

Schools of the Bible:

Contours of the Divine Plan for Education

Does God have a plan for education? If so, might the educational programs He has established throughout the Bible communicate essential features of this model? Paul wrote that God's interactions with His people serve "as examples . . . for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come."¹ Accordingly, it seems that the schools of the Bible could provide us with clarifying contours of a divine plan for education.

The intent of this article is to take a *sola Scriptura* position and directly research the schools of Scripture,² of which at least 10 are documented—five in the Old Testament and five in the New Testament. In each, we will examine key elements of education, including educational purpose, setting, teacher and student characteristics, curriculum, methods, learning activities, and outcomes. Finally, we will endeavor to identify shared themes and patterns in these examples, which may then serve as a framework for practice as we endeavor to carry out Christian education in contemporary settings.

The Eden School: An Experiential Classroom

In the beginning, God created a suitable setting for an educational program—an outdoor classroom that incorporated aesthetic elements.³ In the Eden school, God was the teacher, interacting personally with His students, providing guidance, and clarifying consequences.⁴

The curriculum included the study of God's creation, with nature as the textbook.⁵ It also incorporated manual labor, principles of diet, and an understanding of divine expectations.⁶ Teaching methods focused on high-level thinking. As soon as Adam was created, God assigned him the cognitive task of naming the animals, which called for creative thinking.⁷ With the creation of Eve, learning became collaborative.⁸

The first students were given responsibility. They were to manage the earth—developing the garden, caring for its creatures, and using its resources wisely.⁹ The educational program included assessment.¹⁰ A point of evaluation, the tree of

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the knowledge of good and evil, was placed in the garden and the students were given the power of choice. Tragically, Eve and Adam distrusted God's goodness and His authority.¹¹ They tried to gain knowledge apart from Him.¹² Consequently, they failed the test and were dropped from the program.

God, however, did not abandon the students in the Eden school. Rather, He reached out to them, asking them a series of reflective questions.¹³ In the midst of despair, He provided them with hope.¹⁴ As Adam and Eve left Eden,¹⁵ their Teacher helped them set up another school.

The School of the Patriarchs: A Family-based School

The school of the patriarchs was a family school. Abraham, for example, provided instruction regarding a God-centered code of conduct to his children and the members of his extended family.¹⁶ The purpose of the school was to promote loyalty to God and to serve as a bulwark against idolatry.¹⁷ The ultimate aim was that individuals might experience salvation.¹⁸

The teachers in the school of the patriarchs were men and women of faith,¹⁹ the result of a personal relationship with God.²⁰ God, in turn, communicated directly with the instructors,²¹ who were heaven-focused²² and endeavored to follow the divine instructions.²³ These instructors did not shrink from reproofing wickedness or clarifying ethical conduct.²⁴ A key role of the teachers, however, was also found in their function as peacemakers.²⁵ Teachers were sensitive to the needs of the students.²⁶ They interceded for their students and assured them of divine guidance in their lives.²⁷

The program of studies included the principles of morality, and the development of key dispositions, such as kindness, courtesy, generosity, and hospitality.²⁸ It involved experience in practical occupations and the development of a work ethic.²⁹ Other components of the curriculum included principles of nutrition,³⁰ the importance of service,³¹ and the necessity of prayer.³²

Learning activities included worship and allocating time for reflection and communion with God.³³ Students were given responsibility and the opportunity to exercise the power of choice.³⁴ Evaluation took place for both students and teachers.³⁵

The products of the patriarchal school were illustrious. Joseph, who at first seemed only a spoiled favorite son, soon gave evidence of ethical character and rose to positions of responsibility.³⁶ Similarly, although the time Moses spent in the patriarchal school was brief, it provided the foundation of his success.³⁷ There he developed his commitment to God and to His cause.³⁸

The school of the patriarchs, when fully implemented,

served to preserve the worship of God across generations. Unfortunately, that came to be the case less frequently, particularly during the period of Egyptian slavery. A remedial program was needed.

The School of the Desert: An Intensive, Remedial Program

When God brought His people out of Egypt, He established a school. This system of mass education began when God instructed parents to gather their children into their homes so that they would not perish.³⁹ God created the school so that students might get to know Him, develop faith in Him, and worship Him.⁴⁰

The school of the desert was well organized. Moses served as leader and head teacher,⁴¹ while other individuals, such as Aaron, Bezalel, Miriam, and Oholiab, functioned as assistants.⁴² These instructors were chosen by God, filled with His Spirit, and provided with skills.⁴³ Especially consecrated for their work,⁴⁴ they were to be God's representatives.⁴⁵ They were to be characterized by humility, modesty, and a teachable spirit, serving as role models for their students.⁴⁶ Parents were also to participate in the instruction of their children.⁴⁷

The school had a large and diverse student population.⁴⁸ Although primarily comprised of Israelites, the student body also included a "mixed multitude" from among the Egyptians.⁴⁹ Initially, the students promised that they would follow God's instruction and the rules of the school.⁵⁰ Shortly thereafter, however, under the leadership of an assistant teacher, they returned to worshipping a pagan

god.⁵¹ The students also grumbled and complained—quite frequently, in fact—about the school leadership, the setting, the curriculum, their diet, their assignments, and the long years of study.⁵² Despite these failings, God granted the students continued evidences of His protection and love.⁵³

The program of studies centered on the sanctuary—an experiential, multimedia curriculum intended to reveal the plan of salvation.⁵⁴ At the heart of the tabernacle was the ark of the covenant containing God's visible presence and His law.⁵⁵ In essence, God and His Word were at the center of the curriculum.

The educational program incorporated the transmission of values, including honesty, fairness, respect, compassion, and generosity.⁵⁶ The curriculum also included health and hygiene,⁵⁷ specific instruction on diet,⁵⁸ and principles of attire.⁵⁹ Students learned the importance of the Sabbath and of tithing.⁶⁰ They were to recognize their relationship to leadership,⁶¹ as well as to respect limits and to make restitution for

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wrongs.⁶² Fundamentally, students were to learn about God, understanding His expectations, and developing trust in Him.⁶³

In addition to the sanctuary, instructional materials included concrete objects and visual imagery.⁶⁴ At times, for example, the teacher would create a physical memorial to commemorate significant events.⁶⁵ Learning activities included music,⁶⁶ field research,⁶⁷ and the development of manual skills.⁶⁸ Students were frequently involved in worship experiences.⁶⁹

At various points, evaluation took place.⁷⁰ While there were stellar students such as Caleb and Joshua, the results overall were disappointing. Slowly, however, a corporate understanding began to emerge as to the nature of God and of their relationship to Him.⁷¹ After 40 years, the students of the desert school, or rather, their children and grandchildren, graduated from the remedial program and were ready to enter the school of Canaan.⁷²

The School of Canaan: Community-based Education

Before the Israelites entered Canaan,⁷³ God gave special instructions regarding the educational program that they were to establish, as described in Deuteronomy 6:4-9.⁷⁴ A number of key concepts are highlighted: (1) God is the center of the educational program⁷⁵; (2) The educational dynamic is love; the scope is comprehensive⁷⁶; (3) The words of God form the core curriculum, but these must be internalized first in the life of the teacher⁷⁷; (4) The instructional process requires intentionality and integrates theory and practice⁷⁸; (5) God's words must guide a whole-person development—encompassing physical, intellectual, spiritual, and social dimensions.⁷⁹

The school was community based. Some instruction took place in the home.⁸⁰ Another principal setting was at the sanctuary, particularly during the religious feasts, when special instruction was provided by parents, priests, and Levites.⁸¹ Furthermore, every seventh year was to be a time when the predominantly agrarian population would abstain from planting fields or pruning vineyards, eating only what the land spontaneously produced.⁸² This sabbatical year could then be utilized to study the law of God, as well as to learn various trades.⁸³

Teachers in the school of Canaan included parents, priests, and judges.⁸⁴ These teachers were to internalize God's Word and evidence faithfulness.⁸⁵ They were to live a healthy lifestyle.⁸⁶ Teachers were at times especially commissioned for their work.⁸⁷ Students in the school of Canaan included men, women, children, and "the foreigners who lived among them."⁸⁸ Even the future kings of Israel were to be educated by studying God's Word.⁸⁹

The program of studies included the study of religion, values education, life skills, and instruction regarding social relationships. God's laws and decrees were at the heart of the curriculum.⁹⁰ Moral values were emphasized. Students were taught practices intended to foster generosity, particularly to-

ward "the foreigner, the fatherless, and the widow."⁹¹ They learned the importance and the implications of honesty and integrity.⁹²

Students were taught principles of hygiene, diet, and dress.⁹³ They were to learn practical skills, such as architectural design and construction,⁹⁴ as well as the principles and practices that were to govern military operations.⁹⁵ The curriculum also included an understanding of the judicial system and legal responsibilities.⁹⁶ Students were taught principles to guide social interactions and relationships.⁹⁷ They were especially to safeguard the rights of the vulnerable and socially marginalized.⁹⁸

Learning activities included music, worship, and praise.⁹⁹ Students were encouraged to make moral choices and were subject to evaluation.¹⁰⁰ Teachers would at times use visual reminders of key concepts to reinforce learning.¹⁰¹ The school of Canaan was intended to safeguard Israel's spiritual allegiance and to serve as a witness to other nations.¹⁰² Sadly, it largely failed to accomplish these purposes.¹⁰³ In an endeavor to bring His people back to the divine plan, God raised up judges to deliver and instruct. When a judge died, however, "the people returned to ways even more corrupt than those of their ancestors."¹⁰⁴ Clearly, a revival was needed.

The School of the Prophets: A System Focused on Revival

Samuel, a prophet and the last of the judges, led out in establishing training programs to prepare spiritual leaders.¹⁰⁵ Subsequently revived by the prophets Elijah and Elisha, the schools were located at Jericho, Bethel, and Gilgal, among other sites.¹⁰⁶ The instructional role of the prophets, however, did not conclude with these formal programs, but rather extended throughout the Old Testament period.¹⁰⁷

The purpose of the school of the prophets was threefold: (1) to promote revival and reformation,¹⁰⁸ (2) to provide moral guidance, especially to civil leadership,¹⁰⁹ and (3) to mentor a new generation of spiritual leaders.¹¹⁰

Called by God,¹¹¹ teachers in the school of the prophets were filled with His Spirit.¹¹² As instructors, they were to receive and faithfully convey God's message.¹¹³ This included reviewing God's leading in the past and pointing out the consequences of choices,¹¹⁴ recording current events as lessons for future generations,¹¹⁵ addressing social issues such as injustice and violence,¹¹⁶ and leading out in special events of praise and celebration.¹¹⁷

These teachers related with their students in personable ways. Elisha, for example, shared meals with his students and looked out for their welfare.¹¹⁸ Samuel took time to converse with his students and demonstrate compassion.¹¹⁹ The teachers were also persons of prayer, interceding on behalf of their students.¹²⁰

The curriculum was based on the Word of God, and especially an understanding of God's character and His law.¹²¹ It included the study of specific doctrines, such as tithing, the Sabbath, the mission and ministry of the Messiah, the Second Coming, and the new earth.¹²² The program of studies also fo-

cused on character development, highlighting particularly the core values of justice, mercy, and humility.¹²³ Students were to engage in witness and service.¹²⁴ Emphases included music, history, health, and manual labor.¹²⁵

Teaching methods utilized parables and allegories,¹²⁶ as well as visual illustrations.¹²⁷ Students were given responsibilities—preparing food for the school, for example, and participating in religious services.¹²⁸ Students were also given opportunity to make choices and to understand the consequences of their actions.¹²⁹ They were subject to evaluation.¹³⁰

The school of the prophets achieved significant results. Social injustice was successfully confronted, and the nation experienced peace and prosperity.¹³¹ Surrounding societies observed the effect and desired to know the true God.¹³² The most important result, however, was revival and reformation, evidenced in changed lives, obedience to God’s will, and an outpouring of God’s Spirit.¹³³

Tragically, however, the work of the prophets was often ig-

nored, ridiculed, or rejected.¹³⁴ Some of the prophets were killed.¹³⁵ As a result, the people experienced societal turmoil and ultimately destruction.¹³⁶ This collapse of the school of the prophets was compounded by the appearance of false prophets—individuals who pretended to convey a message from God but who “spoke lies,” motivated by greed, position, and power.¹³⁷ A prophet, steadfast and courageous, was desperately needed.¹³⁸

The School of John the Baptist: Simplicity and Reformation

In the New Testament, the first school identified is the one in which John the Baptist was the only pupil. It was a family school, a school whose purpose prepared the way for a reformation.

The school was located in a rural setting, a context that seemed to contribute to the success of the school.¹³⁹ It was a two-teacher school, with Zachariah and Elizabeth as teachers. They were individuals of prayer and Spirit-filled, their lives evidencing their commitment to God.¹⁴⁰ God communicated

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School	Purpose	Setting	Teacher
The School of Eden: An experiential school	To obtain a personal knowledge of God and of His plan for life	An outdoor classroom, a place of aesthetic delight	God, personally interacting with students, providing guidance, clarifying consequences
The School of the Patriarchs: A family-based school	To promote loyalty to God, serving as a bulwark against idolatry; to experience salvation	The family; covenant-based	Patriarchs—called of God, individuals of faith, obedient, heaven-focused, reproved wickedness; peacemakers, sensitive to the needs of students
The School of the Desert: An intensive, remedial program	To help students know God, have faith in Him, and worship Him; to reveal the plan of salvation	Rural and simple; centered on the sanctuary; established through a series of miracles; covenant-based	God; Moses as leader; assistant teachers, chosen by God and filled with the Spirit; parents; all to be characterized by a teachable spirit, temperance, a personal relationship with God
The School of Canaan: Community-based education	To prepare a people who would love God; to safeguard Israel’s spiritual allegiance; to serve as a witness to other nations	Community; home; sanctuary, particularly during the religious feasts and the Sabbatical year; covenant-based	Parents, priests, Levites, judges; were to review God’s leading in the past, to live a healthy lifestyle; characterized by faithfulness and obedience; commissioned for their work
The School of the Prophets: A system for revival	To promote revival and reformation; to provide moral guidance, especially to civil leadership; to mentor a generation of spiritual leaders	Formal schools, often in cities or towns; informal instruction by individual prophets in a variety of settings	Prophets—Spirit-filled men and women, called by God; reviewed God’s leading in the past; pointed out consequences of choices; recorded current events as lessons; personable with students; persons of prayer

with the teachers, and they, in turn, transmitted a vision of God’s calling to their student.¹⁴¹

John the Baptist was characterized by certain attributes, developed through the educational experience: courage, humility, and a sense of divine calling. In his ministry, for example, John preached with boldness.¹⁴² but also developed the disposition of humility: “After me,” he said, “will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry.”¹⁴³

Although the program of studies is not explicitly defined, a number of features can be inferred. It seems that instruction was provided regarding lifestyle principles and social justice,¹⁴⁴ and that the curriculum included an emphasis on the Word of God and prepared the student for witness.¹⁴⁵ Simplicity of diet and dress prevailed.¹⁴⁶

The results of John’s ministry were significant. “The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.”¹⁴⁷ Jesus described him as “more than a

prophet.”¹⁴⁸ Perhaps the most significant result of the educational experience was that John was enabled to recognize and proclaim Jesus as the Son of God.¹⁴⁹

The School Where Jesus Learned: A Home School

Jesus did not attend the rabbinical schools of His time. As He taught in the temple, the people were amazed and asked, “How did this man get such learning without having studied?”¹⁵⁰ Nevertheless, Jesus was well-educated. Luke, for example, notes that “He came to Nazareth . . . and as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up to read.”¹⁵¹

If Jesus did not attend a formal school, how did He learn? In essence, His parents were His teachers. Joseph was described as a “righteous man,” sensitive to the circumstances and feelings of others.¹⁵² Mary was portrayed as one who had “found favor with God.”¹⁵³ She was also characterized by a reflective spirit.¹⁵⁴ Together, Jesus’ parents endeavored to fulfill civil and religious obligations¹⁵⁵

Students	Curriculum	Methods	Activities	Results
Adam and Eve, created in the image of God	Study of God’s creation; manual labor; principles of diet; understanding of the Great Controversy	Focus on high-level thinking; collaborative learning; reflective questions	Given authority and responsibility to manage the earth; freedom of choice; time for rest; assessment	Failed the test and were dropped from the program; provided with hope—redemption, restoration
Children and extended family	God-centered code of ethical conduct; values of fairness, kindness, courtesy, generosity; work ethic; tithing; nutrition; interpersonal relationships	Direct instruction; modeling	Worship; offerings; service; prayer and reflection; given responsibility and the power of choice; evaluation of students and teachers	Individuals of ethical character, selfless, forgiving, committed to God, humble, filled with the Spirit; preserved the knowledge of God; few parents implemented
Mass education of men, women, and children; some were non-Israelites; initially promised to follow God, but quickly regressed; frequently complained; rebelled and rioted at times	God and His Word; principles of pardon and power to live; moral values: honesty, justice, mercy, respect, compassion; health, attire, diet, hygiene; Sabbath, tithing; consequences; relationships	Multi-sensory; experiential; concrete objects and visual imagery; memorials; repetition	Music and praise; manual skills; field research; worship; giving offerings; evaluation	A few stellar students (e.g., Caleb, Joshua); most students failed and had to repeat their coursework; slowly, corporate understanding formed of the nature of God and their relationship with Him
Men, women, children, and foreigners, even future kings; whole-person development	God and His Word; tithing; avoiding the occult; values of generosity, honesty, justice, mercy; principles of hygiene, diet, dress; practical skills; social relationships	Direct instruction; visual reminders of key concepts	Music, worship, praise; moral decision-making; evaluation	Largely failed; people served God only while Joshua and the elders were alive; God raised up judges to deliver and instruct; when they died, people reverted to paganism
Civil leaders; population at large; “sons of the prophets”	Based on the Word of God—understanding God’s law, mercy, forgiveness, consequences; doctrines of tithing, Sabbath, Messiah, heaven; values of justice, mercy, humility; music, history, health, manual labor	Mentoring; parables and allegories; memorials of concepts and events; visual illustrations	Moral decision-making; witnessing and serving; music and praise; prophesying; preparing food and accommodations for the school; delivering messages from God; evaluation	Social injustice confronted; national peace and prosperity; revival and reformation; outpouring of God’s Spirit; tragically, often ignored, ridiculed, rejected, resulting in social turmoil, violence, and destruction

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and to provide a safe environment for Jesus.¹⁵⁶ They were, however, of scarce economic means.¹⁵⁷

The educational setting was not idyllic, since a portion of Jesus' early experience took place in a foreign country where He and His parents were refugees.¹⁵⁸ Subsequently, they returned to the family home in Nazareth, a small town in the Galilean countryside. It was a community, however, with an objectionable reputation.¹⁵⁹

As a student, Jesus was inquisitive. At the age of 12, He spent several days in the temple with the religious scholars, "listening to them and asking them questions."¹⁶⁰ Jesus was also a sociable and outgoing child. When He was lost, His parents assumed that He was with relatives or friends.¹⁶¹

Referencing Jesus' development during infancy and early childhood, the physician Luke noted that "the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of

God was upon him."¹⁶² After Jesus' visit to the temple at the age of 12, Luke describes further development, adding the social dimension.¹⁶³

The program of studies fostered whole-person development. Jesus, for example, developed skill in a manual trade, which He learned from Joseph.¹⁶⁴ Jesus' later ministry evidenced His keen observation of the natural world,¹⁶⁵ as well as His understanding of Scripture.¹⁶⁶ Christ's teaching also evidenced His perceptive study of people and the events of everyday life.¹⁶⁷

The results of Jesus' education can be seen in His sense of a divine mission for His life. At the age of 12, He asked His parents, "Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"¹⁶⁸ He also developed insight. When Jesus' parents found Him in the temple, asking and answering questions, "everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding

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School	Purpose	Setting	Teacher
The School of John the Baptist: A school of simplicity and reformation	To bring about a reformation of godliness	Family-based; rural and rustic	Parents, who observed the commandments, were individuals of prayer and Spirit-filled
The School Where Jesus Learned: A home school	To know God and His plan; to prepare for a life of ministry	Home, not the rabbinical schools; Egypt and Nazareth—not idyllic settings	Parents—righteous, submissive to God's leading, filled with the Holy Spirit; reflective spirit; fulfilled civil and religious obligations; endeavored to provide a safe environment; meager economic means
The School Where Jesus Taught: A program of discipleship	To unmask Satan's deception regarding God's character; to reveal the principles of the kingdom of heaven; to glorify God	Outdoors—hillside, seaside; private homes; public venues—temple or synagogue	Lived in harmony with God's will; created contexts of joy; invitation to success; conveyed tenderness, sympathy; differentiated instruction; reached out to the socially marginalized; spoke with confidence; humble spirit; demonstrated personal association; centrality of prayer
The School of the Christian Church: A missionary school	To fulfill the gospel commission	Temple court, synagogues, and other public venues (e.g., the Areopagus and the school of Tyrannus); private homes; outdoors (e.g., beside the river in Philippi, in the Gaza wilderness)	Christ and the Holy Spirit; apostles and other church leaders; parents, grandparents; especially commissioned; bold, courageous, patient, gentle, confident, qualified, faithful
The School of Heaven: The school of eternity	To understand God and His plan for the universe; to experience unlimited development and the realization of full potential; to bring eternal security to the universe	Heaven and the new earth—a place where God is, a place of aesthetic delight; both the Holy City and natural settings of peace, safety, and security	God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit; angels and other unfallen beings

and his answers.¹⁶⁹ Perhaps most significantly, Jesus developed a personal relationship with God.¹⁷⁰ In essence, Jesus' early education prepared Him for ministry.¹⁷¹

The School Where Jesus Taught: A Program of Discipleship

The teaching ministry of Jesus revealed perhaps most clearly the divine plan for education. His overarching purpose was to reveal God's character, and, by extension, the principles of His kingdom.¹⁷²

While Jesus frequently taught in the synagogue and later in the temple,¹⁷³ His instructional setting was varied. It included the open countryside, private homes, and more public venues in cities and villages.¹⁷⁴ His students were most often His 12 disciples.¹⁷⁵ On certain occasions, He taught larger groups, numbering at times in the thousands.¹⁷⁶ Sometimes, however, His teaching was one-on-one, as was the case with

Nicodemus and with the woman at the well.¹⁷⁷ Those attending His classes included women and children, as well as laborers, merchants, members of security forces, scribes, and religious leaders.¹⁷⁸

Personal characteristics contributed significantly to Jesus' success as a teacher. These attributes included perceptiveness,¹⁷⁹ tenderness and sympathy,¹⁸⁰ and a spirit of humility.¹⁸¹ Jesus was further characterized by creating contexts of joy,¹⁸² inviting students to success,¹⁸³ recognizing student differences,¹⁸⁴ and courageously confronting wrong.¹⁸⁵ His students experienced personal association with their teacher,¹⁸⁶ as well as tangible evidence of the value He awarded each individual, even those marginalized by society.¹⁸⁷ Perhaps the most significant attribute, however, was the centrality of prayer.¹⁸⁸

In His instruction, Christ emphasized certain themes, which

Students	Curriculum	Methods	Activities	Results
John and John's disciples; sense of divine calling; bold and courageous; humble; Spirit-filled	Lifestyle principles—simplicity of diet and dress; emphasis on the Word of God	Self-study	Fasting and prayer; witness and evangelism	Became strong in spirit; fearlessly rebuked even royalty; brought about repentance and reformation
Jesus—inquisitive, sociable and outgoing, trustworthy, obedient	Scripture; nature; manual skills; life experiences	Nurture; apprenticeship; self-study	In-depth study of Scripture; participation in religious experiences; observation of the natural world; perceptive study of people and social interactions; asking questions	Well-rounded development—physical, intellectual, spiritual, social; sense of divine mission; insight; physical stamina; compassion for the socially marginalized; life of prayer; prepared to carry out His lifework
Disciples—group of 12, group of 70; large groups, numbering in the thousands; individual sessions; adults and children; men and women; day laborers, merchants, members of security forces, scribes, and religious leaders	Clarify the attributes of God; distinguish the essential from the trivial; recognize the “big picture”; understand the past; visualize the future; centrality of Scripture: initiate thought, expand concepts, clarify meaning, create connections, give a call to action	Illustrations—stories, news items, historical events, analogies, tangible objects; demonstration; repetition; questions; comparison and contrast; paradoxes and anomalies; emphasis through hyperbole; active learning; problem solving; collaborative learning	High-level thinking: knowing, understanding, being, doing; prayer; witness; service	Crowds of thousands flocked to hear Him; listeners were amazed at His teaching; some of His listeners rejected Him, and one of His disciples betrayed Him; the majority of His disciples effectively carried on His ministry, even at great personal sacrifice
Jews and Gentiles; children and adults; kings and slaves; everyone everywhere	Word of God, especially the words of Jesus; understanding the plan of salvation; doctrines—state of the dead, Second Coming; character development	Christ-centered, direct instruction; modeling; apprenticeship; thought-provoking questions; encouragement; oral and written communication	Interacting directly with the Word of God; application of knowledge; acquisition of practical skills; teamwork; music; service; witness and evangelism	Transformation of understanding, attitudes, and life; non-believers were amazed; impact felt throughout the entire society; many believers were added to the church
A great multitude—of all nations, ethnicities, and language groups; high admission standards: obedient, faithful, overcomers; white robe, new name; vested with immortality	Character of God; wonders of God's creation; plan of salvation; manual skills—building trades, horticulture; music—vocal and instrumental, performance and composition	Direct interaction with instructors; relationships with fellow students from diverse backgrounds; no evaluation—students have already passed the test; exploration, discovery; self-regulated learning	Worship, praise, and celebration; witness—sharing one's experience of God's amazing grace and power; service; adjudication—high-level thinking, perceptive analysis, appraisal	The Great Controversy is over—the character and acts of God are forever vindicated; unbounded joy, security, peace, and belonging; continual development

included the role of Scripture,¹⁸⁹ distinguishing the important from the trivial,¹⁹⁰ recognizing the “big picture,”¹⁹¹ an emphasis on service,¹⁹² and a view toward the future.¹⁹³ Jesus oriented His teaching to actively engage His students in the learning experience. This involved a focus on thinking,¹⁹⁴ knowing,¹⁹⁵ understanding,¹⁹⁶ being,¹⁹⁷ and doing.¹⁹⁸

In His teaching, Christ used a variety of instructional strategies, methods that promoted high-level thinking and helped His students to better understand, recall, and apply His instruction. These strategies included illustrations,¹⁹⁹ stories,²⁰⁰ news items,²⁰¹ and reference to historical events.²⁰² They incorporated the use of analogies,²⁰³ tangible objects,²⁰⁴ demonstration,²⁰⁵ and repetition.²⁰⁶ Other instructional methods included the use of questions,²⁰⁷ comparison and contrast,²⁰⁸ paradoxes and anomalies,²⁰⁹ and emphasis using hyperbole.²¹⁰ On various occasions, His students also engaged in active learning,²¹¹ problem solving,²¹² and collaborative learning.²¹³

Jesus had a profound influence on His students. When He concluded a teaching session, His listeners were amazed at His teaching. Turning to one another, they asked, “Where did this man get these things?” “Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel.”²¹⁴ One day, alarmed with His growing popularity, the chief priests sent the temple guards to arrest Him. At the end of the day, however, the guards returned empty-handed. “Why didn’t you bring Him in?” the priests fumed. “No one ever spoke the way this man does,” the guards declared.²¹⁵

The School of the Christian Church: A Missionary School

At the conclusion of His ministry on earth, Christ instructed His followers: “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”²¹⁶ This commission established the school of the Christian Church, focused on witness and evangelism. It is instructive to consider examples of this school in action.

Philip, one of the seven deacons, was directly involved in the education process.²¹⁷ Of particular significance in his encounter with the Ethiopian treasurer are the central role of the Holy Spirit, the Christ-centered nature of the instruction, the use of thought-provoking questions, a direct interaction with the Word of God, and the transformation of the student’s understanding, attitudes, and life.

As a child, Timothy received Bible-based instruction from his mother and grandmother.²¹⁸ Observing the positive influence of this early education, the apostle Paul invited Timothy to join his ministry as an apprentice.²¹⁹ As a mentor, Paul encouraged Timothy to focus on character development, to reject the lure of materialism, and to teach others through example.²²⁰ The church subsequently recognized in Timothy the gift of teaching and especially commissioned him for this ministry.²²¹

Similarly, Titus, a Gentile convert on the island of Crete, was appointed to teach various groups of individuals, which included older men and women, youth, and even slaves. They were to be given a Bible-based, values-oriented training. Titus was also to instruct others in the teaching ministry.²²²

Education in the early church took place in a variety of settings, including public buildings, private homes, nature, and within the family.²²³ Students included Jews and Gentiles, children and adults, kings and slaves.²²⁴ Such was the pervasiveness of the educational effort that its adversaries charged that the apostles taught “everyone everywhere.”²²⁵

Teachers included the apostles and other church leaders.²²⁶ The school also incorporated the concept that believers were to instruct one another and that parents were to teach their own children.²²⁷ Teaching was considered a divine calling, closely linked to the role of pastor.²²⁸ Those called to teach were to be instructed in the Word and given a clear understanding of belief and doctrine.²²⁹ They were to be bold and courageous, patient and gentle, confident, qualified, and faithful.²³⁰ They were to teach as co-workers with God.²³¹

The curriculum focused on the Word of God, particularly the teachings of Jesus.²³² Students were to understand

the gospel,²³³ develop Christian character, and devote themselves to a life of service.²³⁴ Teaching strategies included modeling and mentoring, as well as oral and written communication.²³⁵ Learning activities included the acquisition of practical skills, the application of knowledge, teamwork, service, and witness.²³⁶

The school of the early church achieved significant results. The believers “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching,” which produced a transformative influence in their lives.²³⁷ The effects were felt throughout the entire society, and many believers were added to the church.²³⁸

Education in the early church took place in a variety of settings, including public buildings, private homes, nature, and within the family. Students included Jews and Gentiles, children and adults, kings and slaves. Such was the pervasiveness of the educational effort that its adversaries charged that the apostles taught “everyone everywhere.”

The School of Heaven: Education for Eternity

The divine plan for education culminates in the school of heaven. What will that school be like? While the setting surpasses comprehension,²³⁹ Scripture provides a sketch of its features. The school includes a city, the New Jerusalem.²⁴⁰ It is a place of aesthetic delight,²⁴¹ illuminated by God's presence.²⁴² In addition, the classroom will again include a garden,²⁴³ with learning taking place in a natural, peaceful setting.²⁴⁴

God will be the instructor,²⁴⁵ and the redeemed will be the students.²⁴⁶ Teacher and students will live together,²⁴⁷ with the students directly interacting with Him "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."²⁴⁸

While the students in the school of heaven are numerous and diverse,²⁴⁹ admission standards are high. Students must have "clean hands and a pure heart."²⁵⁰ They must be committed to knowing and living the truth.²⁵¹ They are overcomers whose names "are written in the Lamb's book of life."²⁵²

The program of studies will focus on the character of God,²⁵³ the wonders of His creation,²⁵⁴ and the plan of salvation.²⁵⁵ It will also incorporate manual skills,²⁵⁶ music,²⁵⁷ service,²⁵⁸ and worship.²⁵⁹ In a special way, students will focus their study on those aspects that they were unable to comprehend during their earthly life.²⁶⁰

Students in the school of heaven develop deep, enduring relationships with the redeemed from diverse backgrounds and cultures.²⁶¹ They also engage in adjudication,²⁶² which involves high-level thinking, critical analysis, and appraisal.

In many ways, the first school, the school of Eden, and the school of heaven are remarkably similar. This is no surprise, however, since Eden was an extension campus of the school of heaven. There is, nonetheless, an important difference. In heaven's school there will be no evaluation, no tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The students have already passed the test, and before them lies an eternity of self-regulated learning and development.

There is, however, an activity that will take the place of evaluation. Students in the heavenly school will be involved in witness.²⁶³ The redeemed will share their own experiences of God's amazing grace and power, their conviction of His goodness and love with the angels and other unfallen beings.²⁶⁴ The word of their testimony contributes to the eternal security of the universe.²⁶⁵

What will be the results of the school of heaven? Joy, unbounded joy²⁶⁶—the exhilaration of being in God's presence,²⁶⁷ and of experiencing His new creation.²⁶⁸ It is unalloyed delight, because sorrow, pain, and suffering have been banished.²⁶⁹ Furthermore, the students in heaven's school experience security,²⁷⁰ peace,²⁷¹ belonging,²⁷² and unlimited opportunities for continual development.²⁷³

Emergent Themes

Christian education bears fruit when it connects to its roots. What, then, are the themes that emerge from these schools described in the Bible?

The *purpose* of the schools of the Bible was that students

might obtain an experiential knowledge of God. As a result, they were to develop faith in Him and His plan for their lives. Given the great conflict between good and evil, the schools were to unmask Satan's deception regarding God's character and reveal the principles of His kingdom. Particularly, they were to serve as a bulwark against paganism and idolatry. The schools were to delineate the plan of salvation and guide their students to experience God's grace and power. Ultimately, these schools were to mentor spiritual leaders—individuals prepared to fulfill the divine commission and committed to a life of ministry.

While the *setting* of the schools varied, certain patterns emerge. The home was the foremost educational setting, followed closely by the church. Another frequent setting was in the outdoors, where students might be in direct contact with God's creation. At times, public venues were utilized, particularly to reach those who might not otherwise come into contact with the school.

God was the ultimate *teacher* in each of the schools. His assistants were priests, prophets, pastors and other godly people, and parents. Of these, the latter figured most prominently. All, however, were called by God and were to be guided by His Spirit. Many were especially commissioned for their work. These teachers were to be characterized by courage, humility, patience, gentleness, fidelity, and temperance. They were to evidence a teachable spirit and sensitivity to the needs of their students. They were to be persons of prayer and of faith. They were to provide guidance, clarify consequences, reprove sin, review God's leading in the past, convey tenderness and sympathy, personally interact with students, and create contexts of joy.

Students included men and women, young and old, believers and non-believers. On occasion, instruction was provided to large groups of students, numbering in the hundreds or thousands. More often, however, instruction was given to smaller clusters of students and sometimes one-on-one. The emphasis was on whole-person development, particularly in terms of the mental, physical, social, and spiritual dimensions. Students were to be inquisitive, trustworthy, bold, humble, and Spirit-filled. They were to have a clear sense of divine calling. Unfortunately, the students at times resented various features of the educational program, complaining and even rebelling. Their teachers, however, did not abandon them. Rather, they patiently continued their work on behalf of the students, regarding them as candidates for salvation, created in the image of God and redeemed by His grace.

The Word of God was at the heart of the *curriculum*. Through the study of the Scriptures, students were to develop an understanding of the character of God, of the Great Controversy, and of the plan of salvation. Students were also to study the works of God, discerning evidences of God's character through His creation. They were to acquire practical proficiencies and cultivate a strong work ethic. They were to develop a lifestyle characterized by temperance, simplicity of diet and dress, and an emphasis on health and hygiene. Subjects of study included music, history, interpersonal relationships, and an un-

derstanding of the consequences of one's actions. One of the most important elements in the program of studies was character development—the formation of a God-centered code of conduct.

A variety of *methods* were used in the schools. These included direct instruction, demonstration, and repetition, as well as modeling, mentoring, and apprenticeship. Instruction focused on high-level thinking, including creativity and perceptive analysis. These processes were fostered by thought-provoking questions, reflection, and problem-solving. Teachers frequently used illustrations—analogy, parables, and allegories, as well as stories, news items, and historical events. Tangible objects, visual imagery, and multisensory experiences were also employed. Teachers further promoted active learning, collaborative learning, exploration, and discovery.

Students participated in meaningful *learning activities*. They engaged in the in-depth study of Scripture. They observed nature and social interactions. They asked questions. They applied knowledge and acquired real-world skills. They engaged in field research, service, witness, and evangelism. They were given responsibility and the opportunity for moral decision-making. Students also participated in a variety of spiritual experiences, including prayer and reflection, music and praise, celebration and worship. Students were evaluated, and also participated as evaluators in the assessment process.

The *results* of the schools of the Bible were mixed, not due to imperfections in design, but because of flaws in implementation. Few parents carried out their God-given responsibilities, and generations grew up without a knowledge of God. In the schools, students began to ignore or ridicule their teachers, and a number rejected the program itself, rebelling and even rioting. As a result, some teachers became discouraged and deserted their teaching assignments.

The good news is that God didn't give up, nor did the committed teachers. They persevered and provided their students with the hope of redemption and restoration. And there were stellar students, men and women who experienced a transformation of understanding, attitudes, and life. They were well-balanced individuals, with physical stamina, wisdom, social skills, and a deep commitment to God. They developed ethical character, evidenced a deep sense of divine mission, lived a life of prayer, and were filled with the Spirit. They fearlessly confronted social injustice, evidenced compassion for the socially marginalized, and effectively carried out their ministry, even at great personal sacrifice.

In all, the schools of the Bible preserved the knowledge of God and prepared individuals who more clearly understood the nature of God and of their relationship with Him. The result was revival and reformation. Furthermore, an impact was felt throughout the entire society. Non-believers were reached, and believers were added to the church.

Today, as Christian educators, we seek to understand and implement God's plan for education. The schools of Scripture provide the contours of this divine plan, a framework upon which we can safely and effectively develop, implement, and assess our endeavors in Christian education. ✍

This article has been peer reviewed.



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NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. 1 Corinthians 10:11. Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture texts in this article are quoted from the New International Version of the Bible. Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.
2. For the purpose of this article, a school is defined as a setting in which a teacher and student interact in a teaching-learning experience.
3. The campus incorporated trees pleasant to the sight, fruit desirable for food, and even precious stones (Genesis 1:1-25; 2:8-12).
4. Genesis 2:15-17, 29; 3:8.
5. Genesis 1:3, 6; 1:9; 1:14, 15; 1:11; 1:20, 24; Psalm 19:1; Romans 1:20.
6. Genesis 1:29; 2:15-17.
7. Genesis 2:19. It is perhaps significant that the only description of God prior to the declaration, "So God created mankind in his own image" (Genesis 1:27), is that of God the Creator. Whatever other aspects of God may be embraced in the concept of *imago dei*, it must surely include the creative dimension.
8. Genesis 2:21, 22. In fact, the only time in the creation account in which God said that something was "not good" was when His student was working alone (Genesis 2:18).
9. Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15.
10. Genesis 2:9, 16, 17.
11. Genesis 3:1-6.
12. John 8:44; 2 Corinthians 11:3; 2 Peter 1:16.
13. Genesis 3:8-13.
14. Genesis 3:15.
15. Genesis 3:16-19, 23, 24.
16. Genesis 18:19. Note that the teacher taught by direct instruction and through modeling—training his students "after him."
17. Genesis 6:5, 6. Preparing to enter Canaan, Jacob, for instance, called together his household and instructed them, "Get rid of the foreign gods you have with you, and purify yourselves" (Genesis 35:1-4).
18. This salvation focus was demonstrated, for example, to Noah and his family when God said, "Go into the ark, you and your whole family" (Genesis 7:1; see also Luke 17:27 and 1 Peter 3:20).
19. Enoch, Noah, Isaac, Joseph, and the parents of Moses are expressly identified in Scripture as individuals whose lives evidenced a tangible faith in God (Hebrews 11; Romans 4:15; Galatians 3:9).
20. Enoch and Noah, for example, are described as "walking with God" (Genesis 5:24; 6:9), while Abraham is called "God's friend" (James 2:23).
21. Genesis 6:13-21; 17:1-21; 35:1, 11-15; 46:2-4; Exodus 3. When Moses, for instance, felt inadequate for the task before him, God encouraged him, providing Aaron as an assistant, and saying, "I will help both of you speak and will teach you what to do" (Exodus 4:15).
22. Abraham, for example, anticipated "the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God" (Hebrews 11:8, 10). Others "admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. . . . They were longing for a better country—a heavenly one" (Hebrews 11:13, 16).

23. Scripture records that Noah “did everything just as God commanded him” (Genesis 6:22; 7:5), while Enoch is described as “one who pleased God” (Hebrews 11:5). Similarly, when God instructed, ““Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you,” Abraham “obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going” (Genesis 12:1; Hebrews 11:8).

24. Enoch spoke of a judgment day, when God would “convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done” (Jude 14, 15). Likewise, Noah delineated righteousness and rebuked immoral behavior (2 Peter 2:5; Genesis 9:20-27).

25. When there was a dispute between herdsmen as to pasture, Abraham said to Lot, “Let’s not have any quarreling between you and me, or between your herdsmen and mine, for we are close relatives. Is not the whole land before you? Let’s part company. If you go to the left, I’ll go to the right; if you go to the right, I’ll go to the left” (Genesis 13:8, 9). With similar altruism, Isaac didn’t argue with the herdsmen of Gerar over the ownership of the wells that his servants had dug (Genesis 26:19-22).

26. Jacob, for instance, stated, “So let my lord go on ahead of his servant, while I move along slowly at the pace . . . of the children” (Genesis 33:14).

27. Genesis 18:16-33; 24:7, 12-14, 40, 42-44.

28. Genesis 9:5, 6; 18:1-7, 19; 24:12-25.

29. Genesis 4:2; 6:14-16, 22. This is evidenced, for example, in Rebekah’s offer to provide water for the camels (Genesis 24:19, 44).

30. Genesis 9:4.

31. Genesis 12:2.

32. Genesis 24:12-14; 32:9-12. Students learned that they should form life relationships within the community of faith (Genesis 24:3; 26:34, 35; 28:1-9) and that divine love is to form the bedrock of relationship (Genesis 24:67).

33. Genesis 4:3, 4; 8:10; 21:33; 24:63; 26:25; 33:20; 35:7.

34. Genesis 24:2-9, 58; 37:14.

35. Genesis 4:3-5; 22:1-12.

36. Genesis 39:4, 9, 22, 23; 41:39-41. It became clear to those around him that God was his frame of reference (Genesis 40:8; 41:16; 45:5, 7, 8), and that God was with him (Acts 7:9, 10). Even the Pharaoh declared, “Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God?” (Genesis 41:38). Perhaps one of the most significant results in his life, however, was the development of a selfless and forgiving spirit (Genesis 44:33; 45:4, 5; 50:20, 21).

37. Exodus 2:5-10; Acts 7:20-22.

38. Hebrews 11:24-26. From that early education, Moses also developed humility, meekness, and a keen sense of justice (Exodus 2:11-13, 17; 3:11; Numbers 12:3; Acts 7:23-28).

39. Exodus 12:21-23.

40. Exodus 4:8, 9, 29-31; 6:2-7; Deuteronomy 4:10.

41. Exodus 3:14, 15; 4:15; 25:21.

42. Exodus 4:13-17; 31:1-6; 35:34; Leviticus 10:8-11. It should be noted that while each of these individuals was involved in the teaching ministry of the school, God would, at times, provide direct instruction (Exodus 20; 29:42-46; Deuteronomy 5).

43. Exodus 35:30-35; Numbers 11:24-29.

44. Exodus 29:1; Leviticus 8.

45. Exodus 7:1; 18:20; 28:30, 36-38; Leviticus 10:1-3, 8-11; Numbers 6:24-26.

46. Exodus 18:13-24; 28:42-43; Numbers 12:3. Jethro, for example, gave Moses a suggestion as to how to better organize the school through a decentralized administration and the delegation of authority, a plan which Moses readily accepted and implemented (Deuteronomy 1:9-18).

47. Deuteronomy 4:10. When children, for example, asked, “What does this ceremony mean to you?” parents were to explain, “It is the Passover sacrifice to the Lord, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes” (Exodus 12:26, 27).

48. About 600,000 men, in addition to women and children, both at the time of the exodus from Egypt and upon entry to Canaan (Exodus 10:8-11; 12:37; Numbers 1:46; 2:32).

49. Exodus 12:38; Deuteronomy 7:6. At times this non-Israelite group became a catalyst in leading the student body astray, such as when “the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting; and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?” (Numbers 11:4, KJV).

50. When Moses “told the people all the Lord’s words and laws, they responded with one voice, ‘Everything the Lord has said we will do’” (Exodus 24:3, 7).

51. Exodus 32.

52. Exodus 15:24; 16:2, 3; 17:3; Numbers 11:1; 14:2, 36; Deuteronomy 1:27. On occasion, they even rebelled and rioted (Exodus 17:4; Numbers 14:4; 16:41, 42).

53. Exodus 15:13; 19:4; 28:3; 31:1-6; Deuteronomy 2:7; 8:4; 29:5; 32:10-13.

54. Exodus 25:8; Leviticus 1-6; Hebrews 9:1-11. This curriculum was ini-

tiated with the first Passover, even before the tabernacle was built. An understanding of the plan of salvation was conveyed through the Passover lamb, its blood sprinkled on the doorposts of each home, and of the firstborn son, whose life was spared (Exodus 12).

55. Exodus 24:12; 25:21, 22; 40:20; Numbers 7:89; Deuteronomy 10:2-5; 31:26.

56. Students, for example, were taught: “Do not use dishonest standards when measuring length, weight or quantity. Use honest scales and honest weights” (Leviticus 19:35, 36). “Do not show partiality” (Deuteronomy 1:17). “Do not spread false reports. . . . When you give testimony in a lawsuit, do not pervert justice by siding with the crowd. . . . Do not accept a bribe” (Exodus 23:1-6, 8). “Do not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block in front of the blind” (Leviticus 19:14). “Do not take advantage of the widow or the fatherless” (Exodus 22:22). “Show respect for the elderly” (Leviticus 19:32). “The foreigner residing among you must be treated as one of your native-born” (Leviticus 19:33, 34). “When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. . . . Leave them for the poor and the foreigner” (Leviticus 19:9, 10).

57. Exodus 15:26; 19:10; Leviticus 13-15, 17; Numbers 5:1-4.

58. Leviticus 7:22-26; 11.

59. Exodus 20:26; 33:4-6.

60. Exodus 16:22-30; 20:8-11; 31:12-17; 35:1-3; Leviticus 23:3; 27:30-33; Numbers 18:21-32.

61. Numbers 12; 14:4-11; 16, 17; 27:12-23; Deuteronomy 31:1-8.

62. Exodus 19:12; 22; Numbers 2:1-31; 4; 5:5-10; 10:11-33. In essence, they were to understand the consequences of obedience and disobedience, as well as the possibility of repentance and forgiveness (Exodus 32:35; Leviticus 26; Numbers 14:20-45; Deuteronomy 7:12-15; 8:5; 11:13-32).

63. Exodus 14:13, 14, 31; Deuteronomy 4:35; 10:12, 13.

64. For example, water from a rock, tables of stone, a staff that budded, a bronze serpent, and manna that that fell every morning except for the Sabbath (Exodus 16:19-35; 24:12; 31:18; Numbers 17:8; 20:8-10; 21:8, 9; Deuteronomy 8:15; John 3:14).

65. Exodus 17:15.

66. Exodus 15:1; Numbers 21:17.

67. Numbers 13:1, 17-20, 27-33.

68. Exodus 35:30-35; 36:8-38:20; 39:1-30.

69. Exodus 3:12, 18; 15:2; 25:1; 35:4-9, 20-29; Leviticus 1-7. The teachers and students were also to ask those not of their faith for additional means to carry out the work of the school (Exodus 11:2, 3; 12:35, 36).

70. Exodus 20:20; 39:32-43; Deuteronomy 8:2.

71. Deuteronomy 6:4; Exodus 15:11, 18; 20:22, 23; Deuteronomy 29:13.

72. Exodus 3:17; Deuteronomy 31:3, 6.

73. This education setting was prepared by God: “You will bring them in and plant them on the mountain of your inheritance—the place, Lord, you made for your dwelling, the sanctuary, Lord, your hands established” (Exodus 15:17).

74. See also Deuteronomy 11:18-21.

75. Verse 4. This verse (the *shema*), considered by Jews to be one of the most sacred passages in the Torah, is often recited by Jewish parents with their children at the end of the day.

76. Verse 5. The purpose of education, to love God, is highlighted in this passage. To the list of “heart, soul, and strength,” Christ added the concept of “mind” (Mark 12:30), including the intellectual element implied in verse 8.

77. Verse 6. An instructional process of modeling seems inherent. One cannot share what he or she does not have.

78. Verse 7. The terms “impress” or “teach diligently” suggest a striving for mastery. Sitting “in your house” and walking “by the way” imply both receptive and active learning. The prime moments for learning, “when you lie down and when you rise up,” provide a biblical basis for morning and evening devotional periods.

79. Verses 8 and 9. “Hands” are used to actively modify one’s context, and can correspond to an individual’s physical development. The “forehead,” as the seat of thought, reason, and executive function, can reference cognitive development. As these words were originally spoken to the Israelites during their desert sojourn, a reference to the “doorframes of your house” would recall that last memorable night in Egypt, when they were to indicate their faith and spiritual commitment by sprinkling the Passover blood on the doorposts of their homes. Finally, gates were often used, as in many places today, to post announcements for the wider community, thus implying a social dimension, with elements of service and witness. These four dimensions of whole-person development correlate with those described in Luke 2:52.

80. Deuteronomy 6:6, 7.

81. Exodus 12:17, 24-27; 13:1-16; Deuteronomy 31:9-13. These national learning experiences were to occur at least three times a year—at the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Firstfruits, and during the Feast

of Tabernacles. Together, these feasts involved about a month each year (Exodus 23:14-17; 34:23; Leviticus 23; Numbers 28 and 29; Deuteronomy 16:1-17). One of the families that attended these yearly feasts was that of Elkanah (1 Samuel 1).

82. Leviticus 25.

83. Deuteronomy 31:10-13. The yearly feasts and the sabbatical year may have contributed to render Israel one of the more literate nations of antiquity.

84. Leviticus 10:10, 11; Deuteronomy 1-3; 9, 10; Joshua 24:1-13; 1 Samuel 1 and 2; Judges 2:18, 19. Parents, for example, were to teach the word of God and lessons from life experience to their children and grandchildren (Deuteronomy 4:9, 10).

85. Deuteronomy 30:14; 31:23; Joshua 5:13-15; Judges 13:8; 1 Samuel 2:35; 3:21.

86. Judges 13:2-5.

87. God directed Moses, for example, to bring Joshua to “the tent of meeting, where I will commission him” (Deuteronomy 31:14). As a result, “Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moses had laid his hands on him” (Deuteronomy 34:9).

88. Deuteronomy 11:2; Joshua 8:34, 35; Judges 13:24, 25; 14:6, 19; 15:14.

89. Deuteronomy 17:18-20.

90. Deuteronomy 4:5-8; 6:1, 2. It was not sufficient, however, to merely have an awareness of God and His law. Students were to understand the significance of these commands, and apply them to their lives (Deuteronomy 6:20-25).

91. Deuteronomy 24:19-21.

92. Deuteronomy 25:13-16. Note the incident recorded in Joshua 9:19-21. Other values incorporated in the curriculum included impartiality, justice, and mercy, including kindness to animals (Deuteronomy 16:19; 25:4).

93. Deuteronomy 14:1-21; 22:5. Soldiers engaged in a campaign, for example, were instructed to “designate a place outside the camp where you can go to relieve yourself. As part of your equipment have something to dig with, and when you relieve yourself, dig a hole and cover up your excrement.” The rationale for this practice included a spiritual component: “For the Lord your God moves about in your camp to protect you” (Deuteronomy 23:9-14).

94. “When you build a new house, make a parapet around your roof so that you may not bring the guilt of bloodshed on your house if someone falls from the roof” (Deuteronomy 22:8).

95. Before going into battle, a priest was to address the army and state, “Hear, Israel: Today you are going into battle against your enemies. Do not be fainthearted or afraid; do not panic or be terrified by them. For the Lord your God is the one who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory” (Deuteronomy 20:1-4). When planning to besiege a city, the army was to first make that city an offer of peace, which, if accepted, would result only in forced labor, rather than annihilation (Deuteronomy 20:10-12). Furthermore, military campaigns were not to result in ecological devastation. “When you lay siege to a city for a long time, fighting against it to capture it, do not destroy its trees by putting an ax to them. . . . Are the trees people, that you should besiege them?” (Deuteronomy 20:19).

96. Deuteronomy 16:9; 17:6; 19:15-21; 25:1-3. Content included laws of inheritance, as well as safeguards protecting the rights of women (Numbers 27:1-11; 36; Deuteronomy 21:15-17; Joshua 17:3-6). A special feature was the concept of “cities of refuge,” available for Israelites and foreigners alike, where an individual who accidentally killed another might flee and stand trial before an assembly (Numbers 13; Deuteronomy 19:1-13; Joshua 20).

97. Leviticus 25:17; Deuteronomy 15:1-18; 22:13-30; 23:19-25; 27-30; Joshua 23. They learned, for example, that if they were to find something that had been lost, they were to return it to its rightful owner (Deuteronomy 22:1-4). In taking security for a debt, they were not to deprive a person of his or her source of livelihood (Deuteronomy 24:6).

98. Deuteronomy 24:10-17.

99. Deuteronomy 8:10-18; 12:13, 14; 31:19-22; 32:44-47.

100. Deuteronomy 13:3; 30:11-19; Joshua 24:14-28.

101. Joshua, for example, wrote a copy of the law on stones that were placed on Mount Ebal (Deuteronomy 27; Joshua 8:30-32). Similarly, after crossing the Jordan River, Joshua created a monument of that event with an instructional purpose: “In the future, when your children ask you, ‘What do these stones mean?’ tell them that the flow of the Jordan was cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. . . . These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever” (Joshua 4:4-7, 21-23; see also Joshua 22:9-24; 24:25-28).

102. “These are the commands, decrees and laws the Lord your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the Lord your God as long as you live” (Deuteronomy 6:1, 2). Also, Deuteronomy 4:5-8, 15-31; 7:1-6; 30:15-20.

103. Judges 2:7-11.

104. Judges 2:18, 19.

105. 1 Samuel 7:16, 17; 19:20.

106. 2 Kings 2:3-5; 4:38.

107. While the educational work of the prophets was most enduring, there were moments when other forms of instruction took place. King Jehoshaphat, for example, sent his officials throughout Judah, along with priests and Levites, to teach the Word of God (2 Chronicles 17:7-9). As a result, a spiritual revival took place among the people (Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings* [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1943], 91). After the exile, another reformation took place. Ezra, a priest and scribe who “had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the Lord, and to teaching its decrees and laws in Israel” (Ezra 7:10), read the Word of God before all the people. Joined in this work by the Levites, “they read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people understood what was being read” (Nehemiah 8:1-8).

108. Samuel, for example, instructed the Israelites, “If you are returning to the Lord with all your hearts, then rid yourselves of the foreign gods and the Ash-toreths and commit yourselves to the Lord and serve him only” (1 Samuel 7:3-6). As a result of this entreaty, the people fasted and confessed their sins. Ezra also observed that the prophets throughout Israel’s history had served as advocates of revival and reformation (Ezra 9:10-12).

109. 2 Kings 6:32-7:2; 2 Chronicles 12:5; 16:7-9; 19:2; 12; 25:15, 16; Isaiah 39:1-7. Throughout this period, Israel and Judah were ruled by kings, beginning with Saul and extending to Hosea in the northern kingdom and Zedekiah in the south. The prophets endeavored to provide instruction to these leaders. Elijah, for instance, sent a letter to Jehoram reproving him for his idolatrous and violent actions, and warning him of impending judgment (2 Chronicles 21:12-15). The prophets were also commissioned to convey God’s guidance in the political affairs of the nation. Nathan, for example, was involved in ensuring that Solomon became king (1 Kings 1:11-48); Ahijah, in making Jeroboam king (1 Kings 14:2); the prophet Jehu, in the case of Zimri (1 Kings 16:6-12); and Elijah, in anointing Jehu as king (1 Kings 19:16).

110. God instructed Elijah, for example, to extend an invitation to Elisha to serve as his assistant in preparation for his own prophetic ministry (1 Kings 19; 2 Kings 2; 4:11-14, 29-31; 5:10-27; 6:15-17).

111. Jeremiah 1:5-9. Also, 1 Samuel 3; Jeremiah 1:17-19; Ezekiel 2:1-8; 3:17; 33:7.

112. 2 Kings 2:9-15; Isaiah 9:15; Daniel 6. These instructors included prominent personages, such as Samuel, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel, as well as lesser-known individuals, such as Gad, Ahijah, Shemaiah, Jedduthun, and Iddo. They also included women—Huldah, as well as the wife of Isaiah (2 Kings 22:14; 2 Chronicles 34:22; Isaiah 8:3). Some, such as Ezra, were priests and scribes, while others, like Amos, came from the common walks of life (Ezra 7:11; Amos 7:14, 15).

113. Deuteronomy 18:15, 18; 1 Samuel 9:15-17, 27; 2 Kings 20:1; Jeremiah 23:28. At various times, these messages included encouragement, warning, reproof, a call to action, or an invitation to return to God (1 Samuel 13:11-14; 15:16-31; 2 Kings 17:13, 23; 20:14-18; 21:10-15; Isaiah 37:21-38; Haggai 1:2, 3; 2:1-9, 23; Zechariah 1:3).

114. 1 Samuel 12:6-25.

115. 1 Chronicles 29:29; 2 Chronicles 9:29; 12:15; 13:22; 26:22; 35:15.

116. Habakkuk 1:2-4.

117. 1 Samuel 11:14; 2 Chronicles 29:25, 30.

118. 2 Kings 4:1-7, 38-44.

119. 1 Samuel 9:25; 15:30-31, 35.

120. 1 Samuel 7:9; 2 Kings 6:15-17; 2 Chronicles 32:20; Daniel 9:1-19; Habakkuk 3.

121. 2 Samuel 7:4; 24:11; 1 Kings 12:24; 13:1-5; 16:7; 18:1; 19:9; 22:19; 2 Kings 7:1; 20:16; 24:2; 2 Chronicles 17:7-9; Micah 7:18, 19; Malachi 4:1-4.

122. Isaiah 53; 58:13, 14; 65:17-25; Zephaniah 1:14; Malachi 3:6-12; 4:1-3.

123. 1 Samuel 10:25; Joel 3:14; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 7:8-10.

124. 2 Kings 3:11; 8:4-6; Isaiah 58:6, 7.

125. 2 Kings 3:15; Isaiah 38:21; Zechariah 14:5. Students, for example, worked together with their teacher to construct the school buildings (2 Kings 6:1-7). Perhaps it is also significant that the teacher responded positively to student initiatives.

126. To memorialize a victory over the Philistines, for example, Samuel “took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying, ‘Thus far the Lord has helped us’” (1 Samuel 7:12). See also 2 Samuel 12; Isaiah 8:1-4; Ezekiel 16 and 17; Hosea 1:2-11; 12:10.

127. Jeremiah, for example, used a linen belt (13:1-11), a potter’s work (18:1-10), a broken clay jar (19:1-13), a yoke (27:2), and stones buried in clay (43:8-13) to illustrate key concepts. Ezekiel filled a boiling cooking pot with bones, and also packed his belongings and dug a hole through the city wall (12:3-8; 24:1-14). On another occasion, God instructed Ezekiel to “take a block of clay, put it in front

of you and draw the city of Jerusalem on it. Then lay siege to it: Erect siege works against it, build a ramp up to it, set up camps against it and put battering rams around it. Then take an iron pan, place it as an iron wall between you and the city and turn your face toward it. It will be under siege, and you shall besiege it. This will be a sign to the people of Israel” (Ezekiel 4:1-3). Other prophets, such as Hosea and Zechariah, also used tangible illustrations (Hosea 3; Zechariah 6:9-15).

128. 2 Kings 4:38-44; 9:1-3; 1 Chronicles 9:22. Student activities also included praise and prophesying (1 Samuel 10:5; 19:19-24; 2 Chronicles 29:25, 26; Isaiah 5:1-7; 25; 26; 63).

129. 2 Samuel 24:11, 12; 1 Kings 18.

130. Jeremiah 35.

131. 2 Chronicles 17:10, 11; 20:20; 28:9-15.

132. Zechariah 8:23.

133. When Asa, for example, heard “the prophecy of Azariah son of Oded the prophet, he took courage. He removed the detestable idols from the whole land of Judah and Benjamin . . . and he repaired the altar of the Lord” (2 Chronicles 15:8). Similarly, after the captivity, Zerubbabel, Joshua, “and the whole remnant of the people obeyed the voice of the Lord their God and the message of the prophet Haggai. . . . They came and began to work on the house of the Lord Almighty, their God” (Haggai 1:12-14; also Ezra 5:1, 2; 6:14). See also 1 Samuel 10:6, 7, 9-11; 16:13; Ezekiel 36:26, 27.

134. 2 Chronicles 36:12, 16; Daniel 9:6-10; Jeremiah 7:25, 26; 25:1-14; Zechariah 7:11, 12.

135. 2 Chronicles 24:19-21; Nehemiah 9:26; Jeremiah 26:8-11; 29:19; 35:15; 37:2; Zechariah 1:4; 7:12.

136. 2 Chronicles 15:3-6; Nehemiah 9:30.

137. Isaiah 30:10. See also Isaiah 9:15; Jeremiah 5:13, 31; 8:10; 14:14-16; 23:10, 11, 14, 16-40; Ezekiel 13; Micah 2:6-11; Zephaniah 3:4.

138. Malachi 4:5, 6.

139. Luke 1:39. “And the child grew and became strong in spirit; and he lived in the wilderness until he appeared publicly to Israel” (Luke 1:80).

140. Luke 1:13, 23, 41. They are further described as “righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord’s commands and regulations blamelessly” (Luke 1:6). See also Judges 13:4.

141. Luke 1:11-20, 76-79.

142. To the religious leaders John declared, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance” (Matthew 3:7, 8; Luke 3:7-9). He also fearlessly rebuked King Herod for an adulterous relationship with his brother’s wife, and for “all the other evil things he had done” (Matthew 14:3, 4; Luke 3:19, 20). Christ, Himself, recognized John as immovable in the face of opposition, in stark contrast with “a reed swayed by the wind” (Matthew 11:7; Luke 7:24-28).

143. Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:7; Luke 3:15-17; John 1:27; Acts 13:25. Similarly, when Jesus came to John to be baptized, John remonstrated, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” (Matthew 3:14). To his followers, he clarified, “This is the one I spoke about when I said, ‘He who comes after me is preferred before me’” (John 1:15). When Jesus began His ministry, some of the Jews said to John, “‘Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan—the one you testified about—look, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him.’” John replied, “‘He must become greater; I must become less’” (John 3:26-30).

144. Luke 1:15; 3:10-14.

145. Matthew 3:1, 2; Luke 3:2-6.

146. Matthew 3:4; 11:8, 18; Mark 1:6; Luke 1:15; 7:24-28, 33. Apparently, John was subject to conditions of the Nazarite vow, which included a number of additional parameters, as noted in Numbers 6:3-7; Judges 13:4, 5; and Amos 2:11, 12.

147. Mark 11:32; 1:4, 5; also Matthew 21:32.

148. Matthew 11:7-9; Luke 7:24-28.

149. John 1:33, 34.

150. John 7:15.

151. Luke 4:16-20, NKJV. While often emphasized that it was Jesus’ Sabbath custom to attend the synagogue, the passage also notes that it was His custom to “stand up to read.” This indicates that Jesus was recognized by His community as one who would read Scripture with clarity and accuracy.

152. Matthew 1:19.

153. Luke 1:30-38, 46-56.

154. Luke, on two distinct occasions, notes that Mary “treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart” (Luke 2:19, 51).

155. Luke 2:4, 22-24, 27, 39, 41.

156. Matthew 2:13, 14, 22.

157. Of the two offerings that Joseph and Mary could have offered at Jesus’ dedication, they brought the offering allowed for the poor (Luke 2:24).

158. Matthew 2:13-15.

159. When Philip informed Nathaniel that he had found the Messiah and

that He was from Nazareth, Nathaniel asked incredulously, “‘Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?’” (John 1:46).

160. Luke 2:46.

161. Luke 2:44. This assumption also indicates the trust that His parents placed in Him.

162. Luke 2:40. Note that the passage first specifies that Jesus’ physical development was robust. It then indicates that Jesus developed cognitively, gaining mental acuity (Luke 2:46, 47).

163. Luke 2:52.

164. When Jesus returned to Nazareth on a certain occasion, the people asked, “‘Isn’t this the carpenter’s son?’” (Matthew 13:55). Mark, however, records that on a Nazareth visit, people wondered, “‘Isn’t this the carpenter?’” (Mark 6:3).

165. When teaching, He frequently referred to lessons derived from nature—lessons based on salt, water, wind, birds, sheep, lightning, and lilies; lessons that highlighted reeds bending in the wind, a hen gathering her chicks, the habits of vultures, and small seeds growing into large plants, as well as seasonal changes and weather patterns. See Matthew 5:13; 6:25-34; 11:7; 13:31, 32; 16:2, 3; 24:27, 32; Mark 4:26-29, 30-32; 9:50; 13:28; Luke 6:43, 44; 7:24; 9:58; 12:24-27, 54-56; 13:18, 19, 34; 14:34, 35; 17:24, 37; 21:29-31; John 3:8; 4:13; 10:4, 5; 12:24; 15:4, 5.

166. Matthew 4:4, 6, 7, 10; 8:4; 12:3-5, 39-42; 16:4; 19:4, 7-9; 21:13; 22:31, 35-40; 23:35; 24:15, 37-39; 26:24, 31; Mark 1:44; 7:6-13; 9:12, 13; 10:2-9; 11:17; 12:10, 26; 13:14; 14:21, 27; Luke 4:1-12, 14-21, 24-27; 5:14; 6:3; 7:27; 11:29, 51; 18:31; 17:26-29, 32; 19:46; 20:27-38, 41-44; 24:27, 44; John 3:14, 15; 5:46; 6:32, 45; 7:22, 23.

167. Building a house, illuminating a home, mending clothes, making bread, hiring workers, and herding animals; from wedding festivities, seating arrangements, laws of inheritance, investments, and hidden treasure; from children playing in the marketplace, fishermen sorting fish, a merchant looking for products, a shepherd finding his sheep, a king planning a war, and farmers planting seed and eradicating weeds. See Matthew 5:14-16, 38-42; 6:1-8, 16-18, 24; 7:24-27; 9:16, 17; 11:16-19; 12:11, 12; 13:1-9, 24-30, 33, 44-48; 15:3-6; 18:12-14; 20:1-15; 22:1-8; 23:1-7, 16-26, 29-32; 25:1-13, 14-30, 31-46; Mark 2:19, 20, 21, 22; 3:23-27; 4:1-8, 13-20, 21, 22; 7:9-13; Luke 5:36-39; 6:46-49; 7:31, 32, 41-43; 8:4-8, 16-18; 11:5-8, 11, 12, 21, 22, 33, 42-47; 12:6, 7, 16-20, 29, 30, 35-40, 42-48, 57-59; 13:6-9, 15, 20, 21; 14:5, 7-11, 16-24, 28, 29, 31, 32; 15:4-7, 8-10, 11-32; 16:1-8, 13, 19-21; 17:7-10; 18:1-5, 9-13; 19:12-27; 20:9-16, 21-25, 46, 47; 22:25, 31; 10:1-6, 8-13; 12:35; 15:1-3, 6, 13-15; 16:21; 18:36.

168. Luke 2:49, NKJV.

169. Luke 2:47.

170. Matthew 14:23; 26:36; Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; 6:12; 9:28, 29; 11:1; John 17:11, 20.

171. “Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people” (Matthew 4:23). As with His development (Luke 2:52), Christ’s ministry incorporated each of these dimensions: cognitive (teaching in the synagogues), spiritual (preaching the gospel), physical (healing disease), and social (interacting with the people; see a similar passage in Matthew 9:35, which emphasizes that Jesus carried out this ministry throughout “all the towns and villages”).

172. John 14:9; 17:6; Matthew 13.

173. Matthew 4:23; 9:35; 13:54; 21:23; 26:55; Mark 1:21; 6:2; 11:15-17; 12:35; 14:49; Luke 4:15, 31; 13:10; 19:47; 20:1; 21:37; John 6:59; 7:14, 28.

174. Matthew 5:1, 2; 11:1; Mark 2:13; 4:1, 2; 6:6, 34; Luke 5:3, 17-19; 13:22.

175. Matthew 5:1, 2; 11:1; Mark 8:34; 9:31; Luke 11:1.

176. Matthew 5:1-3; 14:21; 15:38; Mark 6:44; 8:9; 10:1; Luke 5:1-3; 9:14; 10:1, 17; John 6:10.

177. John 3:1-21; 4:5-26.

178. Matthew 9:10-13; 12:14; 14:21; 15:1-9, 38; Mark 5:21; Luke 19:1-28; John 6:9; 7:32-46.

179. Mark 4:33; 9:33-35; Luke 8:44-46; John 16:12.

180. Matthew 9:36; 11:29, 30; 14:12, 13; Mark 6:30-32; 49, 50; John 8:10, 11; 11:32-36.

181. Matthew 20:28; John 13:4-17; 3:26-36; 4:1-3.

182. Luke 5:33, 34; 19:37-40; 6:22, 23; 10:17-21; 15:4-7; John 3:29; 16:20-24; 17:13; 15:4-7; 15:11; 10:10.

183. Mark 1:16-18; Luke 5:4-11.

184. Mark 8:31-33; Luke 7:37-47.

185. Matthew 16:23; 21:12; 23:13-37; John 2:13-17.

186. Matthew 17:1, 2; 26:36-44; Mark 3:14; John 1:38, 39; 21:4, 12.

187. Matthew 8:3; 18:10, 14; 19:10, 11, 13, 14; 25:40; Mark 9:42; 12:41-44; Luke 9:46-48; 19:5-7; John 4:40.

188. Matthew 14:23; 26:36; Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; 6:12; 9:28, 29; 11:1; John 17:11, 20.

189. See, for example, Luke 4:16-21 and 24:27, 32. In His teaching, Christ

used Scripture to initiate thought (Luke 10:26), expand concepts (Mark 9:12), clarify meaning (Matthew 5:27, 28), create connections (Luke 20:17), understand the past (Luke 24:26, 27), visualize the future (Luke 24:44), and give a call to action (Luke 11:17).

190. Luke 12:22-31; Matthew 16:24-27; 23:23.
191. Mark 10:2-9; Matthew 5:21-44.
192. Matthew 20:28.
193. Mark 14:8, 9; Matthew 28:19, 20.
194. Matthew 17:25; 18:12; 22:42; 21:28.
195. Matthew 22:29; John 8:32; 14:7.
196. Matthew 13:23; Mark 7:14; John 13:12; Luke 24:45.
197. Luke 10:29, 36; 6:36; Matthew 10:16; Luke 12:40.
198. Matthew 5:16; John 13:17; Matthew 7:21; also Matthew 16:27.
199. Matthew 13:34; 7:16; 9:16, 17; 15:14; 24:43, 44.
200. Mark 4:33, 34.
201. Luke 13:1-5; 10:30.
202. Mark 2:23-26; 12:26; Luke 11:50, 51.
203. Matthew 11:16-19; 23:27, 28; 24:32, 33; 23:37.
204. Mark 12:13-17; 11:13-23; Luke 12:24-27; Matthew 26:26-28.
205. Matthew 11:2-5; John 13:4, 5, 12-17.
206. Matthew 13:11-52.
207. Matthew 11:7-9; 14:31; 16:9, 10, 13-15; Mark 5:30; Luke 13:14-16; John 4:35.
208. Matthew 7:24-27; 25:1-4; 21:13.
209. Matthew 20:26, 27; Luke 17:33; Mark 10:31; Matthew 11:11.
210. Luke 18:25; Matthew 23:24; Luke 6:41, 42.
211. Matthew 17:24-27; Mark 5:18-20.
212. Matthew 21:28-31; Luke 9:12, 13.
213. Mark 6:7-13; Luke 10:1; Mark 6:30.
214. Matthew 7:28, 29; Mark 6:2, 3; Matthew 9:33.
215. Luke 13:17; John 7:32, 45, 46; Luke 24:32.
216. Matthew 28:19, 20. It is perhaps significant that the term “make disciples” (μαθητεύω) is the imperative in this passage and constitutes the focus of the gospel commission.
 217. Acts 8:26-39.
 218. 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15.
 219. Acts 16; 1 Timothy 4:11; 6:2.
 220. 1 Timothy 4:12; 6:6-11.
 221. 1 Timothy 4:13, 14.
 222. Titus 2:1-10, 15.
 223. At the onset, the apostles taught in the temple court (Acts 5:21, 42). At a later time, Paul would often teach in the synagogues, in other public venues, such as the Areopagus and the school of Tyrannus, and in private homes (Acts 5:42; 13:42; 14:1; 17:2, 17, 19; 18:4, 7; 19:9; 20:20). At times, instruction would take place in a natural setting, such as beside the river in Philippi or in the wilderness of Gaza (Acts 8:26; 16:13). Examples of the family setting may be found in Acts 16:1 and 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15.
 224. Acts 21:21; 26:1-28; 1 Timothy 2:7; 2 Timothy 1:11; 3:15; Titus 2:1-10.
 225. Acts 21:28.
 226. Acts 2:42; 18:25; 28:31; 2 Timothy 1:11. One of the qualifications of a bishop, for instance, was the ability to teach (1 Timothy 3:2). Similarly, a portion of the work of church elders was found in teaching (1 Timothy 5:17).
 227. Romans 15:14; Ephesians 6:4; Titus 2:3, 4.
 228. Acts 5:42; 13:1; 15:35; Romans 12:6, 7; 1 Corinthians 12:28, 29; 1 Timothy 4:13; 5:17; James 3:1. Paul, for example, in describing Christ’s gifts to the church, clarifies that the ministry of pastor and teacher is given to the same individuals (Ephesians 4:11).
 229. Romans 2:20-22; 1 Corinthians 14:19; Galatians 6:6; Hebrews 5:12, 13; 1 Timothy 1:7; 2 John 7-10.
 230. Acts 5:25; 18:25; 28:31; 2 Timothy 2:2, 24.
 231. Acts 4:18; 1 Corinthians 3:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:2. False teachers, by contrast, would teach merely what others wanted to hear (2 Timothy 4:3). They would subtly introduce heresies, or would teach to exploit others or for mere financial gain (1 Timothy 1, 6; Titus 1:11; 2 Peter 2:1, 3; Revelation 2:20).
 232. Acts 18:11; 1 Timothy 6:3; 2 Timothy 3:16; 4:3. Parents, for example, were to bring up their children “in the training and instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4).
 233. 1 Timothy 4:10, 11; Revelation 14:6.
 234. Ephesians 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 4:1; 1 Timothy 6:2.
 235. Acts 12:25; 15:37; 16:1-3; 1 Corinthians 4:17; 14:31; 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 2 Timothy 1:13; 4:11.
 236. Acts 6; 18:2, 3; 20:34; Ephesians 4:28; Philippians 4:3; Colossians 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 4:11; 2 Thessalonians 3:6.
 237. Acts 2:42. The learning experience encouraged them to “to live self-

controlled, upright and godly lives” (Titus 2:12).

238. Acts 2:41, 47; 5:14; 11:24; 13:12; 17:6.
239. Isaiah 64:4; 1 Corinthians 2:9. This setting was planned since “the foundation of the world” (Matthew 25:34, KJV) and prepared by Christ Himself (John 14:1-3).
 240. Hebrews 11:10, 16; 13:14; Revelation 21:1, 2.
 241. Its brilliance is “like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal” (Revelation 21:11). Its foundations are decorated with precious stones. Its gates are of pearl and its streets of gold, “pure as transparent glass” (Revelation 21:2, 19, 21).
 242. Psalm 23:6; John 14:2; Revelation 21:23. The city, however, does not contain a temple, “because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple” (Revelation 21:22).
 243. Isaiah 35:1; 55:13.
 244. Isaiah 11:6, 9; 32:18; 60:18; 65:25; 2 Peter 3:13.
 245. Isaiah 52:6.
 246. Revelation 14:4.
 247. Revelation 7:17; 21:3; 22:4, 17.
 248. Colossians 2:3.
 249. Revelation 5:9; 7:9.
 250. Psalm 24:3, 4; Matthew 5:8.
 251. Isaiah 60:21; Matthew 25:46; Ephesians 5:5; Revelation 22:15.
 252. Jude 24; Revelation 2:7, 17; 15:2; 21:27.
 253. Students in the schools of earth longed to see God face to face and to know Him more fully. Job, for example, asserted, “I know that my redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God. I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!” (Job 19:25-27). In the school of heaven that desire is fulfilled—they will see “the king in his beauty” (Isaiah 33:17). Like Enoch, the students will walk with God, and will “see him as he is” (1 John 3:2, see also Genesis 5:22-24; Revelation 3:4). Christ Himself will reveal to them “the knowledge of the Lord” and “the manifold wisdom of God” (Isaiah 11:9; Ephesians 3:10).
 254. Job 38; Psalm 119:89; Revelation 15:3. The overarching conclusion of their research will be, “You alone are the Lord. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything” (Nehemiah 9:6).
 255. Ephesians 2:6, 7. As the redeemed glimpse the depths of the love of God and new dimensions of the sacrifice made in their behalf, they exclaim, “Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!” (Revelation 5:12). “To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever!” (Revelation 1:5, 6). For the students in heaven’s school, the character and acts of God are forever vindicated. They cry out with affirmation, “Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, for true and just are his judgments” (Revelation 19:1, 2). “Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb” (Revelation 7:10).
 256. Isaiah 65:21, 22.
 257. Psalm 87:7; Isaiah 14:7; 24:14; 35:10; 51:3; Revelation 15:2. These musical experiences, both vocal and instrumental, not only involve skilled performance but also creative composition (Revelation 5:9; 14:2, 3; 15:2-4).
 258. In the school of heaven, service is not merely an event, but a way of life. “They are before the throne of God and serve him day and night” (Revelation 7:15). See also Psalm 103:21; Revelation 1:6; 22:3.
 259. This theme of worship and praise permeates the school and each of its activities (Psalm 103:21; 113:3; 145:10; 148:2; Isaiah 60:18; 61:11; Revelation 1:5, 6; 5:13). There are, however, special occasions of celebration (Revelation 19:6-9).
 260. 1 Corinthians 13:12.
 261. They partake of the leaves of the tree of life, which are “for the healing of the nations” (Revelation 22:2). They kneel together “before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name” (Ephesians 3:15).
 262. 1 Corinthians 6:2. See also Luke 22:29 and 30 and Revelation 20:4 to 6.
 263. “You are my witnesses,” declares the Lord” (Isaiah 43:12, italics supplied).
 264. Revelation 15:3, 4; also Psalm 29:9.
 265. Nahum 1:9, NKJV.
 266. Isaiah 35:10.
 267. Psalm 16:11; Matthew 25:21.
 268. Isaiah 51:3; 65:17, 18.
 269. Isaiah 49:10; 65:19; Revelation 7:16, 17; 21:4.
 270. John 10:28.
 271. Job 3:17.
 272. Luke 20:36.
 273. Malachi 4:2.