

Chapter 5

Answer Key for Double-Check Questions

1. *The Bible often recounts the lives of people who seem incapable of doing the jobs God is asking of them. What seems to be the point of this?*

God sometimes picks the least qualified candidate for the job. When that person's mission is accomplished, we have no other reasonable explanations, except to look to God. By choosing the least suitable person for the position, our attention is then diverted toward God.

2. *Describe what a covenant is, using God's covenant with Abraham as an example.*

A covenant is a solemn agreement between human beings or between God and a human being in which mutual commitments are made. Covenants bind the parties together in a special relationship. God's covenant with Abram establishes a relationship: he is our God, we are his people. Abram promises to be faithful to God. God vows his fidelity and also promises to give him land and a great nation (his descendants). It is also an "everlasting covenant" that extends down through Abram's descendants.

3. *How is our relationship with God similar to a marriage?*

Our relationship with God and marriage are both examples of covenants. Unconditional promises are made in both. Both of them establish relationships. Both are meant to be lifelong.

4. *The patriarchs were faithful but imperfect human beings. Explain this statement using one of the patriarchs as an example.*

The patriarchs were people who have both positive and negative qualities. Jacob admirably became the father of the Twelve Tribes of Israel, yet he was also the guy who cheated his brother out of his birthright. When considering all of these biblical characters, our job is to acknowledge their imperfections and imitate their capacity to reveal God's love for one another.

5. *Whose name was changed to Israel, and what does he have to do with the Twelve Tribes?*

Jacob is the father of his twelve sons. Jacob changed his name to Israel. The nation of Israel is made up of the Twelve Tribes who descended from Jacob's twelve sons.

6. *Using Joseph and his brothers in your response, explain why forgiveness is important.*

Joseph could have held a grudge and punished his brothers, but their sorrow was easily apparent to him. Forgiveness allowed them to be reconciled and to move forward. It eased the anger and resentment Joseph felt toward them. Forgiveness allows us to heal and move our lives toward happiness.

7. *How can good come out of evil events?*

When we are in the midst of a difficult, devastating event in our lives, we often do not see the point. What is important is how we react in those difficult moments. We must act with the confidence that God will bring something good out of the bad—even if it isn't clear to us at the time. This is the meaning of Jesus' cross. He was resurrected only after his Passion and death. In light of this, we can be confident that God works through our hardships.

