



Lesson 7—Our Creator

Forgave Disobedient People

Exodus 3:21–34:35

Memory Verse

“For You, Lord, are good,
and ready to forgive, and
abundant in mercy to all
those who call upon You”
(Psalm 86:5)

Teacher’s Objective

At the end of the session,
the students should
be able to:

Define the
word forgiveness

Locate the
Ten Commandments
in their Bible

Describe how God
forgave the Israelites
when they disobeyed Him

Express in their own
words God’s compassion
toward them

Materials Needed
See “Teaching Activities”
for specific activities

Teacher’s Bible Study

In recording the history of God’s relationship to mankind, the Bible reveals various examples of covenants made between God and certain individuals or nations. A covenant may be defined as an agreement, written or verbal, whereby two or more parties agree to a certain relationship governed by specific rules and yielding commensurate results. Therefore, a covenant is most closely analogous to our present day “contract,” though any such analogy must be an oversimplification.

God’s purpose in making covenants has always been, and still is, to officially and clearly delineate what He expects from man and what man can expect from Him. By understanding these covenants an individual may come to a better knowledge of God’s will and desire for mankind and also realize the conditions which will lead to prosperity and abundance.

The best known of the Old Testament covenants is that between God and the Israelites made at Mount Sinai. After bringing the Israelite slaves out of bondage in Egypt, God made an agreement or covenant with them (Exodus 19-24). In return for obedience to the Ten Commandments and other laws enumerated in Exodus 20-23, God promised certain physical blessings. Included among these were protection from enemies, removal of sickness, and abundance of food and water. Conversely, disobedience to these laws would be followed by curses affecting the same areas of the Israelites’ physical lives as did the promises. Moses served as the mediator of this covenant, which was then ratified with the blood of animals. Despite temporary periods of relative obedience, the later history recorded in biblical accounts show the unfaithfulness of the Israelites who repeatedly broke their part of the covenant.

This week’s lesson is a lesson in how forgiving God is of our sins. Forgiveness is not always easy to give, and sometimes it is very difficult to comprehend how God can and will forgive each and every one of our sins. We experience the forgiveness of God through repentance. However, there is another important factor that we all must understand. While God forgives and forgets our sins, He does not always remove the natural consequences of our sins. Many point to David and how he had sinned for committing adultery with Bathsheba and for murdering her husband. While David did repent and God did forgive, David’s life was never the same. Read II Samuel 12:1-23.

In preparation of this week’s lesson read the following scriptures: Exodus 32:1-14; Exodus 32:15-35; Exodus 34:1-17; Psalm 86; and Psalm 145.

Presenting the Bible Story

Who can define the word forgive? Has anyone ever forgiven you for doing something wrong? Have you given forgiveness? Let's turn to our memory verse. Who is ready to always forgive? Yes, God is. Today we are going to read about how God forgave the Israelites.

Exodus 32:1

Moses had been on the mountain for forty days. Read Exodus 24:14. The people became tired of waiting for his return.

Exodus 32:2-4

What commandment were the people breaking here? The second commandment. Who suggested that they melt their gold earrings and make a calf to worship? Aaron.

Exodus 32:5-6

How fast the old ways reassert themselves! Their idolatry led to breaking what commandment now? The Seventh Commandment—sexual misconduct. Read I Corinthians 10:7. In all of this wild behavior, however, they thought they were worshiping the one true God!

Exodus 32:7-10

God was so angry at what the people were doing, He did not even want to claim them as His own. What does “stiff-necked” mean? It means that they were stubborn. God is so very angry here that He wants to consume, destroy the Israelites and make a great nation out of Moses.

Exodus 32:11-14

Moses intercedes for the Israelites. He refers to them as “your people.” Moses pleaded with God on two counts: (1) The Egyptians will mock you, God, and say you just brought them out of Egypt to harm them, and (2) You made a promise to the patriarchs. “So the Lord relented from the harm...” “Relented” does not mean that God changed His mind about the Israelites; it just means He would take a different course of action. This is a perfect example of God's compassion.

Exodus 32:15-18

As Moses came down from the mountain, he met Joshua along the way. Joshua was not aware of what was going on. He thought the people were under attack. Moses knew differently because God had told him what they were doing.

Exodus 32:19-20

Moses was angry. The tablets with the commandments on them were thrown down and broken by him. Just because Moses interceded for the people it does not mean he agreed or thought their actions were justified. Why do you think he had the people drink the water where he had scattered the powder from the burnt golden calf? Could it be he proved how the golden calf was powerless? Drinking the water may have symbolized how the people have to suffer the consequences of sin.

Exodus 32:21-24

God was so angry with Aaron that He wanted to destroy him.
Read Deuteronomy 9:20.

Exodus 32:25-29

Now Moses had to judge those who were not willing to repent of their sin. The Levites went through the camp, and those who continued in the idol-

atry were killed. When it was over, 3000 men were dead.

Exodus 32:3-35
God sent a plague

Moses went to God and asked Him to forgive the people. Moses told God that if He was not willing to forgive them, he wanted his name blotted out of God's book.

Exodus 33:1-6

God commanded Moses to leave Sinai and head for the Promised Land. the land flowing with milk and honey. The people were sad that God was not going to be present with them. Instead an angel would protect and guide them. Removing their ornaments represented Israel's mourning.

Exodus 33:7-11
The tent is not the
Tabernacle of chapter 40

Moses was intimate with God. "So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend." This does not mean that Moses saw the face of God. It does mean that with *openness* and with *friendship*, Moses spoke with God.

Exodus 33:12-23

Moses talked back and forth with God. Moses was concerned about God's intentions and about the absence of God's presence. God reversed His threat not to go with them (read verse 14). Moses then requested to see God's glory. God told him he could look at His back as He passed by, for a fleeting moment, but he could not look upon His face.

Exodus 34:1-4

The covenant is renewed. Moses is to cut new stone tablets for God to again write the commandments upon.. Moses, then ascended to Mount Sinai.

Exodus 34:5-9

God reveals His character to Moses. God is the God of compassion, grace, loyalty, faithfulness, and forgiveness. Naturally, the most beautiful characteristic of God at this moment is that He is forgiving. Again Moses pleads for God's mercy and that He go with them.

Exodus 34:10-11

God renews the covenant. Other people would see God's work and His awesome power.

Exodus 34:12-17

In these verses, God is summarizing what He said in chapters 21–23. This may sound more harsh due to Israel's recent sin. God did not want His people to make a treaty with idolatry.

Exodus 34:18-26

They were to worship God through keeping the feasts. If they worshiped Him properly, He would protect their land.

Exodus 34:27-28

Moses was on Mount Sinai for another forty days. However, this time the people did not turn to idolatry.

Exodus 34:29-35

After Moses spent this time with God, his face shone. The people knew Moses had been with God. Apparently Moses did not know his face shone at first. When he did, he covered it with a veil, but removed the veil when he was in the presence of God.

Teaching Activities

Art and Activities

Activity Pages

Provide a copy of the Activity Page suitable for each of your students. Provide pencils and crayons, and red construction paper.

Art Activity

You will need to provide a small box—or empty match boxes—for each student, wrapping paper, ribbon, scissors, tape, gift tag. Have the students wrap their box and tie a beautiful ribbon on it. Either make a gift tag out of construction paper or use store-bought ones. Print “Forgiveness” on the tag. Attach the tag to the wrapped box. Explain to your students as they work that God provides us with many “gifts,” one of which is forgiveness.

Explore the Subject

**Explore with your students
the following questions**

1. What does forgiveness mean?
2. How did God know what the people were doing while He spoke with Moses? (God is everywhere.)
3. Did God not love His people anymore because they sinned? (No.)
4. How do we know He still loved them? (He forgave them and led them to the Promised Land.)
5. While God forgave the people of their sin, did they still have to suffer the consequences of sin? (Yes.)
6. What were the consequences? (Three thousand people died by the sword and from the plague.)

Respond and Reinforce

**Always close your
class with prayer**

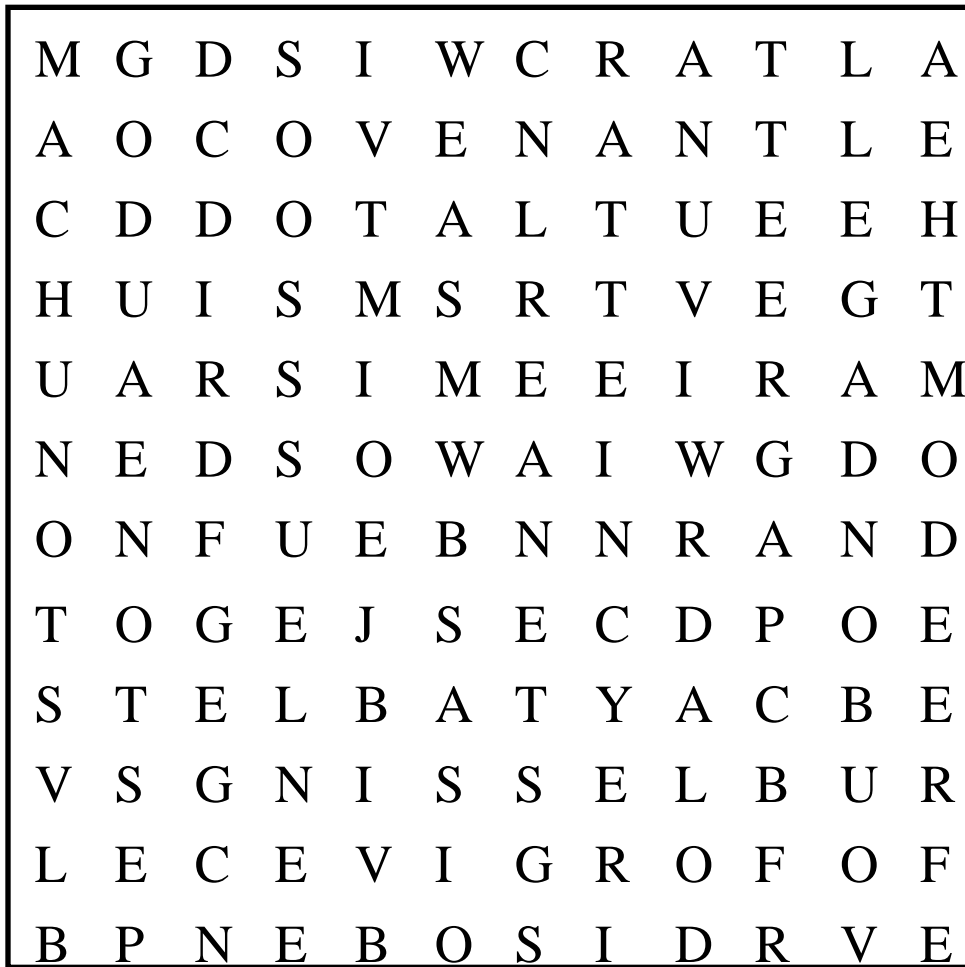
1. When you have sinned, what must you do? (Pray and ask God for forgiveness.)
2. Will God forgive you? (Yes.)
3. How do you know? (Discuss memory verse.)

Activity Page

Forgiving Disobedient People

Exodus 31:1—34:35

Read the Scriptures. Find the words hidden in the word search puzzle below.



FORGIVE

FREEDOM

WISDOM

DISOBEY

BLESSING

PRIEST

COVENANT

CURSES

COMMAND

AGREE

ALTAR

TABLETS

BONDAGE

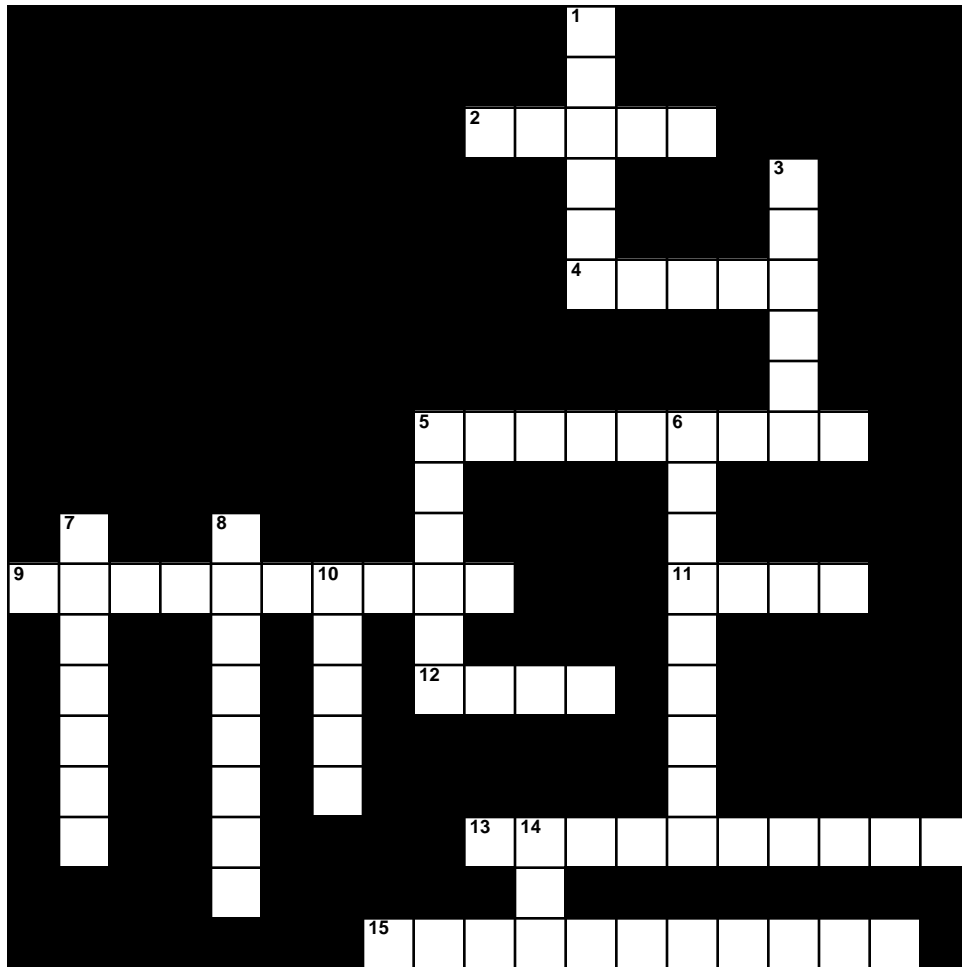
JUDAH

STONE

Activity Page

Forgiving Disobedient People Exodus 31:1—34:35

Read the Scriptures and fill in the crossword puzzle below.



Across

2. The prophet who delivered the Israelites from Egypt.
4. A spiritual being in service to God.
5. An assertion offering firsthand authentication of a fact.
9. House of worship.
11. A young bovine.
12. A general word that indicates a relationship to something.
13. The Lord spoke to Moses _____, as a man speaks to his friend (Exodus 33:11; three words).
15. Skill in an occupation or trade.

Down

1. Successor to Moses.
3. Liquefied by heat.
5. The Ten Commandments were written on _____ of stone.
6. The gold covering on the ark, considered the resting place of God (two words).
7. The day of rest to God's people.
8. Because of the people's _____ Moses went up to the Lord to make an atonement (see Exodus 32:30).
10. The raised platform on which a sacrifice is offered.
14. The _____ of the Covenant.

Across: 2. Moses; 4. Angel; 5. Testimony; 9. Tabernacle; 11. Calf; 12. Sign; 13. Face to face; 15. Face to face; 15. Workmanship; Down: 1. Joshua; 3. Molten; 5. Tables; 6. Mercy Seat; 7. Sabbath; 8. Great sin; 10. Altar; 14. Ark.

Activity Page

Our Creator Forgives Disobedient People

Through the sacrifice of our Savior we are able to be washed clean.
Color the picture, cut out and place on a scarlet (red) piece of paper.

