

**TEACHER'S COPY**

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All scripture references are taken from the Authorized King James Version (KJV),  
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### PREPARING A SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

1. Pray fervently and start lesson preparation early in the week, so that your reading and experiences during the week may be incorporated in your teaching.
2. Have a central aim in your lesson.
3. Read the background scripture passages from several versions for clarification.
4. Develop a clear outline for the class to follow. Choose from your Teacher's Manual the points you plan to emphasize.
5. Arrange time for: prayer, review, bible reading, discussion, pupil's book, memory work, application and closing. But remember, **be flexible!**
6. Remember the needs of individuals in your class (discover these through visitations to their homes and phone calls). Keep in mind that you are teaching persons and not just a lesson. Know the age level characteristics of the group you are teaching.
7. Develop lesson notes for each topic, add illustrations, outlines and other teaching aids regularly as you continue to teach.
8. Know the work required in the pupil's workbook. Determine how to use it in class review, workbook and discussion.
9. Plan an interesting approach to capture students' attention. This may be a question to stimulate their thoughts, a problem to solve, a true – to- life story to illustrate the lesson, or a visual aid to motivate interest in the lesson.
10. Plan a variety of methods: visual, object lesson, drama, stories, sword drills, questions and answers, discussions, writings, buzz groups, or problem solving.
11. Plan thoroughly for class participation.
12. Develop study questions to cause the pupils to search the Bible for personal investigations. Ask them: who, what, when, where, why? (For example: Ask, “What does the Bible say?” Or “What does it mean?” etc.)
13. Allow pupils to ask questions. If you don't know the answer, admit it, and tell your students that you will find the answer during the week and revert, or assign the question to the class for further study.
14. Prepare the room before the class period which includes: arranging chairs, visual aid equipment, decorations, and objects.
15. Pray for wisdom in preparation, clarity in presentation, and sincerity in application.

### PREPARING A LESSON NOTE

#### A. General Instruction

The first page of the lesson note, at the beginning of the session should have the following pieces of information:

1. Name of the Teacher
2. Subject
3. Class

Ideally, a note of lesson should be for one subject and for a single class.

#### B. Specific Information

1. Week:
2. Date:
3. Class:
4. Subject:
5. Topic:
6. Reference Materials:
7. Instructional Materials (More than chalkboard/whiteboard):
8. Entry Behaviour/Previous knowledge
9. Specific Objectives: At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
10. Content – Highlights/Summary of what you want to present.
11. Presentation (With steps)
  - a. Step 1 – Introduction
  - b. Step 2
  - c. Step 3 – (etc).
12. Life application of lesson
13. Evaluation – specific questions

related to your objectives should be asked, mostly questions that can be answered spontaneously.

14. Assignment:

15. Summary/Conclusion:

## POWER FOR YOUR TEACHING

Teaching or service done in the energy of the flesh is of little value. The Holy Spirit's power is needed because:

1. He is the engine oil or lubricant that enhances smoothness and effectiveness in your teaching.
2. The Holy Spirit enlightens, enables, guards and guides us as we prepare and teach.
3. The Holy Spirit's power is needed so that the word of God may be made effective in students' lives.
4. The Holy Spirit power is essential for any proper reception of the truth (2 Corinthians 2:12-15).
5. His power is needed because without Him, we can do nothing.
6. The Holy Spirit's power will remove people's spiritual blindness and regeneration will take place.

It is no gainsaying therefore, that both the teacher and the learner have great need of the breath of the Holy Spirit.

## GENERAL OVERSEER'S FOREWORD

*“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” 2 Timothy 2:15*

The word of God, the Bible is the standard for Christian living. If we are to please God in our service in His vineyard and succeed in our journey to heaven, we must give it devoted attention.

We live in a changing world where commitment to God's word is waning and as Christians, we must be careful not to fall into the trap of being influenced negatively regarding the word of God.

There is no time more compelling than now when we should take the reading, studying and meditation on the scripture serious especially as we see End-time events unfolding around us. Our relevance in the kingdom of God and readiness for the coming of Christ should not be compromised. We must continue to make ourselves available as vessels of honour through which God will fulfil His agenda for the world.

In order for us not to be caught in the web of worldliness (1 John 2:15-17), we must renew our commitment to knowing God through His word. The Sunday School is one veritable avenue which God has provided for us through which we can grow spiritually as we walk with God and serve in His vineyard. It is a heritage we cherish as a church and which we should uphold.

This edition of the Sunday School Manual has been prepared under the influence of the Holy Spirit to enrich our lives. As teachers and students, it is my prayer that this enriched material will add value to your life as you use it devotedly in Jesus name.

I indeed appreciate everyone who has been part of its production. May God Almighty renew His grace upon your life and bless your service in His vineyard in Jesus name.

**Rev. Sam Aboyeji**  
**General Overseer,**  
**The Foursquare Gospel Church in Nigeria.**

## PREFACE

We bless the name of the Lord for another opportunity to have our Sunday School Manual and gather together again for our lessons. The challenging situation of the previous year has made us stronger, better equipped and resolute to serve God come what may.

The global pandemic caused by “COVID 19” that led to lockdown has given us a new insight to reimagine the church. It was a period of great challenge and trial of faith. Our commitment, zeal and spirituality were brought to question. Job said, “But He knows the way that I take; *When* He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold. My foot has held fast to His steps; I have kept His way and not turned aside. I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary *food*.” (Job 23:10-12).

Affliction should make us stronger. The Bible says, “*If* you faint in the day of adversity, Your strength *is* small.” (Prov. 24:10). The NIV says, “If you falter in times of trouble, how small is your strength!” How firm is your faith? Our faith gives us victory to overcome the world (1 John 5:4-5).

The theme for this year is, “**Church Reimagined – Rooted in Scripture, Responsive to a Changing World**”. The church is marching on in glory, honour and power and cannot be stopped. The Master, Jesus Christ, said, “... I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” (Matt 16:18). We need to examine ourselves if we are still in faith.

The topics in this manual have been carefully and systematically arranged to help us gain spiritual momentum in our spiritual ladder and Christian journey. The core values of Christian race are addressed to meet the demand for this challenging and continuously changing world. Most of our curious questions, needs, demands will be met by the changing power of the word of God.

As children of God, we are called to impact our world and positively influence our community. That is why the Master calls us the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Our Christianity could only be meaningful if we could reflect the glory of God around us – shining as light.

I wish to implore us to take the lessons in this manual seriously. I counsel the teachers to make adequate preparations and impact life into the students. I call on the students to also do their home work and practice the principles of Christ they are taught.

As we gather in our various Sunday School Classes, may the Lord be with us, open the eyes of our understanding, grant us wisdom, knowledge and understanding to be the doers of the word. God bless you.

Shalom!  
**Rev. (Mrs.) K. O. Ayanbanjo**  
 National Director of Christian Education,

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### **Church Reimagined: Rooted in Scripture, Responsive to a Changing World!**

Goodbye to 2020, a year of many turbulence and challenges. But Praise God who brought us out of it gallantly and jealously too.

Congratulations to all of us and welcome to the brand new 2021. Our theme as stated above is the most relevant to us as a movement and as a people that God is relying upon to respond to our world. Doing this task requires our total commitment to submission to God and doing excellently in all our endeavours. Our excellence cannot be required at any other times than now.

In thinking about biblical motives for the pursuit of excellence, we are brought face-to-face with the issue of the chief purpose for the Christian life. In 1 Corinthians 10:31, Paul reminds us that whatever we do (in keeping with our purpose) is to glorify God. This naturally includes pursuing excellence for our God in our faith. Our movement began the issue of “Re-imagine” as a focus to respond to our decaying world for over 6 years now. As a movement, we are noted for sound doctrine and to continue this school of actions, we must be made relevant continuously; hence, the focus and our Theme being pursued. This manual is a part of all that would make us achieve the focus and purpose of our existence. Remember the caption at Angelus Temple that reads “DEDICATED UNTO THE CAUSE OF INTERDENOMINATIONAL AND WORLDWIDE EVANGELISM” We cannot do less as imagined and scripted by our Founder, Sister Aimee.

To the Teacher again, please let's study and be diligent to present yourself adequately to the tasks ahead of us in this new and challenging decade by making ourselves relevant and ready for the Master's use.

To the students, make all efforts to make yourself available for these specially selected and crafted topics. I know you can make it happen as we yield together to the lead of the Holy Spirit in this end-time. Let's strive to make all people around us hear and respond to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in our custody. Happy New Year of **soaring higher** in the service of the King!

**Rev. Mrs. Regina M. Kehinde, (DDiv.)**  
 National Minister for Sunday School Curriculum,  
 Foursquare Gospel Church in Nigeria.

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# THIS QUARTER IN THE WORD

## JANUARY

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2 <sup>nd</sup>	Sunday	Be Hopeful (Ruth As Case Study)
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Sunday	Have Faith in God
4 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	Be Wise
5 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	The Divine Purposes

## FEBRUARY

1 <sup>st</sup>	Sunday	Alive in Christ
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Sunday	The Mystery of The Church
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Sunday	Fulfilling God's Purpose
4 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	Be Strong in The Lord

## MARCH

1 <sup>st</sup>	Sunday	<b>SUNDAY SCHOOL REVIEW AND RALLY</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Sunday	A Receptive Heart
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Sunday	A Contrite Heart
4 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	Welcoming the Lord of lords ( <b>Palm Sunday</b> )

# 1ST QUARTER DAILY DEVOTIONAL NOTE

### LESSON ONE

#### THE SOVEREIGN GOD

Mon.	God Exalted	Psalms 21:13, 99:5; Isa. 12:4, 33:5
Tue.	God's Majesty	I Chron. 29:11; Job 37:22; Isa. 2:10; Micah 5:9
Wed.	God Our Strength	Exo. 15:2; II Sam. 22:33; Psalm 28:8, 89:21
Thur.	God's Power	I Chron. 29:12; II Chron. 25:8; Job 26:12;
Fri.	God's Wisdom	Psalms 104:24; Pro. 3:19; Dan. 2:20;
Sat.	Sovereignty of God	Deut. 4:39; Dan. 4:35; Matt. 6:13;
Sun.	God's Greatness	Deut. 3:24; Psalm 77:13; Isa. 12:6

### LESSON TWO

#### BE HOPEFUL (RUTH AS CASE STUDY)

Mon.	Jehovah Chosen	Ruth 1:16; I Kings 18:39; II Kings 5:17;
Tue.	Wise Choice	Ruth 1:16; Josh. 24:15; I Kings 3:9;
Wed.	Divine Constancy	Deut. 4:31; Ruth 1:16; Isa. 54:10; Heb. 13:5
Thur.	Obedience	Ruth 2:10; Luke 8:41
Fri.	Self-Denial	Ruth 1:11; Matt. 10:28; Luke 18:29
Sat.	Industry	Ruth 2:2, 17; Prov. 31:27; I Cor. 4:12
Sun.	Glorifying God	Ruth 4:14; Matt. 5:16; Rom. 15:6

### LESSON THREE

#### HAVE FAITH IN GOD

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Tue.	Jesus of Nazareth	Mark 1:24, 14:67; Luke 24:19; Acts 2:22
Wed.	Christ Sinless	Isa. 53:9; John 8:46; Heb. 4:15; I Pet. 1:19
Thur.	Christ's Authority	Matt. 7:29, 28:18; Mark 1:22, 27
Fri.	Christ's Teaching	Matt. 7:28; Mark 1:22, 4:2; John 7:16;
Sat.	Success	John 6:28; Eph. 6:16; Heb. 11:6; I John 3:23
Sun.	Victory at Last	Gen. 22:8; Josh. 14:12; II Chron. 20:12.

### LESSON FOUR

#### BE WISE

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Fri.	Spiritual Blessings	Prov. 10:22; Amos 9:13; Mal. 3:10;
Sat.	Spiritual Heritage	Ps. 119:111; Acts 26:18; II Cor. 1:22;
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Tue.	Having Fellowship with Christ	Lk. 24:15, 32; I Cor. 1:9; I Jn. 1:3.
Wed.	Stand Fast in Faith	Rom. 5:1-2, 10:17; I Cor. 16:13.
Thur.	Doing Good Works	Eph. 2:10; I Thess. 1:3; I Tim. 6:18.
Fri.	Believers' Walk	Rom. 8:1; II Cor. 5:7; Eph. 5:2.
Sat.	Preaching Christ	Mk. 3:1, 16:20; Acts 28:31.
Sun.	Spirit Indwelling	Rom. 8:9; Ezek. 36:27; Eph. 2:22.

# 1ST QUARTER DAILY DEVOTIONAL NOTE

## LESSON SEVEN THE MYSTERY OF THE CHURCH

Mon. Forordained Plan Gen. 3:15; Rom. 8:29; Eph. 3:10-11.  
 Tue. Christ the Lord I Cor. 8:6; Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18  
 Wed. Christ Indwelling Jn. 17:23; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:17-19;  
 Thur. By the Holy Spirit Acts 2:1-4, 14, 42, 47; I Cor. 2:13;  
 Fri. God's Wisdom Ps. 104:24; Prov. 3:19; I Cor. 1:24;  
 Sat. Stewardship of the Gospel I Cor. 9:17; Gal. 2:7; Col. 1:25.  
 Sun. Spiritual Love Gal. 5:6; Eph. 3:17-19; Col. 3:14.

## LESSON EIGHT FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE

Mon. Godly Fear Josh. 24:14; Ps. 25:12; Eph. 5:21.  
 Tue. Spiritual Fullness Acts 13:52; Eph. 3:19, 5:18; Col. 1:9  
 Wed. Understand God's Will Chron.22:12; Matt. 26:42; Jn. 7:17.  
 Thur. Dead to Sin Rom. 6:2, 11; Gal. 2:20, 5:24-25.  
 Fri. Resist the Devil Eph. 4:26-27, 6:11; I Pet. 5:8-9  
 Sat. Serve God Wholeheartedly Deut.10:12; Eph. 6:6-7; Heb. 12:28.  
 Sun. God's Reward Matt.25:23; Eph. 6:8; Col. 3:24

## LESSON NINE BE STRONG IN THE LORD

Mon. God Our Strength Ex. 15:2; II Sam. 22:33-35; Eph. 6:10  
 Tue. Put on God's Armour Rom. 13:12; Eph. 6:11; I Thess. 5:8  
 Wed. Spiritual Boldness Acts 4:13, 31; Eph. 3:12, 6:19.  
 Thur. Prayerfulness Matt.26:41; Eph. 6:18-19; Ph. 4:6.  
 Fri. Steadfastness I Cor. 15:58; Eph. 6:13-14; I Pet. 5:9.  
 Sat. Power of Word Jer.5:14; Rom. 1:16; Eph. 6:17.  
 Sun. Resist Temptation Prov. 1:10; Rom. 6:13; Eph. 6:13.

## LESSON TEN SUNDAY SCHOOL REVIEW AND RALLY

## LESSON ELEVEN A RECEPTIVE HEART

Mon. Renewed Heart Deut. 5:29; Jer. 24:7; Ezek. 11:19.  
 Tue. Listening Ears Prov. 8:34, 15:31; Lk. 8:15  
 Wed. Teachableness Ezra 8:21; Lk. 11:1; Acts 8:31, 9:6.  
 Thur. Self-Denial Mark 10:21, 28; Lk. 18:29-30; Ph. 3:8  
 Fri. Simplicity of Heart Ps. 119:130; Mk. 10:14, 11:25.  
 Sat. Generosity Prov. 31:20; Matt. 6:1; Mk. 10:21.  
 Sun. Focussed Mind Ps. 27:4; Mk. 10:21; Lk. 10:42.

## LESSON TWELVE A CONTRITE HEART

Mon. Receives God's Mercy Ps. 103:11, 17; Joel 2:13; Micah 7:18.  
 Tue. Humility Mk. 5:22; Lk. 7:37-38; Rev. 1:17  
 Wed. Christ Honoured Lk. 7:45, 19:35; Rev. 5:13  
 Thur. Humble Service Matt. 10:42; Acts 20:18-19  
 Fri. Love for Christ Jn. 14:23; Acts21:13; Eph. 6:24.  
 Sat. Peace Within Rom. 8:6; Eph. 2:14; Ph. 4:7.  
 Sun. God's Grace Ps. 84:11; Acts 11:23; I Cor. 15:10.

## LESSON THIRTEEN (PALM SUNDAY) WELCOMING THE LORD OF LORDS

Mon. Divine Ownership I Chron. 29:14; Psalm 24:1; Haggai 2:8.  
 Tue. Voice of Prophets Matt. 21:4; Luke 1:70; Acts 3:21.  
 Wed. Christ's Meekness Matt. 11:29, 21:5, 26:52; I Pet. 2:23  
 Thur. Obedience to Christ Matt. 21:6, 26:19; John 2:7, 11:29  
 Fri. Christ and Children Psalm 8:2; Matt. 21:16; Mark.9:37,  
 Sat. Praise II Chron. 20:22; Matt. 21:9, 16  
 Sun. Religious Reforms Neh. 13:9; Matt.21:12; John 2:15

▶ CHURCH REIMAGINED ◀

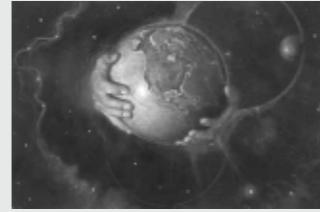
▶ CHURCH REIMAGINED ◀

## Lesson 1

3<sup>rd</sup> January

### THE SOVEREIGN GOD

1Chronicles 29:11-12, Job 12:13-14, Isaiah 45:1-6.



**Central Truth:** Jehovah our God possesses absolute power and authority.

#### Memory Verse: 1Chronicles 29:12

*Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.*

#### Lesson Outline:

- I. God is Sovereign in Person.
- II. God is Sovereign in Position.
- III. God is Sovereign in Power.

#### Lesson Introduction:

God of the Scriptures is eternally sovereign! His sovereignty is rationally unquestionable, (Matthew 6:13b, Job 42:). There are sufficient Scriptural proofs on the subject to convince any willing human being. The creation speaks volumes on the sovereignty of God also, not just His existence, (Romans 1:20). All God's acts in the world and His continual dealings with

mankind confirm that He possesses absolute authority, (Romans 1:20). We cannot dispute that Satan has been attacking the authority of God from the beginning and will continue to do so until he faces the final Divine judgment. Satan's attacks on God is for the purpose of deceiving humanity in order to increase the population of hell, not that he is fighting to defeat the all-powerful God! Unfortunately, there are many victims of his delusion among mankind who have made the fatal choice to reject the Almighty and rebel against His authority. Notwithstanding, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is the supreme authority in heaven and on earth. "And God said to Moses, I Am THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." (Exodus 3:14). It is a great blessing to serve the God who is absolutely in control of every happening in the universe and He is accountable to no authority!

#### Lesson Commentary

##### I. God is Sovereign in Person (Isaiah 45:1-6).

There is none like our God who is subject to nothing and nobody! (Isaiah 45:1-6). We know God to the extent He chooses to willingly reveal Himself to us. The Lord is Supreme Being and the only true God, (John 17:3). He is separate and special from all his creation, (Deuteronomy 4:35). The personality of God is made clear

in the Scriptures as He is revealed as the One who sees, thinks, talks, feels, relates, gives instructions and makes decisions. God, who is Spirit (John 4:24) is also a personal being or has personality. From the creation of the heaven and the earth, God has always revealed Himself as a personal God. In Genesis chapter one from verse three, we read: “Then God said,” “And God saw,” “And God divided,” “God called” “Thus God made”, “Then God blessed.” His personality assures us that He is the living and intelligent God (Exodus 3:14, Deuteronomy 5:26, Jeremiah 10:10). It would have been difficult, if not impossible, to relate with God who lacks personality. It is important to emphasize that we are serving the God who has personality because it will encourage and motivate us to be faithful to Him. The Lord thinks but His thoughts are higher than our thoughts (Isaiah 55:8-9). He loves us with eternal and unconditional love, (Rom 5:6-8, 8:35-39). God speaks to us; we speak to Him, He answers us because He is a person. The Lord is sovereign in person, (Jeremiah 10:3-10).

**II. God is Sovereign in Position (1Chronicles 29:11-12, Psalms 103:19, 2Chronicles 20:6).**

It is easier for us to put our trust firmly in God when we know who He

truly is by the Spirit. Nobody can trust the God he or she does not know intimately! Believers who know that their God is sovereign cannot take Him for granted in any way, instead, they treat Him reverently with their confidence solidly put in Him. Believers must learn to curry and cherish good relationship with God who alone is the indomitable and ultimate hero (Psalm 96:10). The Lord occupies the highest position that exists in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible (Psalms 103). The Lord changes times and seasons; removes kings and raises up kings (Daniel 2:21, Psalms 75:6-8). King Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged Him as the God of gods and the Lord of kings, (Daniel 2:47); the highest king of his time also proclaimed that the God of Israel has “an everlasting dominion...His kingdom is from generation to generation” (Daniel 4:34). As the Seraphim worship the sovereign Lord, so we ought to do every day of our lives (Isaiah 6:1-3). The Lord is the everlasting King all the kings of the nations are under His dominion (Read 1Timothy 1:17, 6:15-16).

**III. God is Sovereign in Power (Job 12:13-15, 1Timothy 1:17, 6:115-16).**

The God who created the heavens and earth by His power is able to do all things, except evil!

Unquestionably, the God of Israel, who is equally our God, possesses invincible (unconquerable and irresistible) power. There is no power in heaven or on earth that can be compared with God's power. Power belongs to God (Psalm 62:11). Let the believers, who may still be in doubt that the Lord is well able to meet their needs, begin 2021 with full persuasion that He is truly the omnipotent God. Allow these Divine declarations to convince us: “Is any thing too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return to thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son,” (Genesis 18:14). “Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for me?” (Jeremiah 32:27). Unusual faith in the God of unlimited, unmatched and absolute power is what we all need in order to experience uncommon breakthroughs in this 2021. Undoubtedly, God's power is incomparable in all ramifications. There is no power that can either deliver out of His hand or is able to reverse His works (Isaiah 43:13, Job 12:14-15). God is sovereign in power.

**Conclusion and Life Application:**

King David was among the Bible characters who stood out in their relationship with God and whose strong faith in God was unbeatable. For him, God is the Sovereign who is worthy to be

revered, worshipped and trusted in every situation. He believed God's word's declaration: **“I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me...” (Isaiah 45:5a)**. It makes a great difference when a believer knows and holds God by His Spirit-revealed worth. What will make us afraid if we truly believe that our God is Sovereign? A youth like David summoned up courage to confront a giant and warlord like Goliath because he believed that his God is supreme (1Samuel 17:45-47). It was that same belief that prevented him from taking revenge when King Saul persistently hunted his life. The sovereign God is the eternal Creator of all things; He is the sole Owner of Things that be, whether tangible or otherwise and the Supreme Controller of all. He has no beginning; no end and no limits! Having the sovereign God as our Lord must make us masters of situations and circumstances because He holds the ultimate power. He is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think (Ephesians 3:20). Trust Him absolutely!

**Discussions / Questions:**

1. What do you understand by “the sovereign God?”
2. Discuss how strong belief in God's sovereignty can impact our lives positively!
3. What should be our proper attitude and response to the sovereign God?



10<sup>th</sup> January

**Lesson 2**

**BE HOPEFUL**  
(AN OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK OF RUTH)  
Ruth 1 - 4



**Central Truth:** The life of Ruth illustrates God's Sovereign care for individuals who are faithful, in spite of national/religious apostasy.

**Memory Verse: Psalms 31:24**

*Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.*

**Lesson Outline**

- I. The Hopeless Situation.
- II. The Hope Salvaged.
- III. The Hope Sustained.

**Lesson Introduction**

In life, there are seasons and situations! No wonder, the preacher, in Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, says “to everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under the heaven... a time to break down ... a time to weep ... a time to mourn ... a time to lose ... a time to tear ... a time of war, and a time of peace”. In certain ways, Solomon's personal experience and

family challenges might have taught him that life is made up of many events, each of which has its own “Season” and “purpose” in the ultimate scheme of God's plan.

The experience of Elimelech and Naomi in the book of Ruth cannot be disconnected from the above statement. In the same vein, our individual and corporate unpleasant encounter some few months ago in Nigeria and globally, is indescribable. God's ways are always pleasant and His paths peace, when they are not isolated from the plans of our life, but considered as parts of the whole. We cannot pronounce on any part of God's dealing with us until the entire plan has been allowed to work itself out.

In times like we had just experienced, majority often loose hope and resign to “fate”, feeling abandoned, rejected and hopeless. In relation to hope. Someone says:

**“You can live for 40 days without food  
You can live for 8 days without water  
You can live for 4 minutes without air,  
but only a few seconds without hope”**

**Lesson Commentary**

**I. The Hopeless Situation (Ruth 1:1- 5)**

The opening of the book presents a family that was forced to flee from their home in Bethlehem because of famine. During their stay in Moab;

Naomi's husband, Elimelech and their sons died, leaving her alone with her daughters-in-law. They lost all! Their lives were shattered and scattered. One of the daughters-in law, Ruth, returns to Bethlehem with Naomi, as a widow, to start a new life. The recent outbreak of the global pandemic pose a great challenge to the entire world, as it has drastically affected all spheres of human endeavours either politically, economically, socially or religiously; just like the experience of Naomi and Ruth. Unless someone intervenes to help these two desperate widows, they could only expect a life of poverty and loneliness. God eventually showed up and intervened to help in an unimaginable way. What is your present situation? Is there a way out? Is your situation complex or complicated and seems all hope is gone? We have a friend in Jesus who we can call upon for solution. He is the answer the whole world needs today.

**II. The Hope Salvaged (Ruth 1:6-3:18).**

Life sometimes appear rough and tough. Things happen to us that we least expected. What do you do when life seems boring and bitter? Remember what Robert Schuller says “Tough Times Never Last, But Tough People Do”

Naomi saw a ray of hope, she heard that God had visited her people and decided to go back to Bethlehem of Judah after her tragic experience in Moab (1:16-17). Behind every hardship, we must look for some critical things to take out of it as lessons. Upon her return to Bethlehem, God began to direct their paths which eventually led to restoration of hope and their subsequent breakthrough.

In salvaging the situation, three things were outstanding as shown in the content below:

**A. New Start**

She was prepared to start afresh Ruth was ready to glean. She nobly volunteered to go into the fields to collect what she could (chapter 2). She aligned herself with her mother-in-law's instructions. Ruth possess a right attitude by believing God to favour her as she was prepared to work. The Old Testament provides for the poor by requiring famers to leave sheaves behind for the needy people (Leviticus 19:9; 23:22).

Ruth completely obeyed her (Naomi) instruction which later paid off. She diligently subjected herself to the authority of

Naomi. God desires our obedience than sacrifice (1 Samuel 15:22). Her earlier dedication to God and obedience to her mother-in-law's instructions were rewarded by God as she experienced kindness from all and sundry.

**B. New Step:**

She took a step - Ruth worked in the field of Boaz that day. God was at work behind the seemingly insignificant events in a way the character could never have anticipated. As we take heed to the leading of the Lord, He is also ready to guide our steps in the right direction (Psalms 37:23; 119:113, Proverbs 16:9). As Ruth moved in the right direction, Boaz was favourably disposed to her. He made available provisions, security and ultimately, a turning point for her life. She returned home with unexpected bounty (vs 18-23). God was constantly behind the events in the lives of Naomi and Ruth.

**C. New Status:**

In chapter 3, a striking event took place, that is, Ruth's action and Boaz's historic decision. Boaz behaved nobly and decisively with a sense of honesty and

integrity (vv. 10-13). Boaz served as the family's Kinsman Redeemer as Ruth gained favour to be his wife. This typifies the mission of Jesus Christ to redeem the entire human souls from the power of sin and death. Christ became human redeemer and a propitiation for our sins.

**III. The Hope Sustained (Ruth 4:1-17).**

The hopeless situation that led to the death of three people out of the family of six is now ending with the glorious marriage of Ruth to Boaz. We must not lose hope and faith, even in unpleasant situations, knowing fully well that God's thoughts and plans for His children are of good, and not of evil. This was accomplished through the lives of these ordinary, but faithful individuals. A committed life is always honoured and becomes important to God. The hope of the righteous shall be gladness ... (Proverbs 10:28) "happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God" (Psalm 146:5).

**Conclusion and Life Application**

God is Sovereign. He has supreme authority and power over every creation. He has eternity at His disposal as well as time. We only need to trust Him who is

able to turn our darkest night into the brightest day of our lives. Be hopeful! The storm will soon be over!

**Discussion Questions**

1. Who is the real central character in this story?
2. How is God's plan worked out in the events recorded?