

## Johanna's Journey: Call to Freedom

### Bible Study

This study can be used in several ways—as a homeschool Bible study, as a neighborhood outreach, in Sunday School, in a book club, and as a special “read together and discuss time” between a parent or grandparent with a girl and her friends. There is more material here than you will probably need, so pick and choose what will work for you, and add your own ideas to the mix. I have a suggested guide below.

*How to use this study guide.*

1. *Review the material.* Each book chapter has a corresponding leader's guide to help apply a lesson from that particular chapter. Included are:

- ❖ Scripture verses. These support the lesson to be learned from each chapter. There is also listed, beside each chapter title, the portion of Scripture which this particular chapter in the book covers, if applicable.
- ❖ Questions for the girls to answer. They love to share. They thrive when they know that their thoughts are valued and invited. Guiding them with Scripture will help them come to Biblical decisions as they discuss issues.
- ❖ Activities. These range from making food, play-acting, learning homemaking skills, and making a personalized collection of Bible verse cards to help them on their journeys. These decorated cards could be laminated and strung on a metal ring for easy access.
- ❖ Food. Need I say anything here? While I suggest serving food in a few lessons, it is always welcomed and appropriate with girls, as you know.

2. *Identify the group to which you plan to minister.* Ask:

- ❖ Who is the group to whom I plan to minister? Your daughter and a group of girlfriends? A group of kids from a public school outreach? A group who attend a Christian school and have Bible classes there? A Sunday School class?
- ❖ What are the needs of this group? Basic Bible knowledge? A need for wholesome pastime during a “boring” summer when they're home alone? A need for an adult to “come alongside” a busy, working mother and give her daughter attention and support as she navigates the challenges of middle school? An opportunity for Christian mothers to connect with their daughters in this special study? This will determine which lessons you plan to emphasize and which activities you choose for them. A Sunday School has a set amount of time while meeting for an afternoon in one's home can involve several hours. It's very individual.

3. *Go through the material and highlight which lessons/activities you think you might want to use and then begin to gather the materials needed, if any.*

4. *Enlist the help of another woman or two who love this age and begin to pray together.* Ask God to help you, above all, show Jesus to these girls as you minister. I always have to remind myself not to preach at them but to love them. There's a saying, "They don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

I also need to be flexible. While I want to accomplish certain goals with each lesson, I must not allow that to be so important that I am not sensitive to, perhaps, a more important issue of the day with the girls. That's why praying and committing the time to Jesus is so helpful. It calms me and helps me keep the big picture.

5. *Enjoy seeing the Lord work.* God will lead you to additional ideas such as: how about having a lending library on hand? You could have a variety of books dealing with etiquette, body changes, boys, etc. collected from your Christian bookstore. There are some great books out there! Some of the American Girl books are good, too.

If you are fortunate enough to live within range of some of our great museums, you could take your girls to the Chicago Museum of Natural History or one in NYC or D.C. and look at ancient Egyptian and Semitic artifacts—jewelry, combs, cosmetic pots. The gift shops in these museums feature beautiful replicas of jewelry, etc. used by women in ancient times. If you are near Orlando, FL you can take them to the Holy Land Experience—a trip back to Bible times where stories are enacted within the setting of an ancient village. How about a visit to a Middle Eastern restaurant or even an Ethiopian one?

**Above all, have fun using your gift of teaching to impact precious girls!**

## Johanna's Journey: Call to Freedom Discussion Questions

### Chapter One: Johanna's Dilemma Genesis 41; 47:27

Visual Aids: Have some parsley and dates on hand for the girls to taste as Johanna did in the story.

#### Discussion:

1. What two things did Johanna want? (*A friend and freedom from slavery. Make sure they understand the background of how the Israelites became enslaved.*)

2. Read the Life Tip about the Pecking Order and discuss.

3. Talk about true friendship and what that looks like. The NIV Bible says in Proverbs 17:17a “*A friend loves at all times.*” The NLT says, “*A friend is always loyal.*”\*

4. Johanna’s people were slaves. Slavery has been a terrible reality all throughout history amidst every race and on most every continent. It still goes on today. What can we do to aid those in slavery? Pray for them! (*For them to be freed, for Christians to be filled with God’s peace whatever happens, etc.*)

\*If you have a lending library, there are Christian books for tweens about friendship such as: *A Girl’s Guide to Best Friends and Mean Girls* by Dannah Gresh and Suzy Weibel.

Activity: 1. Write out Proverbs 17:17a on a colorful index card. Label the flip side, “Friendship. Provide markers and stickers to decorate these cards.

2. Let each girl taste the parsley and dates mentioned in the story.

+++++

## Chapter Two: Johanna’s Hope Genesis 15; 21:8-21

### Discussion:

1. Father talked to Johanna about controlling her emotions. What does the Bible say about a person who does not control his/her emotions? *Proverbs 25:28* “*A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls.*” Discuss how important walls were to ancient cities for protection. A man given to anger, for example, is like a city with broken walls—open to the enemy’s attack. Many crimes today are done in the heat of anger/passion. God can help us learn to control our emotions.

2. What did Father tell Johanna might have happened if Johanna had attacked the men who took cousin Asa away to become a slave? (*They might have found out her name and caused trouble for her family.*)

3. What did Father tell Johanna to do when she felt such anger? (*Run away, talk to others about it, work hard at a job, pray.*)

4. Johanna was intrigued to learn from Father that the LORD did see her. He sees each one of us today and desires to give us a future and a hope. (*Psalms 139—share parts of this with them—God saw us being formed, He knows our thoughts, etc.*)

### Activity:

1. Decorate Bible verse cards. On one side write *God has a plan for me.* On the other side write out Jeremiah 29:11. On a second card write *Control Your Emotions* and copy Proverbs 25:28 down. Let them decorate their cards and add to their ring.

2. Enjoy some Mediterranean food together such as hummus with soft pita bread to dip into it or baklava--a type of pastry which contains honey and ground nuts. Orange juice would go well with the hummus and milk or water with the baklava.

+++++

### Chapter Three: Waiting

Visual Aids: Download a picture of a dung beetle showing it rolling the dung along. There might even be a u-tube clip of it. If you can, get a couple of mancala boards (available at some toy stores or online—just google “mancala games.”) This was Kenyeh’s gift to Johanna. You could even have a gown, Hebrew-like, sewn and ready for someone to try on to represent Johanna’s gift to Kenyeh. There are patterns for Bible costumes in fabric stores. Take photos of the girls trying on the dress and sash. You could even include a daisy to put behind their ears as Kenyeh did. ☺

#### Discussion:

1. Waiting is hard to do. What are some things you have waited for?
2. Some things may require waiting for years. (Give a personal example such as praying for years for someone’s salvation.)

Some things we may not see answered in the way we like or hoped. *One little girl wrote God a letter, put it in her window and hoped she would receive an answer in golden handwriting, but there was no written answer. Years later, as she looked back, she could clearly see how the LORD had indeed answer her prayer over the years. It just didn’t come in the way she was hoping back when she was so young.*

Sometimes it’s not until we look back that we realize how God answered our prayer. But we can be sure that the Lord hears our prayers and is answering. Remember our verse from last week from Jeremiah. God has plans for us. We must trust Him for His timing.

#### Activity:

1. Write out Bible verse card & decorate: One one side, *Wait on God* and write out Lamentations 3:25, 26 on the other side.
2. Let the girls play mancala! This game given to Johanna by Kenyeh and is played all over Africa today with differing rules according to the region.

+++++  
+++++

### Chapter Four: Warrior Women

Visual Aids: I suggest buying a copy of the American Girl book *Stand Up for Yourself and Your Friends*. You can loan it out to them and also use it in the activity below.

Discussion:

1. Do you like to pretend? If so, what? It's good to use one's imagination. It helps at all ages. The Wright brothers had to imagine an invention flying up in the sky before they could create one. Look what happened!
2. How did Kenyeh and Johanna's imaginations help them one afternoon? (*Bullies*)
3. Have you ever known anyone like Amos?
4. Have you ever seen anyone being bullied? What are some things we could do to help a bullied person? (*Remind them of how Johanna remembered Father's words about controlling her emotions and decided not to attack head-on. Discuss I Thess. 5:14b.*) We are all weak at one time or another, and anyone being bullied is weak and should be helped.

Activities:

1. Play act by reading a scenario and assigning two girls to decide how they would handle it and then demonstrate to the class. Ideas:
  - A younger girl is being taunted by other girls and is crying. (Suggestion: *Go up, put your arm around her, and walk off with her: This shows others that you accept and care for her.*)
  - A girl has cornered another girl and is yelling at her. (Try the advantage of "surprise." *Break in by loudly calling the victim's name and saying you need to talk with her, leading away from the bully without looking at the bully.*)
  - What if you hear that a girl is being bullied on the internet? (*Encourage her by telling her "I'm not reading the mean posts about you and they're probably lies. Don't let such people bother you. Everyone knows they're mean."*)
2. Write out the Bible verse on the index card, labeling it: "Help the weak". I Thess. 5:14

+++++

## Chapter Five: Birthday Joys

Visual Aids: Collect any of these items you can and pass them around the room.

- *Parchment paper & ink. Let them try writing with it. (Can find these at some craft stores or where art supplies are sold.)*
- *A frontlet—basically a headband which is worn across the forehead and around the head. Could also use a piece of rectangular fabric and tie it in the back.*

- *Incense. Let them smell it & light it if possible. (Some folks may fear that incense is associated with eastern religions. Remember that God had it used in the tabernacle and in the temple in worship.)*
- *Lavender water—pass around and let them smell. (A health food/supplement store could provide this. It may come as an essential oil and need to be mixed with water so that it's not too potent.)*
- *White linen dress. If you can get a costume (there are sewing patterns for such as well as costumes sold that are white gowns.) You could have a volunteer put it on with the frontlet.*

#### Discussion:

Read and discuss the life Tip regarding waiting. (There is so much waiting in life in so many areas. If one can just know to expect it and learn to wait with hope and even joy, it helps us “live in the moment”—to focus on the here and now of what God has “put on our plates.”

#### Activities:

1. There can be joy in waiting. One example: A young woman has graduated from college and has a nice career. However, she really would like to be married. She has dated but the “right one” hasn’t come along. Rather than becoming despondent and making marriage an idol, she chooses to grow in new ways while she waits: She saves her money and uses some to begin traveling and seeing the world. She goes on some mission trips. Her life is filled with new and exciting experiences. How much better than sitting home pining for what hasn’t happened.

Divide the girls up, assign them scenarios to discuss and let them act out a scene and how they could wait with hope and joy.

- Mackenzie wants a dog badly but her father is allergic to them and says, “Absolutely not!” He says she’ll have to wait until she’s grown and has her own home. How can she have joy knowing she must wait a long, long time for her wish for a dog to come true?
- Kathryn’s family was going on a vacation to the beach when a tree fell onto their house, crushing part of the roof. Now the vacation will have to be postponed while the roof is repaired. Kathryn was sure looking forward to seeing the ocean. She will have to wait a while longer now—maybe a lot longer due to the expense of replacing the roof. How can she do that with joy?

2. Have the girls write out Proverbs 13:12 and label it “I will live with hope.”

++++  
+

## Chapter Six: Pithom Exodus 1:11

Visual Aids. Get some books about ancient Egypt or Google “Ancient Egyptian Women’s clothing and make-up” or such and print a few pictures of women with their wigs and cosmetics. Also google pictures of “Egyptian pyramids and hieroglyphics.” The Metropolitan Museum of Art gift shop online shows many types of Egyptian jewelry based on ancient jewelry discovered. You could find scarab, cat, and snake motifs which would tie in with the chapter. This story takes place in the New Kingdom era approximately 1445 B.C.

### Discussion:

1. What are some of the new sites Johanna saw in the city? (*Magnificent temples, people in their black wigs, hieroglyphs, etc. Show the photos you’ve brought.*)
2. What are some of the delights Johanna saw on the estate? (*A beautiful house with painted frescos, lush cushions, a golden chair, the wonderful garden with all its animals.*)
3. Read the Life Tip and discuss “contentment.”
4. Father told Johanna that the Egyptian way of life involved idolatry and that was not for the LORD’s people. The ancient Egyptian world was a “world system” which did not honor the LORD and led to idol worship. Jesus warned His followers of the same thing in their day, and we are to be careful about it in our day. (*Have a girl who reads well read I John 2:15.*)

*“Stop loving this evil world and all that it offers you, for when you love the world, you show that you do not have the love of the Father in you. For the world offers only the lust for physical pleasure, the lust for everything we see, and pride in our possessions. These are not from the Father. They are from this evil world.” NLT*

*(Make sure the girls know that the “world” here is the world system—not human beings. “For God so loved the world” in John 3:16 refers to humans.)*

Ask the girls to give examples of the world system—physical pleasure-- illegal drug use, drunkenness, gluttony. Lust for everything we see—wanting more of everything, bigger, better, fancier. . . . Pride in our possessions—nicest car, house, newest phone, most expensive athletic shoes, expensive name brand clothes, etc. Show some of the pictures of the lavish Egyptian jewelry, collars, clothes, make-up. People in that day had the same temptation as we do to get caught up in the world system. It’s not wrong to have a nice quality thing. It’s another thing to live for them and to be discontented until you get them. That’s when the world has someone in its grip.

### Activity:

1. Here’s a verse which summarizes the longer passage above. Have them write it out on a card and label the other side, “I will focus on Heaven.” Colossians 3:2 NLT *“Let heaven fill your thoughts. Do not think only about things down here on earth.”* NIV *“Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.”* Explain what that means—living to please Jesus and to remember that we will leave this earth one day and live with Him which will be far better.

2. Make a verse card -- “ Be Content” with I Timothy 6:8. Let them decorate their cards and add them to their ring of verses.
3. Serve a snack. You could include apricots since Johanna tasted them at the estate.

+++++

+

### Chapter Seven: Trouble! Exodus 1:8-2:15; 5:6-14

#### Discussion:

1. Mistress Nessel didn't like Johanna just because she was a Hebrew. What is this called? (*Prejudice—to “pre-judge” someone or something w/o knowing the facts*)
2. What kinds of things can people be prejudiced about?
3. As Johanna rode home with Grandfather, she thought about Mistress Nessel and her family. What did she decide? (*Have someone read Proverbs 15:16, 17 and discuss.*)
4. What happened to Father? (*Beaten*) Jesus said that we would have many trials in this broken world (*broken by sin*). (*Have someone read John 16:33.*) What are some of the results of sin we see in our world?
5. Can you think of something the girls discussed about “a good thing coming from bad”? (*Kenyeh's grandmother taken as slave—bad. She gave birth to Adina who eventually had Kenyeh who became a best friend to Johanna—good.*) Have someone read Romans 8:28. God can take our hurts and failings and bring good from them. (*Share any instances you think would encourage.*)

#### Activity:

1. Write out Romans 8:28 on the index card and on the flip side, put *God can bring good from hardship*.
2. Dessert and/or play mancala.

+++++

+

### Chapter Eight: Time to Plan! Exodus 6-7:14

Visual Aids: For use in demonstrating “planning ahead.” Have 1 hand mixer, two bowls, two boxes of instant vanilla pudding, milk, water, bananas, and vanilla wafers.

#### Discussion:

1. What kind of things did Johanna's family do to prepare to leave Goshen?



2. What if they hadn't have planned? (*Read the Life Tip.*)

Activities:

1. Examples of the “planner” and the “play-er” who doesn't think ahead.

Allow two girls to make the puddings. One girl has the needed ingredients plus the mixer. She has brought vanilla wafers and bananas to enjoy with her pudding. The other girl didn't plan ahead and forgot to buy milk, so she tries water. She also forgot a mixer so she must do it by hand. She planned on nothing to enjoy with the pudding. Discuss the results.

2. Write out on index cards Proverbs 22:3. Label the flip side, “Plan ahead.”

3. You could allow all the girls to make some pudding and eat it together.

++++  
+

Chapter Nine: Plagues! Exodus 7:15-11:10

Visual Aids: Have some battery-operated candles which can be turned on manually by the girls. Prepare slips of paper which list the name of one person or ministry which is shining the light of the Gospel somewhere in the world—missionaries you know, a local ministry, your church, etc. Add a brief description of what that person/ministry does.

Discussion:

1. What plagues did God send? (*See if they can name them in order: water to blood, frogs, gnats, flies, sick animals, boils, hail, locusts. The 10<sup>th</sup> is yet to occur.*)

2. God could've destroyed Pharaoh and all of Egypt with their many gods. Why didn't He? (*He was giving a chance for this mighty nation to know and turn to Him. He has always called pagans to know Him.*) Can you think of other times in the Bible where He called pagans to Himself?—(*Noah preached for 400 years as they built the ark, calling the people to repent; Ruth, a Moabite, became a believer; Jonah was sent to preach to Ninevah—a huge pagan city. God responds to those who seek Him. Psalm 9:10.*)

Activities:

1. Read together the chapter Life Tip.

2. Pass out the candles and papers. Turn out the lights. One by one, have a girl light her candle, read the paper, and walk to a different part of the room. (*They should be scattered all over the room representing “lights” around the world.*)

+++++

## Chapter Ten: Final Days and Moments Exodus 11:3-10; 12:1-32

### Discussion/Activity:

1. The Passover feast was instituted. What strange directions did the Lord give? (*Bread with no yeast, one year old (blemish-free) lamb killed, its blood wiped on the door posts, roasted whole, eaten in traveling wear, etc.*)

We use symbols today. i.e. Red Cross has a familiar symbol

Traffic signs

American flag—stars and stripes

Have a girl read I Corinthians 5:7b “For Christ our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed.”

Have a girl read the Life Tip and make sure they understand.

2. The Hebrews had to perform this ceremony every year. Do we have to have blood shed for us over and over? (*No! Christ’s death was good for eternity.*)

3. When you hear on the news that the Jewish Passover is being observed, it is this very event going back to Egypt which is being celebrated. (*Jews do not yet recognize Jesus as the Passover Lamb.*) (*Some may not know that Jews are descendants of Israelites.*)

+++++

## Chapter Eleven: The Journey Begins Exodus 12:33-41

### Discussion:

1. What are some of the ways God prepared Moses for his role of leading the Israelites to freedom? (*Leadership, language, war skills learned in Egypt...; desert skills learned in Midian—how to find water, tend to sheep, knowledge of weather, the sky....*)

2. God is developing you, too, for His glory. He saw all about you before you were even born. (*Talk about Psalm 139 together and how God made each of us just the way we need to be to do what Hew wants to use us for.*)

3. Nobody can be a better “you” than you! He has given you talents and interests. What are some of the interests you have? (*Give suggestions to get them thinking. What are they interested in? Are some taking instrument lessons? Do some love sports? Do some love to care for babies?*)

4. We need to pray regularly for the Lord to help us develop the talents and skills He wants to use one day and even now. (*Give examples of youth who are using skills now for Christ—athletes in day camps, tutors, babysitters, etc.*)

++++  
+

Chapter Twelve: The Lord Protects His People Exodus 14:1-31; 15:1-21

Discussion/Activity:

1. This is a short chapter. Assign parts, and have the girls read it aloud. Tell them to be dramatic—to really think of what it would’ve felt like to be Johanna. Here are the parts: Samuel, Johanna, Narrator, Ethan, Father, Grandfather, Aunt Chava, Asa, Rina. (*There is much narration, so several could take turns.*)

2. The Israelites celebrated after their deliverance. (*If you’re adventurous, you could show a DVD of Hebraic dancing and have the girls try it. If you could have some bells to tie around their ankles, scarves to wave, and tambourines, it would add to the fun. Google “Israeli dancing or ancient Israeli dancing, and you’ll find many sources for DVD’s and utube demonstrations.*)

3. It is good for us to remember God’s blessings and helps in life. Consider starting a “Gratitude Journal” in which, each night before bed, you write down 2-3 things from your day for which you are grateful. These could be things like: passing a math test, the meal Mother made for supper, your cat, your friend at school, loving the book you’re reading for pleasure, the coziness inside when it rained today, etc. etc. This can be an encouragement to read over sometimes when you feel a little blue. Thankfulness and praise are the best ways to overcome negative feelings.

++++

Chapter Thirteen: Water and Shelter Exodus 15:22-27

Visual Aids: Google “Ancient Hebrew Tents” or “Tents of Ancient Desert People” or such and print a few photos of what Johanna’s tent might’ve looked like.

Discussion:

1. Grandfather said that it was Moses’ obedience, and not the stick, that changed the water from bitter to sweet. Is obedience important to God? Yes! God told Abraham, the father of the nation of Israel about obedience: Gen. 22:18, “*And through your descendants, all the nations of the earth will be blessed—all because you have obeyed me.*”

2. Johanna worked with her mother and grandmother to learn how to organize the tent and make it a home. What’s the value of working with older women? What can we learn from them? Did you know the Bible instructs older women to teach the younger? Titus 2:45, “ “...

*These older women must train the younger women to love their husbands and their children, to live wisely and be pure, to take care of their homes, to do good, and to be submissive to their husbands. Then they will not bring shame on the word of God.” (Briefly discuss what that verse means.)*

Activities:

1. Teach them a homemaking skill such as how to set a table and serve the food. Then sit down to a dessert.
  
2. Depending on the age, provide individual sheets of drawing paper or a large mural-type piece (freezer paper?) on which they can draw a tent. Give them markers and pencils and let them draw all that the chapter described about Johanna’s tent. They could draw & cut out individual items and glue them in place or draw everything directly on the paper. You could include colored construction paper and stickers. Be sure they include people in their drawings. *(There’s nothing like child art!)*

+++++

+

Chapter Fourteen: Work and Rest

Visual Aids: Have a mortar and pestle to demonstrate how they ground up nuts, herbs, & grains. Let the girls try it.

Discussion:

1. What are some of the jobs each family member had to do in the story?
  
2. What are some of your jobs at home? What else could you do to be helpful at home?
  
3. It is important to be a good worker. What are some traits that make a good worker?—  
*(dependable, thorough, careful, cheerful, etc.)*
  
4. God is working today. He didn’t stop working after He created the world. He is busy calling men, women, and children to Himself. He wants us to be working, too. When we learn to be good workers, we can take care of our families and then help those in need we see around us.
  
5. God does not want us to be lazy! *“Lazy people are soon poor. Hard workers get rich.” Proverbs. 10:4.* What does this verse mean?

Activities:

1. Teach a homemaking skill. It could be basic, such as cooking scrambled eggs.

2. Bake some bread together. (The University of PA school of Archaeology & Anthropology has a wonderful website with projects for kids. Included is a kid-friendly recipe for making pocket bread! Google the school and click on “Canaan and Ancient Israel” and you’ll find the kids project link.

3. Make and decorate a verse card for Proverbs 10:4 labeling one side, “Don’t be Lazy!”

++++  
+

Chapter Fifteen: Miracle in the Desert Exodus 16:1-31

Discussion:

1. Complaining affects not just the one doing it, but everyone who has to hear it. How do you feel when you are around someone who complains and complains without letting up?

2. What did Johanna’s father do instead of complaining? What are other ideas of what YOU could do when tempted to complain? What does the Bible say about complaining?

*(Let them read aloud I Thess. 3:16-18, “Always be joyful. Keep on praying. No matter what happens, always be thankful, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.”)*

Here’s what the Bible says about a complaining woman in Proverbs 21:9 *“It is better to live alone in the corner of an attic than with a contentious wife in a lovely home.”* Contentious people are always complainers. *(Mistress Nessel was that sort.)*

3. There were rules about the manna. Why do you think some people tested the rules and ignored them or tried to get by? *(They don’t think they’ll get caught, they think what they’re doing is just a “little” disobedience, they don’t think it’s important to listen to instructions, etc.)* What does the Bible say about that? *(Read Prov. 22:3, applying it to the manna. “A prudent person foresees the danger ahead and takes precautions; the simpleton goes blindly on and suffers the consequences.”)*

4. What should you do if you are around some who persists in the above? *(Prov. 14:7, “Stay away from fools, for you won’t find knowledge there.”)*

Activities:

1. Make a verse card from any of the verses above. Decorate them.

2. Work on a homemaking activity: How to sew on a button, repair a hem, etc.

++++  
+

Chapter Sixteen: Danger! Exodus 17:1-7

Visual Aids:

Show some pictures of the arid land through which the Hebrews traveled with its high peaks and how people lived within it as described below:

The ancient city of Petra, carved out of the rocks in Jordan, shows how people truly did live among the rocks and cliffs. As long as they had a good water supply, they could exist. Ancient people sometimes had water reservoirs within caves—great, deep pools of water. This Exodus account occurred before the city of Petra came into existence, but showing the girls a few pictures of it would enable them to envision how people did indeed live in such desert places. I googled “Petra,” “Gobolites,” and “Amalakites,” and found some fascinating photographs of that area. One shows a robed man sitting way up high on a rock outcropping—a perfect vantage point for seeing all around as the Amalakites must have done. Photos of ancient Petra show how people could and did live in the rocky lands and even carved out homes within them.

Discussion:

There were two types of danger for the Israelites. What were they?

1. (*They’ll mention the Amalakites which is a “danger from without.”*)
2. The second danger is their own “complaining”—a danger from within the heart. While we can’t always control what comes at us from without, we can control that which comes from within. (*Explain that complaining, instead of going to God, leads to a lack of faith and then can lead to wrong, regrettable actions. The fear Moses had of being stoned by the angry men shows how that can happen.*)
3. We talked last lesson about how awful it is to be around a complainer and how God wants us to give thanks in each situation. Let’s talk now about going to God with our complaints and concerns. How do we do that? (*Give them a practical illustration on how to do that with a scenario and how the person prays about it.*)

Here are some encouraging verses: James 4:8a “*Draw close to God, and God will draw close to you.*” I Peter 5:7: “*Give all your cares and worries to God, for He cares about what happens to you.*” Phil. 4:6,7 “*Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. If you do this, you will experience God’s peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.*”

Activities:

1. Play act. (How girls love this!) Let several of them enact a scene of someone worrying or complaining and also show someone who chooses the right way to respond. Give situations out on slips of paper and let them decide how to present their “play.” Situation examples:
  - A girl’s father was going to take them to Six Flags but got called in to work. One girl complains while the other reacts differently. (Both are certainly disappointed, but one chooses not to pout.)

- A girl's brother was to come home from football practice but is over an hour late. Her mother is worried. How can the girl help the situation? Have two girls contrast responses.

2. Choose a verse or two from above and make and decorate cards.

3. Work on a homemaking skill—sewing, crocheting, baking.

+++++

## Chapter Seventeen: War! Exodus 17:8-13

### Visual Aids:

1. A picture of the armor of God. Many Bibles (probably all kids' versions) have such a picture with the parts labeled.
2. Bring a collection of girls' clothes for a "model" to wear: a belt, a vest or sweater, some cute boots, a cute hat or some sort of headband or ornament, a Bible.

### Discussion:

1. The Bible tells that the Amalekites attacked the weakest Israelites. That's when Satan likes to attack God's people—when we're weak from sickness, discouragement, etc. (*Discuss the Armor of God from Ephesians 6:10-18 and how the Bible says we're to "put on" this armor to "stand against the strategies and tricks of the devil."* There are many good Sunday School lessons on this. Also, the Children's Ministry Resource Bible of Child Evangelism has an excellent lesson you could use. Check out their website to order it.)

2. Illustration: (*Have a girl come to class prepared to be your "model."*)

- **"Belt of Truth"** (*Put a cute belt around her and discuss how it applies to their lives to walk in truth.*) As we learn what the Bible teaches us about God, we grow confident in His love for us. He saves us and promises to give us victory. When Satan tries to tempt us or discourage us, we put on that belt of Truth—we speak the truth of God's Word to ourselves. Secondly, we walk a truthful life. We can be counted on to tell the truth.
- **"Breastplate of Righteousness"** (*Have her don a cute vest and then talk of what that means.*) First, God looks at us and sees Jesus' righteousness over us who are saved. If Satan tries to put defeating thoughts into our minds, we remember that we aren't perfect, but God accepts us with love because of Jesus' righteousness in us. Secondly, the breastplate of r. means living our lives as "rightly" as we know how, choosing to be kind instead of mean, telling the truth instead of lying, choosing to be happy for someone instead of jealous.

- **“Feet Shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace”** (*Add some cute boots.*) We who are saved have peace within ourselves because we are loved by God and accepted forever into His family. We can also have peace with others by treating them kindly, forgiving them, encouraging them. When we share God’s love with those who don’t know Him, we are sharing God’s special peace.
- **“The Shield of Faith”** (*Can be tricky but, one could discuss the ways Satan shoots fiery darts into our minds with negative thoughts, temptations, etc. and how claiming our faith and then surrounding ourselves with other believing friends’ support is like holding a large shield against the Devil. To illustrate this, bring up the other girls to represent this. Have them play act a scene where they encourage their friend who’s under trial.*)
- **“The Helmet of Salvation”** (*Add a cute hat*) Soldiers wear helmets to protect their heads from an enemy’s attacks. Our minds, in our heads, are what Satan most likes to attack. He tries to plant negative, defeating thoughts into our minds. By remembering God’s love for us, His promises for today and the future, and by praying to Him to protect us, we are wearing that helmet of salvation. God is stronger than the devil, and his helmet of salvation protects us.
- **“The Sword of the Spirit”** (*Hold up a Bible*) This sword doesn’t get dull when it is used a lot like a steel sword does. Instead, the more we use God’s Word in the battles of life, the sharper and more effective it becomes. So we need to be learning God’s Word by reading the Bible and memorizing special verses which help us.
- **“Prayer”**—vs. 18. A good soldier is always in touch with his commander (*Discuss how that works in the military—how important it is.*) Taking special time apart to get on our knees alone and pray about many things to the Lord is a practice we should aim to do regularly. But we also can pray to our commander at any time and in any place. We can pray while sitting in a car, sitting at a desk, walking to school—everywhere.

#### Activities:

1. Make Bible verse cards.
2. Let the different girls try on the clothing pieces as you name the armor of God and take a photo of each girl as she does so. The idea is for them to think about the armor as they dress each day.

++++  
+

#### Chapter Eighteen: The Spoils of War Exodus 17:14-16



Visual Aids:

1. If you're crafty, you could purchase beading from a craft store and make a blue and silver necklace to represent the lapis lazuli necklace Johanna received from Father.
2. Draw or make some crowns and decorate with plastic gem stones from a craft store. You could show them a crown as you talk about three different rewards in heaven. While we don't know that these are actual crowns, the Bible describes them that way, so it's a great visual illustration.

Discussion:

1. The Bible says that Christians are in a war as they live upon the earth. We fight the world, the flesh, and the devil. (*Discuss each with examples.*)

- **The World**—the values that abound in our world today which aren't Christ-like such as living just to earn money and have lots of things, caring about one's looks too much instead of what's in the heart.
- **The Flesh**—We were born with a sinful "want to" and will sometimes be tempted in wrong ways such as: 1. Someone hurts our feelings, so we try to hurt hers. 2. Being selfish. 3. Lying to avoid getting in trouble. When we go to Jesus and ask for His help, we can overcome our flesh.
- **The devil**—The Bible says in I Peter 5:8, "*Be careful! Watch out for attacks from the devil, your great enemy. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for some victim to devour.*" The devil tries to attack our thoughts and to discourage us. He tries to stop our faith in God. He tries to encourage wrong behavior. Putting on the armor of God we talked about will send him away.

2. Moses and Joshua gave rewards and honor to those who performed well in battle against the Amalekites. God tells us that, when we get to Heaven one day, there will be a kind of reward ceremony there in which we may be praised by the Lord Himself. I Corinthians 4:5b "*When the Lord comes, he will bring our deepest secrets to light and will reveal our private motives. And then God will give to everyone whatever praise is due.*" God will review and judge how we chose to live our lives. Here are some things the Bible says He will reward, or praise us for:

- **Enduring when you're made fun of or lied about because you are a Christian.** Matthew 5:11-12. Jesus said, "*God blesses you when you are mocked and persecuted and lied about because you are my followers. Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted, too.*"
- **Patiently enduring testing while on this earth.** James 1:12, "*God blesses the people who patiently endure testing. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.*"
- **Remaining faithful to Christ through the years of your life.** 2 Timothy 4:7,8, "*I have fought a good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful. And*

*now the prize awaits me—the crown of righteousness that the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that great day of his return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to his glorious return.” (You may have to explain about the return of Christ to new believers. I Thess. 4:13-18.)*

Activities:

1. Make a Bible verse card for their ring of verses.
2. Let them make a “lapis lazuli necklace’ like Johanna’s by purchasing beads from a craft store. Such stores often have classes to teach basic jewelry making. It’s very easy to make a simple necklace. Choose silver and bright blue beads to represent the necklace Johanna received. (This could also be done after chapters 11 and 12.)

++++  
+

Chapter Nineteen: Livna Keeps Her Promise

Discussion:

1. *(If God leads you to discuss dancing, do so. Of course, there was lewd, sensual dancing around the golden calf, but the dancing Livna and the Hebrew girls did was not body-focused but God-ward.)*
2. Livna kept her promise to teach Johanna how to dance. She kept her word. How important is it for us to keep our word to others? Why?
3. Johanna looked up to Livna. Do you have any role-models? Whom do you want to emulate? The world will pressure you to follow pagan ways and people. *(Talk about how important it is to watch those pursuing GOOD.)*

Activities:

1. Watch a demonstration DVD of ancient dancing and/or have someone knowledgeable come and give a lesson/demonstration with accompanying music. Add a tambourine to the mix. Have them jump up and try it. They could have great fun with this together (according to the ages and personality of your group.) If you google “Ancient Hebrew Dancing” or “Messianic video productions ” and you should find information. The latter has a video which teaches basic steps.
2. Provide a few mancala games and help them learn how to play if you don’t choose to pursue Hebraic dancing. ☺

++++  
+

## Chapter Twenty: Finally There! Exodus 19:1-6

### Discussion:

They had reached Mt. Sinai! Now they could rest a while. Now they could enjoy the blessings God had given them as they opened their parcels and baskets.

1. God supplied the Israelites' needs. He promises to supply all of His children's needs. Philippians 4:19, "*And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus.*"  
(Share an example of how God has met one of your needs or give an example from someone you know or a Christian of note such as George Mueller or some other servant of God.)

2. Sometimes God supplies even more than just our needs. He also supplies our wants! What were some of the surprised the Hebrews found in their bundles and packages from the Egyptians?

The key is to trust that He knows what is best for us—even if that means “no” for a want.

### Activities:

1. Make a verse card for Philippians 4:19.
2. This would be a good opportunity to catch up on other projects such as the necklace or any sewing project.

++++  
+

## Chapter Twenty-One: God Speaks! Exodus 19:7-25; 20:1-26; 24:1-3

### Discussion:

1. Do you think you would have been afraid to be at the foot of Mt. Sinai when God showed His might to the Israelites? (*Let them share.*) He was making them a special nation to become a “light to the world”—a way of showing Him to the pagans around them. He had to impress upon them the need to be different from the pagans and their sinful practices. He had to have their respect. God is loving. He also is NOT a push-over to be obeyed only when His children “feel” like it.

2. Does our society respect God? (*Discuss examples of how it may and also how it does not.*) How can you respect Him even when others around you don't? God wants us to be a light to the world around us, too. We can be that by living for Jesus and sharing His love with others.

### Activity:

Since this is the last lesson, have a Middle Eastern feast. Bring in some food from a Middle Eastern restaurant or buy some prepared items. You could let the girls make the falafel recipe in the back of the book to eat with the foods. Suggestions: hummus with pita bread, lamb or beef, tahini salad, falafel, with fruit for dessert—melons, apricots, or baklava—the pastry with honey.

Note: There is a falafel recipe in the back of the book. The falafel should be deep-fried at a hot temperature to really brown and so it doesn't just soak up oil. While I mentioned slightly flattening the balls after they are formed, I now prefer to leave them in balls since that is what I see done most often.

If you happened to have or sew some costumes for earlier lessons, you could let the girls have their photos taken wearing them. You could even paint their faces Egyptian style and have them don a black wig—sold wherever costumes are. They could all join together and perform a Hebraic dance. If you'll google "Hieroglyphics for Children" you could find a site which shows the alphabet. The girls could draw and color their names in hieroglyphs and make a book-mark or name plate. Be sure to have mancala on hand!

**The End ☺**

*Ladies,*

*May we pray together that our girls will go from this study with more interest in Bible stories and an appreciation for all that God taught the Hebrews on their journey, knowing how to apply it to their own lives.*

*Please feel free to send suggestions or comments to me at: [cahamblen@gmail.com](mailto:cahamblen@gmail.com) and labeling the subject line "Johanna's Journey." If there is not subject listed, I may not open the email. It would be fun to see a few snapshots of girls in the various activities. I would love to feature them on my website ([johannasjourney.net](http://johannasjourney.net)) or my facebook page Johanna's Girls. I'm sure they would enjoy seeing themselves featured.*

*God bless you and your girls.*

*Sincerely,  
Cindy*