

Unit 2 Reading Guide Answer Key

God Revealed to His Chosen People

Chapter 5: The Patriarchs: God Reveals Himself to a Chosen Family

Article 20: Abraham and Sarah

1. In common usage, a patriarch is the father or leader of a tribe, clan, or tradition. In the Bible, this word refers to the fathers of our faith: Abraham and his son Isaac, and Isaac's son Jacob.
2. By choosing the least suitable person for the position, God turns our attention toward himself.
3. Faith is the gift of God by which one freely accepts God's full Revelation.
4. A contract focuses on things or events, is conditional, and ends once the commitments are fulfilled. A covenant focuses on relationships, is unconditional, and is a lifelong commitment.
5. God promises to be faithful to Abraham and his descendants. God also promises to give Abraham land and a great nation (his descendants). It is also an "everlasting covenant" (Genesis 17:13) that extends down through Abraham's descendants.
6. In his covenant with Abram, there are two signs. God changes their names. The other sign is circumcision.

Article 21: Isaac and Jacob

1. The test (Abraham's willingness to trust God and sacrifice his son) is Abraham's discovery of the faith he holds in his heart.
2. This narrative also prefigures God the Father's willingness to allow the sacrifice of his only Son, Jesus Christ.
3. Much like the father in Jesus' Parable of the Lost Son, Esau is the model expression of God's love and forgiveness.
4. The being blesses Jacob and gives him a new name: Israel. This will also become the name of the nation consisting of the Twelve Tribes, descendants of Jacob's twelve sons.

Article 22: Joseph

1. Then finally "God remembered Rachel" (Genesis 30:22), and she gives birth to Joseph, who becomes Jacob's favorite son.
2. In the Old Testament, dreams guided and helped the people to be more faithful to the covenant.
3. Before Jacob's death, the brothers worry that Joseph is still nursing a grudge. They beg for his forgiveness again.



4. If his brothers would not have sold him into slavery, not only his entire family but probably most of Egypt would have died in the famine.

Chapter 6: The Pentateuch: God Reveals Himself to His Chosen People

Article 23: Exodus: Free at Last!

1. Through a series of fortunate circumstances, Moses has escaped this fate and has been raised as an Egyptian in the house of the Pharaoh.
2. Moses encounters God in a most unusual form—a bush that is on fire but “not being consumed” (Exodus 3:2).
3. This kind of appearance is called a theophany, God’s manifestation of himself in a visible form to enrich human understanding of him.
4. Later and most important, God reveals his name to Moses: Yahweh, which means something like “I am who am.”
5. God sends Moses to demand Pharaoh to free the Israelites. His (Moses’s) hesitancy leads some scholars to believe that Moses might have had a speech impediment.
6. To convince Pharaoh to let the Israelites go, God brings a series of plagues on the Egyptians.
7. To this day, the Passover is one of Judaism’s most important religious festivals. It celebrates the deliverance of the Chosen People from bondage in Egypt and the Exodus from Egypt to the Promised Land.

Article 24: Covenant: The Ties That Bind

1. Then (on Mount Sinai) God gives Moses a list of laws, including the Ten Commandments. In total, God gives Moses 613 laws to guide the Israelites in all aspects of their lives. The Ten Commandments are at the heart of this Law.
2. The Ark of the Covenant was the sacred chest in which the tablets containing the Ten Commandments were kept.
3. The Ark was the symbol of God’s saving presence among the Israelites. In the rear of the Tabernacle, the Ark of the Covenant was kept in an area called the Holy of Holies.
4. Moses is gone (on the mountain) for a long time, and the Israelites begin worrying that God has abandoned them. So they take matters into their own hands and build a golden calf to worship.



Article 25: Leviticus and Numbers: Being Holy

1. All of the Laws that guide the Israelites' lives center on one idea that God conveys through Moses: "Be holy, for I, the LORD your God, am holy" (Leviticus 19:2).
2. For the Israelites, being holy means two things: (1) living in right relationship with God and with one another, and (2) being set apart or distinct.
3. The Hebrew word Torah literally translates as "law" or "teaching."
4. These sacrifices (in the first seven chapters of Leviticus) include both burnt offerings of animals (holocausts) and grain.
5. The kosher laws are a set of dietary restrictions that govern the foods the Israelites can eat (clean), and those they cannot eat (unclean).
6. The Torah also has laws that specifically deal with fairness and how to treat the anawim, the Hebrew word for the poor and marginalized.

Article 26: Numbers and Deuteronomy: The Promised Land

1. The Israelites wander in the desert for forty years.
2. *Deuteronomy* is a Greek word, meaning "second law." The key theme of Deuteronomy is that Moses calls the Israelites to totally commit themselves to God.
3. Before he died in the wilderness, (and before he made it to the Promised Land), Moses turned his leadership over to his longtime aide, Joshua.
4. Our lives are not over when our physical life on Earth is finished. We believe that those who do God's will are rewarded in the next life.

Chapter 7: Joshua and Judges

Article 27: What Goes Around Comes Around . . . Or Does It?

1. The belief that God rewards and punishes people based on their behavior in this lifetime is called divine retributive justice.
2. Like many of their neighboring tribes, the Israelites believed that their God was a warrior who led them into battles.
3. The ban is the practice of destroying everyone and everything in a defeated city and then burning it as a sacrificial offering to God.
4. God is not the source of our pain in this world. Like Jesus' agony on the cross, our suffering can be redemptive; that is, it can participate in God's saving work.
5. Modern historians attempt to offer an objective analysis of past events. In the Historical Books of the Bible, we find something different. They reveal the hand of God at work in human history.



Article 28: Joshua: The New Moses

1. In the Book of Joshua, parallels are made between Joshua and Moses.
2. God makes it clear to Joshua that he is the new Moses.
3. As Moses guides the Israelites through the parted Red Sea, the waters similarly part for Joshua as he leads the Israelites through the Jordan River to their new home.
4. As soon as they enter, they celebrate two rituals that are fundamental to their faith: (1) the circumcision of the men and (2) the celebration of Passover.
5. Eventually Joshua and the Israelites conquered all of Canaan, the land the Lord had promised to Abraham.
6. For our part, Joshua's call for the Israelites to renew their faith in God is a good reminder for us to do the same.

Article 29: The Judges: New Authority Figures

1. We don't know who wrote the Book of Judges. Scholars call him the Deuteronomist, which is the name given to the person (or group of people) who wrote and organized all of the books from Deuteronomy through Second Kings.
2. This cycle, called the deuteronomic cycle, is a pattern of sin and repentance that the Israelites repeat time and time again.
3. The judges in the Historical Books of the Bible are elders, heroes, and military leaders. They were sent by God to deliver the Israelites from the oppression they brought on themselves.
4. Deborah is the only female judge among the twelve listed in the Book of Judges. She is the only judge with a song recalling her feats.
5. Samson was a nazirite, those consecrated to God through a vow that required them to refrain from drinking alcohol, to stay away from dead bodies, and to keep their hair uncut.
6. The people's disobedience to their covenant obligations had brought about injustice, violence, and disunity.

Article 30: Samuel: Reluctant Kingmaker

1. The blessing of God is made visible through Hannah's pregnancy and the birth of her son, Samuel.
2. Hannah prefigures the Virgin Mary, preparing us to better understand Mary's role as the mother of Jesus Christ.
3. After Eli's death, Samuel becomes the last judge of Israel.
4. So the people want Samuel to "appoint a king over us" (1 Samuel 8:5).
5. This desire to be like all the other nations is a problem for the Israelites. They have forgotten what it means to be holy.
6. The appointment of Saul as the first king is a monumental change in Israelite history.



- Human kings cannot replace God's leadership, especially if the kings and the people forget their covenant commitments to God.

Article 31: Ruth: An Unexpected Hero

- This hero was not a military leader, was not a man . . . and most surprisingly was not even an Israelite. Her name was Ruth.
- Ruth's story reminds the Israelites that God includes the people of other nations in his saving plan.
- She [Ruth] is the great-grandmother of David, Israel's greatest king. Ruth is also one of only four women recalled in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus.
- In this way, Ruth foreshadows the New Covenant of Jesus Christ, extended to all people, of every race and nation.

Chapter 8: The Rise of the Monarchy

Article 32: King Saul: A Disappointing Start

- Samuel helped mediate the process, and Saul was chosen as the first king of Israel.
- When Samuel sees the youngest son, a mere boy named David who is tending to the sheep, the Lord tells Samuel that David will be the next king.
- David's trust is in God, not his own power.
- As David's fame and popularity rose among the people, Saul could feel his own revered status slipping away from him.
- David could have reasoned that since he was anointed by Samuel to be the next king, he should kill Saul and take over. He even has two chances to do that, yet he refuses to do so.
- The First Book of Samuel comes to a dramatic ending with the deaths of Saul and his sons. Severely wounded by the Philistines, Saul decides to take his own life.
- Saul's dishonorable death stands as a reminder to the readers that disobedience to God's Commandments brings on a heavy debt to pay, while surrendering oneself to God's will brings happiness and joy to your life.

Article 33: David: A New King Emerges

- The Second Book of Samuel picks up right where First Samuel leaves off. In chapter 1, David mourns the death of Saul and his friend Jonathan, Saul's son. In chapter 2, David prays for guidance, and God sends him to the city of Hebron, where the people anoint him king of Israel.
- Jerusalem, from the Hebrew meaning "foundation of peace," is the name of the city that becomes Israel's capital and is the future location of the Temple. This city is also known as the City of David or Zion.



3. The Book of Revelation in the New Testament takes this symbolic meaning one step farther. It calls our heavenly home the New Jerusalem.
4. Through the prophet Nathan, God tells David, "I will build you a house." The house to which God refers is not a building, but rather the House of David—a dynasty, or a line of descendants.
5. God's promise to David is fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ.
6. This (the reign of David) is the high point of Israelite history. As long as they are faithful to the covenant and Law, things will go well for David and the Israelites. Unfortunately, these good times do not last long.

Article 34: King David's Downfall

1. Sadly, his (David's) desire for new female companions, in particular a certain married woman, leads to his downfall. (This woman's name is Bathsheba.)
2. Comparing David and Uriah's roles and actions in Second Samuel emphasizes how much David has been corrupted by power and lust.
3. He (King David) is both a sinner and God's chosen one. But most important, he is another reminder that God can accomplish great things even through our flaws and weaknesses.
4. Nathan prophesies that "the sword shall never depart from your house" (2 Samuel 12:10).
5. Upon seeing the men return with news of the battle, David does not ask who won. His only concern is the well-being of Absalom. After being told of his death, David weeps and cries, "My son Absalom!" (2 Samuel 19:1).
6. The temptations that come with power can be a corruptive influence. Because of the flawed humanity of any earthly leader, reliance on earthly powers will never lead us to our heavenly home, the New Jerusalem. This goal can only be attained by following the guidance of our one true king: God.

Article 35: King Solomon: The Last of the Good Old Days

1. The First Book of Kings begins with a short story about the aging King David.
2. With the encouragement of the prophet Nathan and Bathsheba, David decides to pass his reign on to Solomon.
3. One of Solomon's most famous characteristics was his wisdom.
4. Notice that Solomon asks for the wisdom of a "listening heart" (1 Kings 3:9).
5. The centerpiece of Solomon's accomplishments is found in the construction of the Temple.
6. This detailed description (of the Temple in First Kings) was intended to inspire and remind its readers that good comes to those who follow God's Commandments.



Article 36: The End of One Nation

1. His (Solomon's) first sinful behavior is a failure to treat people justly.
2. Solomon's second sinful behavior allows idolatry, the worship of foreign gods and goddesses, to creep back into the kingdom.
3. These two sinful behaviors lead to Solomon's downfall and the splitting of the kingdom.
4. The people with whom we choose to surround ourselves have an influence on us. That's why it is so important to have a group of people around you who encourage and applaud your positive choices.
5. After the death of Solomon around 922 BC, Israel splits into two separate kingdoms: Israel in the north, and Judah in the south.
6. In order to keep his people from going to Jerusalem (in Judah) to worship, Jeroboam, the first king of Israel, creates golden idols for the people to worship. The succeeding kings of Israel follow suit. This and the unjust treatment of the poor eventually lead to Israel's conquest by the Assyrians in 721 BC.
7. The kings of Judah are all descendants of David. They too fall into idolatry and injustice, but the kingdom of Judah will also have some faithful kings that prolong the kingdom's survival. But this isn't enough. The Babylonians will eventually conquer Judah in 587 BC.

(The Scripture quotations on this answer key are from the *New American Bible, revised edition* © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Inc., Washington, D.C. All Rights Reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the copyright owners.)

