

## Lesson 120

# Unit Review

A review of Lessons 111–119.

# Studying God's Word

## Lesson Review

Don't forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.

Refer to the Exodus to Malachi Timeline as you review.

Refer to the Exodus to Malachi Timeline. We talked about how the Jews were taken away from Judah to live in Babylon as punishment for continuing to disobey God. They were not forgotten though; God promised to bring them back to their land after 70 years in captivity. God used faithful and obedient people to lead, teach, and protect the Jews during the time they were in exile (living far from home) and as they returned to Judah.

## Lesson 111

### Slide #4

Refer to Lesson 111 Theme Poster. In this lesson, we learned about three different men who were allowed to see something very special.

What did God allow the prophets Ezekiel and Isaiah and the Apostle John to see? A vision of God and his glory.

Ezekiel's vision was so amazing that it was hard for him to describe, but he used words like brightness, fire, lightning, shiny metal, and even a rainbow! He was overwhelmed by the sight of the Lord on his throne, and he fell on his face in fear and worship.

Another prophet, Isaiah, was also given a vision of God in his temple—he saw the seraphim as they worshipped the Lord.

Refer to the Attributes of God poster. The seraphim were calling God holy. What does that mean? God is perfect; he cannot sin.

Isaiah was overwhelmed, too. He said, "Woe is me!" because he knew he was a sinner and was unclean compared to the perfect, holy God.

Then the Apostle John saw Jesus, the Son of Man, in heaven. John fell down in worship and fear. Jesus explained that he is the eternal God who died for sinners and rose again to offer eternal life to those who trust in him.

These visions were truly awesome. God's glory and holiness overwhelmed these men, and they were humbled before him when they understood how holy God is and how sinful people are.

## Lesson 112

God gave a promise through the prophet Jeremiah that would bring hope to his people while they were living as captives in Babylon. Jeremiah wrote about a new covenant that would take the place of the old one. It promised freedom from slavery to sin and eternal life through Jesus Christ. This promise was not just for the Jews but also for us today!

### Slide #5

Refer to Lesson 112 Theme Poster. For a long time, the Jews lived under the old covenant laws that God gave to Moses, including the Ten Commandments written on stone. But the people could never obey all of these laws because of sin. The priests had to offer animal sacrifices over and over to cover their own sins and the sins of the people.

But the new covenant offers one perfect sacrifice—Jesus Christ, who had no sin. His life, death, and resurrection offer everyone who will believe in him the promise of forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

Do we have to work or do anything good to receive the forgiveness Jesus offers? No.

The new covenant is NOT about doing good things so that God will love us and let us into heaven. It's about God's grace and his free gift of salvation from sin through Jesus' death on the cross. When we believe in Jesus, our sins are forgiven—we are set free—and God's law is written on our hearts. That means God gives us the desire to obey him and the Holy Spirit to help us obey.

## **Lesson 113**

### Slide #6

Refer to Lesson 113 Theme Poster. In this lesson, we saw how God used King Cyrus of Persia to fulfill his promise to the Israelites (Jews) that they would return to Judah after 70 years of captivity. King Cyrus allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. Zerubbabel led the group back to Judah where they rebuilt the altar of God and laid the foundation of the temple.

The other people living in Jerusalem did not want the Jews to come back and rebuild. They made it very difficult for God's people to continue their project, and the Jews stopped building.

Do you remember how many years went by before they finished the temple? 21 years.

But God was still in control and later caused another king to command that the temple be finished. Finally, 21 years later, the Jews celebrated and rejoiced as they dedicated the new temple to the Lord!

What attribute of God do we see in this lesson? Sovereign. God caused the king to allow the Jews to return to Jerusalem. Although some tried to stop the rebuilding of the temple, God was in control to make sure the project was finished.

## Lesson 114

Refer to the Exodus to Malachi Timeline. Next, we looked at God's sovereignty to protect the Jews still in exile in Babylon, which was now called Persia, where Esther and her cousin Mordecai were living.

Even though God's name isn't mentioned in the book of Esther, we can see how he was in control over people and events to save the Jews. First, out of all the young women in the land, a Jewish woman named Esther was chosen and crowned queen of Persia. Then, Mordecai overheard the murder plot against the king and saved the king's life.

Who remembers the name of the powerful man who got mad at Mordecai for not bowing down to him? Haman.

Haman was so angry that he decided he wanted to kill not only Mordecai but all the Jews living in Persia!

### Slide #7

Refer to Lesson 114 Theme Poster. Mordecai told Esther she must go to the king and plead for their lives. Esther knew it was dangerous to go before the king without being invited, but she did it anyway.

What did the king do when Esther came into his throne room? He held out his scepter toward her.

The king welcomed Esther and told her she could have anything she asked for. When Esther finally told the king about Haman's evil plot to destroy the Jews, the king realized that the plot would include the death of his queen and of Mordecai, who had saved his life!

The king was furious with Haman and ordered him to be killed. Then he gave Mordecai permission to write another law that allowed the Jews to protect themselves from their enemies. God sovereignly used Esther and Mordecai to save the Jews!

## Lesson 115

Next, we learned about the second group of Jews who came back to Jerusalem. Their leader was Ezra, a priest and a scribe who knew a lot about God's law and wanted to teach it to the people.

When Ezra arrived in Jerusalem, it didn't take him long to see that the people who had returned earlier with Zerubbabel were not following the law of the Lord. It had been several years since they had come home, and they had forgotten God's laws and were disobeying God.

The Jewish people were marrying people from the foreign nations around them. But God had commanded them NOT to do this very thing.

Why would God give this command? He didn't want the Jews to start worshipping the false gods of these people.

### Slide #8

Refer to Lesson 115 Theme Poster. When the Jews married people from the lands around Judah, the non-Jewish people led them and their children into idolatry by teaching them about their false gods.

The people were disobeying God's commands. Ezra prayed and asked for God's forgiveness and mercy. When the Jews heard Ezra cry out to God, they understood their sinfulness and were truly sorry. They confessed their sin to God and separated themselves from their foreign wives and children.

## Lesson 116

In the book of Nehemiah, we saw a man who prayed AND took action in a very real way to protect his work.

The third group of Jews to return to Jerusalem was led by Nehemiah, who was cupbearer to King Artaxerxes of Persia. Nehemiah was sad when he heard that the Jews in Jerusalem were in trouble because the city walls were broken down, leaving the people open to enemy attack. The king gave him permission to return to Jerusalem, and Nehemiah organized the people to repair different sections of the wall.

But just like the enemies in the land tried to stop Zerubbabel from rebuilding the temple, there were enemies who didn't want the walls to be rebuilt. Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem caused trouble for Nehemiah and threatened to attack the Jews while they were spread out around the city working on the wall.

### Slide #9

Refer to Lesson 116 Theme Poster. What plan did Nehemiah come up with to protect the Jews so they could keep working? He had people ready with weapons to fight and armed workers on the wall. He used a trumpet call that would alert the Jews of an attack so they could all gather to defend themselves.

Nehemiah and the Jews prayed for God's protection. They also armed themselves to be ready for an attack. When their enemies saw that the Jews were ready for them, they didn't attack. So the work continued, and the walls were finished in just 52 days!

## Lesson 117

God also gave Nehemiah the responsibility to lead the Jews as their governor. He organized the rebuilding of the walls and gates even though his enemies tried to distract him from the work and make him look bad as a leader. But Nehemiah trusted in the Lord and didn't fall for the traps they set for him.

### Slide #10

Refer to Lesson 117 Theme Poster. Nehemiah also cared about the poor. He found out that some of the people were forced to sell their houses and land to get food and pay their taxes. Then when they had nothing left to sell, they were forced to sell their own children into slavery. The people had no way to pay back

the money they owed or to free their children. Plus, the officials were taking part of everything the people grew from the land—their grain, oil, and wine.

Nehemiah called the rich nobles and officials together and told them that what they were doing was wrong and that they needed to stop. The wealthy people listened to Nehemiah and returned the houses and land and other things they had taken from their own people.

Nehemiah not only cared about the people's physical needs, like food and homes, but he also cared about their spiritual growth. He knew this group of Jews had not been taught the laws of God. So, he gathered all the people together and asked Ezra to read the Book of the Law to them. The people wept when they understood how they'd sinned. And now that they had responded correctly to the Lord by confessing their sin, they could celebrate and worship God together with joy.

## **Lesson 118**

### Slide #11

Refer to Lesson 118 Theme Poster. In the last book of the Old Testament, we saw how God gave Malachi two messages: a warning for the priests who were sacrificing imperfect offerings and a message of hope that the Messiah would come.

What kinds of animals were the priests offering on God's altar? Lambs, blind, and sick.

The priests were supposed to be God's messengers, teaching the people and being a good example. Instead, they were causing the people to sin and to dishonor God. The animal sacrifices were supposed to be the best of the flock. But the people's hearts were not right. God wants us to have the right heart attitude toward him, showing respect for him and true sorrow for our sin.

Malachi also wrote that a messenger would come before the Messiah to prepare his way.

Who was this messenger? John the Baptist.

We read in the New Testament how the angel Gabriel appeared to Zechariah the priest and told him that he and his wife, Elizabeth, would have a son who would come in the spirit and power of Elijah. When their son, John, grew up, he helped people prepare their hearts for Jesus.

## **Lesson 119**

In this lesson we talked about the "Silent Years." Why are the 400 years between the Old Testament and the New Testament called "Silent Years"? God did not give any new prophecies during this time.

### Slide #12

Refer to Lesson 119 Theme Poster. God gave Daniel a vision of some of the kings and empires who would come. The Medes and the Persians took over Babylon. But they were defeated by the Greeks and their leader Alexander the Great, who conquered many strong countries. Greek became a well-known language that many people used and later became the language of the New Testament.

Two Jewish groups formed during this time of Greek rule: the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

Which group did not want to mix with the Greek culture, but wanted to keep their own Jewish way of life? Pharisees.

The Sadducees wanted to work with the Greeks, hoping they would help their people, while the Pharisees wanted nothing to do with them.

The Pharisees were so careful to keep God's laws that they created extra laws for the people to obey. But they were actually breaking God's command by adding to his Word. They were trying to please God by obeying made-up rules instead of being truly sorry for their sins.

The fighting between these two Jewish groups made it easy for Rome to conquer them. Soon, the Jews lost their freedom and had to obey the Romans. Then Rome set out to conquer other nations. And as they went, they built roads and shipping ports, which made travel much easier when the time came to spread the good news of Jesus.

This 400-year period was a very eventful time of history. It is clear that God was sovereignly guiding kings, nations, and people according to his plan to prepare the world for Jesus' birth.

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