READ
Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:47, 13:1-2; Ephesians 5:27; Revelations 1:3-6

ANSWER
In the Old Testament, God worked through His chosen people, the nation of Israel. According to New Testament passages like Acts 13:1-2, God now works through the church. The church is a group of people **PREPARED** by God for His service, and it is God's place of protection for His Word. According to Matthew 16:18 and Acts 2:47, who built or prepared the church? **JESUS CHRIST**
Wherever God's church meets, it is a **HOLY** place where He can meet with them. According to Ephesians 5:27, what does God desire His church to be? **HOLY AND WITHOUT BLEMISH**

The church is also a **SAFE** place for His Word. Just as in the Old Testament, the kings and priests were to guard the Word of God, today, the church has been given the care of God's Word. According to Revelation 1:3 & 6, what has God made us? **KINGS AND PRIESTS**

THINK
If the Bible is important to God, and the church is where God has chosen to preserve His Word for every generation, how are you helping the church do its job? Are you telling others about God? If unsaved people had to depend on you to get a Bible, would they ever receive one? Will your faithfulness to God and His Word result in the next generation receiving God's pure Word?

LESSON DEFINITIONS

Abomination: Intense aversion or loathing; detestation; something that God hates with the most intense hatred.

Alter: To change something around on purpose.

Ark of the Covenant: A chest or box containing the Ten Commandments and other articles; the most sacred object of the Tabernacle and the Temple in Jerusalem; a place of protection or security.

Church: Christians assembled for worship in a particular place.

Holy: Set apart; Dedicated to God for a specific purpose.

Holy of Holies: The innermost chamber of the Biblical Tabernacle and the Temple in Jerusalem in which the Ark of the Covenant was kept.

Levites: The descendants of Levi that were dedicated to the office of the priesthood.

Manuscripts: The original text; any text not printed.

Prepare: To make something ready for use.

Priesthood: The office of a priest; priests collectively.

Protect: To keep safe from hurt or injury.

Safe: Not exposed to any dangers.

NATIONAL BIBLE PUBLISHING MONTH

TEEN TEACHER GUIDE 2

GOD'S PLACE

FOR PROVIDING HIS WORD TO EVERY GENERATION

LESSON **TWO**

God's Place For Providing His Word to Every Generation

TEACHER NOTE: Blueprints are simply detailed plans of action that are drawn out or written on paper. They are used by builders to help them understand exactly what the designer wants built. God's Word is somewhat of a blueprint. It is God's detailed plan of action that He has given to us. It is our responsibility to carry out God's plan. This lesson will help in understanding God's blueprint for preserving His Word for every generation.

DISCUSSION TIME

Last week, we considered the things that are of great value to you. What measures would you take to protect those things? Would you keep them in a special place in your house? Would you value them so much you consider paying to keep them in a safety deposit box? Would you sacrifice your time, give up your dreams, or even risk your life to protect them? To what extreme do you think God would go to protect His Word?

THINK

God was very specific as to how the written Word was to be handled. For it to be preserved, it had to be taken care of in a very certain way. It could not be handled and treated as any ordinary household item. How long would an item of value last if it were mishandled on a regular basis, and not kept in a secure location? Not very long. Definitely not from generation to generation.

Valuables which are passed down from one generation to the next are usually not handled and used daily. You might have coins, baseball cards, sports memorabilia, china, or other items you value. Some people have things that may not be of great monetary value, but they hold a special place in their heart. The things people value are generally placed in locked areas or safe boxes where they will not be damaged, stolen, or mishandled. In this lesson, we will discuss the plan God set in place to ensure His Word would be handled correctly, and not be destroyed or mishandled through time.

READ

Deuteronomy 10:1-5

ANSWER

Moses broke the first set of stones on which the Ten Commandments were written. According to this passage, what did God command Moses to do with the second set of commandments? **PLACE THEM IN THE ARK**

THINK

God protected His written Word by having it put inside the Ark of the Covenant. God was so serious about protecting His Word, that if anyone were to touch the Ark of the Covenant, they would be instantly struck dead. The Ark was specially prepared by God's people. God gave them detailed instructions how the Ark was to be made in Exodus 25:10-22.

Not only was the Ark overlaid with gold, but also the mercy seat of pure gold was placed on top of the Ark. The mercy seat was in the Holy of Holies, a part of the Tabernacle (See verses 21-22). So, God's Word was not only kept in a prepared place (inside the Ark), but it was also kept in a holy place where God would meet with and talk to His people!

ANSWER

The Scriptures were kept in a **PREPARED** place (Exodus 25:10-16).
The Scriptures were kept in a **HOLY** place (Exodus 25:21-22).
The Scriptures were kept in a **SAFE** place (Numbers 18:1-7; Deuteronomy 10:5).

THINK

The priests were chosen by God to be the guardians of His precious Word. Not only were they responsible to preserve the text from error, but also to copy it so it could be passed down to future generations. Jewish history reveals that meticulous care was given to detail and accuracy of the duplication of manuscripts. A newly copied manuscript was just as accurate and powerful as the one from which it was copied. Opinions, additions, or deletions would never pass through the proofing stage of these writings.

TEACHER NOTE: Rules were followed to make sure nothing was added to or taken from the original text. According to *The Hebrew Text of the Old Testament* by Davidson, the scribes followed a format to maintain uniformity in the copy. Each column had to be a minimum of 48 lines and not to exceed 80 lines. Each column had to consist of 30 letters. No word or letter was to be written from memory. The space of a hair or thread must be between every consonant. Between every book, there had to appear three lines. The copyist had to sit in full Jewish dress, and wash his whole body. It was to be copied each letter by each letter, not word for word or just sentence by sentence. This process was followed for centuries.

That was the process that remained in place throughout the Old Testament. Then a miraculous event occurred that changed everything. The Word became flesh (John 1:1, 14). Jesus began to personify what a life with perfect application of the Old Testament looks like in real time. He added to what had been given in writing by speaking and teaching in person. He then gave the command for that to be taken to the world, not just the Jews (Mt. 28:19-20). Everyone who would believe the message of the Gospel that was brought to them and place their faith and trust in Jesus Christ for their salvation would become a part of a much larger group than the Jews alone. God places them into a group that Jesus loves and gave His life for, the church (Eph. 5:25).

Although God began to use a different group of people as the revealer of Himself to the world, His plan of revealing Himself to the world has not changed. Holy men of God were inspired to pen down everything God wanted mankind to know to reveal Himself to us (II Peter 1:19-21). These writings were to be cared for in a very particular place. Throughout the Old Testament, God gave the responsibility of caring for the writings to the Levitical priesthood, namely the Kohathites. His plan has always been for a very specific group of His people to handle and produce that which is holy. Ezekiel 44 records God's view of what happens when this plan is not followed. When they gave their responsibility to those outside of their family, God said it was an abomination. This will be looked at further in Lesson 3. After Christ came, this responsibility was then passed on to the church with the same requirements as before His coming.