



## EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Session 13: Holy Living

Suggested Week of Use: February 23, 2025

Core Passage: Leviticus 26:1-13

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### News Story Summary

Maren Hanson is a third-grade teacher in Minnesota. Several years ago, she developed a creative way to incentivize good behavior in her classroom. She calls it the “Secret Student.” Throughout the day she’ll drop hints about the Secret Student, such as, “I saw the Secret Student sitting quietly with all their materials ready for math.” At the end of the day, if she hasn’t had to correct any misbehavior, she’ll reveal the name of that day’s Secret Student.

When all her pupils had received the award, Mrs. Hanson allowed them to vote on a class reward. She gave the class several options, like donuts, pizza, or hamburgers. She also included having her own three young children come to class so her students could meet them. To her surprise, the third graders voted to meet Mrs. Hanson’s family.

“The meeting was the sweetest,” she posted. “It felt special that they wanted to do something important to me. They have a stake in my life outside of the classroom and vice-versa.”

Her post has received more than 1.3 million views, and many people shared similar stories about their children’s teachers. One wrote, “My kindergarten daughter talks about her teacher’s baby like he is a prized possession, and they’ve never met!”

For more information on this story, search “Maren Hanson teacher,” or “school children rewards for good behavior.”

### Engage

To supplement the Engage suggestions, summarize the news story about Mrs. Hanson’s class. Before you reveal the reward chosen by the students, invite adults to guess. Then read the rest of the story. Ask: *What do you think it means that the kids chose to meet their teacher’s own children instead of choosing a treat for themselves? In general, which is more effective: rewarding good behavior or punishing bad behavior? Which was more effective for you when you were a kid? What about now?*

Share that today’s session wraps up the study of Exodus and Leviticus. Explain that this passage highlights God as the perfect Parent, who provides blessings for wise choices and enforces consequences for poor decisions. Emphasize that God always longs to bless His children, but He will not overlook sin. Challenge adults to consider how they can live in a way that ensures God’s blessings and not His punishment.

## Challenge

To supplement the Challenge activities, refer back to the story about Mrs. Hanson. Say: *When these third graders had an opportunity to choose their reward, they chose a closer relationship with their teacher instead of a “thing.”* Note that for growing Christian, a deeper relationship with God *is* the reward we should seek. Encourage adults to consider the relationship from God’s perspective. Remind them that a relationship with us was so important to Him that He sent Jesus to bear the consequences (curse) of our sin so that we can have a relationship with Him. Emphasize that a strong connection between God and His people is even more important to Him than it might be for us sometimes.

Close in prayer, thanking God that we don’t have to face the eternal consequences of our sin.