



God Requires Obedience

Deuteronomy 4



LESSON GOAL

Students will see that God requires obedience from His people.

BIBLE TRUTHS

- Moses commanded the people of Israel to obey the word of the Lord.
- When the world sees God's children obeying Him, He is glorified.
- Israel was different from every other nation because they were chosen by God.
- When the other nations saw the different way Israel acted, they realized that God was very different from their false gods.

KEY VERSE

"Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I teach to you to observe, that you may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers is giving you" (Deuteronomy 4:1).

APPLICATION

- Obey God's commands to bring Him glory.
- Demonstrate God's uniqueness by the way you treat others.
- Thank God for His laws, which guide your life.

NEXT WEEK

God Calls Israel to Love through Obedience
Read Deuteronomy 6.

Symbol Key



Craft



Finger Play



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Center



Activity



Q & A



Age Group

4

Teacher Planning Sheet

PREPARE

Objectives/Truths to cover this week

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Personal Application

As a result of my study in this passage, God wants me to

- _____
- _____
- _____

Three ways students need to apply this passage are

- _____
- _____
- _____

Materials Needed

POINT

Choose from various ideas to point students to the coming Bible lesson.

- _____
- _____

PROCLAIM

Choose from various ideas to proclaim the Bible lesson.

Presentation Ideas

- _____
- _____

Praise/Music Ideas

- _____
- _____
- _____

PRACTICE

Choose ideas to help review and apply today's lesson.

- _____
- _____

PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul.... You shall teach them to your children” (Deuteronomy 11:18–19).

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here to aid you in understanding the Scripture.

Bible Background

In Deuteronomy 4 we find the children of Israel in the land of Moab (Deut. 1:5). Forty years of wandering in the wilderness had passed because of their disobedience to God’s commands (1:3). God had told them to go in and take the land, but they did not obey (1:19–33). At this point, 40 years later, Moses stopped to expound God’s law to them. He began to prepare Israel to take possession of the land.

Moses reminded the people of the great things that God had done in the past. He reminded them of how their parents had disbelieved God and refused to go in and take the land. They had rebelled against the command of the Lord and grumbled, accusing God of bringing them to the land of Canaan to be killed. They did not trust God, and because of this, they were sent into the wilderness to wander (Deut. 1:34–46).

Next, Moses reminded Israel of God’s past victories. He had delivered King Og of Bashan and all his people into their hands. The Israelites took all their cities and their spoil, just as they had done to Sihon, king of Heshbon (Deut. 3:6; Num. 21:33–35). Not one man, woman, or child remained alive. Moses reminded the Israelites that these kings were remnants of the giants, the Rephaim (Deut. 3:11). Moses reminded Joshua, “Your eyes have seen all that the LORD your God has done to these two kings; so will the LORD do to all the kingdoms through which you pass” (3:21). Moses exhorted the people, saying, “You must not fear them, for the LORD your God Himself fights for you” (3:22). Those encouraging words should have excited Israel to obedience and faith.

The land that they were about to cross into had been promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob long ago. In Deuteronomy 4, Israel again was very close to entering the land and fulfilling God’s promise.

The rebellious generation had all died out, and Moses was preparing this new generation to enter and take possession of the land. After reminding the Israelites of God’s past acts and future promises, Moses made a plea for their obedience. He charged them to obey and gave them reasons to do so. The entire book of Deuteronomy is a plea for Israel to not forget Yahweh and to obey His commands. This book is about being a doer of the Word and not just a hearer.

In chapter 4, Moses called Israel to obey and gave four reasons to do so. Verses 1–4 state that God’s blessing on their lives was dependent on their obedience. Moses instructed the Israelites to “listen to the statutes and the judgments which I teach you to observe, that you may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers is giving you” (4:1). Following God’s law exactly as it was given to them was the condition for future blessings in the land. The incident involving Baal of Peor was an example of the effect of disobedience. Those in the camp who did not obey were killed, but those who “held fast to the LORD” (4:4) were allowed to live.

Additional Reference Materials

*The Message of
Deuteronomy* by
Raymond Brown

*The MacArthur Study
Bible* by John MacArthur

*The New American
Commentary* by Eugene
H. Merrill

Second, Israel was called to obey because they were God's nation (Deut. 4:7). They were called to be different, which would demonstrate the truth of God's existence and His presence in their lives. The other nations would see that Israel knew how to take God's wisdom and apply it to their lives (4:6). They would see that the Israelites were wise by how they responded to life situations. God's faithfulness also was evident in their lives by the way they were blessed in their obedience. This would cause people to ask, "What great nation is there that has God so near to it?" (4:7). Their law also would make them stand out as a nation set apart from the surrounding peoples (4:8). God's laws demonstrate His character and what He expects of His people.

The third motivation for obedience was to avoid idolatry. Israel had struggled with idols in the past and would continue to struggle in the future. The extent of Israel's tendency and the seriousness of the warning explain the amount of text dedicated to avoiding idolatry.

Verses 9–31 contain warnings to beware of straying from God, a picture of the seriousness of God's holiness, a reminder of His mercy in bringing them out of Egypt, and a warning against idolatry. Idolatry is also referred to back in verses 3–4, when the Israelites forsook God and played the harlot with the false god Baal of Peor (Num. 25:1–9). They committed gross immorality, and the anger of the Lord was aroused against them. Some 24,000 people died before the plague was ended by the zealous act of Phinehas (Num. 25:9). Moses reminded the Israelites that they were eyewitnesses of the wrath of God against such disobedience. This also was used as a motivation to obey.

The fourth motivation for obedience was God's uniqueness (4:32–39). No other nation had ever been chosen by God to be blessed, tried, provided for, and instructed. God is unique because He alone is God. There is no other God. God is the one and only ruler of all that exists, and this alone is reason enough to obey Him. God chose to love Israel and to bring them through the things they experienced to demonstrate His unique love for and election of them.

God was preparing His people to enter the Promised Land. The only way they would experience His blessing was through their obedience.

POINT TO THE TRUTH

"Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth" (Psalm 78:1).

This section includes questions to review last week's lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week's lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



Following Directions

How many of you have baked a cake? There are a lot of ingredients that go into making a cake. Does each ingredient taste good by itself? No. If you were to eat salt, vanilla extract, oil, and other ingredients, they probably would make you feel sick, but if you don't put them into a cake, it will not taste the way it should. Obedience does not always make sense. Sometimes we are asked to do things, and we do not know why we are doing them. Why should we not touch the stove or jump down the stairs? We have to be obedient and follow all the directions that God and our parents give us. In the end, we will see that it was for our good.



Moving Game

In this lesson, the students will be learning about motivation. To motivate means to cause someone to act. Moses gave Israel reasons to cause them to act the way God commanded—to obey Him. Use these simple games to practice the force of motivation. Have the students roll a ball, balloon, marble, or feather across the room with their feet, nose, breath, or fingers.



Obedience, Part One

When your parents tell you to do something, it is for your own good. What are some things that your parents tell you to do? (For example: eat vegetables, take a bath, do not run into the street.) Why do your parents tell you these things? Is it so that you won't have fun? No; your parents love you and want what is best for you. God also gives instructions that are for our good. In today's lesson, Israel will be reminded to obey God. If they remain obedient, God will bless them in the Promised Land. We will find out what Moses says to Israel in today's lesson.



Moses Says

Play this game like "Simon Says." Have "Moses" give instructions for the "children of Israel" by saying, "Moses says..." If Moses does not say, "Moses says" before giving an instruction, the students who follow the instruction have "disobeyed" and are eliminated.

PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

"Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done" (Psalm 78:4).

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included that you can use to proclaim your worship to God. Use the lesson questions to check the students' understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use during the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done directly from the Bible.

Bible Lesson

We are going to learn more about the Israelites today. The Israelites have been wandering in the wilderness for 40 years. That is a long time! Does anyone remember why the Israelites had been wandering around the wilderness? God was punishing them for not obeying Him. Forty years before, God had told their parents to go into the Promised Land, but they did not do it. They grumbled and complained instead, and they did not believe that God would protect them and keep them safe in the Promised Land. So God sent all the parents and their children into the wilderness for 40 years. Now, all the children had grown up, and God said it was finally time for them to get ready to go to the Promised Land. God was using Moses to lead them there. But Moses did not want the Israelites to make the same mistake they had made 40 years before. So Moses had all the Israelites stop and listen to him while he reminded them of how important it was for them to obey God.

Moses gave the Israelites many reasons to obey God. When your mommies and daddies tell you to obey, what reasons do they give you? Well, Moses gave the Israelites some very good reasons, too. We will focus on four of them.

The first reason Moses gave Israel to obey God and go to the Promised Land was that God had promised them good lives and would bless them while they were there.

The second reason was that they were God's chosen people. They were called to obey God's commands so other nations would look at them and see the character of God. Israel was to be an example of God's faithfulness.

What number are we on now? Three! The third reason that Moses told the Israelites to obey God was because he wanted them to avoid idolatry. Do you remember what idolatry is? It is when you worship anything other than God. Israel had done this in the past, and God had punished them by sending a plague that killed 24,000 people. Moses wanted Israel to remember that God hates idolatry and would punish them if they worshiped anything but Him.

The fourth reason is that God is unique. There is no one else like Him because He alone is God. God loved Israel with a unique love. He had chosen the Israelites out of everyone else in the world to bless. The one true God had chosen to give them the wonderful Promised Land. They should have been very grateful and obeyed God.

That were many reasons for the Israelites to obey God! And you know what? We should obey God, too! We should obey Him to bring glory to His name. We can do this by loving others, worshiping only God, and obeying His commands. Let's thank God for the commands He has given to help us obey.



Lesson Questions

How long had the Israelites been wandering in the desert?

Forty years.

Why were they wandering?

They did not obey God when He told them to go into the land and conquer it.

They were punished for their disobedience.

Why was it important for Israel to obey?

They would be blessed in the land that God was about to give them.

They were God's chosen people and were told to obey as an example to others.

If they obeyed, they would not be led astray to worship something other than the one true God. God is unique, and because He is the one and only God, He deserves to be worshiped.

How can you show God that you love Him by the way you act?

[Answers will vary.]

Presentation Ideas



A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards

Use appropriate A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards with the lesson.



Betty Lukens Flannelgraph

Use appropriate flannelgraph pieces with the lesson.



God's Goodness

Who wants this piece of candy? (Hold up some candy.) How do we know that this candy is good to eat? We know because we have tasted candy before and know that it is good. How do we know that God is good? We know that God is good because He has been good 100 percent of the time in the past. We've seen what God has done in the past and what He has promised in the future. If God is perfect and has always been good in the past, can we trust Him to also be good in the future?

Praise and Worship

In My Life, Lord, Be Glorified

King of Kings

This Is My Commandment

Thy Word

Trust and Obey



Obey the Lord

Obey the Lord, please try, try, try!

(Point up; then press palms together under chin.)

Listen, and you will hear why.

(Cup hands at ears.)

God will rescue you for Himself,

(Make a wide sweeping motion toward yourself with arms, ending in a hug.)

To love Him best, above all else.

(Continue hugging self and shake back and forth; then raise hands overhead.)

You will not see wrath, but life,

(Shield eyes with hand and look down while shaking head back and forth; then look up and nod while still shielding eyes.)

You'll be a witness and a light.

(Hold up hand, palm out; then hold up one finger and move in a circle.)

You'll see God's power and mercy, so

(Flex muscle; then hold hand over heart.)

Remember He chose you and will not let go.

(Point to temple; then clasp fingers together firmly and pull.)

PRACTICE THE TRUTH

"That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments" (Psalm 78:7).

Choose ideas from this section to review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



Motivation Mobile

Materials: copies of the "Motivation Mobile" craft sheets, four 12-inch pieces of yarn, wire hanger, scissors, hole puncher, crayons, or other decorations

Directions: Before class, cut out the square on the first "Motivation Mobile" page. Fold the square on the dotted line, and then cut a slit in the center of the fold. Punch holes where indicated. This piece will fit over the wire hanger.

During class, have students complete the sentence on their mobile sheets and then color and decorate the circles. Finally, cut out the circles, punch holes in the tops, and attach them to the mobile using yarn.



"A Light to My Path"

Materials: glitter, glue, verse, crayons, copies of the "A Light to My Path" craft pages (see back of lesson), razor blade, scissors

Directions: Israel was instructed to be obedient to God's Word. Believers today are also commanded to follow and obey God's instructions in His Word, the Bible. God's Word is a lamp; it shows us the way to go. When you have a light in a dark place, you can see in front of you and can walk safely. Psalm 119:105 says that God's Word "is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Create a lamp, using the supplies given, and glue on this verse to be a reminder to use God's Word to direct your steps.

Cut out flashlight parts with tabs. Next, cut along the dotted lines with a razor blade, and attach the flashlight parts by inserting the tabs into the insertion points. Using glue, create light beams, and cover them with silver or gold glitter. After the craft is complete, have students explain how God's Word will be a light to their paths this week.



Obey Your Parents

Encourage the students to think of ways they can obey their parents during the upcoming week. Have some students share their ideas. Read Ephesians 6:1, and give each student a copy of the "Obey Your Parents" activity page. Instruct the students to color the words from the verse with a marker or crayon.



"Why Should We Obey God?"

Materials: one "G" coloring sheet per student, crayons, other decorations

Directions: Students can decorate the large G on this preprinted page, using crayons or glue-on decorations. Remind the students of the four motivations to obey God listed on the page. Talk about how students obey God by obeying their parents (Eph. 6:1).



Obedience, Part Two

How do we show our parents that we love them? We show love by being obedient when they ask us to do something. If you are obedient to your parents' instructions,

you are telling them that you care about what they say and that you love them. Israel was told to obey God. Their obedience showed their love for God.



Motivation

What motivates you to do the right thing? Is it because you will get a reward or because people will say that you did a good job? The reason that we should do everything we do is to glorify God. It's like having a lamp at night. Would you hide the lamp under a basket, or would you shine the light so that people could see it and find their way? We should let people around us see God through the things we do so that they will praise Him (like shining a lamp for everyone to see).



“Hear, O Israel”

Materials: copies of the “Hear, O Israel” craft page, 1-inch strips of construction paper, scissors, tape

Make each student a headband from a strip of construction paper. Give students the “Hear O Israel” craft page. Students may decorate their headband, number 1, and ears. Have them cut out the two ears, the number 1, and the Scripture verse. They should tape the ears to the sides of the headband and the number 1 to the front of the headband. Finally, have the students tape the verse card to the front of the headband.

Coloring Sheets

Give each student a copy of the coloring sheets at the back of the lesson. The students can color the pages in class or at home.



MEMORY VERSE

“Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I teach you to observe, that you may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers is giving you” (Deuteronomy 4:1).

Motivation Mobile

Cut out the square. Fold the square on the dotted line, and then cut a slit in the center of the fold. Punch holes where indicated. This piece will fit over the wire hanger. Cut out the circles on the following page, and attach them to the mobile using yarn.



because...

(write one specific act of obedience)

This week I will

Dear Parents,

This mobile is to serve as a reminder of the reasons Moses gave to obey God in Deuteronomy 4. Help your child select a specific area of obedience to work on this week, with God's attributes as motivation.



Motivation Mobile

○

**God is
gracious
to me.**

○

**God
deserves
glory.**

○

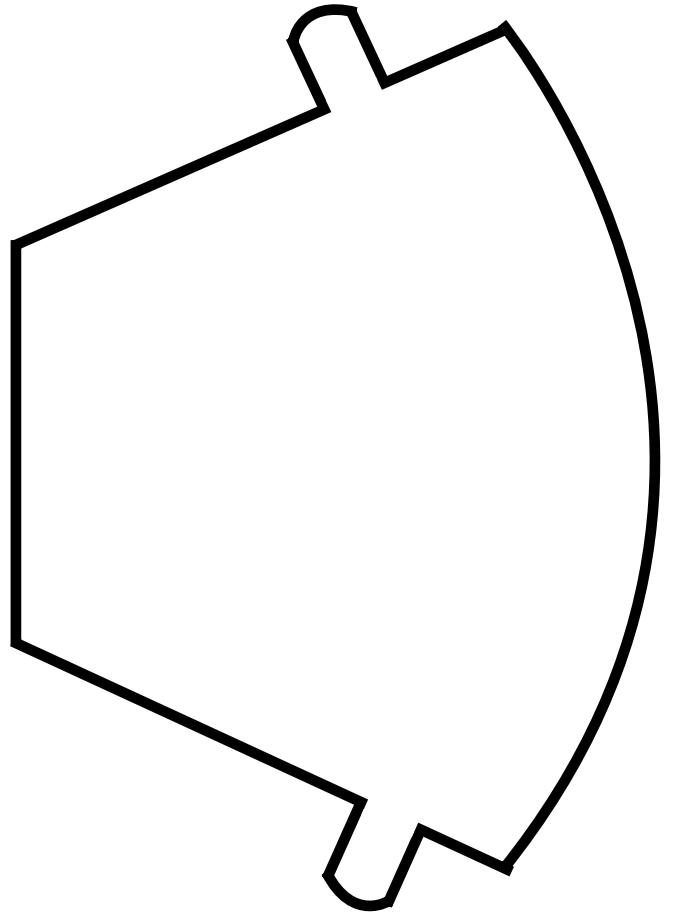
**God is
great and
powerful.**

○

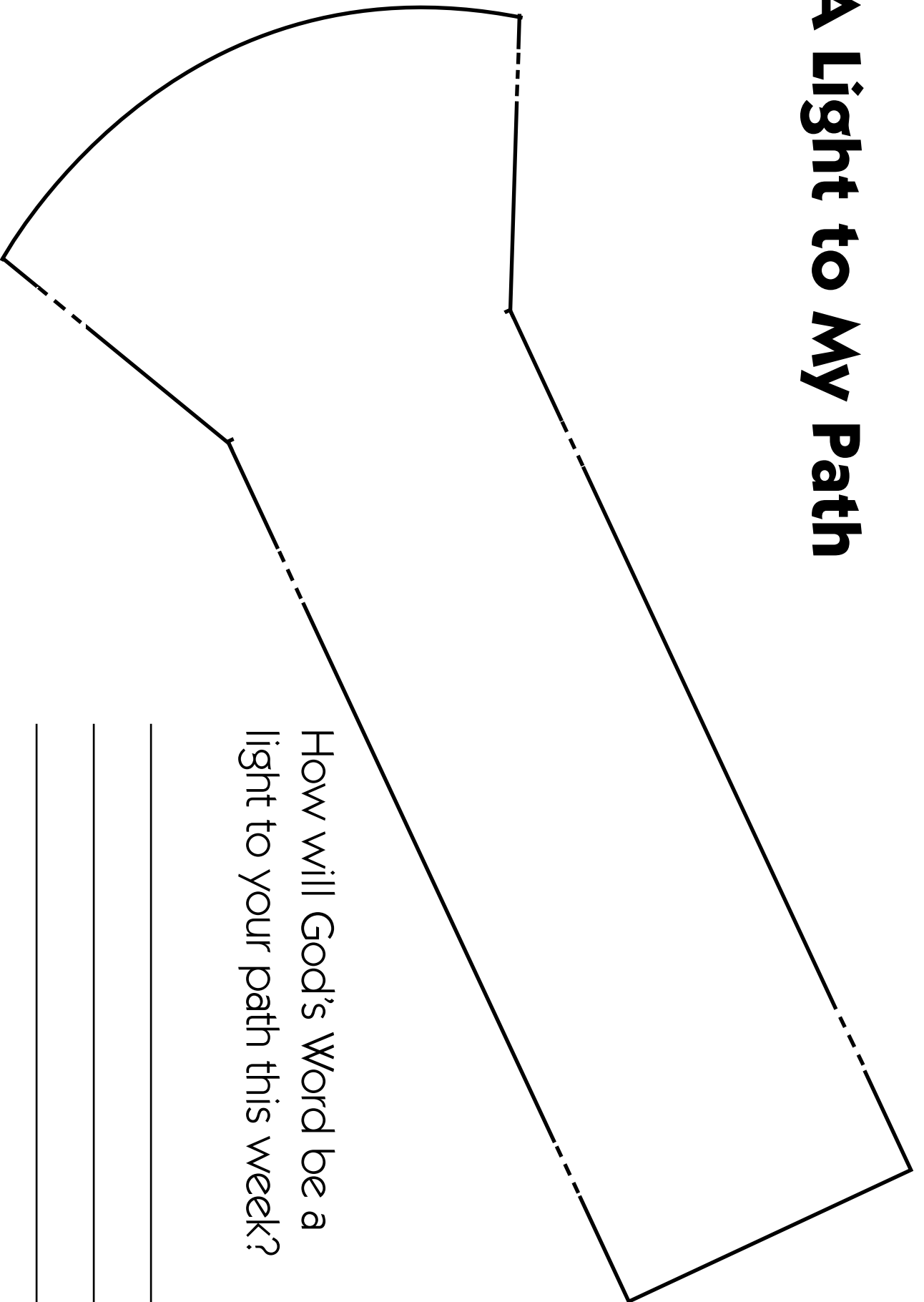
**God
is good.**

A Light to My Path

“Your word is a lamp to my feet,
and a light to my path”
(Psalm 119:1050).



A Light to My Path



How will God's Word be a
light to your path this week?

Obey Your Parents

“Children,
obey your
parents in the
LORD, for
this is right.”

Ephesians 6:1

Why Should We Obey God?

In Deuteronomy 4, Moses motivated the Israelites to obey God by reminding them of His...

Goodness

Glory



Grace

Greatness

Love God with All Your Heart



“You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength”
(Deuteronomy 6:5).



Moses prepared the Israelites to take possession of the Promised Land by calling them to listen to and obey God's commands (Deuteronomy 4:1).



God was glorified when other nations saw the Israelites obeying His commands (Deuteronomy 4:6–8).

