

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a sunset or sunrise. The sky is filled with soft, golden light and scattered clouds. Three birds are seen in flight against the bright sky. In the foreground, the silhouettes of tall, thin grasses or reeds are visible, adding a sense of depth and texture to the scene.

THE RIGHTEOUS REIGN OF GOD

SUNDAY SCHOOL QUARTERLY TEACHER'S GUIDE

Vol. 60
Summer Quarter 2023

JUNE, JULY, AUGUST

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SUNDAY SCHOOL QUARTERLY TEACHER'S GUIDE

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THE COMBINED TEACHER'S GUIDE

SUMMER QUARTER 2023

JUNE • JULY • AUGUST

Christian Education Department
Rev. Garland F. Pierce, Executive Director
Bishop David R. Daniels, Chair

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BASIC SUPPLIES

Bible dictionary	writing paper
Bible pictures and maps	DVD recorder/player
CD players	milk crates
chart paper	paper – letter, drawing,
Christian music – books,	pencils, pens, markers
sheets, recordings	poster boards
Christian videos and DVDs	robes, scarves
crayons	old clothing
digital camera	scissors, glue, paste
digital camcorder	video player
drawing paper	

The Teacher's Guide

Liberating Faith Studies Lessons **Summer Quarter: June 2023 – August 2023** **Prepared by** **Dr. Catherine S. Powell**

Your God Reigns

Lesson 1

June 4, 2023

Lesson Scripture: Isaiah 52:1-12

Focus Scripture: Isaiah 52:7-12

Key Verse: How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns!" Isaiah 52:7

Key Term

- **Isaiah** – Hebrew term: "God is salvation."

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Compare and contrast Israel's history of oppression with the peacefulness of God's promised kingdom.
2. Inspire participants to personally seek God's peace.
3. Encourage exuberant worship in response to God's peace.

Teaching Strategies

1. Ask participants to brainstorm a list of various sources of stress and categorize them by identifying the most and least stressful stressors. Bring closure by asking participants to personally

share “lessons learned” about how to cope with each stressor.

2. Discuss how Israel's history of disobedience and God's judgment are reflected in contemporary life. What can we learn from Israel that will lead to more faithfulness in our lives?
3. Discuss “the messenger of peace” identified by Isaiah. How and where can disciples emulate this role?

Resources: Seating arrangements to accommodate open discussion and active involvement; a brief PowerPoint presentation that traces the Israelites' journey to and from Babylon; Bibles, dictionaries, and either a large easel with paper, a chalkboard with markers/chalk, or a smart board.

God's Kingdom of Peace

Lesson 2

June 11, 2023

Lesson Scripture: Isaiah 65:17-25

Focus Scripture: Isaiah 65:17-25

Key Verse: The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw, like the ox; but the serpent – its food shall be the dust! They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, says the Lord. Isaiah 65:25

Key Term

- **Re-Creation** – In the context of the lesson, to create again. God is un-doing and re-doing things to create a new world and new way of being. In regular use, the term is used to refer to play and making merry with the assumption that such acts also create again and renew in small but important ways.

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Examine Isaiah's prophecy to identify changes he claims God will make in the new era of peace.
2. Create thirsts and longings for the era of peace that God promises.
3. Encourage reliance on God's promises for renewed hopes.

Teaching Strategies

1. Divide participants in groups; have each group review the texts to identify the changes Isaiah claims God will make in the new era. Have each group share their findings to make a composite list.
2. Ask participants to reflect on Isaiah's visions of the new era; ask for volunteers to briefly share how their daily lives would change as a result of the peace God promises.
3. Discuss how hope underlies all of Isaiah's promises in this lesson.

Resources: Seating arrangements to facilitate group work and discussion; Bibles, dictionaries, and either a large easel with paper, a chalkboard with markers/chalk, or a smart board.

God's Servant-King

Lesson 3

June 18, 2023

Lesson Scripture: Ezekiel 37:15-28

Focus Scripture: Ezekiel 37:21-28

Key Verse: My dwelling place shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Ezekiel 37:27

Key Terms

- **Ezekiel** – An Old Testament prophet, whose name in Hebrew means “God will strengthen.”
- **Jewish Diaspora** – As used in this context, refers to Jewish people living outside of Israel.
- **Millennial Kingdom** – The one-thousand-year period during which Jesus Christ will reign on earth (Isaiah 2:4, 42:1; Revelation 20).

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Create deeper understandings of how God's covenant of peace applies to us.
2. Explore the values of unity versus personal preferences.
3. Relate Israel's disunity to our churches and identify ways to create peace and harmony.

Teaching Strategies

1. Discuss the concept of home. What does it mean personally? What images come to mind? Discuss what home must have meant to the Israelites while in Babylon.
2. Compare and contrast disunity within our churches with disunity among the Israelites as a nation.
3. Discuss the concept of “covenants,” and what God's new covenant, which is identified in today's lesson, means to us. Does it differ from God's covenantal relationships with Israel?

Resources: Biblical maps to help participants visualize the journey from Jerusalem to Babylon; Bibles, dictionaries, and either a large easel with paper, a chalkboard with markers/chalk, or a smart board.

With access to appropriate technology, a Power Point presentation that delineates the terms and conditions of God's new covenant is highly recommended.

The Teacher's Guide

Senior Lessons

Summer Quarter: June 2023 – August 2023

Prepared by Rev. Faith Waters

Your God Reigns

Lesson 1

June 4, 2023

Lesson Scripture: Isaiah 52:1-12

Focus Scripture: Isaiah 52:7-12

Key Verse: How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." Isaiah 52:7

Words to Know

- Peace – a state of security and tranquility
- Salvation – deliverance from foes, safety, rescued
- Reign – to act as king
- Sentinels – soldiers or guards whose job is to stand and keep watch
- Redeemed – to be freed
- Purify – cleanse, make pure

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore God's promise of redemption for the Israelites as well as peace.

2. Enjoy the peace that comes from God.
3. Celebrate God's peace through praise and worship.

Teaching Strategies

1. Discuss the importance of praise and worship, especially when facing struggles and trials.
2. Discuss the numerous ways to praise God (dance, mime, art, poetry, singing, play an instrument, social media, etc.).
3. Give the class a brief summary of the Israelite's exodus from Egypt (Exodus 12 – 14). Emphasize the power of God to deliver, provide, and protect God's people. God goes with them (compare 52:12 with Exodus 14:19); this exodus from exile is orderly (compare Exodus 12:31 – 39 with Isaiah 52:12 and Ezra 1–3), and the people bring nothing out of their exile that is idolatrous or impure, physically or in their hearts (Exodus 32).
4. The imagery of celebration (clean, “beautiful” clothing; 52:1 – 2) on the heels of sorrow and oppression (chains, dirt; 52:2) hinges on the coming presence of God with his people (52:6, 8). It is God's presence that brings healing, freedom, joy, and protection (52:8 – 10).
5. Jerusalem as a city (both structures and inhabitants) is to be holy like the temple itself, and the rationale is found in God's presence: the whole city is to reflect God's character now that he is fully present with his people.
6. As the class arrives, play praise music. Once everyone arrives, say, “Let everybody praise the Lord!” Have two minutes of praise and worship.

Resources: Praise music

God's Kingdom of Peace

Lesson 2

June 11, 2023

Lesson Scripture: Isaiah 65:17-25

Focus Scripture: Isaiah 65:17-25

Key Verse: The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox; but the serpent—its food shall be dust! They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, says the Lord. Isaiah 65:25

Words to Know

- Rejoice – to be joyful
- Delight – pleasure
- Distress – to feel harassed or troubled
- Accursed – to be under a curse or bad prediction
- Vain – ineffectual, idle
- Calamity – doomed for misfortune

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Identify the changes Isaiah claims God will make in a new era of peace.
2. Recognize what part we have in God's plan for a new heaven and new earth.
3. Embrace a life of hope and peace.

Teaching Strategies

1. If time allows, encourage each student to draw a picture or create a poem of what the new heaven and earth will be like

based on the lesson and Revelation 21. Share it on social media, like TikTok, if permissible.

2. Be sensitive towards those who may live in violent homes and communities. Some youth may have experienced violence and suffer with its aftermath.
3. Discuss what peacemakers do to help others.
4. Emphasize that being a peacemaker may enhance the possibility of hatred and violence towards them. (Examples - the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.; and police brutality against peaceful protestors when George Floyd was murdered.)
5. The phrase “new heavens and new earth” is brought forward all the way to Revelation 21:1, where John’s apocalyptic vision equates it to God’s final re-creation (see Genesis 1–2).
6. The imagery of vineyards and orchards affirms God’s role as provider and creator, evoking the abundance of the original garden of Eden and God’s care for his creation (compare Isaiah 65:21 – 22 with Genesis 1:29 – 30).
7. Isaiah’s prophecy emphasizes God’s nearness to his people in the new creation (65:24). The prophecy hinges on God’s presence as the source and guarantee of lasting joy, peace, and stability in the new Jerusalem (65:23).
8. Some youth may connect with ideals represented in vegan/vegetarianism, as in verse 25, addressing humanitarian issues of killing for food.

God's Servant-King

Lesson Scripture: Ezekiel 37:15-28

Focus Scripture: Ezekiel 37:21-28

Key Verse: My dwelling place shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Ezekiel 37:27

Words to Know

- Defile – to make polluted, render unclean
- Detestable – shocking, disgusting, obscene
- Transgressions – any actions that violate the Word of God
- Apostasies – the abandonment of one's faith and belief in God
- Ordinance – an authoritative order from God
- Everlasting – to be eternal

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Discern who is God's servant that reigns over the future and eternal kingdom based on Ezekiel's prophecy.
2. Value unity over personal favoritism.
3. Create worship and dialogue opportunities that promote unity and diversity.

Teaching Strategies

1. Be sensitive towards those who have grown up in environments with major conflicts.
2. Discuss the conflict that arises when we choose "I" over "we."
3. Read the full article on the NAACP before class.
4. Discuss God's covenant of peace and refer to John 14:25 – 27.
5. If possible, invite a guest speaker to share how they are involved

in work that promotes unity and equality (NAACP member, community organizer, politician, etc.).

6. Bring to class two sticks. On one write "Judah" and the other "Joseph." Discuss the division between the two nations. Ask for a volunteer to tape or glue the sticks together. Discuss how God would unite them as one nation. Explain to the class the importance of being unified.
7. God is the active agent in this process of restoration and unity. His action is not dependent on Israel's work but rather is his own gracious choice, extending love and mercy to a people who had broken their covenant with him repeatedly. God extends a gracious promise of an unbreakable covenant (Ezekiel 8).
8. In the context of Ezekiel's prophecies, this purification reflects the sacrificial rites of the atonement sacrifice (Leviticus 16:14–19) but is applied to the heart and is eternally effective (Compare Romans 3:25 and Hebrews 10:10–22).

Resources: Two sticks, tape

The Teacher's Guide

Intermediate Lessons

Summer Quarter: June 2023 – August 2023

Prepared by Rev. Faith Waters

Your God Reigns

Lesson 1

June 4, 2023

Lesson Scripture: Isaiah 52:1-12

Focus Scripture: Isaiah 52:7-12

Key Verse: How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." Isaiah 52:7

Words to Know

- **Peace** – A state of security and tranquility.
- **Salvation** – Deliverance from foes, safety, rescued.
- **Reign** – To act as king.
- **Sentinels** – Soldiers or guards whose job is to stand and keep watch.
- **Redeemed** – To be freed.
- **Purify** – Cleanse, make pure.

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore God's promise of redemption for the Israelites as well as peace.

2. Enjoy the peace that comes from God.
3. Celebrate God's peace through praise and worship.

Teaching Strategies

1. Discuss the many ways to praise God (dance, mime, art, poetry, singing, play an instrument, social media, etc.).
2. Some of the ways we can deal with stress: 1) prayer; 2) recite the Word; 3) talk to a trusted adult; 4) exercise and eat healthy food; 5) listen to inspirational music; 6) explore creative arts; etc.
3. Give the class a brief summary of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt (Exodus 12–14). Emphasize the power of God to deliver, provide, and protect God's people and that he is with them; this exodus from exile is orderly and the people bring nothing out of their exile that is idolatrous or impure, physically or in their hearts (Exodus 32).
4. It is God's presence that brings healing, freedom, joy, and protection (52:8-10).
5. As the class arrives, play praise music until it is time to open.
6. For the summer quarter, we are going to focus on the theme, "The Righteous Reign of God." The summer quarter explores the biblical teachings about God's reign. Beginning with Old Testament declarations of God's righteous reign, the lessons proceed to Jesus' teachings about the kingdom of God. The third unit considers additional New Testament texts that elaborate on the theme of Jesus as king and what it means for believers to participate as joint heirs with Christ in God's eternal reign.
7. Use this video as an example of God's intervention in a difficult

situation. Corion Evans, who was 16 years old, rescued three teenage girls from drowning. Then, he also had to rescue a police officer who was drowning, too. God always has a way to rescue us even in the most challenging situations. Listen to Evans describe what happened: https://youtu.be/ymLY_kgf75o.

Resources: Praise music

God's Kingdom of Peace

Lesson 2

June 11, 2023

Lesson Scripture: Isaiah 65:17-25

Focus Scripture: Isaiah 65:17-25

Key Verse: The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox; but the serpent – its food shall be dust! They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, says the Lord. Isaiah 65:25

Words to Know

- **Distress** – To feel harassed or troubled.
- **Accursed** – To be victim of or to suffer under a supernatural event that can cause severe injury or harm.
- **Vain** – Ineffectual, idle.
- **Calamity** – Doomed for misfortune.

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand Isaiah's explanation of the changes God will make in the new era of peace.
2. Recognize God's plan for us in the new heaven and new earth.

3. Commit to a life of hope and peace.

Teaching Strategies

1. Each student can draw a picture (or create a poem) of what the new heaven and earth will be like based on the lesson and Revelation 21. Share it on social media, such as Tiktok or animoto.com, if permissible.
2. Be sensitive towards those who may live in violent homes and communities. Some youth may have experienced violence and suffer with its aftermath.
3. Discuss what peacemakers do to help others. (Use examples like Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Jesse Jackson, Mother Teresa.)
4. The phrase “new heavens and new earth” is brought forward all the way to Revelation 21:1, where John’s apocalyptic vision equates it to God’s final re-creation (see Genesis 1–2).
5. The imagery of vineyards and orchards affirms God’s role as provider and creator like the abundance of the original garden of Eden and God’s care for his creation (compare Isaiah 65:21-22 with Genesis 1:29-30).
6. Some youth may connect with ideals represented in vegan/vegetarianism, as in verse 25, addressing humanitarian issues of killing for food.
7. **Life Application** answers to *True and False* – 1) F; 2) F; 3) T; 4) T; 5) T.

Resources: Construction paper, art supplies

God's Servant-King

Lesson 3

June 18, 2023

Lesson Scripture: Ezekiel 37:15-28

Focus Scripture: Ezekiel 37:21-28

Key Verse: My dwelling place shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Ezekiel 37:27

Words to Know

- **Defile** – To make polluted, render unclean.
- **Detestable** – Shocking, disgusting, obscene.
- **Transgressions** – Any actions that violate the Word of God.
- **Apostasies** – The abandonment of one's faith and belief in God.
- **Ordinances** – Authoritative orders from God.
- **Everlasting** – To be eternal.

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Discern who is God's servant that reigns over the future and eternal kingdom based on Ezekiel's prophecy.
2. Value unity in all relationships.
3. Create worship and dialogue opportunities that promote unity and diversity.

Teaching Strategies

1. Be sensitive towards those who have grown up in environments with major conflicts.
2. Discuss the conflict that arises when we choose "I" over "we."

3. Research information on the NAACP before class and discuss how the organization works to gain equal treatment for all.
4. Discuss God's covenant of peace and refer to John 14:25-27.
5. If possible, invite a guest speaker to share how they are involved in work that promotes unity and equality (NAACP member, community organizer, politician, etc.).
6. Have the class research information on teenager Brehanna Daniels. She has broken down a barrier in a sport that is not usually associated with African Americans or women. She is a pit crew member, a tire changer, affiliated with NASCAR racing.
7. Racism has been an issue that many protested during the Civil Rights Movement, South Africa apartheid, George Floyd's death, etc. Discuss the historical times of protest for equal rights.
8. Bring to class two wooden multi-purpose art sticks. On one write "Judah" and the other "Joseph." Discuss the division between the two nations. Ask for a volunteer to tape or glue the sticks together. Discuss how God would unite them as one nation. Explain to the class the importance of being unified. Then, give each youth two sticks and have them write on the sticks two groups that are in conflict and need to be unified.
9. God is the active agent in this process of restoration and unity. His action is not dependent on Israel's work but is his own gracious choice, extending love and mercy to a people who had broken their covenant with him repeatedly. God extends a gracious promise of an unbreakable covenant (Ezekiel 8).
10. In the context of Ezekiel's prophecies, this purification reflects the sacrificial rites of the atonement sacrifice (Leviticus 16:14-19) but is applied to the heart and is eternally effective. (Compare

Romans 3:25 and Hebrews 10:10-22.)

Resources: Two wooden multi-purpose sticks for each student,
tape

The Teacher's Guide

Junior Lessons

Summer Quarter: June – August 2023

Prepared by Monica C. Jones, Ph.D.

God Reigns

Lesson 1

June 4, 2023

Lesson Scripture: Isaiah 52:7-12

Focus Scripture: Isaiah 52:7-12

Key Verse: For the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rear guard. Isaiah 52:12b

Word Power!!!

- **Sentinels (sin'-ti-nells)** – Those persons who act as guards or soldiers to protect persons and property.

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand the importance of patience and waiting on God to act.
2. Understand the lesson Kelsey's father was attempting to teach her.
3. Realize that God does answer prayer, but not necessarily in our desired time.

Teaching Strategies

Emphasis

1. Compare the message of Isaiah in the passage with Kelsey's story.
2. Solicit the participants' understanding of what it means to have patience and to understand that God's will for us may not be what we want for ourselves.
3. Stress that we cannot always have what we want, even when we pray for it.

Questions

1. Do you remember a time when you were waiting on someone to come home in your family either for Christmas or some other special occasions? What happened and how did you feel?
2. In Isaiah's story, we learned that God *reigns*. What do you think this word means for you when you pray?

Praise God!!!

A Group Praise: Divide into two groups. One group will say the first line; the next group will respond with the second line.

1. God knows what's best for me!
2. He gave me the victory.
3. I waited with patience and believed.
4. He gave me the victory!

Closing Prayer

(Each month you will have a closing prayer that will help

strengthen your relationship with the Lord. Can you memorize it?)

Lord! You are king of my life; you are the reason I have joy. Thank you for all that you do; each day, I love you more and more! Amen.

Resources: Biblegateway.com or Bibles

A New Day Is Coming

Lesson 2

June 11, 2023

Lesson Scripture: Isaiah 65:17-25

Focus Scripture: Isaiah 65:17-25

Key Verse: But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating.
Isaiah 65:18

Word Power!!!

- **Accursed (ah-kurst')** – To be victim of or to suffer under a supernatural event that can cause severe injury or harm.

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Compare Tony's story with the passage from Isaiah and the implications.
2. Understand the importance of prayer and the power of God to move in a situation.
3. Translate the message from the song "I Can Only Imagine" into a faith that realizes we can imagine and then make positive change.

Teaching Strategies

Emphasis

1. Provide encouragement for students who may need support in writing a prayer.
2. Guide students in understanding Isaiah's message and connecting that message to maintaining a sustained prayer life.
3. Give insight into what it means to imagine a new world and help learners to see the connection between the lyrics from the song and imagining a better community.

Questions

1. What do you think about what Tony said to his teacher? Do you agree with Angela's response?
2. Now that you have heard the lyrics to "I Can Only Imagine," what do you imagine heaven to be like? Can there be heaven on earth, meaning can we make earth a better place?

Praise God!!!

(Call and response – choose two teams)

Team 1: We are strong!

Team 2: Won't do wrong!

Team 1: Say, God is dope!

Team 2: We got hope!

(Finish with your own final two verses)

Closing Prayer

(Each month you will have a closing prayer that will help strengthen your relationship with the Lord. Can you memorize it?)

Lord! You are king of my life; you are the reason I have joy. Thank you for all that you do; each day, I love you more and more! Amen.

Resources: Biblegateway.com or Bibles; video of “I Can Only Imagine” by Tamela Mann

One Nation Under God

Lesson 3

June 18, 2023

Lesson Scripture: Ezekiel 37:15-28

Focus Scripture: Ezekiel 37:21-28

Key Verse: My servant David shall be king over them; and they shall all have one shepherd. Ezekiel 37:24

Word Power!!!

- **David** – The king of Israel; a royal symbol of Old Testament stories.

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand why keeping promises is important.
2. Make the connection between the story of Andy keeping his promise to his friend and the message in Ezekiel's passage regarding God's faithfulness.
3. Understand why seeking and giving forgiveness is a part of our faith walk.

Teaching Strategies

Emphasis

1. To offer clarity on how Ezekiel's message relates to the story of Andy and his failure to keep a promise to his friend, as well as his father's advice.
2. Underscore what it meant for God to offer redemption to his people.

Questions

1. What should Andy have done when he realized he was not going to keep his promise to his friend Lil J?
2. Why do you think God was willing to forgive his people and allow them to start over again?
3. What were some of the words that you used for FORGIVENESS?
4. Do you agree with what Andy's father told him? Why or why not?

Praise God!!!

Share your "FORGIVE" words with the class!

Closing Prayer

(Each month you will have a closing prayer that will help strengthen your relationship with the Lord. Can you memorize it?)

Lord! You are king of my life; you are the reason I have joy. Thank you for all that you do; each day, I love you more and more! Amen.

Resources: Biblegateway.com or Bibles