

**BIBLE
STUDIES
FOR LIFE®**

Personal

Study Guide

SENIOR ADULTS
FALL 2025
KJV

The Greatest Truths of All Time

How to Handle Life's Interruptions

THE PERFECT GIFT.

Most of us never outgrow the childlike delight of receiving a gift, but as we become adults, we discover the joy is just as rich when we give a gift. We save for weeks and shop for just the right present, or we invest time in making or planning the gift. Then we watch with joyful anticipation as the recipient opens the gift. Seeing those smiles only increases our joy.

As much as we enjoy giving gifts, God enjoys it far more. Because He loves us so much, He gave us the greatest gift possible: Himself. Left to ourselves, we are lost; our sin keeps us from the joy of eternal life with God. But Jesus came to earth as a baby, lived the sinless life we could not, and then died as a substitute for our sin. That was His perfect gift to us. But the gift does not stop there. God raised Jesus from the dead, conquering sin and death for us.

Through Jesus, God offers you the gift of forgiveness, freedom, a new beginning, and a life with Him that never ends. But to receive this gift, you must let go of your sin. Repent and put your faith in Him. Admit to God you are a sinner and ask Him to forgive you. Confess your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Express your repentance and faith by praying something like this:

“Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I believe Jesus died on the cross to forgive me of my sins. I’m sorry for all the wrong I’ve done and ask You to forgive me. I now accept Your gift of eternal life. Thank You for Your love, forgiveness, and a new life in Jesus Christ. From this day forward, I choose to follow You. In Jesus’s name, Amen.”

Share your decision to follow Jesus with a pastor or those in your Bible study group. Get involved in a church that will help you grow in your faith. Be baptized as an expression of your faith.

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EBOOK

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COMMENTARY

Dig deeper into Scripture with the *Bible Studies for Life: Herschel Hobbs Commentary*. This resource features in-depth Bible exposition on the passages studied in this book.

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This Personal Study Guide is designed for senior adults ages 70 and up. We believe that the Bible has God for its author; salvation for its end; and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter, and that all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. To review Lifeway's doctrinal guideline, please visit www.lifeway.com/doctrinalguideline.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from the Holy Bible, King James Version.

Welcome

A change of season is upon us! For many of us, fall means getting back into a routine, and a valuable part of any routine is a regular connection with others around God's Word. The book you are holding will help you do just that.

This issue includes two studies built on our plan for discipleship and growing deeper in our walk with Christ. The study "The Greatest Truths of All Time" will help us engage with Scripture, and we hit upon the central themes that run through all of God's Word. The second study, "How to Handle Life's Interruptions," helps us deepen our obedience to God, because life's interruptions are a good indicator of who is in charge of our lives. This study pushes us to obediently trust God rather than our own plans.

I encourage you to read a little more about the plan and strategy behind Bible Studies for Life. Check out the Discipleship Plan on pages 10–11 to see how these studies will contribute to your walk with Christ.

Enjoy the time you spend reading these studies built on God's Word. And may God richly bless your time with your Bible study group!

Chris Johnson

Content Editor, *Bible Studies for Life*

THE PATHWAY OF DISCIPLESHIP

Growing in Christ is a journey—a lifelong journey—but what does that look like? Lifeway’s research reveals eight markers consistently present in the lives of believers who are growing spiritually. Each year, *Bible Studies for Life* engages all eight of these areas. Following this intentional plan for discipleship ensures progress on the pathway to becoming more like Christ.

Visit www.BibleStudiesforLife.com for a fuller picture of this discipleship plan through 2026.

	FALL 2025	WINTER 2025-26	SPRING 2026	SUMMER 2026
ENGAGE WITH SCRIPTURE	The Greatest Truths of All Time			
OBEY GOD & DENY SELF	How to Handle Life’s Interruptions			
EXERCISE FAITH		Limited Resources, Limitless God		
SHARE CHRIST		Sharing Jesus in a Post-Christian World		
SEEK GOD			God Is: Understanding the Character of God	
LIVE UNASHAMED			Seize the Day: Embracing a Mission with Purpose	
BUILD RELATIONSHIPS				Connecting with Others Like Jesus Did
SERVE GOD AND OTHERS				Essentials for Christian Living

THE GREATEST TRUTHS OF ALL TIME

How This Study Supports the Discipleship Plan

Engage with Scripture. The six great subjects in this study hit upon the central themes that run through all of Scripture.

Sept. 7	Session 1	The Greatest Name (Isaiah 42:1-12)
Sept. 14	Session 2	The Greatest Need (Luke 5:17-26)
Sept. 21	Session 3	The Greatest Sin (Matthew 12:22-32)
Sept. 28	Session 4	The Greatest Gift (Romans 5:6-11,18-21)
Oct. 5	Session 5	The Greatest Command (Mark 12:28-34)
Oct. 12	Session 6	The Greatest Return (1 Thessalonians 4:16–5:8)

HOW TO HANDLE LIFE'S INTERRUPTIONS

How This Study Supports the Discipleship Plan

Obey God and Deny Self. Our response to life's interruptions is a good indicator of who is in charge of our lives. This study pushes us to obediently trust God rather than our own plans.

Oct. 19	Session 1	When God Interrupts Your Life (Hebrews 11:8-19)
Oct. 26	Session 2	When Life Goes Terribly Wrong (Genesis 39:21-23; 40:5-8; 41:10-14)
Nov. 2	Session 3	When Your Actions Cause an Interruption (Exodus 2:11-22; 3:5-10)
Nov. 9	Session 4	When Well-Meaning People Interrupt Your Plans (Luke 8:40-50,54-56)
Nov. 16	Session 5	When a Time of Inactivity Slows You Down (Acts 1:4-8,12-14; 2:1-4)
Nov. 23	Session 6	When Doing God's Work Is Interrupted (Acts 16:4-15)

Introduction

THE GREATEST TRUTHS OF ALL TIME

We live in a world obsessed with goats. Not the farm animals, but the acronym that refers to the Greatest Of All Time [GOAT]. We love to determine who is the greatest player in a given sport, or the greatest president, car, invention, and discovery in history. It's both fascinating and trivial, depending on your personal interests.

One GOAT list that's not trivial but worthy of study is what could be called the Greatest Scriptural Truths of All Time. This unit will dive into six of the greatest themes throughout the totality of Scripture. These six greatest truths are a must-know to anyone who calls Christ their Savior or is searching for truth and meaning in this life and the next one.

These GOATS of the Christian life are . . .

- The Greatest Name: YAHWEH
- The Greatest Need: Forgiveness
- The Greatest Sin: Not embracing Christ
- The Greatest Gift: Salvation through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ
- The Greatest Command: Love God and others
- The Greatest Comeback: The day of the Lord

These themes are not trivial, but are eternal, with the power to transform a person from death to life, darkness to light, and night to day. Join us as we study God's Word together.

JEFF SHULTZ

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The Greatest Name

THE POINT

There is only one God and only His name deserves glory.

THE PASSAGE

Isaiah 42:1-12

QUESTION 1:

In your opinion, who is the greatest of all time in the field of sports, books, or movies?

THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

Names are important. It's rare you see boys named Judas or Damian or hear Jezebel tossed around for possible girl names. Instead, names are chosen to inspire and encourage.

I have inherited a great name, at least my surname. My first name is altogether different. I was named after a soap opera character my mom thought was cute; he also was killed off the show shortly after my birth. Not a great start.

My grandfather and father lived lives that brought respect and honor to the last name I inherited. More than a few times, with great pride, I was referred to as so and so's grandson or son. Just before leaving college my dad told me to never forget who I was and whose name I carry. Big challenge, but gladly accepted.

The prophet Isaiah spoke of a coming "servant" who would represent God. We now know that Servant by the name of Jesus. His mission was to represent God and His name accurately. He was to bring honor and glory to that very name. Let's discover how Isaiah said Jesus would do it.

Isaiah 42:1-4

1 Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

2 He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.

3 A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. 4 He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.

Isaiah 42 contains the first of four “Servant Songs” describing the coming Messiah. These songs have sometimes drawn undeserved challenges to Isaiah’s authorship. Some contend Isaiah couldn’t have written the book by himself. Most who hold this belief don’t embrace the divine nature of prophecy. Their worldview doesn’t provide space for divine foretelling. Of course, we hold the view that the entire book of Isaiah was written by one man, the prophet himself.

Isaiah is often called the prince of prophets. His tenure as prophet spanned four kings and almost sixty years dating from 740–680 BC. His book has the most sweeping and complete prophecies of our Messiah, covering everything from how He would enter the world to how He would leave it. The book has been referred to as the fifth gospel, and

even its name means “Jehovah is salvation.”

The Bible reveals two portraits of the Messiah who would come:

- **Messiah, Son of David: The Lion of Judah.** He would be the victorious King who conquers the enemy and rescues His people.
- **Messiah, Son of Man: The sacrificial Lamb of God.** He would be the Suffering Servant who takes the penalty for His people.

Jewish thought believed that one man could not fulfill both roles. Biblical history informs us otherwise. Jesus is both the Lion and the Lamb. In His first advent, He was the Lamb; in His second, He will be the Lion.

Isaiah opened this first servant song with the words “Behold ” (v. 1). It means to fix your gaze, marvel,

wonder, study, notice, and consider. Think of a bride at her wedding. All eyes and attention should be upon her as she marches down the aisle. The remainder of verse 1 reveals some characteristics of this coming Messiah:

- “Servant”: One who acts on behalf of another.
- “Whom I uphold”: God will protect, direct, and supply His Servant with all He needs.
- “Elect”: Selected since the foundation of the world.
- “In whom my soul delighteth”: The Father delights in the Son before He has done anything related to the mission.
- “I have put my spirit upon him”: The Servant is personally anointed by the Lord.

These prophecies were written seven hundred years before Jesus’s birth, but each was fulfilled by Him. His baptism and the wilderness temptation stand out as revealing these characteristics.

Two themes fill the rest of these verses: judgment and humility. *Judgment* is mentioned three times. The Servant will:

- “Bring forth judgment unto truth” (v. 3). He will be true to the Father’s purpose.
- “Set judgment in the earth” (v. 4). He will not be disheartened.
- The word for judgment, *mishpat*, means “a fair judgment” or “to set things right.” The Servant is to set things right between God and all His rebellious children.

The second theme is how He will deliver this divine justice. The Servant will not cry out or shout His message in the streets for the masses. With gentleness and humility, He will carry it to those who are broken and bruised. He will set things right for those who have little to live for. Bruised reeds and smoking flax were thrown out as useless, even though they could be repaired. This justice will bring life and hope to those who have little left.

This task would be difficult. He would face trouble and opposition but would not be disheartened until He faithfully delivers justice to the overlooked and forgotten. Jesus, the Servant, was to be the sacrificial Lamb who bore the sins of the world. This justice will reach the isles, or in other words, the uttermost parts of the world. In John 17, facing His final days, Jesus expressed His sole desire

was to glorify His Father. He did it perfectly, and the coasts and the isles still hear of His justice.

QUESTION 2:

How does verse 3 encourage you in your walk with God?

Isaiah 42:5-8

5 Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: **6** I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; **7** To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. **8** I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

Signatures on a mortgage make bold promises, namely, to pay back money borrowed for the purchased house. To verify the validity of its promise, the person must be verified as trustworthy and able to keep the promise.

Promises were made of the Servant whom Isaiah's audience was to behold. He would bring justice to the nations. Verses 5-8 are the verification, or credit check, of the promise maker. Isaiah identified the guarantor as God the Lord. The word *LORD* is the name we use in English for Yahweh, the personal name God gave His people. The structure of the Lord's announcement is . . .

- The Lord's credentials are revealed.
- The Lord's promises are proclaimed.
- The Lord's name is glorified.

Isaiah established the Lord's credentials as the one "that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it" (v. 5). Isaiah used the phrase "stretched them out," a repeat of 40:22. That was counterintuitive—at the time the universe was believed to be static. It wasn't until the early 1920s, thanks to the work of scientists named Einstein, Hubble, and Friedmann, that we confirmed Isaiah was right all

along. The universe is expanding, or being “stretched out.”

He is the One “that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein” (v. 5). Those words recall the creation account of Genesis 1–2, where the Lord breathed life—and therefore His Spirit—into the ones He molded out of the dust. These credentials verify the Promise Maker is also the Promise Keeper.

After His credentials were verified, the Lord Himself spoke to His Servant. He made specific promises concerning the righteous purpose for which He had been called. It was a call to transform the rebellious into the righteous. Everything about the mission was “right.”

- The right person
- The right time
- The right place
- The right purpose

Paul echoed this “rightness” in his letter to the Romans (Rom. 5:6) that at the right time Christ came to die for sinners.

QUESTION 3:

How have God’s purpose and promises been fulfilled in your life?

In verse 6, the Lord took over and spoke directly to us, promising things

on which the Servant could count. With His own hand, God would hold and protect Him. The same hands that stretched out the galaxies, dug the oceans, and raised the mountains would lead Him and watch over Him. Even though it would be difficult, it would be accomplished because of the Lord’s hand.

A *covenant* is a sacred, formal agreement between two parties that establishes a bonding relationship, many times delivering peace between warring parties. The Lord didn’t tell the Servant He would bring, deliver, or administer a covenant. Instead, He would be the covenant for all people. He would also be a light to the nations. Isaiah had previously connected light to salvation (9:2).

The Servant would:

- “Open the blind eyes” (v. 7);
- “Bring out the prisoners from the prison”;
- Release “them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.”

The Lord declared that He will not share His glory with anyone. He alone is the One who can accomplish what He has promised: justice and salvation. Therefore, only the name Yahweh deserves glory and praise.

The Point There is only one God and only His name deserves glory.

Some seven hundred years later, Jesus, the Servant, fulfilled these words. He opened the eyes of the blind and set the prisoner spiritually free. Because of what Jesus did, He became the covenant that reconciled God and people. Only Jesus was qualified, only Jesus could do it, and only His name is worthy of praise.

This makes Peter's statement even more clear:

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

QUESTION 4:

Which of the metaphors about God's work in the world have you seen play out in others' lives?

Isaiah 42:9-12

9 Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them. **10** Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof. **11** Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit: let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains. **12** Let them give glory unto the LORD, and declare his praise in the islands.

The Lord once again reminded His people why they could trust His promises. To highlight this, God called them to remember events that had already transpired. What were they? The text doesn't specify, but some possibilities could be when He:

- Freed the Israelites from Egyptian slavery;
 - Scattered the Israelites because of their unfaithfulness.
- One can't pinpoint with certainty which events God was speaking about, but the statement highlights that something new would happen. The Lord declared new events would

transpire just as surely as the past events. Again, what can these new events be? One possibility is the use of the Persian King Cyrus as an instrument to allow God's people to return home from exile. But ultimately, He spoke of the work of the coming Servant.

“Before they spring forth” (v. 9) can be translated “before they spring up,” which carries the idea of a plant or grass blade breaking through the surface and suddenly appearing out of the ground. It's the result of hidden work below the surface. There's little doubt that this new thing is the work of the Servant we know as Jesus.

No matter what the past or future events are, the truth is that what God says comes to pass. It's not only because God can read the signs and the times, see into the future, and accurately forecasts what will happen. The reason they happen is because God is creating and shaping the future with His hands!

Isaiah closed out this section of the Servant song in a similar way to his other Servant songs—a hymn of praise. The purpose is to raise the audience's eyes from their current difficult circumstances and be inspired by what the Lord will do in the future.

Why a new song? For there to be a new song, there had to be an old song. Just as His people sang His praises for the things that have already taken place, there will be new songs of praise lifted for the new things that are about to spring up. Once the Lord brings justice to the nations through the Servant, there will be yet another new reason to sing praise songs to the one and only true God.

Who will sing this new song? It will be sung by all people and from all places:

- Sailors who go down to the seas,
- Island dwellers,
- Nomadic desert wanderers, and
- City and mountain lovers.

An unusually specific place is mentioned, Kedar. It represents the Arab desert tribes—one of Israel's enemies. Their inclusion, while perhaps astounding to Isaiah's audience, highlights the type of work the Servant will accomplish. His praises will spring forth from the depth of the sea, ring down from the mountain tops, echo in the city streets, waft over the vast desert and wasteland, and rise up from the coastland and even the remotest islands.

ENGAGE

Glory means “heavy in weight,” “give weight to.” To which of the following matters do you give the most weight in your life?

- Your health
- Your family
- Your living situation
- Your problems
- Your comfort
- God

Based on your responses, what receives glory in your life?

How can you give more weight to God than any of these other heavy matters?

The new song is a foreshadowing of the day when all people from every tribe behold the Lord as the one true God. Paul wrote:

“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:9-11).

This new song is a reminder that the first time Jesus came as Messiah, the Lamb to reconcile, but the second time He will come as Messiah, the Lion of Judah to conquer. And He will take those of us who have trusted in Him to heaven.

QUESTION 5:

How has God’s faithfulness prompted a new song in your heart?

LIVE IT OUT

There is only one God and only His name deserves glory. Choose one of the following applications.

Memorize. Commit Philippians 2:9-11 to memory. Reflect on those words and ask God to show how you can live under His lordship each day.

Write. The Bible speaks of a new song. Write a hymn, poem, or spoken word poem thanking the Lord for His faithfulness in the past and His promises for the future. Share this work with others or use it in your personal worship to glorify God.

Encourage. There are many bruised people in our communities. Someone you know is going through a hard time. Send this person a note of encouragement with a promise from God of His faithfulness.



