1 PREPARING

A. THE SOURCE

Genesis 1:28 (NLT) • “Then God blessed them and said, ‘Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.’”

Exodus 22:28 (NLT) • “You must not dishonor God or curse any of your rulers.”

Leviticus 25:53 (NIV) • “They are to be treated as workers hired from year to year; you must see to it that those to whom they owe service do not rule over them ruthlessly.”

2 Samuel 5:2 (NIV) • “In the past, while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel on their military campaigns. And the Lord said to you, ‘You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will become their ruler.’”

Psalm 58:1 (NLT) • “Justice—do you rulers know the meaning of the word? Do you judge the people fairly?”

Titus 3:1 (CEV) • “Remind your people to obey the rulers and authorities and not to be rebellious. They must always be ready to do something helpful.”

Daniel 7:14 (The Message) • “He was given power to rule—all the glory of royalty. Everyone—race, color, and creed—had to serve him. His rule would be forever, never ending. His kingly rule would never be replaced.”

Manuscript Releases, vol. 21, p. 19 • “All who have a part in God’s work are to remember that He is the Ruler, and that those who have been appointed to take charge of His work must be under His rulership, body, soul, and spirit. And they are to remember that it is not enough that they do no wrong; they are not to suffer wrong to be done. They themselves must cherish a fear to offend God that will effectually restrain them from doing evil. He who is engaged in God’s service must look constantly to Jesus, filled with the determination to follow Him who gave His life for the life of the world. Our abrupt words and actions show a zeal that is not according to knowledge. We need always to be on watch lest the policy of the world creep in, and one-sided plans unbalance the mind. Many are in positive danger of being led astray because they do not realize that they are in positive danger. They breathe the tainted atmosphere of the enemy, and as a thief in the night deception creeps upon them. The clear spiritual vision is dimmed. A line of action formed on false conceptions is followed, and the Holy Spirit is grieved.”

Life Sketches, pp. 408, 409 • “Then I further dwelt upon the supreme rulership of God above all earthly rulers. His law is to be the standard of action. Men are forbidden to pervert their senses by intemperance, or by yielding their
minds to satanic influences; for this makes impossible the keeping of God’s law. While the divine Ruler bears long with perversity, He is not deceived, and will not always keep silence. His supremacy, His authority as Ruler of the universe, must finally be acknowledged, and the just claims of His law vindicated.”

_Signs of the Times, November 11, 1903_ •

“Neither husband nor wife is to make a plea for rulership. The Lord has laid down the principle that is to guide in this matter. The husband is to cherish his wife as Christ cherishes the church. And the wife is to respect and love her husband. Both are to cultivate the spirit of kindness, being determined never to grieve or injure the other.”

_Signs of the Times, November 11, 1903_ •

“Parents can be ministers for Christ in the training of their children. From its babyhood the child is to be taught to obey. Those parents who allow their children to grow up willful and disobedient are preparing them for a life of sorrow and disappointment. Parents, teach your children to obey. And from the grief you feel when they disregard your wishes, learn how you grieve and disappoint Christ when you disobey Him. The effort to train your children aright will teach you many lessons in regard to your duty to obey the Lord.”

(See additional passages in student material.)

_B. WHAT’S TO BE SAID ABOUT “RULERSHIP: GOD’S MANAGERS”_

David says, “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for he founded it on the seas and established it on the waters” (Psalm 24:1, 2, NIV). God made everything on earth. He made people to rule over the earth. And He gave its keeping into their hands. They were to rule the animals, the plants, and other resources. Those placed in positions of power among the people were to rule them as well. There have been good rulers and bad rulers.

Ultimately, everyone on earth is under God’s rulership, and we answer to Him. We all have someone or something under our authority, even if it’s only ourselves. That’s why it’s important to learn how to rule God’s possessions and people with wisdom and justice. In the end we’ll be called to give an account of how we took care of everything in our little “kingdom” and how we treated others. At that time we want to be able to hear God tell us we have been good and faithful stewards of all He placed in our keeping.

_C. WHERE WE’RE GOING WITH “RULERSHIP: GOD’S MANAGERS”_

As a result of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Realize that we are all responsible for the earth and its resources and for one another.
2. Understand how to care for our possessions and responsibilities in a way that’s pleasing and honoring to God.
3. Become more aware of areas they are “ruling” over in order to do the best possible work for God.

_D. MATERIALS NEEDED_

_Beginning_ • (Activity A) Monopoly or other play money, eight small boxes (large enough to contain the money or, alternatively, eight sheets of paper the money can be placed on to designate its destination) labeled: The Poor, Environment, Construction, Transportation, Schools, Government, Disaster Relief, Wildlife. Each box or paper should have a minimum amount that can be contributed (for example, if you intend to give the students each $1,000 in play money, the total in the boxes should _exceed_ $1,000). This will force them to decide which destination is most important, since they can’t contribute equally to all of them; (Activity B) paper and pencils.

_Connecting_ • Bibles, student lessons.

_Applying_ • Cupcakes or similar snack cakes individually wrapped.
2 BRIDGING

A. WHERE WE’VE BEEN

Allow 10 minutes at the beginning of class for students to:

1. Share anything that was meaningful to them in this lesson.
2. Engage in a discussion about the topic of the lesson in connection to the belief highlighted this week.
3. Say the Bible memory text either individually or in a group.
4. Review the “Applying” section of their Friday lesson (if needed).

B. OTHER SABBATH SCHOOL COMPONENTS

>> Song service
>> Mission emphasis (find a link for Adventist Mission for youth and adults at www.realtimefaith.net)
>> Service project reports

3 BEGINNING

NOTE TO TEACHER: Put together your own program with options from the categories below—Beginning, Connecting, Applying, and Closing. Please keep in mind, however, that the students need to have an opportunity to be interactive (participate actively and with one another) and to study from the Word.

A. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • Say: It’s easy to criticize people who are in government or any kind of authority and say that if you were in their place you would do things differently. But many times outside circumstances or limited resources make it impossible to do what you would really want to do.

Get set • Place the boxes (see Materials Needed) in the center of a table and have students sit around the table in a circle. If you have a large group you might want to divide up into similar groups of 10 or so. Each will need the same supplies. Distribute the Monopoly money. Give each student $1,000 (more if you have enough money to go around).

Go • Say: There are many needs in the world. You get to decide which is most important. The responsibility for meeting every need is yours and yours alone. How will you decide what to support and what to cut?

Debriefing • Ask: What did you decide to give less to? What did you decide to give more to? Was that what you felt like doing or what you thought was right? Theoretically, what are some results that could occur as a result?

B. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • Say: We all have assets. Your assets are everything that belongs to you. This includes even things that you “own” or possess but can’t see. For example, it could mean your voice if you sing well. It could mean your legs if you are a fast runner. It includes everything that makes you the special person you are.

Get set • Pass out paper and pencils.

Go • Say: At the top of this paper write your name. Below that write the heading: Assets. Then start to list all the things you own or possess that are a benefit to you. Dig deep. If you have 20 T-shirts at home or 15 sweaters, write that. If you own two bikes, put that down too.

Debriefing • Ask: Think about your list for a minute. What do you own that you could share with those less fortunate? Don’t just think about physical possessions. If you play an instrument, could you share that talent with seniors in a nursing home?
Other shut-ins? Could you organize a sporting event (maybe a basketball game) to benefit a local charity or raise money for famine relief? Which of your “possessions” are tangible (something you can see and hold) and which are intangible (those you can only demonstrate: singing, sports, drawing, etc.)? Which do you use most?

C. BEGINNING ILLUSTRATION

In your own words, tell the following story:

Phil T. Rich certainly was rich. He had at least two of everything a kid could want. He kept it all safely locked up in his room. No way was anyone touching his stuff. Especially that grubby brat next door, Real E. Poor. Phil T. Rich spent most of his free time counting the money he saved up each week from his allowance. He had a special super-duper bank he kept it in. When he saved up enough, he was going to buy himself something really terrific, like a robot that would clean his room.

Real E. Poor didn’t have much at all, but he did have a bike. It was secondhand and pretty banged up, but it got him around. He used it to deliver papers. The money he made delivering papers he used to make sack lunches for the homeless. It wasn’t much, but at least it helped keep them from starving. Real E. Poor also liked animals. Every Wednesday he worked at the local humane shelter brushing the dogs and taking them for walks.

Debriefing • Ask: Which of these kids was using his “possessions” in a way that blessed his world? Why? What do you think God might say to Phil T. Rich? What might He say to Real E. Poor? What would you say to them? Which one are you more like?

4 CONNECTING

A. CONNECTING TO THE KINGDOM

Present the following ideas in your own words:

One of our most important responsibilities on earth, a vital mission, is to be God’s managers. God said, “Let us make human beings in our image, make them reflecting our nature so they can be responsible for the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, the cattle, and, yes, earth itself, and every animal that moves on the face of Earth” (Genesis 1:26, The Message). God created earth, the Garden of Eden, and everything in it as a gift for Adam and Eve.

After the Fall, when Adam and Eve were banished from the garden, they were to keep taking care of everything He had made. He said, “Be masters over the fish and birds and all the animals.” Creation is both our gift and our responsibility.

When someone gives you a gift, you treat it well. If you destroyed it, what would that say about how much you cared for the giver? (That I don’t like them very much. That I don’t care about their feelings. That I disrespect them.) How would it make them feel to have something they lovingly gave you destroyed out of careless-ness or contempt? (They would feel sad. They might get angry. They would know that I didn’t care about them.)

How we care for the planet, the animals, the resources, and our fellow human beings demonstrates to God how we feel about Him. If we litter, ignore the less fortunate, and don’t bother to get involved in important issues like government, we are saying, “Your gift is not important to us. We don’t care about You.” As Christians we can’t ignore our duty—we will be called into account. We have to make it our business, our special mission, to take care of God’s earth, His people, and His creatures to the best of our ability so we can present it to Him when He comes again.

B. CONNECTING TO THE LESSON ILLUSTRATION

Ask someone beforehand to read or tell the story from Sabbath’s section of the lesson. Then share the following thoughts in your own words:
King Christian X of Denmark was a wise ruler. He believed that all of his subjects were created equal, that none was above another, not even he, the king. Many of his actions proved that he stood behind his words. He could have hidden behind his lofty position and kept out of harm’s way, but instead he used every opportunity to speak out against what Germany was doing. He led by example. We should remember this when we work with others as God’s special agents. We aren’t better than the people we are trying to help.

**Ask:** Why do you think King Christian X stood up for the Jews when it was so dangerous? (Because he knew it was the right thing to do. Because he was determined not to give in to evil. Because he didn’t like what Hitler and the Nazis were doing.) **We know that the Nazis didn’t kill King Christian for opposing them, but did he know he wouldn’t be killed for speaking out?** (No, he was taking a chance with his life. His position did not protect him from the Nazis.) **If tomorrow someone came to you and said that Christians might be sent away on trains to concentration camps, what would you do?** (Run. Help others to get away. Hide out in the woods.)

**Ask:** People are God’s most important resources, and He wants us to care for them even more than all His other possessions. **How important were the ordinary Danish people in protecting the Jews?** (Very important. They risked their lives to save them.) **Say:** We don’t have to be in positions of authority to make a difference. God expects us to do what we can, whether we are kings or paupers.

**C. CONNECTING TO LIFE**

**Pose the following scenario:**

Duane’s older brother had just gotten his license and he was responsible for bringing Duane to his basketball games. One day as he was driving Duane back from a game his brother was pulled over by a police officer and given a ticket for speeding. Duane was terrified.

“What are you going to do?” he asked his brother.

“Do?” his brother replied. “What do you mean?”

“Well, the fine is $300. You don’t have that kind of money,” Duane said.

“Well, first I’m going to have to open my bank to see what I’ve saved. Then if I need more, I’ll have to get a job, save my money, and pay the ticket.”

God says, “Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. For it is God’s will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people” (1 Peter 2:13-15, NIV). God’s kingdom is conducted with order and respect, and He wants us to conduct our earthly affairs in the same way.

**Ask:** Does God expect us to obey rulers and those in authority? (Yes. When people follow the rules of society, they can live in peace.) **Why is it important for us not to be the victims of the ignorant talk of foolish men?** (It can hurt our reputation. It can hurt our witness. If we act badly, it reflects poorly on God.) **Should we be afraid of the law?** (No; if we do what is right, we have no reason to fear the law.)

**Say:** Paul says, “For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended” (Romans 13:3, NIV).

**5 APPLYING**

**A. APPLICATION ACTIVITY**

Distribute or call the students’ attention to Friday’s section for the coming week. Discuss the “mission.” They are being asked to take care of a cupcake or other individually wrapped snack cake throughout the coming week. They are...
to see it as a symbol of the earth and all its resources. Let them know that next week they are to bring back the cake, still wrapped. There will be a contest to decide which cake is in the best shape.

**NOTE TO TEACHER:** Next week hold the contest at the beginning of Sabbath School. Students must be on time to have their cake compete. If the wrappers are not clear, they will need to be opened to view the condition of the cake inside. Pass out pencils and paper. Assign each cupcake a number. Students are to vote for the cupcake in the best condition. Count the votes and see which cupcake won. Have students record the votes for their cupcake on their Cupcake Mission Report. Allow students to consume their cake, if they wish.

**Debriefing • Ask:** How difficult do you think it will be to take care of your cupcake all day, every day? (It will be tough. It will probably get squashed in my backpack. I might have to bring it to school, and my friends will want to eat it.) **How do you think that taking care of the cupcake will be like taking care of the earth?** (We can’t just let it go. We have to take care of it. We have to be careful with it. The earth is fragile like the cupcake.)

**B. APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

1. What are you the ruler of?
2. How do you see your part in the big picture: hunger, the environment, politics?
3. Why do you think heaven operates in an orderly way, and what can we learn from that?
4. Although it appears that Satan is in control of the earth right now, who is in ultimate control? Explain your answer.
5. How can God help us “rule” the earth?
6. In what ways do you think we are responsible for how we take care of the earth and its subjects?
7. Should we obey people who are in authority if they ask us to do something that goes against one of God’s commands? Why or why not? What might happen to us if we refuse?
8. What does it mean to “rule” the earth? In what practical ways can we do that? List some.

**SUMMARY**

In your own words, conclude with the following ideas:

As God’s rulers we have a great responsibility to others and the world around us. As Christians we answer to God for what we did, what we didn’t do, and what we could have done if we’d taken the time or had the interest.

Stewardship—taking care—of God’s gift is our special mission. Each day we make choices about what to do with our lives and our stuff. As we do, we need to remember that nothing we own, even our own body, truly belongs to us. It belongs to God, and we must take care of it the way He has instructed us in the Bible. Check it out for yourself!
Sabbath
FOR STUDY

» Memory Text: "As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Peter 4:10, NKJV).

» Our Beliefs, no. 17, Spiritual Gifts and Ministries: "God bestows upon all members of His church in every age spiritual gifts that each member is to employ in loving ministry for the common good of the church and of humanity."

» Ellen G. White, Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, pp. 91-93

A STAR IS BORN

You may have heard of King Christian X of Denmark. But what happened in Denmark is a truly inspiring story.

On April 9, 1940, German troops overran the country and made Denmark an offer. If the country offered no resistance, Germany would respect Danish political independence. Left with no other options, they agreed, and entered into a five-year-long occupation. King Christian X became known as a protector of the Jews. A number of stories tell how he snubbed Hitler and the Nazis. Every day he made it a point to ride his horse, unarmed and unescorted, through the streets of Copenhagen to illustrate his continuing claims for national sovereignty. He rejected many aspects of the occupation and made speeches against Germany.

As the Danes’ resistance became bolder, Hitler demanded that the Danish government declare a state of emergency. When the government refused and resigned, the German commander-in-chief imposed martial law. The arrest and deportation of Danish Jews was finally ordered on October 2, 1943. But, behind Germany’s back, the Danish government warned the Jews to go into hiding and conducted secret negotiations with Sweden to take them in. Only 450 of Denmark’s 7,500 or 8,000 Jews were arrested and sent to Theresienstadt concentration camp in Czechoslovakia. Of those, nearly 90 percent made it back to Denmark after the war.

Thousands of Danish Jews survived the Holocaust because of the bravery and courage of not only their government officials but also ordinary people who were willing to help. The courage of the Danish people in opposing the Nazis and risking their lives in heroic efforts to shelter their Jewish neighbors and help them escape the Nazis is a great evidence to the difference that human beings can make by God’s grace when they act out of principle and ethical conduct.

Sunday
RESPONDING


» Kara comes from a poor family. She wears the same old clothes every day. Not only that, but she doesn’t eat lunch very often.
She says she’s not hungry, but you know better. She’s not eating because she can’t afford to buy lunch and there’s not enough food at home for her to bring a bag lunch.

» You’ve got plenty of food and drawers full of clothes at home. How can you be a good steward of the resources God has given you to help Kara, who is less fortunate? Would you give her your best? Or the clothes you don’t care for and all the cans of lima beans?

Monday
BIBLE ANSWERS ON SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND MINISTRIES

» Read 1 Corinthians 12:7; 1 Peter 4:10, 11.

» Everything we have God has blessed us with. Every blessing God has given us should be shared and used to serve Him. We should always represent God as strong, thinking men and women—taking a stand for truth and for what is right.

» What are the “gifts” of a Christian leader?

- leads
- prophecy
- individually
- many
- not
- exhorts
- use
- teaches
- all
- differing
- gives

“For as we have _______ members in one body, but _______ the members do _______ have the _______ function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and _______ members of one another. Having then _______ _______ according to the grace that is _______ to us, let us _______ them: if _______, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or _______, let us use it in our ministering; he who _______, in teaching; he who _______, in exhortation; he who _______, with liberality; he who _______, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness” (Romans 12:4-8, NKJV).

Tuesday
REFLECTING

» Read Psalm 24:1.

» OK, so you get that all your stuff belongs to God and you’re just borrowing it, so it’s real important to treat it the way God wants you to. But all this ruler stuff seems so far off in the future. Who could possibly care about politics or the environment or people in developing countries now? Well, you for one. Because the world you live in today is going to be the world the grown-ups give you tomorrow. You’ve got to start caring about what’s going on with it now so you know what to do with it when the time comes.

» If your brother was going to give you his car as soon as you got your license, when would you start caring how he treated the car? The day you got your license? No way! You’d nag him not to get it all scratched up off-roading with his friends. You’d be sure it was washed and vacuumed out. You’d probably even wax it. You might read the
owner’s manual, even though most of it wouldn’t make sense, just because you know that someday you’ll own the car. You want it to be in the best shape possible.

It’s the same way with the earth. Now is the time to care about it. Get involved. Not necessarily in a big way, but in a way that feels comfortable to you, in an area that interests you. Crazy about dolphins? See what you can do to help protect them. Like to do nice things for people? Volunteer at a shelter.

Everything you do makes a difference and gets you ready to take over the care of the world when the time comes.

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

» Fill in the blanks. You can find the various Bible versions at BibleGateway.com.

1. “God spoke: ‘Let us make _______ _______ in our _______, make them _______ our _______ so they can be _______ for the _______ in the sea, the _______ in the air, the cattle, and, yes, _______ itself, and _______ _______ that moves on the face of Earth’ “ (Genesis 1:26, The Message).


3. “He prayed, ‘O L ord, God of our _______, _______ _______ _______ the _______ who is in heaven. You are _______ of _______ the _______ of the _______. You are _______ and _______; no one can stand _______ you!’ “ (2 Chronicles 20:6, NLT).

4. “_______ is he whose _______ is _______ , whose _______ is _______. _______ _______ is the man to whom the L ord does _______ _______ , and in whose _______ there _______ _______ _______” (Psalm 32:1, 2, NKJV).

5. “_______ your _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ also _______ , and _______ _______ _______ _______ _______” (Psalm 37:5, NKJV).

Thursday
CONNECTING

» Read Proverbs 16:2, 3.

» Review the memory text.

God doesn’t expect you to go out there and conquer the world alone. In fact, He doesn’t expect you to conquer the world at all. But He does want you to share what you have with others—there’s more where it came from because God’s blessing never ends.

And He wants you to take an interest in your little corner of the world. Not sure just what He wants you to do? Ask Him. God never expects us to do anything on our own. He always wants us to ask Him for help.

Remember, everything you have and everything you are belong to God. Dedicate it all to Him. Start in one corner of your room and put your hands on your stuff—your clothes, your coats, your music player, your game system, your computer, everything in your room, one by one—and say, “God, I dedicate this____ to You. It belongs to You. If You have another purpose for it, tell me.” End
with yourself. Dedicate yourself and all your talents to God. Then stand back and brace yourself for all the great things God is going to do in your life!

Friday

APPLYING THE CUPCAKE PROJECT

» Read Psalm 8:6.

Supplies: One individually wrapped cupcake (or other snack cake).

Mission: You must keep your cupcake with you 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Why? you ask. The cupcake represents the earth and all its resources. We’re responsible for the world we live in nonstop. See how well you take care of your cupcake world for a week.

Each day you must log the condition of your cupcake. You are not, under any circumstances, to leave your cupcake in the care of another individual. Your cupcake must be with you every day. Bring your cupcake to Sabbath School class with you next Sabbath so your class can vote on whose cupcake is in the best condition!

Cupcake Name: _______________________

Day 1: Rate your cupcake on a scale of 1 (poor) to 10 (good).

Condition: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Significant events in the life of my cupcake today: ______________________________________

Day 2: Rate your cupcake on a scale of 1 (poor) to 10 (good).

Condition: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Significant events in the life of my cupcake today: ______________________________________

Day 3: Rate your cupcake on a scale of 1 (poor) to 10 (good).

Condition: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Significant events in the life of my cupcake today: ______________________________________

Day 4: Rate your cupcake on a scale of 1 (poor) to 10 (good).

Condition: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Significant events in the life of my cupcake today: ______________________________________

Day 5: Rate your cupcake on a scale of 1 (poor) to 10 (good).

Condition: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Significant events in the life of my cupcake today: ______________________________________

Day 6: Rate your cupcake on a scale of 1 (poor) to 10 (good).

Condition: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Significant events in the life of my cupcake today: ______________________________________

Final Sabbath School Scoring (to be done next Sabbath):

Overall cupcake rating compared to other cupcakes: ______________________________________

I received___________ votes for my cupcake.