



Reflecting Jesus: The Big Picture

7



Before you start:

1. Prayerfully read through the whole lesson at least twice
2. Gather all the materials you need for each section (see right)
3. Work with another team member and plan who will manage each section of the session.

Leadership Personal Preparation:

Think about an occasion when something happened in your life that didn't make sense at the time, but, later on, you could see how God had perfectly arranged the events as part of his overall plan for your life.

If the Holy Spirit invites you to do so, be ready to tell the story of your experience during the welcome or the conclusion. Otherwise use the inspiration of the story to fill you with enthusiasm for today's session.

You will need:

- Marker pens/felt pens and pencils
- Paper
- Icebreaker:**
- Large Jigsaw puzzle of the world (or a nature scene or Bible Story scene). Must have enough pieces for one per person. (See activity for further information).
- Copy a set of the Jigsaw Icebreaker questions for each pair of people.
- Word Search:**
- Copies of group Bible study sheets for each person in each of the seven groups to have their own study sheet.
- Make large posters or jigsaw shapes, each printed with the number and title of one of the seven pieces of the Big Picture.
- Purchase tiny, brightly-coloured sticky notes in four colours - yellow, green, orange and pink - enough for each person to have one of each colour.
- Make one copy of the Combined Bible study sheets for each person
- Family Focus Time:**
- Drinks and cups for refreshments during the Family Focus time.
- Copy the Family Time Line instruction and prayer cards onto card and cut them apart. You will need one card for each family.
- 1 metre from a roll of white drawing paper (from a children's educational toy and craft shop - try the Early Learning Centre in the UK). Alternatively, use a length of wall lining paper.
- Jesus and Me (JAM) Session:**
- CD player and CD of soft worship music
- One set of 'Jesus and Me' Journal Pages per participant
- Take-away Menu (optional):**
- A4 sheets of red acetate cut into A5 pieces (or smaller if necessary)
- Scissors

By the end of the session, the group members will:

- Know that their lives are an important part of God's bigger picture and his plan for the entire universe.
- Feel a confident trust in God as they understand the plan of salvation, and their special place in it.
- Respond by participating with the Holy Spirit in God's plan of re-creating them in his perfect and loving image.



KID for Teens: Leaders Guide: The Big Picture



Welcome and Prayer – 5 mins

Say:

“ The Bible was written by more than 40 people over 1500 years. The authors were shepherds, kings, fishermen, doctors, peasants, poets, songwriters and government officials. But together they tell one story. Just as a picture on your computer is made up of thousands of tiny coloured dots, so all the parts of the Bible story build up a bigger, clearer and more colourful picture of God and his character.

When we start to understand the bigger picture of the way God is working to make our messy world and our lives as beautiful and perfect as they were in the beginning, then we can also begin to make sense of our place in God’s eternal plan. Understanding our place in God’s plan gives our lives an amazing sense of purpose and beauty. Our trust in God grows when we realise how perfectly God is working through us, even when we make mistakes, and even though we don’t know everything the future holds for us.

”

Icebreaker

- Find a large jigsaw of the world (or a jigsaw of a nature or Bible story picture) that has at least enough pieces for every person in your group to have one piece each. If possible, look for a large-scale floor jigsaw with a design that isn’t too childish. Try looking in educational children’s toy shops, or a Christian book shop that sells children’s jigsaws.
- Alternatively, find a coloured picture of the world on the Internet, or in a book, and enlarge it to A3 on a colour copier.
- Copy it onto a sheet of A3 card (or copy it onto A3 paper and then stick the paper onto a sheet of card). Turn the card over and draw a jigsaw-type design on the back of the card that will give you at least one piece of jigsaw for each person in the group. To help you plan the layout, start by drawing a faint pencil grid of the number of squares you need for your group. Then draw the jigsaw shapes using the grid as a guide. Cut the picture apart along the lines you have drawn.

Icebreaker Activity - 12 mins

You will need:

1. Jigsaw - prepared as per instructions on left
 2. A set of the Jigsaw Icebreaker questions for each pair of people.
 3. Paper
 4. Pencils
 5. Pens
- Give every person in the group a piece of jigsaw, a sheet of blank paper, and a pencil.
 - Ask them to pair up with someone else and guess the design that will be on the completed jigsaw based on the two pieces of jigsaw that they have. Ask them to draw their ‘guessed’ design.
 - Then invite everyone to come together to make the jigsaw.
 - When the jigsaw has been completed ask people to show their ‘guessed’ designs and to compare them with the completed jigsaw.
 - Ask the group members to return to their original partner.
 - Distribute the Jigsaw Icebreaker questions – one copy per pair – and ask them to discuss the questions together.
 - After they have discussed the questions in pairs, invite some group feedback.





KID for Teens: Leaders Guide: The Big Picture



Word Search – 35/45 mins

You will need:

1. Paper
2. Pencils
3. Pens
4. Scissors
5. Copies of group Bible study sheets for each person in each of the seven groups to have their own study sheet.
6. Large posters or jigsaw shapes, each printed with the number and title of one of the seven pieces of the Big Picture.
7. Tiny, brightly-coloured sticky notes in four colours, yellow, green, orange and pink, enough for each person to have one of each colour.
8. A copy of the Combined Bible study sheets for each person

Say: 'The Big Picture of God's work in the world can be divided into seven smaller (but still very big) jigsaw pieces. We are going to break into seven groups and explore one of the different jigsaw pieces. Then we will bring our discoveries back to the main group and creatively present them to everyone else.'

- Hand out the work sheets.
- (If you are working with only a few people – give each small group two or three of the seven studies and ask them to write a summary of each study on a large sheet of paper or card that has been cut like a jigsaw piece. Remind them to number and title their piece so that you can easily arrange them in the correct order. Then stick them on the wall where everyone can walk around and read the description of each jigsaw piece in the bigger picture of God's plan of salvation.)

Coming together

- Call people back to the larger group. Invite each group to share their insights and presentations about their 'puzzle pieces' in whatever way they wish.
- As they do so, stick seven large sheets of paper along a wall, each one printed with the number and title of a puzzle piece (it is neatest if this can be printed on a computer so that it looks tidy and professional). For extra interest you could cut these out of large sheets of card, to make seven interlocking puzzle pieces, and then add the printed titles.
- *(Optional) After every group has presented their discoveries, give each person four different-coloured mini sticky notes in yellow, green, orange and pink (or use different coloured star stickers or felt pens). Ask them to stick their sticky notes onto one of the seven big puzzle pieces according to the way they would answer the following questions. Stress that there are no correct answers because they are just about their personal thoughts today:*
 - Yellow - Which of the puzzle pieces of God's Big Picture do I like the most?
 - Green - Which puzzle piece do I think is the most important one?
 - Orange - In which of the puzzle pieces do I see myself, personally, today?
 - Pink - Which of the puzzle pieces do I think could most easily be left out of the picture?
- This part of the activity is about personal reflection and you do not need to draw attention to the responses or discuss them as a group.
- Transition to the Family Focus time.

Family Focus Time - 10/15 mins

You will need:

1. Drinks and cups for refreshments during the Family Focus time.
2. Family Time Line and Prayer instruction cards - one per family.
3. 1 packet of marker pens for each family
4. 1 metre of white drawing paper

- Request everyone to re-assemble into their family groups, collecting a drink and activity supplies on the way.

- Give each family a 1m length of white paper; a packet of felt-pens and a Family Time Line instruction card.
- Give the families ten minutes to create a simple time-line for their life as a family over the last year. Invite them to mark the times when God guided them in special ways, answered their prayers or encouraged them. They can also add the celebrations and the sad times and the ways in which God comforted them. It is up to them to include whatever they like on their time-lines, but every person in each family group needs to be involved in the activity.
- Let them take their time-lines home with them.





KID for Teens: Leaders Guide: The Big Picture



Family Prayer Time - 10 mins

- Invite each person in the family to thank God for one of the moments in the last year that has been included on their time-line.
- Ask God to help you see your family life from his perspective.
- Thank God for walking alongside your family in the past year.

JAM Session (Jesus and Me) - 5 mins

You will need:

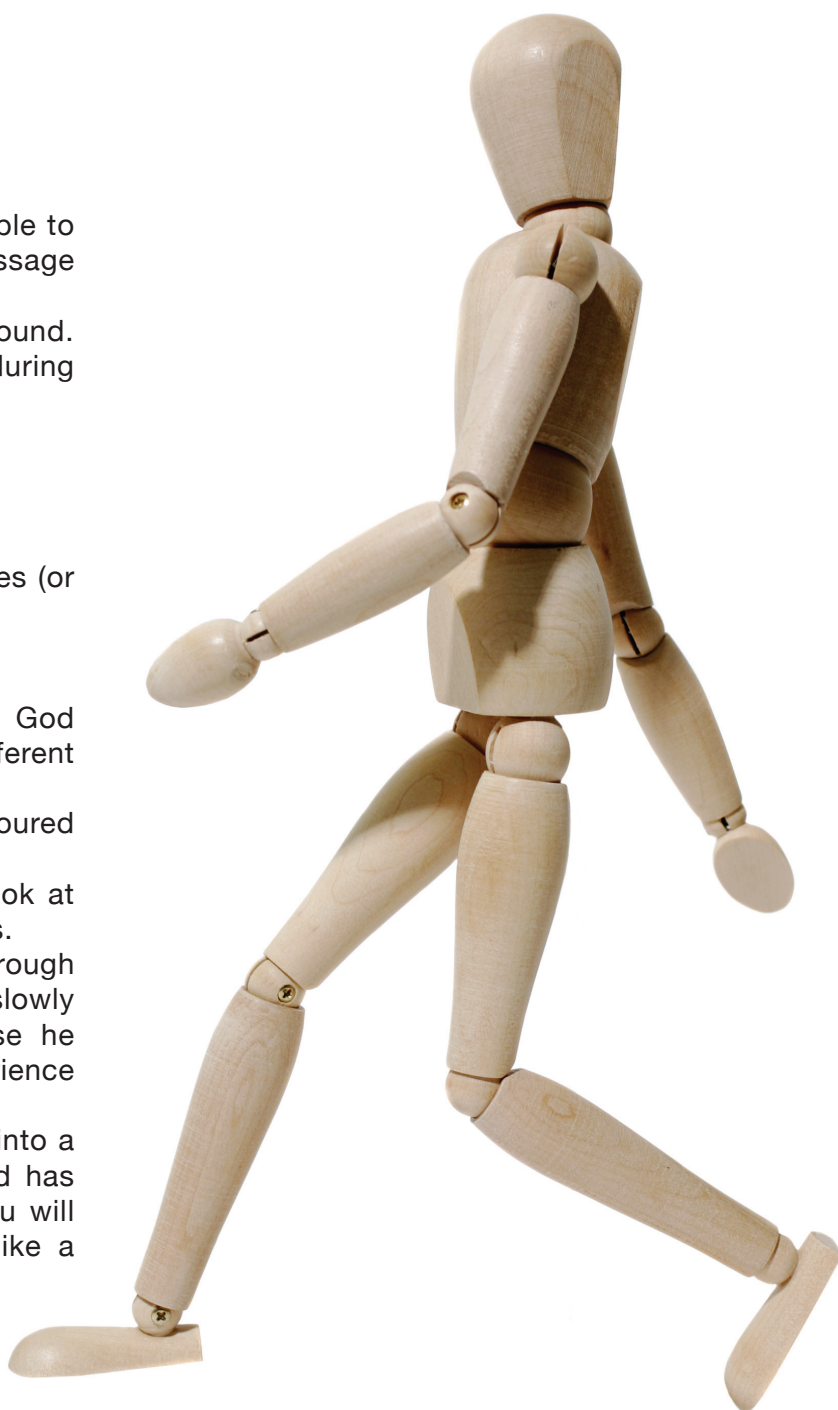
1. One copy per person of the journal pages
- Give out the journal pages and invite people to spend a few moments reading the Bible passage and starting on one of the activity ideas.
 - Play some soft praise music in the background.
 - Encourage them to follow up the activity during the week.

Take-Away Menu

You will need:

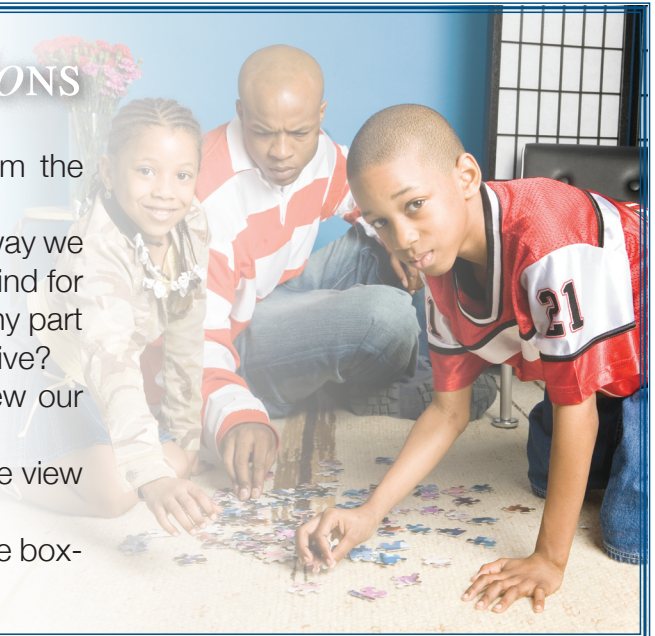
1. A4 sheets of red acetate cut into A5 pieces (or smaller if necessary)
 2. Scissors
- In conclusion, remind the group that God looks at the world and eternity from a different perspective than we do.
 - Give each person an A5 piece of red-coloured acetate (OHP film).
 - See how everything changes when we look at the world through a different coloured lens.
 - God looks at us and his plans for eternity through the lens of his magnificent love. He is slowly working things out for the best because he wants as many people as possible to experience his love and love him and others in return.
 - Take your piece of red acetate and cut it into a shape that will help remind you that God has a different perspective to you. Maybe you will choose a heart shape, or a long strip like a bookmark, or the shape of an eye.
 - Keep the shape in your Bible or faith box.

Closing Prayer



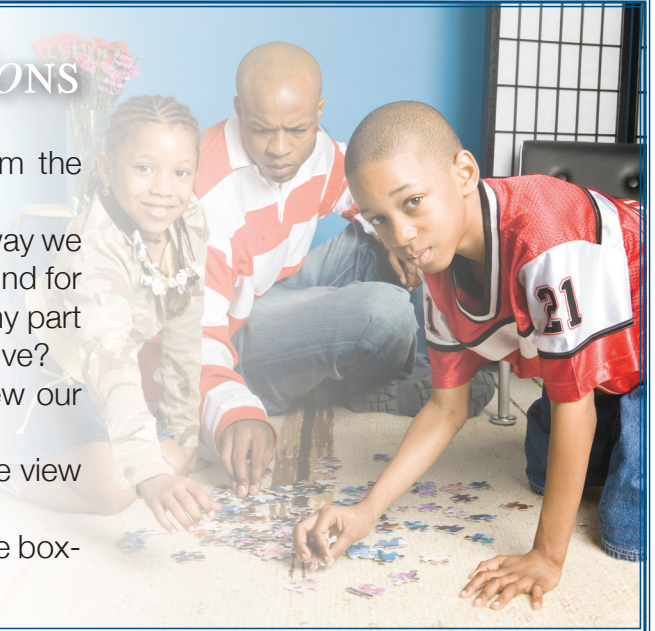
Icebreaker Jigsaw Questions

1. How was your 'guessed' picture different from the completed jigsaw?
2. What can we learn from this activity about the way we try to guess at the bigger picture God has in mind for the universe, even though we can only see a tiny part of the overall picture from our human perspective?
3. What mistakes might we make if we don't view our lives and world from God's perspective?
4. What are the advantages of having a God's eye view of eternity?
5. How can we discover more of the picture on the box-lid of God's universal and eternal jigsaw?



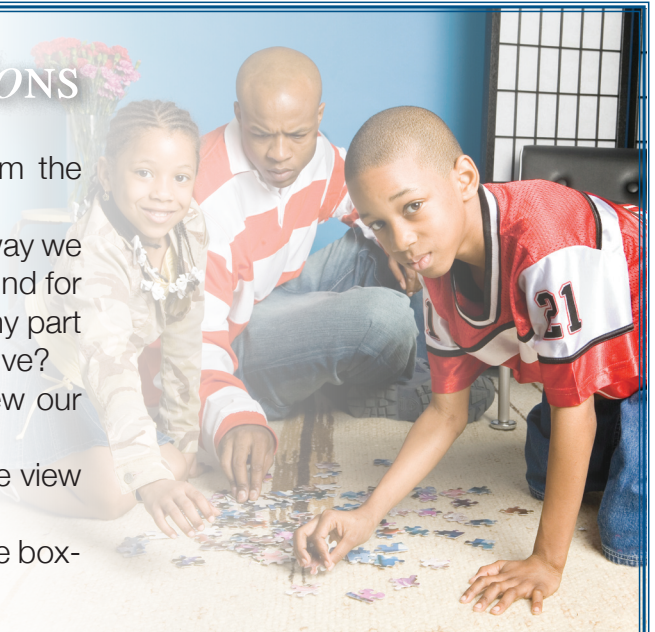
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KID for Teens: Handout: The Big Picture Word Search - Puzzle Pieces



The Fall of Satan and his Angels from Heaven

Satan wanted to be like God. Because of his pride, Satan started a war in heaven to try and overthrow God and his government. Satan and one third of the angels had to leave heaven because they chose to live in ways that broke God's law of love. God created human beings in his own image (to look like him) and with his own character (to love like him) because he wanted to share his love with us. When Satan saw God's love for the people he had created, Satan became even more angry and proud. He decided to take revenge on God by hurting the human race as much as he possibly could, and by destroying the beautiful and perfect things that God had created. Satan and his angels are invisible to us, but they are at work all around us. We can see the terrible effects of their actions every day.

Look up the following verses and summarise them in your own words in the spaces provided:

Isaiah 14:12-15

Ezekiel 28:14-17

Revelation 12:7-9

Ephesians 6:10-12

What have you learned about God's character by exploring this piece of the puzzle?

How would you like to present your discoveries to the rest of the group (as a mini-drama, a picture, a diagram, by reading your Bible verse summaries, etc)?





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Creation

God wanted human beings to be like him, so he created us to look like him and to have his character of perfect love. God enjoyed making our world and everything he made was exquisitely beautiful. At the end of every day of creation, when he looked back at what he had made, he was completely delighted. God described everything that he had created as 'good'. The whole universe shared in God's happiness as he carefully made a special place for us to live.

Look up the following verses and summarise them in your own words in the spaces provided:

Genesis 1:26-27

Genesis 1:31

Job 38:4-7

Psalms 104

What have you learned about God's character by exploring this piece of the puzzle?

How would you like to present your discoveries to the rest of the group (as a mini-drama, a picture, a diagram, by reading your Bible verse summaries, etc)?



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The Fall of Man

Soon after creation, Eve went to the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. She disobeyed God and went there even though God had told her not to go anywhere near the tree. He knew that eating the fruit could unlock a terrible kind of poison on the earth, the poison of sin. While she was looking at the tree Satan, disguised as a beautiful and persuasive creature came and tempted her to disobey God and eat the fruit of the tree. Once Adam and Eve had disobeyed God they suddenly became ashamed of their naked bodies. Their sin had broken God's character of perfect love in their hearts. The glory that had once covered them in pure light had disappeared. They were beginning to experience the effects of their disobedience, they were beginning to die. When God came to visit them he found them hiding in the bushes, afraid and ashamed. With great sadness in his heart he killed an animal to help Adam and Eve understand what it meant to die, and then he made them clothes from the animal's skin, to help cover their shame.

How could they, and all their children, be rescued from the effects of their sin?

Genesis 3:1-12

What have you learned about God's character by exploring this piece of the puzzle?

How would you like to present your discoveries to the rest of the group (as a mini-drama, a picture, a diagram, by reading your Bible verse summaries, etc)?



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Salvation

Whenever there is sin, death has to follow: sin = death. This is a natural law of the universe, and because we have all sinned, this natural law condemns us to die forever. But God loved us so much that he sent the part of himself that is Jesus to die in our place, and to break the power of the natural law, that sin = death. Jesus took the punishment that we deserve and he broke the law of death for all of us who trust that he died on the cross in our place.

God's heart was broken when sin separated us from him. He longs to be fully together with us again, just as he was when Adam and Eve were first created. He is so happy when any of us choose to trust in his plan of salvation – to trust in the death of Jesus for our sins - that there is a celebration in heaven!

As soon as we choose eternal life rather than eternal death, we invite God to begin working in our lives straight away. Gently and carefully he recreates in each one of us his loving image and thoughts, slowly developing the character that Adam and Eve lost in Eden. He works patiently and slowly, like an artist restoring a valuable old painting. But we are worth far more than an old picture! Just as God clothed Adam and Eve in the skin of a dead animal, he is re-clothing us. But this time he is dressing us in the pure righteousness and perfection of Jesus; the clothing of heaven.

Explore the following verses:

- Isaiah 53:4-6
- Romans 6:23
- Romans 3:21-24

What have you learned about God's character by exploring this piece of the puzzle?





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Judgement

Nobody can tell who is truly saved except God. Satan has tried to accuse God of being unfair and unjust ever since he battled against God in heaven. So God wants to hold an open judgement of his character, where the whole universe can see that the choices and plans that he made are right, good and fair. It is our trust in Jesus that saves us, but Jesus also makes it clear that we are judged according to the way we are open to the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Once we accept the gift of Jesus' salvation, we also choose to be part of the Holy Spirit's process of transforming our characters, so that the perfect image of God can be re-created in our lives.

Look up the following verses and summarise them in your own words in the spaces provided:

Romans 14:10-12

Daniel 7:9-10

Matthew 25:31-46

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The Second Coming

Jesus promised us that he would come back to earth, and that he would come in person, just as he came here more than 2000 years ago. But this time the event will be so spectacular that everyone will see him return. When he comes, everyone who has been growing the character of God in their lives will be transformed, in 'the twinkling of an eye'. At that moment they will find themselves re-created with God's perfect character and re-clothed with his glory, just like Adam and Eve at the moment of their creation.

Look up the following verses and summarise them in your own words in the spaces provided:

John 14:1-3

Acts 1:9-10

Matthew 24:24-27

1 Corinthians 15:35-55

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The Destruction of Satan and his followers, and the Re-creation of the Earth

After 1000 years with Jesus in heaven, we will judge Satan and all the angels and humans who chose to follow him. When their judgement has been announced, God will destroy the earth with fire, to purify it completely. Then he will re-create it, in just the way he intended it to be when he created earth the first time. Then we will live on the earth again, peacefully, perfectly and safely. All our relationships will express the loving character of God, and we will grow more like Jesus, every day, forever and ever.

Look up the following verses and summarise them in your own words in the spaces provided:

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Revelation 20:7-15

Revelation 21:1-5

2 Corinthians 3:18

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As soon as we choose eternal life rather than eternal death, we invite God to begin working in our lives straight away. Gently and carefully he recreates in each one of us his loving image and thoughts, slowly developing the character that Adam and Eve lost in Eden. He works patiently and slowly, like an artist restoring a valuable old painting. But we are worth far more than an old picture! Just as God clothed Adam and Eve in the skin of a dead animal, he is re-clothing us. But this time he is dressing us in the pure righteousness and perfection of Jesus; the clothing of heaven.

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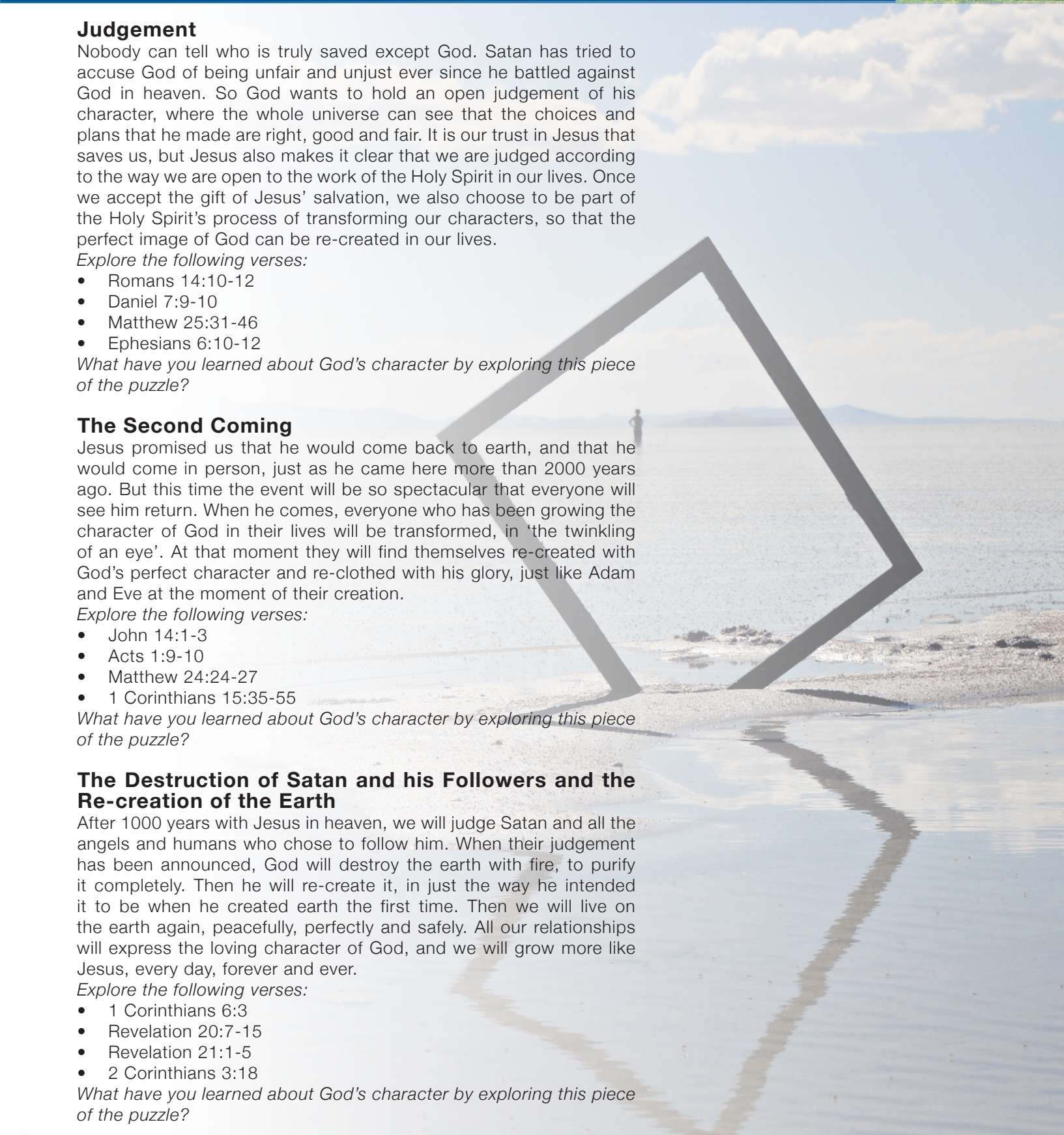
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Lesson 7 -

FAMILY Time-Lines

You have ten minutes to create a simple time line of your life as a family over the last year. Mark the times when God guided you in special ways; answered your prayers or encouraged you. Add your celebrations and your sad times and the ways in which God comforted you. You can include whatever you like on your spiritual time-line. Involve everyone in your family in this activity.

PRAYING TOGETHER

Invite each person in the family to thank God for one of the moments in the last year that has been included on your time-line. Ask him to help you see your life as individuals, and as a family, from his perspective.

Thank him for walking alongside you all during the past year.

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Jesus and Me: Journal Lesson 7

The Big Picture



Read Revelation 21-22

Then imagine you are looking at your life, now, from God's perspective.

Choose one or two of the following options:

Write a letter to yourself from God summarising his hopes for you. Write some words encouraging you to invite the Holy Spirit to work with you to re-create an area of your character that needs some careful restoration.

Draw one picture or diagram of a life lived without God and another picture or diagram of a life in harmony with God.

Imagine that you are God, looking down on your life from his perspective, through his love-tinted glasses. Write or draw what he might be seeing when he looks at you with love and grace today, as his precious son or daughter.

Create a time line of your personal life. Mark out each year and its significant events. Plot your closeness to God, and plot his closeness to you (he is always right there with you). Add stars for celebrations, answers to prayers, and moments of wonder and happiness. Add a symbol of your choice for the sad, lonely, challenging and difficult moments. Add Bible promises that encouraged you along the way. Look for the ways that God has been working in your life all along and thank him for those times. Pray about the parts of your life that still feel sad, hurt or confusing and ask him to show you where he is in those parts, too. Know that you can always trust him.

Make a collection of objects, pictures or poetic verses that illustrate the seven different puzzle pieces in God's Big Picture jigsaw:

1. The Fall of Satan from Heaven
2. The Creation of the Earth
3. The Fall of Man
4. God's Plan of Salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus
5. The Judgement
6. The Second Coming
7. The Destruction of Satan and the Re-creation of the Earth