

UNIT #1

GOD'S INCREDIBLE PLAN

UNIT DESCRIPTION

God's Word reveals that He has a plan and a purpose for everyone. In His love, He created mankind, but man chose autonomy over dependence upon a loving God. Mankind's separation from God is the result of the Fall (Genesis 3), yet the Word shows the unified and continuous plan of God to restore the rightful relationship between Himself and His creation.

This unit, *In the Beginning*, is designed to give an overview of God's plan of redemption. As we review the fall of the angels, and Adam and Eve, we will track the progression of sin.

Despite the downward spiral of sin and rejection of God's love and provision, God's desire is a restored love relationship with us. He wants this so much that He, Himself, paid the price for our sin on the cross.

The Bible, from beginning to end, reveals God's Incredible Plan to redeem us back to Himself. The best news is that His plan includes each and every one of us! We have the incredible privilege to be used to further His plan on this earth and to affect the eternal destiny of those who don't know Him.

INTRODUCTION

CONCEPT

God has an Incredible Plan for His creation.

GOAL

Christian students will learn that from the Bible we can learn what God is like.

Non-Christian students will learn that the Bible tells us about God's incredible plan for His creation, and as part of His creation each of us.

PASSAGE: ISAIAH 46:10, 11

Key Verse: "Only I can tell you the future before it even happens. Everything I plan will come to pass, for I do whatever I wish. I have said what I would do, and I will do it." Isaiah 46:10, 11 (NLT)

PLANNING AHEAD*

Lesson Supplies

Lesson:

- Jigsaw puzzle pieces
- God's Incredible Plan Puzzle (in color), 1/class

Music:

- CD player
- CD w/song "OT Books of the Bible," The Invisible Gospel Band

Learning Activity #1:

- Red yarn, 10' long with masking tape markers every foot

Craft Supplies

Activity Stations:

- God's Incredible Plan puzzle pieces (65# cover stock) in a sandwich bag, 1/student
- Markers
- OT/NT cards, 2 sets/room
- Old Testament/New Testament Bookshelf, 1/student

* **Teachers please note:** For clarity, the shaded areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag. **Items followed by an asterisk* are to be supplied by the teaching team.**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION / TEACHER HELPS

This year we will be taking students on a journey through the Bible as it reveals God's Incredible Plan of redemption. When we read Bible stories or verses, we often don't take into account that each is part of the bigger picture, God's plan for the entire universe. "We all have memories of unrelated Bible stories; David and Goliath, mighty Samson, Noah and his ark, Jonah and the big fish. But it is impossible to understand any related significance of these stories if they are merely viewed as an unrelated collection of bits and pieces of literature, heroic dramas, philosophy, history, wise sayings.

"My personal belief is that most of the criticism that the Bible receives as not being accurate comes from taking one verse or portion out of its larger context and failing to see that there is a fantastic unity which ties it all together. Most people study the Bible in about the same way they would put together a jigsaw puzzle. They find interesting pieces that seem to hold promise of larger assemblings but no sensible picture emerges until all the pieces have fallen into place. Then you can see the value that each separate piece played.

"This same thing is true of the Bible. There is an Incredible Plan that runs throughout the whole Bible from the first book of Genesis to the last book of Revelation. Not only does it give a sensible picture of the workings of God in the lives of men of ages past but this plan also gives promise of God's continued intervention in our personal lives in the twentieth century and in the affairs of nations."¹ He loves us and includes us in His plan. He reveals Himself to us and brings fallen people back to Himself. From before creation God knew of the great sacrifice He would make to redeem all mankind. He loves each of us so much that He died for us! Take time to understand and know in your hearts what God has done for you. Then you will be able, by example, to pass on to the children "the belief that there is a purpose to the universe, that we can know what it is, and even more importantly, that we can be a significant participant in God's plan."²

¹ McCallum & Hamblin, *God's Incredible Plan*, Fleming H. Revell Co., Tappan, New Jersey, 1978, p. 7.

² *Ibid.*, p. 14.

LESSON PLAN

SET UP/ INCORPORATION 15-20 MIN	<p>Activity Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Craft – Puzzles Instructions: Give each student a sandwich bag with a set of puzzle pieces. Have them put the puzzles together and color the pieces if they wish. Discuss that all of the pieces of the puzzle are needed to create the complete picture. The Bible is somewhat like a puzzle. We can read Bible stories and learn about God. The more we read, the more we can get to know what God is like. But it is not until we look at the whole Bible that we can really see God's Incredible Plan for His creation. ● Books in the Bible Instructions: Give each student a copy of the printed sheet. Fill in the NT blank books. Challenge them to learn the names of the Old and New Testament books and be able to name them all by memory. To make it easier they can learn by category. ● Where does it go? Instructions: Deal the 66 cards to the players. Using the Old and New Testament sheet have the students work together to put the cards in order. ● Missions Prayer Instructions: Talk about and pray for Oasis Giving campaign and adopted missionary child.
INTRODUCTION / INSTRUCTION -- LG GROUP 5 MIN	<p>Expectations Instructions: "The most successful classes are those where the teacher has a clear idea of what is expected from the students and the students know what the teacher expects from them."³ To head off potential discipline problems, class expectations, rules, and procedures must be communicated on the first day and consistently enforced throughout the year. Please meet as a team and <i>together</i> agree on simple, clear rules and specific expectations, e.g., keep hands, feet and objects to yourself, listen when others are talking, and respect others. To add some humor and clear understanding to your presentation, you can role-play appropriate and inappropriate behavior. Clearly explain the consequences of inappropriate behavior and be prepared to consistently follow through. It is your responsibility to fairly and consistently enforce the rules and the responsibility of the students to obey.</p> <p>God has given us the wonderful job of sharing with you about Him. He has amazing things to teach you this year. We want each of you to get to participate and learn; therefore, we will expect you to listen while others are talking, to work together as a class, and to have fun together. (Explain the rules that you will enforce each week.)</p>
LESSON -- LG GROUP 10 MIN	<p>A Piece of the Puzzle</p> <p>Hold up a jigsaw puzzle piece and ask students if they can tell you what the puzzle picture is. What can you tell me about the puzzle? What colors are in the puzzle? You can know a little bit about the puzzle by looking at one piece, but the whole picture is unknown. As more and more pieces are added to the puzzle, you discover more and more of the picture. The Bible is somewhat like a puzzle. We can read individual Bible stories and passages and learn a little bit about God.</p> <p>"... many different authors, written over a period of centuries, it tells one main story. That story is the story of God planning, creating, redeeming, and perfecting people who would be his own special people. The main character of the Bible story is God. In smaller story after smaller story, he is the one who plans, who promises, who keeps his promises, who saves, who blesses, and who judges. Each story shows us God at work. As we read Bible stories, we always want to ask</p>

³ Harry Wong, *The First Days of School, How to be an Effective Teacher*.

ourselves: What is God doing in this story? What can I learn about God here? Our little minds will never understand all there is to our great God. But if we read all the stories he gave us in his Word, always looking for him in those stories will have a very clear picture of what wants us to know about him."⁴ The more we read, the more we can get to know what God is like. But it is not until we look at the Bible as a whole that can we see God's Incredible Plan for His creation from start to finish.

Now everyone stand up and put the palm of your hand on your nose. What can you see? You see only a small part of your hand. Now move your hand out and rest your elbow on your side. You can see your hand more clearly. Now stretch your arm all the way out. You can see your hand and your entire arm. When you had your hand up close you only saw a small part of your hand. As you moved your hand out farther and farther you were able to see your arm and hand and how they fit together. This is similar to the way we will learn what God wants us to know in His Bible. Each week we will learn more and more about the Bible. By the end of the year, you will see how it all fits together to show us God's Incredible Plan. God said, **"Only I can tell you the future before it even happens. Everything I plan will come to pass, for I do whatever I wish. I have said what I would do, and I will do it"** (Isaiah 46:10, 11).

This plan is revealed in the Bible, from the very first page to the very last. Our key verse this week is a long one, but it states that God has a plan and will accomplish it. **"Only I can tell you the future before it even happens. Everything I plan will come to pass, for I do whatever I wish. I have said what I would do, and I will do it"** (Isaiah 46:10, 11).

This year we will be looking at God's incredible plan of redemption. Who knows what redemption is? (Redemption is to buy, exchange for, ransom – like a gift card... you receive it, go to the store, find what you want to buy the items with the gift card.) We all sin. Sin separates us from God. But because of His great love for us, God has made a way to redeem us or buy us back by exchanging the life of His Son Jesus for our lives. He loves everyone and desires that all people accept His provision of redemption. When we accept God's offer of forgiveness we enter into a relationship with Him. In **Jeremiah 31:3** God says, **"I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness."** God's love for each of His children will never change, no matter what. It will last forever. He wants you to be part of His plan by first asking Him into your life, then by telling others about Him.

Instructions: Have the kids gather around one table. Put the puzzle pieces together one at a time as you mention the parts represented by the symbols.

Now let's take a quick trip through the Bible to see what we have in store this year. God began with the creation of angelic beings (angels). Then God created the world (globe) and placed man in the Garden of Eden (garden) where he was given the choice to obey or disobey God. Adam and Eve disobeyed God's instructions. Therefore, they were cast out of the Garden of Eden. Since then God has been working out His plan to bring all people back to Himself. Throughout history he has worked through people: Noah (rainbow), Abraham (the ram), Moses (Egyptian pyramids), David (the star of David), Daniel (the lion), and the rest of the Jewish nation (dreidel and menorah). God then sent His Son as a man to be the sacrificial lamb to pay the penalty for the sins of the world and provide a way for man's redemption. In the end Jesus will return and set up His kingdom. The people who go into God's kingdom will be those who have trusted Christ by faith (faces of children). They will be with God in Heaven (heaven) forever. Those who have

⁴ Starr Meade, *Mighty Acts of God: A Family Bible Storybook*, © 2010 by Educational Publishing Concepts, Inc. pp.17-18.

	<p>chosen to be independent from God will be apart from Him forever in Hell.</p> <p>Now we have a complete picture from God's word. As we read the Bible we learn that we can be an active part of God's incredible plan if we tell Him we are willing.</p>
<p>LEARNING ACTIVITY #1 -- LG GROUP 10 MIN</p>	<p>GAME - WHERE IS IT? Instructions: Stretch the red yarn out on the floor. Have the students start at one end. Divide the class into teams with a maximum of 4 students on a team. Each time a team correctly answers a question, they advance to the next masking tape marker. Come up with your own questions or use the ones below. The students can use a Bible, the Old Testament / New Testament Bookshelf sheet and the Bible timeline to come up with the answers. Explain that only God knows everything. The more we read and learn the Bible, the more we will understand what God wants us to know. We may know some things about the Bible, but God knew everything before it ever happened! He not only knows all the parts of the Bible, but He also knows everything that isn't written down.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In which book is our memory verse? • Name one of the books where you can read about Jesus' birth • Name three Old Testament books • Name the 4 Gospels, the first 4 books of the New Testament • What is the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament? • In which book do we learn about Adam and Eve? • Which books were written by Samuel? • In which book can we find a description of Daniel's visions? • In which book does David describe Jesus being hung on a cross? <p>In which book does God tell us about the End of Times?</p>
<p>TRANSITION – 2 MIN</p>	<p>Now we are going to split up into smaller groups and talk more about God's Incredible Plan</p>
<p>LEARNING ACTIVITY #3 – SM GROUPS 10 MIN Rationale: to apply scripture to real life.</p>	<p>Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you learn something about the Bible today that you didn't know? • Do you have a question about the Bible or God or something we talked about today? • What does "God's Incredible Plan" mean? • Who can sing or say the first 5 books of the Bible? <p>Pray – include in your prayer that they will learn how the Bible's 66 books all fit together to tell us about God's Incredible Plan</p>
<p>OPTIONAL ACTIVITY</p>	<p>MUSIC Instructions: Use the CD to teach the students the song that will help them to memorize the names of the books of the Old Testament. Start with the first five books.</p> <p>Bible Instructions: Talk about the Bible. What do the students know about the Old and New Testaments? What do they know about the books in each? This is a great opportunity to learn what the students know about the Bible.</p> <p>Puzzle/Timeline Match Instructions: Match the large puzzle pieces to the Bible timeline in the classroom.</p>