho - ly Spir - - - it._____



"Like the Stars of Heaven"
Grades 2-3

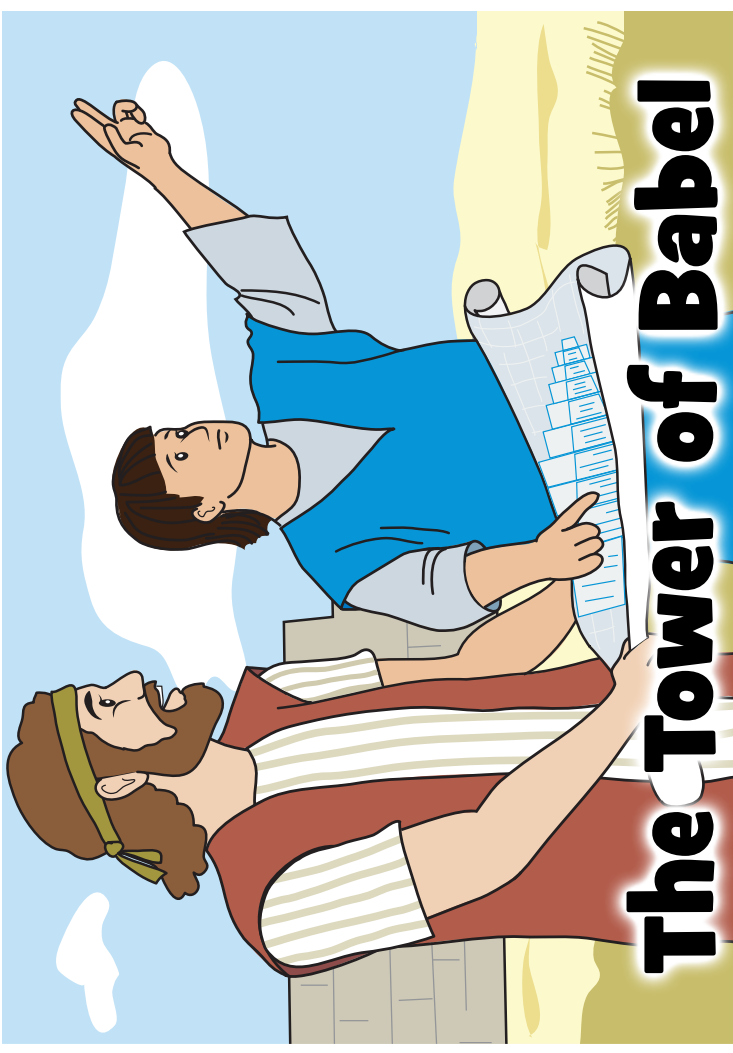
A Book of Genesis Orthodox Sunday School Curriculum, AODCE

The people stopped working together.

God saved them from their proud hearts.

The people began to obey God and spread around the world.

They learned that God is the greatest!



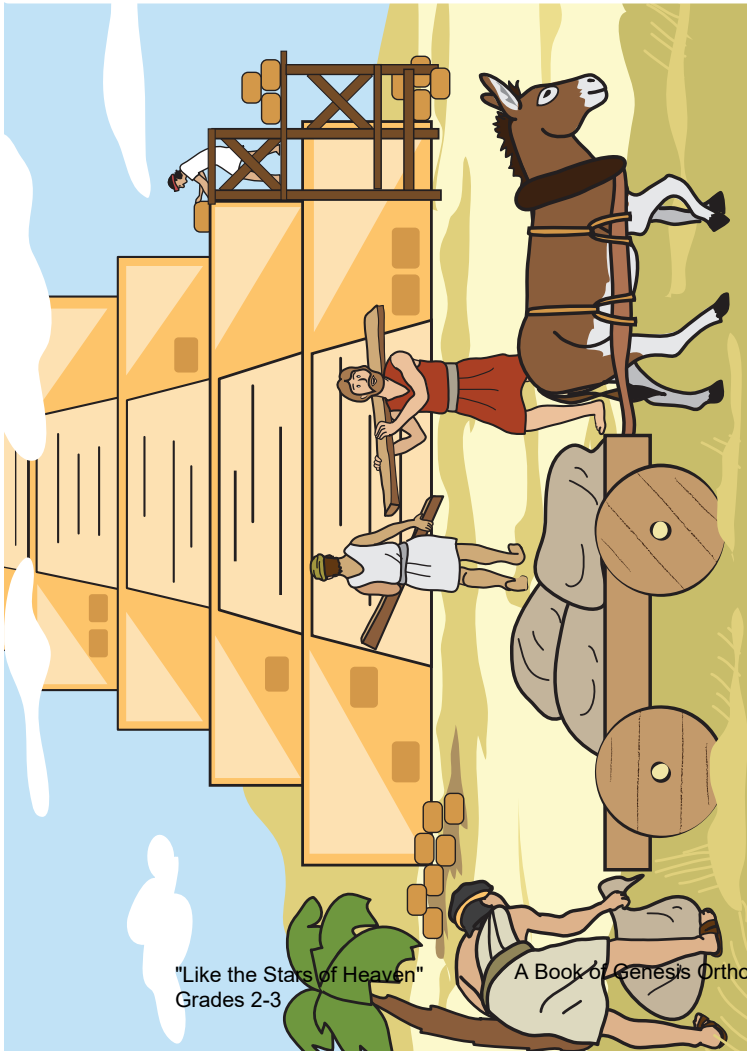
The Tower of Babel

The people after Noah didn't listen to God.

The people became proud.

They wanted to be famous.

They planned to build a big tower so that everyone would know how great they were.



"Like the Stars of Heaven"
Grades 2-3

They worked hard.

Brick after brick, the tower grew taller and taller.

They were very happy with their job.

But God was worried about their pride.



God mixed up their language so they could not understand each other.

It seemed like they were babbling.

They couldn't work together.

This was the beginning of the languages.



“Like the Stars of Heaven”
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The Antiochian Orthodox Department of Christian Education (AODCE)

Feedback on this lesson plan is welcome and encouraged [HERE](#).

Title of Lesson:	Lesson Number:	Key Verse(s)	Grade Level
The Faith of Abraham	5	“And there Abraham built an altar to the Lord, who appeared to him.” Genesis 12:7	PK-1st Grade ✓ 2nd-3rd Grade 4th-6th Grade Junior High Senior High

Lesson Length: 30 minutes (main) + 15 minutes (extension)

Key Ideas in this Lesson:

- Abraham had faith that God would keep his promises.
- We should have faith like Abraham and believe in God’s promises.

Key Vocabulary in this Lesson:

- Altar - a special table containing holy items that the clergy use for worship

To prepare for this lesson, you will need:

Audio/Visual	Printed Materials	Craft/Activity Materials
	<p>Bible for reading Genesis 12:1-9, plus one Bible for each group of students</p> <p>Divine Liturgy service book</p> <p>God’s Promises to Abraham activity sheet (one per group of students)</p> <p>Matching game: part of the free Preparing the Gifts printable activity package from Orthodox Pebbles https://orthodoxpebbles.com/orthodox-basics/preparing-the-gifts/</p> <p>(Optional) Worksheets from the free Preparing the Gifts printable activity package from Orthodox Pebbles: Matching the Holy Items to Their Names, Anagram activity https://orthodoxpebbles.com/orthodox-basics/preparing-the-gifts/</p>	<p>Pictures of an altar table (taken in advance).</p> <p>Small group activity: scissors, glue sticks, colored construction paper.</p> <p>Individual activity options: white construction paper, colored construction paper, craft gems, buttons, decorative beads and ribbon.</p>

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Opening Prayer:

Open with prayer. Suggestions for opening include **The Lord's Prayer** or the **Prayer Before Reading Scripture**. "Illumine our hearts, O Master Who loves mankind, with the pure light of Your divine knowledge. Open the eyes of our mind to the understanding of Your gospel teachings. Implant also in us the fear of Your blessed commandments, that trampling down all carnal desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing such things as are well-pleasing unto You. For You are the illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and unto You we ascribe glory, together with Your Father, Who is from everlasting, and Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen."

Opening Activity: (5 mins)

If possible, take the class into the church to view the altar. (Arrange with your priest in advance to have the Holy/Royal Doors open so they can easily see the items on the altar table.) If the church is not available, show the class some pictures of the altar table. Ask the students to identify the holy items that are used for worship. (Altar cloth, chalice, paten, Gospel book, Cross, candles.)

Lesson Instruction: (20 mins)

A: Initial part of lesson

Small group activity: Divide the class into groups of three students. Give each group a Bible, a copy of "God's Promises to Abraham" activity sheet, colored construction paper, scissors and glue. Read Genesis 12:1-3 aloud to the class. Each group should cut out the word cards one set at a time, unscramble the words to complete God's promises, and glue them onto the paper in the correct order. Have the groups follow the same procedure for the next two promises. Another option is to pre-cut the activity sheet into thirds so that each student in the group can cut out one of the three sets of words. You may need to re-read the verses or have students look at them in their Bibles. Allow each group to take turns reading the promises aloud.

Promise 1: I will make you a great nation. (Genesis 12:2)

Promise 2: I will bless you and make your name great and you shall be a blessing. (Genesis 12:2)

Promise 3: In you all the tribes of the earth shall be blessed. (Genesis 12:3)

Suggested discussion: Do you think Abraham trusted God to keep His promises? Do you think Abraham will obey God and leave his family and his home? What is God's promise to us when we follow Him? When we have the faith of Abraham, and believe God's promises to us, He will bless us.

B: Second part

Read Genesis 12:4-9 aloud to the class.

Suggested discussion: Why did Abraham build an altar? (To give thanks to God for keeping His promises.)

Discuss the altar that we have in church. It's a central part of our worship. It's where the Holy Gifts, the body and blood of Jesus are prepared.

From the Orthodox Pebbles link above: watch the video on Preparing the Gifts.

Individual Activity Options (from the free printable activity package in the Orthodox Pebbles link above):

1. Give each student a sheet of white construction paper, a copy of the page (p. 2 of the activity package) that has the altar items from the Orthodox Pebbles link, scissors, and glue. Have students draw an altar table, add an altar cloth, and cut out the items to place on their altar. Discuss how the colors of the altar cloth change throughout the year.
2. Students can complete the chalice craft. (p. 3 of the activity package).

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Closing Activity: (5 mins)

Play the matching game (pp. 7-8) in the free printable activity package from the Orthodox Pebbles link above.

To extend this lesson for additional time...

Additional activity ideas:

1. Read the consecration prayers from the Divine Liturgy. Discuss the proper behavior during this time, and why this is the most important part of the Liturgy. Re-read the prayers, having students show their actions. (Kneeling when it's appropriate, bow down in prayer, make the Sign of the Cross.
2. Complete any other activities from the free printable activity package in the Orthodox Pebbles link above. (Matching the Holy items to their names p.9, Anagram activity p.10.)

Background Resources for Teachers:

- Teachers may want to consult the [*Book of Genesis Common or Challenging Questions and Orthodox Christian Responses*](#) resource prior to this lesson.

God's Promises to Abraham

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Feedback on this lesson plan is welcome and encouraged [HERE](#).

Title of Lesson:	Lesson Number:	Key Verse(s)	Grade Level
The Hospitality of Abraham and Sarah	6	"O Lord, if I have now found grace in your sight, do not pass by your servant." Genesis 18:3	PK-1st Grade ✓ 2nd-3rd Grade 4th-6th Grade Junior High Senior High

Lesson Length: 30 minutes (main) + 15 minutes (extension)

Key Ideas in this Lesson:

- How is it that Abraham is eating with Christ if He hasn't been born yet?
- How is hospitality a holy endeavor?

Key Vocabulary in this Lesson:

- Hospitality (*Philoxenia* in Greek) - love of the stranger

To prepare for this lesson, you will need:

Audio/Visual	Printed Materials	Craft/Activity Materials
Tablet/computer to display Hospitality of Abraham/The Holy Trinity icon by Rublev: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DfsbzGKbNRRZe6Z8dpEXBALd2GRvc0im/view And to play the song "Always Stay Humble and Kind": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=awzNHuGqoMc	Hospitality charade cards Always Stay HUMBLE & KIND coloring sheet, one copy per student Or Line drawing icon of the Hospitality of Abraham and Sarah, featuring an icon image by Sparks 4 Orthodox Kids, one copy per student (Optional) Print the Hospitality of Abraham/The Holy Trinity icon by Rublev included in this lesson packet	Crayons, markers, or colored pencils

Opening Prayer:

Open with prayer. Suggestions for opening include **The Lord's Prayer** or the **Prayer Before Reading Scripture**.

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"Illumine our hearts, O Master Who loves mankind, with the pure light of Your divine knowledge. Open the eyes of our mind to the understanding of Your gospel teachings. Implant also in us the fear of Your blessed commandments, that trampling down all carnal desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing such things as are well-pleasing unto You. For You are the illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and unto You we ascribe glory, together with Your Father, Who is from everlasting, and Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen."

Opening Activity: (5 mins)

"I Say, You Say" activity:

When I say, "Good morning boys and girls," YOU say, "Good morning Mr./Mrs. ____."

Explain to your students how we have common phrases and responses that we say in church. The teacher will say the Teacher part, and your students will respond accordingly:

Teacher: "Christ is Risen!"

Students: "Indeed He is Risen!"

Teacher: "Christ is Born!"

Students: "Glorify Him!"

Teacher: "Christ is in our midst!"

Student: "He is and ever shall be!"

Ask students about what the last response "He is and ever shall be" means. How is Christ always in our midst? (Allow time for discussion).

Read Matthew 25:31-40. Jesus said that whatever we do to others, we do to Him. He said, "I was a stranger and you took me in." Christ is always in our midst. He is invisibly present with us and in us. Talk to your students about how Christ was always present, even before He took on human flesh. He was present at Creation, and He was present in the midst of Abraham and Sarah's hospitality.

Lesson Instruction: (20 mins)

A: Initial part of lesson

Let the students know that now we are going to talk about what it means to be hospitable and how hospitality is holy. In the Book of Genesis, we learn about the hospitality of Abraham and Sarah. Read Genesis 18:1-15 and then show the students Rublev's icon of the Holy Trinity. In some icons of the Holy Trinity, we see Abraham and Sarah depicted, and that is known as "The Hospitality of Abraham and Sarah."

Give the students time to share what they notice about the icon. (The three angels fit into a perfect circle and it looks like they are having a conversation. The mountains are leaning in as if they are bowing to the Holy Trinity. For more, see Explanation of the Meaning of the Trinity Icon, below.)

Ask the students if they know what it means to be hospitable. (Allow time for answers.) The word "hospitality" comes from the Greek word *philoxenia* which means *love of the stranger*. Then ask how Abraham and Sarah showed hospitality to the three strangers? (They brought them water, washed their feet, made bread for them to eat, cooked them dinner.)

Ask the students if they can think of a time when they or their families showed hospitality to someone. (Example: welcoming a new student at school, inviting a new family to the church hall after Liturgy or to Sunday School, making a meal for a guest, etc.)

Ask another question: How are the angels in Genesis 18 like the Trinity? (When they spoke, they all spoke with

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one voice. Emphasize that Abraham has a direct experience with Christ. As we know the Father through Christ, so does Abraham.)

B: Second part

Play the Hospitality Charades game. Prior to class, cut out the Hospitality Charade strips and fold them so that the words cannot be seen. Place the strips in a bowl or small bag. Each student has a chance to draw a scenario from the bowl and then act it out without using any words. The other students in the class will try and guess what the act of hospitality is.

- Scenarios include:
 - Get drinks for people
 - Let your guest get food first
 - Hang up your guest's jacket
 - Collect garbage
 - Let your classmate choose the game
 - Allow someone to go in front of you in line

After playing the game, ask why is it that hospitality is considered HOLY? What are some things that these scenarios had in common? (Allow students time to answer these questions.) Be sure to emphasize the importance of **humility** and **kindness**. The key to being hospitable is to be HUMBLE & KIND. Challenge your students to take these scenarios and turn them into real acts this week.

Share this verse with students to reinforce the lesson concepts, "Be hospitable to one another without complaining. As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace." 1 Peter 4:10

Closing Activity: (5-10 mins)

Activity options:

1. Students will color the Always Stay Humble and Kind handout. Play the "Humble and Kind" song by Tim MGrav from your phone while they work.

Always Stay HUMBLE & KIND

2. Students will color the line drawing icon of the Hospitality of Abraham and Sarah.

To extend this lesson for additional time...

Additional activity ideas:

1. Play the Trash Can Trivia game. Give your students time at the end of the lesson to "show what they know." Ask a trivia/review question (below). Some of the questions may be from previous lessons in Genesis. Draw names from popsicle sticks (or split the class into two teams and take turns) and allow students to answer the trivia questions one at a time. If they answer correctly, then they get to shoot a small ball or wad of paper into the trash can. Variation: for about \$15, you can get a door hanging basketball goal and let them shoot into that basket instead. This is something that can be used throughout the year and can serve as an incentive for students.

Question 1. What new name did God give to Abram? (Abraham.)

Question 2. Do you know anyone else whose name was changed? Maybe you know someone who has been baptized with a new name.

Question 3. Why did God change Abram's name? (Because Abram had a special calling by God, to be the father of many nations.)

Question 4. Where did today's story happen? (At the Oak of Mamre.)

Question 5. How many people came to visit Abraham? (Three strangers.)

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- Question 6.** What did Abraham do when he saw the three strangers? (He and his wife prepared a meal for them.)
- Question 7.** Do you think Abraham and Sarah were afraid to invite complete strangers to have dinner with them? Answers vary. (Note: love of strangers was one of the highest virtues in the Old Testament.)
- Question 8.** What message did the three strangers have for Abraham and his wife, Sarah? (That they would have a son.)
- Question 9.** What did Sarah do when she heard this message? (She laughed)
- Question 10.** Why did Sarah laugh? (Because she was too old to have children)
- Question 11.** What did the three strangers say about her laughter? (She and Abraham should believe that nothing is impossible with God)
- Question 12.** What is special about three persons visiting Abraham? Why not two, or four? (Answers vary)
- Question 13.** We believe that God is a Trinity, God is three persons united in one. Do you know who the three persons are? (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.)
- a. What connections can you make? (Answers vary.)
- Question 14.** Looking at the icon of the hospitality of Abraham, who do you see? (Answers vary.)
- Question 15.** Do you think Abraham knew who he was hosting? (Answers vary.)
- Question 16.** If he had known, would he have treated them differently? (No, Abraham had hospitality for everyone.)
- Question 17.** When we meet a new person, how should we treat them? (With hospitality, just like Abraham.)
- Question 18.** What does it mean to be hospitable? (Answers will vary - love of the stranger, offering a meal, welcoming a new student in your class or a new family to your church, introducing yourself, a kind smile, etc.)

Reminder: The key to being hospitable is to be HUMBLE & KIND.

Background Resources for Teachers:

- Teachers may want to consult the [Book of Genesis Common or Challenging Questions and Orthodox Christian Responses](#) resource prior to this lesson.
- Explanation of the Meaning of the Hospitality of Abraham/The Holy Trinity icon by Rublev: <https://d2y1pz2y630308.cloudfront.net/17509/documents/2017/8/Trinityicon.pdf>



The Hospitality of Abraham / The Trinity

By Andrei Rublev - Public Domain,

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=54421>



Thanks to <https://sparks4orthodoxkids.com/> for this beautiful drawing of the Holy Trinity.

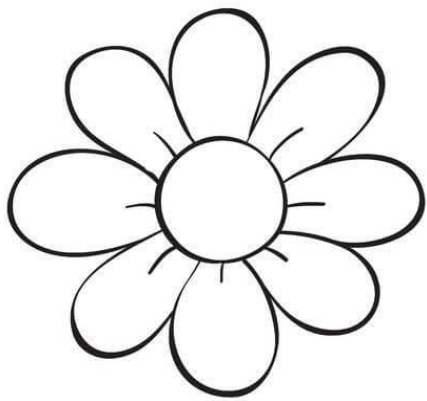
Hospitality Charades

(Cut these out, fold them and put it in a bowl to be drawn)

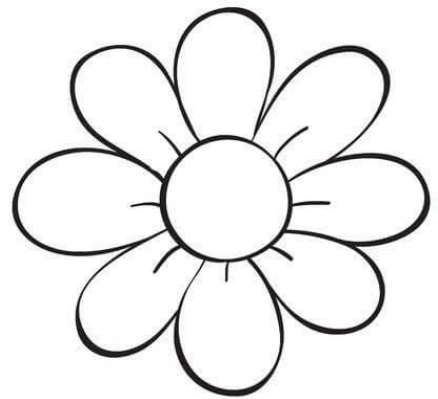
Get drinks for people	Let your guest get their food first
Hang up your guest's jacket	Let your classmate choose the game
Collect garbage	Allow someone to go in front of you in line
Share your favorite toy or device	Bring a chair for your guest when no seats are available
Cook a meal for your guests	Invite someone to join your game
Sit with a student who is eating their lunch alone	Bake cookies and share them
Help make holy bread to offer for Liturgy	Help an elderly person with their groceries

Always Stay

HUMBLE



&



KIND

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Feedback on this lesson plan is welcome and encouraged [HERE](#).

Title of Lesson:	Lesson Number:	Key Verse(s)	Grade Level
Sacrifice of Isaac: OBEDIENCE	7	"I will assuredly multiply your seed as the stars of heaven and as the sand on the seashore." Genesis 22:17 Genesis Chapter 22	PK-1st Grade ✓ 2nd-3rd Grade 4th-6th Grade Junior High Senior High

Lesson Length: 30 minutes (main) + 15 minutes (extension)

Key Ideas in this Lesson:

- Sin entered the world because of disobedience. We restore our relationship with God when we obey His commands and trust in His divine providence.
- We will find eternal joy when we obey the Word of God.

Key Vocabulary in this Lesson:

- Obedience - an act of humility and faithfulness by choosing to submit to another's authority
- Sacrifice - to offer something up to God. In the Old Covenant, God commanded His people to sacrifice animals, grain, or oil as an act of thanksgiving, praise, forgiveness, and cleansing.

To prepare for this lesson, you will need:

Audio/Visual	Printed Materials	Craft/Activity Materials
Tablet or computer to play the song "Eternal Joy": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sm9KD3afVYM Hand motions to the song: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ujPNbYuLtB4	My Family Tree print out, one copy per student Lineage of Abraham print out Obey the Law worksheet, one copy per student	Pencils Red and green crayons, markers, or colored pencils

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Opening Prayer:

Open with prayer. Suggestions for opening include **The Lord's Prayer** or the **Prayer Before Reading Scripture**.

"Illumine our hearts, O Master Who loves mankind, with the pure light of Your divine knowledge. Open the eyes of our mind to the understanding of Your gospel teachings. Implant also in us the fear of Your blessed commandments, that trampling down all carnal desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing such things as are well-pleasing unto You. For You are the illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and unto You we ascribe glory, together with Your Father, Who is from everlasting, and Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen."

Opening Activity: (10 mins)

"Family Tree" activity:

Share your family tree with your students by writing some of your lineage on the board. Next, have your students write out their family tree, as much as they can, on the "My Family Tree" handout. Give them time to share then ask your students to consider how important family trees are. God gives us parents and grandparents who love us and who hopefully guide us to the Truth. We respect our parents and elders by obeying them (even when we do not agree with them). When we practice obedience to our parents and elders, we are more likely to be obedient to God.

Share the "Lineage From Abraham to Jesus" family tree and post it in the classroom for future reference as you study the Book of Genesis (note that Dinah is Jacob's daughter and not one of the 12 tribes). You may wish to give each student a copy to keep with their classroom materials as an important visual reference.

Lesson Instruction: (15-20 mins)

A: Initial part of lesson

Have your students find Abraham and Isaac on the family tree handout. Isaac was the "beloved son" (v.2) of Abraham. Today, we are going to learn about how Abraham obeyed God, even when he did not understand what God was doing. He shows to be the opposite of Adam and Eve who disobeyed God. Recall how sin came into the world through their disobedience.

Read Aloud: Genesis 22:1-19.

Note: The focus on the story is not on the ethics of the situation. Abraham has already been told that Isaac will be the father of all his descendants. When Abraham makes the decision to do what God is telling him to do, he does so with the knowledge that God will make a plan for it (e.g. Hebrews).

Ask:

Who does Isaac remind you of? (Jesus; the sacrifice of Abraham is a typology of Christ. God sacrifices His beloved Son, just like Abraham was willing to do; it is a foreshadowing of a later sacrifice. Abraham's sacrifice takes three days, and Isaac becomes a willing victim. He does not resist, which is a prefigurement of Christ.)

Ask:

How does God bless Abraham for his obedience? (God promised to make him a father of many nations and multiply his seed "like the stars of heaven" v. 17.)

Ask:

Have you ever been tempted to disobey your parents, teachers, coaches? What usually happens when we disobey?

B: Second part

Main idea:

If our children never learn to obey their elders (parents, teachers, coaches etc.), they are going to find it really hard to obey God. We are called to make our families to be an earthly reflection of our relationship with God. God has his

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"rules" that He wants us to learn to obey because he wants the best outcome for our lives. He doesn't love us more or less based on our obedience, but life can go a lot smoother as we trust and obey Him through both the times of fun and excitement as well as the times of suffering and pain. If you think about the pain imposed on humanity in this life, most of it comes directly from someone stepping outside of a desire to obey God.

Sometimes, we don't understand why we may be suffering or have to endure unexpected events, but we have to trust (like Abraham and Isaac) that we can come to know the Father more deeply through our trials and tribulations.

Activity:

Acting On Scripture - Will You Do It? Game

Have the children line up in a horizontal line across the back of the room. This game is similar to Mother-May-I. Instead of taking turns all the children listen to your question and respond with, "Yes, I will." You then issue the command and they all may respond. In this game everyone will be a winner when they reach you. (Adjust the commands according to your room size, so that they can reach you by the time you've finished asking the questions.)

1. Mother asks you to turn the TV off. Will you get up and do it without saying, "wait?" (You may take 3 baby steps forward.)
2. Teacher asks you to stop talking in class when she's talking. Will you stop talking? (You may take 4 little hops forward.)
3. Big brother asks you not to play in his room while he is at school. Will you stay out of his room? (You may take 1 giant step forward.)
4. Grandmother tells you eating cookie dough is bad for you. Will you keep your fingers out of the mixing bowl when she's not looking? (You may take 2 scissor steps forward.)
5. Daddy tells you to come straight home from school and not stop for any reason. Will you go straight home even though your friend calls from his house to come see his new kittens? (You may take 3 side-winder steps forward.)

Remind the boys and girls that often we have to obey even though we can't understand the reason for it. We make the sign of the cross and remember that God is the boss. When someone asks you to do something and you feel like saying "no," say a prayer for Jesus to help you.

Closing Activity: (5 mins)

Print the "Obey the Law" activity and have students color in the circles red for those things that are not obedient and green for those things that are obedient.

To extend this lesson for additional time...

Additional activity ideas:

1. Teach the song and the hand motions to "Eternal Joy".

Eternal Joy

By Gigi Shadid

Let us knock [knock, knock], at the gate [knock, knock],
Of the Bible, of the Bible.

Don't be discouraged, have perseverance,
"He who has ears, let him hear it" (Matthew 11:15).

**Those who obey what God's Word has to say,
Will find eternal Truth, eternal joy.**

So let us knock [knock, knock], at the gate [knock, knock],
Of the Bible, of the Bible.
The latch will open, we'll see the garden,

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A spring of water (John 4:14) to hearts unhardened.

**Those who obey what God's Word has to say,
Will find eternal Truth, eternal joy.**

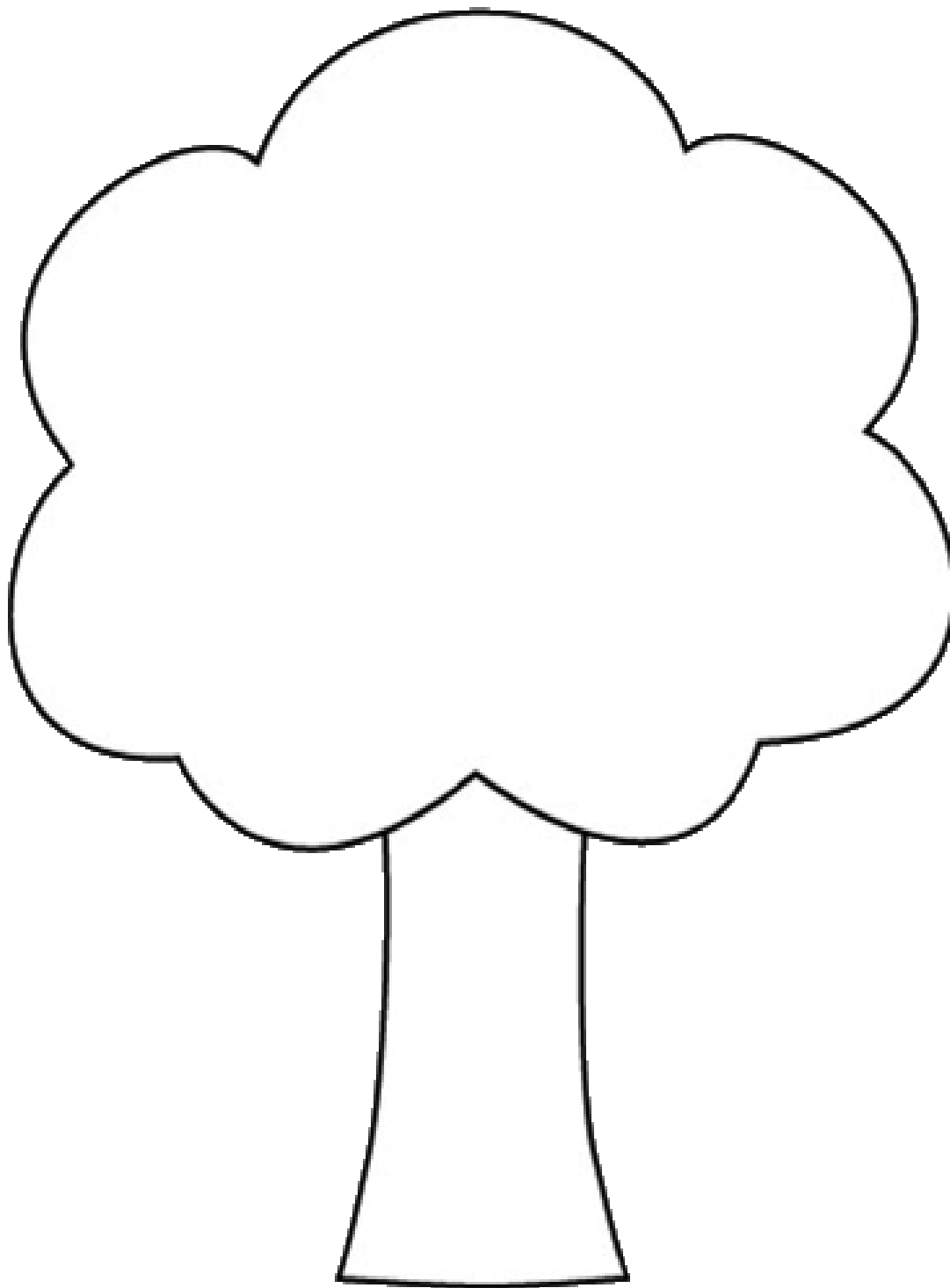
[repeat song]

2. Time permitting, emphasize the importance of reading the Bible so we know what it is we are called to obey.

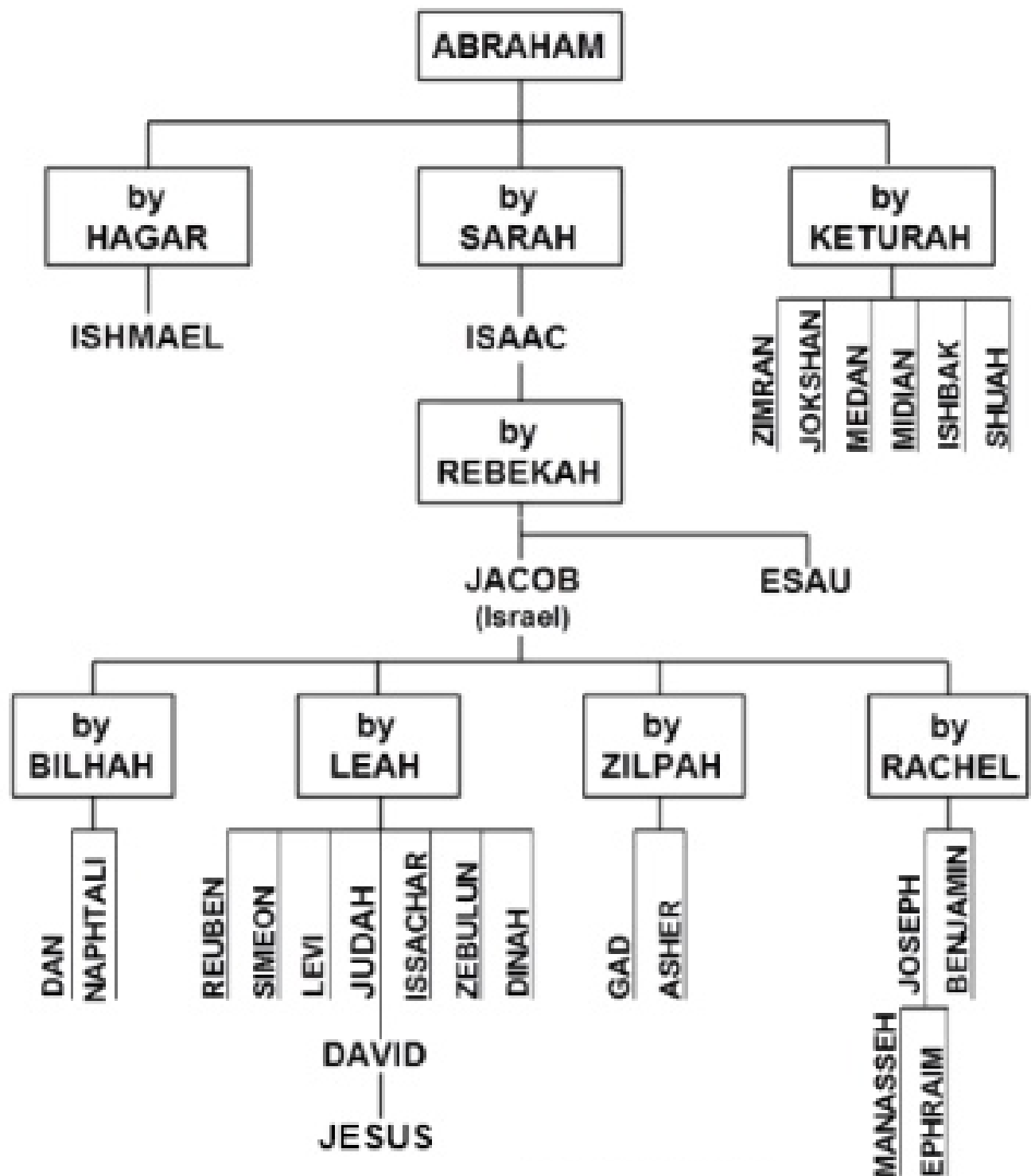
Background Resources for Teachers:

- Teachers may want to consult the [*Book of Genesis Common or Challenging Questions and Orthodox Christian Responses*](#) resource prior to this lesson.

My Family Tree



Lineage from Abraham to Jesus



Speaking
kind
Words
1

Stealing
2

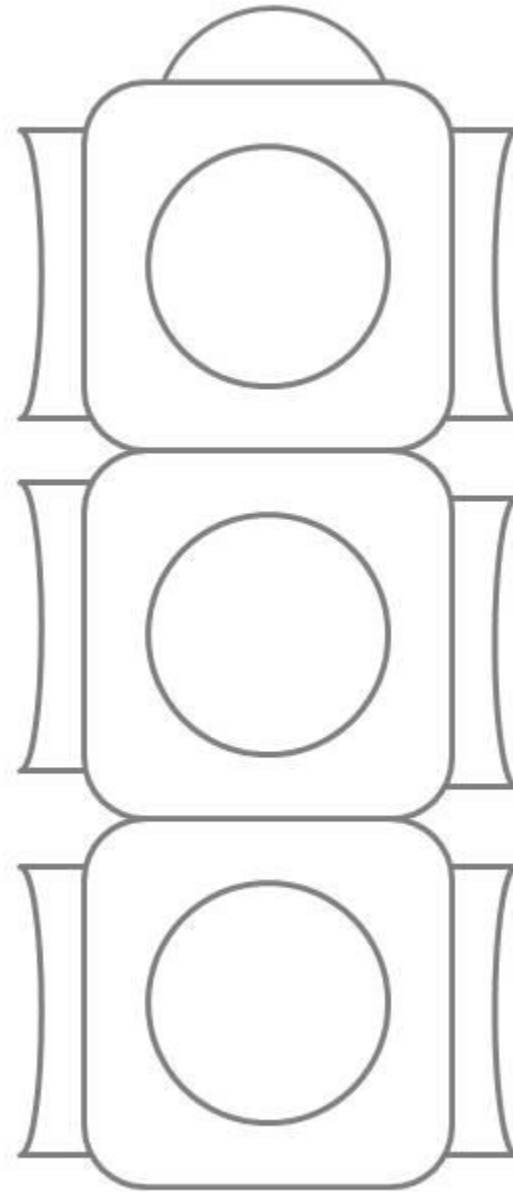
Helping
your mom
3

Sharing
your toys
4

Going to
Church
5

Bad
Thoughts
7

Keeping the
Word
Of
Wisdom
6



Saying bad
words
8

Keeping
the
Sabbath
Day Holy
10

Reading
The
Scriptures
12

Serving
Others
14

Teasing
9

Disobeying
parents
11

Lying
13

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Feedback on this lesson plan is welcome and encouraged [HERE](#).

Title of Lesson:	Lesson Number:	Key Verse(s)	Grade Level
Jacob & Esau: Our Inheritance Through Jesus	8	“Look, I am about to die. What good then is this birthright to me?” Genesis 25:32	PK-1st Grade ✓ 2nd-3rd Grade 4th-6th Grade Junior High Senior High

Lesson Length: 30 minutes (main) + 15 minutes (extension)

Key Ideas in this Lesson:

- Through our Baptism and Chrismation, we have been given a great “birthright” and are able to receive the Body and Blood of our Lord.

Key Vocabulary in this Lesson:

- Inherit - to receive from an ancestor as a right or title descendible by law at the ancestor's death
 - Birthright - a right, privilege, or possession to which a person is entitled by birth

To prepare for this lesson, you will need:

Audio/Visual	Printed Materials	Craft/Activity Materials
If you are not familiar with the game “Who Has The Upper Hand”, learn the instructions here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cwX-SVwyBbl - not shown in class, just for reference.	Bible for reading Genesis 25:29-34 Lineage from Abraham print out A Nice Bowl of Soup skit, four copies (Optional) Genesis crossword puzzle, one copy per student	Air-Dry Clay, (optional) acrylic paint and brushes Pencils

Opening Prayer:

Open with prayer. Suggestions for opening include **The Lord's Prayer** or the **Prayer Before Reading Scripture**.

“Illumine our hearts, O Master Who loves mankind, with the pure light of Your divine knowledge. Open the eyes of our mind to the understanding of Your gospel teachings. Implant also in us the fear of Your blessed commandments, that trampling down all carnal desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing such things as are well-pleasing unto You. For You are the illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and

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unto You we ascribe glory, together with Your Father, Who is from everlasting, and Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen."

Opening Activity: (5 mins)

Play a Game: "Who Has the Upper Hand?" (hand slap game). After playing the game (which your students will enjoy), talk about what it means to have the "upper hand." This is a phrase which 2nd and 3rd graders may not be familiar with. The "upper hand" is when someone is in the position of having power or being in control of a particular situation. Ask if they had to trick their partner in order to get the upper hand.

Today, we will be learning about two twin brothers in the Book of Genesis, Esau and Jacob, sons of Isaac. One of them used trickery in order to get the upper hand.

Have your students refer to the "Lineage of Abraham" family tree that we used in the last lesson. Students may notice that Jacob will have a lot of children. (Refer to God's promise that He would make Abraham's seed multiply "like the stars of heaven.")

Lesson Instruction: (15-20 mins)

A: Initial part of lesson

Important to know: Esau was technically the first-born because he was born just before Jacob. In the culture of the time (and to this day in many cultures), the first born son is given many special privileges as part of something called a "birthright."

In this time, the first born inherits everything. In this case, that included the promises to Abraham. Because of their birth order, Esau was promised the entire birthright of his father Isaac. It was then up to Esau how to divide his inheritance among his brethren.

Take a few minutes to ask your students if they have siblings and what their birth order is, and then have them imagine that they are the brothers in this story.

After introducing the story, read Genesis 25:29-34.

B: Second part

Act it Out:

Print four copies of "A Nice Bowl of Soup" skit and ask for volunteers to play each part. Feel free to use puppets to make it more interesting/engaging. Have the student volunteers come to the front of the classroom and act out the scene.

After reading the Scripture to them and acting out the scene, your students may ask questions like, "Why would Esau sell his birthright for a bowl of soup? That does not make any sense..."

You may suggest that Esau was more concerned with matters of the day, "instant gratification," and that he did not think about the future. He wanted what he wanted and he wanted it right then.

Ask:

Are we that way sometimes? Are there times when we want to buy something now and worry about paying for it in the future? (This is why so many people are in debt today.)

Key point: Esau did not value his birthright. He was willing to give it up for a bowl of stew. That might sound silly, but how often are we willing to give up OUR birthright as children of the One True God? Through our Baptism and Chrismation, we have inherited a far greater birthright than Esau. We can receive the Body and Blood of our Lord. How many times have we missed the Liturgy because of trivial matters like going to a soccer or baseball game on a Sunday morning? How many times have we pretended not to be a Christian in order to fit in? We become like Esau when we do that, so we should not laugh at him so easily.

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As a teaser, let them know that in Chapter 27 of Genesis, Jacob plays an even bigger trick on Esau in order to get the upper hand. Encourage your students to read it on their own, or perhaps you can read it to them while they do their closing craft.

Closing Activity: (10 mins)

Make a Clay Bowl

Jacob shared his stew with Esau in exchange for Esau's birthright. Make this fun, simple bowl with the children while reading Genesis 25 (or Genesis 27 as teased earlier). Each student will need a small ball of Air-Dry Clay for this activity.

Pinch Pot Method:

- Roll the clay into a ball.
- Stick thumbs into the center of the ball, pinching the sides to make a hollow (you're making a bowl shape, not a donut.)
- Flatten out the bottom of the ball to make a nice flat surface for the bowl (so it will sit sturdily on a table without risk of it falling).
- Let it air dry or bake dry depending on the type of clay you are using.
- Use acrylic paint to decorate the pot however you like or leave it natural.

To extend this lesson for additional time...

Additional activity ideas:

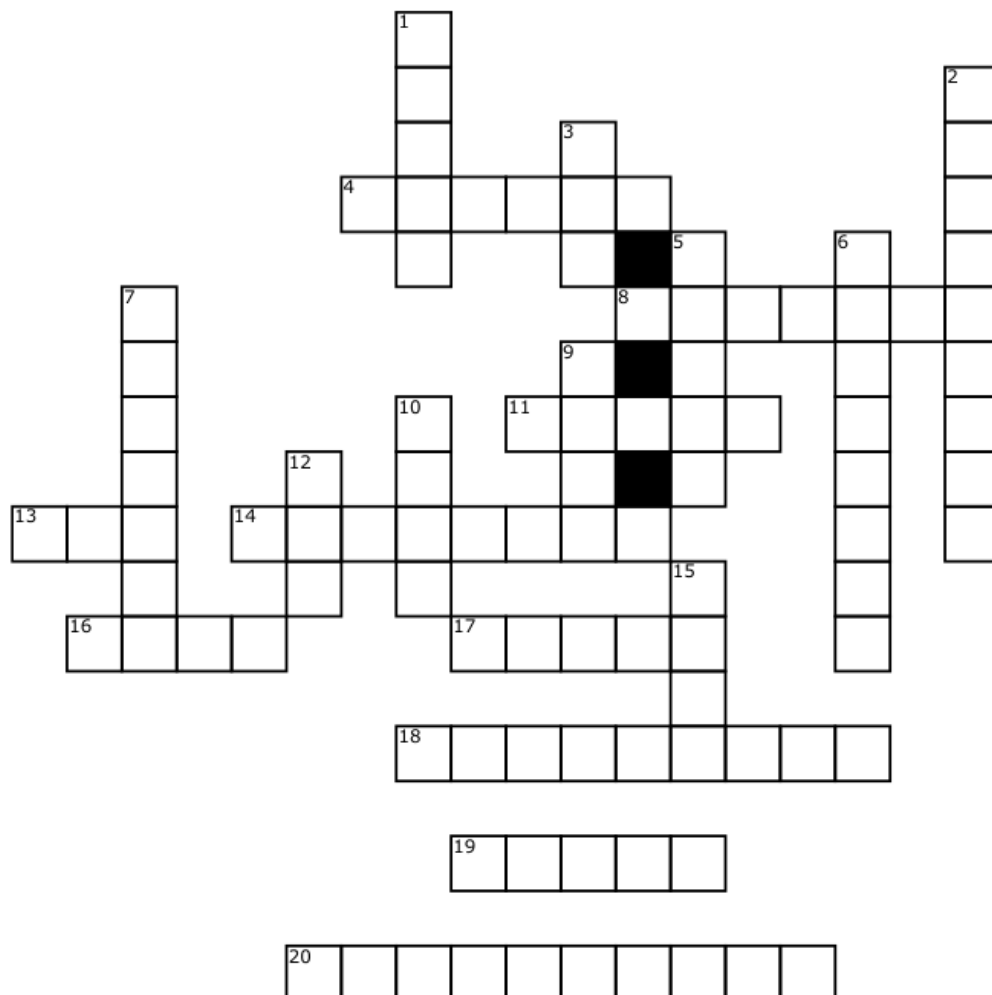
1. Genesis Crossword Puzzle which will serve as a good review of what they have learned as well as practicing looking up verses in the Bible.

Background Resources for Teachers:

- Teachers may want to consult the [*Book of Genesis Common or Challenging Questions and Orthodox Christian Responses*](#) resource prior to this lesson.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Genesis



Across

- 4.** Gen 9:22 _____, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers
8. Gen 6:11 Now the earth was _____ in God's sight.
11. God created the heavens and the _____
13. Adam and _____.
14. Gen 15:18 Lord made a _____ with Abram
16. Gen 6:10 Noah's first son was _____.
17. Old name of Sarah was _____.

- 18.** Gen 2:9 The tree of the _____ of good and evil
19. Gen 6:10 Noah had _____ sons.
20. Gen 17:1 When Abram was _____ years old, the Lord appeared to him
Down
1. Old name of Abraham was _____.
2. Gen 6:9 Noah was a _____ man.
3. Gen 6:10 Noah's second son was _____.

- 5.** God flooded the earth for _____ days and _____ nights
6. Gen 9:1 'Be fruitful and _____, and fill the earth
7. Gen 6:10 Noah's third son was _____.
9. Gen 4:8 _____ killed Abel in the field
10. Cain and _____
12. Abraham's nephew _____.
15. Gen 5:6 Seth had lived for one hundred and _____ years.

A Nice Bowl of Soup (Jacob and Esau)

Skit

Characters:

- Narrator
- Teacher
- Jacob
- Esau

Prop: Bowl

(Feel free to use puppets to make it more interesting/engaging.)

Narrator: Hi. My name is _____ and I am going to tell you a story about 2 brothers. This story comes from the Bible.

Once upon a time there was a man named Isaac and his wife named Rebekah. They wanted to have a baby but so far they had none. Isaac and Rebekah prayed to God for a baby. God answered prayer and soon Rebekah was expecting twins!

She could feel the twins wrestling in her tummy. She prayed and asked God what was going on. God told her that the twins would not get along and would go their separate ways and the youngest son would boss around the oldest.

Soon, the babies were born and Rebekah named the first one Esau because he was red and really, really hairy. I mean he was hairier than a grizzly bear... he was so hairy he...

Teacher: Heeeeeyyy!!

Narrator: (ducks/hides) What?

Teacher: Just stick to the story.

Narrator: Sorry. (back out front) Sheesh what a grouch! Where was I? Oh, yeah. Rebekah named the second son Jacob because it means "heel grabber" and he was grabbing the heel of Jacob's foot when they were born.

The two boys grew up and were very different. Esau loved to hunt. Jacob loved to stay indoors and read. Isaac loved his son Esau because he liked to eat the food Esau caught while hunting. Rebekah loved her son Jacob because she knew the plans God had for him to be a mighty ruler.

When someone was born first they were given what was called the birthright. The birthright meant that when you got older, the family's stuff was given to you. One day Jacob, who was very sneaky, had cooked up a plan. Let's watch:

Jacob: Hum hum hum... This is some reeeeeeally great stew I'm making here. (Tastes it) Mmmmm... Not bad. Needs a dash of salt. Yes, it is perfectly delicious!

Esau: (rushing in) Jacob, Jacob my brother! I am STARVING! I've been hunting all morning and have not caught anything and I haven't eaten breakfast yet. I am so hungry!!!

Jacob: (Calmly) Gee Esau, that's too bad. Too bad you can't have some of this scrumptious stew I'm stirring. It's soooooooo delicious!

Esau: Please, share your stew! I am dying of hunger.

Jacob: I could share my stew if... you give me your birthright.

Esau: No Way! I'll starve first.

Jacob: S-s-suit yours-s-self.

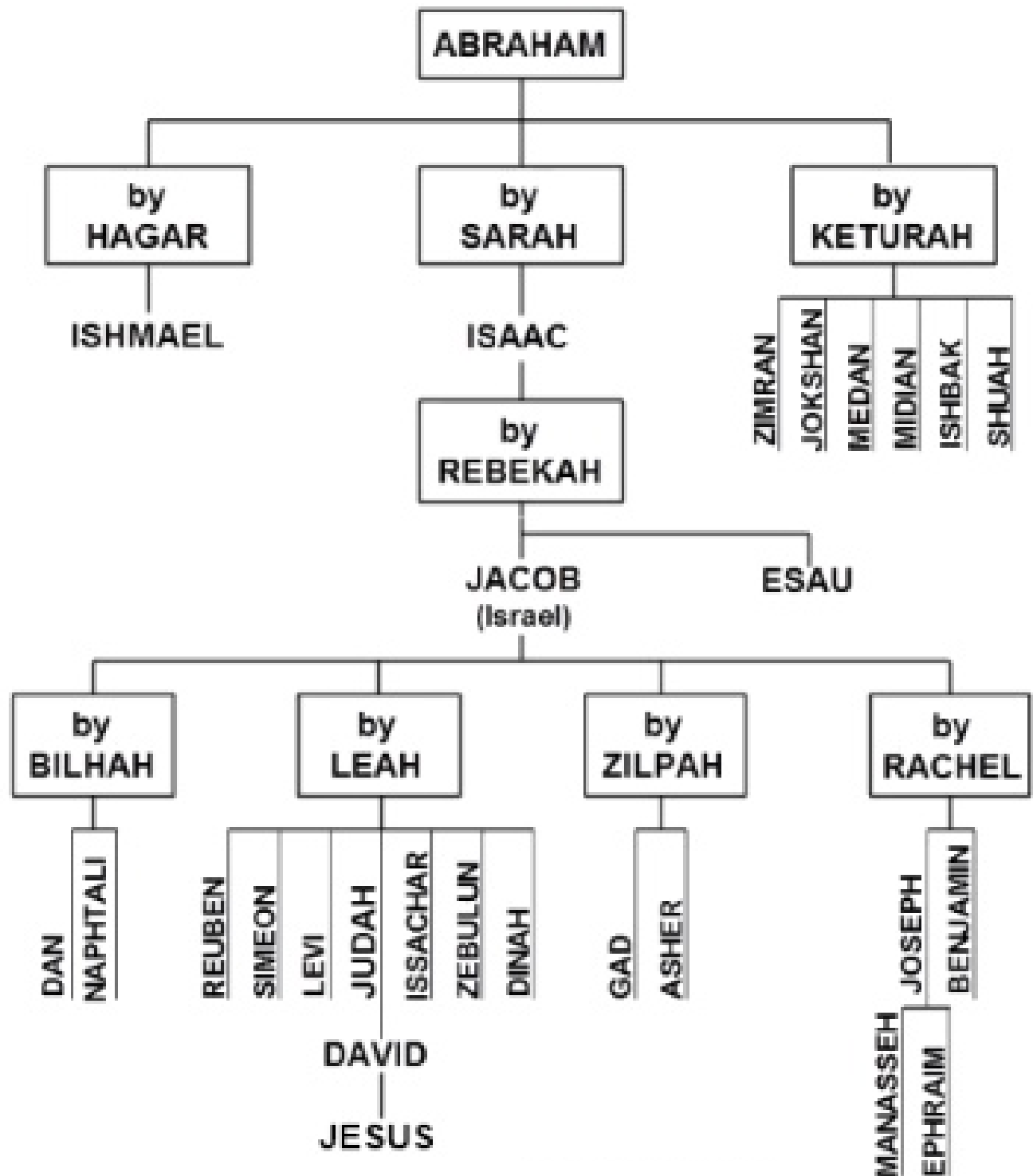
Esau: Wait. Fine, what good is my birthright if I'm not around to use it.

Jacob: Good choice. Soups on! (Slides the bowl to Esau.)

Esau: (Eats stew) Delicious. Needs salt though.

Narrator: And that is how Esau gave his birthright to Jacob. That was the first step in Jacob's plan to be a great ruler.

Lineage from Abraham to Jesus



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Feedback on this lesson plan is welcome and encouraged [HERE](#).

Title of Lesson:	Lesson Number:	Key Verse(s)	Grade Level
Joseph & His Brothers: God's Purpose for Us	9	“But you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good.” Genesis 50:20	PK-1st Grade ✓ 2nd-3rd Grade 4th-6th Grade Junior High Senior High

Lesson Length: 30 minutes (main) + 15 minutes (extension)

Key Ideas in this Lesson:

- Joseph was given a colorful coat by his dad, Jacob, and then, with the help of God, had to deal with the jealousy of his brothers.
- God has a purpose for us, but we have to be willing to be used by Him.
- We endure struggle, knowing that God is always with us and can bring good even out of things that are bad.

Key Vocabulary in this Lesson:

Jealousy - feeling or showing envy of someone or their achievements and advantages
Providence - the protective care of God within His divine plan

To prepare for this lesson, you will need:

Audio/Visual	Printed Materials	Craft/Activity Materials
“Joseph’s Coat of Many Colors” song from The Wonder Kids 100 Bible Songs for Kids: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZmFiz_gEeWE	Lesson 7 “Lineage from Abraham” (use as a reference) Coat of Many Colors handout, one copy per student	Present wrapped with many layers of paper Markers and crayons (Optional) watercolor paints

Opening Prayer:

Open with prayer. Suggestions for opening include **The Lord’s Prayer** or the **Prayer Before Reading Scripture**.

“Illumine our hearts, O Master Who loves mankind, with the pure light of Your divine knowledge. Open the eyes of our mind to the understanding of Your gospel teachings. Implant also in us the fear of Your blessed commandments, that trampling down all carnal desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing such things as are well-pleasing unto You. For You are the illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and

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unto You we ascribe glory, together with Your Father, Who is from everlasting, and Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen."

Opening Activity: (5 mins)

Icebreaker - "That's Not Fair!!"

Joseph's brothers think it's not fair – Joseph gets much more love and attention than they do. He even gets presents! And what do they get? It feels like they get nothing at all! They are jealous.

What do you need: A nice present that's suitable for both a girl or a boy, wrapping up paper and sticky tape, music.

Preparation: Wrap up the present in several layers of wrapping paper. You're going to play "Pass the Parcel" with the children.

Ask the children to sit in a circle and tell them you have a present for them. Have them pass the parcel around in the circle while playing music. Once the music stops, the one who has the parcel in their hands can open it and take off one layer of paper (be sure to tell them not to tear the whole thing off). You keep going until you reach the present itself – the child who takes off the last layer of paper to reveal the present may keep it. Once the game is over, ask the children how it felt to open the present and see that there was still another layer of paper underneath? Who would have liked to get the present? Do you think it's fair or unfair that you didn't get the present in the end? Why? Tell the children that Joseph's brothers thought it wasn't fair. Joseph got much more love and attention than they did. He even got presents! And what did they get? They felt like they got nothing at all! They were jealous.

Lesson Instruction: (15 mins)

A: Initial part of lesson

Read Genesis Chapter 37. Refer to the Lineage of Abraham family tree (from Lesson 7) so your students can see the relationship between Joseph and his brothers as their names come up.

Jacob's Favorite Son was Joseph

Be sure to start with your Bible sitting on your lap. Also have the chart showing all 12 of Jacob's sons' names. Jacob had 12 sons. Show the chart with their names.

Two of these sons were born in his old age (and of his beloved wife, Rachel). They were Joseph and Benjamin. Of all Jacob's sons, Joseph (Rachel's oldest) was his favorite.

Ask students what they think of that. When you are a parent, is it a good idea to have a favorite child? (Probably not!) Remind your students that no matter what, God loves each of us!

Jacob gave Joseph a Coat of Many Colors

Jacob (their dad) loved Joseph so much that he had a special coat made just for him. It had lots and lots of pretty colors in it, which meant it was hard to make and probably very expensive.

Ask:

What do you think? Is it a good idea for a dad to give his special favorite kid a special favorite gift? That's tricky, isn't it? How do you think all of Joseph's brothers felt about that? (Wait for answers. Answers might include: Angry. Jealous. Sad.)

Joseph's brothers (as you might imagine) were jealous of him! The Bible tells us that they even began to hate him!

God Talked to Joseph in Dreams

Joseph began to have dreams. God was sending him dreams about the future. Joseph told his parents (and his brothers) about his dreams. The dreams said that one day all of Joseph's brothers, and even his mother and father, would bow down to him and honor him!

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Ask:

How do you think Joseph's brothers felt? (Wait for answers.) Now they were madder than ever at Joseph! The Bible says that they began to hate him even more!

They Sold Him into Slavery in Egypt

When Joseph was about 17, his dad sent him to check on his brothers, who were far away taking care of the family sheep. His brothers saw him coming down the road! They made a plan to kill him! They grabbed him, took off his pretty coat of many colors, and threw him into an empty cistern (a deep hole with no water).

They were going to leave him there to die, but... Just then a caravan of merchants came by on their way to Egypt. Joseph's brothers decided not to kill him, but to sell him into slavery in Egypt. So they sold him to the merchants in the caravan for 20 pieces of gold.

Most of Joseph's brothers were really glad he was gone! "Now we'll see what comes of his dreaming," they said. But what were they going to tell their father?

Jacob Believed that Joseph had Died

The brothers took Joseph's coat of many colors and tore it. Then they poured goat blood on the coat, then they took the coat back home to their father, Jacob. They told their father, Jacob, that they had FOUND this coat and asked him to look at it to see if it was Joseph's Coat of Many Colors (when, of course, they KNEW it was!).

Jacob, faced with this lie of a torn coat with goat blood on it, thought that his son Joseph must have met up with a wild animal on the road and been killed. Jacob was very, very sad. He cried for Joseph, his son, because he thought he was dead.

God was with Joseph in Egypt (God Meant it for Good)

Meanwhile, back at the caravan... Joseph was being carried off to Egypt by the merchants who had bought him.

Ask:

How do you think Joseph must have felt? Maybe he felt sad, or angry, or even scared.

But then something wonderful happened. Even though Joseph had been betrayed by his brothers, and sold into slavery... Even though he was on his way to a foreign country, where he had never been before... Even though all of these bad things had happened... God was with Joseph. God (the One who had given Joseph all those dreams about the future) had not left Joseph. God was with Joseph, even though Joseph got hauled off to Egypt, and even though he got sold as a slave. The Bible says that God was with Joseph in Egypt and gave him success in everything he did!

Later on we will learn that (even though Joseph's brothers meant all of this for evil) God meant it all for good. Because through all of this, God would end up saving many people's lives (including the lives of all of Joseph's family – even his brothers!)

Closing Activity: (10 mins)

Joseph's Coat of Many Colors (coloring craft)

Provide copies of the Coat of Many Colors activity page for the children in class. Provide a variety of crayons or markers. You may choose to use watercolors. Explain that Joseph's Coat of Many Colors needs some color. Ask the children to use their markers, crayons, or watercolors to make Joseph's Coat as colorful as possible. Display these in class or send them home with the children.

While they are coloring or painting, play the song "Joseph and the Coat of Many Colors" song:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZmFiz_gEeWE

Bible Verse Mix-Up Activity

If there is a bit of time at the end, give each student in the class 1-2 sticky notes (depending on the number of

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students in your class). Each sticky note has one word written on it from today's memory verse: "But you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good" (Genesis 50:20). That's 12 words, so you will need 12 sticky notes. Hand them out in random order and then have your students work together and stand in order so that the verse is read correctly. If there are more than 12 students in your classroom, play the game twice. Challenge your students to memorize the verse.

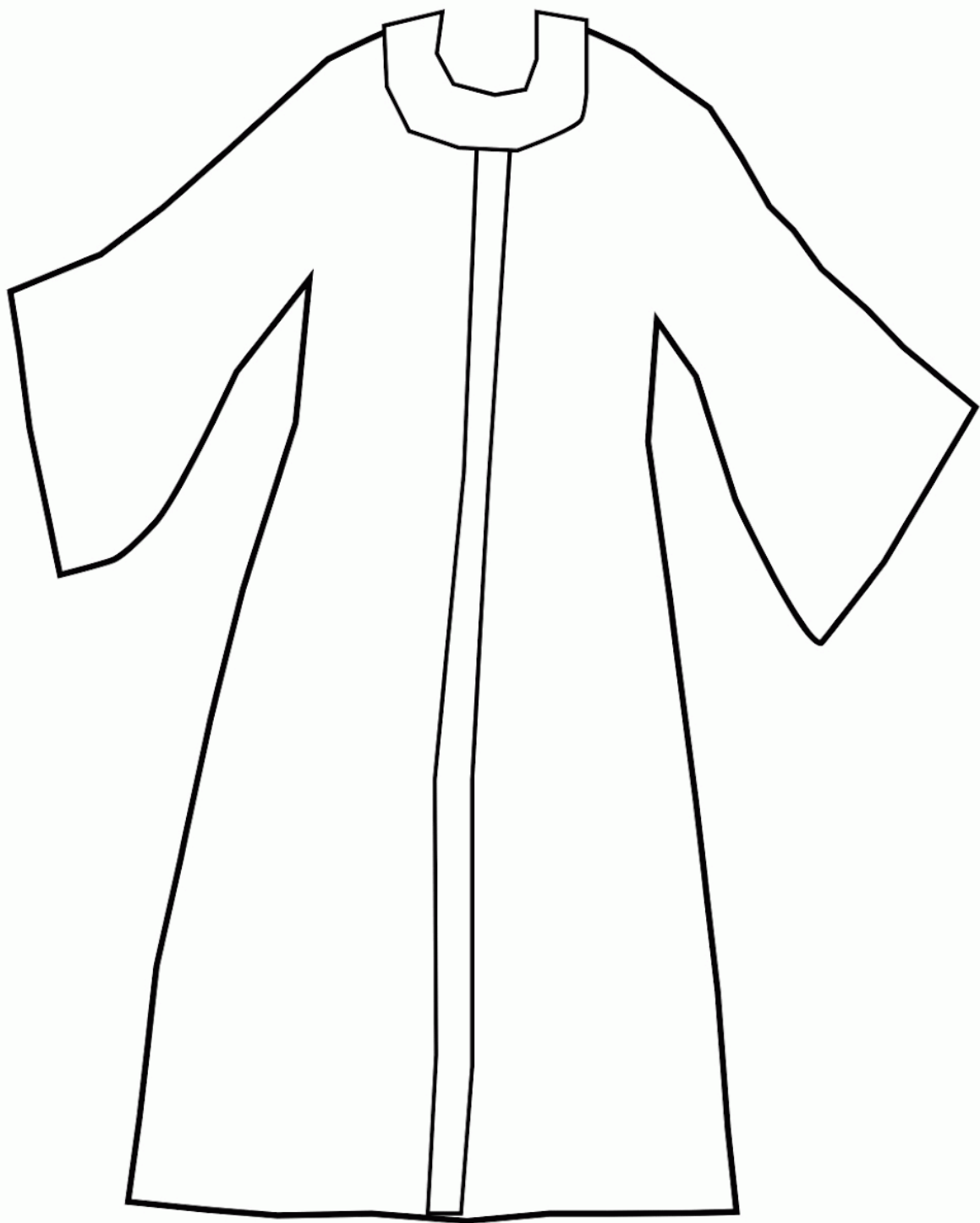
To extend this lesson for additional time...

Additional activity ideas:

1. Act it out: The children will act out the parts of the Bible Story.
 - a. Before Class: Bring items to class to help the children act out the parts of the Bible Story you heard today. You will need some "plain" outfits for the brothers and at least one "fancy" outfit for Joseph. Large pieces of fabric work well to drape across shoulders for robes. You may also use things like towels, pillowcases, or even sheets. Create an empty "well" by turning a card table upside down (with its legs up in the air). You can put paper (or a sheet) around the legs to make it seem more like a well. You will also need a small sack of silver coins (such as quarters, dimes or nickels) to pay for Joseph.
 - b. During Class: Retell the story of Joseph and his Coat of Many Colors. Read back through the lesson, if you like, or retell it in your own words. Allow the children to dress up as the different parts. Allow them to do different parts each time you do the skit.

Background Resources for Teachers:

- Teachers may want to consult the [Book of Genesis Common or Challenging Questions and Orthodox Christian Responses](#) resource prior to this lesson.



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Feedback on this lesson plan is welcome and encouraged [HERE](#).

Title of Lesson:	Lesson Number:	Key Verse(s)	Grade Level
Joseph Reunited with His Brothers: Reconciliation	10	"And he kissed all his brothers and wept over them. Afterward his brothers talked with him." Genesis 45:15	PK-1st Grade ✓ 2nd-3rd Grade 4th-6th Grade Junior High Senior High

Lesson Length: 30 minutes (main) + 15 minutes (extension)

Key Ideas in this Lesson:

- Joseph does not seek revenge against his brothers but chooses to see how God works all things for good. "All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28).
- We are called to forgive the way we want Christ to forgive us.

Key Vocabulary in this Lesson:

- Forgive - to stop feeling angry or resentful toward someone for (an offense, flaw, or mistake)
- Reconcile - to restore friendly relations; to accept forgiveness

To prepare for this lesson, you will need:

Audio/Visual	Printed Materials	Craft/Activity Materials
"Forgive" song by Gigi Shadid: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pO4UGxJQBbM	Be Like Christ handout, one copy per student	Opening Activity: lemon slices, sugar, small Dixie cups. Closing Activity: sticky notes.

Opening Prayer:

Open with prayer. Suggestions for opening include **The Lord's Prayer** or the **Prayer Before Reading Scripture**.

"Illumine our hearts, O Master Who loves mankind, with the pure light of Your divine knowledge. Open the eyes of our mind to the understanding of Your gospel teachings. Implant also in us the fear of Your blessed commandments, that trampling down all carnal desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing such things as are well-pleasing unto You. For You are the illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and unto You we ascribe glory, together with Your Father, Who is from everlasting, and Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen."

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Opening Activity: (10 mins)

You Will Need: Bible, one lemon slice in a Dixie cup per child, one lemon slice sprinkled with sugar in a Dixie cup per child, plastic spoons, hand wipes.

Get Ready: Give each child both kinds of lemon slices in cups.

Read aloud Genesis 45:1-8. In today's Bible lesson, Joseph had a choice. He could choose to punish his brothers for what they had done to him, or he could forgive them and reunite with them. Joseph chose forgiveness, and God wants us to forgive others, too.

Ask students to share about a time that someone wronged them and if they got angry about it. (Allow time.) Those things hurt us. We have to make choices every day about whether to forgive people.

Let's see what it's like when we choose to forgive others. Have kids take the cup with the plain lemon and take a bite of the lemon. What does that taste like? (Allow kids to answer.) Think about a time that you forgave someone. Have kids take the cup with the sugar-coated lemon and take a bite of the lemon. What does that taste like? (Allow kids to answer.) How is the bitter lemon like or unlike not forgiving others? How did the sugar change the taste of the lemon? How does forgiveness change our relationships to be sweeter?

The first lemon was bitter like the bitterness we feel when we don't forgive. The second lemon was sweet and tasty like the sweetness we feel when we forgive others. God chooses to forgive us when we ask, and Joseph forgave his brothers for the horrible things they did. God wants us to follow Joseph's example of sweet forgiveness and forgive others.

Note: God wants us to be forgiving, but that does not mean we have to be a doormat, either. We can love someone and forgive them, but we can also choose not to allow them to continue to hurt us by staying away from them if needed.

Lesson Instruction: (15-20 mins)

A: Initial part of lesson

Review: Recall how last week we learned that most of Joseph's brothers plotted against him to kill him because they had such immense hate towards him. One brother convinced them to hold him captive instead. Years passed and Joseph was not a leader. Joseph could have been angry towards his brothers for what they did, for how much they hated him. Instead he chose forgiveness over resentment. He had the perfect opportunity to take revenge on his brothers, once he became a leader, but he chose not to.

God loved, therefore, He gave. He took action. As God's children, we are called to love others, even though they may be imperfect or hard to love. Recall the Lord's Prayer and how we ask God to "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

This is an important story for children to learn. Love all of God's children as God does. Forgive them for the mistakes that they make, no matter how large.

B: Second part

When Joseph arrived in Egypt, a lot of things happened to him—some good and some not so good.

Play a Game: Tell your students what happened to Joseph, and they will decide whether it was good or bad. Have your students stand up and take a **step forward** if they think it was good or a **step backward** if they think it was bad.

- Joseph made it to Egypt & was put to work in the house of Potiphar, a captain in Pharaoh's guard. (Pause.)

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- Joseph was put in charge of all of Potiphar's money. (Pause.)
- Potiphar's wife told terrible lies about Joseph to her husband. (Pause.)
- Because of his wife's lies, Potiphar had Joseph thrown into jail. (Pause.)
- The head jailer liked Joseph and put him in charge of all the other prisoners. (Pause.)
- Joseph used his God-given gift to interpret or explain the other prisoners' dreams. (Pause.)
- Joseph was stuck in jail for more than two years. (Pause.)
- Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt, heard that Joseph had the ability to understand dreams. (Pause.)
- Pharaoh released Joseph from jail to explain his dreams. (Pause.)
- Pharaoh believed what Joseph told him and put him in charge of the entire land of Egypt. (Pause.)

Stop and have your students take a look at where they are standing. They are probably ahead of where they started out. Joseph had some setbacks, but he also had some good things happen, and he ended up ahead.

Talk about how good things can come even out of the seemingly bad things that happen in life.

C: Third part

Ask your students if they notice any **similarities between Joseph and Jesus**. (Allow time for responses.) Write their responses on the board.

- They both forgave the people who persecuted them (Jesus on the cross said, "Forgive them Father for they know not what they do" Luke 23:34).
- Joseph was a slave "in body," and our Lord took on the form of a slave – humanity.
- Joseph was sold into slavery because of the envy of his brothers for twenty pieces of silver – Jesus the Savior was sold for thirty pieces of silver by Judas because of the envy of the Jewish rulers.
- Joseph saved his people by feeding them bread in a time of famine. Jesus the Savior saves mankind, and feeds them with the bread of heaven – His body and blood.

Note: Joseph is a "type" of Jesus. At the first Bridegroom Matins, served on Sunday evening of Palm Sunday, the Church commemorates Joseph the All-Comely. The Church holds up Joseph as the "earliest symbol of Christ."

Closing Activity: (10 mins)

Give a copy of the "Be Like Christ" handout to each student. Have your students describe attributes of Jesus. For example: "Jesus is humble." Have the students write the attribute on their paper underneath the first column. Next to it, have your students think of a way they can imitate that attribute. For example: "I can let others go before me." This is an act of humility and is a good way to imitate Christ. The first sample has been done on the handout.

When they are done, remind them about how Joseph is an image of Jesus in the Old Testament and how WE are called to be His image-bearers today. When we act like Him, we look like Him.

To extend this lesson for additional time...

Additional activity ideas:

1. Play the "Forgive" song while allowing students to draw an icon of Jesus on the back of their handout.

Background Resources for Teachers:

- Teachers may want to consult the [Book of Genesis Common or Challenging Questions and Orthodox Christian Responses](#) resource prior to this lesson.

Be Like Christ

Attributes of Jesus:

- Jesus is forgiving



How I can be like Jesus:

- I can forgive those who hurt me



Some Common or Challenging Questions about the Book of Genesis and Orthodox Christian Responses

*Responses provided by V. Rev. Dr. Stephen De Young,
Pastor of Archangel Gabriel Orthodox Church in Lafayette, Louisiana.
Fr. Stephen holds a Ph.D. in Biblical Studies from Amridge University.*

Lesson 1 Gen 1-2: Creation

How do Orthodox Christians respond to questions of creation or evolution?

The real answer is "in a number of ways." This question will come up, it came up when I taught this material to middle school kids. There are parents on either side of this issue who are liable to get heated if a version of either side is taught as "the Orthodox view." I think it's best to focus on the positive things that the text is teaching about where humans came from, what God has tasked us with doing, etc. and let things like how old the earth is, which Genesis really doesn't tell us, be. These questions can be a good opportunity, though, to talk about how God tells us the things that we need to know for our salvation. He doesn't necessarily answer all of our curious questions.

What is the Orthodox Christian view of a human being?

Hopefully this will come out of the lesson, in terms of talking about a human person as the image of God and the tasks that God has given men and women to accomplish in the world.

What about gender questions?

These will take a lot of different forms because a lot of kids will ask anecdotal questions about other kids at school who identify in various ways, etc. It's very important to offer them a positive response. Rather than criticizing other people or making political arguments, it's important to offer the positive teaching of the Church regarding men and women. Both men and women are equal before God in Christ. Men and women are biologically different and are called to work together in the world toward the goals of Christ's kingdom. Creation means putting things in order and then filling them with life. Men are called primarily to put things in order, but women participate with them in that effort. Women are called primarily to fill things with life, and men participate with them in that effort. A garden is full of life, but tended and in good order. Kids should focus on how to fulfill what God has called them to do and become the person God created them to be rather than on identifying as this or that thing or with this or that group.

Why is there *something* rather than *nothing*?

First, because it is "good" to exist. This is the response of God Himself to the created world, that it is good. It is better to be than not to be. Second, we have seen that human beings, uniquely, are made in the image of God, and meant to grow into likeness with Him. Third, human beings are to keep the Sabbath, which is a formal way of both imitating and worshiping God.

Are there other things human beings are meant to do, to fulfill their purpose?

1. "Be fruitful and multiply" (1:28) - yes, and this commandment seems to imply that reproductive procreation, and the male-female complementarity, are fundamental to human life. Love of each other and nurture of children are central to this.
2. "Fill the earth and subdue it" (1:28) - yes; just as God made and then *filled* the earth, so human beings are instructed to do likewise. Human beings have a responsibility for creation, moreover; "dominion" is the term that most translations use, but the fact of the matter is that 'ruling over' implies 'taking care of', power assumes responsibility. With the onset of rapid technological advance in the 20th c., this element of responsibility has become crucially important. We are stewards of the world and the environment.
3. Finally, in Gen. 2:15, God puts Adam in the garden "to tend and keep it." This phrase is important. The Hebrew verbs used here are actually better translated as, "to worship and obey," and they are used in only a couple other places in the Pentateuch, each time to refer specifically to the duties of priests in the Tabernacle. Human beings are meant to be the priests of creation, taking what God has given in nature and offering it back in worship and culture (art, civilization, etc.) .

Lesson 2

Genesis 3: Expulsion from Paradise

How can God, who is good, curse things?

Curse is more of a state of being than a magic spell. As God created things good, they all work together and cooperate to bring forth life and goodness in the world. When that balance and that order gets disrupted, it brings about a state of curse. So Adam is told that the ground is cursed because of him and it will no longer cooperate with him to bring forth food. It will be difficult and hard for him, because he has put himself 'out of order' with God and with creation.

Are people born sinful or evil?

No. Because of Adam, people are born in a weakened state, meaning that they are subject to the passions. Some passions aren't sinful, like getting hungry or tired or thirsty. Some of them, like pride or anger or greed, are sinful. Even the ones that aren't sinful can become sinful if we eat or drink too much or become lazy.

Lesson 3

Genesis 4-9: Sin and the Flood

Did Cain marry his sister?

Without getting into issues of evolution, etc. within the story being told in Genesis 4 and following, Cain would have married one of Adam and Eve's daughters, so yes. If it comes up in further questions, it can be pointed out that at that point people were much more genetically diverse so there would have been fewer genetic issues.

Lesson 4
Genesis 10-11: Babel and the Nations

Should we be making a connection between Babel and Pentecost?

That's a perfectly good connection to make. After the events of Genesis 1-11, God creates the nation of Israel as the vehicle through which he is going to redeem all the nations of the world and gather them back together into a new people, the Church. So the understanding of the preaching of the gospel in various languages at Pentecost represents the regathering of the peoples of the world in Christ. This time, humans aren't out to accomplish their own desires, but to serve and follow Christ together.

Lesson 5
Genesis 12: Promises to Abraham

Does the blessing of Abraham mean God shows favoritism?

I'm not completely sure in what sense you mean the question, partially because "favoritism" is a slippery term. So, for example, it's true that out of the hundreds of millions of people alive on earth during Abraham's lifetimes, God chose to reveal himself to Abraham and not all the others in the same way. There's only one woman in the history of the world, the Theotokos, who was chosen to be the mother of Christ. So, it is true that God calls each of us to different lives in different places at different times, not everyone is called to be a monastic or a missionary or a martyr. The key thing is that our salvation is found in fulfilling our own calling, not in wishing we had one that we think is more important or prestigious.

If this question was meant in terms of Abraham's descendants, then it may be based on a misunderstanding. Salvation and the knowledge of God was never ethnically determined. Most of Abraham's descendants were part of nations who descended into paganism (Moab, Edom, Ammon, Midian, etc.) Most of the population of Israel and Judah did likewise. Throughout the Old Testament, many of the Biblical heroes and heroines were not ethnically Israelites (eg. Caleb, Ruth, etc.) One particular genealogy extending from Abraham ended in our Lord Jesus Christ, and it's through Christ that people of all ethnic backgrounds find salvation.

Lesson 6
Genesis 18: Hospitality of Abraham

How is it that Abraham is eating with Christ if he hasn't been born yet?

This is kind of brain breaking for people, so this kind of answer has to be adjusted for the age level of the person asking. There are a bunch of other similar questions like about God walking in the garden of Eden, etc. where God appears in human form in Genesis and elsewhere in the OT which the fathers uniformly say are Christ. The core of the answer is that God doesn't relate to time the way that we do. St. Paul can call Christ the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world, for example. So who Christ is is a sort of eternal reality that is only revealed to us when he is born from the Theotokos. There is a mystery here that we can't fully understand but just need to marvel at.

Lesson 7
Genesis 22: The Sacrifice of Isaac

Does God really want Abraham to kill his own son? What do we do with that?

He didn't; God knew exactly what would happen. This Bible study on this chapter might help:

<https://youtu.be/Ld2UvPUwRVl>

Lesson 8
Genesis 26-28: Jacob and Esau

If the prophecy was that “the older will serve the younger”, was it good, then, that Jacob deceived his brother to get the birthright?

There are also a number of questions related to this one in Genesis where people use trickery and deception and don't seem to be criticized for it, or are even praised for it. In general, in the Old Testament, trickery is acceptable if it is used to restore justice by a weaker party. So someone who is younger or weaker who has been wronged by someone older and/or stronger can use trickery to make things right again or re-balance the scales. Note that this is about trickery, not violence.

Lessons 9 & 10
Genesis 43-36: Joseph and His Brothers

How is Joseph considered a foreshadowing of Christ?

There are a number of ways. Joseph is rejected and betrayed out of jealousy by his brethren in the way that Christ came to His own and they received Him not. The brothers tell Jacob that his son is dead but he receives him back alive. Joseph descends to become a lowly servant but then is elevated to a position of rulership. After his ascension, Joseph forgives his brothers who wished him ill and provides salvation for them from the famine.

General Teaching Strategies and Classroom Considerations

Classroom Management

Establish Routines

Important for all ages, especially the youngest learners

Establish simple routines and procedures at the beginning of the year so students know what to expect. This is VERY important for the lower grades.

Ideas for Routines:

- Entering Class Routine: Greet students by name as they enter the classroom – even better if you can stand at the door while doing it! This not only helps ensure all students feel known and connected, but it can also shift students into a classroom mindset. If you tend to have a large number of varying students each week who may not all know each other (or whom you might not know), have some pre-folded “table tent” name cards and markers ready which students can write their names on and place by their seats. You can even make it fun each week by having them draw a different “favorite thing” next to their names each time (favorite sport, favorite food, favorite team, etc.)
- Opening Prayer: Always start class with a prayer either at the icon corner or before students sit down. We suggest you use the same prayer each time. Younger grades might especially want to use this as an opportunity to teach and reinforce *The Lord’s Prayer*.
- Clearing the Room Routine: After crafts or activities, have students clean up after themselves to the best they are able at their developmental level. This gives them a sense of ownership of and responsibility for the space and materials. One fun way to do this is to play music in the background during clean up time. Challenge the students to see if they can have everything put away before the song ends. You could also invite students to look around the room and decide together if the space is “better than we found it” before they are dismissed.

Walk around the Room

Good for all ages.

It’s tempting sometimes to stand at the front of the classroom, but challenge yourself to move around instead. It’s ok to walk around the classroom (including walking behind students) and to even sit next to them. This helps you to be “present” to all students – and can help you spot and gently correct behaviors in the moment before they become disruptive.

Classroom Setup

Good for all ages.

If the option is available to you, consider exploring different ways to arrange your classroom furniture. Whether you have desks, chairs, or tables, different seating arrangements can really affect the dynamic of the classroom. Also, with older students especially, consider switching things up on occasion. It can positively affect the energy and expectation students feel when walking into the room.

- For discussion-oriented classrooms, you might try a roundtable or horseshoe approach (if smaller numbers) or group or pair pods (if larger numbers).
- For younger students, group or pair pods often help direct them towards the right amount of social interaction with each other within manageable boundaries.

Instructional Strategies

Prediction Strategies

Good for all ages.

Inviting students to predict what might happen in a story *before* reading or talking about it is one of the strongest things you can do to support comprehension – even if they get their initial predictions wrong! The act of predicting prepares them to listen closely for the “answer” when they later encounter it. Some ways to do this:

- Provide the title of the story and a few main details, then ask them to guess what they think might happen.
- Show pictures of the story and ask them to guess what the caption might be.
- For older kids, have them jot down their True or False answers to a quick 3-5 questions about the story before they read it. As you then read the story, have them note which ones they got correct. (You can even turn it into a game.)

In all cases involving prediction, the key is to explicitly return to those questions and their “answers” after you’ve read/shared the story together.

A note: The classroom setup itself can be a great place of “prediction and preparation”, too. You might pre-print all the icons connected to the Genesis curriculum and post them on the walls before beginning the first lesson of the curriculum. Over the course of the curriculum, invite students to reflect, discuss, or guess about the icons and what they are teaching as a way of preparing them for what they will encounter over the curriculum.

See, Think, Wonder - Discussion Strategy

Especially effective when viewing icons.

Before introducing an image (especially an icon), ask students questions designed to get them engaged, interested, and ready to learn about it.

- *What do you see or notice?*
- *What do you think might be happening?*
- *What are you wondering about?*

You can ask these questions out loud or have them jot down answers on paper. The important thing to remember is that this is a time for students to generate thoughts and not for you to correct them. Avoid the temptation to add what you already know; instead, keep the ideas flowing by asking, “And what else?”

Pair & Share Discussion Strategy

Especially relevant for 4th grade and up.

When you pose a question that you want students to discuss, have students first turn to their neighbor to talk about it in pairs. As students discuss, it’s helpful to walk around the room and listen in. You might engage in quick little conversations with pairs, though be careful not to interject too much.

As the “pair” time comes to an end (or as the pairs’ conversations begin to die down – whichever comes first!), then invite the pairs to share with the larger group. One way to transition into a large group conversation is to say aloud, “Please finish whatever you’re saying to your neighbor and be ready to share out.” Another way is to have a little bell or timer sound on your phone which signals the shift.

As conversations die down, ask the class, “What kinds of things did you and your neighbor talk about?” Phrasing the question to include “you and your neighbor” can be an especially helpful way to encourage shy or reticent students to share, as they are able to speak for their group rather than just for themselves. You might even call on specific students by name using this question – again, allowing them to speak on behalf of their pair.

You can adapt this as well:

- **Think-Pair-Share:** Teachers may want to add an additional layer of reflection to this strategy by asking students to either first think about or jot down their initial thoughts before pairing up. This helps students – especially those who might benefit from pre-thinking time – to gather their thoughts and prepare for discussion.
- **Think-Group-Share:** If your classroom is better arranged according to small groups rather than pairs, the same process can still work.

3-2-1 Reflection Strategy

Especially useful as a reflection piece at the end of a lesson.

At the end of a lesson, one quick and easy way to help students solidify connections by way of reflection on their own learning is to do a quick 3-2-1 check in. Students can respond verbally or on paper. You can also ask them to reflect individually or (especially if you have a larger group), they can share their responses with each other in pairs or groups.

Simply ask students to think about and share...

- *3 things they learned*
- *2 things they already knew*
- *1 thing they still wonder*

Key to this is to provide time for them to think about this before asking them to respond. Additionally, as you collect or listen to their responses, take note of some of the "I wonders" that you might want to address, clarify, or respond to in the next lesson. This can be a great way to build trust and continuity by remembering the questions they have.

Incentives

Games:

Good for all ages.

Have a game or two that you play at the end of class which incorporates what students learned in the day's lesson. This can be as elaborate as a trivia game or as simple as "hangman" on the board using key words from the lesson.

One great way to capitalize on this as a formative learning tool is to have students create the questions themselves during or after the lesson. You might have sticky notes at each seat during class so students can jot down "questions and answers" they think of.

When doing games, it's best to have them compete in teams (boys/girls, groups, pairs, etc.) rather than individually. Not only does this build positive energy and team-camaraderie, but it keeps students from feeling anxiety that can come from being "on the spot."

"Like the Stars of Heaven"
A Book of Genesis Orthodox Sunday School Curriculum
The Antiochian Orthodox Department of Christian Education (AODCE)

Stump the Priest:

Good for all ages, but especially great for middle grade students.

At the end of each lesson, let students decide which 1-2 "stump the Priest" questions from today's lesson that they will plan to ask their priest after class (perhaps in Coffee Hour). This could be part of your end-of-class routine each week. If it happens weekly, you might even keep a running tally of times that they are able to stump him. This can be a fun way for students to not only stay engaged with the lesson, but it can also build some positive, fun interactions between students and the clergy.

Gem Jar:

Especially for younger students.

Get a small 8 oz jar and put a marble in the jar when you see great behavior or a student does or says something worth recognition. If you have a larger jar, then you can give every student a marble for attendance (that will help them fill it quicker and motivate them to come.) Once the jar is full, you can celebrate the following Sunday with a special treat - like donuts, a game day, or whatever you think your class would be motivated by depending on their age.)

Reading Scripture Together

Locating Bible Verses:

Don't assume all your students know how to look up a verse in the Bible. Sending students to look up Scripture is a great time to help teach this skill! Rather than making it a race, be explicit in modeling and talking through the process for locating the verse(s). ["First, let's look in the table of contents for the name of the book... then let's look in the top corner to find the chapter... etc."]

If you all use the same Bibles together, consider also sharing the page number.

It's helpful to write the Scripture reference on the board as well.

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Reading Aloud:

In a Sunday School setting, we encourage teachers *not* to require all students to read aloud, as students (even at higher levels) read at different levels and might feel self-conscious. Rather, invite students who are interested in reading aloud to do so. If you do ask students to take turns reading around the room, consider offering them a "pass" option which they can say instead when it comes to their turn.

Alternatives to Reading Aloud:

Consider listening to an audio version of the Scripture instead as students follow along. This is especially great for longer passages. Bible Gateway has a free and simple resource for this you might use (in a variety of translations):

<https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/audio>