

JuniorWay®

JUNE • JULY • AUGUST 2022

teacher

Partners
IN A NEW
CREATION



BEFORE YOU TEACH

It is such a blessing that you have decided to teach this quarter. While Juniors will learn all about the Creator God, you will reap the benefits of God's call on you to teach. Thank you for your service.

As you navigate through the lessons, keep in mind that some Juniors might struggle with why they exist. They could be sick, have a sick loved one, have experienced personal trauma, or any other situation that may cause them to be unhappy with their lives. It is important that Juniors realize the negative effect that sin has had on the world and that their unfortunate situations are not how God originally designed things. Juniors may not fully comprehend why such an all-powerful and all-knowing God would allow sin to destroy His creation. Be sensitive as you work with these Juniors.

Remind Juniors that they are partners with God in creation. He creates new things through them. For example, God uses people to create technology. Explain to Juniors how their phones, laptops, and other technological tools and devices are all a result of someone using their God-given talent and knowledge to create something new. If you get a chance this quarter, spend time speaking with Juniors about various creators and innovators.

Finally, be sure that Juniors know that because of sin, God created a new place for us to live after we die. God did this because of His love for His creation. That new home is reserved for those who believe in Him and have accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Although Juniors attend class, do not assume that they are saved. Always be willing to talk and pray with those who want God to create in them a clean heart when they accept His gift of salvation.

Thank you for partnering with us. Together, we can and do make a difference in the lives of Juniors. You and I are not only partners with God in creation but with one another. It's been my honor to join with you to create a wonderful learning experience for Juniors.

Love and Blessings,

Yolonda Tonette Sanders
Juniorway® Editor

P.S. Do you or your students have a good, clean joke to share? If so, please email me at ysanders@urbanministries.com. Your content could be featured in a future edition of the LOL section found in the student booklet!

ANSWERS TO JBA®

The *Juniorway® Bible Activities* magazine offers activities to supplement and expand lessons in the *Juniorway® Student Magazine*. You will need to plan adequate time for each lesson activity.

LESSON 1:

Answers:

ACROSS

3. sorcery
5. horoscopes
6. stargazers

DOWN

1. prognosticator
2. astrology
4. idol

LESSON 2:

Answers will vary.

LESSON 3:

Answers:

Lord, lift, hand, Gentiles, standard, people

Thus saith the Lord God, behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people.

LESSONS 4-8:

Answers will vary.

LESSON 9:

Answers:

D	H	Z	B	K	J	U	G	L	J	C
W	K	O	P	E	D	E	T	O	O	O
E	U	N	L	T	L	V	S	M	D	M
L	A	S	Q	Y	I	I	F	U	V	M
L	B	A	E	Q	G	O	E	Y	S	A
X	I	D	F	C	R	H	O	V	N	N
D	D	U	C	T	A	Q	O	C	E	D
E	E	J	E	G	O	E	R	S	A	M
V	X	R	J	O	H	N	P	W	T	E
O	H	S	E	L	T	S	O	P	A	N
L	O	Y	A	R	P	X	C	O	G	T

LESSON 10:

Answers:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
13	23	2	22	9	7	3	14	10	6	12	21	11

N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
19	17	4	5	24	20	1	8	16	26	25	15	18

19	17
N	O

11	17	24	9
M	O	R	E

1	9	13	24	20
T	E	A	R	S

10	19
I	N

14	9	13	16	9	19
H	E	A	V	E	N

LESSON 11:

Answers:

And had a **wall** great and high, and had twelve **gates**, and at the gates twelve **angels**, and names written thereon, which are the names of the **twelve** tribes of the children of **Israel**: On the east **three** gates; on the north three gates; on the **south** three gates; and on the west three **gates**. And the wall of the **city** had twelve **foundations**, and in them the **names** of the twelve **apostles** of the Lamb.

Revelation 21:12-14

LESSON 12:

Answers:

- A. 7, B. 3, C. 4, D. 9, E. 1, F. 10, G. 2, H. 6, I. 8, J. 5

LESSON 13:

Answers:

1. Matthew 16:27, 2. Mark 13:26, 3. Luke 21:27, 4. John 14:2-3

SPECIAL STUDENT ACTIVITY ANSWERS

Before the quarter begins, carefully examine the following activities in the student magazine. Be prepared to clarify instructions for these activities and check answers for accuracy. Plan to let your students use the activity pages in class when you have time or as special outside assignments.

WHUZZUP?

Answers will vary.

HIGH FIVE

Answers will vary. Allow volunteers to share their answers.

JUNIORWAY TRAILS

Answers will vary.

BIBLE DISCOVERY

Answers:

Teachers, work with Juniors to locate each place on the map. Answer to #6: No, Jesus did not go to Capernaum. The man believed Jesus and he started home. His servants met the nobleman and told him his son was healed!

QUARTER IN REVIEW

True Or False?

1. T
2. T
3. F
4. T
5. F

Short Answer

1. Babylon
2. John

Learning About God

Answers will vary.

Keeping It In Mind

Answers will vary.

Quarter At-A-Glance June 2022

Partners in a New Creation

Members of Christ's body have the grand opportunity to be co-laborers with the ever-abiding Spirit of God in reconciling, re-creating, and rightly restoring all things in the eternal reign of God. This summer quarter considers ways in which believers are partners with God in creation.

UNIT 1 • God Delivers and Restores

This unit has four lessons. Using three chapters of Isaiah, this study explores God's predictions of the future destruction of Babylon and deliverance for Israel. These events were evidence of God's power at work to grant mercy and redemption to the penitent and to restore God's people to a state of peace and prosperity.

UNIT 2 • The Word: The Agent of Creation

This unit has five lessons taken from John's Gospel. The lessons stress how the Creating Word, at work in and with humanity, became flesh, healed the sick, saved the lost, resurrected the dead and granted—through the Holy Spirit—peace.

UNIT 3 • The Great Hope of the Saints

In this unit, a four-lesson study draws from Revelation to help learners envision the new home and city God has prepared for the redeemed. In this new heavenly environment, the saints will enjoy the new water of eternal life.

NOWHERE TO RUN. NOWHERE TO HIDE.

WEEKLY THEME:

GOD FORETELLS DESTRUCTION

BASED ON:

Isaiah 47:10–15

KEEP IN MIND:

Isaiah 47:10

FROM YOUR BIBLE:

The Scripture text is in the student lesson under “Learning From God.”

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON

During this lesson, Juniors will discern present-day practices and false gods that are not pleasing to God and obstruct people’s relationship with God; regret the separation from God that results from sin; and turn away from evil practices and worship God alone.

BEFORE YOU TEACH

1. Suggested Materials—Bibles, student magazines, pens or pencils, a T-chart for “Get Started Activity,” and index cards written with the Key Verse words (see “Keep In Mind”).

2. Lesson Background—For background information, read Isaiah 47. Be sure to read the student lesson. Also see Bible Study Guide 1 in the white pages of this book, as well as in the UMI Annual Commentary, *Precepts for Living*®.

The book of Isaiah is the longest book of prophecy in the Bible. It is also the most quoted book of prophecy by New Testament writers. In the first 39 chapters of Isaiah, the prophet warned about the Assyrian Empire. Assyria was most threatening to Israel at that time. In Isaiah 39, Isaiah told King Hezekiah that Babylon was a much greater future threat. Isaiah 40–48 deals with the judgment coming to Babylon because of its idolatry. Babylon was a powerful and godless nation.

In Isaiah 47, the prophet scolds Babylon for its dependence on divinations, the use of their magical and astrological arts. Witchcraft is a sin which gives honor to the devil, not God. Astrology is a sin which credits the stars and heavenly bodies as having control. People worship the creation instead of the Creator. Babylon’s govern-

ment even protected these practices. The people learned sorcery from youth through adulthood.

Hebrews 13:8 proclaims Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. God has not changed. What was detestable and worthy of punishment in Isaiah is equally sinful today.

OPEN THE LESSON

Get Started Activity

Review last week’s “Doing My Part” activity.

Say, “I want you to think about movies or fairy tales where an evil villain or wicked queen is pitted against a character that is good. As you think, describe the characteristics of the villain and the opposite traits of the good person.” Add the suggestions on a T-chart labeled: EVIL vs. GOOD. (Please search the internet for examples of T-charts.)

Then, explain that today we will look at Scripture and see where the Babylonians might fit on our chart.

What’s It All About?

Teaching time about 4–8 minutes

Student Story: Nowhere to Run. Nowhere to Hide.

“I itch!” Shayla whined. She started scratching on the rash running up her arm, but Mama quickly grabbed her hand.

“Here, let’s cover it and give you something for the itching. The more you scratch, the more the poison ivy will spread,” Mama said as she wrapped gauze around Shayla’s arm. “How did this happen anyway? Grandma showed you exactly where *not* to play. You’ve pointed out poison ivy on our walks, so I know you *know* what to avoid.”

Shayla defended herself. “I wanted to pick those yellow flowers growing along the edge of the trees. I just barely touched it when I reached over it to get the flowers. I figured a quick touch couldn’t hurt. It’s not like I sat in it!”

“I hear you, but your reasoning is wrong. Even a little touch is too much with poison ivy,” Mama rebutted.

Later that day...

Shayla called out to Mama, “This is great! Look what I found on my phone. My horoscope says, ‘Something good will happen to you today.’ I bet this poison ivy will disappear quickly. I can’t wait to read tomorrow’s message.”

“Shayla, reading horoscopes is like playing near the poison ivy. You think a little bit won’t hurt, but it will. If you kept scratching your poison ivy, it would have spread. Likewise, playing around with horoscopes or anything that is counter to God will lead to a spread of destruction in your life. God tells us to avoid *all* ways except His. It might seem like fun and games, but God takes astrology and such guesses seriously. Anything against God’s ways harms our relationship with Him. He is our only God.”

Shayla didn’t think she was doing anything wrong. What might be the harm in reading a horoscope? What hinders your relationship with God?

PRESENT THE SCRIPTURES

Learning From God

Teaching time about 10–15 minutes

Babylon was a powerful, godless nation. They were proud of their power and education. They studied the stars to make monthly predictions and decisions from astrology. They practiced sorcery and the occult. The more they believed in the power of these evil ways, the worse they became. Although Babylon was a powerful nation at that time, its wickedness meant it would fall. Isaiah announced Babylon’s destruction. None of the people’s idols would be able to save them. God tolerates no other gods before Him.

What I Have Learned

Teaching time about 5–8 minutes

Juniors are asked to unscramble words found in today’s Scripture.

Answers: 1. Enchantment (belief in magical spells); 2. Sorcery (belief in supernatural powers or witchcraft to control others); 3. Astrologers (those who study the stars to predict the future); 4. Stargazers (those who believe that the “stars” influence our actions); 5. Monthly prognosticators (those who read horoscopes)

Note: You will need to explain the parenthetical information equated to the scrambled words. Explain that each of these beliefs is a form of occult, supernatural power opposed to God. Even “playing” with these beliefs is like playing with poison.

Juniorway® Bible Activities

For additional material, see the activity for this lesson in the *JBA® (Juniorway® Bible Activities)* book.

Keep In Mind

Teaching time about 2–3 minutes

Write each word and the reference of today’s “Keep In Mind” verse on separate index cards. Hide them around the room. Challenge Juniors to find the cards. Work together to place them in the correct order. Read the verse. Say, “Those who read horoscopes, and practice astrology and sorcery are wrong to believe in. They will not save you; only Jesus can do that.”

EXPLORE THE MEANING

Choosing What’s Best

Teaching time about 4–8 minutes

Juniors will cross out everything they might trust in more than God. (*Answers: Everything should be crossed out!*) Then they can pray a prayer of confession and ask forgiveness to get right with God.

NEXT STEPS FOR APPLICATION

Doing My Part

Teaching time about 2–3 minutes

Juniors are challenged this week to look at areas in their own lives. Help them understand what it means to “clean house” and make a fresh start in sinful areas. Help Juniors think about ways to avoid temptations by removing the temptation, avoiding situations, and having an accountability partner. Pray for Juniors to be successful and share testimonies next week.

God Foretells Destruction

Bible Background • ISAIAH 47

Printed Text • ISAIAH 47:10–15 | Devotional Reading • PSALM 137

Aim for Change

By the end of this lesson, we will UNDERSTAND why God would destroy Babylon; GRAPPLE with the destructiveness of delighting in power and pleasure; and REPENT from thoughts, actions, and feelings that separate us from God.

In Focus

Jeremy's life turned around when he earned a free ride scholarship to Yale. When he graduated, he went into investment banking. His salary was more than anything his family had imagined. He could afford the finer things in life, and he wasn't ashamed to flaunt it.

Time passed and Jeremy got married and had kids of his own. He rose up in the ranks at his company and even became vice president. Soon Jeremy abandoned going to church, claiming he was too busy and that the preacher only wanted money. He also rarely visited home and often talked down about the neighborhood where he came from.

One day his wife, Judy, said, "Your mom called earlier. Wanted to see if we could come over for dinner on Friday."

"We'll see her on the Fourth," Jeremy said. "Isn't that soon enough?"

"Maybe she just wants to see her son," Judy said.

Jeremy doubted it. "Or maybe Aunt Pearl wants to ask me again if I'll cover her rent."

"Times have been hard for people in your old neighborhood."

"They were hard for me, too, but I got out of it. Why can't they? They're poor because they're just lazy and wouldn't take advantage of the opportunities they have like I did."

One day everything Jeremy trusted in came crashing down. His doctor told him he had a brain tumor. Now he wished he had a stronger relationship with God, and in the corner of his office, he knelt down to ask God to forgive him for his pride.

Has your pride ever separated you from God?

Keep in Mind

"Thus shall they be unto thee with whom thou hast laboured, even thy merchants, from thy youth: they shall wander every one to his quarter; none shall save thee."
(Isaiah 47:15, KJV)

Focal Verses

KJV **Isaiah 47:10** For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me.

11 Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know.

12 Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail.

13 Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee.

14 Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame: there shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it.

15 Thus shall they be unto thee with whom thou hast laboured, even thy merchants, from thy youth: they shall wander every one to his quarter; none shall save thee.

The People, Places, and Times

Isaiah. Isaiah was a prophet during the eighth century. His prophetic ministry spanned the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Manasseh. Scholars have argued that Isaiah was more than likely connected to the king's court in some way, based on his call narrative. Throughout his ministry, Isaiah's prophecies are directed at Judah and its idolatry and oppression. Isaiah's prophetic ministry can be summarized as judgment, renewal, and hope as he foretold Judah's Babylonian captivity as well as its return from exile and the coming of the Messiah. Tradition tells us Isaiah was eventually sawn in half during the reign of Manasseh.

Babylon. Babylon is an ancient city, and the name Babylon can be translated as "the gate of gods." It is mentioned in the Bible, along with Egypt, as the antithesis to God's people. When Israel sinned against God through idolatry and injustice, God allowed the Babylonians to punish Israel by sending Nebuchadnezzar to conquer Judah and send the Jews into exile. Babylon remained a superpower until the

Medes and Persians conquered Babylonia in 539 BC.

Background

Isaiah prophesies the demise of Babylon (Isaiah 45). Isaiah announces the conquest of Babylon by King Cyrus of the Medo-Persian Empire. This prophecy is linked to the salvation and restoration of Israel as they return from exile under Cyrus' reign. Babylon is condemned for its idolatry (Isaiah 46). The idols of Babylon are deemed powerless. They are made from created things and cannot save their worshipers. The reign of Babylon is over, and its gods cannot protect its people.

God calls the Babylonian sorcerers and astrologers to account (Isaiah 47). Their knowledge is world-renowned, but it is powerless against the sovereign judgment of the Lord. None of their astrological understanding or spells of witchcraft can prevent the disaster coming upon them. The once proud city will be humbled through the divine arrangement of its conquest by a foreign power.

What is bad news for the Babylonians is good news for the Jews. Because of Babylon's conquest, they will gain an ally in Cyrus who will give them freedom to return to their homeland and rebuild their capital Jerusalem as well as their Temple. God assures them no idol could have foretold these things and establishes His superiority over the gods and idols of other nations (Isaiah 48). He is God and He is in control of the destiny of not only Israel but all the nations of the globe.

At-A-Glance

1. The Pride of Babylon and Its Consequences (Isaiah 47:10–11)
2. False Trust in Babylon's Expertise (vv. 12–13)
3. The Ultimate Demise of Babylon (vv. 14–15)

In Depth

1. The Pride of Babylon and Its Consequences (Isaiah 47:10–11)

God, through Isaiah, calls out Babylon's prideful attitude. They have committed wickedness brazenly as if they were accountable to no one. The Babylonians were renowned for their knowledge, and this knowledge was the source of Babylon's pride. Because of this they put themselves in the place of God by saying, "I am, and none else beside me" (v. 10). These are proud, blasphemous words which display the inward attitude of the heart.

God would not allow Babylon to remain unpunished for this sin of pride. Calamity and disaster would come upon the city in the form of the Medo-Persian Empire and King Cyrus. None of Babylon's sorcery and knowledge could conjure an escape from the Medes and Persians.

Their kingdom would be taken over, and they could do nothing about it. As believers we have no reason to despair when proud and wicked rulers or leaders are in power. Eventually all of us will come before the judgment seat of God. There none of our knowledge, wealth, or social standing will be of any use—only whether we were righteous and humble before Him.

What is your response when you see wicked and proud people in power?

2. False Trust in Babylon's Expertise (vv. 12–13)

Isaiah mocks the knowledge and abilities of Babylon's sorcerers and astrologers. No matter what they do, they could not stop the judgment of God. Isaiah taunts them by pointing out that although they are experienced in enchantments and sorceries, they still will not withstand God's disaster. Astrology and sorcery were ways to control destiny. Babylon would soon face the truth that it was not in control of its destiny.

With all of their counselors, they weary themselves. They cannot figure a way out of their situation. Their astrologers try to predict an overturning of their fate, but it will not make a difference. Babylon's wisdom and knowledge will not be able to help it. Nothing they take pride in will pull them out of the ditch they dug for themselves through blasphemous pride and wickedness.

This same understanding of reality needs to be imprinted on our own hearts and minds. We are not in control, and any attempt to control our destiny is empty and vain. God is sovereign over our lives, and we need to look to Him for help. He controls our future and our destiny.

How do you respond to the fact that God controls your future and your destiny?

3. The Ultimate Demise of Babylon (vv. 14–15)

The astrologers and sorcerers of Babylon are compared to straw or stubble burning in the fire. They will not be able to save Babylon. Their fate was with the city and its empire. Looking to them for help would be fruitless. Sitting by their fire would bring no warmth. They can't save Babylon because they can't save themselves.

The nations who have dealt with Babylon since its origin will turn their backs on it. They will not help Babylon when calamity strikes. The pride of Babylon will be broken by the sovereign will of God. Babylon will have no way to escape it, no one to turn to, and no resources to meet this disaster.

Where do you turn when you are facing an impossible situation?

Search the Scriptures

1. What is Babylon's declaration of pride (Isaiah 49:10)?
2. What did Babylon rely on in times of disaster (vv. 12–13)?

Discuss the Meaning

1. What are the modern equivalents in our country to Babylon's knowledge and witchcraft? What do we trust in as a nation?
2. Why do people turn to things like astrology and witchcraft?

Liberating Lesson

We may be tempted to despair as we see the world and its leaders walk in pride and wickedness. When it comes to our own nation, hyper-patriotism and blind allegiance has puffed up many with misplaced pride. They believe we as a nation are superior to others and continually progressing toward increasing splendor. Our Scriptures tell us God is in control of the nations. He lifts up some and casts down others. Loyalty

to your country is a good thing but blind loyalty and pride absent of dependence on God is a path to ruin. We may despair at the injustice we see in the world, but God will call the nations to account for their pride and wickedness. Oppressive regimes and unjust laws are a result of human pride. But human pride will always be brought low under the sovereignty of God.

Application for Activation

No nation is beyond the pride we read about in Isaiah's description of Babylon. As individuals, we are equally in danger of exhibiting this kind of pride. In the coming week, take some time to pray for our nation and its leaders. Also make a plan to serve others. This is a surefire way to root out pride in your life.

Follow the Spirit

What God wants me to do:

Remember Your Thoughts

Special insights I have learned:

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- Walton, John H., Victor H. Matthews, and Mark W. Chavalas. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000.

Say It Correctly

Jotham. JAW-thum.

Ahaz. AYE-hazz.

Manasseh. Mah-NAH-suh.

Antithesis. an-TIH-thuh-siss.

Daily Bible Readings

MONDAY

Babylon's Days Are Numbered
(Jeremiah 29:8–14)

TUESDAY

Let Your Compassion Come Speedily
(Psalm 79)

WEDNESDAY

Persecution Foretold
(Mark 13:1–13)

THURSDAY

Keep Awake!
(Mark 13:28–37)

FRIDAY

Rise Up, O God!
(Psalm 74:10–23)

SATURDAY

The Humiliation of Babylon
(Isaiah 47:1–9)

SUNDAY

No Security in Wickedness
(Isaiah 47:10–15)

Notes

HOPE FOR THE WORLD

WEEKLY THEME:

GOD FORETELLS OF REDEMPTION

BASED ON:

Isaiah 49:1–11

KEEP IN MIND:

Isaiah 49:8

FROM YOUR BIBLE:

The Scripture text is in the student lesson under “Learning From God.”

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON

During this lesson, Juniors will explore the false security they find in people and things; appreciate that all people who serve God are included in God’s promises; and create opportunities to praise God for the plan of redemption.

BEFORE YOU TEACH

1. Suggested Materials—Bibles, student magazines, pens or pencils, paper, highlighters for “Getting Started Activity,” black construction paper or other material to darken any windows in the room (optional), and a flashlight.

2. Lesson Background—For background information, read Isaiah 49:1–17. Be sure to read the student lesson. Also, see Bible Study Guide 2 in the white pages of this book, and in the UMI Annual Commentary, *Precepts for Living*®.

In this passage, Isaiah spoke about God’s Servant. Isaiah reminds the people they were created to be His servants to the nations. Now, Isaiah transitions to describing one Redeemer who would open the Gospel to *all* people. Because God’s people, the Israelites, turned a deaf ear to the Gospel, God has appointed a Redeemer to bring salvation to both Jews and Gentiles.

Notice that Isaiah speaks in the first person, as God’s Servant, the Savior. Isaiah 49:1–3 confirms the Servant’s life and purpose were planned from the beginning of time. He describes the Servant King who will restore Israel and bring salvation to all humankind. This passage foretells the Messiah. Isaiah reports to the people that in the end, the Messiah will succeed in bringing comfort, mercy, and—most of all—salvation to the

world. As Servant, the Messiah will be rejected and despised. As Savior, He will guarantee God’s promise of redemption for sin. As King, He will free all men and be revered by every nation. The suffering Servant will reign as King.

OPEN THE LESSON

Get Started Activity

Review last week’s “Doing My Part” activity.

Give the Juniors paper, pens, and highlighters. Ask them to list things they couldn’t live without. Then, have them use colored highlighters to color-code ideas. Which ones could they literally *not* live without; which ones would they not *want* to live without; and which ones could they honestly live without but not *want* to live without? Discuss why we feel this way. What makes us feel we need certain people, statuses, or things?

What’s It All About?

Teaching time about 4–8 minutes

Student Story: Hope for the World

“Why the sad face?” Dad asked Derek when he got in the car at school.

“I wanted the lead part in our class play. Instead, Mr. Strain gave it to Michael,” Derek said. “I didn’t even try for any other parts. Everyone knows I’m the best reader in class. I would have made a perfect King George. Instead, I got the part of King George’s *servant!*”

Dad listened. “Did you ask Mr. Strain about his decision?” he asked.

“Yeah,” Derek said. “Mr. Strain said something about the servant plays a key role. Mr. Strain wants me to help the rest of the class. He

had his reasons and a plan, I guess. But I just wanted to be the lead. You know I'd make a great king, Dad."

Two weeks later...

Dad asked, "How's that play, Derek?"

"Really good. Yesterday, I helped friends memorize a rhyme that the servant says with the common people. They were all excited. Then, I explained to Michael how to sound more like a king in the first scene. He acted like he wasn't listening, but later he used my ideas and sounded great. And then, Mr. Strain asked if I had time to design the set," Derek exclaimed.

"It looks like your teacher knew exactly where you needed to be. He must have wanted you to help the others, not just strut around like a king," Dad said, laughing.

How would you feel if you were Derek, expecting the lead role in the play but not getting it? How did he make the best of the situation? What might have happened if Derek had a bad attitude?

PRESENT THE SCRIPTURES

Learning From God

Teaching time about 10–15 minutes

Imagine Jesus speaking about Himself. When we speak about ourselves, we speak in first person, using the personal pronouns *I*, *me*, and *my*. Isaiah wrote prophetically about the Savior. This passage is written as the Suffering Servant song. God's Servant brings light to the Gentiles and serves as God's Witness for the Israelites. People rejected Jesus Christ, but He remained faithful to God the Father. He completed His Servant mission to bring redemption for *all* people.

What I Have Learned

Teaching time about 5–8 minutes

Have Juniors match the KJV statement with its meaning.

Answers:

<i>He made my mouth like a sharp sword.</i>	<i>The Redeemer's word will bring judgment.</i>
<i>I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain.</i>	<i>People will reject the Servant.</i>

<i>The Lord formed me from the womb to be his servant.</i>	<i>God planned all this before birth.</i>
<i>God shall be my strength.</i>	<i>The Servant depended on God.</i>
<i>The Lord has comforted his people and shown mercy on the afflicted.</i>	<i>God used the Servant to bring comfort and mercy.</i>

Who is Isaiah writing about in this passage? Jesus, the Messiah

Juniorway® Bible Activities

For additional material, see the activity for this lesson in the *JBA® (Juniorway® Bible Activities)* book.

Keep In Mind

Teaching time about 2–3 minutes

Ask Juniors to sit in a circle. Practice saying today's "Keep In Mind" verse, beginning with the last phrase, "I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles..." Turn the lights off in your classroom and darken any window light. Pass a flashlight to a Junior and repeat the verse. That Junior will pass it to another Junior who says the verse. Continue passing the light and repeating the verse until all the children have had a turn.

EXPLORE THE MEANING

Choosing What's Best

Teaching time about 4–8 minutes

Ask Juniors to think of what they learned during times when they were placed in a role more like a "servant" rather than a "king." Then have Juniors write a prayer to thank God for His plans, placements, and purposes.

NEXT STEPS FOR APPLICATION

Doing My Part

Teaching time about 2–3 minutes

Juniors are challenged to watch for people who serve God without looking for attention. They are encouraged to show their appreciation for those people.

God Foretells Redemption

Bible Background • ISAIAH 49:1-17

Printed Text • ISAIAH 49:1-11 | Devotional Reading • PSALM 111:9-10

Aim for Change

By the end of this lesson, we will UNDERSTAND that God’s mission for the people of Israel is to show all people the way to God, CELEBRATE that all people who serve God are included in God’s promises, and TELL others about God’s never-ending love and salvation for all people.

In Focus

For two centuries, African Americans were slaves with seemingly no hope of deliverance. As they toiled in wretched conditions, they sang songs and prayed prayers, hoping for relief. God heard their cries, and He allowed someone to rise among them. Her name was Harriet Tubman, and she was known as the “Moses” of her people.

Tubman was born in slavery and experienced many hardships. Unlike some who had accepted their lot, she longed for freedom. God did indeed allow her to escape the bonds of slavery. She enjoyed her freedom, but she couldn’t forget her brothers and sisters who were still in bondage. She returned to the South many times and led her people to freedom, just as Moses had done in Egypt for his people.

The slaves were clever. They included coded escape signals in their songs. After dark, “Steal Away” was the song used to signal slaves to move to a meeting place from which to escape to the North via the Underground Railroad. Harriet Tubman helped more than 300 slaves escape to freedom this way. And though she only delivered relatively few from the bonds of slavery, her heroic deeds focused attention on the need for emancipation. Moses, Harriet Tubman, Martin Luther King Jr., and others were powerful leaders led by God. Each came to lead a particular people at a particular time. However, Jesus came for ALL people and His great work has and will be felt through all eternity.

How have you helped spread the Word of God’s deliverance to all people?

Keep in Mind

“Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages.” (Isaiah 49:8, KJV)

Focal Verses

KJV **Isaiah 49:1** Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.

2 And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me;

3 And said unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.

4 Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the LORD, and my work with my God.

5 And now, saith the LORD that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength.

6 And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles,

that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

7 Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.

8 Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages;

9 That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places.

10 They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.

11 And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted.

The People, Places, and Times

The Suffering Servant. Arising out of the complex prophecies of Isaiah, this enigmatic figure serves God and will suffer for others (see Isaiah 42:1–4; 49:1–7; 50:4–11; 52:13–53:12). In their original context, these passages attempt to explain the harsh suffering the Israelites would pass through during their exile.

One song explicitly identifies the servant as Israel (Isaiah 49:3). But the servant was also said to be God's perfect Servant, which can only be Jesus. This paradigm makes sense of the most difficult aspect of the Jesus tradition—His suffering. Equally important, it pointed to

the Gentiles as the object of God's healing and forgiveness alongside the Jews.

Background

God instructed His prophet, Isaiah, to write concerning Israel's captivity in Babylon. For seventy years, the nation suffered under this oppression. Then the Lord allowed them to return to Jerusalem. He gave them the resources to rebuild the Temple and establish themselves once again as God's representative.

But the Israelites got comfortable in Babylon. They became accustomed to the Babylonian ways and their gods. Most of the Israelites

refused to move. Only a small remnant traveled back to Judah.

God speaks through Isaiah about these upcoming problems (Isaiah 48). In the first part of the chapter, he rebukes their negative attitudes and behaviors. However, God changes His tone in the last half of the chapter. In several of the later chapters of Isaiah, the Lord offers hope and help with the promise of the Messiah's coming. Like a loving mother attempting to get her cranky toddler to take a nap, the Father begins to speak softly. He highlighted promises about a coming Savior, Jesus, to save Israel and the entire world.

Are you willing to move forward on God's promises? Or are you staying behind, enjoying Babylonian, worldly comforts?

At-A-Glance

1. The Servant's Call and Mission (Isaiah 49:1–7)
2. The Servant Saves and Restores (vv. 8–11)

In Depth

1. The Servant's Call and Mission (Isaiah 49:1–7)

In the book of Isaiah, four passages are called “the Servant Songs” (Isaiah 42–50). The second song found here outlines the coming Messiah's mission on earth. Jesus, God's redeemer, brings light, healing, and restoration. He offers His salvation promises to the Jewish people and the entire world.

God speaks through the Messiah in the first person. He asks for listening ears. His calling started in the womb of His mother. Before the Holy Spirit placed Jesus' embryo in Mary's body, the angel said, His name is Jesus, the Savior of all humanity (Luke 1:31).

Isaiah compared Jesus' mouth, His words, to instruments of war. The well-polished sword and the shaft pierces the intended target. God kept Jesus out of the main limelight until a particular time in history. At the appointed time, He introduced the Savior and His penetrating message (Galatians 4:4–5).

Isaiah calls the Servant, whom we now understand to be the Messiah, by the name Israel. This nation originally carried God's salvation message. When the Jewish people rebelled, the Messiah picked up the baton, committed to completing God's assignment.

God called Jesus to draw back the Israelites to Jehovah. God raised Him and gave Him the might and power to carry out the task. The first Christian missionaries and the authors of the Bible were Jewish people, God's instruments to introduce salvation to the world. The Servant fulfilled the covenant God made with the Israelites, and He is the actual covenant. Some of the Jewish people pushed Jesus aside, denying His claim as Messiah. They looked down upon Him, calling Him unclean, a liar. However, God viewed Him as valuable and deemed worthy of praise (1 Peter 2:4).

Jesus respected those in positions of authority in the secular government and within the Jewish religion. But both plotted against Him. When Jesus returns to the earth for the second time, He will be honored and worshiped. Rulers and every human being will prostrate before Him (Philippians 2:10–11).

How did Jesus complete the work that Israel was supposed to do?

2. The Servant Saves and Restores (vv. 8–11)

Jehovah heard the prayer of the Servant and helped Him fulfill a fruitful ministry. God is committed to lifting this universe out of its critical condition, placing His Spirit in desolate, godless places. His desire is for the

entire human race to know the truth through His Son Jesus.

God frees captives. God freed the captives in Babylon, and He offers freedom to all humanity bound in sin. It is now possible to bask in the presence of a Holy God—no sin hinders or divides (Isaiah 61:1).

Messiah bids everyone come openly to the light. Christ found the Jews enslaved to the law, covered in the darkness, and separated from God. Christ lifted their burdens. The Compassionate Shepherd is always leading to greener pastures. Jesus keeps His sheep away from the scorching sun, leads them to lush feeding grounds and fresh water. Even in places that are downtrodden and barren—God provides for His sheep.

These promises are not only for the Jewish nation or people in biblical days. Jesus still saves and restores anyone willing to come to Him.

In a letter to the Corinthians, Paul references these verses and explains that “today is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2). How does this affect our reading of Isaiah?

Search the Scriptures

1. Use the Scripture verses in Isaiah 49:1–11 to describe the characteristics and mission of the Lord’s servant. (Example characteristics, v. 1 called before birth, v. 2 words of judgment are sharp, v. 3 a Servant; Example mission points: v. 1 wants people in distant and faraway lands to listen, v. 4 work seems useless)

2. In verse 1, Isaiah addresses the “isles,” meaning a place far, far away from him. What expression would we use today to confer this understanding?

Discuss the Meaning

The Scriptures clearly state Jesus’ job description. He came to seek and save humanity. His death on the Cross allowed freedom from the bondage of sin. This lesson reminds

Christians that the Savior is light out of darkness, He restores and is our Shepherd to lead us into His beautiful pastures. Think about the past couple weeks. How have you seen Jesus do this in your life? What kinds of people or things have you or others turned to instead of Christ to foster a better life?

Liberating Lesson

The word “servant” does not always sit well with African Americans. It rakes up pictures in our minds of Black people as slaves or only getting a job as a maid, driver, or butler. Yet, when the word “servant” is used in the Bible, God desires for Christians to have a different picture. Jesus came to serve all humanity. He, too, was mistreated and unappreciated. But He kept placing Himself in God’s protective hands, being assured of God’s watchful eye.

Get alone with God and express any anger or hostility you may feel about the mistreatment of people of color. Ask God to begin a transformation in your heart about how to be a true servant.

Application for Activation

Many individuals today continuously wonder, “What about me? What about me?” God saw the need for salvation. He sent Jesus to meet that need in our world, and Jesus completed God’s assignment. As Christians, we are to answer the same call. Pray for more sensitivity to the Holy Spirit as we go through our daily activities. How can I help those around me foster the same attitude and be less selfish and self-centered?

Follow the Spirit

What God wants me to do:

Remember Your Thoughts

Special insights I have learned:

Sources:

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- Oswalt, John N. *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40–66*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.
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Say It Correctly

Enigmatic. eh-nig-MAH-tik.
Eunuch. YOU-nik.

Daily Bible Readings

MONDAY

God's Redemption Defies
Human Wisdom
(1 Corinthians 1:18–25)

TUESDAY

Righteousness, Sanctification,
and Redemption
(1 Corinthians 1:26–31)

WEDNESDAY

God Sent Redemption to God's People
(Psalm 111)

THURSDAY

Christ Brings Eternal Redemption
(Hebrews 9:11–14)

FRIDAY

Pardon My Guilt, O Lord
(Psalm 25:1–11)

SATURDAY

Redeem Israel, O God
(Psalm 25:12–22)

SUNDAY

The Lord Will Have Compassion
(Isaiah 49:1–11)

Notes
