Jesus’ Outlandish Claim & “Let us consider what we know of the Messiah...”

Objectives: The students will review for, and take the Unit 1 exam, OR they will discuss what they recall Jesus doing during his time on earth. They will be able to answer correctly, 1) In regard to the prophecy of Isaiah, what are two acts of Jesus that fulfilled it? (Jesus gave sight to the blind, and preached to the poor); 2) What does the word “messiah” mean, and why does it apply to Israel’s kings? (Messiah means, “annointed.” Israel’s kings ascended to the throne when oil was poured over their heads); and 3) Fill in the blanks: “Enter through the ______ that leads to life.” (Narrow gate)

For the Catechist

This lesson contains the exam for the first unit. An answer key is also provided. The exams are not to be seen in a competitive way. The goal is for the students to know this material, and having an exam causes them to be accountable for what they have learned. You may go over some of the questions during the Introduction. As the students wrote full sentences to answer the Study Guide questions, they should not have any difficulty if the information is posed as a true-false, multiple choice, etc. Check the students’ notebooks to see if their parents signed off on each page. If not, pair up students to review the material.

There are 15 questions on each exam. Scores of 11 out of 15 (73%) are considered passing. If a student misses more than 4, take the student aside and go over the questions that were missed. You can have the student retake a section of the exam, or all of the exam. The goal is that the students know the material.

The lesson has been shortened to allow for taking the exam; however, the question it poses is pivotal for this course, as it was for the Jews of the time of Jesus; namely, is Jesus the Messiah? The question is posed with Jesus’ announcement in the synagogue after reading the prophecy of Isaiah, “This scripture is fulfilled in your midst.” Jesus never came out directly with, “I am the Messiah,” rather, he made statements, or posed questions, such as to Peter in Mark’s gospel, “Who do you say I am?”

made a person come to their own conclusion.

The Scribe summarizes the Old Testament beliefs on the Messiah. The students are not asked, at this point, whether they think Jesus is the Messiah; rather, they are asked whether they think the Scribe is leaning in that direction. Toward the end of the course the question will be posed to them.

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from sources noted)

Isaiah’s Prophecy

Isaiah speaks of the anointing of Christ by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of the Lord descended upon Jesus ast His baptism (3:22) Jesus will bring blessings long awaited by the Jewish people, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah. (OSB footnote to Luke 4:18)

Peter’s Speech--Acts 2:22-39

Peter’s listeners are cut to the heart because they understand what he is saying. Almost half of Peter’s message is the quotation of OT Scriptures promising the Messiah. The evidence that Jesus Christ is Lord is overwhelming to them. (OSB footnote to Acts 2:37).

Jesus, One of Their Own

They marveled at His words, but could not believe that Jesus, a fellow villager, could be the Messiah. (OSB footnote to Luke 4:18).

Issue 5

Lesson Quickview

OPENING: [Need: New worksheet for Opening and Closing Prayers. Bible, marked at Isaiah 2:1-3] Students will find and mark opening and closing prayers as they wait for the class to begin.

INTRODUCTION: Review a few of the questions from the exam.

CONTENT MASTERY: [Need: Unit 1 exams, highlighters, Issue 5; “Issue 5 Recap,” copies of “The Orthodox World,”] ---Ahead of time, look at the “Recap” worksheet and highlight your copy of Issue 5 according to what the students will need to know.

Lesson Reinforcement: “Recap of the News” fill in the blanks, and “Compare/Contrast” Jesus with the Messiah.

The Orthodox World: Our Lord

Moral/Faith Question: none

STUDY GUIDE PAGE: Optional. The answers to the questions are found in the lesson objective.

CLOSING: [Need: Bible marked at Matthew 7:13-14].

RELEVANT SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES:

Jesus in the synagogue, Matthew 4:16-30.

Saul, 1 Samuel 9-11 (Samuel is also referred to as Kings)

Elisha, 2 Samuel 2:19-25

Aaron, Numbers 17:1-10

Cyrus of Persia, Isaiah 44:28-45:1

David, 1 Samuel 16:1-13,

1 Samuel 17, many others
Lesson Plan

Opening
[Students should be ready to read along. Have one student read aloud, beginning with: “A reading from the book of _____ chapter ___, verses ___ through ___.”] Let’s gather around the icon corner and stand to hear a reading from the Bible.

Introduction
[If you have chosen to do the Study Guides and exams:] How many of you studied for the exam with your parents? Please open your notebooks so I can see their initials. [Review notebook pages.] If you miss any questions, you will have a chance to take a make-up exam. [Look over the exam questions qand review any that you think might be problematic. Then pass out exams. You may have the students check each others, or you may wish to do this after class. The students may miss four questions and still pass.]

[If not having exam:] To begin class, I want you to think about what Jesus did while he was on earth—tell me your favorite stories about Jesus. [Allow responses. As the students share, note the verbs (i.e., preached, healed, etc.) on the board.]

Content Mastery
[Pass out Issue 5, and highlighters. Read page aloud.]

Lesson Reinforcement: Let’s see how well you recall what we’ve read. You may work as individuals or pairs, and can refer back to your reading. [Answers to Recap: Jesus read a passage from Isaiah that clearly refers to the Messiah: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because He has appointed me to preach the gospel to the poor: He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and of sight to the blind . . .” Then he told the people, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” In other words, Jesus claimed to be the Messiah! Jesus said that he was the one, the Messiah, that the prophet spoke of. The word ‘messiah’ simply means ‘anointed.’ The greatest anointed one was King David. David was a shepherd. The Israelites knew another Son of David would come. He would be good and strong. He would care for the people and teach them the ways of the Lord. He would return glory and greatness to Israel.

Compare and Contrast. [Work on this as a class. Students may answer the final question with their own opinion.]

The Orthodox World [Read together.]

Moral/Faith Issue: none.

The Scribe: Record-Keeping: Students should record “Jesus” and “the Messiah.”

Study Guide Page
[Optional.] Make sure to check answers.

Closing
[Gather at the icon corner. Have students follow along as one reads aloud.]
Finding Bible Passages

It's important to know how to find a Bible passage. Let's look at how it's done. Here is a Bible reference: MARK 3:1–5. This tells us that we are looking for the Book of Mark, chapter 3, verses 1 through 5.

Use the Table of Contents to turn to the right page. There may be a separate listing for the books of the Old Testament, and the books of the New Testament. After you find the book, use the chapter and verse numbers in the heading to find the exact page. Then you're ready to find the chapter number, and then the verse number. Don't be confused by footnote and cross-reference numbers and symbols.

When it is your turn to read, introduce the passage with "A reading from the book of __________, chapter ____, verses ____ through ____.”

Write the first three words of each passage...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Opening Reading</th>
<th>Closing Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Isaiah 2:1-3</td>
<td>Matthew 7:13-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Isaiah 65:17-25</td>
<td>Matthew 6:31-34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Psalms 65:7-10</td>
<td>Matthew 8:23-37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Exodus 16:12-15</td>
<td>Matthew 14:15-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Isaiah 29:13</td>
<td>Mark 7:5-7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Scribe
Unit 1 Exam

Section A. True or False? Circle T or F.

T  F   1. The first commandment is: Thou shall not worship any deities but God.

T  F   2. One of the commandments is: Thou shall not talk about God.

T  F   3. One of the commandments is: Thou shall keep the Sabbath.

T  F   4. Jesus made the Ten Commandments more strict.

T  F   5. The citation Mark 3:1-12 is said as: “the book of Mark, verse 3, chapters 1-12.”

Section B. Matching. The phrases in the column I are completed in column II. Write the letter of the phrase that completes each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column I</th>
<th>Column II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6. _____ The covenant</td>
<td>a. is the largest body of Christ’s teachings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. _____ The Sermon on the Mount</td>
<td>b. is a gift from God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. _____ The Scribe said the Law</td>
<td>d. is the agreement between God and the Israelites.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section C. Short answer using complete sentences.

9. What did God reply when Moses asked for his name?

___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________

10. In Orthodox icons of Jesus Christ, where do we see this name? (The name referred to in #10 above.)
11. What are the words of the citation John 4:26? 
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________.

Section D. Multiple choice. Circle the one correct response.

12. Moses receiving the Law on Mt. Sinai is a type of . . .
   a. Jesus calming the storm
   b. Peter, James, and John with Jesus on Mt. Tabor
   c. Jesus and the Sermon on the Mount
   d. Mary and the cave in which Jesus was born

13. Elijah is seen as a type of . . .
   a. John the Baptist
   b. St. Paul
   c. the Good Samaritan
   d. St. John the Evangelist

Section E. Fill in the blanks.

14. The __________________________ of the Bible contains the __________________________ and __________________________ of the Jewish people until the time of __________________________.

15. The __________________________ of the Bible contains the ________________ and ________________ of Jesus and ________________ through the first century.
Section A. True or False? Circle T or F.

X F 1. The first commandment is: Thou shall not worship any deities but God.
T X 2. One of the commandments is: Thou shall not talk about God.
X F 3. One of the commandments is: Thou shall keep the Sabbath.
X F 4. Jesus made many of the Ten Commandments more strict.
T X 5. The citation Mark 3:1-12 is said as: “the book of Mark, verse 3, chapters 1-12.”

Section B. Matching. The phrases in the column I are completed in column II. Write the letter of the phrase that completes each statement.

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</table>

Section C. Short answer using complete sentences.

9. What did God reply when Moses asked for his name?

God replied, “I AM WHO AM.”

10. In Orthodox icons of Jesus Christ, where do we see God’s name? (The name referred to in #9 above.)

In Orthodox icons we see God’s name in the halo of Jesus.
11. What are the words of the citation John 4:26?

**Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am He.”**

Section D. Multiple choice. Circle the one correct response.

12. Moses receiving the Law on Mt. Sinai is a type of . . .

a. Jesus calming the storm

b. Peter, James, and John with Jesus on Mt. Tabor

X Jesus and the Sermon on the Mount

d. Mary and the cave in which Jesus was born

13. Elijah is seen as a type of . . .

X John the Baptist

b. St. Paul

c. the Good Samaritan

d. St. John the Evangelist

Section E. Fill in the blanks.

14. The **Old Testament** of the Bible contains the **history** and **wisdom** of the Jewish people until the time of **Jesus**.

15. The **New Testament** of the Bible contains the **life** and **words** of Jesus and **his followers** through the first century.
Jesus’ Outlandish Claim
& “Let us consider what we know of the Messiah . . .”

Jesus read a passage from Isaiah that clearly refers to the Messiah: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because He has appointed me to ______ the gospel to the poor; He has sent me to ______ the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and of sight to the blind . . .” Then he told the people, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” In other words, Jesus claimed to be the Messiah!

Jesus said that he was the one, the Messiah, that the ____________ spoke of. The word ‘messiah’ simply means ________________. The greatest anointed one was King David. David was a shepherd. The Israelites knew another Son of David would come. He would be good and strong. He would care for the people and teach them the ways of the Lord. He would return glory and greatness to Israel.

Compare and Contrast

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jesus</th>
<th>Messiah</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

At this time would you say the Scribe thinks Jesus is the Messiah? Why, why not?
Our Lord

Only a few centuries ago, in many countries, the ruler, or lord, was the one whom you served, and the one held power to let you live or die.

At our baptism, we accept Jesus as our Lord. We recognize that our whole life depends on him. In the photo, a child is being tonsured as part of the baptism. The cutting of the hair symbolizes obedience and sacrifice—that with our baptism we know that we must obey Christ’s teachings, even when sacrifice is required. This means we can’t go along with the crowd in every circumstance.

To enter the Kingdom of God, Christ taught that we must “enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction” (Matthew 7:13).

Liturgical Link

“Lord, have mercy”

“Enter through the ________ ___________ that leads to life.”
Jesus’ Outlandish Claim
& “Let us consider what we know of the Messiah . . .”

Answer in complete sentences.

1. In regard to the prophecy of Isaiah, what are two acts of Jesus that fulfilled it?

__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

2. What does the word “messiah” mean, and why does it apply to Israel’s kings?

__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

3. Fill in the blanks:

“Enter through the ____________________  ___________________ that leads to life.”
**Jesus Teaches on “Kingdom of God” & “Let us consider what we know of the Messiah’s kingdom . . .”**

Objective: The students will be able to answer correctly, 1) What are two Old Testament beliefs about the kingdom? (The kingdom will be a transformation of life as we know it now. We will not have to seek it; it will just happen.), 2) What are two points Jesus made in regard to the kingdom? (The kingdom should have top priority in our lives, and we should be pro-active in seeking it.), and 3) What are the four marks of the Church? (One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic).

---

**For the Catechist**

Jesus’ teachings on the Kingdom of God are central to his message, see Matthew 13. Jesus came to establish the everlasting Kingdom. He taught us to “seek first the Kingdom,” that if we find the Kingdom, like the pearl of great price, we should sell all else to obtain it. He taught that the kingdom is like a marriage feast, and that we must prepare ourselves rightly for it. He taught that the kingdom is like a vineyard that was taken away from those originally intended, since they were unworthy of it. Clearly, Jesus wanted his listeners to learn about the kingdom.

Key to understanding why many Jews did not grasp Jesus’ teaching is the Roman occupation of Jerusalem. They believed that God’s people were not to be oppressed, and they expected a son of King David, a military leader, to be the Messiah.

Jesus’ task was to make them see that the kingdom would not be a “given,” for the Jews, but rather that Messiah had been sent to inaugurate a spiritually-based kingdom. The Jews needed to so radically change their expectations that Jesus aptly used the phrase, “you must be born again.” Most significantly, they had forgotten the words of the Prophet Isaiah that they were to be the “light” to the nations, that salvation may be offered to all through them (cf. for example, Isaiah 49:6).

Four Marks of the Church. The four marks of the Church are found in the Nicene Creed. The students may need to think about two of them, catholic and apostolic. Catholic is often defined as “universal,” and is associated with the Roman Catholic Church. However, its truest meaning is “all-encompassing,” lacking in nothing; in the early Church documents both “orthodox,” (“right worship”), and “catholic” were used in reference to the Church. The second, “apostolic,” means that we trace our history to the apostles, but equally important is the idea that the Church today is apostolic. So vital is “apostolic” to the life of the Church that a parish without a missionary outreach is dead.

The Church’s four marks depend on Christ for validity. The Church is the door to the Kingdom of God; however, as we live in a fallen world, leaders of the Church are not perfect, and we will not know the perfect Kingdom of God until the end of the world.

---

**Background Reading**

(Direct quotations from sources noted)

**Blessed is the Kingdom**

To bless the Kingdom of God means to love it as one’s most precious possession. The response of the people to the proclamation of blessing by the priest is with the word “Amen,” which means “so be it.” This is the solemn affirmation that indeed the blessing of God’s Kingdom is fitting and proper. It is the official confirmation that this Kingdom is indeed the “pearl of great price” for the faithful, which once having found it, they will love it and serve it and desire to have it forever (Luke 13:14). (Hopko, *Worship*, 162)

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**RELEVANT SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES:**

An Old Testament prophecy about the Kingdom, Isaiah 65:17-25.

Jesus Teaching about the Kingdom, Matthew 6:31-34.
Lesson Plan

Opening
[Students should be ready to read along. Instruct students to keep their Bible open after the opening prayer for a discussion when they return to their seats. Have one student read aloud, beginning with: “A reading from the book of _____ chapter ___, verses ___ through ___.”] Let’s gather around the icon corner and stand to hear a reading from the Bible.

Introduction
[Pass out and/or go over exams.] Our opening reading from the prophet Isaiah contains thoughts about the Kingdom of God. What are some of the ideas he mentions? [Record on board.] We usually think of the Kingdom as heaven. Does this sound like heaven to you? Why, or why not?

Content Mastery
[Pass out Issue 6, and highlighters. Read page aloud.]

Lesson Reinforcement: Let’s see how well you recall what we’ve read. You may work as individuals or pairs, and can refer back to your reading. [Answers to Recap:

Jesus of Nazareth has referred to the Kingdom often. He says that the Kingdom should be the most important thing for every person. He has said, “seek first the Kingdom of God.” The Kingdom is not easy to attain.

The Messiah will be a kingly figure, a royal shepherd, a son of David. He will teach us and rule justly. He will lead the world in procession to Mt. Zion--the kingdom of God. On Mt. Zion there will be a great feast. The lion will lie down with the lamb. Death will be no more.

Compare and Contrast. [Work on this as a class. The difference in the point of view between Jesus’ words and the Old Testament prophecy should become apparent. In Jesus’ words we see a directive--the kingdom should have top priority in our lives, and we should be pro-active in seeking it. The conclusion is that it is a reality even at the present time. In the Old Testament prophecy, the kingdom is a transformation of life as we know it. It will take place at the end of the world. Consequently, it cannot be sought after, or attained. It does not need to be a priority. It is simply “to happen.”

Students may answer the final question with their own opinion.]

Bible Skills: Concordance [Need: Orthodox Study Bibles, or separate Concordance books. Read and complete together.]

The Orthodox World [Read together.]

Moral/Faith Issue: none.

The Scribe: Record-Keeping: Students should record “Jesus’ teaching on Kingdom, and” and “the OT prophecy of Kingdom”

Study Guide Page
[Optional. Make sure to check answers.]

Closing
[Gather at the icon corner. Have students follow along as one reads aloud.]
Jesus of Nazareth has referred to the Kingdom often. He says that the Kingdom should be the ______ ________________ thing for every person. He has said, “______ __________the Kingdom of God.” The ________________ is not easy to attain.

The Messiah will be a ____________ figure, a royal ________________, a son of _______________. He will teach us and rule justly. He will lead the ________ in procession to Mt. Zion--the kingdom of God. On Mt. Zion there will be a great _____________. The lion will lie down with the lamb. ____________ will be no more.

**Compare and Contrast**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jesus’ teaching on Kingdom</th>
<th>OT prophecy of Kingdom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Are there more points in common, or different, in the two views of the Kingdom of God. What do you make of it?
Finding a Word or Phrase

Jesus spoke about the Kingdom of God, but was it really all that important to him and those he taught?

One way to find out is to count how many times the word “kingdom” is used in the Bible. To do this without looking at every page, you can use a concordance. There is a concordance at the end of the Orthodox Study Bible.

The concordance offers a word followed by phrases that contain the word. After the “.” is the citation for finding that passage.

Look under “KINGDOM,” then:

“you shall be to Me a . . . Ex. 19:6.”

Where does the word “kingdom” fall in the phrase?

The citation is the book of Exodus, the second book of the Bible. In a concordance, the citations are listed in the order their books appear in the Bible, hence, Old Testament first, then New Testament.

A concordance is like Google, without the electronics. It can help you find the information you need. What is a teaching of Jesus you recall? Pinpoint the keywords, then use the concordance to see if you can find the phrase.
The Kingdom and the Church

Jesus came to establish the kingdom of God. In the kingdom, God and humankind are reunited, and the damage of Adam’s sin is repaired. To establish the kingdom, he chose twelve of his followers, and entrusted to them his teachings, and his Body and Blood. They were to come together to pray, and to consecrate the bread and wine. He was in their presence, when they did so.

The Church is the result of the work of the twelve. We say that the Church has four marks:

1) The Church is “One.” We are one Orthodox Church, unbroken, undivided.

2) The Church is “Holy.” We are set apart for God, which is what the word “holy” means. Everyone in the Church is not perfect, but because God is present in the Church, the Church is Holy.

3) We are “Catholic,” according to the meaning of the word. “Catholic” means whole, complete, lacking nothing. We have the whole faith, from Christ himself.

4) We are “Apostolic.” We are connected to the apostles, and we are to continue their work. Like the twelve, we are sent to preach the good news.

Some people think they can be a Christian without the Church. How can that be? It was Jesus’ desire to establish the kingdom--there is no such thing as a kingdom of one. He wanted us to live together--to share, forgive, celebrate--in community. When we have Holy Communion, we are in communion with God, and one another.

It is good to live in the kingdom!
Jesus Teaches on “Kingdom of God”
& “Let us consider what we know of the Messiah’s kingdom . . .”

Answer in complete sentences.

1. What are two Old Testament beliefs about the Kingdom?

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

2. What are two points Jesus made in regard to the Kingdom?

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________
**For the Catechist**

Many of Jesus’ miracles involve healings. In these we may find compassion of our God, for human suffering. In the miracle of the calming of the sea, compassion does not seem to be a factor. The disciples come away from the miracle with the question, “Who can this be, who calms the storm,” which eventually will lead them and the early Church to realize that Jesus was God incarnate. All the miracles, and especially those involving nature, are to grasp the attention of those in attendance, for the primary purpose of imparting knowledge of the Kingdom of God—clarifying what his listeners had come to believe about the Kingdom. Salvation is what Jesus came to give, more than compassion, more than amazing shows of power.

The students are asked to think about a frightening event. It is always interesting to learn what these events are. Immersed in physical reality as we are, loss of life, and suffering seem to be the most frightening events we can think of. Yet, loss of our eternal life is greater. Nothing is more important than our salvation. In times of distress, and terror, Jesus is still with us. If it seems appropriate, have the students close their eyes and imagine a frightening situation. Ask them then to look next to themselves, and see Jesus. Nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, Romans 8:35-39.

**Background Reading**

(Direct quotations from sources noted)

**Jesus Power over the Storm**

Jesus’ mastery over creation is another powerful sign that He is the Messiah and is divine. Commands to the sea and waves (v. 24) cannot be issued by a mere human being, but only by God (Job 38:8-11; Ps. 65:5-8; 107:29). Jesus was asleep because He was truly fatigued and needed the rest. For in His Incarnation He assumed all the natural and blameless passions of humanity, of which sleep is one. His inactivity intensified the disciples’ fear, giving this miracle a greater impact. The image of Christ and the disciples in a boat is traditionally used to depict the Lord and His Church. God permits storms, and delivers us from them, so that we can see His blessings and protection more clearly. Jesus, rebuking the storm, reminds us that He puts an end to the tempest of our souls. (OSB footnote to Matthew 8:23-27).

**Adverse Circumstances**

St. John Chrysostom sees a purpose behind the miracle. The Lord, he believes, is preparing His disciples for the dangerous trials they will face; He is assuring them of his power to protect them. . . (Archbishop Dimitri, The Miracles of Christ, 130.)

. . . We often think that people around us, even unbelievers, enjoy a far more peaceful and unperturbed life. But Christians must have faith that adverse circumstances can be trials from the Lord that strengthen our faith and increase our dependence on Him and His powers. We must not complain that following Christ brings no earthly rewards or perceptible benefit. Rather, in everything that happens to us, if we have committed ourselves to Him and belong to Him, we must, as St. Paul says, “understand what the will of the Lord is” (Ephesians 5:17) ((Archbishop Dimitri, The Miracles of Christ, 131-2.)

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**Lesson Quickview**

**OPENING:** [Need: Bible, marked at Psalms 65:7-10] Students will find and mark opening and closing prayers as they wait for the class to begin.

**INTRODUCTION:** What is your idea of a frightening event?

**CONTENT MASTERY:** [Need: highlighters. Issue 7; “Issue 7 Recap,” copies of “The Orthodox World,” inspirational handout for notebooks, “Nothing can separate us from the love of God.” ---Ahead of time, look at the “Recap” worksheet and highlight your copy of Issue 7 according to what the students will need to know.

**Lesson Reinforcement:** “Recap of the News” matching, and “Compare/Contrast Jesus’ calming of the sea, and God’s authority over nature.

**The Orthodox World:** Natural Disasters, Why?

**Moral/Faith Question:** Are we obligated to help out victims of natural disasters?

**STUDY GUIDE PAGE:** Optional. The answers to the questions are found in the lesson objective.

**CLOSING:** [Need: Bible marked at Matthew 8:23-37].

**RELEVANT SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES:**

Calming of the Sea, Matthew 8:23-27

Let us consider the signs: Ps 65:7, 89:9, 107:29; and 22:22 and Isaiah 49:7
Lesson Plan

Opening
[Students should be ready to read along. Have one student read aloud, beginning with: “A reading from the book of _____ chapter ___, verses ____ through ____.”] Let’s gather around the icon corner and stand to hear a reading from the Bible.

Introduction
What is a scary situation? [List replies on board. After a few are listed, ask how each compares to a large storm, an earthquake, a flood, for example, “Is a car wreck worse than a bad storm? An earthquake . . . etc.”] How did most of Jesus’ disciples make their living? (They were fishermen.) They knew the sea pretty well, but nothing prepared them for the story we are about to read.

Content Mastery
[Pass out Issue 7, and highlighters. Read page aloud.]

Lesson Reinforcement: Let’s see how well you recall what we’ve read. You may work as individuals or pairs, and can refer back to your reading. [Answers to Recap: 1. d; 2. b; 3. g; 4. c; 5. a; 6. f; 7e.]

Compare and Contrast. [Work on this as a class. Students may answer the final question with their own opinion.]

The Orthodox World [Read together.]

Moral/Faith Issue: Are we obligated to help out after a natural disaster?

The Scribe: Record-Keeping: Students should record “God’s authority over nature,” and “Jesus’ calming of the sea.”

Study Guide Page
[Optional. Make sure to check answers.]

Closing
[You may wish to ask if a student would bring in any information from the internet in regard to the IOCC. Gather at the icon corner. Have students follow along as one reads aloud.]
Recap of the News
Write the letter of the phrase that completes the sentence.

**Boat Trip Nearly a Disaster & “Let us consider the signs . . .”**

1. Jesus and the disciples were crossing the sea ___
2. Jesus slept through the storm; when they woke him, ___
3. Then he spoke to the storm and told it to be quiet; ___
4. The Scriptures tell us many things about our salvation ___
5. Jesus strange power over the sea reminded the Scribe of how the Psalms describe ___
6. In particular, “He calms the storm, so that ___
7. “Then they are glad because they are quiet; ___

   a. God's power over the sea.
   b. he asked why they were afraid.
   c. and signs that will accompany the Messiah.
   d. when a sudden, fierce storm came up.
   e. so He guides them to their desired haven.”
   f. its waves are still.
   g. it stopped dead.

**Compare and Contrast**

**God’s authority over nature**

**Jesus’ calming the sea**

**In the Scribe’s view, did Jesus show, without a doubt, that he is the Messiah?**
Natural Disasters, Why?

At the time of a natural disaster, many wonder why so many had to die, and why so much destruction. The answer is in the first pages of the Bible.

In the book of Genesis we learn that God created a wonderful world. He created man and woman, and placed them in charge with the words, “Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the cattle and all the animals that crawl on the earth” (Genesis 1:28).

Adam had all that anyone could ask for, with one exception. God forbade Adam to eat the fruit of one of the trees, “but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you must not eat; for the day you eat of it, you must die” (Genesis 2:17).

If Adam had set his gaze on all that he had been given, he would have had an overwhelming sense of gratitude. He might not have even thought about the forbidden fruit.

Adam was not grateful. Instead, he ate of the forbidden tree. From that moment, evil entered the world. Evil came into the world through a man. Nature, created for man’s pleasure, now had the ability to cause destruction and death.

Because of Adam’s choice, we have natural disasters.

Evil did not totally take over. We still can see the imprint of God in the world. There is still beauty and goodness. We need to focus on the good and be thankful.

A person who has lost all in a natural disaster might wonder if God exists. Our God has the ability to bring good from evil. Jesus Christ showed us that when He rose from the dead. True, we have inherited a world with evil. However, we have also inherited God’s Holy Spirit. We have hands to help, and hearts to love. God’s love heals.

Are we obligated to help out victims of natural disasters?

The organization, “International Orthodox Christian Charities,” (IOCC) aids disaster victims.

Photo: Nias, Indonesia, after tsunami. Courtesy of IOCC.
For I am persuaded that neither death
nor life, nor angels nor principalities
nor powers, nor things present
nor things to come, nor height nor depth,
nor any other created thing,
shall be able to separate us from the love of God
which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

St. Paul in the Epistle to the Romans (8:37-39)

In the world you will have tribulation; but take
courage, I have overcome the world.

Jesus in the Gospel of St. John (16:33)
Boat Trip Nearly a Disaster & “Let us consider the signs. . .”

Answer in complete sentences.

1. Why did Jesus’ calming of the storm make the Scribe think of God?

__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

2. What is the name of the international Orthodox organization that aids disaster victims?

__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
For the Catechist

When Pharaoh finally agreed to let the Israelites leave Egypt, there was no time to pack provisions. After they had crossed the Red Sea, they found themselves in the wilderness without food or drink. They complained to Moses, and the Lord responded, as quoted below

Exodus 16:11-15. And the Lord said to Moses, “I have heard the murmurings of the people of Israel; say to them, ‘At twilight you shall eat flesh, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread; then you shall know that I am the Lord your God.’"

In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning dew lay round about the camp. And when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flake-like thing, fine as hoarfrost on the ground. When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, “It is the bread which the Lord has given you to eat.”

Exodus 16:31. Now the house of Israel called its name manna; it was like coriander seed, white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey.

The term “manna,” comes from the expression, “What is it?” God continued to feed his people with the manna during the 40 years in the wilderness.

Thankfulness/Eucharist. It is imperative that our students become people of “thanks-giving.” As noted in Issue 7, The Orthodox World, Adam’s sin can be understood as being “not thankful.” Jesus gave thanks (blessed) the loaves. We give thanks “eucharist” during the Divine Liturgy. To give thanks, especially to celebrate Eucharist, is to continue to overturn the sin of Adam, begun by Jesus.

Background Reading
(Direct quotations from sources noted)

The Feeding, and Eucharist
The miracle of the feeding of the five thousand, reported by all four evangelists, shows Jesus feeding His people as God fed the Israelites in the desert. The Church Fathers see in this an image of the Eucharist, an idea also expressed in John 6, the discourse on the Bread of Life. (OSB, footnote to Matthew 14:14-21)

Faith to Share
Someone—“a lad,” according to St. John—had brought five loaves and two fishes. His willingness to share so little says a great deal about the atmosphere of faith and love that the Lord’s presence brought. It also teaches us to share even when there is no abundance. Sometimes we are willing to share only when we have too much for ourselves. (Archbishop Dimitri, The Miracles of Christ, 34).

Five Loaves
... We have always used five loaves in the eucharist, which is, of course, the means by which every generation of Christians has been miraculously fed, spiritually nourished. The fish became a secret sign, the drawing of which was a means for Christians to identify themselves to one another in the early days of the Church. (Archbishop Dimitri, The Miracles of Christ, 34).

Objectives: The students will be able to 1) Compare and contrast Moses and the manna from heaven with Jesus feeding the multitudes. (In both cases people were in a “wilderness” and hungry. Moses and Jesus both prayed. Moses didn’t have anything to feed them with. Jesus had a few loaves and fishes. In both cases the people ate until they were full.) 2) answer correctly, “What does the word, “Eucharist,” mean? (Thanksgiving).
Lesson Plan

Opening
[Students should be ready to read along. Have one student read aloud, beginning with:
“A reading from the book of _____ chapter ___, verses ___ through ____.”] Let’s gather around the icon corner and stand to hear a reading from the Bible.

Introduction
[Review Study Guides for Issues 5-7.] A few weeks ago we learned about the concordance. Turn to the handout from that lesson and glance over it. Use your concordance, and find the word, “bread.” [Choose a few entries from Psalms to look up.] Bread is important in the life of the Israelites, and is the subject of today’s issue.

Content Mastery
[Pass out Issue 8, and highlighters. Read page aloud.]

Lesson Reinforcement: Let’s see how well you recall what we’ve read. You may work as individuals or pairs, and can refer back to your reading. [Answers to Recap:
A crowd of thousands had followed Jesus to a lonely spot on the shore. At the end of the day, many were hungry but there was no place to buy bread. Jesus took a few loaves of bread, and some fish, lifted them in prayer, and handed the bread to his disciples. They gave bread to all the people. No one knew where the bread kept coming from.

After the Israelites crossed the Red Sea, they were in a wilderness with nothing to eat. Moses prayed to God to feed the multitude. The Lord told Moses: “I will rain bread (manna) down from heaven.” The Holy Scriptures show that with God there are feasts in the desert. In feeding the crowds Jesus showed himself to have power and compassion; perhaps God has once again sent the bread of heaven.

Compare and Contrast. [Work on this as a class. Students may answer the final question with their own opinion.]

The Orthodox World [Read together.]

Moral/Faith Issue: none.

The Scribe: Record-Keeping: Students should record “Moses and the manna in the wilderness,” and “Jesus feeding thousands.”

Study Guide Page
[Optional. Make sure to check answers.]

Closing
[Gather at the icon corner. Have students follow along as one reads aloud.]
Jesus Provides Bread for Thousands & “Let us recall the heavenly manna . . .”

A crowd of __________ had followed Jesus to a lonely spot on the shore. At the end of the day, many were hungry but there was no place to ____ _____.

Jesus took a few loaves of bread, and some fish, __________ __________ __________, and handed the bread to his disciples. They gave bread to all the people. No one knew where the bread ______ coming from.

After the Israelites crossed the Red Sea, they were in a ___________ ___ with nothing to eat. Moses ________ to God to feed the multitude. The Lord told Moses: “I will rain bread (manna) down from heaven.” The Holy Scriptures show that with God there are feasts in the desert. In ____________ the crowds Jesus showed himself to have power and compassion; perhaps God has once again sent the bread ______ heaven.

Compare and Contrast

Moses and the manna in the wilderness  Jesus feeding thousands

Did the Scribe make a case for Jesus’ fulfilling the feeding of the Israelites in the wilderness?
At the end of his ministry, Jesus told the parable known as "The Sheep and the Goats." Absolutely everything that Jesus taught is important, but this parable is especially so. Using the metaphor of sheep and goats, Jesus revealed what was at the top of God's list for getting into heaven (Matthew 25).

In brief, we are to care for those who are sick, hungry, in prison, thirsty, etc. We are to not give to them just enough to get by, but rather, treat them as if each one were Christ himself.

In countries at war, the IOCC workers risk their lives to care for the victims. In places where poverty appears to be the only future for the children, IOCC brings tools, education, and hope. God's Everyday, IOCC helps people move from desperate circumstances. In Russia, Romania, the Republic of Georgia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, IOCC is providing loans for small businesses, tractors and seeds for farmers, and empowering communities through capacity building with local organizations. In the Holy Land, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, and Ethiopia, IOCC provides job skills training and job creation, school building and repair, child nutrition programs, educational training, and HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

Be thankful to God for what you have, and more so, for the opportunity to help others. Work in your community to feed the hungry and care for those in need. Support the efforts of the IOCC, receive their newsletter, and stay in touch with what the Orthodox are doing to care for those in need around the world.

When Jesus lifted the loaves to heaven, he gave thanks to God. In Greek, the word for thanksgiving is "eucharist."
Jesus Provides Bread for Thousands & “Let us recall the heavenly manna”

Answer in complete sentences.

1. Compare and contrast the Moses and the manna from heaven with Jesus feeding the multitudes.

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

2. What does the word, “Eucharist,” mean?

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________
Jesus Makes an Odd Path to Gennesaret, & “Jesus: Bread of Heaven?”

Objectives: The students will discuss bread, and be able to 1) answer correctly, “What is the part of the Divine Liturgy during which the priest prepares the bread and wine? (Prothesis, The Service of Proskomide, or the Service of Preparation), 2) Explain the phrase, “Yours of your own.” The phrase means, “You have given us all things, even the wheat to make this bread; we can offer nothing to you except what you have first given us.”

For the Catechist

Jesus was always leading people to look through the physical world to understand spiritual realities, and never more so than in these “hard saying” (John 6:60) verses that teach us that we must partake of the Body and Blood of Jesus. Two thousand years later, the material world is as much, if not more so, our preoccupation.

Those who have been raised to understand Holy Communion as the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ most likely do not understand how vile this sounded to the Jews of His time.

There is no Old Testament corollary to this teaching (hence we do not offer an Opening Reading from the Old Testament). Jesus’ point of departure is the miracle of the manna during the Exodus.

John 6:32-33. Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

John 6:51. “I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.”

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from sources noted)

Many Left Him

In response to the Jews’ question, “How can this man give us His flesh to eat?” Jesus utters His “hard saying”: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you.” It was because of this that “many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him. The Fathers (such as St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lectures 22, nos. 1-4) consistently understand His saying here as referring not only to complete faith and trust in Him but also to the holy Eucharist (Archbishop Dimitri, The Miracles of Christ, 31-32).

The Body and Blood

His words are clear: To receive everlasting life, we must partake of His eucharistic flesh and blood. St. John Chrysostom (Homily 47:2) teaches we must not understand the sacrament carnally, that is, according to the laws of physical nature, but spiritually, perceiving a true byt mystical presence of Christ in the Eucharist (OSB footnote to John 6:53).

Orthodox theology teaches that in the Eucharist we partake not simply of the physical/material, but of the deified and glorified Body and Blood of Christ which give resurrection life (OSB footnote to John 6:54-55).

Yours of Your Own

As the celebrant intones these words, which proclaim that all that is offered to the Father is already His—for every creature and all of creation are His, together with the Beloved Son and the Holy Spirit who are uncreated and divine—the eucharistic gifts are lifted up towards the heavens. It is the sign that the faithful Christians have been exalted together with their Lord into the Kingdom of God (Hopko, Worship, 185).

RELEVANT SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES:

Jesus walks on water, Matthew 14:22-33

Jesus met by crowd, John 6:26-40
Lesson Plan

Opening
[Students should be ready to read along. Instruct students to keep their Bible open after the opening prayer for a discussion when they return to their seats. Have one student read aloud, beginning with: “A reading from the book of _____ chapter ___, verses ___ through ____.”] Let’s gather around the icon corner and stand to hear a reading from the Bible.

Introduction
In two weeks we’ll have an exam. Let’s start preparing today. [Go over questions from the study guides, issues 5-8, with the students. This class will serve as the primary review session before the exam.] Today’s issue reports a story that happened just after the headline of the previous issue, “Jesus Provides Bread for Thousands.”

[Introduce that if you are not doing the Study Guides, bring in a loaf of bread, and ask the students for words they associate with bread. This will prepare them for the The Orthodox World article on “The Bread of Life.”]

Content Mastery
[Pass out Issue 9, and highlighters. Read page aloud.]

Lesson Reinforcement: Let’s see how well you recall what we’ve read. You may work as individuals or pairs, and can refer back to your reading. [Answers to Recap: 1. e; 2. a; 3. c; 4. b; 5. d; 6. g; 7. h; 8. j; 9. i.]

Compare and Contrast. [Work on this as a class. Students may answer the final question with their own opinion.]

The Orthodox World [Read together.]

Moral/Faith Issue: none.

The Scribe: Record-Keeping: Students should record “Manna” and “Jesus—Bread of Heaven.”

Study Guide Page
[Optional. Make sure to check answers.]

Closing
[Gather at the icon corner. Have students follow along as one reads aloud.]
Recap of the News
Write the letter of the phrase that completes the sentence.

**Jesus Makes an Odd Path to Gennesaret and “Jesus: Bread of Heaven?”**

1. The disciples were in the boat when they saw Jesus _____
2. When he got into the boat _____
3. When they arrived in Gennesaret a crowd met Jesus _____
4. Jesus told the crowd that met him on the shore that they should be looking for _____
5. He claimed that he could raise to heaven _____
6. What are we to make of this man, Jesus, who _____
7. Then, he leads us into a wall by telling us we must _____
8. There is nothing in scripture _____
9. One thing is sure, _____

**Compare and Contrast**

**Manna**

**Jesus--Bread of Heaven**

*Is the Scribe leaning toward seeing Jesus action as similar to God providing manna in the desert?*
The Bread of Life

Jesus told those who were looking for another free meal, that they should be looking for the bread from heaven, which He said He was. In the Gospel of St. John, Jesus say clearly, “I am the Bread of Life,”

We respond to word, “bread,” in a way different than had Jesus said, “fig,” or “olive” or “cake.” Bread, whether doughnut shaped, flat, round or in sticks, has been the sustenance—the basic food—of all cultures. What is Jesus saying about himself?

During the Prothesis (also called the Service of Pros-

komide, or Service of Preparation), the priest prepares five loaves, either large or small, which represent the five loaves that He used to feed the multitudes. In most cases the bread is baked by parishioners.

When the priest says, “Yours of your own,” it means, “You have given us all things, even the wheat to make this bread; we can offer nothing to you except what you have first given us.”

Liturgical Link

“Yours of your own”
Jesus Makes an Odd Path to Gennesaret and “Jesus: Bread of Heaven?”

Answer in complete sentences.

1. What is the part of the Divine Liturgy during which the priest prepares the bread and wine?

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

2. Explain the phrase, “Yours of your own.”

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________
Jesus Debates Religious Leaders, and 
“Let us consider Jesus as a prophet . . .”

**Objectives:** The students will discuss, “What is a prophet.” They will be able to answer correctly: What is the Greatest Commandment? (You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. And you shall love your neighbor as yourself), and, “What was the primary task of the prophets?” (To call people back to God).

**For the Catechist**

It is said that the Israelites stood on two pillars—the Law, and the Prophets. The prophet was sent by God, to a certain person or group of people, to tell God’s words, which were typically intended to call people back to the covenant. Obedience to God was an important part of being one of God’s chosen people, as it is still.

No one likes to hear that they’ve gone astray. The life of a prophet was not easy, but the prophet knew he or she had to do what God asked. When the prophet, Amos, was called by God, he described his feelings as the fear one feels when a lion roars (Amos 3:8). We’ve studied two of the prophets, in the first issue of The Scribe.

The words and actions of the prophets could be harsh and loud in order to get the people to pay attention. However, their words could also be comforting, to let the people know that God still loved them very much; and so loves us today! Some of the prophets foretold the coming of the Messiah, who would establish the everlasting kingdom.

**Jesus is seen as a prophet.** As recorded in John 6:14 after the multiplication of the loaves, Jesus is compared to the Prophet Moses. Indeed, Jesus in His ministry took up many of the themes of the Old Testament prophets. He told what God would do in response to the unfaithfulness of the people (parable of the Vineyard, Mark 12), God’s forgiveness (parable of the Prodigal Son, Luke 15); but primarily Jesus took upon Himself the role of the prophet by calling people back to God. He saw Himself as fulfilling prophecy, Luke 4:18.

“Empty?” Worship. Those who do not understand the Divine Liturgy may come from Protestant churches where the service consists primarily of a sermon which asks the hearer to evaluate how well he or she is following Christ. The directness of the sermon’s message can appear “intelligent,” and Eastern worship “merely ritual.” Of course, they do not understand that true worship is giving glory to God, and is physical as well as mental.

**Background Reading**
(Direct quotations from sources noted)

The ultimate act of God’s mercy and compassion is His sending of His Son as the Messiah of Israel. Jesus, as we have seen, is the final King of God’s Kingdom which reigns forever. He is the great high priest Who brings completion and perfection to man’s priestly sacrifices to God. He is also the last and final Prophet Who ushers in the time when God creates a whole people of prophets, a whole assembly of those who are taught directly by God to know His Will and to speak His Words in the world. (Hopko, *Bible and Church History*, 104)

Jesus is “that prophet” whom Moses spoke about in the Old Law. (Deuteronomy 18:15).

. . . Jesus, as the final Prophet, is more than a prophet. He is radically different from the prophets of old. He is the “teacher come from God” (John 3:2), Who “speaks as one having authority” (Matthew 7:29, Mark 1:22), Who speaks not His own words, but the words of the Father Who sent Him. (John 14:24) . . . He is the Word of God (Hopko, *Bible and Church History*, 105).

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**Lesson Quickview**

**OPENING:** [Need: Bible, marked at Isaiah 29:13.] Students will find and mark opening and closing prayers as they wait for the class to begin.


**CONTENT MASTERY:** [Need: highlighters, Issue 10; “Issue 10 Recap,” copies of “The Orthodox World.”]---Ahead of time, look at the “Recap” worksheet and highlight your copy of Issue 10 according to what the students will need to know.

**Lesson Reinforcement:** “Recap of the News” matching, and “Compare/Contrast” The Prophets, and Jesus.

**The Orthodox World:** “Orthodoxy and “Empty?” Worship”

**Moral/Faith Question:** none

**STUDY GUIDE PAGE:** Optional. The answers to the questions are found in the lesson objective.

**CLOSING:** [Need: Bible marked at Mark 7:5-7].

**RELEVANT SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES:**

Jesus criticizes the Pharisees, Mark 7:1-23.

Jesus’ words recall, Isaiah 29:13, and Micah 6:8

Jesus thought to be a prophet, John 6:14, Matthew 21:46
Lesson Plan

Opening
[Students should be ready to read along. Have one student read aloud, beginning with: “A reading from the book of _____ chapter ___, verses ___ through ___.”] Let’s gather around the icon corner and stand to hear a reading from the Bible.

Introduction
[If you have chosen to do the Study Guides and exams:] Next week we’ll have an exam which will use only the questions from the Study Guides. You are to take home your notebooks this week. Have your parents quiz you using the Guides, and initial on the top of the page that they have helped you study. If you miss any questions, you will have a chance to take a make-up exam. [Go over questions from the study guide, Issue 9 and questions they found difficult from the previous week’s review.]

We’ve learned already that the Israelites possessed God’s law, it was a gift from him, as part of his covenant with his people. It was the task of the priests and religious leaders, to keep the people faithful to the covenant. Some of the Israelites were very strict, and actually made more laws than those which God gave them. These people were the Pharisees. Jesus criticized the Pharisees which made the Scribe think of him as a prophet. What do you think of when you hear the word “prophet?” [Allow a few responses, then pass out “The Law and The Prophets.” Read the handout together.]

Content Mastery
[Pass out Issue 10, and highlighters. Read page aloud.]

Lesson Reinforcement: Let’s see how well you recall what we’ve read. You may work as individuals or pairs, and can refer back to your reading. [Answers to Recap: 1. c; 2. e; 3. a; 4. b; 5. d.]

Compare and Contrast. [Work on this as a class. Students may answer the final question with their own opinion.]

The Orthodox World [Read together.]

[Yellow box answers: great, heart, soul, mind, strength, neighbor, yourself.]

Moral/Faith Issue: none.

The Scribe: Record-Keeping: Students should record “The Prophets” and “Jesus”

Study Guide Page
[Optional. Make sure to check answers.]

Closing
[Gather at the icon corner. Have students follow along as one reads aloud.]
**The Law and . . .**

It is said that the Israelites stood on two pillars—the Law, and the Prophets.

**Obedience to God was an important part of being in a covenant relationship with Him.**

The primary task of the prophet was to bring people back to God.

No one likes to hear that they’ve gone astray—the life of a prophet was not easy—but the prophet knew he or she had to do what God asked. Have you ever heard of Jonah and the whale? Jonah ended up in the belly of a whale for three days because he tried to run away from his task as a prophet.

The tasks of the prophets were:

- speaking against kings or leaders of the people;
- foretelling destruction because the people had been unfaithful to the covenant;
- offering words of comfort as God does not stop loving his people; and
- prophesying the coming of the Messiah and the everlasting kingdom.

How would you categorize the quotations from the prophets shown?

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**The Prophets**

You sun shall not more go down, nor your moon withdraw itself; for the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your days of mourning shall be ended. Your people shall all be righteous; they shall possess the land for ever . . . I am the Lord; in its time I will hasten it” (Isaiah 59:20-22).

For in the days that I brought them out of the land of Egypt . . . this command I gave them, “Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people; and walk in the way that I command you, that it may be well with you.” But they did not obey . . . I make to cease the voice of mirth and gladness . . . for the land shall become a waste (Jeremiah 7: 21-34, excerpts).

When King Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, “Is it you, you troubler of Israel?” And he answered, “I have not troubled Israel; but you have, and your father’s house, because you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord and followed the Baals” (1 Kings 18:17-18).

I have called you by name, you are mine. When thou shalt pass through the waters, I will be with thee . . . (Isaiah 43:1-2) Can a woman forget her child . . . even if she may forget, yet I will not forget you (Isaiah 49:15).
Jesus Debates Religious Leaders
& “Let us consider Jesus’ as a prophet . . .”

1. Jesus accused the Pharisees of clinging to human traditions while _____
2. The Scribe suggests that Jesus is a prophet, _____
3. Jesus has used the words of the prophet, Isaiah, “These people draw near me with their mouths . . .
4. Like Micah, Jesus, stood up to the “experts” and told them their worship was
5. Rather, God wants us _____

The Prophets, for example, Isaiah and Micah

Jesus

Does Jesus seem to be a prophet, in today’s story, and from what you know of the prophets? Why, why not?
Orthodoxy and “Empty?” Worship

Sometimes people come to an Orthodox service, and seeing processions, incense, and bowing for the first time, think that our faith is all about “performing—” without thinking.

Is that the case? If it is, we are not much better than the Pharisees that Jesus criticized.

We participate in liturgy, first, by setting aside a day for God, and by gathering together—spiritually, we climb the mountain of the Lord, to be in His presence. We offer the world, our concerns, and ourselves to God. We offer thanks (eucharist) to God for all he has done for our salvation, and pray that we might be found worthy to have communion with Him and one another. We offer the Divine Liturgy, the "public offering" on behalf of all, and for all, the world.

Liturgy is all about offering. Far from being a mechanical performance, when we participate in the Divine Liturgy, we are part of an act that has cosmic significance.

Jesus stated that there are only two _______ commandments:
You shall love the Lord with all your ______, with all your _________, with all you ________, and with all your ____________; and you shall love your ______ ______ as _____________. (Matthew 22:37-39)
Jesus Debates Religious Authorities and “Let us consider Jesus as a prophet . . .”

Answer in complete sentences.

1. What was the primary task of the prophets?

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

2. What is the Greatest Commandment (both parts)?

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________