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LESSON 1 PATRIARCHAL PERIOD

INTRODUCTION:

THIS OUTLINE IS MERELY A SUGGESTION OF THE LESSON. IF YOU NEED TO CLEAR UP THE STORY IN YOUR MIND, YOU CAN CHECK THE DETAILS BETWEEN GENESIS 1:1 AND EXODUS 19.

- I. The Bible (Key your memory to this first object you hold in your hand.)
 - A. The Bible is:
 1. Composed of 66 books which have been translated into about 1200 different languages and dialects.
 2. A book with 40 different authors, who range in occupation from shepherds to kings.
 3. A book written over a 1500-year period; therefore, many of the authors never even saw one another.
 4. An amazing book, because its message is unified in spite of its great number of authors and length of years used in composing it -- how else can we explain its existence if it is not inspired by God?
 - B. The Bible answers three questions (that no other book does):
 1. Where did I come from?
 2. Why am I here?
 3. Where am I going?

- II. The Chart (This is the second object to which you may key your memory.)
 - A. This chart is not inspired; only the Bible is inspired.
 - B. The chart is a visual aid to help us follow the progress of Bible events.
 - C. Let's look over the whole chart generally. (You might as well do this now, or they will wonder about it the rest of the lesson.)
 1. This chart represents 3 periods of Bible history or 3 laws of the Bible.
 2. Note that the first two are complete (indicating that they are laws of the past), but the third is incomplete (meaning that we still live during this period before Christ has returned to the earth to close it).
 3. Tonight we will consider only:
 - a. Patriarchal (meaning "father-rule")
 - b. Hebrews 1:1 (at the bottom) says that "God spoke to the fathers. . .," and hence this was a very special kind of law and period.

TRANSITION: Let us look at this first period in detail.

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LESSON:

I. Creation (Key memory to first scripture.)

A. No better place to begin than the beginning, is there?

B. Theories about creation:

1. One theory of the earth's origin is that it spun off the sun.
2. One theory of life says that it came from the sea millions of years ago, and has, by a process of evolution, reached its present state.
3. Notice that none of these theories explain real origins; that is, they all begin with something already in existence.

C. Genesis 1:1 answers our curiosity about creation. (Read it with them.)

1. "In the beginning" - does not say exactly when.
2. "God" - the beginning force of all things.
3. "God created" - This is how our world got here and all its life.

D. Genesis 1:26 tells the story of man's creation in the image of God. (Read this with them.)

II. The Garden of Eden

A. We read that God put man in the garden of Eden (Gen. 2:8ff).

1. We don't know where this spot was in our world.
2. Archaeologists have found in the area close to the Persian Gulf some of the oldest remains of civilization known to man. (Show on the map.)
3. This could have been the original spot for the garden of Eden; certainly the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers are there as described in Genesis 2:14. (Actually it doesn't make any difference perhaps, but it is interesting to think about such possibilities.)

B. The fall (Gen. 3:1ff)

1. You remember the story of how man was to dress and keep this garden and was forbidden to eat only from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
2. But when Satan came in the form of a serpent and tempted Eve, she ate of the fruit, and Adam did too.
3. For this sin, God cast them out of the garden.

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QUESTIONS:

- a. "I don't see anything so wrong with eating a piece of fruit, do you?" (Wait for them to answer - don't get in a hurry to do it for them.) "No," they say.
- b. "Well, what then made the eating of this fruit so bad?" (Their answer should be something like, "because God said not to eat it.")
- c. "So God punished them for their deliberate disobedience, didn't He?" (Yes)

C. The punishment

1. First, God placed a curse on man (Gen. 3:14ff).
2. Second, God cast man out of the Garden (Gen. 3:24).

III. Wickedness

- A. This describes to us the wicked state into which mankind sank after the sin in the garden of Eden.
- B. In Genesis 4 we read the familiar story of Cain murdering his brother, Abel.
- C. Then in Genesis 6:5 we read how wicked mankind became with the passing of years.
 1. Read this passage with them.
 2. Ask question, "It's pretty bad when the human race not only does evil, but thinks nothing but evil thoughts, isn't it?"

(Keep them involved with you in the lesson by asking questions; otherwise, the lesson becomes a monologue.)

IV. Noah

- A. Things got so bad that God determined to destroy every living thing on earth; he seemed to want to wipe the slate clean and start over again.
- B. But God picked out a man named Noah to be saved.
 1. The command was given to Noah to build an ark of gopher wood (Genesis 6:14).
 2. We read that Noah did all that God commanded him. (Genesis 6:22)

Questions: (to bring out the idea of obedience)

1. I'd like to stimulate your thinking just here by asking you a question or two.
2. God told Noah to make an ark 300 cubits long, didn't he? (Wait for the "yes".)
3. And Noah did it all just like God said, didn't he? (According to Gen. 6:22 - wait for the yes answer.)

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4. Now if Noah had decided to make the ark only 280 cubits long . . . (Important Point) *****"WOULD THAT HAVE BEEN OBEYING GOD?" ***** (Use these exact words in quotes.)
Wait for answer - "No, it wouldn't have been."

That's right. Doesn't this show us the difference between Noah and Eve? One did exactly as God said, and the other didn't. We are going to see obedience rewarded and disobedience punished again and again as we study through the Bible.

V. The Flood

- A. Beginning in the 7th chapter of Genesis we read of the flood.
 1. At least one pair of every animal was taken into the ark.
 2. Only 8 people went in (Noah, his wife, their three sons and their wives).
 3. It rained 40 days and nights, and the fountains of the deep were broken up.
 4. Water covered the highest mountains, and all flesh died outside the ark.
 5. They remained inside the ark for about a year before they came down on the mountains of Ararat. (Locate this on map.)
- B. God established a new covenant with a rainbow (Genesis 9:8ff).
- C. The sons of Noah repopulated the earth (Genesis 10).

VI. The Patriarchs

- A. Abraham (Genesis 12:1)
 1. If you will turn to this passage, we will find God selecting a special person to fulfill that promise that God made when He cast Adam and Eve out of the garden of Eden.
 2. Abraham lived down in Ur of the Chaldees. (Locate this on the map.)
 3. Abraham left home and went to Haran, a journey of about a thousand miles, in response to God's call. (Acts 7:1-4 gives this part of the story not covered in Genesis 12.)
- B. Isaac
 1. When Abraham and Sarah were very old they finally had the son of promise and they called his name "Isaac" (meaning "laughter").
 2. To Isaac, God repeated this promise of his being the father of the Redeemer (Genesis 26:4).

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C. Jacob

1. Isaac had twin sons. Esau as first born should have had the birthright and blessing.
2. But Jacob bought the birthright from Esau, and then stole the blessing!
3. To Jacob, God repeated the promise (Gen. 28:14) and changed his name to "Israel."
4. Jacob had 12 sons.
 - a. Their families become the 12 tribes of Israel.
 - b. Judah will be the one to carry the promise, but we drop this point in order to follow the story of Joseph.
 - c. Joseph, the favorite son, is sold by some of his jealous brothers into slavery.
 - d. They make Jacob (Israel) think Joseph is dead by bringing Joseph's coat covered with animal blood.

D. Joseph

1. Joseph is sold into Potiphar's house as a slave in Egypt, where he does well until Potiphar's wife falsely accuses him of immorality and has him cast into prison.
2. In prison
 - a. Joseph again rises to a position of responsibility.
 - b. A butler and a baker from Pharaoh's palace are thrown into prison with him, and he interprets their dreams.
 - c. He asks the butler to remember him when he gets his old job back, but the butler forgets for two years until Pharaoh needs a dream interpreted.
 - d. Joseph is sent for and correctly interprets that Egypt will have seven years of plenty and then seven years of famine.
 - e. Joseph advises a grain storage program, and Pharaoh puts him in charge of it.
3. After seven years of plenty, the famine comes.
 - a. Joseph's own brothers are sent to buy grain.
 - b. Joseph reveals himself to them.
4. The whole family is brought down to live in Goshen in the land of Egypt.

VII. Egypt

A. Bondage (Exodus I)

1. About 400 years pass.

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2. Another Pharaoh comes to the throne who does not appreciate Joseph's work.
3. Pharaoh makes slaves of the Israelites.

B. A deliverer

1. Moses is born and taken into Pharaoh's palace to be raised as the son of Pharaoh's daughter.
2. When Moses is 40 years old he tries to deliver his people but has to flee to Midian when he murders an Egyptian taskmaster.
3. He keeps sheep for 40 years until God calls him back by a vision at the burning bush to deliver the people.

C. The deliverance

1. Pharaoh resists until the tenth plague convinces him.
2. He tries to pursue Israel through the Red Sea and the army is drowned.

D. The desert

1. They turn southward toward Mt. Sinai. (Locate on map.)
2. There, as they circle the mountain the lighting flashes and thunder rolls while Moses goes up to the top of the mountain to receive a NEW LAW from God.

(AND THAT IS WHERE OUR LESSON WILL BEGIN NEXT TIME.)

REVIEW: Let us review a little right here. We have learned how God created a family religion by speaking through the fathers in the Patriarchal period of Bible history. During this time they had animal sacrifice and a family type altar.

The next law which we study will be quite different from this one. It is a truly exciting story in itself, and I know you won't want to miss it.