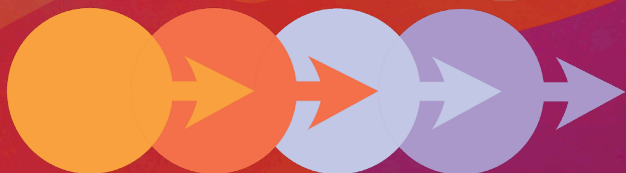


G2G



GENERATION TO GENERATION

**FAMILY MINISTRY JOURNAL
OF CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH**



G2G

Generation to Generation
Family Ministry Journal
by Calvary Baptist

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"GIVE EAR,
O MY PEOPLE,
TO MY TEACHING;
INCLINE YOUR EARS TO
THE WORDS
OF MY MOUTH!
I WILL OPEN MY MOUTH IN A
PARABLE; I WILL UTTER
DARK SAYINGS FROM OF
OLD, THINGS THAT WE
HAVE HEARD AND KNOWN,
THAT **OUR FATHERS**
HAVE TOLD US. WE WILL
NOT HIDE THEM FROM THEIR
CHILDREN, BUT TELL TO THE
COMING GENERATION
THE GLORIOUS DEEDS OF
THE LORD, AND HIS MIGHT,
AND THE WONDERS
THAT **HE** HAS DONE.

- **PSALM 78:1-4**

How To Use This Journal

G2G was born out of a desire to see the households of Calvary Baptist Church be faithful to the biblical model of discipleship within the home. This journal was created to be a resource for all families, whether young or old, empty nesters, or full houses, to use throughout each week as a discipleship tool in the home. Inside you will find content designed to facilitate family devotion and worship time which includes:

- A Bible passage listed from the Gospel Project lesson of the week
- A Key Verse/Memory verse from the passage to be memorized together as a family.
****The bold portion of the key verse is for preschool or younger children.***
- Context and meaning behind the verse
- Application of the verse and text
- This is the big idea of how this week's Bible story points to Jesus.
- Ways to pray for our community for lost people groups

As you look to make use of this journal, we encourage you to first set aside a designated time beforehand each week to sit down together for a family devotion and worship time. Read the listed passage and then discuss it as a family, incorporating what was covered during the Life Group hour on Sunday. Discuss the context and application as we look to be obedient to the Lord in our daily lives. Read the memory verse together as a family and have each member recite it throughout the week. We as a church will all be memorizing these Scriptures together throughout the year.

How amazing is it to learn God's Word together! Go over the catechism question and answer for the week as well. Whether we are 5 or 95 it is always important to have a solid foundation of biblical doctrine as we walk with Christ. Finally, pray together as we look to lift up family needs as well the needs of our community and the lost around the world to the Lord. Throughout devotion time, practice journaling significant points of discussion as well as praises and prayer requests. In the future you will be able to look back and see how the Lord worked in the areas you wrote down.

As you end the devotion encourage everyone to look for ways throughout the week to share the Gospel and to show the love of Christ to our neighbors.

As you use this journal remember the words of the Lord from Psalm 78:1-7:

***1 "Give ear, O my people,
to my teaching; incline your
ears to the words of my mouth!
2 I will open my mouth in a parable; I will
utter dark sayings from of old,
3 things that we have heard and known,
that our fathers have told us.
4 We will not hide them from their
children, but tell to the coming generation
the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his
might, and the wonders that he has
done.
5 He established a testimony in Jacob and
appointed a law in Israel,
which he commanded our fathers
to teach to their children,
6 that the next generation might know
them, the children yet unborn, and arise
and tell them to their children,
7 so that they should set their hope in God
and not forget the works of God, but keep
his commandments." (Psalm 78:1-7)***

What Is A Catechism? (By John Piper)

In 1 Corinthians 14:19 Paul says, "In the church I would rather speak five words with my mind, in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue." In Galatians 6:6 he says, "Let him who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches." Acts 18:25 says that Apollos "has been instructed in the way of the Lord." ***In each of these verses the Greek word for "instruct" or "teach" is katecheo. From this word we get our English word "catechize". It simply means to teach Biblical truth in an orderly way.*** Generally this is done with questions and answers accompanied by Biblical support and explanation.

What is the history of this catechism?

This is a slightly revised version of "The Baptist Catechism" first put forth by Baptists in 1689 in Great Britain. It was adopted by the Philadelphia Baptist Association in 1742. It is patterned on the well-known reformed Westminster Catechism, Keech's Catechism for Baptists and The New City Catechism.

Is there a Biblical pattern of doctrine?

Several texts teach that there is. For example, in Romans 6:17 Paul gives thanks that "you have become obedient from the heart to the pattern of teaching to which you were committed." 2 Timothy 1:13 says, "Follow the pattern of sound words which you heard from me." Acts 2:42 says, "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching." 2 Thessalonians 2:15 says, "Stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us." And Acts 20:27 says, "I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God." So it appears that there was a body of authoritative instruction and even a way of teaching it in the early church.

Why is it important?

1. We are required to "continue in the faith, stable and steadfast" (Col. 1:23).
2. We are urged to "attain to the unity of the... knowledge of the Son of God...so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine" (Eph. 4:13-14).
3. There are many deceivers (1 John 2:26).
4. There are difficult doctrines "which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction" (2 Peter 3:16).
5. Leaders must be raised up who can "give instruction in sound doctrine and also confute those who contradict it"

"DEEPER DIVE"

Take your family for a deeper dive as you learn these 52 Catechisms (one per week) and the adjoining Bible passages they are built upon.

PART 1 - GOD, CREATION AND FALL, LAW.

Q1 What is our only hope in life and death?

That we are not our own but belong to God and to our Savior Jesus Christ. (Romans 14:7–8)

Q2 What is God?

God is the creator of everyone and everything. (Psalm 86:8-10 & 15)

Q3 How many persons are there in God?

There are three persons in the one God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They are equal in power and glory. (2 Corinthians 13: 14)

Q4 How and why did God create us?

God created us male and female in his own image to glorify him. (Genesis 1:27)

Q5 What else did God create?

God created all things and all his creation was very good. (Genesis 1:31)

Q6 What is the chief end of man, his ultimate purpose?

Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. (Romans 11:36 & Philippians 4:4)

Q7 What does the law of God require?

That we love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength; and love our neighbor as ourselves. (Matthew 22: 37-40)

Q8 What is the law of God stated in the Ten Commandments?

1. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not make for yourself an idol.
3. You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God.
4. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.
5. Honor your father and your mother.
6. You shall not murder.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not give false testimony.
10. You shall not covet. (Exodus 20: 3-17)

Q9 What does God require in the first, second, and third commandments?

First, that we know God as the only true God. Second, that we avoid all idolatry. Third, that we treat God's name with fear and reverence. (Deuteronomy 6:13-14)

Q 10 What does God require in the fourth and fifth commandments?

Fourth, that on the Sabbath day we spend time in worship of God, Fifth, that we love and honor our father and our mother. (Leviticus 19:3)

Q 11 What does God require in the sixth, seventh, and eighth commandments?

Sixth, that we do not hurt, or hate, our neighbor, Seventh, that we live purely and faithfully, Eighth, that we do not take without permission that which belongs to someone else. (Romans 13:9)

Q 12 What does God require in the ninth and tenth commandments?

Ninth, that we do not lie or deceive, Tenth, that we are content, not envying anyone. (James 2:8)

Q 13 Can anyone keep the law of God perfectly?

Since the fall, no human has been able to keep the law of God perfectly. (Romans 3:10-12)

Q 14 Did God create us unable to keep his law?

No, but because of the disobedience of Adam and Eve we are all born in sin and guilt, unable to keep God's law. (Romans 5:12)

Q 15 Since no one can keep the law, what is its purpose?

That we may know the holy nature of God and the sinful nature of our hearts; and thus our need of a Savior. (Romans 3:20)

Q 16 What is sin?

Sin is rejecting or ignoring God in the world he created, not being or doing what he requires in his law. (1 John 3:4)

Q 17 What is idolatry?

Idolatry is trusting in created things rather than the Creator for our hope and happiness. (Romans 1:21 & 25)

Q 18 Will God allow our disobedience and idolatry to go unpunished?

No God is righteously angry with our sins and will punish them both in this life, and in the life to come. (Ephesians 5:5-6)

Q 19 Is there any way to escape punishment and be brought back into God's favor?

Yes, God reconciles us to himself by the Redeemer. (Isaiah 53:10-11)

Q 20 Who is the Redeemer?

The only Redeemer is the Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Timothy 2:5)

PART 2 - CHRIST, REDEMPTION, GRACE.

Q 21 What sort of Redeemer is needed to bring us back to God?

One who is truly human and also truly God. (Isaiah 9:6)

Q 22 Why must the Redeemer be truly human?

That in human nature he might on our behalf perfectly obey the whole law and suffer the punishment for human sin. (Hebrews 2:17)

Q 23 Why must the Redeemer be truly God?

That because of his divine nature his obedience and suffering would be perfect and effective. (Acts 2:24)

Q 24 Why was it necessary for Christ, the Redeemer, to die?

Christ died willingly in our place to deliver us from the power and penalty of sin and bring us back to God. (Colossians 1:21-22)

Q25 Does Christ's death mean all our sins can be forgiven?

Yes, because Christ's death on the cross fully paid the penalty for our sin, God will remember our sins no more. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

Q 26 What else does Christ's death redeem?

Every part of fallen creation. (Colossians 1:19-20)

Q 27 Are all people, just as they were lost through

Adam, saved through Christ?

No, only those who are elected by God and united to Christ by faith. (Romans 5:17)

Q 28 What happens after death to those not united to Christ by faith?

They will be cast out from the presence of God, into hell, to be justly punished forever. (John 3: 16-18 & 36)

Q 29 How can we be saved?

Only by faith in Jesus Christ and in his substitutionary atoning death on the cross for our sins. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Q 30 What is faith in Jesus Christ?

Faith in Jesus Christ is acknowledging the truth of everything that God has revealed in his Word, trusting in him, and also receiving and resting on him alone for salvation as he is offered to us in the gospel. (Galatians 2:20)

Q 31 What do we believe by true faith?

Everything taught to us in the gospel. The Apostles' Creed expresses what we believe in these words: We believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. (Jude 3)

Q 32 What do justification and sanctification mean?

Justification means our declared righteousness before God Sanctification means our gradual, growing righteousness. (1 Peter 1: 1-2)

Q 33 Should those who have faith in Christ seek their salvation through their own works, or anywhere else?

No everything necessary to salvation is found in Christ. (Galatians 2:16)

Q 34 Since we are redeemed by grace alone, through Christ alone, must we still do good works and obey God's Word?

Yes so that our lives may show love and gratitude to God; and so that by our godly behavior others may be won to Christ. (1 Peter 2: 9-12)

Q 35 Since we are redeemed by grace alone, through faith alone, where does this faith come from?

From Christ through the Holy Spirit including faith itself. (Titus 3: 4-6)

PART 3 - SPIRIT, RESTORATION, GROWING IN GRACE.

Q 36 What do we believe about the Holy Spirit?

That he is God, coeternal with the Father and the Son.
(John 14:16-17)

Q 37 How does the Holy Spirit help us?

The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sin, and he enables us to pray and to understand God's Word.
(Ephesians 6:17-18)

Q 38 What is prayer?

Prayer is pouring out our hearts to God. (Psalm 62:8)

Q 39 With what attitude should we pray?

With love, perseverance, and gratefulness.
(Philippians 4:6)

Q 40 What should we pray?

The whole Word of God directs us in what we should pray.
(Ephesians 3:14-21)

Q 41 What is the Lords Prayer?

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. (Matthew 6: 9-13)

Q 42 How is the Word of God to be read and heard?

With diligence, preparation, and prayer; so that we may accept it with faith and practice it in our lives.
(2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Q 43 What are the ordinances of the New Testament church?

The ordinances given by God and instituted by Christ are baptism and the Lord's Supper.
(Romans 6:4 & Luke 22:19-20)

Q 44 What is baptism?

Baptism is a holy ordinance, in which immersion (to put under) in the water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, symbolizes our being joined to Christ and our sharing the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagement to be the Lord's.

(Matthew 28: 19 & Romans 6:3-5)

Q 45 Is baptism with water the washing away of sin itself?

No, only the blood of Christ can cleanse us from sin.

(Luke 3:16)

Q 46 What is the Lord's Supper?

Christ commanded all Christians to eat bread and to drink from the cup in thankful remembrance of him and his death. The Lord's Supper is a celebration of the presence of God in our midst; bringing us into communion with God and with one another.

(1 Corinthians 11: 23-26)

Q 47 Does the Lord's Supper add anything to Christ's atoning work?

No, Christ died once for all. (1 Peter 3:18)

Q 48 What is the church?

A community elected for eternal life and united by faith, who love, follow, learn from, and worship God together.

(2 Thessalonians 2:13)

Q 49 Where is Christ now?

Christ rose bodily from the grave on the third day after his death and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

(Ephesians 1:20-21)

Q 50 What does Christ's resurrection mean for us?

Christ triumphed over sin and death so that all who trust in him are raised to new life in this world and to everlasting life in the world to come.

(1 Thessalonians 4:13-14)

Q 51 Of what advantage to us is Christ's ascension?

Christ is now advocating for us in the presence of his Father and also sends us his Spirit. (Romans 8:34)

Q 52 What hope does everlasting life hold for us?

That we will live with and enjoy God forever in the new heaven and the new earth, where we will be forever freed from all sin in a renewed, restored creation.

(Revelation 21:1-4)

GOD CREATED THE WORLD

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 5

Key Passage: Read Genesis 1

Memorize: In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. **Genesis 1:1** (ESV)

Context: Jesus is in the middle of his teaching ministry. He often taught in parables which were not easily understood by his hearers, including his disciples. He explained the reason for teaching in parables, so that his sheep may hear his voice.

Read: The true story of the Bible begins where we would expect it to begin—at the beginning of all creation. Everything in the universe has a starting point except God. He alone is eternal—He has no beginning and no end. He has always existed. So the beginning in this week's Bible story is the beginning from our perspective. It is humanity's beginning.

During this week, be sure to emphasize three things:
First, that God created everything from nothing. God did not create like we do—by taking some raw materials like clay and making a beautiful sculpture. Instead, God made everything that exists—everything we see and even that we don't see—simply by speaking it into existence from nothing. That's important because it teaches us that everything belongs to God because He made it all and also how powerful He is to be able to create the universe by speaking it into being.

Second, that God created everything with order. Not only do we see that God created the different kinds of plants and trees as well as animals according to their different kinds, but we also see an orderly pattern in the days of creation. God created by separating things on days 1-3 (light from darkness; sky from water; and

IN THE
BEGINNING,
GOD
CREATED
THE HEAVENS
AND
THE EARTH.

- GENESIS 1:1

then land from oceans) and then He filled what He had created on days 4-6 (the stars, sun, and moon in the heavens; birds and fish in the sky and waters; animals on the land). *(Each picture in this journal is a day of creation.)*

Third, that God created everything for a reason—to bring Himself glory. We will talk a lot more about this during the next few weeks, and all of our study through Scripture. But for now help your child see that everything exists to show how good God is—to show His glory for all to see.

Meaning/Application:

Telling us in the beginning that God created implies not only that God already existed (eternally) but, also, that He alone has the power to create from nothing. The heavens, the earth, and everything that is to come only exists because God spoke and chose it to be. Today this should still be humbling to us as we look around and realize that an all-powerful and almighty God created all things and they exist because of Him.

Questions to discuss and ponder: How often do you stop and think about God and his creation? How often do you dwell on the fact that He made all things out of nothing?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: Jesus makes everything work.

Preschool: The Bible says everything was created by God and for God and that Jesus makes it all work. Everything shows how good God is!

Kids: Jesus is Lord over all of creation. The Son has always existed. The Bible says everything was created by Him and for Him, and He holds everything together. All of creation exists to bring God glory.

Students: John began his Gospel with the following words: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." When John wrote about "the Word," he was referring to Jesus. John is deliberately connecting Jesus to Genesis 1:1. God created the universe by the spoken word, and everything He created reveals His glory. Jesus, the Word of God, reveals God's glory to us. Jesus came to restore all of creation, including humanity, to how God created it to be.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

Would you pray for the health of our community?
Gen. 4:16-26

1. THE GOOD OF THE COMMUNITY

"[Jabal] was the father of those who live in tents and raise livestock ... [Jubal] was the father of all who play stringed instruments and pipes ... [Tubal-Cain] forged all kinds of tools out of bronze and iron" (Gen. 4:19-22).

Communities buzz with the excitement of people, productivity and creativity. From the very first, they have been places where people fulfill God's plan to "be fruitful and increase in number" (Gen. 1:28). Give thanks for the people of your community and its unique culture.

PEOPLE GROUP

201,000 Reddika People of India

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

GOD CREATED PEOPLE

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 12

Key Passage: Read Genesis 1:27 - Genesis 2

Memorize: So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. **Genesis 1:27** (ESV)

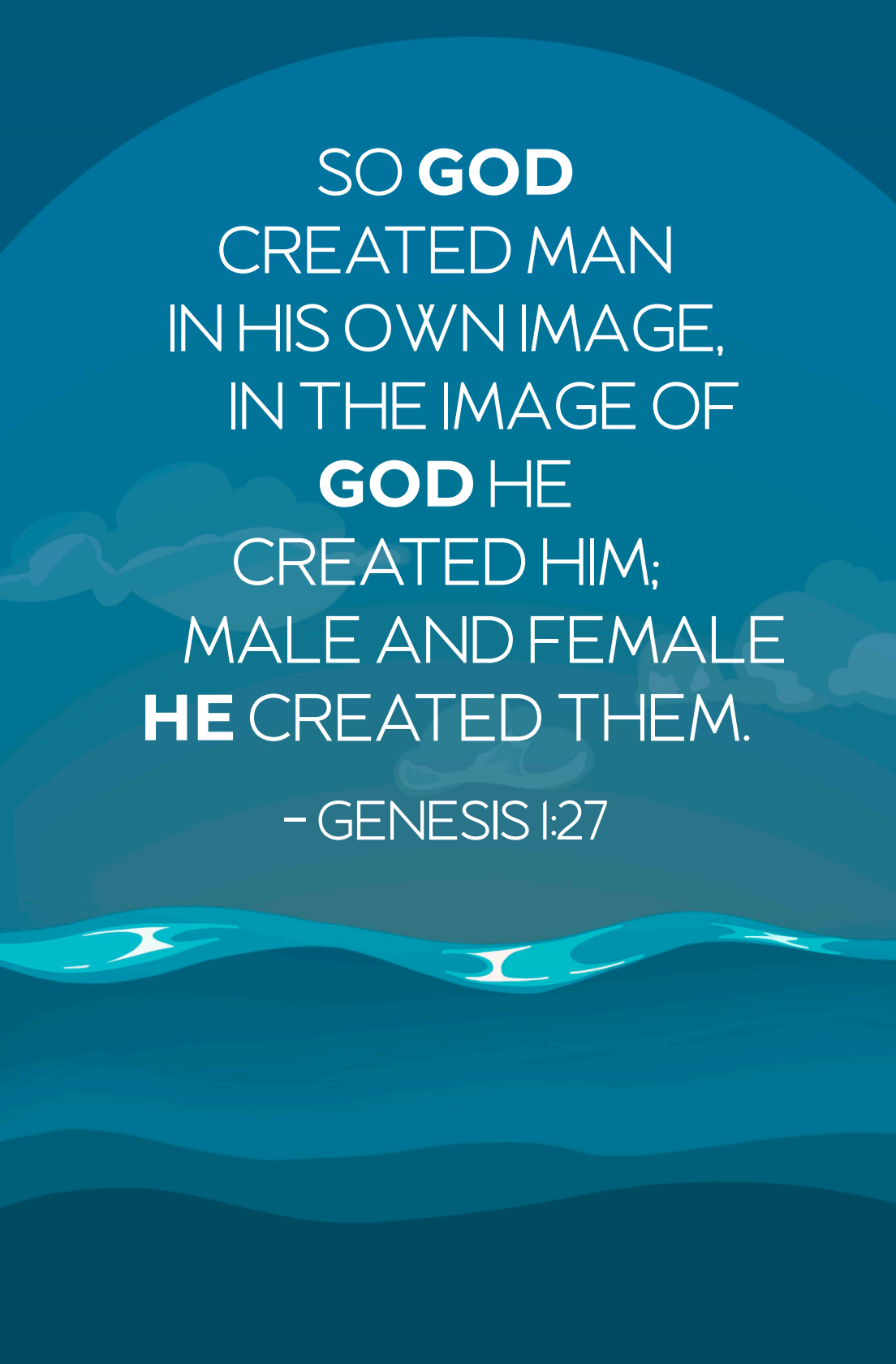
Context: God has spent the previous 5 days creating. He has created all things in the universe. On the 6th day He has created animals. But He has saved one last creation for the end. He creates man. Not only this, but He creates them and gives them instructions, which is not something He gives to any other creation.

Read: Humans are at the center of everything God created. Only God Himself is more important. That is why the creation of the first man and woman—Adam and Eve—deserved its own session.

As you talk with your kids about this week's session, there are two words that might be unclear or even confusing. The first is our in Genesis 1:26. "Let us make man in our image." This can be confusing because the Bible is clear that there is only one God (see Deuteronomy 6:4 and 1 Timothy 2:5). Why then does God say our image and not my image?

Bible scholars have long debated what is meant by this word, but here are two of the most common explanations. The first is that this word is affirming the doctrine known as the Trinity—that God is one in three Persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Our in this verse is drawing from that important aspect of who God is. This would make sense here because a common, but wrong, belief of why God created people was because He was lonely. But God as three Persons in one is never alone. He has always enjoyed a perfect relationship of love within who He is. It would make sense that God wants to make that clear here.

A second explanation for our is that it is the use of what is called the "plural of majesty." In this case, God is



SO **GOD**
CREATED MAN
IN HIS OWN IMAGE,
IN THE IMAGE OF
GOD HE
CREATED HIM;
MALE AND FEMALE
HE CREATED THEM.

– GENESIS 1:27

establishing from very early on how glorious He is, even in how He refers to Himself.

The second word that deserves a note is image. Once again, scholars have debated for ages about what this word means. But we can know what it does not mean: physical form. God is spirit (see John 4:24), so we are not made with a body like God's body; He has no body. Instead, being made in God's image includes attributes of people that separate us from the rest of creation (such as our ability to reason, our morality, our will, and our emotions) and our unique role in creation as ruling over it under God's greater rule.

Meaning/Application:

Nothing else God creates is made in his image. Man, both male and female, are created in the image of the Triune God. Not only this, but we are given dominion over the earth and an opportunity for a relationship with God, which, unfortunately, man loses and must be restored through a divine working. We should recognize this image bearing status and this charge from the Lord in our everyday life. It should impact how we treat others as well as God's creation.

Questions to discuss and ponder: Does the fact that you, as well as all mankind, being image-bearers of God affect how you treat others? How are you showing the love and respect of God to those with whom you, not only agree, but also disagree? Do you take this image-bearing status seriously?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: We can know and love God.

Preschool: People are special because God made us to know and love Him, through Jesus.

Kids: Jesus is Lord over all of creation. The Son has always existed. The Bible says everything was created by Him and for Him, and He holds everything together. All of creation exists to bring God glory.

Students: Jesus is the perfect image of God, being God Himself (Heb. 1:3). Jesus came to earth in perfect obedience to the Father so that He might bring all glory and honor due to Him.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

THE COMMUNITY: Would you pray for the health of our community? Gen. 4:16-26

2. THE GOSPEL IN THE COMMUNITY

"At that time people began to call on the name of the LORD" (Gen. 4:26)

According to the United Nations, over half the world's population lives in cities, and that figure is predicted to rise to 70% by 2050. Thank God for the wonderful gospel opportunities this creates. Pray that many in your community & city would "call on the name of the LORD".

PEOPLE GROUP

1,640,000 Xiangxi Miao People of China

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER



CREATION GLORIFIED GOD

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 19

Key Passage: Read Psalm 19

Memorize: The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. **Psalm 19:1** (ESV)

Context: David composes his psalms as a form of worship to the Lord. Here we see David declaring to the Lord that His creation, including His Law, is perfect.

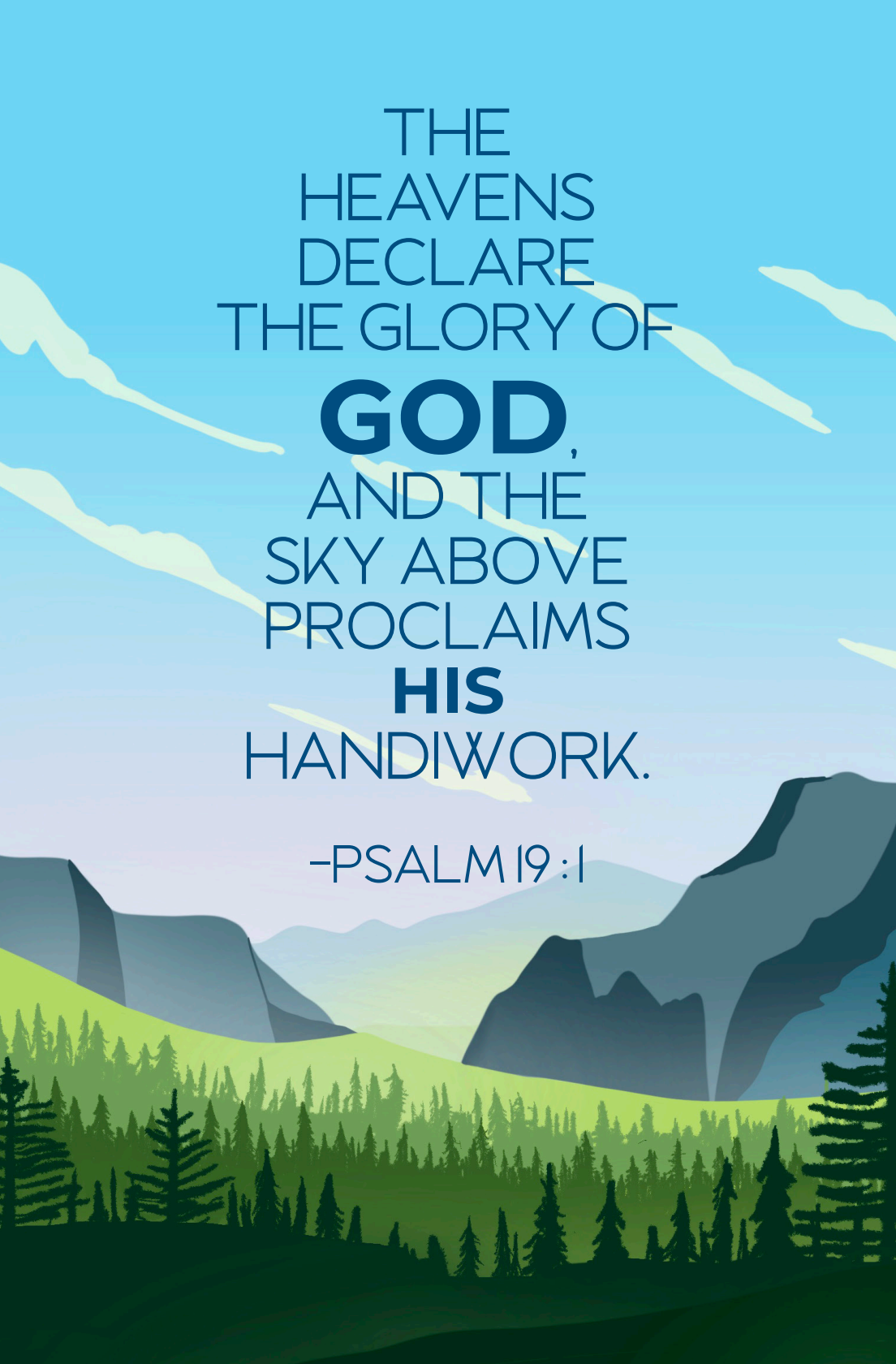
Read:

In the first two sessions of this unit, we have seen a common thread of God's glory. God created everything, including people, to display His glory. In this session, we want to make sure that our kids understand what that means. What is God's glory?

God's glory can be thought of as God's greatness. The Bible often uses the picture of a brilliant white light when it comes to God's glory. When Moses came down from Mount Sinai after spending time with God, his face shone. When Jesus was transfigured, He shined like a brilliant white light. And when Paul encountered Jesus on the road to Damascus, he saw a blinding light. Such an intense light helps us understand how pure and powerful God's glory is.

But we don't just see God's glory revealed in bright light. In this session, we looked at a Psalm that King David wrote many years after Adam and Eve. David used creation to speak of God's glory. For David, it was easy to see God's glory—at least its fingerprints—all around him.

If you have ever looked up into the heavens on a clear, dark night, maybe you have sensed it too as you consider all the stars that cannot be counted and think that each is a giant sun, like ours—only our sun is relatively modest in comparison—and that they stretch over billions and billions and trillions and trillions of miles. And that is just what we can see!



THE
HEAVENS
DECLARE
THE GLORY OF
GOD,
AND THE
SKY ABOVE
PROCLAIMS
HIS
HANDIWORK.

-PSALM 19:1

Or maybe you have caught a glimpse of God's glory as you looked over a stunning mountain range or walked on a beach. Creation is full of beauty, wonder, and power—all of which hints at the greater beauty, wonder, and power of the Creator who made it all. God is glorious indeed.

But one of the greatest ways we can know of God's glory is that the Creator who made everything not only made us too, but wants to have a friendship with us. That is why He gave us the Bible—so that we might come to know Him, love Him, and live for Him.

As you talk with your kids, seek to leave them in awe of how big and how good and how loving God is.

Meaning/Application:

We cannot escape God. Like Jonah, there is no running and hiding from Him. His creation points to Him and there is nowhere we could go that He is not. This should point our hearts to humbleness and worship.

Questions to discuss and ponder: Do you ever simply take time to notice God's creation and praise Him for it? Do you fear the Lord and seek to obey Him as he commands us to?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: All creation shows God is great.

Preschool: All of creation shows how great God is. Jesus is God. Jesus is the best way we can know how great God is.

Kids: All of creation displays the glory of God—how great He is—although not perfectly. The perfect revelation of God's glory is found in Jesus, who came to show us exactly what God is like. Because Jesus is God, He is the perfect display of God's glory.

Students: The glory of God—His splendor and majesty—is revealed to humanity in many different ways, but its greatest manifestation is found in Christ Jesus, the Son of God. The Son came to earth so that we might have a relationship with the Father through Him for the glory and honor of God.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

THE COMMUNITY: Would you pray for the health of our community? Gen. 4:16-26

3. THE WAYWARDNESS OF THE COMMUNITY

"So Cain went out from the LORD's presence ... Cain was then building a city" (Gen. 4:16-17)

Lament that so many people in your community live like Cain – rejecting God and seeking shelter in the community and all the opportunities it offers, rather than in Jesus. Cry out for a work of the Spirit to turn their hearts back to him.

PEOPLE GROUP

100,000 Anglo-Australian people of Papua New Guinea

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

SIN ENTERED THE WORLD

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 26

Key Passage: Read Genesis 3

Memorize: I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; **he shall bruise your head**, and you shall bruise his heel. **Genesis 3:15** (ESV)

Context: Following the creation narrative, man was deceived and rebelled against God. He chose to believe the lies of the serpent instead of trusting the word of the Lord. However, God was not defeated as seen through this prophetic covenant about Christ.

Read:

Does the story of the fall surprise you? How could Adam and Eve—who had everything they needed—rebel against a loving God? Do you think you would have acted differently?

Adam and Eve's story is our story. Think about the last time you blatantly sinned. What lies were you believing in that moment? Satan wants us to believe the same lie that Eve believed: Maybe God is holding out on me. Maybe He isn't good or loving. Maybe I would do a better job than Him. Do you ever wonder if you know better than God?

Before the fall, Adam and Eve enjoyed a loving, two-way relationship with God. The garden was a true paradise. God filled the garden with good gifts so that they might enjoy them and give Him thanks. This glorifies God. All of that changed when Adam and Eve gave in to the serpent's temptation.

Adam and Eve desired something more: the wisdom the fruit offered. But when their eyes were opened, they didn't get what they hoped for. Instead, they were aware of their nakedness. They felt ashamed. Surely the Lord's heart broke at their act of disobedience and rebellion. Can you think of a time your own sin produced regret and sorrow?

I WILL
PUT **ENMITY**
BETWEEN YOU
AND THE WOMAN,
AND BETWEEN
YOUR OFFSPRING
AND HER
OFFSPRING;
HE SHALL BRUISE
YOUR HEAD,
AND YOU
SHALL **BRUISE**
HIS HEEL.

-GENESIS 3:15

Because of their sin, God cast Adam and Eve out of the garden. Though they did not die right away, sin's effect was immediate and thorough. Their lives and their children's lives—and the lives of all of humanity—would be forever affected by their choice. We see this in the world around us. We experience God's grace, but we are very aware that the world is broken. It was not meant to be this way.

Sin is a big problem that needs a big solution. At just the right time, God sent His Son into the world, born as a baby. (Matthew 1:21) As your kids become increasingly aware of the bad news—that we are all sinners from birth—rejoice with them over the good news: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15).

Meaning/Application:

Our key verse this week points forward to Christ. Even though man has just sinned and is receiving his punishment, God is already looking forward to when the relationship can be restored, and sin and death can be defeated. We should remember that we can always trust the promises and truth of God through his Word.

Questions to discuss and ponder: Have you placed your faith in the offspring of Eve? Do you know the One who has defeated death? Do you know Christ as your Lord and Savior?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God planned to send Jesus to make everything right.

Preschool: Since Adam and Eve, all people have been sinners. God sent Jesus to rescue us from sin.

Kids: Ever since Adam and Eve sinned, all people have been born as sinners. Sin separates us from God, but God still loves us. God promised a Rescuer would come from Eve's family. God sent His Son, Jesus, to rescue people from sin and bring them back to God.

Students: Even in the midst of Adam and Eve's transgression, God's grace was evident. God promised to provide a descendant, Jesus, who would crush the head of the serpent, thereby defeating sin and death and restoring people both with God and with one another.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

THE COMMUNITY: Would you pray for the health of our community? Gen. 4:16-26

4. THE SIN OF THE COMMUNITY

"Lamech said to his wives ... I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for injuring me" (Gen. 4:23).

Bring before God the sin of your community. Confess to God the ways in which you have contributed to this over the past week. Pray for God's restraining hand over all forms of violence, corruption and oppression.

PEOPLE GROUP

1,700 Western Tunebo people of Columbia

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

SIN SPREAD TO PEOPLE

WEEK OF OCTOBER 3

Key Passage: Read Genesis 4

Memorize: If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. **Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it. Genesis 4:7** (ESV)

Context: The sacrifice of Cain was not acceptable before the Lord while his brother Abel's was acceptable. This caused Cain to become jealous and strike down his brother, performing the first act of murder on the earth.

Read: Siblings often fight and compete as children and even adults. It may be over something as innocent as who gets the last cookie or as serious as who inherits their parents' prized heirloom.

The competition Cain felt toward Abel—the world's first siblings—reminds us that these family tensions can cause great damage to our relationships with one another, with parents, and even with God.

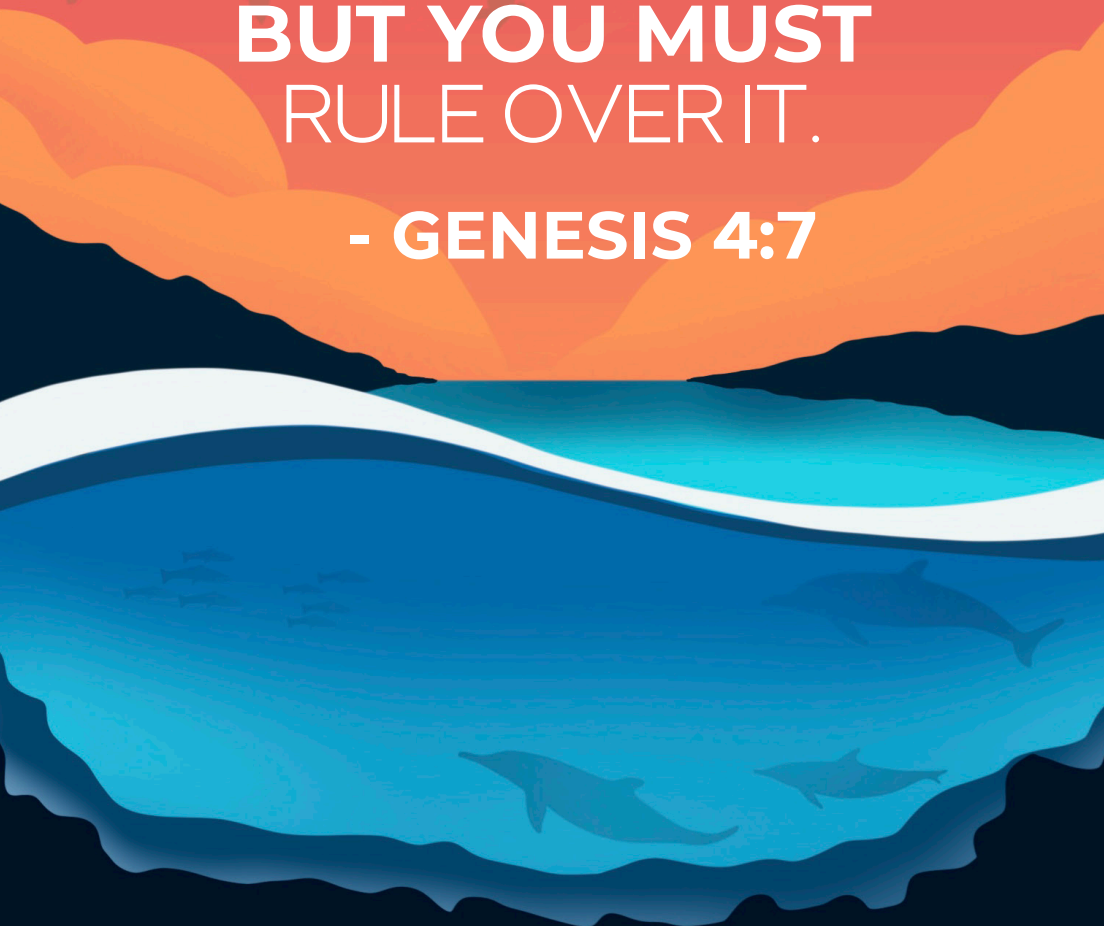
In the story of Cain and Abel, we find a progressing pattern of jealousy, which leads to hatred, which leads to murder. The result is not one but two lost sons for Adam and Eve.

God's disregard of Cain's offering stirred an intense jealousy and anger within Cain. Cain raged not only because his offering was rejected by God, but also because his brother's offering was accepted by the Lord. Cain's jealousy led him into a pit of misdirected hatred of Abel, ultimately leading him to murder his brother. The consequence of sin—death—that God had warned Adam and Eve about had come to fruition.

Jealousy never produces anything godly in us. And why is that? It's primarily because jealousy is nothing more than proof that we have staked our identity on what we have done or can do, rather than on what God has done for us through Christ.

IF YOU DO WELL,
WILL YOU NOT BE
ACCEPTED? AND IF
YOU DO NOT DO WELL,
SIN IS CROUCHING AT
THE DOOR. ITS DESIRE
IS CONTRARY TO YOU,
BUT YOU MUST
RULE OVER IT.

- GENESIS 4:7



When you are tempted to compare yourself to others, let that trigger a reminder of who you are in Christ.

Second Corinthians 5:17 tells us that "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation." As a child of God, our identity is not dependent upon what we do, but instead upon what Christ has done to save us through His life, death, and resurrection. Rather than living in the comparison between ourselves and others, let's live in the confidence that we have been made new. In Christ, we are fully loved and accepted.

Fight the temptation to compare. Fight the urge to compete with others before God. And trust in the finished work of Christ. For you are not your own; you were bought with a price. And that price is one you could never repay.

Meaning/Application:

We see what will result when we do not rule over our sin. Its desire will overtake us if we allow it to do so. We stumble and sin, both in large ways and small ways, when we succumb to temptation. We know that we cannot overcome the hold of sin on our own. We must place our trust in God and daily follow Him if we want to overcome the perils of this world.

Questions to discuss and ponder: Are you daily seeking to follow Christ? What steps are you taking to ensure sin is not ruling over you?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God promised to send Jesus.

Preschool: Everyone in Adam and Eve's family sinned too. God promised to send His Son, Jesus, to save sinners.

Kids: Adam and Eve's sin and its consequences spread to all of their descendants. But God did not forget His promise to send a Rescuer. At just the right time, God would send His Son to save sinners.

Students: After Adam and Eve's sin in Eden, sin's impact on humanity and creation spread far and deep, but it could not surpass the grace and mercy of God. God's promise to provide a Rescuer in Genesis 3:15 still remained. Jesus would be that Rescuer, the one who would come to put an end to sin and death.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

THE COMMUNITY: Would you pray for the health of our community? Gen. 4:16-26

5. THE HOPE OF THE COMMUNITY

"[Eve] gave birth to a son and named him Seth, saying, 'God has granted me another child in place of Abel, since Cain killed him'" (Gen. 4:25).

Praise God for Jesus Christ, the promised descendant of Eve, who crushed Satan's head when he was crucified outside the city walls – so that now we can be part of God's heavenly city. Pray that this message of hope would ring out and transform your community.

PEOPLE GROUP

178,000 Mزاب people of Algeria

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER



GOD SPARED NOAH

WEEK OF OCTOBER 10

Key Passage: Read Genesis 8:20 - Genesis 9

Memorize: I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and **never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth. Genesis 9:11** (ESV)

Context: God has flooded the earth because of man's sin. He has spared Noah and his family, as well as two of each animal. The flood has now subsided, and God has established a covenant with Noah to no longer flood the earth.

Read: The Bible is full of promises. As early as the first few chapters of Genesis, we begin to see God make, and even fulfill, His promises: promises for punishment and for blessing, for death and for life, for separation and for salvation. In Noah's journey to build an ark, survive the flood, and begin to repopulate the earth, we find multiple reminders that the Lord is faithful to fulfill His promises.

When God destroyed the entire population of the earth except for Noah and his family, we are reminded that God keeps His promise to preserve a remnant of His people always. When Noah sent a dove to find dry land and it returned with an olive leaf, we are reminded of God's promise to show His people the way at just the right time. And when God painted His bow in the sky, we are reminded of God's promise that He will always keep His Word.

As you survey Genesis 6–10, may it stir a great reminder in your heart and mind that God is always faithful and true. God is no liar, and He will not turn back from His word. May these chapters of Genesis also give you hope that though everything around you may fail, God's Word never will.



I ESTABLISH MY
COVENANT WITH YOU,
THAT NEVER AGAIN SHALL
ALL FLESH BE CUT OFF
BY THE WATERS OF THE
FLOOD, AND **NEVER** AGAIN
SHALL THERE BE A FLOOD
TO DESTROY THE EARTH.

- **GENESIS 9 : 11**

God is a God of great and magnificent promises. And every single one of them we can trust completely. When in doubt of this truth, look to the cross of Christ and His empty grave.

As Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 1:20, "every one of God's promises is 'Yes' in [Jesus]."

God will fulfill His promises. This week, pray that God would stir in you many reminders of how He keeps His word.

Meaning/Application:

While we see God's justice towards sin on display, we also see His mercy. He spares Noah and his family and also promises to refrain from flooding the earth again. We can, therefore, trust God at his word to keep his covenant with "every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." We are reminded of this when we see a rainbow and our hearts should be directed back towards the Lord and His goodness and mercy.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Am I thankful for the promises and mercy of God or do I take them for granted? Is your heart pointed towards the Lord when you see something such as a rainbow, or do you simply see a beautiful phenomenon?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: We can trust in Jesus.

Preschool: God rescued Noah and his family from the flood. Jesus came to save people from sin. When we trust in Jesus, He saves us from our sin.

Kids: God rescued Noah and his family from the flood. The story of Noah points ahead to a greater rescue. God's Son, Jesus—the only perfectly righteous One—came to take the punishment for our sin. By trusting in Him, we are saved from the punishment our sin deserves.

Students: Because of our wickedness, all of humanity deserves judgment, but God is gracious and has provided a way of salvation, Jesus took upon Himself the punishment for our sin so that all who trust in Him might be forgiven of their sin and be saved from the coming judgment.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY: Would you pray for the relationships in our community?

Proverbs 15:1-7

6. WISE PERSPECTIVES

"The eyes of the LORD are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good" (Prov. 15:3).

To be truly wise is to stand in awe of the sovereign God, who sees everything. Give thanks that he sees the individuals who bring us joy, and he knows the hidden pain that broken relationships cause. Spend some time thanking God for the people in your life and for his work in your relationships.

PEOPLE GROUP

250,000 Bavarian Austrian people of Italy

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER



PEOPLE REBEL AGAINST GOD

WEEK OF OCTOBER 17

Key Passage: Read Genesis 11: 1-9

Memorize: **So the LORD dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth,** and they left off building the city.
Genesis 11:8 (ESV)

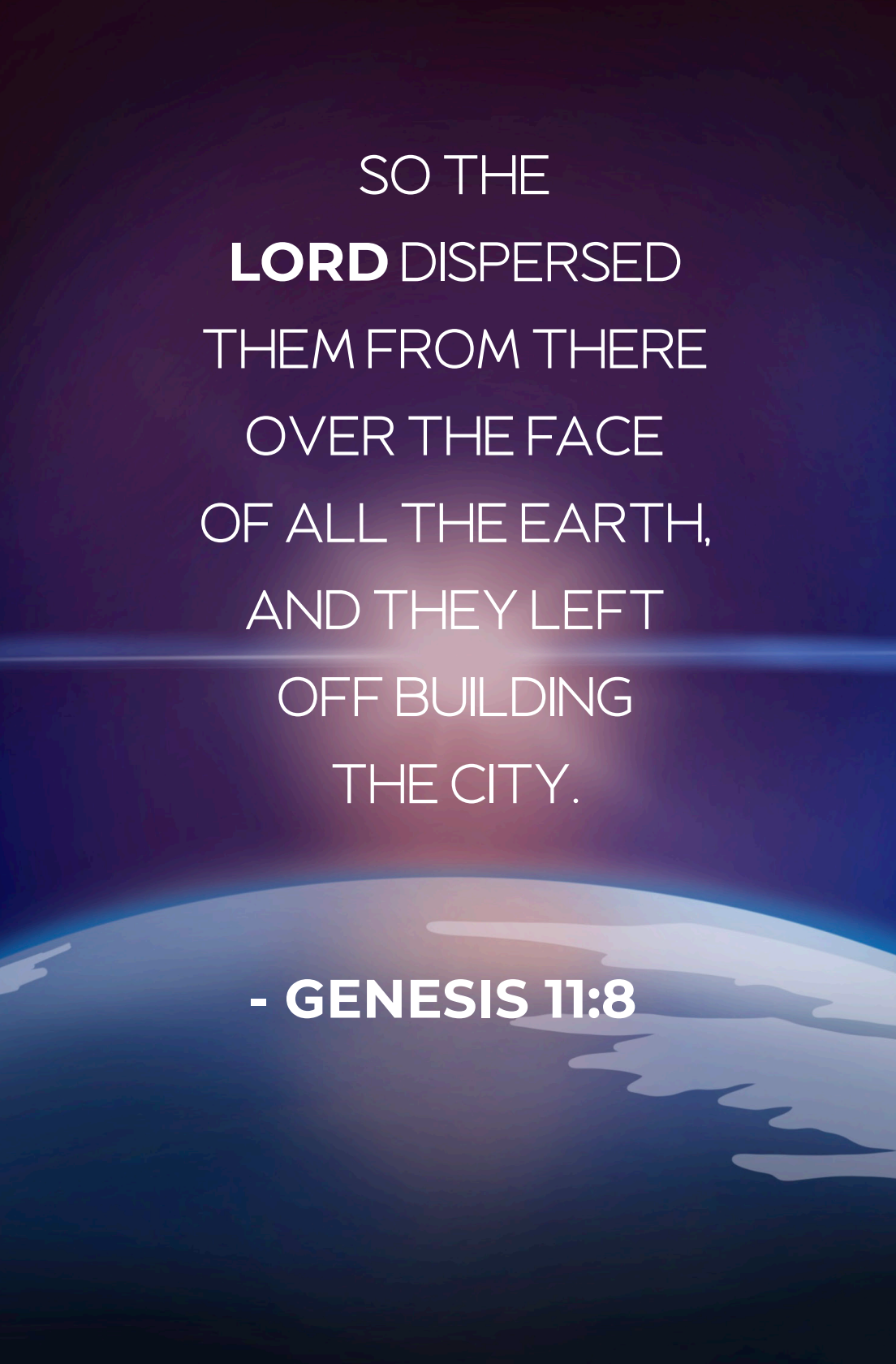
Context: The people of the earth, after the flood, still show their sinful nature. They seek out to build a tower to the heavens in order to exalt their own name. This is displeasing to the Lord which causes God to confuse their language and to disperse them across the earth.

Read: We love to measure the health, success, or sustainability of pretty much anything and everything. We measure our kids by their grades in school. We measure teams by their wins and losses. We measure people by their influence and following on social media. In a world obsessed with measuring "success," we ought to be assessing in our own lives something we cannot see: our motivation.

We can define motivation simply as the reason we do something. Motivation is the driving force behind the decisions we make. There is a reason for everything that we do—both big and small—but what that motivation is might not be obvious to those around us.

In Genesis 11, Noah's family had grown and began to rebuild the earth's population. At some point along the way, they decided to ignore God's command to spread out and subdue the earth for God's glory. Instead, the people decided to build a tower to show their greatness. Their motivation was both obvious and arrogant.

Read Psalm 127:1-2. These verses provide a blatant reminder that God is the only true builder. His glory is our only proper motivation. Additionally, this psalm gives us a promise that those who love God will be able to rest from being driven by selfish motivation. Doesn't it sound pretty attractive to be able to rest from selfish motivation that plagues so much of our thinking and behavior?



SO THE
LORD DISPERSED
THEM FROM THERE
OVER THE FACE
OF ALL THE EARTH,
AND THEY LEFT
OFF BUILDING
THE CITY.

- **GENESIS 11:8**

In God's economy, He's less worried with the outcome of our decisions and more concerned with the reason for our decisions. That's not to say that it doesn't matter what we do. Rather, if our motivation is right—if our hearts are right—our actions will follow. And not only will our motivation and behavior honor God, but much of the anxiety of life will fade away too.

Meaning/Application:

We see here again that God is a jealous God. He will not share His Name with another, and this includes man building a name for himself. The Lord caused the confusion of language so that man could not so easily conspire against God in order to exalt his own name. We should recognize that we should not seek to make our own name but should always seek to give God the honor and glory due to Him. We are created in his image and this should be reflected in our actions.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Am I guilty of seeking to make a name for myself? How am I honoring and glorifying God in my daily actions?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: People will worship Jesus.

Preschool: People disobeyed God, so God mixed up their language and spread the people over the earth. One day, Jesus will bring His people back together. People from every language will worship Him together.

Kids: People wanted glory for themselves instead of God. They ignored God's plan, so God confused their language and scattered them all over the earth. One day, Jesus will gather together all of God's people—from every tribe and language—and they will worship Him together.

Students: God responded to the people's act of rebellion in building the tower of Babylon by confusing their language, forcing them to scatter. Many years later, God would respond to the source of all our rebellion by providing Jesus. At Pentecost, God tore down the language barrier, bringing people from every tongue, nation, and tribe together in Christ Jesus.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY: Would you pray for the relationships in our community?

Proverbs 15:1-7

7. WISE FRIENDSHIPS

"The soothing tongue is a tree of life, but a perverse tongue crushes the spirit" (Prov. 15:4).

The community is full of words! Billboards, newspapers, tweets, conversations ... Words have the power to build up or tear down. Pray that you would develop friendships where you can give and receive wisdom, comfort, encouragement, and hope for this life and the rest.

PEOPLE GROUP

352,000 Northern Yemeni people of Saudi Arabia

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL + PRAISE + PRAYER

GOD MADE A COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

WEEK OF OCTOBER 24

Key Passage: Read Genesis 12:1-9

Memorize: And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. **Genesis 12:2** (ESV)

Context: God calls Abram from the land he calls home. He declares that He will make him a great nation and make his name great. Abram obeys and goes to the land and builds an altar. We know nothing of Abram's experience with God before this, but we see that he honors and obeys God.

Read: Think about all of the choices that we have each day. Just in the morning, we have dozens of different cereals to eat, perhaps that many varieties of milk to pour on top of the cereal, and nearly as many ways to make coffee to go with it. All of these are choices that we often take for granted.

Now think about all of the choices God had as He took a significant step in redemptive history and chose a couple to start a new people from whom the promised Rescuer would come. (Gen. 3:15) We see some of those choices at the tail end of Genesis 11, but we need to remember that God is not confined to choices like we are. He is all-powerful and sovereign; God had an infinite number of choices for this critical couple.

So whom did God choose? A man named Abram and his barren wife Sarai. Now that's a curious choice, isn't it? This is the couple whom God would give descendants as numerous as the stars? (Gen. 15:5) From the world's perspective, this was a curious choice at best—and a laughable choice at worst.

But from God's perspective, Abram and Sarai were a brilliant choice. First, God made it clear from the inception of this new people that He was the One bringing everything to pass. This family was special because God clearly worked in them to bring forth children.

AND I
WILL MAKE
OF YOU
A GREAT
NATION,
AND I
WILL BLESS
YOU AND
MAKE YOUR
NAME GREAT,
SO THAT
YOU WILL BE
A **BLESSING.**

-Genesis 12:2

This is what Sarai understood when she said, "Who would have told Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne a son for him in his old age" (Gen. 21:7). That the son of promise, Isaac, married a wife, Rebekah—who was also barren—is not a coincidence. (Gen. 25:21) Nor is it a coincidence that Jesus would be born to a virgin. (Luke 1:34) God is the God who makes possible that which is impossible, including rescuing people from sin.

God's covenant with Abram was certainly amazing. But perhaps His choice of Abram in the first place is even more amazing.

Meaning/Application:

We do not know the background of Abram and his previous encounters with the Lord. However, we see him obeying God's call and his faith and trust in God's word. We are called to be obedient to God's call and place our faith and trust in Him. We should be daily entrusting God with, not only our daily lives, but also our future plans.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Do you trust God with your future plans or do you try and do it all on your own? Do you trust Him for your daily provisions as well?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God sent Jesus.

Preschool: God sent Jesus to earth as part of Abraham's family. Jesus saves people from their sins.

Kids: God promised to bless all the world through Abraham. God sent Jesus from His home in heaven to be born on earth into Abraham's family. Through Jesus, all the nations of the earth are blessed because Jesus saves people from their sins.

Students: God promised that He would bless the world through Abraham and his family, an unlikely and imperfect people. Jesus Christ, an unlikely but perfect Savior, is the fulfillment of God's promise, the descendant through whom salvation flows to the entire world.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY: Would you pray for the relationships in our community?

Proverbs 15:1-7

8. WISE FAMILIES

"A fool spurns a parent's discipline, but whoever heeds correction shows prudence" (Prov. 15:5).

The family unit is designed so that the older generation can help the young to flourish. Pray that your community would be filled with families where words of leadership and discipline are shared and accepted in love.

PEOPLE GROUP

343,000 Deaf Congolese people of The Democratic Republic of the Congo

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

MELCHIZEDEK BLESSED ABRAHAM

WEEK OF OCTOBER 31

Key Passage: Read Genesis 14:17-24

Memorize: And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; **and blessed be God Most High**, who has delivered your enemies into your hand! **Genesis 14:19-20** (ESV)

Context: Not much is known about Melchizedek here is this passage. However, when we examine other portions of Scripture, particularly Hebrews, we can see that he falls in line as High Priest. Thus his blessing over Abram confirms Abram's calling from God.

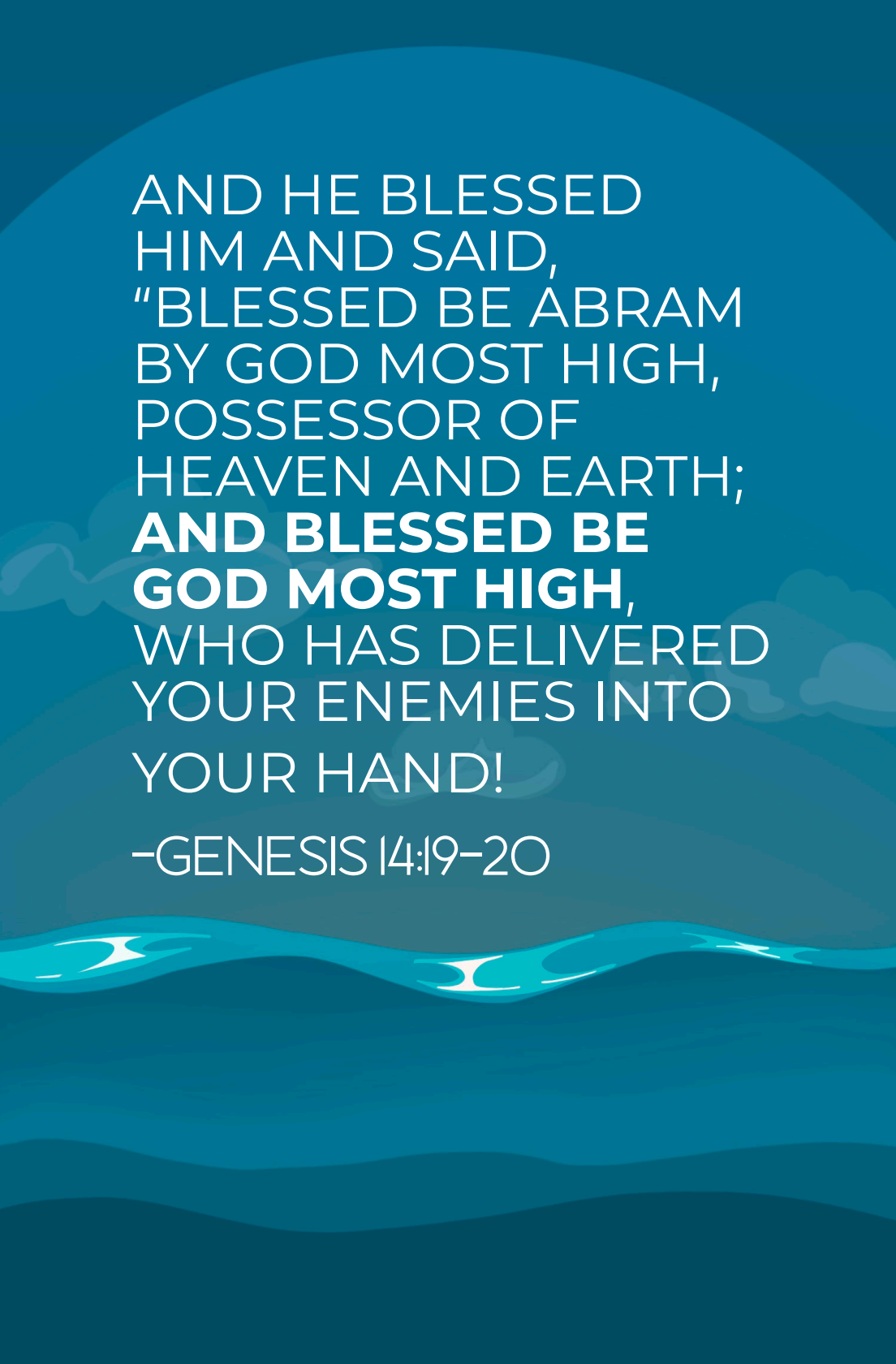
Read: We marvel at stories with two characters who are total opposites of each other. This is why so many stories feature some form of a noble hero and an immoral villain. The contrast of character and conduct is what drives the tension of the story.

In Genesis 14, we find two completely opposite kings: the king of Sodom and the king of Salem. One sought to get; the other sought to give. One sought to curse; the other sought to bless. One sought to take life; the other sought to give life.

These two rulers illustrate the spirit of the world and the Spirit of God, two forces actively at work in our world and in our lives.

This is why Paul reminded us in Ephesians 6 to put on the full armor of God. "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this darkness, against evil, spiritual forces in the heavens. For this reason take up the full armor of God, so that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having prepared everything, to take your stand" (Eph. 6:12-13).

We live in the middle of a real fight between two opposing forces seeking to own our hearts. One, the evil spirit in our



AND HE BLESSED
HIM AND SAID,
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BY GOD MOST HIGH,
POSSESSOR OF
HEAVEN AND EARTH;
**AND BLESSED BE
GOD MOST HIGH,**
WHO HAS DELIVERED
YOUR ENEMIES INTO
YOUR HAND!

-GENESIS 14:19-20

present world, like the king of Sodom seeks to take from us and generate chaos and confusion. The other, the Spirit of the living God, like the King of Salem seeks to give life and bring peace and joy.

In our present world, we must recognize that this battle goes on inside of every believer. And we must put on the full armor of God daily that we might withstand the attack of the evil one and faithfully commit to full submission to the Spirit of God. It's not enough that we deny the evil one; we must say "yes" to God.

This battle is real and raging. And the people of God must fight with great resolve to ensure our allegiance remains to the only good King, the Lord.

Meaning/Application:

Within this blessing we can see the acknowledgement that God is the Creator of all things and reigns over all. He is sovereign and controls all things on this earth. We later will see how Melchizedek points forward to Christ and His sacrifice and the better covenant He offers. Our hearts should be pointed toward God by Christ just as Abram's was through Melchizedek.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Do we take the blessings we read in the Bible seriously? Are they words on a page, or are they living praises to the God Most High?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: Jesus came to bless us.

Preschool: Jesus is a priest and king like Melchizedek was, but Jesus is better! Jesus came to bless us. He died on the cross and rose again to give us life with God forever.

Kids: Melchizedek means "king of righteousness." Melchizedek reminds us of Jesus, an even greater priest and king who lives forever. Jesus died on the cross and rose again to bless all who trust in Him by providing forgiveness and eternal life.

Students: Abraham's encounter with Melchizedek, a priest to God Most High, points to a greater priest who would come, Christ Jesus. Jesus would bless all the families of the earth through His sacrifice on the cross so that all who believe might be saved.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY: Would you pray for the relationships in our community?

Proverbs 15:1-7

9. WISE COMMUNITIES

"The house of the righteous contains great treasure, but the income of the wicked brings ruin" (Prov. 15:6)

Pray that homes in your community would be places where people thrive in honesty and love. Pray too for those facing abuse, those families ensnared in a life of crime, and those households focused on accumulating wealth on earth rather than storing up treasure in heaven – pray that they would know the transforming power of Christ.

PEOPLE GROUP

190,000 Lintang people of Indonesia

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL + PRAISE + PRAYER



GOD PROVIDED ISAAC

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 7

Key Passage: Read Genesis 22:1-19

Memorize: Abraham said, **"God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son."** So they went both of them together. **Genesis 22:8** (ESV)

Context: God has finally provided Abraham and Sarah with a long-awaited son, Isaac. Even through advanced age and through the lack of faith in having a child with Hagar, Isaac is born and through him will come a great nation of people. But God then throws a curveball to Abraham and tells him to sacrifice his only son to Himself as a test of obedience.

Read:

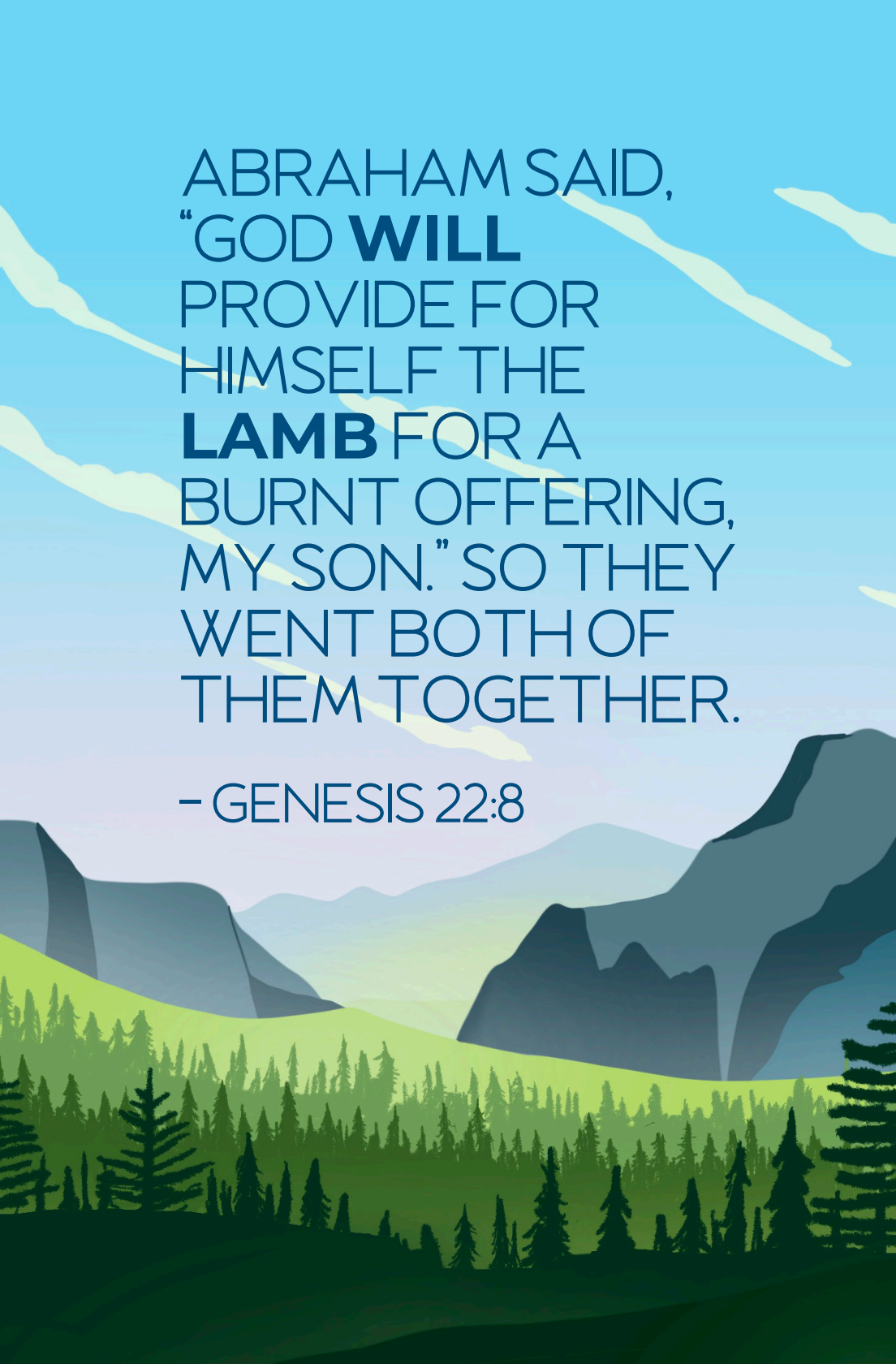
It's been said that when a word or phrase is repeated in the Bible, we ought to pay close attention. In Genesis 22, Abraham repeated one phrase three times: "Here I am."

Abraham first used "Here I am" on his journey when God called his name. Abraham's eager response to God shows that he was ready and expectant to hear from God.

Abraham then used this phrase in response to his son, Isaac. On the journey to the place of sacrifice, Isaac called out to his father and Abraham responded, "Here I am." Even though Abraham was surely wrestling with what God had commanded him to do, he was eager to hear from his son and help him understand what God was doing.

Third, Abraham responded to the angel of the Lord: "Here I am." The angel called Abraham's name twice as he was about to sacrifice his son in obedience to God. Even in a tense and emotional moment, Abraham was sensitive to the Lord and eager to hear from him.

Abraham's use of this phrase clearly shows his open-handed readiness to serve. Abraham responded to the Lord, to his son, and to the angel from his humble heart and willing spirit. in comparison—and that they stretch



ABRAHAM SAID,
“GOD **WILL**
PROVIDE FOR
HIMSELF THE
LAMB FOR A
BURNT OFFERING,
MY SON.” SO THEY
WENT BOTH OF
THEM TOGETHER.

– GENESIS 22:8

Instead of shutting down and stopping his ears to God because of the incredibly challenging task God had put before him, Abraham remained steadfast in His openness to the Lord.

God desires that we always be ready for however He may intend to use us for His glory and our good. Whenever we sense the leading of the Spirit of God, may we take a posture similar to Abraham, always willingly to say, "Here I am."

Meaning/Application:

We see in this passage that Abraham trusts God to provide a sacrifice. He even tells Isaac that God will provide. This does not stop him, however, from following through with God's commands until the Lord divinely intervenes. Abraham's faith is on display, as well as the goodness of God in blessing those who place their faith in Him. We should be like Abraham and not withhold anything when we trust and follow Him.

Questions to discuss and ponder: How would you have reacted if you were in Abraham's shoes? Is there anything in your life that you might be withholding from entrusting with God in your walk with Him?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God loves us and keeps His promise.

Preschool: Abraham loved God. He was willing to give up his son Isaac, but God provided a ram. God loves us. He gave His Son, Jesus, to save the world from sin.

Kids: Abraham showed his love for God by being willing to sacrifice his son Isaac. God provided a ram instead. This is how God showed His love for us: He sent His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross so that we could have eternal life through Him.

Students: Abraham was willing to sacrifice Isaac, the long-awaited son of promise, because he believed that God could raise him from the dead (Heb. 11:19). But God provided a ram as a substitute Isaac. Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah, the beloved Son whom God the Father did not spare. He was the willing sacrifice God provided as a substitute to pay for our sin.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY: Would you pray for the relationships in our community? Proverbs 15:1-7

10. WISE SCHOOLS

"The lips of the wise spread knowledge, but the hearts of fools are not upright" (Prov. 15:7).

Schools have a pivotal role in the molding of young lives. Pray that teachers will impart knowledge well and will be able to flourish in their chosen profession. Take time to pray specifically for the schools close to you and for any teachers in your congregation.

PEOPLE GROUP

1,560,000 Pingdi Yao people of China

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL + PRAISE + PRAYER

GOD CHANGED ISAAC

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 14

Key Passage: Read Genesis 32:22-32

Memorize: Then he said, **"Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel,** for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed." **Genesis 32:28** (ESV)

Context: Jacob is travelling with his family and servants when he encounters a mysterious man along his way. Wrestling throughout the night, the man did not prevail against Jacob. However, Jacob recognized who this man was and sought his blessing.

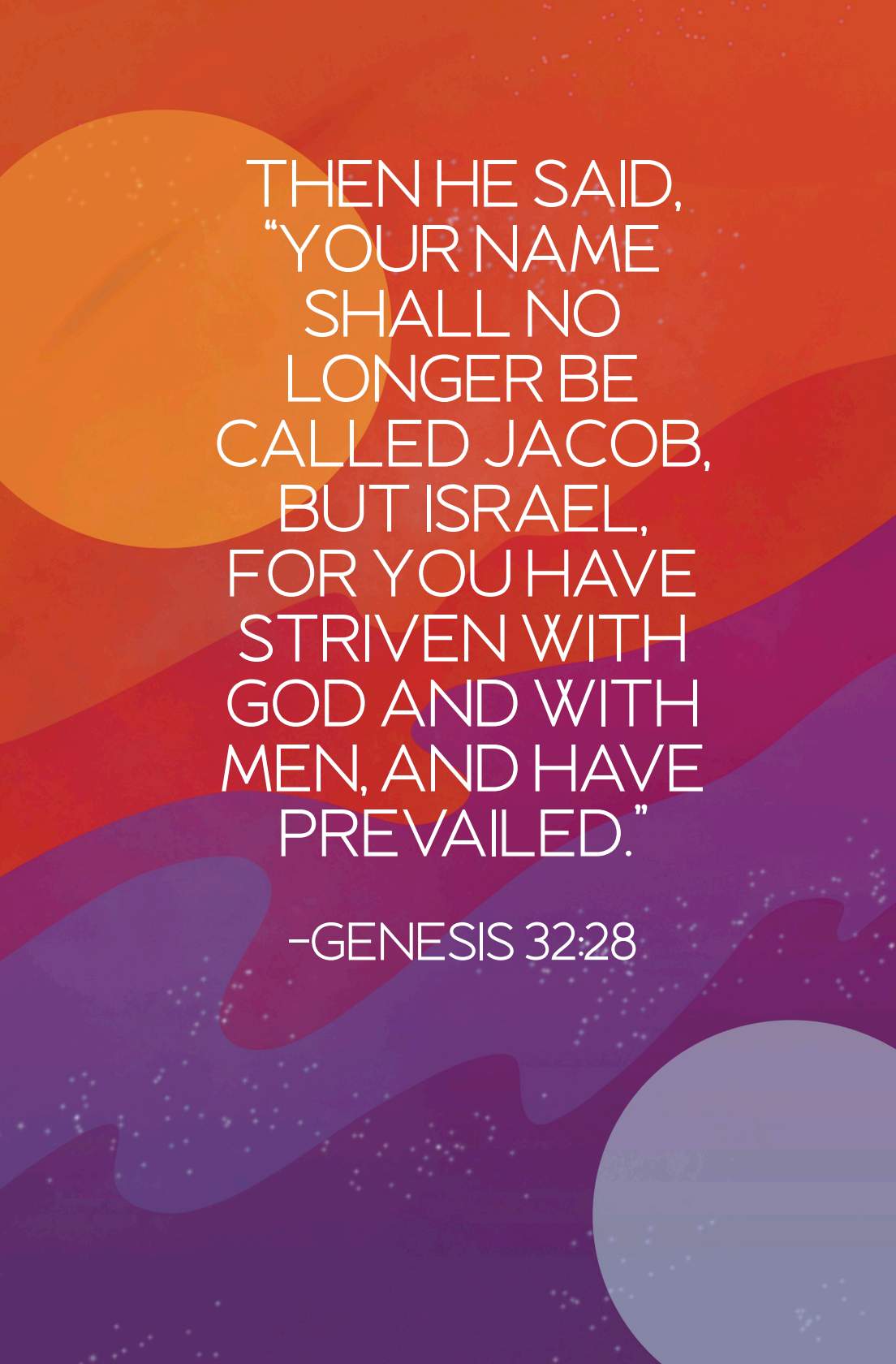
Read:

Jacob's journey in Genesis is one of unexpected and undeserved blessing after blessing. With a name that literally means he cheats, Jacob was unlikely to receive the privilege and opportunity God gave him.

Jacob was a cheater, a liar, and a deceiver. He was quiet and not strongly gifted. And he was gullible, too. We cannot miss that the deceiver was deceived at times too—easily convinced by his mother and tricked by his uncle. But God would work through Jacob when no circumstances or characteristics made it seem possible.

In Genesis 32:10, Jacob expressed his own bewilderment to the Lord. "I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servant. Indeed, I crossed over the Jordan with my staff, and now I have become two camps."

Jacob came to realize that nothing that he had accomplished or accumulated was the result of his own doing. He was not capable or competent enough to produce the many good things he had received and especially not to be the recipient of the promise of God to make his family like the dust of the earth. Jacob was humbled by the reality that through him and his offspring, all of the families of the earth would be blessed.



THEN HE SAID,
"YOUR NAME
SHALL NO
LONGER BE
CALLED JACOB,
BUT ISRAEL,
FOR YOU HAVE
STRIVEN WITH
GOD AND WITH
MEN, AND HAVE
PREVAILED."

—GENESIS 32:28

It's easy to look at Jacob and say he didn't deserve what God gave him. It's hard to feel that way about ourselves. But it's just as true. Salvation should bring about this astonishment in us as well. It should remind us that we are not worthy, and it should lead us to rejoice in the undeserving gift of God's grace.

Meaning/Application:

Jacob recognized that he had wrestled against God. God provides him with a new name, Israel. Though we may not immediately see how this is a blessing, we will soon see the great nation of Israel as God grows His people. Finally, God leaves Jacob with a wound as reminder of his time with Him. Often, we are left with wounds during our time on this earth, but we too can use them as reminders of God's providence.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

What do you think was going through Jacob's mind as he wrestled with God? Are there points in your life that may have brought you pain but you can look back and see how God was working?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God calls us His children.

Preschool: God gave Jacob a new name, Israel. When we follow Jesus, God calls us His children.

Kids: God changed Jacob's life and gave him a new name, Israel. Jesus came so that we might have a changed life, forgiven of sin. Jesus' death and resurrection provided sinful people the way to be adopted into God's family. When we trust in Jesus, we also receive a new name—children of God.

Students: God delighted in using a broken family to bring blessing to the world, showing that all the glory goes to Him alone. God, however, was not just at work through this family, but in them as well, as He changed and remade them in His image. As Christians, we have been changed and remade in Christ and we now bear His name. This is both a privilege and a responsibility before the watching world.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY -"WORK" -Genesis 1:28, 2:15, 3:17-19

11. THE BLESSING OF WORK

"God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number'" (Gen.1:28).

Although we don't always see it this way, work is a blessing! Give thanks for the way God uses work to provide for our needs and give us a sense of fulfilment and purpose as we reflect his image.

PEOPLE GROUP

7,000,000 Khmer Krom people of Vietnam

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

GOD HAD A PLAN FOR JOSEPH

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 21

Key Passage: Read Genesis 50:15-21

Memorize: As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. **Genesis 50:20**(ESV)

Context: Though he was sold into slavery by his brothers out of jealousy, Joseph has providentially been placed second in command under Pharaoh. During a time of famine his family is forced to come before him seeking assistance. Though they do not recognize Joseph, he recognizes them. He takes the opportunity to test them before revealing himself and ultimately providing for them.

Read: The story of Joseph is packed full of moments that resonate with us. Maybe you were the favorite child or the favorite child's sibling. Some people resonate with being cast away from family or being undeservingly welcomed into a new family. Some resonate with finding favor with an enemy or showing favor to an enemy. In Joseph's story, we can see ourselves and our need for Jesus in so many ways.

On at least four occasions in Joseph's journey, others gave him tremendous blessings. Though Joseph lost some of these earthly treasures, he remained faithful to the Lord. We normally focus on Joseph's adversity, but we can't miss that both the lows and highs of Joseph's life were also marked by God's blessing through others.

First, Joseph's father blessed him with a beautiful multi-colored robe as a representation of his favored status. This tangible symbol was taken from him when his brothers sold him into slavery. Yet Joseph remained faithful.

Next, Potiphar blessed Joseph by making him overseer of his entire household. The role lent itself to all the tangible and monetary things anyone could want. But when Joseph fled from the advance of Potiphar's wife, it was all taken from him. Yet Joseph remained faithful.

AS FOR YOU,
YOU MEANT *EVIL*
AGAINST ME, BUT
GOD MEANT IT FOR
GOOD, TO BRING IT
ABOUT THAT MANY
PEOPLE SHOULD BE
KEPT ALIVE, AS THEY
ARE TODAY.

– GENESIS 50:20



Third, the prison warden blessed Joseph by making him overseer over the entire prison. Finally, Pharaoh blessed Joseph by placing him as second in command over all of Egypt, putting Joseph in a position to save his family from famine.

Joseph refused to let the evil actions of others steal his faith. When he had the chance to take away from others who had taken from him, Joseph showed generosity instead.

Meaning/Application:

Though Joseph could have enacted revenge against his brothers, he rightfully refrained and recognized that it was the Lord's will for him to end up in the position that he did. He also rightfully attributes the sinfulness of the situation to man (his brothers) while attributing the providence of the situation to God. We live in a fallen world where evil exists and bad things happen. However, this does not take away from the sovereignty of God and his ultimate plan to work all things for good for those who love Him. Our faith and attitude should be pointed towards God's sovereignty and not in the despair of this world.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Where does my mind go when trials and tribulations affect me in this life? Do I look to praise God and trust Him during the difficulties? Do I truly believe that God can work something for good even when man means it for evil purposes?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God's plan was to send Jesus.

Preschool: Joseph's brothers hurt Joseph. One day, people would hurt God's Son, Jesus. God's good plan was to use Jesus' death to save His people from sin.

Kids: God had a plan for Joseph's life. He allowed Joseph to suffer in order to rescue a whole nation. God planned for Jesus to suffer so that many—people from all nations—would be saved.

Students: God used the evil deeds of Joseph's brothers for His greater plan of saving Joseph's family from the famine. In a greater way, God used the evil injustice of those who crucified Jesus to bring about His master plan of providing salvation from sin and death.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY -"WORK"- Genesis 1:28, 2:15, 3:17-

19 12. THE CALL OF WORK

"Increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it" (Gen. 1:28). In work, God calls us to be part of his plan to subdue the earth – from sweeping floors to performing surgery, from teaching young children to trading stocks. Give thanks for the dignity that this gives to your work, however mundane or frustrating you may find it. Pray that those who follow Christ in your community would increasingly worship God through their work, and not worship their work as god.

PEOPLE GROUP

289,000 Wolof people of Mauritania

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER



GOD CONTROLS EVERYTHING

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 28

Key Passage: Read Job 19

Memorize: For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. **Job 19:25** (ESV)

Context: The book of Job provides us with a picture of a faithful servant in Job who is relentlessly tested by Satan to turn away from God. In fact, his friends and family urge him to as well because of the trials and tribulations he is put through. Job, himself, at times becomes despaired. However, this chapter of Job provides the picture of reliance on the Lord which we must cling to.


Read: In research, there is a common practice used to measure data: the pre-test and post-test. The pre-test is a baseline, assessing the state of something prior to experimental factors being introduced. As is suggested by the name, this happens prior to the experiment.

The post-test is a comparison, designed to compare the outcome of the experiment to the pre-test results in order to assess change. As the name suggests, the post-test comes after the experiment.

In the life of Job, we find a man who goes through the most traumatic experiences imaginable. Job lost his kids, his wealth, his career, and his friends. His sheep even burned up! (It's true, read Job 1:16.) Job's life was turned upside down. His joy was low and his sorrow was high.

It's fascinating to look at Job's life before and after this series of trials. Prior to Job's losing all he had, Job is described as blameless and upright, fearing God and turning away from evil. He had great spiritual fortitude and great material wealth.

Following his extended trial, Job repented of his wavering trust in God. Job was restored to God, and God restored his wealth to a greater degree than before.

The background is a stylized landscape. At the top, a large, bright orange sun is partially obscured by the text. Below the sun, a blue river flows from the left towards the center. On the left bank of the river, there is a cluster of dark green evergreen trees. In the foreground, a dark silhouette of a horse stands on a dark bank, facing left. The sky is a gradient of orange and yellow, and the hills in the background are dark brown.

FOR I
KNOW THAT MY
REDEEMER
LIVES, AND
AT THE LAST
HE WILL STAND
UPON THE
EARTH.

- JOB 19:25

The pre-test and post-test of Job's journey demonstrate a man who, in the big picture, was unshakable in his relationship with God. Though he had high and low moments during the trial, Job was fully restored to God. Like Job, our faithfulness does not mean that there won't be moments of struggle or slipping, but it does mean that overall, our faith in God remains and grows.

If you aren't in the midst of a trial, know that God is strengthening your trust in Him so that when difficulty does come—and it will—your pre-test shows a strong faith that can endure. And if you are in the midst of great challenges right now, strive to endure so that a post-test might demonstrate that your love and trust of God has remained and even increased.

Trials are inevitable. Trust in God, who controls everything. Anticipate that trials will come, and aim for growth on the other side.

Meaning/Application:

Job recognizes who his redeemer is and that in the end, only He will stand. Though we may suffer and face trials in this life on this earth, we must recognize who is in control and who controls eternity. Christ has defeated death. We should keep our eyes on Him no matter the circumstances.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Do you remain focused on Christ even during the difficult times? How do you handle outside forces urging you to turn away from God?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: We can trust Jesus.

Preschool: The story of Job reminds us of Jesus. Jesus had hard times, too, but He never sinned. He saves us from sin. Jesus comforts us when we hurt, and we can trust Him.

Kids: Job learned that God is all-powerful, sovereign, and good. When we face suffering, we can hope in God. God sent Jesus, the only truly innocent One, to suffer and die so that everyone who trusts in Him can have forgiveness and eternal life.

Students: Jesus is at the center of creation. All of creation exists by Him and for Him. The Son of God is the One who holds all of creation together.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY - "WORK" -

Genesis 1:28, 2:15, 3:17-19

13. THE CARE OF WORK

"... to work it and take care of it" (Gen. 2:15).

The word for "care" in this verse means to watch over and protect, like a shepherd caring for his flock. Ask God's forgiveness for the times when you have instead spoiled or harmed God's creation through your work. Pray that people in your community would be more passionate about caring for God's world.

PEOPLE GROUP

265,000 Brunei Malay people of Brunei

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL + PRAISE + PRAYER



GOD CALLED MOSES

WEEK OF DECEMBER 5

Key Passage: Read Exodus 3

Memorize: God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" **Exodus 3:14** (ESV)

Context:

Moses has fled Egypt after killing an Egyptian and is living in the wilderness with his wife and her family. While tending sheep, he encounters a burning bush and goes to investigate. Here he has an encounter with God.

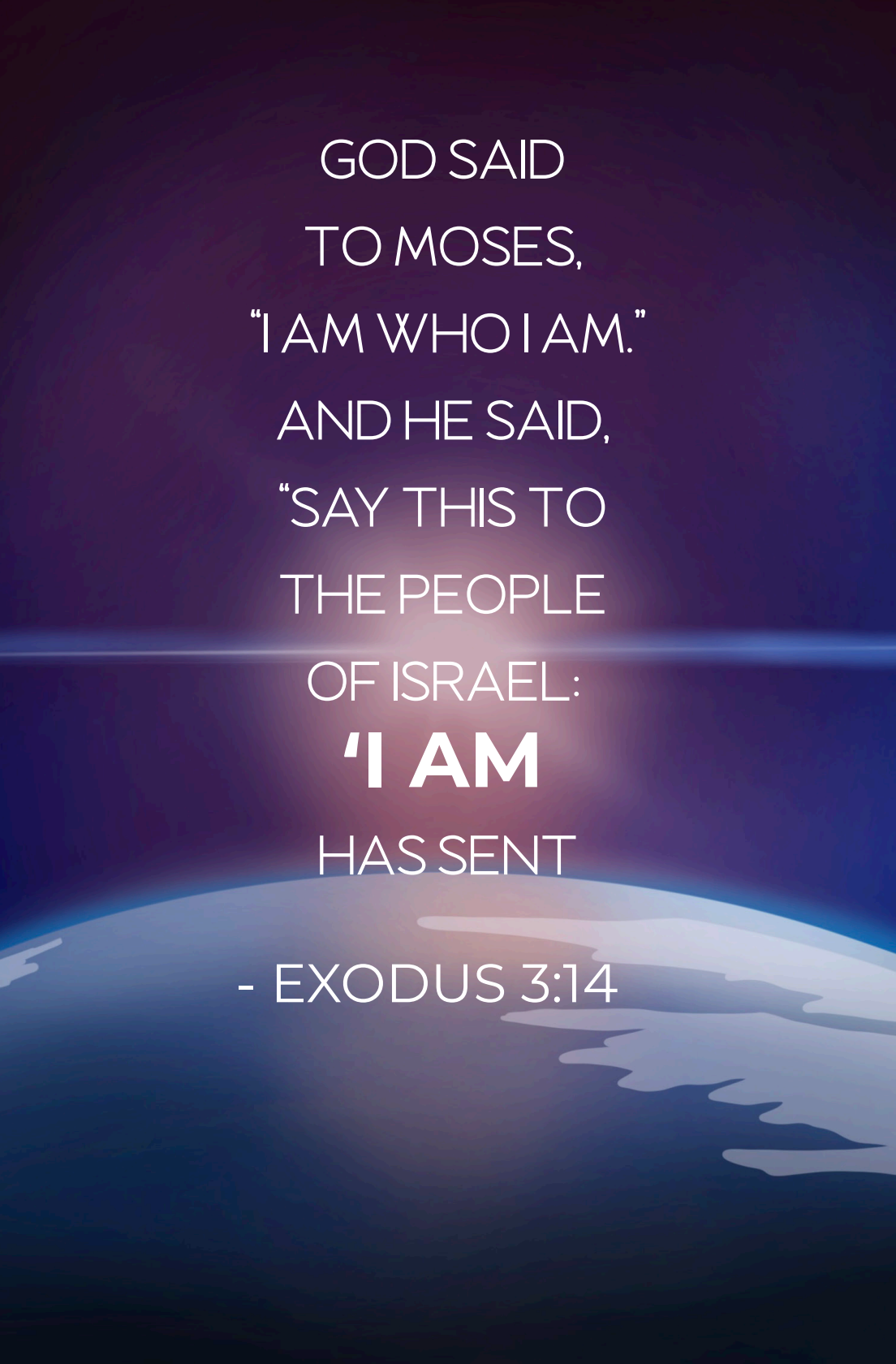
Read:

Moses was born into a culture that hated his people. If you remember, the Israelites—descendants of Israel (Jacob)—had set up their home in Egypt when a famine forced them to seek out food. They became so numerous that Pharaoh felt threatened and forced them into slavery. But their families still grew, and Pharaoh instituted an unimaginable method of population control: kill all of the baby boys.

Moses' story is a clear picture of God's sovereignty. Not only was Moses' life spared by the Egyptian princess, Moses' mother was able to care for him. Moses grew up in Pharaoh's house and then spent years shepherding in Midian before God called him to his task.

Imagine the encounter between God and Moses at the burning bush. God drew a curious Moses to Himself and then spoke: "Moses, Moses!"

God identified Himself as the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. He testified to His own grace: "I have observed the misery of my people ... and I know about their sufferings ... I am sending you ... so that you may lead my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt" (Ex. 3:7-10).



GOD SAID
TO MOSES,
"I AM WHO I AM."
AND HE SAID,
"SAY THIS TO
THE PEOPLE
OF ISRAEL:
'I AM
HAS SENT

- EXODUS 3:14

God revealed His name: "I AM WHO I AM." The most basic and important fact about God is that He exists; He always has and always will exist. God does not change. God revealed to Moses who He is so that the people would trust in Him.

Help your kids understand that God saved Moses' life and called him to rescue God's people from slavery. The calling of Moses points to a greater calling and rescue—the call of Jesus to come to earth to save God's people. Jesus gave up His life to save us from slavery to sin.

Meaning/Application:

God has raised up Moses for this specific time to go to Egypt and have His people freed. He offers up many excuses as to why he can't do it. One question he asks is who should I say sent me? God's reply of I AM will also be used by Christ during his ministry to show His divinity. Ultimately, Moses had no answer to keep him from God's call of leading the people of Israel. We, ourselves, are sent out by God. I AM has sent us to spread the Good News to all the nations. Are you being obedient?

Questions to discuss and ponder:

How are you responding to God's call to tell others about Him? Are you ever like Moses in that you look for excuses so that you can remain comfortable where you are?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God can do anything.

Preschool: Is there anything God cannot do? No, God can do all things. God chose Moses to save His people.

Kids: God saved Moses and called him to rescue God's people from slavery. Moses' calling points to the call of Jesus to come to earth to save God's people. Jesus gave His life to save us from slavery to sin.

Students: God called Moses to deliver His people from captivity. Moses' life points to a greater calling—the call of Jesus to come to earth to save God's people. Jesus gave up His life to save us from slavery to sin.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY -"WORK"

Genesis 1:28, 2:15, 3:17-19

14. THE OPPORTUNITIES OF WORK

"Be fruitful ... fill the earth" (Gen. 1:28).

Today Christians are also called to "fill the earth" with followers of Jesus, as we obey his command to "go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). Pray that God's people would be gracious and bold in the workplace in both word and deed. Pray for workplace ministries and evangelistic initiatives in your community to bear much fruit for the gospel.

PEOPLE GROUP

105,000 Nagekeo people of Indonesia

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

GOD DELIVERED HIS PEOPLE

WEEK OF DECEMBER 12

Key Passage: Read Exodus 12:29-51

Memorize: And on that very day the LORD brought the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their host.

Exodus 12:51 (ESV)

Context: The Lord has reigned down the plagues upon Pharaoh and Egypt. After the final plague of the death of the first born, Pharaoh finally relents and lets God's people leave. In fact the nation of Israel was able to plunder the Egyptians on their way out.

Read: Last week, kids learned about Moses' birth and his calling. God had a plan to rescue the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt. He chose and called Moses for the task and allowed Moses' brother, Aaron, to help him.

Moses and Aaron faced a huge obstacle in leading the Israelites out of Egypt, and his name was Pharaoh. Pharaoh did not recognize the Lord's authority: "Who is the LORD that I should obey him by letting Israel go?" (Ex. 5:2) Pharaoh hardened his heart against the Lord, but all of this fit into God's plan to reveal to Pharaoh—and all of Egypt—who He is.

First, God sent a series of plagues that wrecked Egypt. The plagues were acts of judgment designed to show the Egyptians who God is—and the Egyptians learned their lesson. Read Exodus 8:19; 9:20,27; and 10:7.

The tenth plague was the most severe and had the greatest impact on the Egyptian people. God told Moses that around midnight, every firstborn male in Egypt would die. But God gave specific instructions to the Israelites. They were to slaughter a lamb or goat and put its blood on their doorposts. The blood on the doorpost would be a distinguishing mark. When God saw the blood, He "passed over" the house.

The Israelite people were sinful, and they deserved death just as much as the Egyptians did. But God graciously

AND ON
THAT VERY DAY
THE LORD
BROUGHT
THE PEOPLE
OF ISRAEL
OUT OF
THE LAND
OF EGYPT BY
THEIR HOSTS.

– EXODUS 12:51

provided a way out. By marking their doorposts with the blood of a lamb, they were spared from the judgment and death they deserved. The lamb was killed instead. The heart of the gospel is found in the story of the Passover: Jesus never sinned, but He was crucified for our sins. We deserve death, but He died instead.

As you talk to your kids this week, highlight that by His grace, God spared the Israelites from judgment by requiring the blood of a lamb. Jesus is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. His death was the ultimate sacrifice, and those who trust in Christ are under His saving blood and will be passed over in the final judgment.

Meaning/Application:

Throughout this passage and the chapter before it, we are able to see the providence of God at work. Though Pharaoh's hard heart seemed to be a barrier to freedom for the Israelites, God worked in ways to show His power and free His people. The Passover is certainly a foreshadowing of Christ's blood covering our sin and freeing us from its bondage.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Have you trusted in Christ's blood to free you from the bondage of sin?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God kept His people safe from the last trouble.

Preschool: God delivered His people and proved that He is the one true God.

Kids: By His grace, God spared the Israelites from judgment by requiring the blood of a lamb. Jesus is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. Those who trust in Christ are under His saving blood.

Students: God delivered His people and proved that He is the one true God. By His grace, God spared the Israelites from judgment by requiring the blood of a lamb. Jesus is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

WITNESS IN THE COMMUNITY - "YOUNG PEOPLE"
Prov. 4:1-6

15. THE UNBORN

"I too was a son to my father..." (Prov. 4:3).

Give thanks for the joy of children and families! Praise God that he cares for every new life and knits each of us together in our mother's womb (Psalm 139:13). Pray for any pregnant mothers you know, that the children they carry would grow up to know Christ. Pray too that your community's culture would increasingly value and protect the lives of the unborn.

PEOPLE GROUP

214,000 Bolla people of India

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

GOD PARTED THE RED SEA

WEEK OF DECEMBER 19

Key Passage: Read Exodus 14

Memorize: Israel saw the great power that the LORD used against the Egyptians, so the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in His servant Moses. **Exodus 14:31** (ESV)

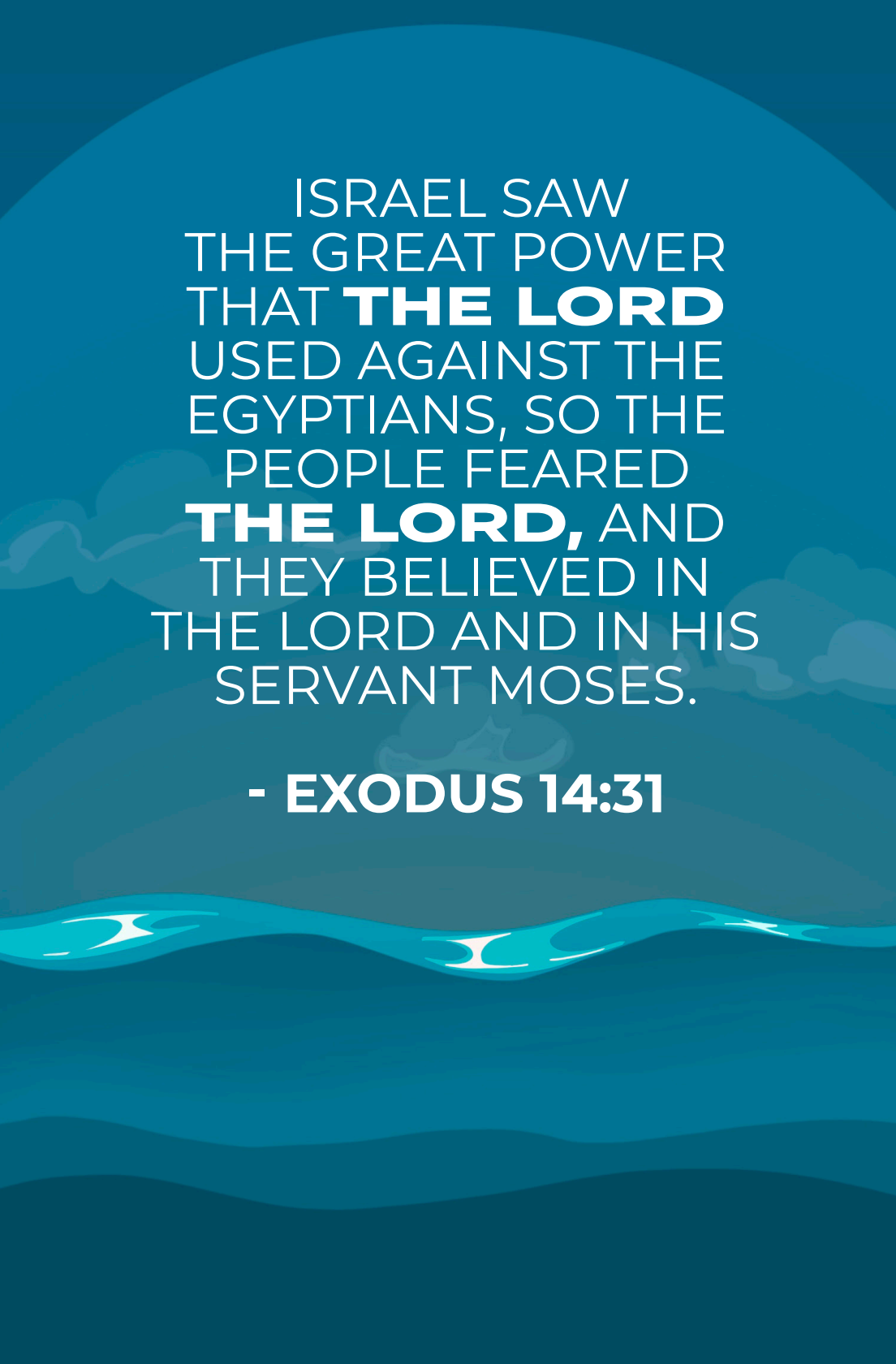
Context: After being rescued from slavery in Egypt, God's people are facing a seemingly insurmountable obstacle. They appear to be trapped between the Red Sea and the pursuing army of Pharaoh. However, the Lord demonstrates His power in spite of the lack of faith at times of the Israelites. He uses His servant Moses to bring about His will.

Read: The crossing of the Red Sea is an event in history that displays God's grace, remembered for generations as God's mighty redemptive act. God had clearly shown His power in Egypt through the plagues; now He was about to do something even greater.

Instead of leading the Israelites into the wilderness, God instructed Moses to turn back so that the Egyptians would think they were lost. God purposefully hardened Pharaoh's heart so that he would pursue the Israelites. Why? "Then I will receive glory by means of Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD" (Ex. 14:4).

Imagine the fear the Israelites felt as they saw the Egyptians pursuing them. They expressed it in their complaints to Moses. (See Ex. 14:11.) Moses spoke up to calm them: "The LORD will fight for you" (Ex. 14:14).

The Lord did fight for them. All night long, the Lord kept a pillar of a cloud between the Egyptians' chariots and the Israelites. Then He instructed Moses to stretch out his hand; God drove back the sea with a powerful east wind. By faith, the Israelites passed through on dry ground! (See Heb. 11:29.) When Pharaoh and the Egyptians followed after them, the waters came back and covered the entire army of Pharaoh. None of them survived.



ISRAEL SAW
THE GREAT POWER
THAT **THE LORD**
USED AGAINST THE
EGYPTIANS, SO THE
PEOPLE FEARED
THE LORD, AND
THEY BELIEVED IN
THE LORD AND IN HIS
SERVANT MOSES.

- **EXODUS 14:31**

As you talk to your kids this week, press into their hearts that Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, and God provided a way for them to escape through the Red Sea.

The Bible says that Jesus is greater than Moses. *"For Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses—as much more glory as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself."* Hebrews 3:3

People who trust in Jesus escape the penalty of sin and have eternal life. God didn't make a way of salvation for us because we deserve it but because of who He is: a gracious and loving God who created us to know and love Him.

Meaning/Application:

Though they initially were upset at the situation they were in, God's people rightly turned towards the Lord upon the crossing of the Red Sea. They feared and believed in Him. Each day the Lord is working, whether we realize it or not. Our hearts should be turned towards Him in worship as the One who rescued us from sin.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Do you fear and believe in the Lord? Who do you turn to when things seem to be dark? Do you rely on the promises of God even when it seems to be hard?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: No one is more powerful than God.

Preschool: God led His people through the Red Sea on dry ground.

Kids: Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, and God parted the Red Sea for His people to cross. The Bible says that Jesus is greater than Moses..

Students: Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, and God provided an escape through the Red Sea. Jesus is greater than Moses. (Heb. 3:3) People who trust in Jesus escape the penalty of sin and have eternal life.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

WITNESS IN THE COMMUNITY - "YOUNG PEOPLE"
Prov. 4:1-6

16. TODDLERS

"... still tender, and cherished by my mother" (Prov. 4:3).

Raising toddlers is a mix of joy and stress – but praise God for the opportunities this stage often gives for the gospel too. Pray that parents with little ones in your church would be outgoing in getting to know other families. Ask God to open up opportunities through toddler groups, playgrounds, cafes and more.

PEOPLE GROUP

11,000 Han Chinese people of Pakistan

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER



GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES

WEEK OF DECEMBER 26

Key Passage: Read Lamentations 3

Memorize: The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. **Lamentations 3:22-23** (ESV)

Context: The book of Lamentations is written as a lament of the destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem. We are able to see the journey from despair and destruction to hope and renewal.


Read:

Lamentations 3 is from the perspective of one man represented as the city of Jerusalem receiving destruction from God's judgment. There is no escaping God's wrath, and it only leads to distress and ultimately death. When we stand as enemies of God, we have no peace, happiness, or hope. However, God has made a way to reconcile us with Him

When we remember who God is, we are not hopeless. God's steadfast love never runs out and never perishes. God is also devoted to His covenant that He made with His people; this is His covenantal mercy. (v.23, Gn. 12:2-3) His promise to save and redeem His people. That promise is ultimately fulfilled in Jesus.

In our darkest moments in life, we need to remember that they are only temporary. This darkness without light is the darkest of darks. However, the night fades, and the sun rises every morning, bringing hope and mercy. The Lord's mercies are new every morning. Each day we get the opportunity to experience God's grace and mercy. He satisfies us with His love.

When we turn to Jesus, God redeems our life and stands as our advocate. His advocacy results in our deliverance of sin and shame.



THE STEADFAST
LOVE OF THE LORD
NEVER CEASES;
HIS MERCIES
NEVER COME TO AN
END; THEY ARE NEW
EVERY MORNING;
GREAT IS YOUR
FAITHFULNESS.

- LAMENTATIONS 3:22-23

In this lament, we see this man praying for renewal and responding to God's goodness and control, and because of this, he can stay confident in God's love for him and Israel.

Our response is to lift up our hearts and hands in repentance seeking forgiveness. When we lift up our hearts this is the beginning of repentance, truly exposing who we are. When we lift up our hands we are expressing our total dependance on God. We cannot save ourselves, and must surrender to Him for salvation.

The wrath that God has stored up was poured out upon Jesus. He absorbed God's wrath. Jesus is now our hiding place and refuge.

Meaning/Application:

Chapter 3, and specifically verses 19-23, are the pinnacle of this journey of hope and renewal. Here we see that the love of God never ceases, and his faithfulness is great. We are told we should place our hope in Him. That is the only way for the relationship to be restored.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Like the temple and the city of Jerusalem, our lives are broken apart from God. Have you placed your faith in Him and had the relationship restored? Are you placing your hope in Him?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers:

God hears our prayers.

Preschool:

God hears our prayers and He loves us.

Kids:

Jesus saves us from our sin. He forgives us.

Students:

Jesus is our propitiation, in other words Jesus absorbed the wrath of God for us. His wrath was poured out on Jesus on the cross. Through Jesus' sacrifice we can trust in Him and have peace with God in a reconciled relationship.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

WITNESS IN THE COMMUNITY - "YOUNG PEOPLE"
Prov. 4:1-6

17. CHILDREN

"Then he taught me, and he said to me ..." (Prov. 4:4).

Give thanks for Christian parents in your church. Pray for them in their task of raising their children in the training and instruction of the Lord. Pray also for schools in the area where you live, and particularly for the witness of Christian parents and teachers. Pray that students who love Jesus would learn how to live for him and to speak of him to their friends at school.

PEOPLE GROUP

131,000 Mambai people of Timor-Leste

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

GOD PROVIDED MANNA

WEEK OF JANUARY 2

Key Passage: Read Exodus 16

Memorize: Then the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day’s portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not.

Exodus 16:4 (ESV)

Context: God’s people, during their journey, were grumbling about being hungry and complaining that in Egypt their bellies were full. The Lord hears them and supernaturally provides bread from heaven and tests their faith in His Word.

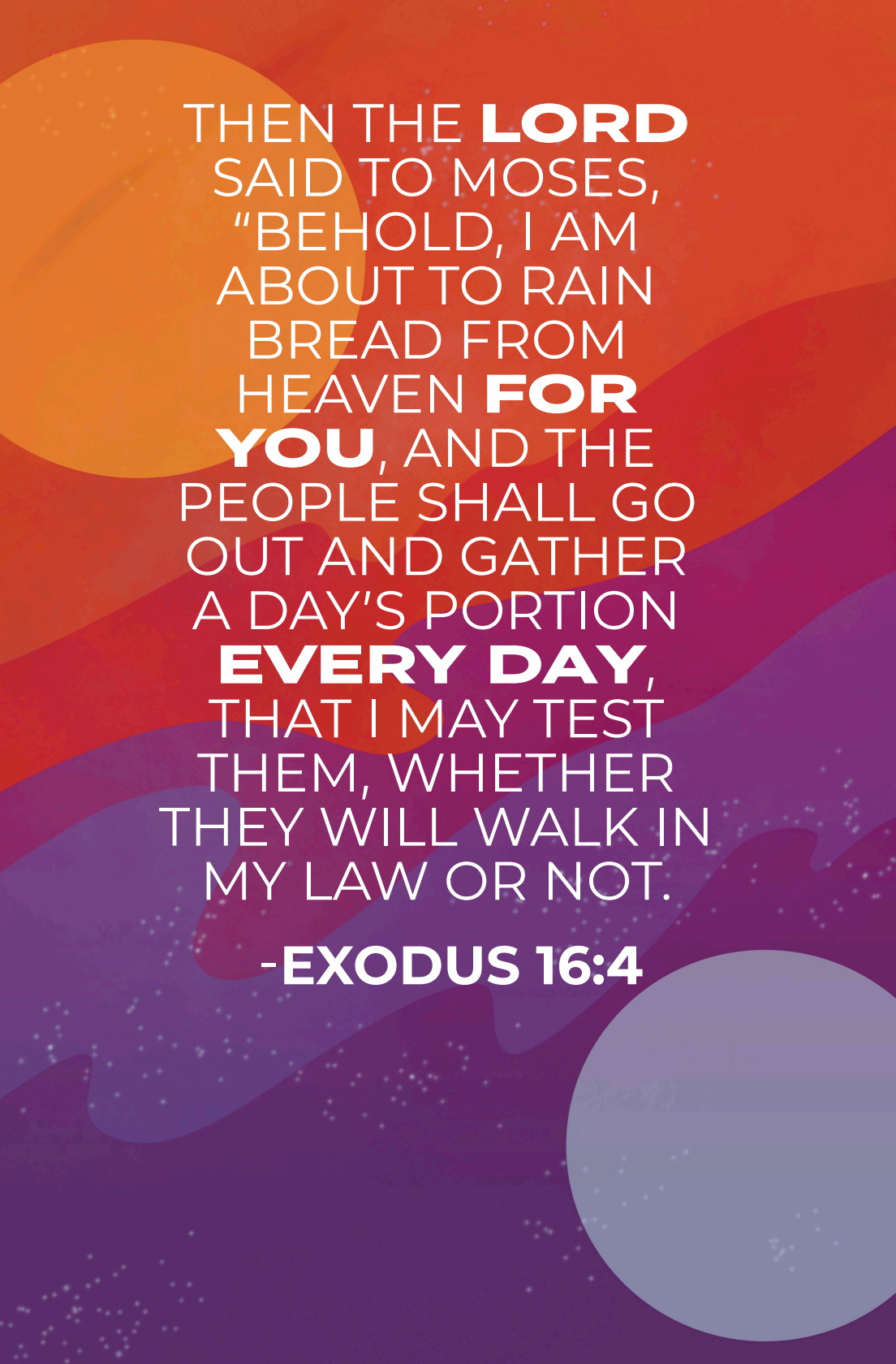
Read:

The Israelites’ future looked bright. The Lord, through Moses, had rescued them from slavery in Egypt. He fought for them, displaying His power by parting the Red Sea and subsequently destroying Egypt’s army. God was working out His plan to bring the Israelites to the promised land, the land God promised to Abraham’s family.

But the journey from Egypt to Canaan was not direct. The Lord led His people into the wilderness. The Israelites’ bright future seemed to fade. Their dry mouths and rumbling, empty stomachs produced complaints and accusations. They doubted the Lord’s goodness.

The Israelites traveled three days into the wilderness and were unable to find water. When they found water at Marah, they must have rushed to it—only to find the water was too bitter to drink. The people grumbled to Moses. Of course, Moses had no power to change the water. But the Lord did. Moses cried out to the Lord, and He showed Moses a tree. Moses threw the tree into the water, and the water became drinkable.

Then the Israelites moved farther into the wilderness. Their hunger produced despair: “If only we had died by the LORD’s hand in the land of Egypt ... Instead, you brought us into this wilderness to ... die of hunger!” (Ex. 16:3).



THEN THE **LORD**
SAID TO MOSES,
"BEHOLD, I AM
ABOUT TO RAIN
BREAD FROM
HEAVEN **FOR**
YOU, AND THE
PEOPLE SHALL GO
OUT AND GATHER
A DAY'S PORTION
EVERY DAY,
THAT I MAY TEST
THEM, WHETHER
THEY WILL WALK IN
MY LAW OR NOT.

-EXODUS 16:4

Again, the Lord gave the Israelites what they needed. Moses and Aaron explained the purpose behind the Lord's provision: "You will know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt" (Ex. 16:6). God sent bread from heaven and quail for the Israelites to eat. They ate manna in the wilderness for 40 years.

As you talk to your children this week, remind them that the Lord is our Provider. In the New Testament, Jesus said that He is the Bread of life. (John 6:31-35) God provided manna from heaven for His people's physical hunger, and later He provided His Son, Jesus, for our spiritual hunger. The Israelites needed bread to live for a little while, but whoever has Jesus will live forever!

Meaning/Application:

God provided for the needs of the people. But he also ensured they would daily place their faith in Him by only giving what they needed for the day and providing extra to cover the Sabbath. We should trust the Lord to provide for what we need on a daily basis. He promises to do so.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Do you trust the Lord daily to provide, even when it seems to not be possible? Do you trust the promises of God?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God is good.

Preschool: What is God like? God is holy, loving, and good. God gave His people food and water.

Kids: God provided for the physical needs of His people. God provided manna for His people's physical hunger. The Israelites needed bread to live for a little while, but whoever has Jesus will live forever!

Students: In the New Testament, Jesus said that He is the Bread of life. (John 6:31-35) God provided manna for His people's physical hunger, and later He provided His Son, Jesus, for our spiritual hunger.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

WITNESS IN THE COMMUNITY - "YOUNG PEOPLE"

Prov. 4:1-6

18. TEENAGERS

"Get wisdom, get understanding; do not forget my words or turn away from them"

(Prov. 4:5).

The teenage years can be a difficult time when some children from Christian homes turn away from God's word. Pray for wisdom for those you know who are parenting teens. Thank God for the work of youth groups, Christian camps, and Christian groups in schools. Ask God to use them to draw many to Christ.

PEOPLE GROUP

119,000 Deaf Afghan people of Afghanistan

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

GOD GAVE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

WEEK OF JANUARY 9

Key Passage: Read Exodus 20:1-21

Memorize: You shall have no other gods before me.
Exodus 20:3(ESV)

Context:

The Lord has brought His people to the foot of Mount Sinai. Moses has ascended and is receiving the Ten Commandments from the Lord.

Read:

As the rescued people of Israel traveled toward the promised land, God gave them laws to guide them in how to live and to help them understand God's perfect holiness. God's laws covered every part of their lives and were summed up in the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments can be grouped into two categories: The first four laws deal with a person's relationship with God and the last six laws deal with a person's relationship with others. God did not give laws for the sake of giving laws; the laws had a purpose. Not only did they show what righteous living looks like, they were part of the covenant God made with Israel, known as the Mosaic covenant. (See Ex. 19:3-8.)

God had promised Abraham that all the peoples on earth would be blessed through him. (See Gen. 12:3.) "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him for righteousness" (Rom. 4:3). God's promise to Abraham would be fulfilled in Jesus. But God gave the law to guide people until Jesus came.

As you talk to your children this week, avoid presenting the Ten Commandments as a burden—a list of laws they must try to keep to earn God's favor. God is holy and separate from sin. His law shows us what He requires—perfect righteousness. Our sin separates us from God, but Jesus came to bring us back to God. Jesus is perfectly righteous. When we trust in Jesus, He takes away our sin and welcomes us into God's family.



YOU
SHALL
HAVE NO
OTHER
gods
BEFORE
ME.

- EXODUS 20:3

Point your kids to Jesus and help them understand that God is pleased with us because He looks at Jesus, who never sinned. Because of Christ, we have a right relationship with God.

He gives us power through the Holy Spirit to “love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind” and to “love your neighbor as yourself” (Matt. 22:37-39).

Meaning/Application:

These Ten Commandments are the basis of God’s law and what he expects of us. The very first one should cut us to the core in that we are to have no other gods before Him. No idols, no treasures, nothing. He should consume our focus and everything we do should be an outpouring of what He has done in us.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Is there anything that you are placing before God? Have you mixed up your priorities and set things before God instead of allowing God to reign over your entire life?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: Jesus always obeyed God’s rules.

Preschool: What is God like? God is holy, loving, and good. God gave rules to show how to love Him and others.

Kids: God gave rules to show how to love Him and others. God is holy and separate from sin. His law shows us what He requires—perfect righteousness. Sin separates us from God, but Jesus came to bring us back to God.

Students: God is holy and separate from sin. His law shows us what He requires—perfect righteousness. Jesus is perfectly righteous. When we trust in Jesus, He takes away our sin and welcomes us into God’s family.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

WITNESS IN THE COMMUNITY - "YOUNG PEOPLE"
Prov. 4:1-6

19. STUDENTS

"Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you"
(Prov. 4:6).

University and college campuses are often fruitful, yet challenging contexts for the gospel. Pray that Christian students would not forsake Christ, but would instead hold out his wisdom to others through outreach events, one-to-one Bible-reading and evangelism.

PEOPLE GROUP

1,805,000 Bedouin Arabic people of Iraq

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER



THE PEOPLE WORSHIPED A GOLDEN CALF

WEEK OF JANUARY 16

Key Passage: Read Exodus 32

Memorize: The next day Moses said to the people, "You have sinned a great sin. **And now I will go up to the LORD; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin.**"
Exodus 32:30 (ESV)

Context: While Moses has been on the mountain for a long period of time, the people of Israel have begun to doubt God. They implore Aaron to make them a golden calf to worship, who eventually relents and does so. This angers the Lord, and His anger burns against the people and their sin.

Read: God led His people into the wilderness, but He did not leave them there alone. The Lord was with His people. He provided meat, bread, and water. He guided them to Mount Sinai, where He met with their leader, Moses. The Lord came down on the mountain in fire, and He spoke through thunder. The Israelites could not have ignored His presence.

But when Moses went up on the mountain and did not return for several weeks, the Israelites felt abandoned. They appealed to Moses' brother, Aaron: "Come, make gods for us who will go before us because this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt—we don't know what has happened to him!" (Ex. 32:1)

Aaron's response led the people to commit a terrible sin. He gathered gold from the people and made an image of a calf, and the people worshiped the golden calf. God saw what the people were doing, and He told Moses to go down the mountain at once. Moses confronted his brother. Aaron claimed that when the people gave him the gold, he threw it into the fire, and "out came this calf!" (Ex. 32:24)

God punished His people for worshiping a golden calf, and Moses returned to the mountain to ask the Lord to forgive the Israelites' sin. Moses could not atone for the people's

THE NEXT DAY MOSES
SAID TO THE PEOPLE,
"YOU HAVE SINNED
A GREAT SIN. AND
NOW I WILL GO UP TO
THE LORD;
PERHAPS I CAN MAKE
ATONEMENT FOR
YOUR SIN."

- EXODUS 32:30



sin; God said He would hold the people accountable for their sins, but the Lord did not abandon the Israelites.

Introduce your children to the concept of idolatry. An idol is anything a person puts in the place of God. Explain that idolatry is a sin. The Israelites deserved to be punished for their sin. In the same way, we deserve to be punished for our sin. Point out that God's people sinned against God, and Moses asked God to forgive them. Moses acted as their mediator, standing for them before God. Moses could not do anything to make up for their sin, but we have a better Mediator—Jesus. Jesus paid for our sin on the cross and stands for us before God. When we trust in Jesus, our sins are forgiven.

Meaning/Application:

The sin of the people is grounds for destruction by the Lord. They have turned to worship other gods. God is perfectly within His right to punish them for this sin. Moses tells them perhaps he can make atonement for the sin in their place. The Lord says he will punish those who have sinned. Praise be to the Lord Almighty that atonement has been made for our sin. We must place our faith in Christ as the atonement for our transgressions.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Have you turned to the Lord for the atonement of your sin? Has your heart strayed from God and perhaps chasing after idols? Do you need to repent and return to the Lord for any sin?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God forgives people through Jesus.

Preschool: What is worship? Worship is celebrating the greatness of God. God's people worshiped a golden calf.

Kids: God's people sinned, and Moses asked God to forgive them. Moses could not do anything to make up for their sin. Jesus paid for our sin on the cross and stands for us before God.

Students: God disciplined His people for worshiping a golden calf. Moses acted as their mediator. Jesus paid for our sin on the cross and stands for us before God. When we trust in Jesus, our sins are forgiven.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

WITNESS IN THE COMMUNITY | "OLDER PEOPLE"
Psalm 71

20. AGING FAITHFULLY

"From my birth I have relied on you; you brought me forth from my mother's womb"
(Psalm 71:6).

Each passing day gives us more evidence of God's kindness and his sustaining power. Thank him for his work in your life, and in the lives of the older members of your church.

PEOPLE GROUP

166,000 Kalmyk-Oirat people of Mongolia

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL + PRAISE + PRAYER



THE PEOPLE BUILT THE TABERNACLE

WEEK OF JANUARY 23

Key Passage: Read Exodus 40

Memorize: Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. **Exodus 40:34** (ESV)

Context: While Israel is in the desert, a tabernacle has been formed and raised for the purposes of worship and sacrifice. The tabernacle will also be the place where the glory of the Lord is able to reside with the people of Israel. The cloud, as well as fire, is how the Lord led his people throughout their journey.

Read: Thirteen of the last sixteen chapters of the Book of Exodus contain instructions for building the tabernacle. The word tabernacle means “dwelling place.” The tabernacle was a portable tent where God met with His people. God wanted to dwell among them. (Ex. 29:45-46.)

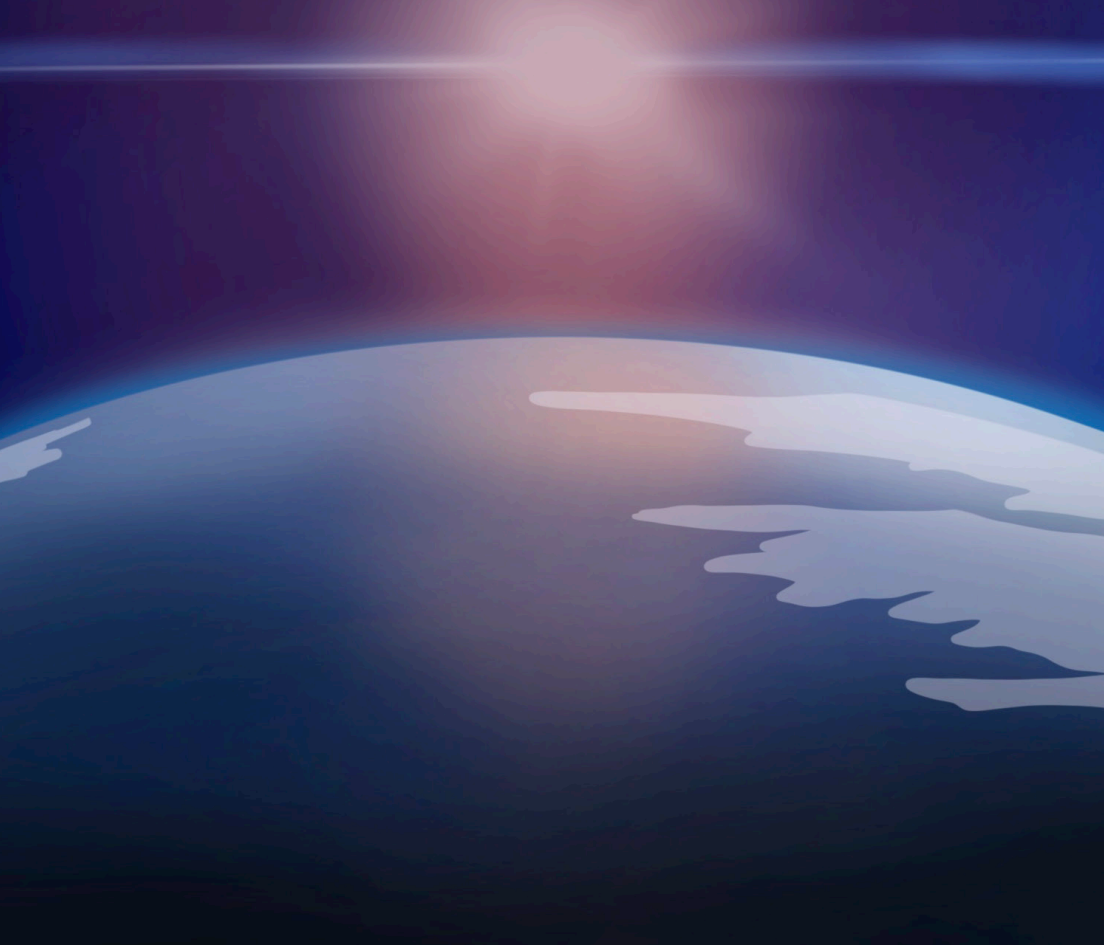
Moses had been on the mountain talking with God for 40 days. God wrote the Ten Commandments, the words of the covenant, on tablets. When Moses returned to the camp, he called all of the Israelites together and gave them the instructions God had given him. (Ex. 24:3-4)

God's directions for building the tabernacle were very detailed. God was not trying to burden the people; He was trying to show them His holiness and absolute authority. God appointed Bezalel and Oholiab to oversee the building of the tabernacle, giving them wisdom, understanding, and craftsmanship. Every skilled person “whose heart moved him” eagerly worked on the tabernacle of the Lord. (See Ex. 35:30-35; 36:1-6.)

God gave the Israelites the tabernacle as a visual picture of His dwelling with them. The tabernacle—and later the temple that replaced it—was a temporary place for God's glory to dwell until the coming of Christ. (2 Cor. 4:6) Every part of the tabernacle was designed to illustrate God's relationship with His people.

THEN THE **CLOUD**
COVERED THE TENT
OF MEETING, AND
THE GLORY OF
THE LORD FILLED
THE TABERNACLE.

- **EXODUS 40:34**



Jesus is the New Testament fulfillment of the Old Testament tabernacle. John 1:14 says that "the Word became flesh and took up residence among us." Jesus made His dwelling with people.

As you talk to your kids about the building of the tabernacle, show them God instructed the Israelites to build a tabernacle where He would dwell with them. God desires to be with His people. As part of His plan to save sinners, God sent Jesus to "tabernacle," or dwell, with people on earth. Emphasize that in the future, He will dwell with us forever. (Rev. 21:3)

Meaning/Application:

Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting while God's glory was residing in it. After the temple was built, a veil separated the holy of holies from the rest of the temple and could only be entered once a year. But, thankfully, after the death of Christ, the veil has been torn and we have direct access to the Lord again. Just as they were sanctified by the glory of God, we have the Holy Spirit within us if we are in Christ.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Are you being sanctified by the Spirit of the Lord? Are you taking advantage of the fact that the veil is torn and we can go directly to God?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God wanted to be with His people.

Preschool: What is worship? Worship is celebrating the greatness of God. God told His people to build the tabernacle.

Kids: God instructed the Israelites to build a tabernacle where He would dwell with them. God wants to be with His people. As part of His plan to save sinners, God sent Jesus to "tabernacle," or dwell, with people on earth.

Students: God told His people how to build the tabernacle where He would dwell with them. God desires to be with His people. As part of His plan to save sinners, God sent Jesus to "tabernacle" with people on earth.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

WITNESS IN THE COMMUNITY | "OLDER PEOPLE"

Psalms 71

21. AGING PAINFULLY

"Do not cast me away when I am old; do not forsake me when my strength is gone"

(Psalm 71:9).

Increasing years bring many joys, but they can bring many losses as well: loss of health, friends, role, mobility and independence. Pray that older Christians would turn to our faithful God in their pain, and that their perseverance would be inspiring to others, both inside and outside the church.

PEOPLE GROUP

200,000 Khorasani Turkish people of Iran

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL + PRAISE + PRAYER

GOD DESERVES OUR WORSHIP

WEEK OF JANUARY 30

Key Passage: Read Leviticus 1

Memorize: He shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him. **Leviticus 1:4** (ESV)

Context: Leviticus 1 gives direction for how the people are to present burnt offerings to the Lord. There is a very specific process which must be followed in order to please the Lord and make atonement. It must be strictly followed.

Read: The tabernacle was complete. God now had a place where His glory could dwell without causing the Israelites to fear death. God had given His people laws from the mountain, and He gave them more rules for living and worshiping Him in the tabernacle. These rules are recorded in the Book of Leviticus. The reasoning behind Leviticus can be found in Leviticus 19:2: "Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy."

In Leviticus 17:11, God set apart the blood of a creature as the means for making atonement. This answers the question, "Why did Jesus have to die?" God's requirement for the forgiveness of sins was the shedding of blood: "According to the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Heb. 9:22).

It is important to note a New Testament revelation about the sin offering. Hebrews 10:4 says, "It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins." Then why did God require people to make sacrifices? The institution of a sacrifice was to point to something greater—the ultimate sacrifice God would make by sending His own Son, Jesus Christ, to pay for the sins of the world once and for all. (See Eph. 1:7; Rom 5:9.)

The sacrifices God required of His people were a hint of what God was going to do to forgive sinners. We no longer need to offer sacrifices because we trust in Jesus.

HE
SHALL LAY
HIS HAND
ON THE HEAD
OF THE BURNT
OFFERING, AND
IT SHALL BE
ACCEPTED
FOR HIM
TO MAKE
ATONEMENT
FOR HIM.

- LEVITICUS 1:4

The sacrifices God required of His people were a hint of what God was going to do to forgive sinners. We no longer need to offer sacrifices because we trust in Jesus. Jesus offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice that takes away our sin once and for all.

You and your children may not be familiar with the Book of Leviticus. Use this week as an opportunity to emphasize God's holiness and His requirement of a blood sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins. Lead them to treasure Jesus as the perfect and final sacrifice "who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).

Meaning/Application:

For us today, we see the seriousness of sin and everything which needed to be done to make atonement in the Old Testament. Thankfully, today we no longer have to offer a perfect male. No one has to lay hands on it to make atonement. Christ was that perfect sacrifice for us and made the atonement we could not make. We simply must place our faith in Him and seek forgiveness from Him, not in a burnt offering or anything else.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Have you placed your faith in Christ' death on the cross for atonement? Even if you have, do you go to Him for forgiveness or do you try and make up for it with good works?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God sent Jesus to earth because He loves us.

Preschool: What is worship? Worship is celebrating the greatness of God. God made ways to forgive His people.

Kids: The sacrifices God required of His people were a hint of what God was going to do to forgive sinners. Jesus offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice that takes away our sin once and for all.

Students: God is holy and requires a sacrifice for sin. The sacrifices God required of His people were a hint of what God was going to do to forgive sinners. We no longer need to offer sacrifices because we trust in Jesus.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

WITNESS IN THE COMMUNITY | "OLDER PEOPLE"
Psalm 71

22. AGING EVANGELISTICALLY

"Even when I am old and grey, do not forsake me, my God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your mighty acts to all who are to come" (Psalm 71:18).

The elderly in our congregation have an exciting role to play in telling others about Jesus. Pray that they would be active in reaching out to those around them, faithfully declaring the power of the gospel. Pray also that the younger generation would be intentional in reaching out to those older than themselves.

PEOPLE GROUP

1,900,000 Polish people of Brazil

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

THE PEOPLE DIDN'T GO INTO THE LAND

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 6

Key Passage: Read Number 14

Memorize: If the LORD delights in us, he will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land that flows with milk and honey. **Numbers 14:8** (ESV)

Context: The people of Israel have sent spies to report about the Promised Land and to prepare to take it for themselves. However, after seeing the land and the people living there, only 2 spies report that the people should take the land. The other spies fear the natives in the land and did not trust that the Lord could deliver the Promised Land to them. This causes the people to rebel and not enter the Promised Land.

Read: Before God rescued His people from slavery in Egypt, He promised to bring the Israelites back to the land He had given to Abraham so many years before. (Ex. 3:8) From Egypt, the Israelites crossed the Red Sea and traveled toward Mount Sinai. When they were hungry and thirsty, God provided food and water. (See Ex. 16–17.) Israel spent one year at Mount Sinai, where Moses received God's law, including the Ten Commandments.

Time and again, the Israelites rebelled against God, Moses interceded, and God pardoned the people. When Israel arrived at the edge of the promised land, God instructed Moses to send scouts into the land. Moses sent out a leader from each tribe. Twelve men, including Joshua and Caleb, traveled through the promised land of Canaan for 40 days. They returned with fruit—grapes, pomegranates, and figs—and gave a report on the land.

The scouts described the land's abundance, as "flowing with milk and honey." They gave an account of the people, various tribes who were physically strong and whose cities were fortified. Caleb's immediate imperative—"Let's go up now!"—was met with resistance by most of the group. Assessing their own strength against the strength of the inhabitants, they concluded that to move forward would mean certain defeat.



IF THE
LORD
DELIGHTS IN US,
HE WILL
BRING US INTO
THIS LAND AND
GIVE IT TO US,
A LAND
THAT FLOWS
WITH
MILK AND HONEY.

- NUMBERS 14:8

The Israelites complained: "If only we had died in the land of Egypt, or if only we had died in this wilderness!" Joshua and Caleb tried to persuade the people of God's presence and protection, but the people would not trust God. So God gave them what they thought was better. He sent them into the wilderness to wander for 40 years. They would die there. Only Joshua, Caleb, and the Israelites' children would enter the promised land.

Help your kids contemplate the punishment Israel faced for their rebellion. The Israelites rebelled against God because they did not trust Him. Jesus trusted God perfectly. He took the punishment we deserve for our sin, or rebellion against God. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and gives us eternal life.

Meaning/Application:

Only 2 spies trusted the Lord and placed their faith in His promise to deliver the Promised Land to them. The rest of the people rebelled and therefore wandered in the wilderness and never entered the Land. Often, we can miss out on blessings from the Lord simply because we do not trust Him and choose to do things our way. We must remember that we can trust the Word of the Lord and His promises for us. We walk by faith and not simply by sight.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Are you trusting God's Word even when the world around you tells you to doubt Him? Is your faith in Him alone?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: We can trust God.

Preschool: What is worship? Worship is celebrating the greatness of God. God made ways to forgive His people.

Kids: What does it mean to sin? To sin is to go against God and His commands. Joshua and Caleb trusted God.

Students: The Israelites rebelled against God because they did not trust Him. Jesus trusted God perfectly. He took the punishment we deserve for our sin, or rebellion against God. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and gives us eternal life.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

WITNESS IN THE COMMUNITY | "OLDER PEOPLE"
Psalm 71

23. AGING HOPEFULLY

"Though you have made me see troubles, many and bitter, you will restore my life again"
(Psalm 71:20).

Pray that there would be a real openness to the gospel among the retired of your community, whether they live in the leafy suburbs or the high-rise blocks of urban estates. Plead with the Lord to open more eyes so that people begin to see that death is not the end and that eternal life is guaranteed for those in Christ.

PEOPLE GROUP

793,000 Chhattisgarhi-Badhai people of India

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER



MOSES DISOBEYED GOD

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 13

Key Passage: Read Numbers 20:12

Memorize: And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe in me, to uphold me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them."

Numbers 20:12 (ESV)

Context:

While wandering in the wilderness, the people are again grumbling and complaining against Moses and Aaron. This time their complaint is that there is no water to drink. The Lord then uses Moses to provide water through a rock.

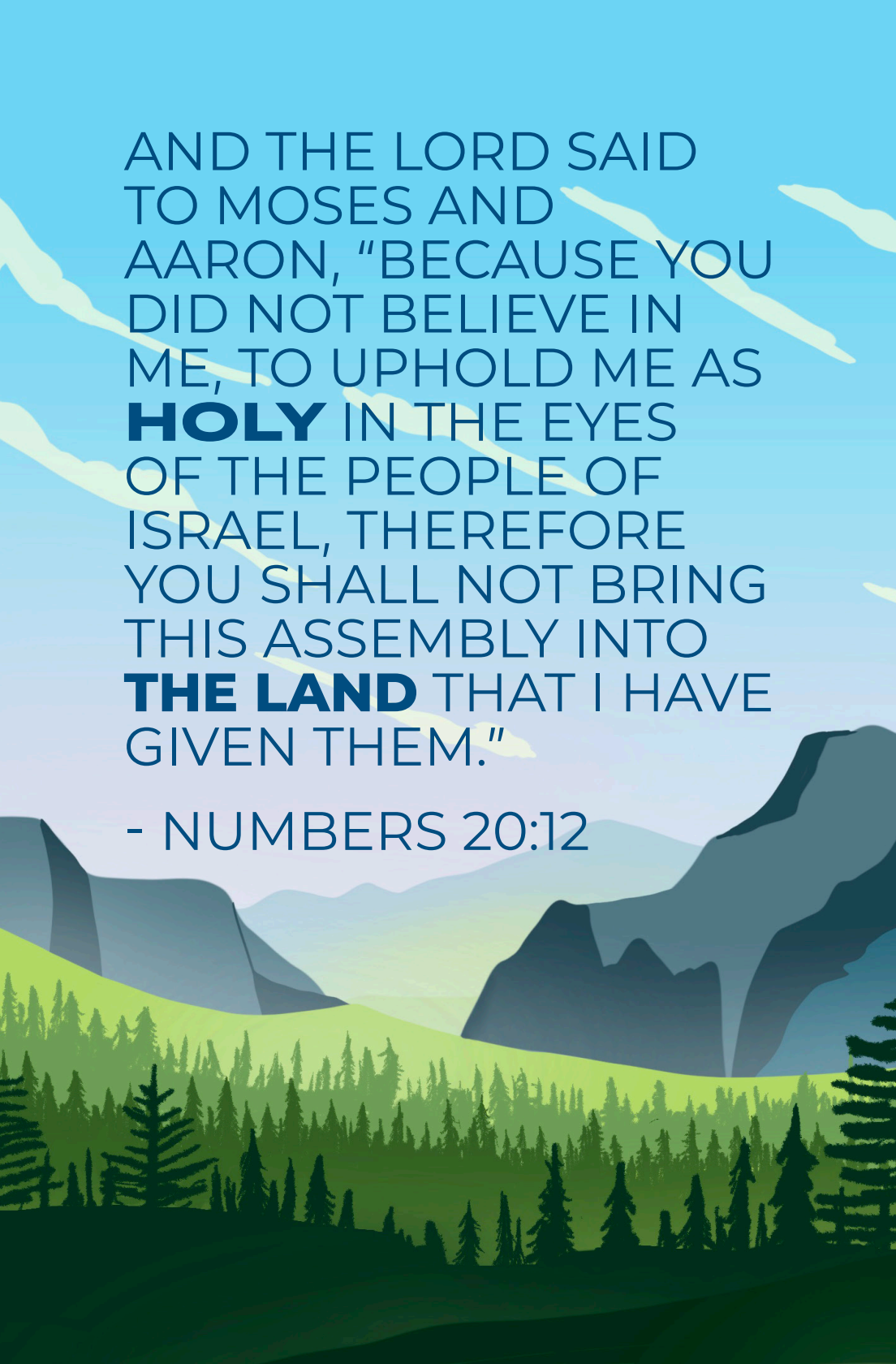
Read:

The grumbling of the people of Israel continued against the Lord as they marched in the wilderness journey. The Lord wanted to put an end to their grumbings. (17:5,10) God had Moses gather twelve staff, one for each tribe, and write their names on the staff.

Aaron was written on the staff of Levi. And it was Aaron's staff that sprouted, and blossoms came forth and produced ripe almonds. Moses brought it before the people. If the people were to endure the wilderness and make it to the promised land, they had to trust the leaders God had appointed them. They were to support Aaron and his family as they ministered to the people as priests. (18:2)

After the death of Miriam, the people quarreled with Moses bringing up what they had in Egypt, and now they are stuck in the wilderness with no water. Both Aaron and Moses fell on their faces before the Lord. The Lord told Moses to speak to the rock, and water would come out.

Moses brought the people before the rock and struck the rock with Aaron's staff twice, and water came out. The problem was Moses did not do as God had commanded. Maybe a combination of anger against the people



AND THE LORD SAID
TO MOSES AND
AARON, "BECAUSE YOU
DID NOT BELIEVE IN
ME, TO UPHOLD ME AS
HOLY IN THE EYES
OF THE PEOPLE OF
ISRAEL, THEREFORE
YOU SHALL NOT BRING
THIS ASSEMBLY INTO
THE LAND THAT I HAVE
GIVEN THEM."

- NUMBERS 20:12

complaining and the death of Miriam at that moment he did not put his faith in God. *"Because you did not believe in me, to uphold me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them."* (20:12)

This story reminds us that as great a leader as Moses was, he was not perfect. There would need to be a better Moses, a perfect mediator, and this is why we need Jesus. In all of this, Christ was the representative of the rock that was struck for the salvation of humanity. *"Jesus said to her, 'Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.'" (John 4:13-14)*

Meaning/Application:

The people doubted God again and again the Lord provided in a supernatural way. This time even Moses did not fully obey the Lord in that he struck the rock instead of speaking to it. He, therefore, did not get to lead the people into the Promised Land. Once again, we see the people losing their faith in the Lord when things become hard. But God was and is still faithful to provide.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Are you tempted to complain and grumble when life is challenging? What can you do to rest in the promises of God no matter the circumstances?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: Jesus is perfect.

Preschool:

Jesus is our perfect leader.

Kids:

Moses was a great leader, but he was not perfect. Only Jesus is the perfect leader.

Students:

The water the people of Israel received still left them thirsty. Jesus is the satisfying water, the spring that wells up to eternal life, never leaving us thirsty again. we can put our hope in Jesus that He is our Savior.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

WITNESS IN THE COMMUNITY | "OLDER PEOPLE"
Psalm 71

24. AGING JOYFULLY

"My lips will shout for joy when I sing praise to you"
(Psalm 71:23).

Pray for a specific older person you know – ask that they would come to Christ and know the joy of having their lives hidden in him.

PEOPLE GROUP

29,000 Agul people of Russia

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

GOD HEALED THE PEOPLE

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 20

Key Passage: Read Numbers 21:4-9

Memorize: And the LORD said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live." **Numbers 21:8** (ESV)

Context: The people of Israel again complain against the Lord. They have failed to learn from their previous sins and continue to doubt the Lord instead of trusting Him. This causes God to punish them through fiery serpents. However, if they will only look at the raised bronze serpent of Moses they will not die.

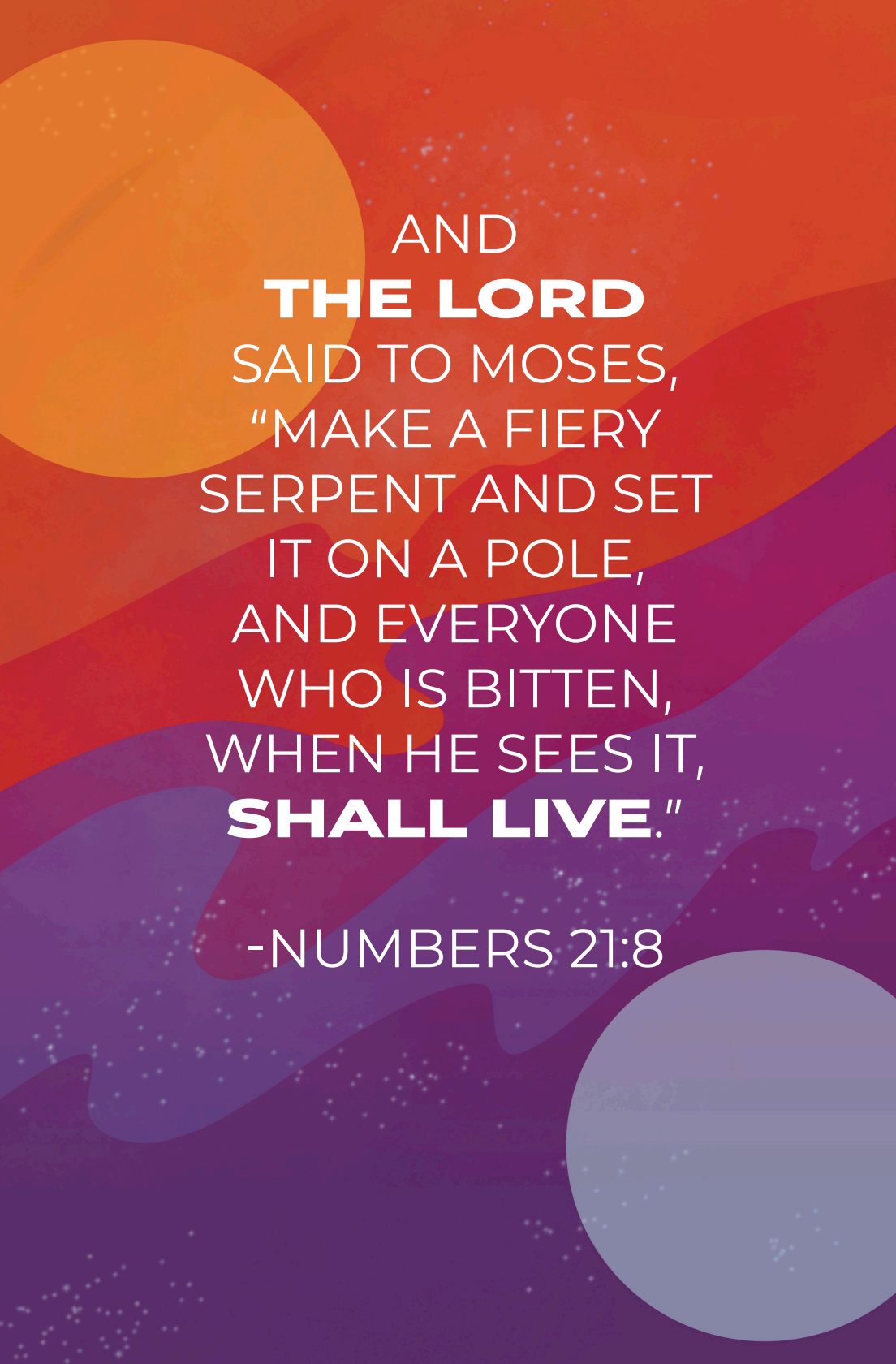
Read: The Israelites had been wandering in the wilderness when they complained to Moses and to God. God had done some pretty amazing things for the Israelites—He rescued them from the hand of Pharaoh, He parted the Red Sea so they could safely cross, and He provided manna for them to eat. But to the Israelites, this wasn't enough.

God disciplined them because He knew their dissatisfaction was a sign of a bigger issue: a heart problem, a sin problem. They stopped believing that God is good. In their hearts, the Israelites believed the same lie that rattled Eve in the garden. Maybe God isn't interested in giving us what is best. Maybe He is holding out on us.

God sent venomous snakes that bit the people and killed many of them. The Israelites repented. They wanted Moses to ask God to take away the snakes.

God provided a solution. He told Moses, "Make a snake image out of bronze and mount it on a pole. When anyone who is bitten looks at it, he will recover."

In John 3:14, Jesus said, "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up." What was Jesus talking about? Second Corinthians 5:21 says, "He made the One who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."



AND
THE LORD
SAID TO MOSES,
"MAKE A FIERY
SERPENT AND SET
IT ON A POLE,
AND EVERYONE
WHO IS BITTEN,
WHEN HE SEES IT,
SHALL LIVE."

-NUMBERS 21:8



So Jesus invites us, "Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth. For I am God, and there is no other" (Isa. 45:22).

As you talk to your kids this week, help them understand that the Israelites faced a huge problem because of their sin. God sent snakes to punish Israel, but anyone who was bitten could look at the bronze snake on the pole and live. Because of our sin, we face a huge problem: we are separated from God. We deserve to die, but anyone who looks to Jesus on the cross and trusts in Him will live forever with God.

Meaning/Application:

This is clear foreshadowing to Christ. It is even referenced as such by Jesus in John 3. Those who simply believed God's words and lifted their eyes to look upon the bronze serpent would be saved. Today we simply need to have faith in the One who was raised up on a cross for our sins and we, too, will be saved.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Do you ever continue to grumble and complain even though the Lord has provided for you continuously in the past? Do you look to Jesus for your salvation and to sustain you through the course of this life?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God sent Jesus because He loves us.

Preschool: What does it mean to sin? To sin is to go against God and His commands. God told His people to look at the bronze snake.

Kids: The Israelites faced a huge problem because of their sin. God sent snakes to punish Israel, but He also showed them mercy. God told His people to look at the bronze snake to be healed.

Students: God sent snakes to punish Israel for their sin, but anyone who was bitten could look at the bronze snake on the pole and live. Because of our sin, we deserve to die, but anyone who looks to Jesus on the cross will live forever with God.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

WITNESS IN THE COMMUNITY | "OLDER PEOPLE"
Psalm 71

25. CORPORATE CARE

"The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said" (Luke 10:35).

Caring isn't designed to be a solitary activity. Pray that the Lord would provide carers with good networks of friends who are able to support them. And pray too for those who provide respite services.

PEOPLE GROUP

2,800 Pankara people of Brazil

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

NO ONE IS LIKE GOD

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 27

Key Passage: Read 1 Peter 1:13-25

Memorize: Since it is written, **"You shall be holy, for I am holy."** 1 Peter 1:16 (ESV)

Context:

Peter is writing to remind New Testament believers to remember the future inheritance for those in Christ. He also reminds them of what it cost for them to gain that inheritance. He, therefore, reminds them and us that our conduct and our lives should reflect this truth.

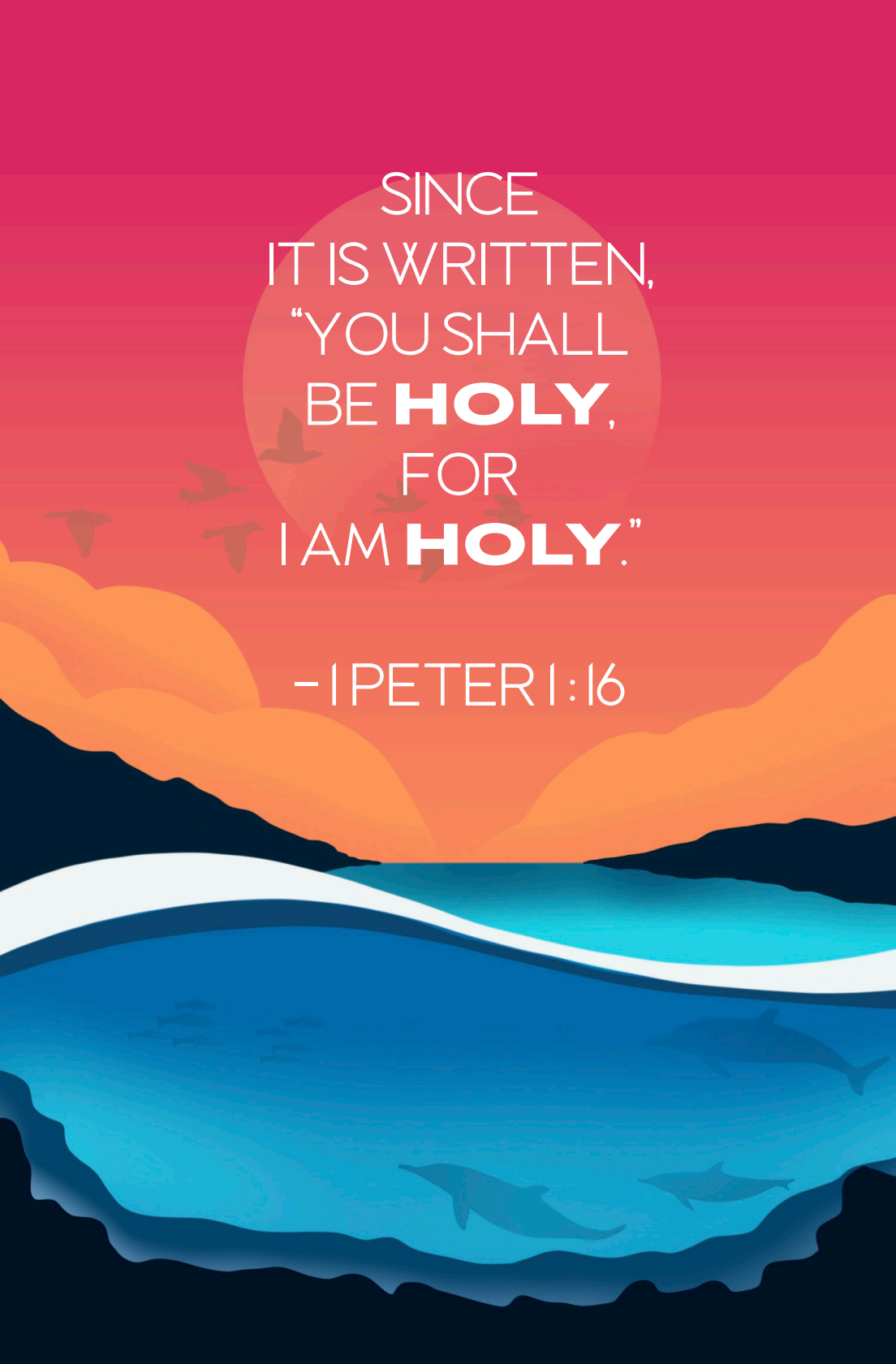
Read:

The new standard that we are called to is holiness, the holiness of God. Peter gives the mandates here that we are to be intentionally about our holiness. 1 Peter 1:1-12 in the Greek is one long continuous sentence. In the first 12 verses there is no command or mandate, just affirmations. He focuses solely on what God has done.

We see here an intellectual aspect of repentance. The mind is being engaged with an understanding of the gospel. The concept of repentance involves our knowledge of God and His holiness, the knowledge of our sin and guilt, and the knowledge of the mercy of God and His readiness to forgive.

We see that it is an intellectual aspect because Peter begins with the preparing and sober mindedness of our minds. In the greek the word prepare is the word for "gird up." This is the idea of girding up your loins, during these days when you were about to run you would put a belt on and pull up your robe so it doesn't interfere with you running. Peter is telling us essentially we need to engage our minds so we can be ready and intentionally pursue holiness.

Peter gives sort of an incentive and focus for believers in the midst of hostility and suffering. He challenges them to "set their hope fully on the grace that will be brought to them at the revelation of Jesus Christ."



SINCE
IT IS WRITTEN,
"YOU SHALL
BE **HOLY**,
FOR
I AM **HOLY**."

-1 PETER 1:16

We have something to give us singular focus, eternity and the return of Christ. We should devote our mental, spiritual and emotional energy on contemplating and concentrating on the grace that is to come.

Because we are now associated with Jesus we are no longer associated with Adam. With this understanding and knowing what Christ has done for us we now have a new purpose that we are called to. Peter says "knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways." Being redeemed is language used for slaves that were bought from bondage by the payment of a price. We were slaves to a sinful and meaningless way of life but the payment that was required was the "precious blood of Christ"

Meaning/Application:

Our daily lives should reflect the fact that we are a new creation in Christ. We have a glorious inheritance if we are in Christ, and we should act accordingly. We should be holy for our Father is holy. We should reflect His Holiness. This is a reference all the way back to Leviticus where God tells his people to be holy and keep themselves from unclean animals. For us today, we should be holy and refrain from all things which are unclean and do not represent the holiness of God.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Is your conduct holy and does it reflect the holiness of God? Have you put away the passions of your former life before God? Do you need to put those away and receive salvation today?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God is holy.

Preschool: God is Holy. There is no one like God.

Kids: There is no one like God. He is holy and because of Jesus we can be holy.

Students: Peter tells us what God has done for us and how we have our hope and promise in him and even describes him as our Father, a judge who is impartial, and in all that we should fear him. Because He is God, because He is holy. This does not mean we walk in doubt and anxiety with the Lord, but reverence and awe. Because of the sacrifice Jesus made we can approach the very throne of God.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

JUSTICE IN THE COMMUNITY | "GOVERNANCE"

Romans 13:1-7

26. RULERS

"The authorities that exist have been established by God" (Romans 13:1).

Our communities are the places where authority is seated – and God establishes all authorities. Thank God for his gifts of rulers: kings, queens, national government and local representatives. Pray that those in authority in your community would increasingly honor the Lord in all that they do.

PEOPLE GROUP

350,000 Bharadi people of India

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER



GOD ENCOURAGED JOSHUA

WEEK OF MARCH 6

Key Passage: Read Joshua 1

Memorize: Have I not commanded you? **Be strong and courageous.** Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go." **Joshua 1:9** (ESV)

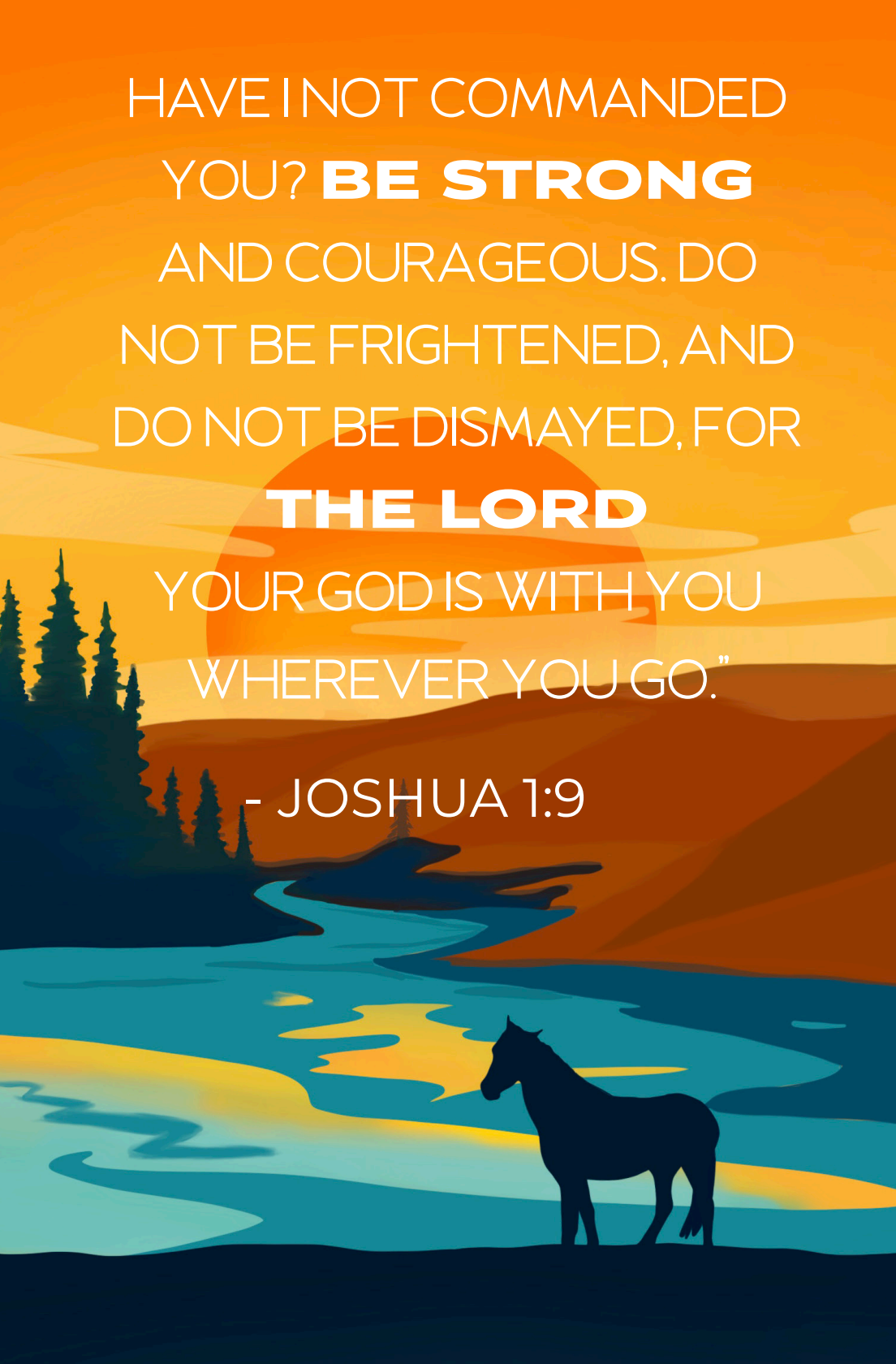
Context: Moses has died, and now is Joshua to take his place as the leader of the people. He will lead them into the Promised Land. God is commissioning Joshua for the role that he will now serve before the people and before God.

Read: Before God rescued His people from slavery in Egypt, He promised to bring the Israelites back to the land He had given to Abraham so many years before. (Ex. 3:8) From Egypt, the Israelites crossed the Red Sea and traveled toward Mount Sinai. When they were hungry and thirsty, God provided food and water. Israel spent one year at Mount Sinai, where Moses received God's law, including the Ten Commandments.

Time and again, the Israelites rebelled against God, Moses interceded, and God pardoned the people. When Israel arrived at the edge of the promised land, God instructed Moses to send scouts into the land. Moses sent out a leader from each tribe. Twelve men, including Joshua and Caleb, traveled through the promised land of Canaan for 40 days. They returned with fruit—grapes, pomegranates, and figs—and gave a report on the land.

The scouts described the land's abundance, as "flowing with milk and honey." They gave an account of the people, various tribes who were physically strong and whose cities were fortified. Caleb's immediate imperative—"Let's go up now!"—was met with resistance by most of the group.

Assessing their own strength against the strength of the inhabitants, they concluded that to move forward would mean certain defeat.



HAVE I NOT COMMANDED
YOU? **BE STRONG**
AND COURAGEOUS. DO
NOT BE FRIGHTENED, AND
DO NOT BE DISMAYED, FOR
THE LORD
YOUR GOD IS WITH YOU
WHEREVER YOU GO."

- JOSHUA 1:9

The Israelites complained: "If only we had died in the land of Egypt, or if only we had died in this wilderness!" Joshua and Caleb tried to persuade the people of God's presence and protection, but the people would not trust God. So God gave them what they thought was better. He sent them into the wilderness to wander for 40 years. They would die there. Only Joshua, Caleb, and the Israelites' children would enter the promised land.

Help your kids contemplate the punishment Israel faced for their rebellion. The Israelites rebelled against God because they did not trust Him. Jesus trusted God perfectly. He took the punishment we deserve for our sin, or rebellion against God. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and gives us eternal life.

Meaning/Application:

God is not only instructing Joshua, but also reminding him and encouraging him with truths he already knows. As he leads the people, he is to not deviate from the Law that God has given. He is to lead with strength and conviction. The Lord is with him wherever he goes. We too should remember that the Lord is with us. We too should live our lives with strength and conviction knowing who has saved us. We should also remain steadfast in God's Word and let it be the guide for our lives.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Do you remain steadfast in God's Word each day? Do you meditate in it so that the Lord may guide your steps?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God

Preschool: What does it mean to sin? To sin is to go against God and His commands. Joshua and Caleb trusted God.

Kids: To sin is to think, speak, or behave in any way that goes against God and His commands. Joshua and Caleb trusted God to give His people the promised land.

Students: The Israelites rebelled against God because they did not trust Him. Jesus trusted God perfectly. He took the punishment we deserve for our sin, or rebellion against God. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and gives us eternal life.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

JUSTICE IN THE COMMUNITY | "GOVERNANCE"
Romans 13:1-7

27. RESPONSIBILITIES

"Do what is right and you will be commended" (Romans 13:3).

Citizens of God's kingdom are called to be citizens who obey the law of the land. There may be times when we need to petition, debate and urge our leaders to change, but pray that God's people would always be committed to acting in ways that are legal and upright.

PEOPLE GROUP

395,000 Deaf German people of Germany

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

GOD STOPPED THE JORDAN RIVER

WEEK OF MARCH 13

Key Passage: Read Joshua 3

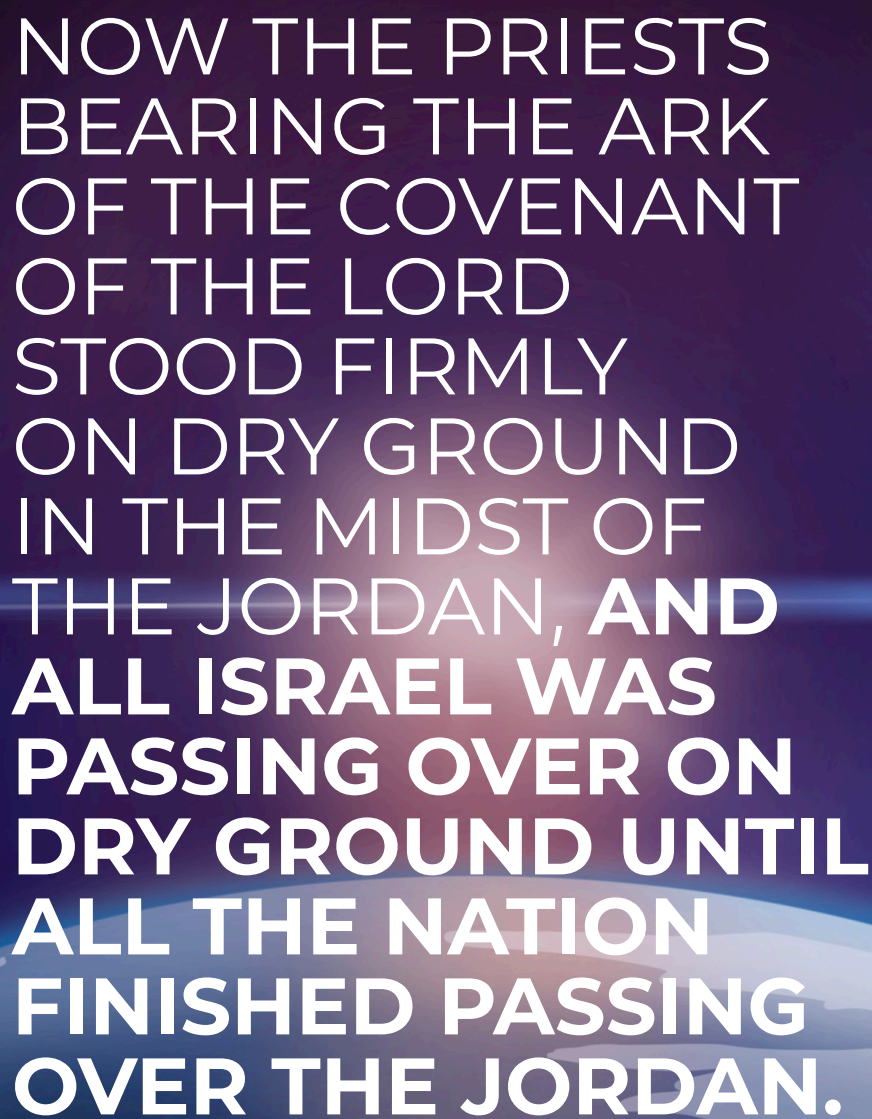
Memorize: Now the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firmly on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan, **and all Israel was passing over on dry ground until all the nation finished passing over the Jordan. Joshua 3:17** (ESV)

Context: The people of Israel are now ready to cross the Jordan River and enter the Promised Land. They have sent spies and the Lord has made provision for them to take what he has Promised them. Like so many times before, He providentially provides a way for their journey.

Read: You and your children have been learning about the Israelites' wandering in the wilderness. Forty years later, it was time for the next generation to enter the land. Only one geographical barrier separated the Israelites from the promised land of Canaan: the Jordan River. When the Israelites arrived, the Jordan River was flooded due to spring rains and snowmelt. Any other time, the river would have been manageable, but crossing the swollen river would have been as daunting as crossing the Red Sea. (See Josh. 4:23.)

The Israelites had mourned Moses' death for 30 days (Deut. 34:8), but now this new generation looked to Joshua to lead them into the promised land. God had chosen Joshua and promised to be with him. Joshua prepared the people to cross the Jordan River, and they agreed to obey him as they obeyed Moses.

God gave Joshua a promise and a command. First, He promised to go before them and drive out all the people of the land. Then God commanded him to tell the priests to carry the ark of the LORD (a symbol of God's powerful presence) into the waters of the Jordan. Then the waters of the river would be cut off from flowing, and the waters coming down from above would stand in one heap. When this happened, all of Israel would know that God was with Joshua.



NOW THE PRIESTS
BEARING THE ARK
OF THE COVENANT
OF THE LORD
STOOD FIRMLY
ON DRY GROUND
IN THE MIDST OF
THE JORDAN, **AND**
ALL ISRAEL WAS
PASSING OVER ON
DRY GROUND UNTIL
ALL THE NATION
FINISHED PASSING
OVER THE JORDAN.

- JOSHUA 3:17

All of the people passed over on dry ground. Joshua set up 12 memorial stones as a reminder of God's faithfulness in bringing Israel safely across the Jordan into the promised land. The Israelites could do nothing apart from God. He was with them, and He was going to fight for them. In John 15:5, Jesus said, "You can do nothing without me."

As you go through this week, emphasize with your kids that God was still at work with His people. The cross is our reminder of what Jesus has done for us: a miraculous saving we could never do for ourselves.

Meaning/Application:

God shows his sovereignty once again by allowing his people to cross a body of water on dry land. The ark stood in the middle of Jordan River while the entire nation crossed over. After a long journey through the wilderness, the people are finally being given what has long been promised. Here we see the Lord keeping His promise, just as He always does. Our hearts should cling to this truth and trust the Lord even when times are tough.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

What would have been going through your mind if you were finally crossing the Jordan River, and on dry ground no less? Why is it hard for us to trust God's promises during difficult times even when he has provided for us before?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God keeps His promises.

Preschool: God is a promise keeper. We can trust Him every day.

Kids: God held back the Jordan River for His people to cross. God went ahead of Joshua and the Israelites into the promised land. He showed His power to them so they would trust in Him.

Students: God went ahead of Joshua and the Israelites into the promised land. He showed His power to them so they would trust in Him. When Jesus came to earth, He showed His power so people would trust in Him and be saved from sin.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

JUSTICE IN THE COMMUNITY | "GOVERNANCE"
Romans 13:1-7

28. REGULATIONS

"[Those in authority] are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer"
(Romans 13:4).

Pray for those who write our laws and those who enforce them: politicians, civil servants, police officers, financial authorities, members of the judiciary, and all who support them. Pray that they would act in ways that are above reproach and uphold justice in your community.

PEOPLE GROUP

158,000 Ko people of Benin

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL + PRAISE + PRAYER

GOD'S PRESENCE IN HIS WORD

WEEK OF MARCH 20

Key Passage: Read Psalm 119:1-16

Memorize: I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you. **Psalm 119:11**(ESV)

Context:

This Psalm is a full celebration of God's gift of the covenant with his people. It is the longest chapter in the Bible. It is constructed in a way that is meant to be sung and prayed in worship to God.

Read:

A good defense makes for a good offense. In the longest chapter of the Bible, with 176 verses, Psalm 119 speaks of the greatness of the Word of God. God's Word is a precious gift given to believers that we may know and understand the Lord better.

This chapter provides many reasons to view scripture as a gift by showing the importance of following its instructions and trusting His Word. Blessing comes to those who keep the commandments with their whole heart.

When it comes to keeping ourselves pure, no matter what century we live in, the way to guard the heart is by using the Word of God. Technology and significant medical advancements have changed throughout the years, but nothing has addressed man's sin condition. The only treatment is God's Word. That is why we read a book written over 1,000's years ago because nothing else can cure it.

I HAVE
STORED
UP YOUR
WORD
IN MY HEART,
THAT I
MIGHT NOT
SIN AGAINST
YOU.

– PSALM 119 : 11

The antidote to sin is God's Word. A great defense against sin makes a great weapon against temptation. Memorizing and meditating on God's word fixes our eyes upon Him. His word keeps our focus Heavenward, and we usually aim at where we are looking.

In John 1:1, this Word became flesh, bringing us the complete and ultimate salvation. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God." – John 1:1

Meaning/Application:

God's Word should be precious to us. It is pure and should guide our lives each day. When we stray from it, we can easily become ensnared in sin. But when we are faithfully following and hiding His Word in our hearts, we can avoid sin. We see this same principle when we place our faith in Christ and have the Holy Spirit within us.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Are you hiding God's Word in your heart? Are you seeking to be obedient to God and avoiding sin? Take some time to memorize this week's passage and let God's Word take root in your heart.

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers:

The Bible is God's Word.

Preschool:

The Bible is God's Word.

Kids:

The Bible is God's Word and we can trust what He said. We can trust the Bible, because we can trust God.

Students:

Jesus is the complete fulfillment in Scripture. God's Word is the authority on our lives. Scripture is without error because God is without error. The Bible tells the truth concerning everything that it addresses. The Bible is the inspired Word of God. (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21)

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

JUSTICE IN THE COMMUNITY | "GOVERNANCE"

Romans 13:1-7

29. RESPECT

"Give to everyone what you owe them ... if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor"

(Romans 13:7)

It's easy to mock politicians and to criticize those involved in the law. Of course, they are fallible – but we are still called to respect them. Repent of any ways in which you have fallen short in this area. Pray that as we Christians talk about our leaders, we would choose our words wisely and honor them as we should.

PEOPLE GROUP

225,000 Mashan Miao people of China

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

GOD DEFEATED JERICH0

WEEK OF MARCH 27

Key Passage: Read Joshua 6:1-21

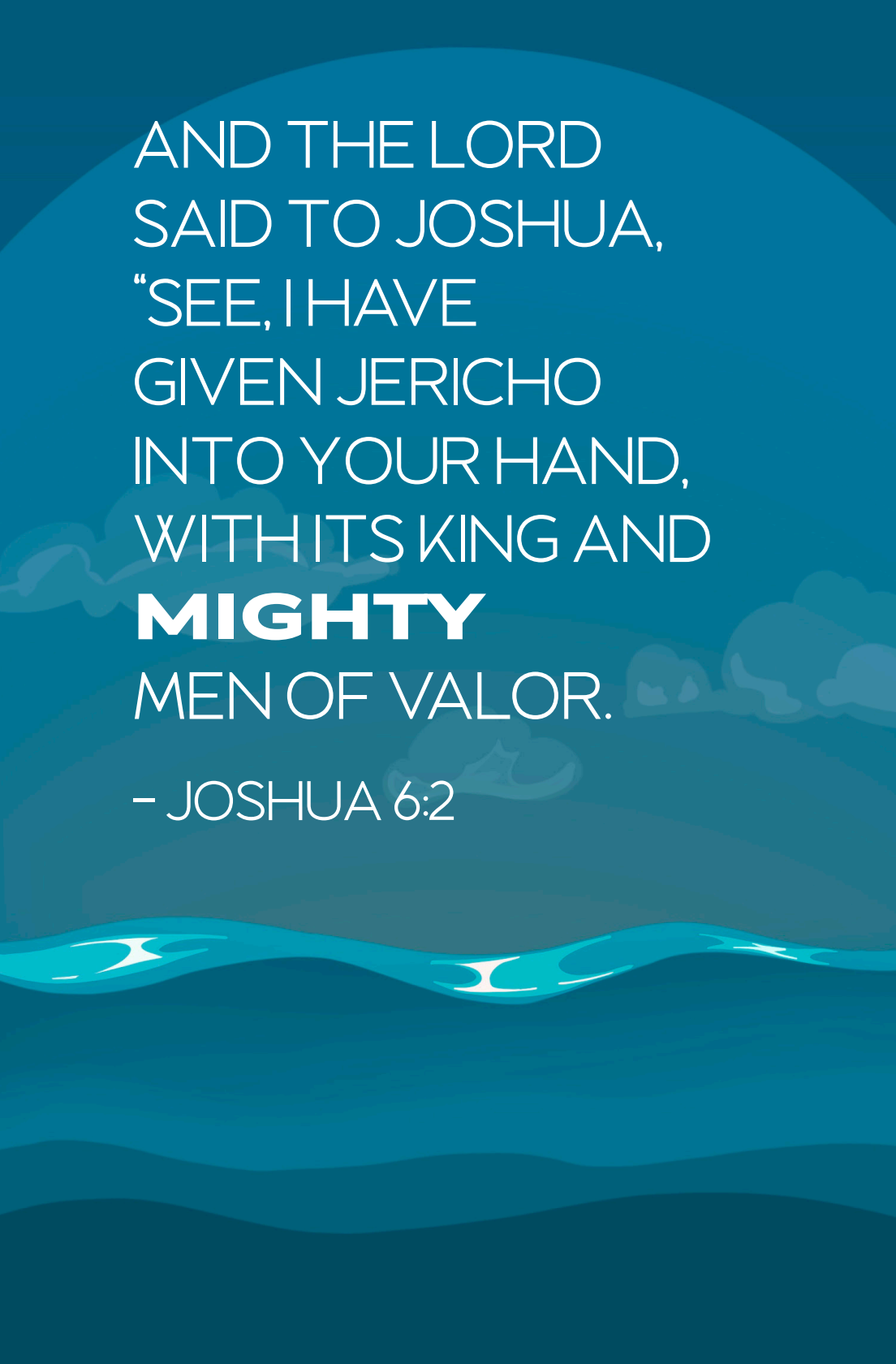
Memorize: And the LORD said to Joshua, "See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and mighty men of valor. **Joshua 6:2** (ESV)

Context: Joshua is leading the people through the Promised Land. This requires taking over the land of the native peoples who are there. God has already told Joshua and the people that he is for them and, therefore, he will providentially allow them to conquer those in the land. The city in this passage is Jericho.

Read: The Lord brought His people into the promised land. Now they had a task set before them: conquer the people living in the land. Before the Israelites crossed the Jordan River, Joshua—in the way Moses had done decades before—sent scouts into the land. (See Num. 13:2-3.) The first city the Israelites came to was Jericho. God told Joshua that He had handed the city over to Israel.

The Lord's reputation went ahead of the Israelites, creating fear in the people of Jericho. With the exception of one woman, the people of Jericho wanted nothing to do with God.

Rahab was unique among the inhabitants of Jericho. She wanted to be on God's side. Hebrews 11:31 says that by faith, Rahab "welcomed the spies in peace." Rahab didn't hide the spies and help them escape from the city because she was especially courageous or because she had a strong desire to live; Rahab acted by faith. By faith Rahab believed God would win the battle, and she asked the spies to show mercy to her family and keep them safe. When the Israelites attacked Jericho, Rahab and her family received mercy and became part of God's people. Jesus has won against sin and death. Everyone who trusts in Jesus receives mercy and becomes part of God's family forever.



AND THE LORD
SAID TO JOSHUA,
“SEE, I HAVE
GIVEN JERICHO
INTO YOUR HAND,
WITH ITS KING AND
MIGHTY
MEN OF VALOR.

– JOSHUA 6:2

Rahab wasn't the only one trusting in God. The Israelites fought the battle of Jericho by faith. (See Heb. 11:30.) Israel did not focus on what was going on inside the city of Jericho; they focused on doing what God had instructed. On the seventh day, the troops shouted, the trumpets sounded, and the wall around Jericho collapsed.

Joshua gave the people specific instructions to destroy everything in the city except for Rahab and her family. The Israelites were not to keep anything for themselves. The Lord would provide for all of their needs, so they had no reason to plunder Jericho. By faith, we believe Jesus has defeated sin and death. Everyone who trusts in Jesus is safe and becomes part of God's family forever.

Meaning/Application:

The Lord divinely gives Jericho to Joshua and his men. He does so through means which we would ordinarily not use. Though the city has a well-built wall around it, God gives specific instructions to follow that, if done correctly, will cause the walls to fall and the city to be conquered. Often we see God's plan for our lives and struggle to say yes because it is not the way we would ordinarily go about things. We must have faith and trust the Lord to guide us in his will. We must lean not on our understanding, but on his Word.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Are you trusting God even though his plan seems to be different than yours? Are you leaning on his Word or your own understanding?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God is always with us.

Preschool: How can we glorify God? We can glorify God by loving Him and obeying Him. God brought down the walls of Jericho.

Kids: Everyone who trusts in Jesus receives mercy and becomes part of God's family forever.

Students: By faith Rahab believed God would win the battle, and she asked the spies to show mercy to her family and keep them safe. When the Israelites attacked Jericho, Rahab and her family received mercy and became part of God's people.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY | "A UNITED CHURCH"
Ephesians 2:11-22

30. THANKFUL

"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13).

People in our churches may speak different languages and dress in different ways, but we have all been brought into God's family through the sacrificial work of Jesus. Spend time praising God that he has brought us close to him and close to one another in Christ.

PEOPLE GROUP

2,600 Tupinikin people of Brazil

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER



GOD GAVE THE PEOPLE THE LAND

WEEK OF APRIL 3

Key Passage: Read Joshua 10:1-15

Memorize: And the LORD said to Joshua, **"Do not fear them, for I have given them into your hands.** Not a man of them shall stand before you." **Joshua 10:8** (ESV)

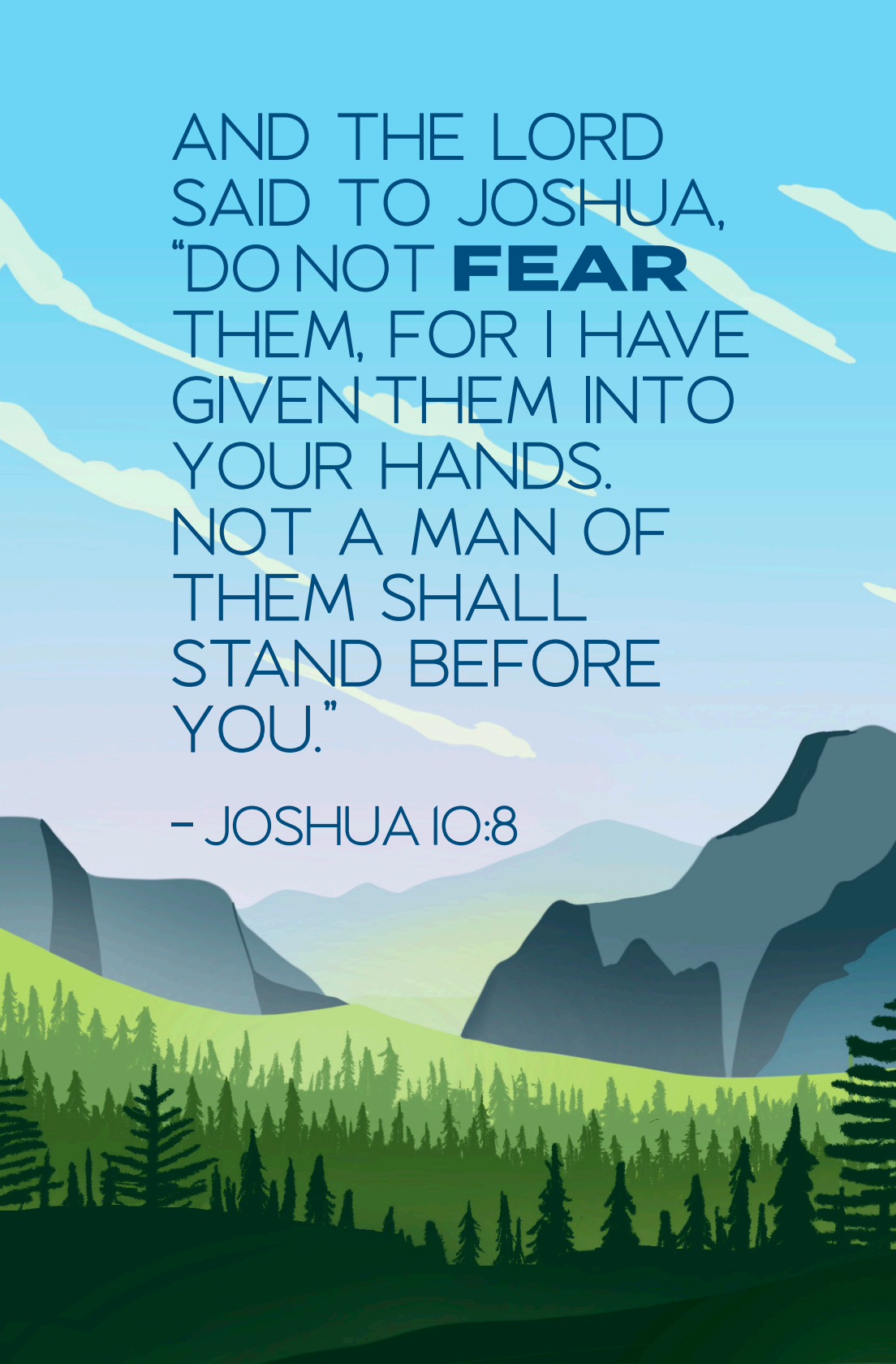
Context: Joshua and the people of Israel have formed a covenant with the Gibeonites. They have even done this without inquiring of the Lord. This causes alarm to other cities, and they seek to cause harm to Gibeon. Even though they did not seek the Lord, the Lord still honors the covenant.

Read:

Last week, kids learned that God fought for His people at the battle of Jericho. When Moses was the leader of Israel, God gave His people instructions about entering the promised land. Among those instructions was the command to drive out the nations living in the land of Canaan. (See Deut. 7.) These nations were corrupt, and God would judge them for their sin. (Lev. 18)

In the first battle, Israel marched around Jericho and the Lord gave them the city. As Israel moved to take the rest of the land, God pledged His presence to Joshua and reminded Israel of what He required: If you want to be successful in the land, you must obey Me. (See Josh. 1:7.) The Israelites learned from experience that disobedience to God would result in certain defeat, as Achan's sin brought about their downfall during the battle of Ai.

During the battles the Israelites faced in Canaan, Joshua was not in charge; the Lord was. God determined whom Israel battled and how Israel would win. Joshua 10–11 describes Israel's defeat of five kings who attacked Gibeon, an ally of Israel. Miraculously, God sent hailstones and stopped the sun. He gave Israel the victory. God was with Israel as they conquered the rest of the land. Then He gave His people years of peace and rest.



AND THE LORD
SAID TO JOSHUA,
“DO NOT **FEAR**
THEM, FOR I HAVE
GIVEN THEM INTO
YOUR HANDS.
NOT A MAN OF
THEM SHALL
STAND BEFORE
YOU.”

– JOSHUA 10:8

Help your kids see the bigger picture beyond Israel's individual battles against the Canaanites. Joshua's name means "The LORD is salvation." God fought for Joshua and the Israelites, saving them and giving them victory over their enemies. Sinners can look to God for victory over sin and death. God brought us salvation by sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross and rise again.

Meaning/Application:

The Lord divinely gives Jericho to Joshua and his men. He does so through means which we would ordinarily not use. Though the city has a well-built wall around it, God gives specific instructions to follow that, if done correctly, will cause the walls to fall and the city to be conquered. Often we see God's plan for our lives and struggle to say yes because it is not the way we would ordinarily go about things. We must have faith and trust the Lord to guide us in his will. We must lean not on our understanding, but on his Word.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Are you trusting God even though his plan seems to be different than yours? Are you leaning on his Word or your own understanding?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God is always with us.

Preschool: How can we glorify God? We can glorify God by loving Him and obeying Him. God made the sun stand still.

Kids: How can we glorify God? We can glorify God by loving Him and obeying Him. God made the sun stand still and gave His people victory.

Students: Joshua's name means "The LORD is salvation." God fought for Joshua and the Israelites, saving them and giving them victory over their enemies. God brought us salvation by sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross and rise again.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY | "A UNITED CHURCH"
Ephesians 2:11-22

31. UNITED

"For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility" (Ephesians 2:14).

No one in the first century thought it would be possible for Jews and Gentiles to get along but in Christ they were united. Pray that Christians in your community would increasingly acknowledge the real and lasting unity which binds together all who truly believe – whatever their ethnic, economic or social backgrounds.

PEOPLE GROUP

100,000 Tai Leng people of Myanmar

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

JOSHUA CHALLENGED THE PEOPLE

WEEK OF APRIL 10

Key Passage: Read Joshua 23

Memorize: For the LORD has driven out before you great and strong nations. And as for you, no man has been able to stand before you to this day. **Joshua 23:9** (ESV)

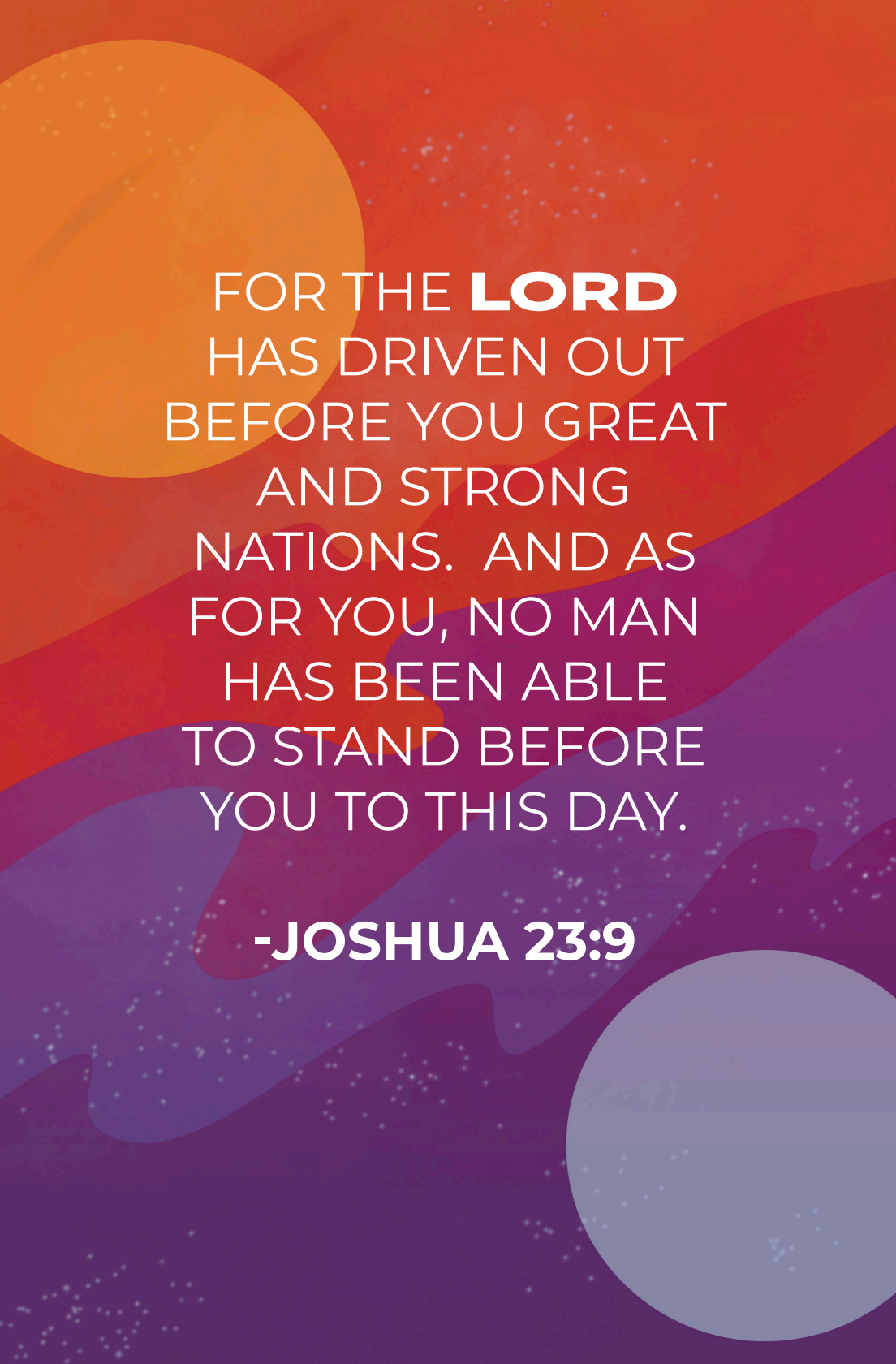
Context:

After a long period of time, the Lord has given the nation rest from its enemies. Joshua knows his time on this earth is coming to an end. He uses this opportunity to remind the people of important truths and gives them a charge for the future.

Read:

It has been nearly a quarter century since Israel first crossed the Jordan River into the promised land. Joshua orders Israel's leaders to uphold the covenant, citing God's total faithfulness to his promise once more (23:1-3). The Lord had promised to drive out the last of the people (13:6). Their obedience will be in response to God's provision, not in order to earn it. The people have received their dowry.

As a result, it is time for Israel to swear - and keep - its oath of faithfully obeying God's commands once more. Otherwise, the serpent will tempt the servant once more. "until you perish from off this good ground that the Lord your God has given you" (23:13). God has kept every word, but if Israel does not, every one of the curses God has brought on the Canaanites will fall on their head "until he has destroyed you from off this good land that the Lord your God has given you"(23:14-16).



FOR THE **LORD**
HAS DRIVEN OUT
BEFORE YOU GREAT
AND STRONG
NATIONS. AND AS
FOR YOU, NO MAN
HAS BEEN ABLE
TO STAND BEFORE
YOU TO THIS DAY.

-JOSHUA 23:9



Allegiance to other nations' gods remained the primary threat that Israel faced while living among the nations. Joshua challenges the leaders who will follow him to be very strong. The greatest responsibility is to live and lead in accordance with everything written in the Book of Moses' Law. The same God who is true to his word in keeping his promises of blessing will be true to fulfill his threats if Israel breaks covenant with him and decides to serve other gods.

Meaning/Application:

Joshua is reminding the people all that the Lord has done in giving them this land. He has driven out many nations who were great and strong. He has divinely guided their steps to the Promised Land. The people should remember the Lord and thus keep His commandments. He can be trusted. We also should remember all that the Lord has done for us. We know that we can trust the Lord because His Word says so and his actions prove Him to be trustworthy.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Do you daily remember all that the Lord has done? Are you keeping his commandments and honoring him with your words and actions?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers:

God is good.

Preschool:

God is good and we can trust Him.

Kids:

We can follow trust God because He keeps His promises.

Students:

God remained faithful and kept His side of the covenant. When we failed to remain faithful God sent His son Jesus to fulfill the promise that we couldn't keep, to live a perfect obedient life.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY | "A UNITED CHURCH"
Ephesians 2:11-22

32. DIVERSE

"[Christ] came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near"
(Ephesians 2:17).

God reaches out to all. Wherever someone has grown up and whatever belief system they used to hold, everyone is welcome in God's family. Pray that your church would be a place where people from all contexts are invited and are able to celebrate the peace of God.

PEOPLE GROUP

198,000 Georgian people of Russia

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL + PRAISE + PRAYER

GOD'S MIRACLES PROVE WHO HE IS

WEEK OF APRIL 17

Key Passage: Read Joshua 24:14-28

Memorize: Now therefore fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. **Joshua 24:14** (ESV)

Context:

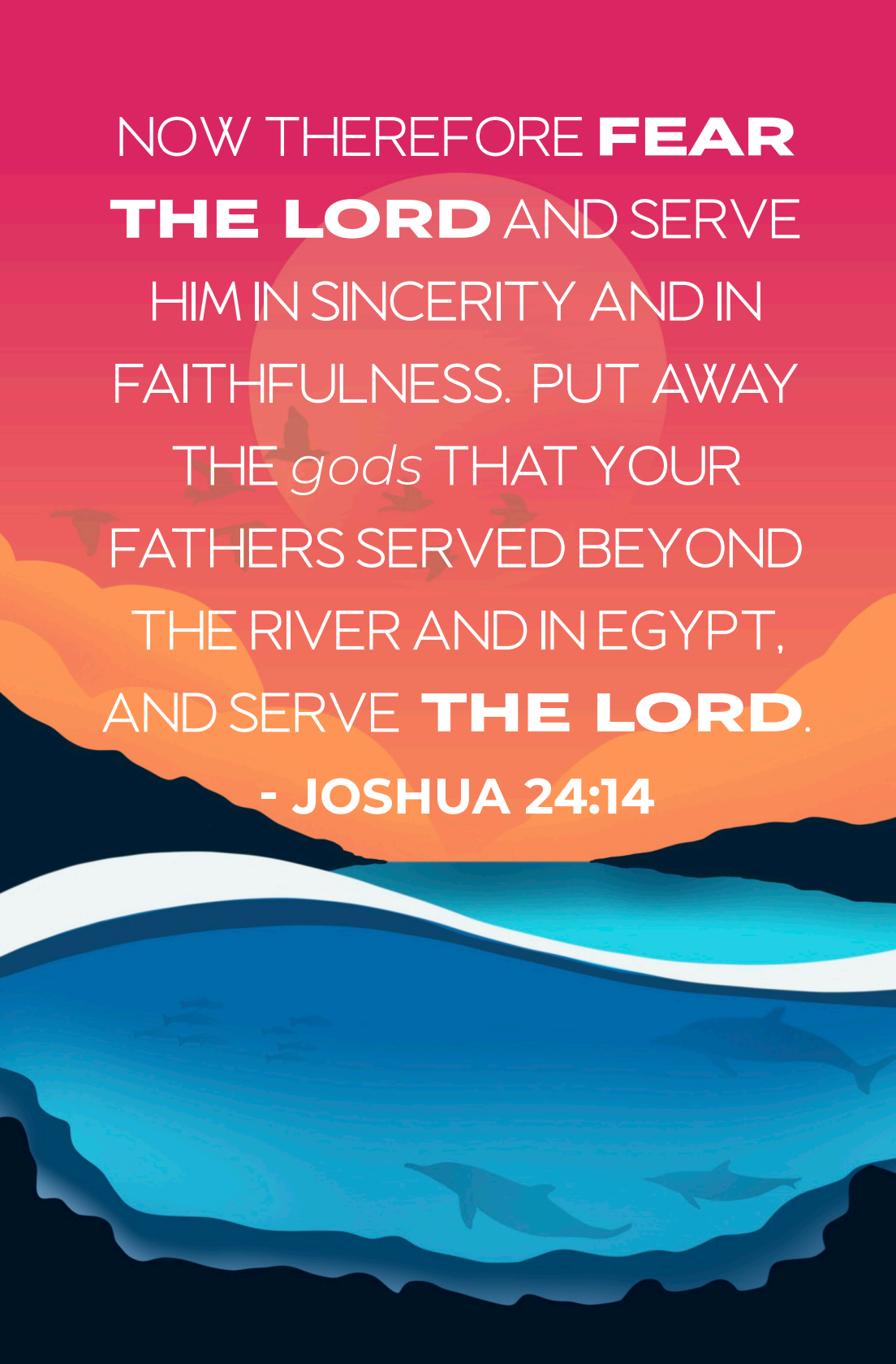
Joshua is giving one last bit of instruction before his death. The people need to be reminded and encouraged to follow the Lord. Joshua knows the people need to be reminded of the covenant of the Lord and to be told to pursue Him.

Read:

Joshua brought the tribes to Schechem and called for the elders and all of the leaders. In a similar fashion to Moses, Joshua gives a recount of God's faithfulness to the Israelites and how He has kept His promise. He goes on and reminds them of the covenant He made with them. Joshua begins to call for a renewal of that covenant among every tribe, clan, and family. Joshua is calling for them to serve the Lord in fear and sincerity.

In calling them to this, He is reminding them that Yahweh is the one true King. Joshua asks for a commitment on this day. Choose who you will serve. It is not one or the other. Either serve God, the one true King, or the gods of the Amorites.

When we choose to live for God, we must abandon all other false idols in our life. Joshua declares, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Joshua states, how could we ever go another direction? How could we choose to worship anyone other than God?



NOW THEREFORE **FEAR**
THE LORD AND SERVE
HIM IN SINCERITY AND IN
FAITHFULNESS. PUT AWAY
THE *gods* THAT YOUR
FATHERS SERVED BEYOND
THE RIVER AND IN EGYPT,
AND SERVE **THE LORD.**

- **JOSHUA 24:14**

"For it is was the Lord our God who brought us and our fathers up from the land of Egypt, and out of the house of slvarey..." (24:16)

Joshua reminds them that God is a jealous God. What a great day to establish your hearts (James 5) and choose who you will serve. Knowing what Jesus has done for us on the cross, how could we live anyone or anything else., but then for Him alone. He alone can save.

Meaning/Application:

Joshua is telling the people to choose whom they will serve. Will it be God the Almighty or the gods of Egypt or other false gods? Joshua says his house will serve the Lord and the people say they will as well. Today we can often slip into a comfort zone and our attention is drawn away from God. We can prioritize other things in this world and fail to honor God as we are supposed to. So we today must make a choice to serve God and not anything else.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Who or what are you serving today? Are you choosing to serve the Lord on a daily basis? Are you putting away anything foreign to follow Christ?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers:

God is good.

Preschool:

God is good and we can trust Him.

Kids:

We can follow God's commands because God is good and trustworthy. Jesus died on the cross for us, so we can know God.

Students:

There is no other way to God except through Jesus. Jesus is our Savior and Lord.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY | "A UNITED CHURCH"
Ephesians 2:11-22

33. CO-OPERATIVE

"You are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people" (Ephesians 2:19).

Fellow citizens have shared responsibilities. Pray that churches in your community would have a passion for working alongside one another in the kingdom, for the glory of the Lord Jesus. Pray for generosity and creativity between churches and Christian organizations as they unite in mission across your community.

PEOPLE GROUP

177,000 Deraf Moroccan people of Morocco

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER



FOLLOWING THEIR OWN GOD

WEEK OF APRIL 24

Key Passage: Read Judges 2:16-23

Memorize: Then the LORD raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those who plundered them.

Judges 2:16 (ESV)

Context: The people of Israel have forgotten the words they spoke to Joshua and have disobeyed and were unfaithful to the Lord. Therefore, the Lord has given them to their enemies to plunder and they are oppressed by them. It is within this cycle that the Lord raises up the various judges who will judge the nation.

Read:

Following Joshua's death, the Israelites were without a leader. They fell into a cycle of sin that can be seen during each reign of the judges. The cycle is marked by an A-B-C-D-E pattern. Let's look at the first judge, Othniel, to see this pattern.

First, the people fell into Apostasy. They turned away from God and served other gods. (Judg. 3:7) Next, they experienced a period of Bondage. God was angry with the Israelites, and He gave them into the hand of the king of Aram. (v. 8) Third, the people Cried out to God. (v. 9) Then, God sent a Deliverer to save them. (vv. 9-10) Finally, they had Ease in the land. (v. 11) Then Othniel died.

This pattern continued with Ehud. The people had again turned from God. Their apostasy made God angry. He sent them into bondage by strengthening the king of Moab to defeat Israel. The Israelites served the king of Moab for 18 years.

The Moabites were well-fed, especially the king. They enjoyed the fruit of the Israelites' labor while the Israelites went hungry. By thrusting a sword into the king's belly, Ehud disemboweled the king and left him dead on the floor of his room. The fat covered over the handle of the sword so that Ehud could not remove it.

THEN THE **LORD**
RAISED UP JUDGES,
WHO SAVED THEM
OUT OF THE HAND
OF THOSE WHO
PLUNDERED THEM.

- **JUDGES 2:16**



After Ehud delivered Israel, the Israelites struck down the Moabites and there was peace in the land for eighty years. But Ehud would die, and they would need another judge to lead them.

As you talk with your kids this week, discuss that the Israelites needed someone better than a judge. The judges saved the people from the consequences of their sin, but not the cause of it. God's plan was to one day send a true Deliverer—Jesus, His own Son—to be the King of His people. Jesus saves people from sin forever.

Meaning/Application:

Israel forgot what the Lord had done for them and continually chased after other gods. Each time the Lord punished them, they would cry out and God would send a judge to save them. However, when the judge died, they would return to their sin. Thus, the Lord left nations within the land to contend with Israel. We are often like Israel in that we sin, turn to the Lord for rescue, and then turn back to our sin when things are smooth again. The Lord is not simply a doctor to save us and nothing else. He is our Lord who created all things and we should serve Him as such.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Do I only look to God in my time of need and then seek my own pleasure when He fixes everything? Am I serving him as my Savior AND my Lord?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God helps us obey Him

Preschool: What is repentance? Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus. God's people forgot about Him.

Kids: God's people repeatedly turned from Him. The judges saved the people from the consequences of their sin, but not the cause of it.

Students: The judges saved the people from the consequences of their sin, but not the cause of it. God's plan was to send a true Deliverer—Jesus, His own Son—to be the King of His people. Jesus saves people from sin forever

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY | "A UNITED CHURCH"
Ephesians 2:11-22

34. GROWING

"And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit"
(Ephesians 2:22)

We are designed to grow together – rooted in Christ, indwelt by the Spirit and maturing alongside one another. Pray that Christians of all backgrounds would be eager to give and receive gospel encouragement.

PEOPLE GROUP

500,000 Mandar people of Indonesia

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

FOLLOWING HIS OWN PASSIONS

WEEK OF MAY 1

Key Passage: Read Judges 13

Memorize: And the woman bore a son and called his name Samson. And the young man grew, and the LORD blessed him. **Judges 13:24** (ESV)


Context: The people again have sinned against the Lord, so He has placed them in the hand of the Philistines. The Lord promises a young couple a son who will be raised up in the Lord and will begin to bring them out of the hand of the Philistines. They must not cut his hair or allow him to drink strong drink.

Read: Samson was the last of the major judges of Israel. He was born to parents who dedicated him to the Lord as a Nazirite after the Angel of the Lord announced that Samson would be born to save the Israelites from the power of the Philistines. Samson grew up, and God blessed him with great strength. But when Samson requested to marry a Philistine woman, his parents were confused. Samson was supposed to deliver the Israelites from the Philistines. Why would he want to marry one of them? But God had a plan in all of this. (See Judg. 14:4.)

As Samson prepared for the wedding, he gave a riddle to the men with him about an event that occurred on his way to Timnah. (See Judg. 14:9-14.) Days passed, and the men convinced Samson's wife to tell them the answer to the riddle. This action sparked a series of events that would eventually lead to the death of Samson.

When the men solved his riddle, Samson was so angry that he torched the fields of the Philistines. He used the jawbone of a donkey to kill 1,000 men, and he left his wife. The Philistine leaders determined to kill Samson. When Samson fell in love with a woman named Delilah, the leaders bribed her into telling them where Samson's strength came from.

A man came and shaved the braids from Samson's head. He lost his strength and



AND THE
WOMAN BORE
A SON
AND CALLED
HIS NAME
SAMSON.
AND
THE YOUNG
MAN GREW,
AND
THE LORD
BLESSED HIM.

- **JUDGES 13:24**

became helpless. The Philistines gouged out his eyes and took him prisoner. They had him stand between the pillars of a pagan temple. In a final plea to God, Samson asked for his strength back. God gave him strength, and Samson knocked over the pillars, collapsing the temple. In his death, Samson killed more Philistines than he had killed in his life. (Judg. 16:30)

Though Samson disobeyed God, God used him to accomplish His purpose of delivering the Israelites from the Philistines. Samson's story reminds us of Jesus. Jesus never sinned, but God sent Him to die on the cross and rise again to rescue people from sin and give them eternal life.

Meaning/Application:

Though the people have sinned against the Lord, they are still His chosen people whom He has made promises to and whom He loves. Therefore, He is keeping His promise through raising up Samson to one day begin to save Israel from their oppressors. Praise God that He still raises up people to serve Him today. Though we often turn from Him, His church remains just as he promised with those boldly proclaiming his Word and serving Him.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Why did the Lord need to raise up Samson? Am I acting like the people of Israel or am I being used to God to serve his people?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God sent Jesus to be our Judge.

Preschool: What is repentance? Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus. God made Samson strong.

Kids: God gave Samson strength to defeat the Philistines. Samson's sin led to his own death, but God used his death to save the Israelites from their enemies.

Students: Samson's sin led to his own death, but God used his death to save the Israelites from their enemies. Jesus never sinned, but God sent Him to die on the cross and rise again to rescue people from sin and give them eternal life.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

JUSTICE IN THE COMMUNITY | "MARGINALIZED PEOPLE"
Zech. 7:8-12

35. TRAFFICKED PEOPLE

"This is what the Lord Almighty said: 'Administer true justice'"
(Zech. 7:9).

Behind the doors of our communities there are those ensnared in domestic servitude – those trafficked into unspeakable horrors. Pray that they would know true and lasting freedom. Pray too for those charities and public services working to bring them hope.

PEOPLE GROUP

57,500 Coyaima people of Colombia

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL + PRAISE + PRAYER

FOLLOWING GOD'S GUIDANCE

WEEK OF MAY 8

Key Passage: Read Ruth 1

Memorize: But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. **Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Ruth 1:16** (ESV)

Context: Naomi has sojourned to the land of Moab because of famine. While there, her husband and her two sons die. This leaves her with only 2 daughters-in-law and in a foreign land. When returning one daughter-in-law stays while the other, Ruth, returns to Bethlehem. She was not obliged to, but chose to remain loyal to Naomi.

Read: Only two books in the Old Testament bear the name of a woman: Ruth and Esther. Ruth's story occurs at the time when judges ruled over Israel. God's people were characterized by rebellion and immorality. At a time when the Israelites desperately needed a king to lead them back to God, Ruth's story of faithfulness points us to Jesus Christ, a coming Redeemer who will make all wrong things right again.

Ruth was the daughter-in-law of Naomi, a woman from Bethlehem who settled in Moab with her husband and two sons to escape a famine. Naomi's husband died, and her two sons married Moabite women, Orpah and Ruth. They lived in Moab for 10 years; then Naomi's sons died.

Naomi heard that the Lord had provided food for His people during the famine, so she decided to go back to Judah. Naomi encouraged Orpah and Ruth to return to their families. Orpah returned home, but Ruth clung to Naomi. So Naomi and Ruth traveled back to Bethlehem together.

Naomi permitted Ruth to gather fallen grain in a field. The owner of the field was Boaz, a relative of Naomi's late husband and a family redeemer. A family redeemer was someone who would help his close relatives if they were in trouble. Boaz noticed Ruth and told her she could safely

BUT RUTH SAID,
“DO NOT URGE ME
TO LEAVE YOU OR
TO RETURN FROM
FOLLOWING YOU.
FOR **WHERE YOU
GO I WILL GO**, AND
WHERE YOU LODGE
I WILL LODGE. YOUR
PEOPLE SHALL BE MY
PEOPLE, AND YOUR
GOD MY GOD.

-RUTH 1:16

safely gather grain in his field. At Naomi's urging, Ruth sought to be redeemed by Boaz. Boaz bought back the land Naomi and Ruth had lost when their husbands died, and he married Ruth. They had a son named Obed, whose grandson would be King David. Boaz was a family redeemer. He helped his close relatives who were in trouble.

Boaz cared for Ruth and Naomi because their husbands had died. In a similar way, Jesus is our Redeemer. We need help because we sin. Jesus bought our salvation for us by taking our punishment when He died on the cross. God gave Ruth—a foreigner—a special place in the lineage of Jesus Christ. As you talk about this story with your kids, introduce them to Jesus, our Redeemer. He bought for us salvation, paying the price with His very own blood.

Meaning/Application:

Ruth was determined to remain with Naomi no matter what. She chose to leave her homeland and travel to a foreign place. She chose to serve the Lord even though He was not the god of her homeland. God divinely arranged this because through Ruth eventually would come the line of David and, thus, Christ. Leaving would have been uncomfortable for Ruth but she chose to cling to Naomi and her God. We should also show the resolve of Ruth and choose God even when it is difficult.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Do we choose to follow God even when it is difficult and uncomfortable? Do we trust the Lord's plan in challenging times?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God takes care of us.

Preschool: God sent Jesus to earth through Ruth's family

Kids: Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus. God provided a redeemer for Ruth and Naomi.

Students: Boaz was a family redeemer. Boaz cared for Ruth and Naomi because their husbands had died. In a similar way, Jesus is our Redeemer. Jesus bought our salvation for us by taking our punishment when He died on the cross.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

JUSTICE IN THE COMMUNITY | "MARGINALIZED PEOPLE"
Zech. 7:8-12

36. HOMELESS PEOPLE

"Show mercy and compassion to one another"
(Zech. 7:9)

Living and working on the streets can be a terrifying experience. Violence, addiction, ill-health and early death are just some of the issues faced by these vulnerable individuals. Often such people feel dehumanized – pray they would experience God's true mercy and compassion, and receive the help they need to move towards both short-term and eternal security.

PEOPLE GROUP

5,900 Atikum people of Brazil

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

GOD PROVIDE FOR HANNAH

WEEK OF MAY 15

Key Passage: Read 1 Samuel 1

Memorize: For this child I prayed, and the LORD has granted me my petition that I made to him. Therefore I have lent him to the LORD. **As long as he lives, he is lent to the LORD."** 1 Samuel 1:27-28 (ESV)

Context:

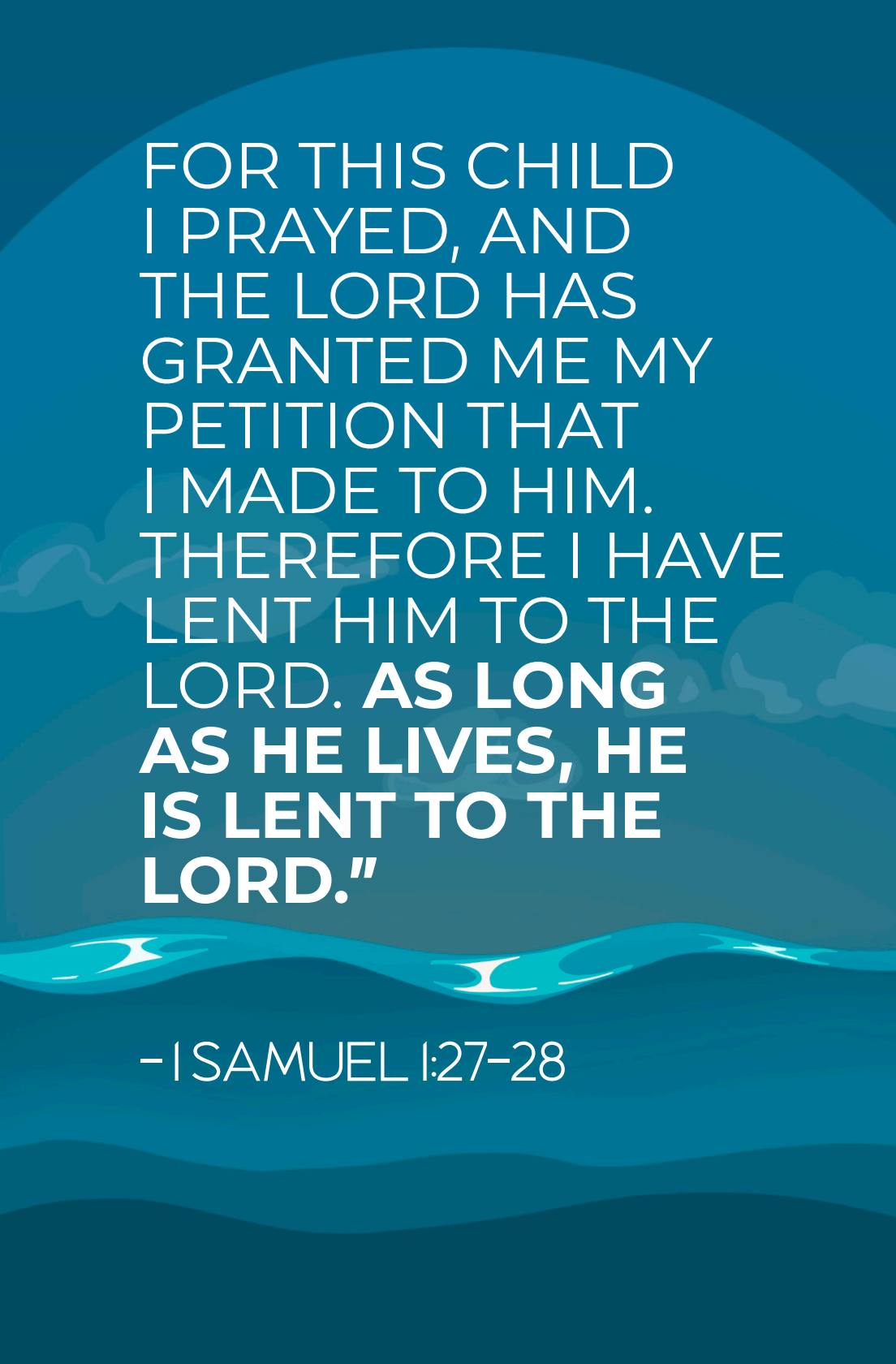
Hannah is distressed because she is without children. She cries out a petition to the Lord in her heart without making a sound causing the priest Eli to think something is wrong. She tells him her trouble and Eli asks the Lord to grant the petition. Hannah promises to give the child to serve the Lord if she is able to have one. The Lord grants her petition and Samuel is born.

Read:

The time of the judges was turbulent for God's people. The Israelites had conquered the promised land of Canaan, but after Joshua's death, they fell into a cycle of sin. This was the culture in which Hannah and her husband Elkanah lived. They were ordinary Israelites—Elkanah, a devoted worshiper of the Lord; and Hannah, a woman who wanted nothing more than to be a mother. But the Lord had closed her womb. (1 Sam. 1:5)

One year, when Elimelech went to make sacrifices and worship God, Hannah went too. She could no longer hide her grief over being childless. She prayed so fervently to the Lord—asking for a child and vowing to dedicate him to God—that Eli the priest rebuked her because he thought she was drunk.

God answered Hannah's prayers, and she named her son Samuel, which means "requested from God." When Samuel was old enough to wean, Hannah presented him to Eli. First Samuel 2 records Hannah's triumphant prayer. Hannah glorified God for His sovereignty; then she went home with her husband, leaving Samuel to serve God under the leadership of Eli.

The background of the image features a dark blue gradient. At the top, a large, light blue semi-circle represents a sun or moon. Below it, there are stylized, wavy lines in various shades of blue, suggesting ocean waves. The text is centered in the upper half of the image.

FOR THIS CHILD
I PRAYED, AND
THE LORD HAS
GRANTED ME MY
PETITION THAT
I MADE TO HIM.
THEREFORE I HAVE
LENT HIM TO THE
LORD. **AS LONG
AS HE LIVES, HE
IS LENT TO THE
LORD."**

-1 SAMUEL 1:27-28

Hannah visited Samuel each year and brought him a robe. Samuel faithfully served God. On the other hand, Eli's sons—though they were priests—had no regard for God. They did not listen to Eli, so God rejected Eli's family. This hard news came to Eli through the boy Samuel.

Review 1 Samuel 3. Note how Samuel responded to God's call: "Speak, for your servant is listening." This week, help your kids identify Samuel's role as God's messenger. God called Hannah's son to share God's plan. Lead them to them connect Samuel to Jesus. Samuel used God's words to tell the people what God is like. John 1:1 says that Jesus is the Word. Jesus—the Son of God—told the world about God's plan and showed what God is like.

Meaning/Application:

Samuel is given to serve the Lord with Eli once he is weaned and is old enough to go to the temple of the Lord. As she hands him over, Hannah makes a sacrifice unto the Lord and cries out that as long as he lives, he belongs to the Lord. The Lord had a divine plan for Samuel to be His messenger. He was indeed faithful to Him throughout his life. This all began with the faith of Hannah.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Do I have the faith of Hannah to be willing to give up something so precious to the Lord?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God is greater than anything.

Preschool: Is anything greater than God? No, God is greater than everything. God spoke to Hannah's son Samuel.

Kids: Hannah's son Samuel was a gift from God. God called Samuel to share His plan with His people.

Students: Samuel used God's words to tell the people what God is like. John 1:1 says that Jesus is the Word. Jesus—the Son of God—told the world about God's plan and showed what God is like.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

JUSTICE IN THE COMMUNITY | "MARGINALIZED PEOPLE"
Zech. 7:8-12

37. BROKEN FAMILIES

"Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless"
(Zech. 7:10)

Domestic abuse, family breakdown and isolation mar many households. Too many young men are growing up without good role-models; too many children have never experienced real love. Pray that your city would recapture the importance of stable families. Thank God that he has called you into his family – pray that you would welcome the hurting and lonely.

PEOPLE GROUP

170,000 Malayali people of Oman

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL + PRAISE + PRAYER



ELI'S SON DISOBEYED GOD

WEEK OF MAY 22

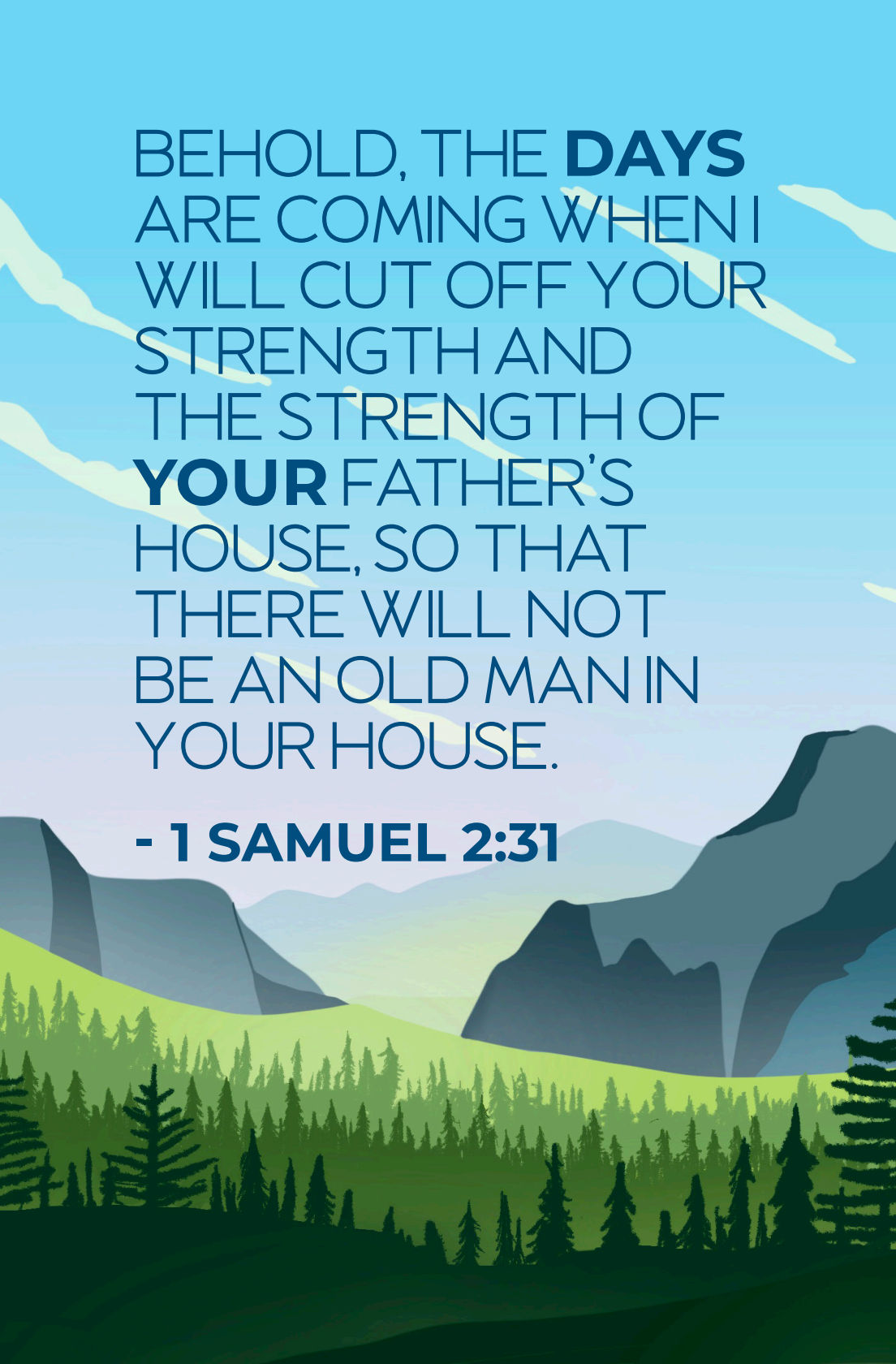
Key Passage: Read 1 Samuel 2:27-36

Memorize: Behold, the days are coming when I will cut off your strength and the strength of your father's house, so that there will not be an old man in your house. **1 Samuel 2:31** (ESV)

Context: The sons of Eli are sinful and dishonoring to the Lord. They do what is shameful; their sin before the Lord was great. Therefore, God declares that his household will be cutoff. He will raise up a new priest who will be faithful to Him.

Read: The word of the Lord came to Samuel. This prophetic word was a warning of judgment on Eli's evil sons. Israel was utterly defeated in battle against the Philistines. So they decided to take the ark of the covenant into the battle with them next time. Eli's two sons were with the ark of God, but despite the ark being with Israel, the Lord did not help them. The Philistines defeated Israel again, and the ark was captured, and Eli's sons died. This news brought Eli, a 98-year-old man, to die as well.

The Philistines brought the ark of God into the house of Dagon, a false god, and left it overnight beside Dagon. The following day the Philistines found Dagon had fallen down on the ground before the ark of the Lord. They set him back up but the very next day Dagon had fallen again, but this time Dagon's head and both of his hands broke off. The people of Ashdod were afraid and tried to get rid of the ark, so they took it to Gath, and they were terrified as the people of Gath took it to Ekron. The people of Ekron feared what may happen to them, so they gathered together and decided to return the ark to the people of Israel.



BEHOLD, THE **DAYS**
ARE COMING WHEN I
WILL CUT OFF YOUR
STRENGTH AND
THE STRENGTH OF
YOUR FATHER'S
HOUSE, SO THAT
THERE WILL NOT
BE AN OLD MAN IN
YOUR HOUSE.

- **1 SAMUEL 2:31**

Samuel had a strong word for the people of Israel some 20 years later. "If you are returning to the Lord with all your heart, then put away foreign gods... and direct your heart to the Lord and serve Him only and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines." (7:3). So the people put away the Baals and the Ashtarothe gods, and they served the Lord only. That day the Lord thundered a mighty sound against the Philistines, were thrown into confusion, and Israel defeated them. Samuel took a stone and set it up and called its name Ebenezer and said, "till now the Lord has helped us."

This section shows us that God does not need our help in defending him, and the people of Israel were helpless to save themselves, so they cried out to be rescued. The Ebenezer that Samuel set is a reminder that God is our very present help. We can put our hope in Him moving forward that Christ has been our help all the days of our lives.

Meaning/Application:

God is a just and holy God. Though he may show mercy and withhold His anger for a period of time, He cannot be in the presence of sin. This is especially true of a household of priests. If they dishonor the Lord, how can they lead the people to honor Him. As a church we should examine ourselves to see if we indeed are honoring the Lord and pointing those around us to Him.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Are we as a church guarding ourselves from sin? Am I guarding myself and my family from sin? What are some practical ways we can daily honor the Lord and point others to Christ?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God helps us.

Preschool: God rescued the people of Israel.

Kids: God rescued the people of Israel and Jesus rescues us from our sin.

Students: We can put our hope in God moving forward, knowing that Christ has been our help all the days of our lives.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

JUSTICE IN THE COMMUNITY | "MARGINALIZED PEOPLE"
Zech. 7:8-12

38. REFUGEES/CROSS CULTURAL LABORERS
"Do not oppress ... the foreigner or the poor"
(Zech. 7:11).

Suffering can be so prevalent on our screens and on our streets that instead of feeling compassion, we become immune to injustice. Spend time confessing those moments when you have failed to care. Ask God to grow in you a heart for marginalized people.

PEOPLE GROUP

117,000 Riffi Berber people of France

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

GOD TAKES SIN SERIOUSLY

WEEK OF MAY 29

Key Passage: Read Romans 8:1-11

Memorize: For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, **Romans 8:3** (ESV)

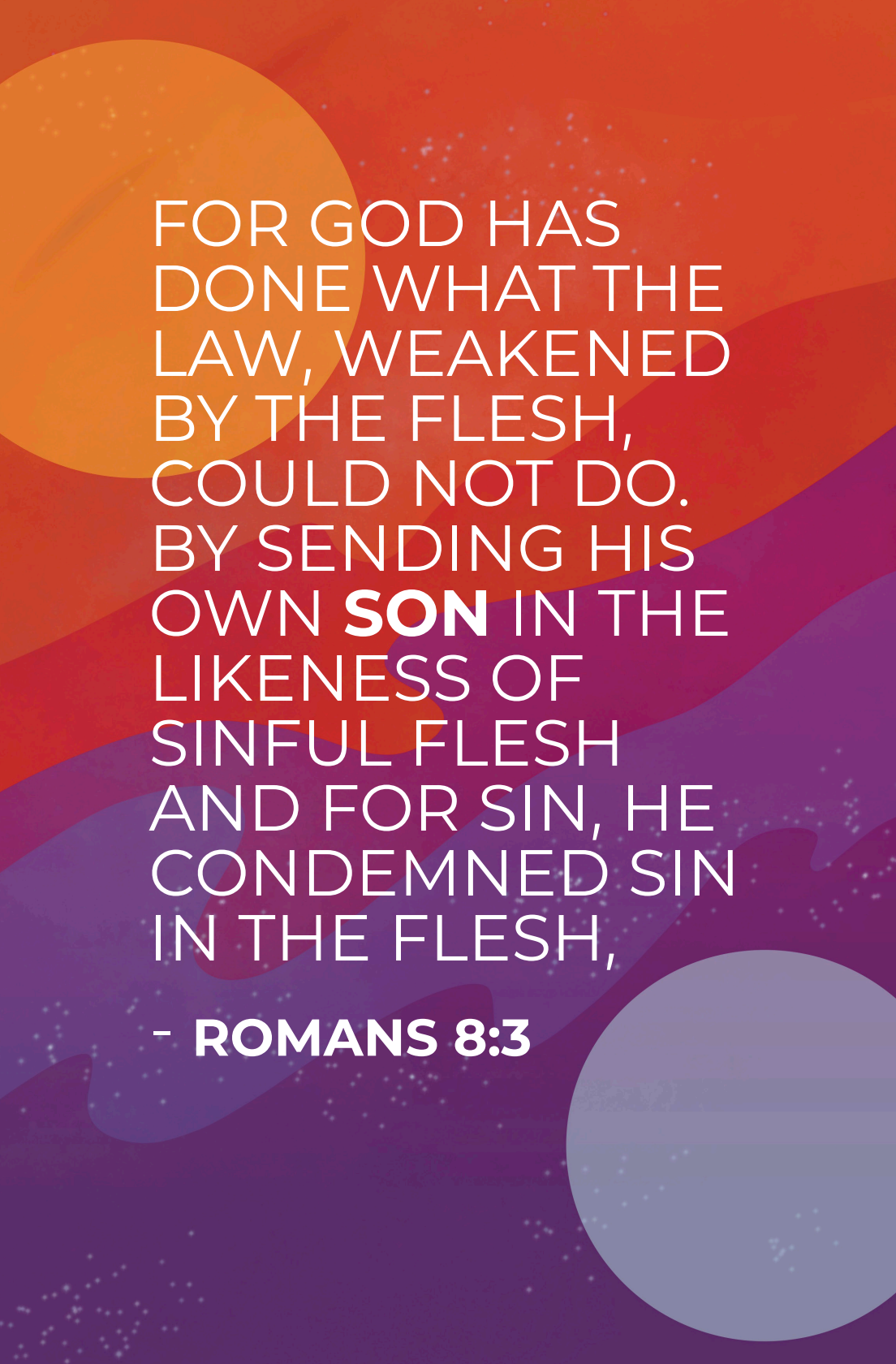
Context:

Paul in this part of Romans is pointing out the inability of humans to keep the law. This does not make the law bad but means that we are all sinners. Paul points out that even when we desire to keep the law, we are unable to do so perfectly.

Read:

After correcting misconceptions about the law and how it relates to the gospel, Paul explains how there is “now no condemnation” for believers “in Christ Jesus”. The Holy Spirit’s work in spiritual life “sets free” Christians from the guilt and power of sin. This life could not be bestowed by the law or human obedience. Only the Son, through his coming, could and did.

Because of Christ’s finished work, what the law requires for living in harmony with God and his will can be realized through the work of God’s Spirit. But we are all confronted with a choice: either we are oriented toward the flesh, which leads to death, or the Spirit reorients us, so that our present possession and ultimate destiny are “life and peace” (vv.5-6). Without the Spirit, we “cannot please God.” Believers live in the Spirit rather than in the flesh.



FOR GOD HAS
DONE WHAT THE
LAW, WEAKENED
BY THE FLESH,
COULD NOT DO.
BY SENDING HIS
OWN **SON** IN THE
LIKENESS OF
SINFUL FLESH
AND FOR SIN, HE
CONDEMNED SIN
IN THE FLESH,

- **ROMANS 8:3**

Physically, our bodies are mortal in this life, and sin is present. However, the gospel's righteousness means that the Spirit brings life. As he stays among God's people and in their own spheres, the Spirit who raised Jesus alters believers' everyday lives. Paul argues that those who have been connected to the rising Lord share in Christ's genuine resurrection life.

Meaning/Application:

Christ, however, came to fulfill the law. He did so perfectly, which means those that are in Him are released from the law. Because we are sinful and unable to keep the law, He came in the likeness of man and fulfilled it for us. Therefore, through Christ we are saved from our sins.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Are you still trying to keep the law in the flesh by doing good deeds to earn God's favor? Have you trusted Christ to fulfill the law for you and free you from your sins?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers:

Jesus loves us.

Preschool:

We are sinners. Jesus forgives us.

Kids:

We are sinners. Jesus can forgive us of our sins.

Students:

Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection from the grave brings us hope and freedom from the law of sin and death. We can remain confident as believers that we are God's own children. By grace, through faith, Christ is our elder brother and we are heirs of God.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY | "A PRAYERFUL CHURCH"

Acts 4:24-31

39. CORPORATE PRAYER

"When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God"
(Acts 4:24).

When faced with opposition, the early church came together. They knew that as a family, they were called to encourage one another by praying collectively. Pray that every Christian in your community would see the beauty and the necessity of corporate prayer.

PEOPLE GROUP

723,000 Thuana Rajput people of India

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

ISRAEL DEMANDED A KING

WEEK OF JUNE 5

Key Passage: Read 1 Samuel 8

Memorize: And the LORD said to Samuel, "Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, **but they have rejected me from being king over them. 1 Samuel 8:7** (ESV)

Context:

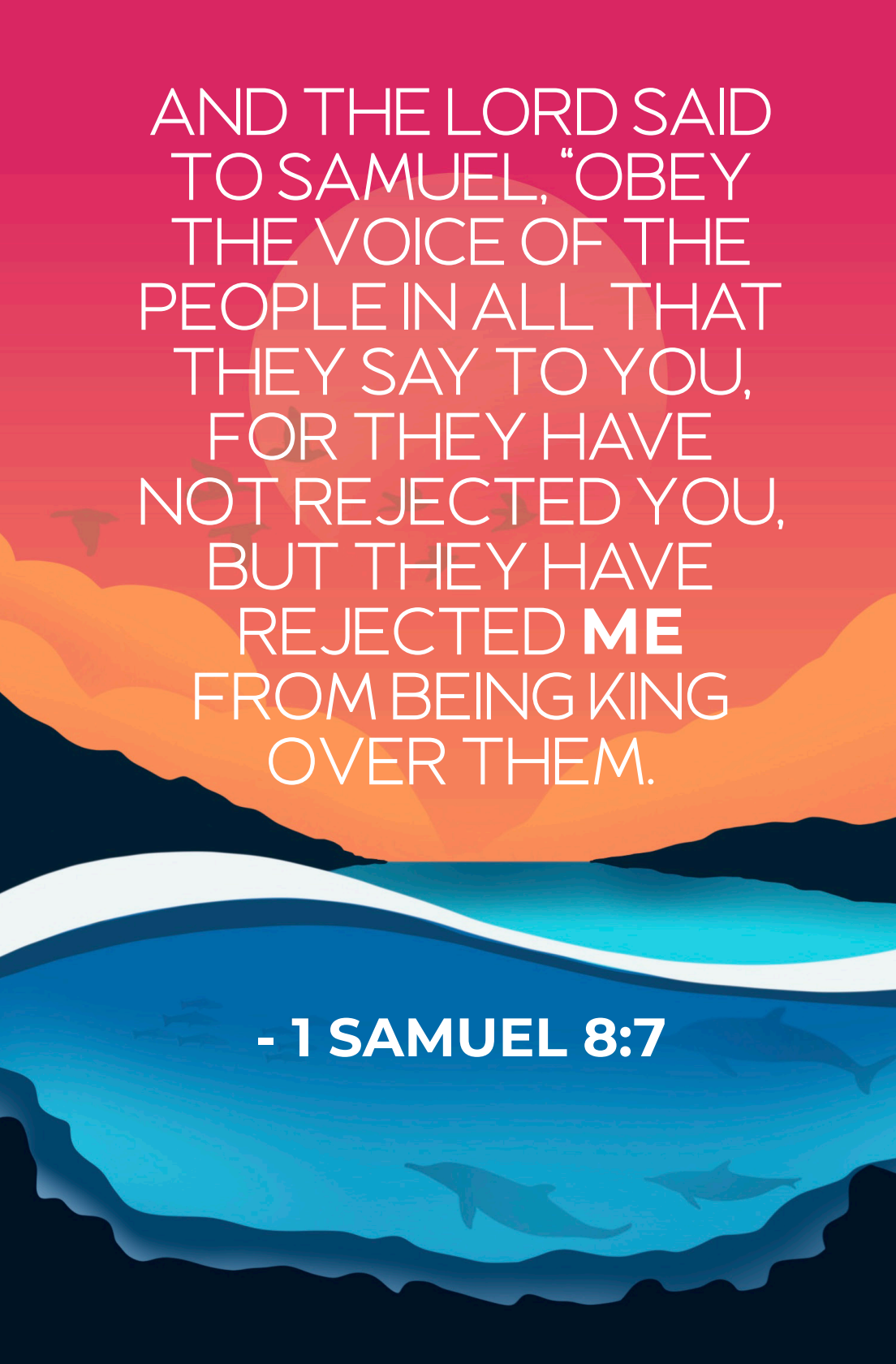
Though Samuel had served the Lord, his sons who followed did not do so. The people of Israel began to clamor for a king instead of the judges. They desired to be ruled just as the other nations were.

Read:

This week's Bible story picks up more than 20 years after the Philistines returned the ark of God to the Israelites. During that time, Israel began to seek God again, and Samuel led them to remove their foreign gods and worship God only.

Samuel had judged Israel throughout his lifetime, but he was getting old. So Samuel made his sons, Joel and Abijah, judges over Israel. But like many sons before them, Joel and Abijah did not follow the example of their father. They disobeyed God and caused problems for Israel. The elders of Israel spoke to Samuel about his sons and demanded a king. All the other nations around them had kings, they pointed out. Samuel knew their desire to imitate the nations around them was sinful, and he prayed to God.

"Give them what they want," God said. "They have not rejected you; they have rejected Me as their King." Samuel explained to the Israelites what rights a king would have over them; he warned them that when they regretted asking for a king—and they would regret it—God would not help them.



AND THE LORD SAID
TO SAMUEL, "OBEY
THE VOICE OF THE
PEOPLE IN ALL THAT
THEY SAY TO YOU,
FOR THEY HAVE
NOT REJECTED YOU,
BUT THEY HAVE
REJECTED **ME**
FROM BEING KING
OVER THEM.

- 1 SAMUEL 8:7

God intended for a heavenly king to rule over Israel, but the Israelites did not trust God's plan and wanted a king like the nations around them. God had a plan to send His Son, Jesus. King Jesus trusted and obeyed God perfectly and died so sinners could be forgiven and accepted.

Meaning/Application:

Though they desired a king, they failed to recognize that this meant they were rejecting God to rule over them. Samuel even warns the people of the dangers of having a king instead of allowing God to rule. The people do listen and the Lord grants their request. Too often we seek someone or something besides the Lord to rule over us. Whether this be a political figure, our job, or outside activities, we often do not first look to the Lord and trust His plan for our lives. Though God created all and uses all for the good of those who love Him, people and things should not be what rules over our lives.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Is God ruling over your life? Are there other things which you have placed as kings in front of God?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers:

God is greater than anything.

Preschool:

God's people wanted a king. Jesus is the only perfect King.

Kids:

Although God is the perfect King, God's people wanted a king like the nations around them. God warned His people, but then gave them what they wanted.

Students:

The Israelites wanted a king like the nations around them. God had a plan to send His Son, Jesus. King Jesus trusted and obeyed God perfectly and died so sinners could be forgiven and accepted.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY | "A PRAYERFUL CHURCH"
Acts 4:24-31

40. CONFIDENT PRAYER

"Sovereign Lord, 'they said, 'you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them'" (Acts 4:24). There is nothing outside the sovereignty of God. He made everything, sustains all things and is intimately involved in his world. Spend some time praising God for his power, the wise way he rules the earth and the wonderful way he answers prayer.

PEOPLE GROUP

478,000 Turkmen people of Iraq

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER



GOD MADE SAUL KING

WEEK OF JUNE 12

Key Passage: Read 1 Samuel 10; 11:12-15

Memorize: So all the people went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul king before the LORD in Gilgal **1 Sameul 11:15a** (ESV)

Context: Despite warnings from God through Samuel, the people still desire a king to rule over them. God has sent Samuel to anoint and proclaim Saul as king. After defeating the Ammonites, he is made king before all the people.

Read:

Every page of scripture shows the one thing about humankind that never changes: our need for a Savior. As great as a prophet Samuel was, his sons did not walk in the ways of their father. The people of Israel cried against Samuel, begging for a King. They felt like Samuel was too old now and that his sons do not walk after Samuel's ways.

Samuel prayed to the Lord, and the Lord answered him and said, give them a King if that is what they wanted. He reassured Samuel, "for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them." (8:7). So Samuel warns them about the ways of a king. a king will reign over them, and put them to work as servants, and you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen, and the Lord will not answer you." But they still demanded a king despite the warning.

So Samuel brought a handsome young man; the Bible says there was no one more handsome in all of Israel. This man was also taller than anyone else. He looked like a king, and it appealed to the people. He was not what they needed as a king, but it was who they wanted. This man was Saul from the tribe of Benjamin. So Samuel anointed Saul and proclaimed him as king. Samuel gives a solemn reminder when presenting Saul as king. "But today you have rejected your God, who saves you from all your

SO ALL THE
PEOPLE WENT
TO GILGAL, AND THERE
THEY MADE SAUL KING
BEFORE THE LORD
IN GILGAL.

- 1 SAMUEL 11:15a



distress, and you have said to him, set a king over us." (10:19). And Samuel presented Saul and declared there is none like him among the people, and all the people shouted, "long live the king." (10:24). Before handing the reigns to the king Samuel gives on last speech, encouraging them not to forsake their God. He reminded them to serve the Lord with all their heart, only fear and serve Him. He said, "consider what great thing He has done for you." (12:20-24). Samuel promised to continue to pray for the people. Saul looked the part and had all of the proper credentials. Saul was a great commander of the army, but what Saul lacked was faith. And so did the people of Israel. The fact that they wanted a king proved they had lost trust in God. Help your kids understand that Saul was not the king the people needed.

Meaning/Application:

Though a king is not God's original design for ruling over the people, He still provides Saul as their king. If we look forward, we see that God's warnings will come true and that King Saul fails. However, we also know that David follows and that, through his line, Christ will come. God's Sovereign Will cannot be thwarted.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Are there points in my life where I did not listen to the Lord, but He still worked something good? Am I heeding the warnings of the Lord when it comes to sin and following the things of the world?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers:

God is good.

Preschool:

God is a good God and we can trust Him.

Kids:

Love the Lord with all your heart. Jesus is our true King.

Students:

Without faith it is impossible to please God. (Heb. 11:6). We look on the outside but God looks at the heart. God is trustworthy and is sovereign and in control over all things.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY | "A PRAYERFUL CHURCH"
Acts 4:24-31

41. CONSISTENT PRAYER

"They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen"
(Acts 4:28).

The early Christians knew that God's unswerving sovereignty meant that no opposition could derail his kingdom plans. Pray that your church would have the same view and that as you pray together, the wonders of Scripture would shape how you see the realities of life, and help you to persevere in prayer.

PEOPLE GROUP

115,000 Selayar people of Indonesia

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL + PRAISE + PRAYER



SAUL SINNED AND WAS REJECTED

WEEK OF JUNE 19

Key Passage: Read 1 Sameul 13:8-22

Memorize: The LORD has sought out a man after his own heart, and the LORD has commanded him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you." **1 Sameul 13:14b** (ESV)

Context:

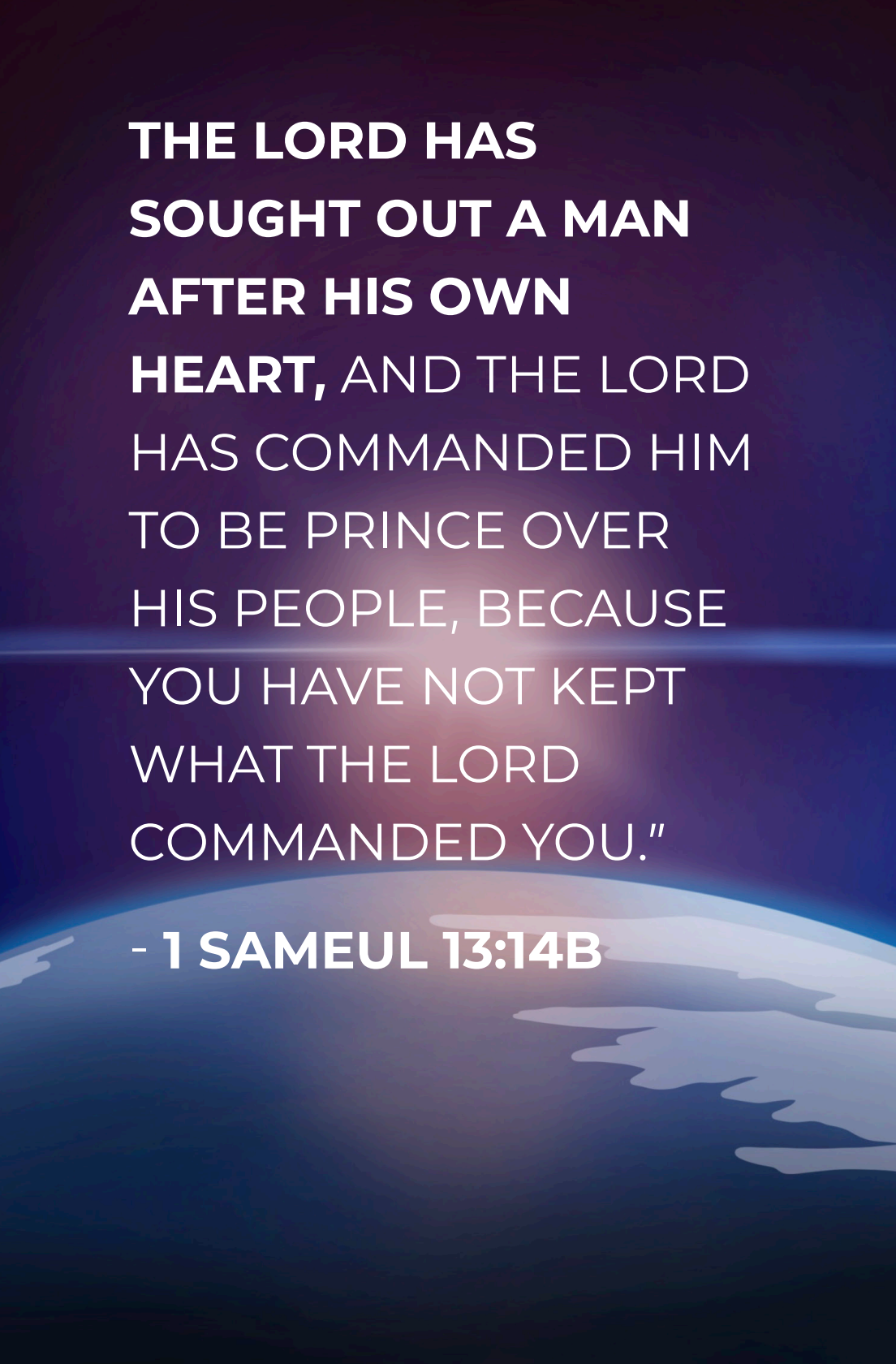
As Saul was preparing for battle, he decided to make a burnt offering himself without waiting for Samuel. This was displeasing and unlawful in the eyes of the Lord.

Read:

Saul had been king for two years now. Saul had gathered 2,000 men to take on the Philistines. And the verdict was still out on whether Saul would honor and trust the Lord. As the Israelites were going to engage in battle over the Philistines, Saul did not wait on the Lord. He took matters into his own hands instead of waiting for Samuel to arrive. Saul had a small view of God and believed his authority as king was more excellent.

His son Jonathan trusted in the Lord, and it was because of His faith the Lord gave them victory. Samuel early on realized that Saul's reign would not continue much longer. Saul had not kept the command of the Lord. Had he obeyed, Samuel said the Lord would have established his kingdom. Samuel hinted at a king that could come, "a man after his own heart." (13:14). Saul did not seem phased by Samuel's words, and he continued making foolish decisions and not putting his trust in the Lord.

The Lord had given a command to destroy the city of Amalek and all the animals, but Saul did not listen



**THE LORD HAS
SOUGHT OUT A MAN
AFTER HIS OWN
HEART, AND THE LORD
HAS COMMANDED HIM
TO BE PRINCE OVER
HIS PEOPLE, BECAUSE
YOU HAVE NOT KEPT
WHAT THE LORD
COMMANDED YOU."**

- 1 SAMEUL 13:14B

and obey completely. Because of Saul's continued disobedience, the Lord was not pleased with Saul. The word of the Lord came to Samuel and told him that He regretted making Saul king. Samuel told Saul this; he also told him obedience was greater than sacrifice. This time Saul recognized his sin and admitted that he feared the people more than the Lord. The Lord would forgive Saul the man but rejected him as king. Saul had failed to give glory to God in his victories.

The Lord has left the people of Israel, nor forgotten His promise to them. We will see in the upcoming lessons that God had a plan all along.

Meaning/Application:

Because Saul did not honor and obey the Lord, he lost his kingdom. The Lord knew of someone who was a man after his own heart in David. God's plan called for a man who was truly after Him and would be obedient and honor Him as King. We, ourselves, should check to see if we are chasing after the heart of the Lord or are chasing after our own desires.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Are you a person after God's own heart or are you like Saul and seeking to do things your own way? Are you keeping the Lord's commandments or are you looking for ways around them?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers:

God is the greatest King.

Preschool:

God has a good plan for us.

Kids:

Saul looked like a good King but he did not love God like he should have.

Students:

On our best days we still fall short of the glory of God. WE sometimes can even place Christian duties about our love and relationship with God. This is self-deceiving and self-destructive. Focus on loving and obeying him. God also has a perfect plan to redeem us through His son Jesus.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY | "A PRAYERFUL CHURCH"
Acts 4:24-31

42. COURAGEOUS PRAYER

"Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness" (Acts 4:29).

We are not called to pray for comfortable circumstances but for the courage to speak the good news of Jesus. Pray that your church's prayers would be bold prayers – even when you know that God's "yes" might come with a cost.

PEOPLE GROUP

763,000 Shina people of Pakistan

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

GOD, THE JUST KING

WEEK OF JUNE 26

Key Passage: Read Amos 5:18-27

Memorize: But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. **Amos 5:24** (ESV)

Context: Amos is bringing a dire word of warning and judgement upon the nation of Israel. Though they believe their wealth is a sign of blessing, it is, in fact, not. They have not honored the Lord in how they treat others and His judgement will soon be upon them. Though they believe Assyria to be no threat, it will soon take away their entire kingdom.

Read: Amos' message is important for us today, because we are like Israel, believing that God's judgment is for someone far worse than us. Amos' message was for Israel's neighbors but God wanted Israel to take notes. The people of Israel were blinded to the fact that they were in need of judgment because they knew to do right and had rejected God's commands. (37) Believers today know God's Words but do not embrace it like the people of Israel. Israel made mistakes that we could learn from. If we look at Israel's wayward response it will help us from doing the same.

This message unpacks each of Israel's oppressions and how God had blessed Israel and yet they had forgotten the Lord and opposed him.

The message that Amos spoke to Israel is relevant to us because we have been privileged in a similar fashion to Israel. Israel had been privileged with God's Word, and God had established and delivered them. If we fail to recognize that God has done the same for us then we will be held accountable. *"With the privilege of great responsibility comes a great accountability."* - TJ Betts

We too can have a sense of entitlement much like the people of Israel in Amos' message. We are prone to replace authentic devotion for something mystical just like the people of Israel.

BUT LET
JUSTICE ROLL
DOWN LIKE
WATERS, AND
RIGHTEOUSNESS
LIKE AN EVER-
FLOWING
STREAM.

- **AMOS 5:24**

The people of Israel were blinded to the fact that they were dead spiritually. He makes the claim that we must not assume we are on good terms with God, but must truly love the Lord, unlike Israel. The people of Israel were too confident in their relationship with God and were self-deceived. They had placed their confidence in their lineage, their religious offerings, and their military security. Many people today love the idea of following the Lord Jesus Christ without truly loving Him, just like the people of Israel. Israel has been blessed materially, militarily, and also had received the blessing of God's Word, much like believers in America today. People today have the Ten Commandments on display but it has no effect on their lives.

Meaning/Application:

The people of Israel thought the day of the Lord was near in that their enemies would be placed under their feet. However, the day of the Lord that was upon them was the judgment of God upon themselves. Their unfaithfulness to the Lord would cause His judgement to fall upon them, not their enemies. We should take great care not to heap burning coals upon those around us when, in fact, we ourselves are not living in a way that is pleasing to the Lord.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Are you ever tempted to look down upon those around you with a feeling of superiority? Are you checking your own heart to make sure you are walking in the ways of the Lord?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God is good.

Preschool: God keeps His promises.

Kids: God keeps His promises and is true to His word.

Students: We must not forget our relationship with God. God kept His promise by sending Jesus to reach all nations. He keeps His promises and is true to His word.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY | "A PRAYERFUL CHURCH"
Acts 4:24-31

43. CONFORMING PRAYER

"After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts. 4:31).

When Christians pray, God acts! Thank God that he always answers prayers in the ways he knows to be best, even when that doesn't look how we expect. Pray that, whatever his response, you would keep trusting God and becoming more like Christ by the Spirit's power.

PEOPLE GROUP

100,000 Serbian people of The United Kingdom

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

GOD CHOSE DAVID TO BE KING

WEEK OF JULY 3

Key Passage: Read 1 Samuel 16:1-13

Memorize: ... For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, **but the LORD looks on the heart."** 1 Samuel 16:7b (ESV)

Context:

God has rejected Saul as king and has instructed Samuel to go to the house of Jesse to seek one of his sons as king. Jesse offers his sons to Samuel, but none of them are chosen. He then learns that David is not present and immediately sends for him. David is then chosen king.

Read:

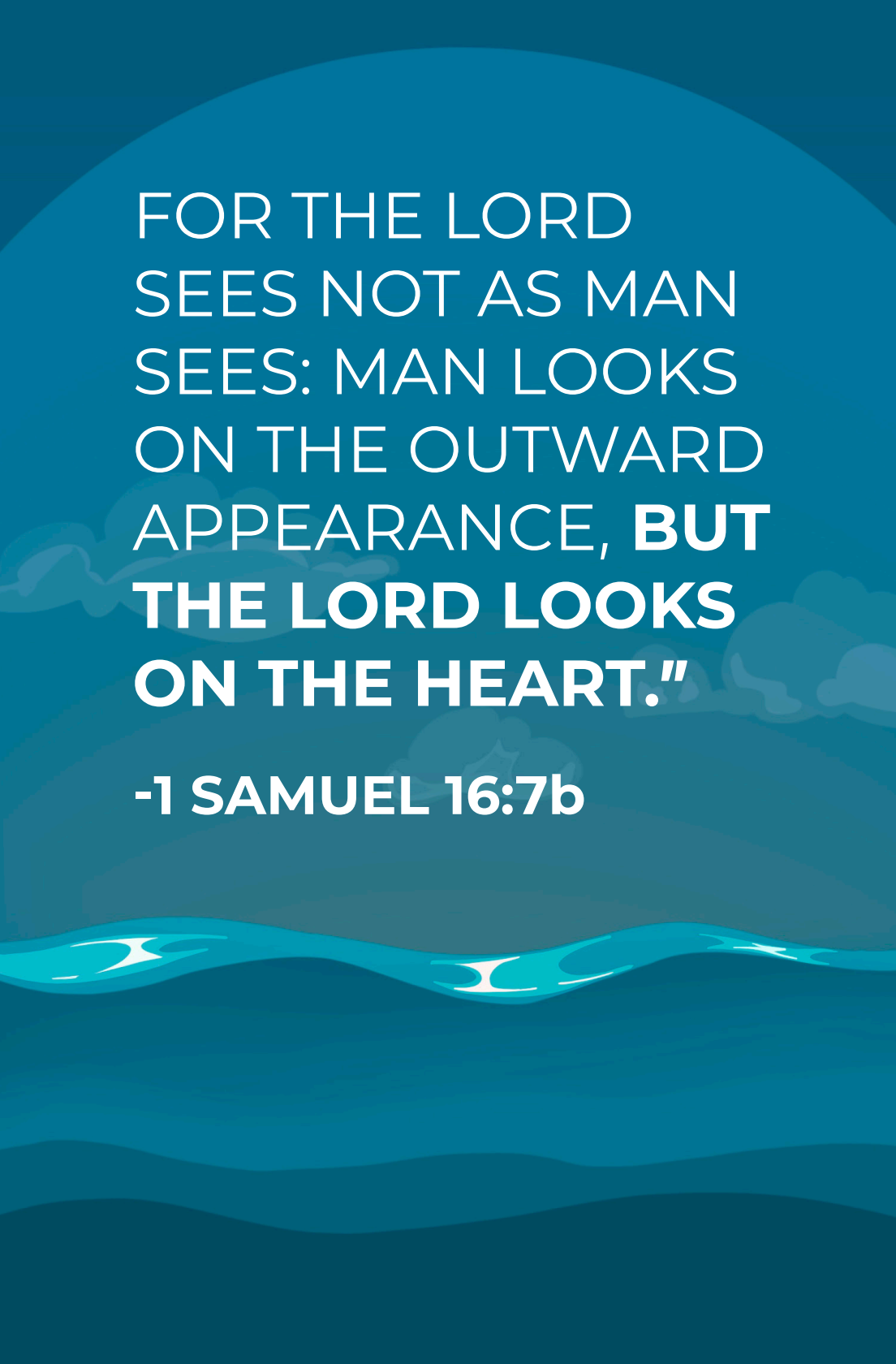
Samuel had anointed Saul as king over Israel, but it wasn't long before Saul's disobedience led God to reject him as king. God sent Samuel to Bethlehem to meet Jesse—a man in the family line of Judah. God had chosen one of Jesse's sons to be Israel's king.

When Samuel saw Jesse's oldest son, Eliab, he thought, "This must be the one God has chosen!" Eliab was likely tall and good-looking. Why wouldn't God choose someone like that? But God doesn't make decisions like people do. Read what God said to Samuel in 1 Samuel 16:7.

Jesse's sons took turns passing before Samuel, one by one. Samuel was probably eager to hear which son God had chosen to be Israel's next king! Abinadab? No, not him. Shammah? No. "The Lord hasn't chosen this one either."

It seemed Samuel was out of options, but Jesse had one more son; his youngest, David, was out tending the sheep. David came in and God said, "This is the one." Samuel anointed David, and the Spirit of the Lord was with David.

David did not become king right away. Saul was still on the throne, and David was still young. One day, David found himself at the battle where the Philistines had gathered to fight the Israelites.



FOR THE LORD
SEES NOT AS MAN
SEES: MAN LOOKS
ON THE OUTWARD
APPEARANCE, **BUT
THE LORD LOOKS
ON THE HEART."**

-1 SAMUEL 16:7b

The story of David and Goliath is one of the most well-known accounts in the Old Testament. When the Israelites cowered in fear, David—with God's power—stepped up and defeated the enemy with just a sling and a stone.

David did not look like a king or a mighty warrior, but God chose him to be king over Israel and gave him victory over Goliath. The Israelites were too weak and afraid to face Goliath; they needed David to fight on their behalf. In a similar way, though Jesus did not look like a warrior or king, we need Him to fight for us. Jesus gives us victory over sin and death.

Meaning/Application:

Samuel was judging who was fit based on appearance. He looked at the outward appearance. Saul had been tall and handsome and looked the part of the king. God, however, was looking at the inward self and judging who would best serve as king by following Him. Thus, David was chosen by his character. Today we must remember that the Lord looks for people of character. A person's heart defines whether he is fit unto the Lord, not his or her appearance. We must not be quick to judge by looks or show.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Have you ever judged someone by whether they were pleasing to the eye? If someone were to judge you would they be able to judge you by your God-honoring character?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: Jesus is our King.

Preschool: Jesus perfectly rules over everything.

Kids: God chose David to be king instead of Saul. David did not look like a warrior or a king, but God gave him victory over Goliath to show that He is the One who provides the victory.

Students: David did not look like a king or a warrior, but God chose him to be king over Israel and gave him victory over Goliath. In a similar way, Jesus did not look like a warrior or king, we need Him to fight for us. Jesus gives us victory over sin and death.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY | "A HOLY CHURCH"
Romans 12:1-5

44. SACRIFICIAL CHURCH

"I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God"
(Romans 12:1).

Following Christ is not a path of ease – he calls us to pick up our cross. Yet we do this "in view of" the mercy he has already shown us. So thank God, and pray that Christians would set aside comfort, status and power, and live wholeheartedly for the Lord in response.

PEOPLE GROUP

600,000 Manggarai people of Indonesia

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL + PRAISE + PRAYER



DAVID FOUGHT GOLIATH

WEEK OF JULY 10

Key Passage: Read 1 Samuel 17 (38-55 for younger kids)

Memorize: Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, **but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. 1 Samuel 17:45** (ESV)

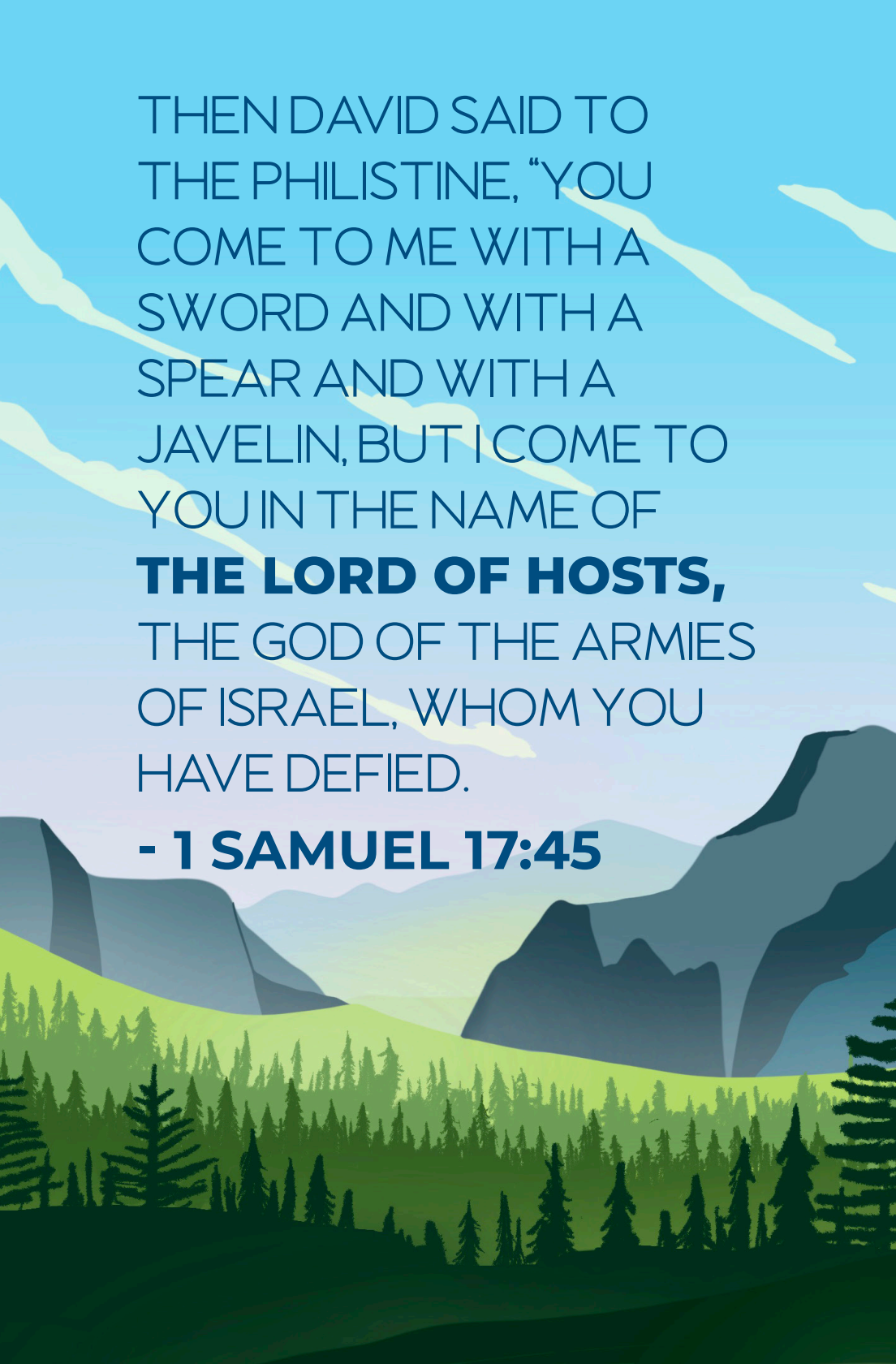
Context:

Goliath, the Philistine, is taunting the army of the Lord. Because of his great size and strength, he strikes fear into the hearts of those who are supposed to trust in the Lord. Thus, the army of the Lord is too afraid to go to battle against the Philistines.

Read:

Saul was still king, but the Lord was lining up the next in line. He came to Samuel and told him that you would find the next king among the sons of Jesse from Bethlehem. Out of fear of Saul finding out, Samuel invited Jesse and his sons to help with the sacrifice as a cover-up story. One by one, Samuel observed each of Jesse's sons. The Lord told Samuel not to look on the appearance or the height of his stature... "for the Lord sees not as man sees; man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart." (16:7). It was David that the Lord pointed out to Samuel, the ruddy son. Samuel anointed David, and the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon David.

The Lord was with David, and he used him to refresh Saul's soul by playing music for him. The Lord used David to defeat the giant Goliath. It was David's zeal for the glory of God that caused him to fight. David did not come in with a sword, but he came in the name of the Lord... that



THEN DAVID SAID TO
THE PHILISTINE, "YOU
COME TO ME WITH A
SWORD AND WITH A
SPEAR AND WITH A
JAVELIN, BUT I COME TO
YOU IN THE NAME OF
THE LORD OF HOSTS,
THE GOD OF THE ARMIES
OF ISRAEL, WHOM YOU
HAVE DEFIED.

- 1 SAMUEL 17:45

all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel... for the battle is the Lord's." (17:45-47). All the while, Saul's jealousy of David grew. David was a man born in Bethlehem, and the Lord used him to save the Israelites. Jesus is the great David, born in Bethlehem, defeating the giant of sin as we represented as the helpless Israelites trust in our king to save us. This story teaches us the power of music that the Lord looks at the heart of man and points to the promised Messiah, Jesus.

Meaning/Application:

David does not fear Goliath despite his great size. He fully trusts God and recognizes that the battle belongs to the Lord. He is, therefore, able to boldly walk out into battle despite appearing to be an inferior opponent. He is able to defeat Goliath because of the giant's arrogance and solely because he came in the name of the Lord. Though we are not David, we should still have the faith of David. Our trust should be in God alone. We should not allow our faith to wane based on circumstance.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Where do I place my faith? Is it in the almighty God or does it fade when times are more difficult? Do I trust the Lord no matter what my circumstances are?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers:

God is powerful.

Preschool:

David defeated Goliath with God's help.

Kids:

Jesus is greater than David. Jesus defeated the giant of sin.

Students:

Jesus is the greater David, born in Bethlehem, defeating the giant of sin as we represented as the helpless Israelites trust in our king to save us.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY | "A HOLY CHURCH"
Romans 12:1-5

45. COUNTERCULTURAL CHURCH

"Do not conform to the pattern of this world ..."
(Romans 12:2).

Our holy God calls us to live holy, distinctive lives. Pray that Christians would care for those that society finds hard to love, and be generous to those that society say are undeserving. Pray that church members would show unswervingly biblical priorities when it comes to education, work, socializing and their use of time.

PEOPLE GROUP

107,000 Bahraini Sunni people of Bahrain

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

GOD MADE A COVENANT WITH DAVID

WEEK OF JULY 17

Key Passage: Read 2 Samuel 7:1-17

Memorize: And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever." **2 Samuel 7:16** (ESV)

Context:

David is now on the throne. God is making a covenant with him and his house. This house though has nothing to do with a building but rather a kingdom.

Read:

The path to Israel's throne was not easy for David. Saul had tried multiple times to kill him, and David had to flee for his life, leaving behind his good friend Jonathan. But God had appointed David to be king, and God was faithful. Leading up to 2 Samuel 7, Jonathan was killed in battle against the Philistines. Saul fell on his own sword, and David became the king of Israel.

David moved the ark of God to Jerusalem—a cause for joyous celebration—and settled into his palace there. God blessed David and gave him peace from his enemies. But when David looked around, something didn't seem right. He was living in a majestic palace while the ark of God was in a tent! David determined to build God a temple. That night, God gave the prophet, Nathan, a message for David. "Have I ever asked you to build Me a house?" God said. No, for four hundred years—since God brought the Israelites out of Egypt—He had dwelled in a tent.

David had been a shepherd, but God made him a king! God promised to give the Israelites a place to stay so they wouldn't need to move around anymore. God promised to give His people rest from their enemies so they could stop fighting. Though God denied David's desire to build God a house, God promised to make a house for David: a dynasty of his descendants and an everlasting kingdom.



AND YOUR
HOUSE AND
YOUR **KINGDOM**
SHALL BE MADE
SURE FOREVER
BEFORE ME.
YOUR THRONE
SHALL BE
ESTABLISHED
FOREVER.'"

-**2 SAMUEL 7:16**



God promised David that every future king of Israel would come from David's family, and David's kingdom would last forever. God kept His promise by sending His Son, Jesus, as one of David's descendants. Jesus is our King who will never die; He will rule over God's people forever.

Meaning/Application:

Though David desired to build the Lord a temple, this will be done by his offspring Solomon. But God is promising to make David's house an eternal kingdom. This is prophetic as we know Christ will come through the line of David. We can, therefore, trust God and His promises. Though there would be kings that followed David that did not honor God, we know that God kept his word and established an eternal kingdom through Jesus Christ.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Do you daily trust the Word of God? Do you believe that he is sovereign over the ends and the means? Are you trusting His promises? Have you placed your faith in Christ and become part of that eternal kingdom that was promised to David?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers:

Jesus is our King.

Preschool:

God promised that every king of Israel would come from David's family.

Kids:

God promised that the Messiah would come from David's family. God's covenant with David foretold of how God would provide Jesus, the King who will rule without end.

Students:

God promised David that every future king of Israel would come from his family, and his kingdom would last forever. God kept His promise by sending Jesus as one of David's descendants. Jesus is our King who will rule over God's people forever.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY | "A HOLY CHURCH"

Romans 12:1-5

46. TRANSFORMED CHURCH

"... but be transformed by the renewing of your mind"
(Romans 12:2).

Believers are called to a life of change. Think of one or two Christians in your church, and pray that God would mold them to be more like Jesus as they face joys and trials.

PEOPLE GROUP

1,045,000 Hindi-Speaking Jain of India

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

DAVID SINNED AND WAS FORGIVEN

WEEK OF JULY 24

Key Passage: Read 2 Samuel 12

Memorize: David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die. **2 Samuel 12:13** (ESV)

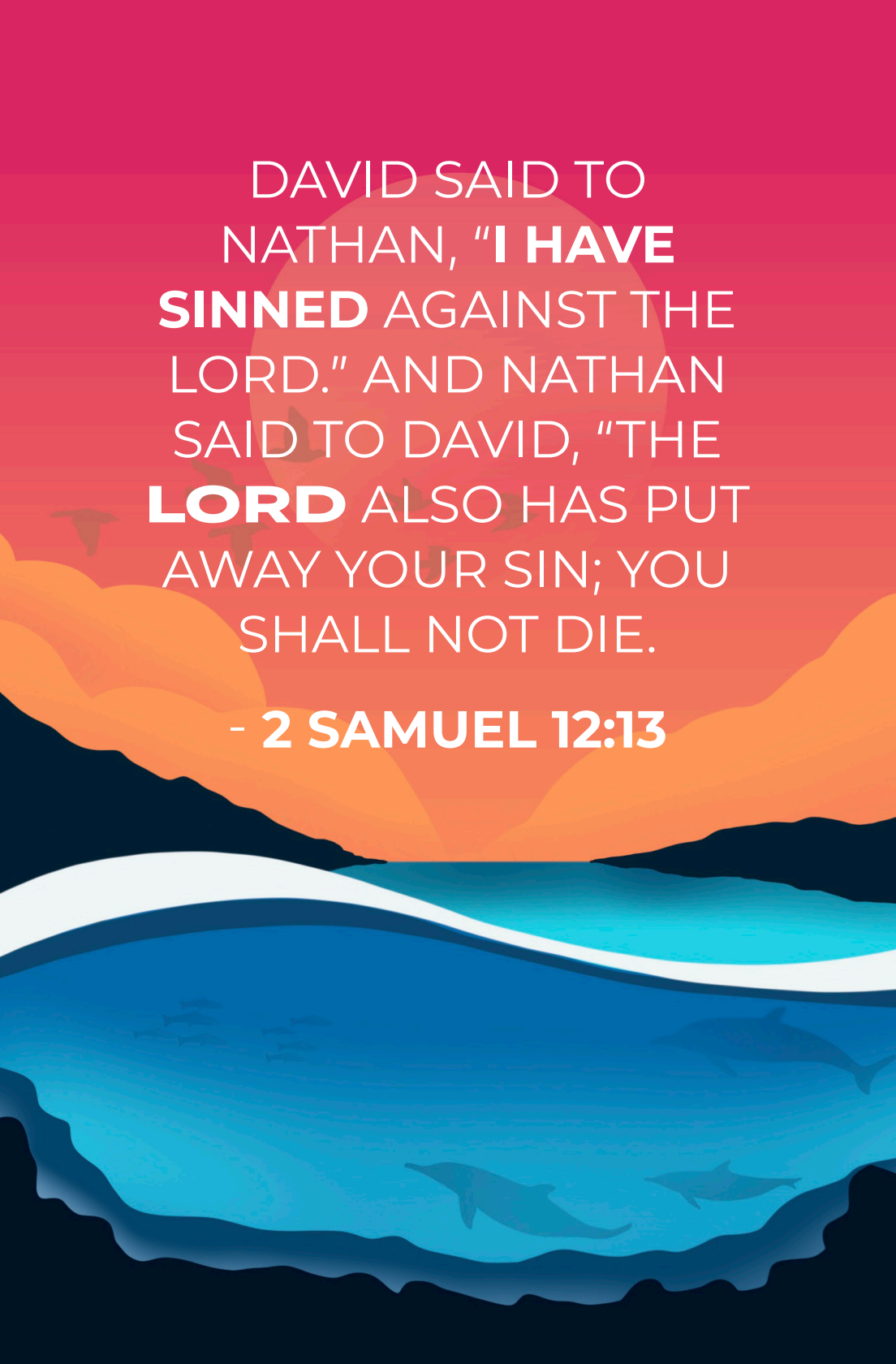
Context: David has sinned a great sin in that he has committed adultery with Bathsheba and committed murder in having her husband Uriah killed in battle. Though he is God's chosen king and a man after His own heart, he is still a sinner before God and is not immune to His judgement. Thus, God sends Nathan the prophet to rebuke David.

Read: The Ammonites were no strangers to the Israelites. They often fought over the region of Gilead, which stretched east of the Jordan River. David had tried showing kindness to the Ammonites, but they humiliated the Israelite ambassadors. (See 2 Sam. 10:1-5.) Thus began a war between the Israelites and Ammonites. This context sets the scene for the story of David's sin and restoration.

David had experienced a season of blessing from God and success on the battlefield. The tribes of Israel united under David. But the upward trajectory of David's life did not continue much longer.

One evening, David looked from his rooftop and saw Bathsheba bathing. He found out that she was the wife of Uriah, one of David's elite soldiers. Her married status alone made her off-limits to David, but he nevertheless called for her and slept with her. David probably assumed his sin would go unnoticed, until Bathsheba told him she was pregnant. With Uriah gone to war, it was obvious the baby was not her husband's.

David called Uriah home from the battle and encouraged him to be with his wife. But Uriah refused. Uriah didn't think it was fair for him to be with his wife while other men were at war.



DAVID SAID TO
NATHAN, "**I HAVE
SINNED** AGAINST THE
LORD." AND NATHAN
SAID TO DAVID, "THE
LORD ALSO HAS PUT
AWAY YOUR SIN; YOU
SHALL NOT DIE.

- **2 SAMUEL 12:13**

So David instructed his army commander to position Uriah in the most violent part of the battle so he would be killed. This time, David's plan worked. Uriah was killed, and David took Bathsheba as his wife.

God knew David's sin and sent Nathan the prophet to confront David. David's confession is recorded in Psalm 51. God wanted David's heart to change so he would not want to sin again. Like David, we need more than a changed lifestyle to be made right with God; we need new hearts. Jesus died to satisfy God's wrath against sin so that we could be made alive in Him.

Meaning/Application:

Nathan directly confronts David of his sin and David is convicted and repents. However, the consequences and effects of his sin remain. When we sin, we are told to repent and seek forgiveness. But, like David, that does not mean we can escape the consequences of our action depending on the severity. Praise the Lord that, before God, our sins have been paid for through Christ.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Is there unconfessed sin for which you need to repent in your life right now? Have you confessed and repented of your sins before the Lord and accepted Him as your Lord and Savior?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: Jesus forgives us.

Preschool: God forgave David. Jesus us forgives us from our sin.

Kids: David repented and God forgave him. Sin always comes with a price though. God spared David from the death his sin deserved, but He did not spare him from all of his sin's consequences.

Students: When David sinned against God, God forgave him, but sin always comes with a price. God spared David's life, but David's son died. When we sin, we deserve death. But we can receive God's forgiveness because God sent His Son, Jesus, to pay the price for our sin.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY | "A HOLY CHURCH"
Romans 12:1-5

47. HUMBLE CHURCH

"Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment" (Romans 12:3)

Few characteristics are as ugly as pride. We are all sinners saved by grace and have no reason to look down on others. Take a moment to reflect on and repent of any pride in your heart. Pray that the church would have a compelling witness in your community, as Christians put others before themselves.

PEOPLE GROUP

180,000 Southern Tati people of Iran

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER



GOD, THE GRACIOUS KING

WEEK OF JULY 31

Key Passage: Read Psalm 51

Memorize: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. **Psalm 51:1** (ESV)

Context: David has just been rebuked by Nathan for his sin of adultery and murder. David realizes his sin and pens this psalm as a response. It is a psalm of penitence.

Read:

From the rising of the sun to its setting, out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shines forth. God is the might one. Every beast of the forest is His. He owns all living things. He knows every bird and everything that moves in the fields belongs to Him.

This great and mighty God who is Lord overall is a God of tremendous and mighty mercy. Nothing indeed compares to Him. In Psalm 51, David comes to the Father seeking forgiveness and mercy. David's sin is before him. When we see God who He truly is, we recognize who we indeed are. David sees his sin in the light of God, knowing that he is filthy and is pleading to the Father to be cleansed.

David takes full responsibility for his sin. He doesn't call it a mistake or a mishap. Instead, he says, "I have sinned and done evil in your sight. David also has an understanding that he has sinned against the Lord.

In his prayer of confession, David asks that the Lord would have mercy on him according to God's steadfast love and abundant compassion. He knows of God's love and doesn't seek to take advantage of it. The only way we can be cleansed of our sin is for the Lord to do the cleansing. We can't clean ourselves up, but we must come to the foot of the cross.

HAVE MERCY ON ME,
O GOD, ACCORDING
TO YOUR STEADFAST
LOVE; ACCORDING TO
YOUR ABUNDANT
MERCY BLOT OUT MY
TRANSGRESSIONS.

- PSALM 51:1



When we come to the Father in the name of Jesus, we will never be cast away from His presence. Listen to the words of David used asking to be cleansed. (wash me, cleanse me, purge me, let me hear joy and gladness, blot out, create in me a clean heart, renew, restore, uphold me, deliver me). In return, David gives a response by saying, "I shall be clean, I will teach transgressors your ways, my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness, my mouth will declare your praise." Let us always come to the Father not demanding forgiveness, nor justifying our sin, but seeking God's love and mercy. God will restore our salvation and put joy in our song.

Meaning/Application:

David recognizes that he has sinned against the Lord and goes before Him to ask for mercy. He knows he does not deserve it and only the Lord can grant it. It provides an example to us for when we ourselves sin. We should go before the Lord and confess and seek His mercy and forgiveness with a humble heart.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Do you humble yourself before the Lord when convicted of sin? Do you seek the mercy and grace which only the Lord can provide?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers: God loves us.

Preschool: God forgives us.

Kids: We can come to God when we sin, because He is a loving and merciful God.

Students: We can come to God when we sin, because He is a loving and merciful God. When we are forgiven we stand in the righteousness of Jesus being justified before a holy God.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY | "A HOLY CHURCH"

Romans 12:1-5

47. HUMBLE CHURCH

"Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment" (Romans 12:3)

Few characteristics are as ugly as pride. We are all sinners saved by grace and have no reason to look down on others. Take a moment to reflect on and repent of any pride in your heart. Pray that the church would have a compelling witness in your community, as Christians put others before themselves.

PEOPLE GROUP

100,000 Akkin people of Russia

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL + PRAISE + PRAYER



GOD GAVE SOLOMON WISDOM

WEEK OF AUGUST 7

Key Passage: Read 1 Kings 3:1-15

Memorize: Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for **who is able to govern this your great people?" 1 Kings 3:9** (ESV)

Context:

Solomon is now king. He is building now both a home for himself, as well as, a temple for the Lord. The Lord comes to Solomon in a dream and presents him an opportunity to ask for anything. Solomon asks for wisdom in governing his people.

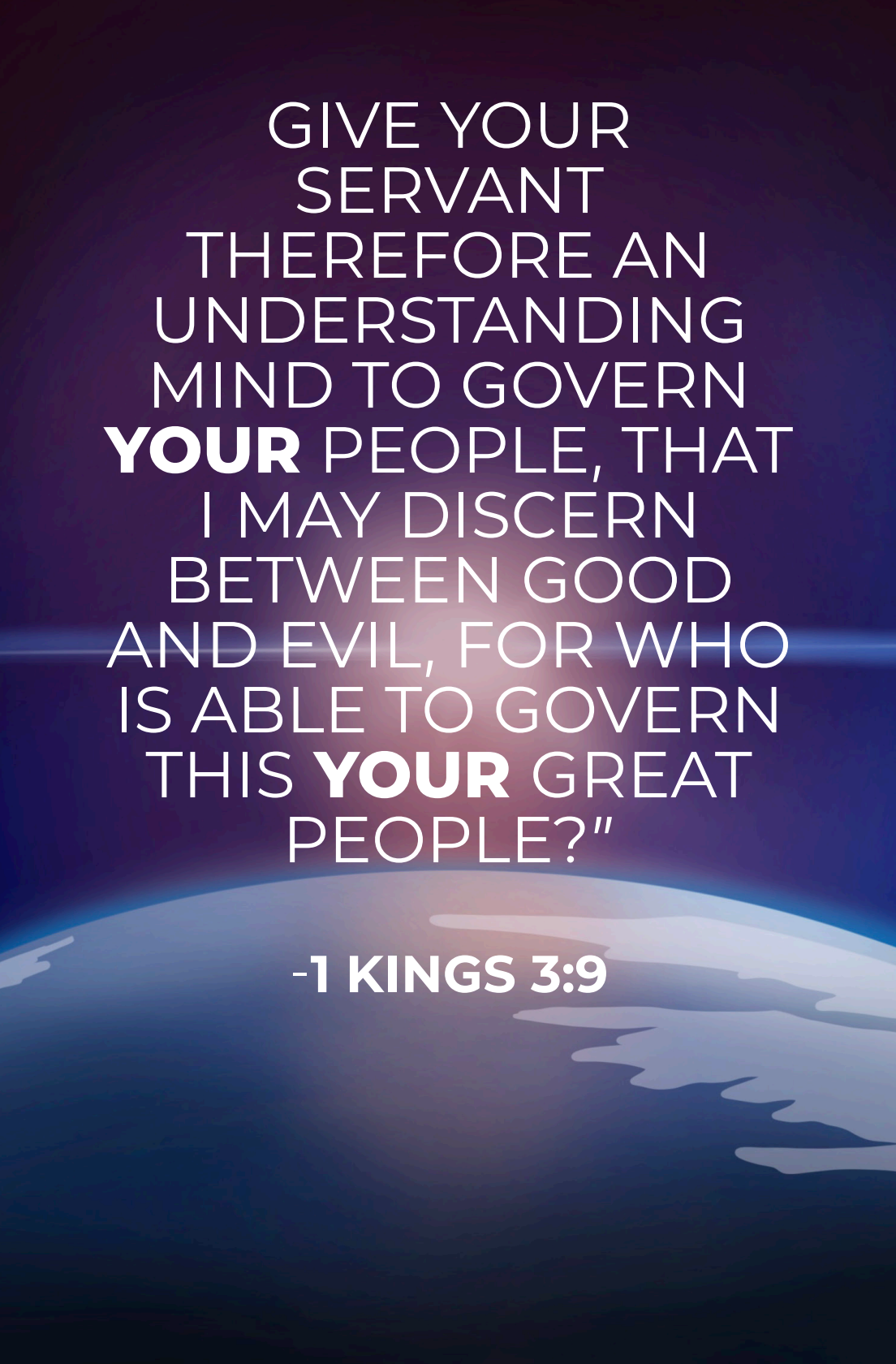
Read:

The downfall of David's kingdom was propelled by David's sin with Bathsheba. Amid the pain of losing their firstborn son, God showed David and Bathsheba that He still loved them. Bathsheba gave birth to Solomon. God chose Solomon to be Israel's next king. (See 2 Sam. 12:24-25; 1 Chron. 22:9-13.)

David spoke to his son from his deathbed, giving specific instructions: "Keep your obligation to the LORD your God to walk in his ways" (1 Kings 2:3a). After 40 years of reigning over Israel, David died and Solomon became Israel's king.

Early in Solomon's reign, God appeared to him in a dream. "What should I give you?" God asked. Solomon's response set him apart from many other kings. His God-honoring qualities were apparent. First, Solomon humbly acknowledged his lack of experience in leading God's people. Then he said, "Give your servant a receptive heart to judge your people and to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of yours?" (1 Kings 3:9).

If you were a king or queen and God offered to give you anything you asked for, what request would you make?



GIVE YOUR
SERVANT
THEREFORE AN
UNDERSTANDING
MIND TO GOVERN
YOUR PEOPLE, THAT
I MAY DISCERN
BETWEEN GOOD
AND EVIL, FOR WHO
IS ABLE TO GOVERN
THIS **YOUR** GREAT
PEOPLE?"

-1 KINGS 3:9

Ask the kids you teach what they would ask for if they could receive anything their hearts desired. One might assume that a king would ask for power or for victory over his enemies. Perhaps he would ask for riches or to live a long life. Solomon asked for none of these. Instead, he asked God to make him wise. God was pleased with Solomon's request, and He agreed to give Solomon a wise and understanding heart. Solomon's heart was surrendered to God. Solomon was a wise king who wanted to do God's plan.

Meaning/Application:

In asking for wisdom, Solomon already shows some amount of wisdom. But he recognizes that he needs the wisdom of the Lord to care and govern God's chosen people. God was pleased with this request and granted it. In our own lives we should be seeking wisdom from the Lord. James tells us that if we lack wisdom, all we must do is ask in faith and it will be granted. We should not just ask if something is right or wrong, but ask if it is wise.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Are you seeking the wisdom of the Lord? Do you ask if a decision is wise or do you ask if it simply right or wrong?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers:

God knows everything.

Preschool:

God gave Solomon wisdom to lead His people.

Kids:

God gave Solomon wisdom to lead His people. Solomon could have asked for anything he wanted, but he asked for what would help him lead God's people, and this pleased God.

Students:

Solomon was a wise king who wanted to do God's plan. Solomon wasn't perfect, but God had a plan to give His people a greater and wiser king—His Son, Jesus. Jesus completely trusted God. Jesus surrendered His own life to die on the cross for our sin.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY | "A GLOBAL CHURCH"
Colossians 1:3-8

49. GRATEFUL HEARTS

"We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus"
(Colossians 1:3-4).

The history of global missions has been hugely influenced by the movement of people between and through communities. Give thanks for the many who have come to faith in your community and have then moved to a different country – taking the gospel with them.

PEOPLE GROUP

291,000 Gujarati Kenyan people of Kenya

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL + PRAISE + PRAYER

SOLOMONG BUILT THE TEMPLE

WEEK OF AUGUST 14

Key Passage: Read 1 Kings 8:1-21

Memorize: Now the LORD has fulfilled his promise that he made. For I have risen in the place of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and I have built the house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. **1 Kings 8:20**(ESV)

Context:

Solomon has built the temple to the Lord as he was promised. He is now placing the ark of the covenant within the temple. Here the people finally have a permanent place to worship the Lord.

Read:

When David was king, he wanted to build a temple for God, but God did not allow him to. "When your time comes and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up after you your descendant ... and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever" (2 Sam. 7:12-13). God said King David's son would build the temple.

King Solomon began to gather materials to build the temple. He ordered cedar and cypress timbers from Lebanon. He gathered 30,000 men from all of Israel as laborers to excavate stone and prepare the timbers for the temple's construction.

The temple was impressive. The entire interior was cedar. King Solomon had everything covered with gold. In all, it took seven years for the temple to be completed. Inside the temple was furniture and accessories. (See 1 Kings 7:48-50.) The time came to dedicate the temple. All of the Israelites gathered in Jerusalem. The priests brought the ark of the Lord to the most holy place, and a cloud filled the house of the Lord. God's glory filled the temple.

FOR I HAVE RISEN
IN THE PLACE
OF DAVID MY
FATHER, AND SIT
ON THE THRONE
OF ISRAEL, AS
THE LORD
PROMISED, AND
I HAVE BUILT THE
HOUSE FOR THE
NAME OF THE
LORD, THE GOD
OF ISRAEL.

-1 KINGS 8:20

Solomon prayed and praised God for keeping His covenant with David. He recognized that God is not confined to a temple. "Even heaven, the highest heaven, cannot contain you, much less this temple I have built" (1 Kings 8:27). Solomon's prayer and speech was followed by a great offering to God.

Jesus changed everything when He died for our sins on the cross. By taking our sin upon Himself, Jesus made the way for sinners to come to God.

Meaning/Application:

Solomon recognizes the promises of the Lord that are being kept. He knows that it was God that placed him on the throne. And it was God who brought the people out of Egypt many years before. Therefore, he can worship God within the temple built in His name with the ark which contains the covenant of the Lord. Today we recognize that the Lord still keeps his promises. We worship together as his Church in fulfillment of the words of the Christ.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Do you view Christ's Church the way that Solomon viewed the temple and the ark within it? Are you thankful for the Lord's continued faithfulness in keeping his promises?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers:

We worship God.

Preschool:

Because of Jesus, we can worship God everywhere.

Kids:

God led His people to build a temple where He would dwell with them. The people would gather at the temple to make sacrifices and worship God.

Students:

The temple was a place where God was with His people. The people could go there to make sacrifices and worship God. Today, when we trust in Jesus, He is with us wherever we go. We can look to Him for forgiveness and help.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY | "A GLOBAL CHURCH"
Colossians 1:3-8

50. GOSPEL FAITHFULNESS

"... about which you have already heard in the true message of the gospel"
(Colossians 1:5).

Pray that the gospel would be faithfully passed on as people take it from community to community. Pray for churches and mission agencies who send and receive gospel workers between communities – pray that in all things, they would hold on to the true message of Christ.

PEOPLE GROUP

201,000 Mamba people of Chad

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER

SOLOMON, THE FAILED KING

WEEK OF AUGUST 21

Key Passage: Read 1 Kings 11:9-13

Memorize: Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, "Since this has been your practice and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I have commanded you, **I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant. 1 Kings 11:11**(ESV)

Context:

Solomon has turned from the Lord. He is pursuing other gods despite God appearing before him on multiple occasions. Therefore, the Lord is taking the kingdom from him.

Read:

King Solomon loved God. He received wisdom from the Lord and was dedicated to building His temple. But early on, we see hints that Solomon's heart was not completely devoted to God. He married foreign wives who turned Solomon's heart away from God. (1 Kings 11:4)

Solomon gradually abandoned what he had believed. Israel had a history of turning away from God, and Solomon was no exception.

God was angry with Solomon. He had warned him twice not to turn to false gods. God planned to discipline Solomon by taking the kingdom away from his family. God was going to take the kingdom from Solomon's son Rehoboam—every tribe except for one. God graciously left one tribe for Rehoboam, keeping the promise He made to David. (See 2 Sam. 7:16.)

God set apart Jeroboam, one of Solomon's servants, to become leader over 10 tribes of Israel. Parts of the tribe of Benjamin followed Jeroboam, and some followed Rehoboam. When Solomon died, all of Israel gathered to make Rehoboam their new king. They asked Rehoboam to lighten the burden of service Solomon had given them, but Rehoboam refused. In fact, he promised to make their work even harder.

THEREFORE THE
LORD SAID TO
SOLOMON, "SINCE
THIS HAS BEEN YOUR
PRACTICE AND YOU
HAVE NOT KEPT MY
COVENANT AND
MY STATUTES THAT I
HAVE COMMANDED
YOU, I WILL SURELY
TEAR THE KINGDOM
FROM YOU AND WILL
GIVE IT TO YOUR
SERVANT.

- 1 KINGS 11:11

Israel rebelled against Rehoboam and made Jeroboam king. Only the tribe of Judah stayed with Rehoboam.

So the kingdom was divided into two kingdoms—the Northern Kingdom was called Israel (ruled by Jeroboam) and the Southern Kingdom was called Judah (ruled by Rehoboam).

Meaning/Application:

Solomon's sin is being punished harshly by the Lord. However, God says he will preserve one tribe for the sake of David to give to His Son. He remembers the promise once again. We know that this points to Christ as he comes from the line of David. Our hearts should be full of thankfulness and praise that the Lord still willed for Christ to come despite the sinfulness of man.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Is my heart thankful for Christ's coming and for his saving power despite the sinfulness of man? How can I praise God today for saving me?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers:

God sent Jesus from David and Solomon's family.

Preschool:

God divided Israel into two kingdoms because Solomon sinned.

Kids:

What does God know? God knows everything about the past, present, and future. God divided Israel into two kingdoms because Solomon sinned. God divided Israel into two kingdoms because Solomon sinned. When Solomon's son Rehoboam became king, he made an unwise decision which led to God's people being torn in two.

Students:

Solomon failed to lead God's people perfectly. God's people needed a better king, a perfect king! Through David's family, God would send His Jesus to be a perfect King over God's people forever. Jesus brings His people together and leads them back to God.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY | "A GLOBAL CHURCH"
Colossians 1:3-8

51. GOSPEL FRUITFULNESS

"In the same way, the gospel is bearing fruit and growing through the whole world..."
(Col. 1:6).

Cities bring nations together. A city like London could have over 300 languages spoken in it, and New York as many as 800! Ask God to use this coming together of people to bear much fruit for the gospel as people come to Christ and are then sent out around the world.

PEOPLE GROUP

120,000 Deaf North Korean people of North Korea

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL + PRAISE + PRAYER



GOD, THE MERCIFUL KING

WEEK OF AUGUST 28

Key Passage: Read Luke 18:9-14

Memorize: I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. **For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.**” **Luke 18:14** (ESV)


Context: Jesus is teaching through parables to the people and to those who count themselves as righteous already. One such parable teaches a lesson on humility as well as God’s mercy. It ends in a way that is different from what the crowd was expecting. The Pharisee was rebuked, but the sinful tax collector was praised for his actions.

Read:

Jesus told this parable to anyone who puts their trust in their own righteousness. We see the contrast of two people, one who is self-confident in their outward moral behavior and the other who comes humbly before the Lord seeking mercy. One appears to have everything together, while the other has a proper response to the gospel. The Pharisee, who seems righteous, prays a prayer apparently without sin or fault; in contrast, the tax collector prays and begs for forgiveness.

In this parable, we see how God responds to us based upon how we approach him. God knows who we are inside and out, so it does no good to pretend that we are anything different. The best approach is to come to God as we are, seeking forgiveness. The tax collector became justified as a result of his humbleness rather than his righteousness.

The dangerous thing about a self-righteous religion is that you do not always recognize you are replacing the gospel with it. We can seem to be doing something good, and that good takes priority over Jesus. Whether its moralism, legalism, etc.



I TELL YOU, THIS MAN
WENT DOWN TO HIS
HOUSE **JUSTIFIED**,
RATHER THAN
THE OTHER. FOR
EVERYONE WHO
EXALTS HIMSELF WILL
BE **HUMBLLED**,
BUT THE ONE WHO
HUMBLES HIMSELF
WILL BE EXALTED."

- **LUKE 18:14**

With self-centered righteousness, we have placed the idol of control in our lives. Maybe it is because we do not want to address what is going on inside our hearts, so we make changes on the outside. Seeking the approval of others, forgetting our identity in Christ. When in reality, our hearts are far from Him. Which is all more the reason we need Jesus. Even in our best moments, we still fall short of the glory of God.

Meaning/Application:

The Pharisee viewed himself as better than the sinful tax collector because he believed he was justified based on his good deeds. However, the tax collector recognized he needed God's mercy in order to be justified because he was a sinner. Christ is pointing us to the fact that we all are sinners in need of mercy. And we need to humble ourselves before the Lord in order that we may be exalted into his kingdom.

Questions to discuss and ponder:

Are you ever guilty of looking down on someone because they are a "sinner?" Are you daily humbling yourself before the Lord? Instead of looking down on someone what can you do to serve them?

CHRIST CONNECTION

Babies & Toddlers:

God forgives us.

Preschool:

God forgives the humble.

Kids:

The gospel of Jesus reminds us that we are sinners, but God exalts and forgives the humble.

Students:

The gospel of Jesus reminds us that we are sinners, but God exalts and forgives the humble. We don't have to pretend before God, because He already knows us. Come to Jesus as you are, seeking mercy and let Him change you from the inside out.

PRAYER TIME

THE COMMUNITY

CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY | "A GLOBAL CHURCH"
Colossians 1:3-8

52. SERVANTS TO SEND

"You learned [the gospel] from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf"
(Colossians 1:8).

Ask the Lord to raise up servants of the gospel who are prepared to be sent out as missionaries. Thank God for any missionaries you know from your church; pray that they would be faithful in their ministry and full of love for God, his people, and the lost.

PEOPLE GROUP

480,000 Albanian people of Italy

SHARE THE GOSPEL

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Will you use your acts of kindness cards and determine how you and your family will share the gospel with someone this week?

JOURNAL+ PRAISE+ PRAYER



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