

# Looking Back at the Whole Story

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Sunday Plan

SCRIPTURE

Selections from Exodus through Deuteronomy

MEMORY VERSE

Deuteronomy 30:20

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*God saves his people and teaches them how to live.*

## For the Teacher

Read this before you teach. This is the last week of the quarter. For twelve weeks the kids have been walking through Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy with God's people — out of slavery, through the sea, up to Sinai, around the wilderness, and right up to the edge of the Promised Land. Today is not new material. Today is the chance to put the whole story back together so the kids can carry it with them.

### KEY TRUTH

God saves his people and teaches them how to live.

**One sentence holds the whole quarter.** Every week we said one bottom line in a different shape. *God heard. God went with them. God showed his power. God fought for them. We love God by obeying him. God lives with his people. God alone gets first place. God is bigger than what we're afraid of. Gratitude helps us see God's good gifts.* Each one was a piece of the same story. Today's bottom line is the whole shape: God saves his people and teaches them how to live. That's Exodus to Deuteronomy in a single sentence, and it's the same shape of the gospel — rescue, then a new way to live.

**Rescue comes before rules. Always.** That's the order God uses across the whole quarter. He rescues his people from slavery before he gives them a single commandment. He brings them to Sinai *after* he splits the sea. He teaches them how to live as free people only once they're free. The kids should leave today knowing the order matters, because it's the same order God uses with them — Jesus rescues first; then we learn to live as people he saved.

**This is a tour, not a sprint.** The source material lists twelve short scripture stops across Exodus through Deuteronomy. Don't try to re-teach all of them. Pick five or six that match the kids you have in the room and skim through them as a tour. The list below shows which six this lesson hits hardest. If a kid wasn't there for one of them, that's fine — the point isn't to test them, it's to remind them.

**What we're skipping and why.** The source material includes a long list of Numbers stories — Balaam's donkey, the bronze serpent — that Q2L10 and Q2L11 already covered. Don't re-tell them in detail today. A one-sentence callout per story is plenty. The same goes for Deuteronomy: Q2L11 taught the Shema and Q2L12 taught "choose life," so today just walks past them as part of the larger arc.

**Repeat the bottom line all morning.** Say it at least six times. Have the kids say it back. Write it on the board. End with it.

### MATERIALS

- Bibles for every student
- Whiteboard or large paper, markers
- Pencils, crayons or colored pencils
- Six smooth river stones (or any palm-sized stones), and a marker that will write on them
- A small basket or bowl to hold the stones
- Activity sheets (printed in advance from this week's activities — pick what you'll use)

## 1. Gather

Welcome the kids back. Tell them today is the last week of the quarter. For three months they have been walking with God's people through Egypt, the Red Sea, Mount Sinai, and the wilderness — and today they get to see the whole story at once.

## ASK

*What's one thing from this whole quarter that you remember best — a story, a person, a verse, anything?*

Let four or five kids answer. You'll get a mix — Moses, the burning bush, the Red Sea, the Ten Commandments, the golden calf, a snake on a pole. Don't correct anyone. Just collect the answers and tell them: those are all part of the same story, and today we'll see what holds them together.

Write the bottom line on the board:

## SAY

*God saves his people and teaches them how to live.*

## 2. The Story

### Setting the Stage

Tell them, in your own words: at the beginning of this quarter, God's people were slaves in Egypt. By the end of the quarter, they are standing on a hill looking across at the Promised Land, free, and ready to go in. In between, God did two things over and over: he *saved* them, and he *taught* them how to live as his people. We're going to walk through the story one stop at a time.

### A Walk Through the Story

Pull out the stones and the marker. Tell the kids: in the Bible, God's people sometimes set up a pile of stones to remember what God had done. Today we're going to do the same thing — one stone for each part of the story. As we go, we'll write one word on each stone and put it in the basket.

Walk through these six stops. At each one: name the story in a sentence, have a student read the verse aloud, ask the question, and write the word on a stone. Drop it in the basket. Move on. Don't linger — this is a tour.

**Stop 1 — God heard.** *Egypt. The people were slaves and they cried out.*

#### Exodus 2:23–25

What four things does God do here? *Heard, remembered, saw, knew.* Write **HEARD** on a stone.

**Stop 2 — God saved.** *The Red Sea. Pharaoh's army behind them, water in front of them.*

#### Exodus 14:13–14

Who fought for the people? *The Lord.* Write **SAVED** on a stone.

**Stop 3 — God taught.** *Mount Sinai. Thunder, fire, the Ten Commandments.*

#### Exodus 20:1–3

What's the first commandment? *No other gods before him.* Write **TAUGHT** on a stone.

**Stop 4 — God lived with them.** *The Tabernacle. A tent God could live in, right in the middle of the camp.*

#### Exodus 25:8

Why did God want a Tabernacle? *To dwell with his people. He didn't just rescue them — he wanted to be with them.* Write **WITH** on a stone.

**Stop 5 — God forgave.** *The golden calf. The people broke the first commandment about as fast as they could.*

**Exodus 32:7-8**

Did God give up on them? *No. He kept being their God anyway.* Write **FORGAVE** on a stone.

**Stop 6 — God called them to choose.** *Forty years later. Moses, old now, standing in front of a new generation about to enter the Promised Land.*

**Deuteronomy 30:19-20**

What does Moses tell them to choose? *Life. Love God. Hold fast to him.* Write **CHOOSE** on a stone.

Set all six stones in the basket where the kids can see them.

**What All Six Stones Say****DISCUSSION**

1. Look at the first three stones — *Heard, Saved, Taught.* What did God do first?

→ *He heard, then he saved, then he taught. Rescue came before rules. He didn't tell his people how to live until he had already pulled them out of slavery. That order matters — God still works that way.*

2. Look at the last three stones — *With, Forgave, Choose.* Even after God's people messed up, what did God keep doing?

→ *Living with them. Forgiving them. Calling them to choose him. God's people kept failing, and God kept being their God. He's patient in a way nobody else is.*

3. If you put all six stones together, what's the one big idea about God you see?

→ *He saves his people, and he teaches them how to live. He didn't just rescue them and walk away — he stayed, taught, forgave, and kept calling them. That's the whole quarter.*

### 3. The Point

Say the bottom line again, with the kids:

**SAY**

*God saves his people and teaches them how to live.*

**The Memory Verse**

Have everyone turn to Deuteronomy 30:20. Read it together:

**SCRIPTURE**

*Deuteronomy 30:20*

*Loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice, and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days.*

Read it together three ways: all together normally, all together in a whisper, then once with each kid pointing to themselves on the words "your life."

Tell them: this is Moses' last sermon. He has watched God rescue these people, teach them, forgive them, and walk with them for forty years. And the one thing he wants them to remember is *the Lord is your life*. Not a rule. A relationship. He is the rescuer who keeps teaching us how to live.

## What This Means For Us

### DISCUSSION

1. We learned all quarter that God rescued his people first, *then* taught them how to live. Where do we see that same order in the gospel — in what Jesus does for us?

→ *Jesus rescues us first. He died for us while we were still sinners. We don't earn his love by obeying — we obey because he already saved us. That's the same order Exodus uses. Rescue, then a new way to live.*

2. Of all the stones in the basket — Heard, Saved, Taught, With, Forgave, Choose — which one do you most need to remember about God this week, and why?

→ *Listen for honest answers. A kid who picks "Heard" might be feeling unseen. A kid who picks "Forgave" might be carrying something. A kid who picks "Choose" might be facing a real decision. Whatever they pick is right — let them say why.*

## Closing Prayer

### PRAY

*God, this whole quarter you have shown us who you are. You heard your people in Egypt. You saved them at the Red Sea. You taught them at Sinai. You lived with them in the Tabernacle. You forgave them when they made the golden calf. And you called them to choose life. Thank you for being a God who saves his people and teaches them how to live. Help us, this week, to love you, obey you, and hold fast to you, because you are our life. Amen.*

## 4. The Work

Pick one or more activities from this week's menu. Print enough copies for each kid in advance. The kids don't have to do all of them — pick what fits the group's energy and what time you have left.

The menu for this week:

- **Stones of Remembrance** — coloring page of the basket of six labeled stones in front of an open Bible, with the memory verse.
- **The Whole Story** — word search built from names and key words spanning the entire quarter.
- **My Best Story** — drawing prompt where the kids draw one moment from the quarter that meant the most to them.
- **Remember the Whole Quarter** — fill-in-the-blanks recall using the kids' Bibles, with one verse from each major story.

The full production specs for each activity are in this week's activities file.

### NOTE

While the kids work, sit with them. Ask one or two what they're working on. Reinforce the bottom line one more time before class ends. Today is the last Sunday of the quarter — leave them with the sense that the whole story is theirs to remember.

## What Comes Next Quarter

A new story begins next week — but the God of the story is the same. The same God who heard his people in Egypt and led them to the Promised Land is the God who hears, saves, and teaches us today.