



FELLOWSHIP

# *Kids*

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FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP GUIDE

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## What is a Family Discipleship Guide?

In addition to all the responsibilities of raising children, God has commanded parents to continue growing in their faith and to intentionally pass it on to the next generation.

**Deuteronomy 6:4-9** says:

**4** *“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. **5** You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.*

**6** *And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.*

**7** *You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. **8** You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. **9** You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

In this passage, God gave the Israelites, and us, a model for family discipleship that uses the rhythm of life to pass faith on to our children. The Family Discipleship Guide is a resource from Fellowship Kids designed to help parents leverage everyday moments to spark Gospel-centered conversations with kids of any age.

## How do I use the Family Discipleship Guide?

Each page of the guide is one week’s worth of discipleship content for the whole family. The weekly page follows the lesson taught on Sunday morning in Fellowship Kids and contains: Scripture passage for family reading, a devotional, additional discussion questions, and a family activity.

You may choose to spread the content out over the week or use the entire page for a special family devotional one night a week.

For each unit, the guide also provides a Scripture verse and Big Picture Question for the family to review and memorize. Some Scriptures throughout the guide are divided to make it easier for preschoolers or younger children to memorize. Those shorter versions will be highlighted in bold print for you.

## *Unit Seven:* **WANDERING IN THE WILDERNESS** **LESSON**

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<b>WEEK 1</b>	Joshua and Caleb .....	<b>MARCH 3</b>
<b>WEEK 2</b>	The Bronze Snake .....	<b>MARCH 10</b>
<b>WEEK 3</b>	Balaam and Balak .....	<b>MARCH 17</b>
<b>WEEK 4</b>	Moses' Farewell .....	<b>MARCH 24</b>

## *Unit Eight:* **CONQUERING THE LAND**

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<b>WEEK 5</b>	The Battle of Jericho .....	<b>MARCH 31</b>
<b>WEEK 6</b>	Taking the Land .....	<b>APRIL 7</b>
<b>WEEK 7</b>	Jesus' Triumphal Entry .....	<b>APRIL 14</b>
<b>WEEK 8</b>	Jesus Crucifixion and Resurrection .....	<b>APRIL 21</b>

## *Unit Nine:* **THE CYCLE OF JUDGES**

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<b>WEEK 9</b>	Israel's Unfaithfulness .....	<b>APRIL 28</b>
<b>WEEK 10</b>	Deborah and Barak .....	<b>MAY 5</b>
<b>WEEK 11</b>	Ruth and Boaz .....	<b>MAY 12</b>
<b>WEEK 12</b>	Samson .....	<b>MAY 19</b>
<b>WEEK 13</b>	Gideon .....	<b>MAY 26</b>

# Unit Seven

## WANDERING IN THE WILDERNESS

### *Key Passage*

***Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Proverbs 3:5-6***

### *Big Picture Question*

What does it mean to sin?

**Answer:** *To sin is to think, say, or behave in any way that goes against God and His commands.*

### *Unit Four Description*

*Israel doubted and disobeyed God, yet God still planned to bless them. God was with His people as they wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. Finally, He led them back to the promised land. God later sent Jesus so that even disobedient doubters can trust in Him and receive His promised eternal rest.*

# Week One

## JOSHUA AND CALEB

JOSHUA AND CALEB TRUSTED GOD TO GIVE HIS PEOPLE THE PROMISED LAND.

*Family Bible Reading* NUMBERS 13:25-31; 14:20-25

### *Family Devotional*

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 said the land was “flowing with milk and honey”, which meant it was rich in what it offered. They gave an account of the people, various tribes who were physically strong and whose cities were even stronger. Caleb encouraged the Israelites to go immediately, but it was met with resistance by most of the group. They saw that they weren’t as strong and were afraid of being defeated. They didn’t trust that God would help them!

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.

**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.**

### *Family Activity*

Go grocery shopping as a family and choose different fruits from the produce section. Try to allow each family member to choose their favorite fruit and a fruit they’ve never tried. Assign each family member a task in making a fruit salad using the fruits chosen at the store. Invite neighbors over to share the salad. Talk about the fruit-filled land God promised His people.

### *Discussion Questions*

1. Why were the Israelites afraid to take the land?
2. Why should knowing God planned to give them the land have made a difference?
3. Why is it a sin to distrust God?
4. What can we trust God to do?
5. How is Jesus different than the Israelites and us?

### *Key Passage*

**Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.**

**Proverbs 3:5-6**

### *Big Picture Question*

What does it mean to sin?

**Answer:**

*To sin is to think, say, or behave in any way that goes against God and His commands.*

# Week Two

## THE BRONZE SNAKE

GOD TOLD HIS PEOPLE TO LOOK AT THE BRONZE SNAKE TO BE HEALED.

### Family Bible Reading NUMBERS 21:4-9

### Family Devotional

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. Time and time again, God provided for the Israelites. And they still complained!

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."

How cool is that! God could have just let them die. But instead He provided for them once again. 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. 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).

### Family Activity

Go around your family and have each person confess something they recently complained about. Then, have each family member turn that complaint into praise of thankfulness to God for what He has provided. For example, if you've complained about eating peas, you can praise God for providing food!

### Discussion Questions

1. What are we tempted to complain about?
2. What is a better response than complaining?
3. Why was it good that God disciplined Israel for their sin?
4. Why is discipline a good thing for us?
5. Who can we look to save us and give us life with God forever?

### Key Passage

**Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.**

Proverbs 3:5-6

### Big Picture Question

What does it mean to sin?

**Answer:**

To sin is to think, say, or behave in any way that goes against God and His commands.

# Week Three

## BALAAM AND BALAK

GOD COMMANDED BALAAM TO BLESS HIS PEOPLE.

### Family Bible Reading NUMBERS 22:26-38

### Family Devotional

Sometimes people use the phrase “When Pigs Fly!” when they think something will never happen. Have you ever heard anyone say, “When Donkeys talk!”. No? Maybe that’s because one has spoken before!

One day, the powerful King of Moab, Balak, saw the Israelites make camp in his land, and he was terrified! He knew that He could not defeat the Israelites on his own, so he called on Balaam, a pagan prophet, to put a curse on them.

While Balaam was traveling to King Balak, God sent an angel to stop Balaam. Balaam could not see the angel, but his donkey could. Three times the angel stood in the way, and three times the donkey stopped. Balaam didn’t understand why the donkey was stopping. He hit the donkey with his stick, so God gave the donkey the ability to speak!

“What have I done to you that made you beat me three times?” the donkey said. “You made me look like a fool!” Balaam said. God then allowed Balaam to see the angel, and Balaam said, “I was wrong. I didn’t know you were trying to stop me. If you don’t think I should go, I’ll return home right now.”

God told Balaam, “You are not to curse this people, for they are blessed.” So, each time Balaam spoke over Israel, God did not allow him to curse the Israelites. Instead, Balaam spoke in four clear messages, insisting that God would bless the Israelites.

God had blessed the Israelites, so Balaam blessed them too. Fourteen hundred years after Balaam announced God’s promise, Jesus was born. God sent Jesus to bless the whole world by rescuing people from sin.

### Family Activity

Visit the Arkansas Heritage Farm at Little Rock Zoo where you can pet and feed farm animals...including donkeys! Talk about what it would be like to hear a donkey talk and how God used the donkey to bless His people. Then, talk about how Jesus is the greatest blessing for all people!

### Discussion Questions

1. Why was the king of Moab afraid of the Israelites?
2. Why was Balaam unable to curse the Israelites?
3. Who is the mighty King who would be born to the people of Israel?
4. What is the best blessing God has given?

### Key Passage

**Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.**

**Proverbs 3:5-6**

### Big Picture Question

What does it mean to sin?

**Answer:**

*To sin is to think, say, or behave in any way that goes against God and His commands.*

# Week Four

## MOSES' FAREWELL

MOSES REMINDED THE PEOPLE TO KEEP GOD'S COVENANT.

*Family Bible Reading* DEUTERONOMY 32:1-4, 44-47

### *Family Devotional*

After 40 years in the wilderness, the Israelites were once again at the edge of the promised land. But this time, it was a whole new generation of Israelites—many of whom had not even been born when the people left Egypt and came to this land the first time.

Moses was 120 years old, and he knew he could not lead the people into the promised land. But Moses promised the people that the Lord would get them there. God would go before them and defeat their enemies. Moses assured the people that they didn't need to be afraid. God would be with them and would not leave them.

God gave Moses a song for the people, and he read it to the Israelites so they would remember God's words. Moses said, "These words are your life." After that, Moses went up to a mountain where he could see the land that God had promised to give to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Then Moses died there.

We have to remember that Moses wasn't perfect, but Moses was a good leader for God's people. The Bible says Jesus deserves more glory than Moses. Jesus is our perfect leader. He died and was raised so that Moses and every believer in all of time can enter the promised land of God's kingdom.

### *Family Activity*

Hike to the top of a mountain or hill as a family. Talk about the beauty of the land you can see from this view. Discuss with kids what it would have been like for Moses to see the promised land from the mountain but not be able to enter. Remind children that Jesus is the perfect leader. He died and was raised so that Moses and every other imperfect person—us included—who believe in Him can enter the promised land of God's kingdom!

### *Discussion Questions*

1. How does knowing God is with us change how we act and think?
2. Why didn't Moses get to enter the promised land? (See Numbers 20:7-12)
3. Where does our strength and courage come from?
4. How is Jesus better than Moses?

#### *Key Passage*

**Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.**  
*In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.*

**Proverbs 3:5-6**

#### *Big Picture Question*

What does it mean to sin?

**Answer:**

*To sin is to think, say, or behave in any way that goes against God and His commands.*



# Unit Eight

## CONQUERING THE LAND

### *Key Passage*

***It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed. Deuteronomy 31:8 ESV***

### *Big Picture Question*

*How can we glorify God?*

***Answer:*** *We can glorify God by loving Him and obeying Him.*

### *Unit Five Description*

*The Israelites needed to conquer the promised land, so God fought for His people. Joshua led the people and encouraged them to be faithful to the one true God. The people conquered the promised land and began to live in it. Joshua was a representation of Christ, leading the Israelites to victory in Canaan as Jesus leads us to victory in overcoming the world.*

# Week Five

## THE BATTLE OF JERICHO GOD BROUGHT DOWN THE WALLS OF JERICHO.

*Family Bible Reading* JOSHUA 6:1-7, 12-20

### *Family Devotional*

Have you ever seen or participated in a trust fall? This is when a person stands in a chair and falls backwards into the arms of a few people they trust to catch them. It's a pretty scary adventure for sure! One way to make the trust fall easier is to select people you know can be trusted to catch you—like your parents. Falling backwards to them is easier because you know they love you and want to protect you.

When the Israelites reached the promised land, they were faced with a problem: someone else was already living there. As spies went into the land to see what it was like, they were housed and protected by a woman named Rahab. In exchange for her kindness, Rahab asked the Israelites to keep her safe when they conquered the city, so the spies promised to keep her and her family safe.

Meanwhile, God gave Joshua specific instructions for conquering the city of Jericho. So, Joshua led the Israelite army to march around the city once a day for 6 days. On the seventh day, the army marched around the city seven times and the priests blew their trumpets loudly. As the people shouted, the walls of Jericho fell to the ground. The whole city was destroyed, but Rahab and her family were saved.

This battle was all about trust. The Israelites and Rahab trusted that God would win the battle. When the Israelites attacked Jericho, Rahab and her family received mercy and became part of God's people. Jesus has won the battle against sin and death. Everyone who trusts in Jesus receives mercy and becomes a part of God's family forever!

### *Family Activity*

Hold a competition to see who in your family can build the sturdiest tower using building blocks or Legos. Use books or weights to see whose structure can hold the most weight. As you build, discuss why only God could defeat Jericho. Then, read Matthew 1 to find Rahab in Jesus' genealogy. Discuss how God used this event to save Rahab and how she became part of His story to bring Jesus as the Savior we need!

### *Discussion Questions*

1. Why did Rahab hide the spies?
2. How do you think the Israelites felt marching around Jericho for six days with nothing happening?
3. What does Rahab's story teach us about God's love?
4. How was trust important in this story?

#### *Key Passage*

***It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.***

**Deuteronomy 31:8 ESV**

#### *Big Picture Question*

*How can we glorify God?*

**Answer:**

*We can glorify God by loving Him and obeying Him.*

# Week Six

## TAKING THE LAND

GOD MADE THE SUN STAND STILL AND GAVE HIS PEOPLE THE VICTORY.

### Family Bible Reading JOSHUA 10:12-15

### Family Devotional

The Israelites came to a place ruled by five kings. One of the kings called to the other four kings and said, “Help me attack Gibeon because it has made peace with Joshua and the people of Israel.” So, the five kings and all their armies prepared to fight against Gibeon.

The men of Gibeon cried “Help us!” to Joshua. So, Joshua and the whole army went to Gibeon for battle. The Lord said to Joshua, “Do not be afraid of the kings, for I have handed them over to you.” As the Israelites fought, God confused the kings’ armies and helped Israel to defeat them. Even though the enemy armies fled, the battle was not over. Joshua needed more time to fight before the sun went down, so he prayed and asked God to make the sun stand still in the sky. Are you ready for this? The sun actually stood still, and the moon stopped until Israel and Gibeon defeated all the kings’ armies!

God fought for His people and helped them conquer the land. God gave the Israelites peace and rest from their enemies for many years. When Joshua was old, he reminded the Israelites about all the great things God had done for them. The people said, “We will worship the LORD because He is our God!”

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.

### Family Activity

Take your family on an outing to a place where you can get a good view of the sunset (or sunrise). As you take in the beauty of the changing sun, talk about how God fought for His people by making the sun stand still. Remind your kids that God is in control of everything and we can find comfort in knowing we can trust Him.

### Discussion Questions

1. How did God show His power to Israel, Gibeon, and the five kings?
2. How did Jesus give believers victory over sin and death?
3. How do you think Joshua, the Israelites, and Gibeon felt about the victory God gave them?
4. How do you feel to think about the victory God gives believers through Jesus?

#### Key Passage

**It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.**

**Deuteronomy 31:8 ESV**

#### Big Picture Question

How can we glorify God?

**Answer:**

We can glorify God by loving Him and obeying Him.

# Week Seven

## JESUS' TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS TO JERUSALEM AS THEIR KING.

### Family Bible Reading MATTHEW 21:1-11

### Family Devotional

Jesus came into Jerusalem with cheers and celebration! The people had heard the great miracles of Jesus, and they believed in His power. The people displayed their worship of Jesus by waving palm branches and laying them out on the road as Jesus rode into the city on a donkey.

The people shouted Hosanna. Do you know what that word means? It actually means “Save Us!” The people were shouting Hosanna because they believed Jesus was coming to be their king and to rule over them with goodness and mercy. They were probably expecting him to be an actual king—like one that marries a queen and sits on a throne—but Jesus is the King of Kings. He was the King who had come to save all who believe in Him!

John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” This was the true reason why Jesus came—to bring salvation and eternal life for anyone who believes in Him. When we read the story of Jesus’ triumphal entry into the Jerusalem, we must remember that Jesus is the King who has come to save!

### Family Activity

Spend time preparing your family for the events of the Passion week. Discuss the opportunity to remember Jesus’ sacrifice on Good Friday. Decide on a way to remember the hopelessness and sadness that was felt on Saturday as the disciples waited to see what would happen next. Finally, make it a point to invite another family to join you for an Easter service to celebrate the Risen Savior together!

### Discussion Questions

1. What did the people shout as Jesus entered the city? What did ‘Hosanna’ mean?
2. Why do you think Jesus chose to ride on a donkey instead of a horse, chariot, or some other form of transportation?
3. What kind of King would Jesus be? How is this different but better than what people expected?
4. How can we celebrate and worship Jesus as the King of kings?

#### Key Passage

**It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.**

**Deuteronomy 31:8 ESV**

#### Big Picture Question

How can we glorify God?

**Answer:**

We can glorify God by loving Him and obeying Him.

# Week Eight

## JESUS' CRUCIFIXION AND RESURRECTION

JESUS DIED ON THE CROSS TO PAY FOR SIN AND ROSE AGAIN TO DEFEAT DEATH.

### Family Bible Reading MATTHEW 27:27-50; 28:1-10

### Family Devotional

In the 1980 Winter Olympics, the United States Hockey team was up against the powerhouse Russian Hockey Team, who had won every Gold Medal for the previous 16 years! The Russian team seemed unbeatable, but the U.S. team was in the lead as the final minutes of the match ticked down. As the final buzzer sounded and the U.S. team claimed the unexpected victory, announcer Al Michaels shouted, "Do you believe in miracles? Yes!"

While that was just a hockey game, the question does make us think of the greatest miracle of all time—the resurrection of Jesus! On the third day after Jesus' death and burial, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to the tomb. Suddenly an angle of the Lord rolled back the stone. The angel spoke to the women, "Don't be afraid! Jesus is not here. He has risen, just like He said He would." At this announcement, the woman ran to share the good news with the other disciples.

The death and resurrection of Jesus are at the center of the gospel. We deserve to die because of our sin, but Jesus died in our place. Because Jesus is alive, we do not need to fear anything. Those who trust in Jesus have forgiveness and eternal life, and we can joyfully obey Him. Now that's a miracle to believe in!

### Family Activity

As you begin the activity, ask kids to use the bracelet they received at church to share the gospel message with the entire family. Then, read 1 Corinthians 15:1-8. Play the role of detectives and talk about some of the evidence for the resurrection. Discuss why Jesus' death was necessary for salvation and how His resurrection is the hope for eternal life.

### Discussion Questions

1. How did Jesus respond when the people accused Him, hurt Him, and eventually crucified Him? Why do you think Jesus didn't stop them?
2. Did Jesus deserve to be treated this way?
3. What does the bible say we deserve for our sin?
4. Why is Jesus' death and resurrection the greatest miracle that ever happened?

#### Key Passage

**It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.**

**Deuteronomy 31:8 ESV**

#### Big Picture Question

How can we glorify God?

**Answer:**

We can glorify God by loving Him and obeying Him.

# Unit Nine

## THE CYCLE OF JUDGES

### *Key Passage*

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

**1 John 1:9 ESV**

### *Big Picture Question*

*What is repentance?*

**Answer:** *Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.*

### *Unit Six Description*

*When the neighboring nations threatened and attacked Israel, God provided new leaders, called judges, to help rescue His people. While these judges could only give temporary help, they reminded God's people that one day God would provide a perfect Judge to rescue His people for good.*

# Week Nine

## ISRAEL'S UNFAITHFULNESS

GOD'S PEOPLE REPEATEDLY TURNED FROM HIM.

### Family Bible Reading JUDGES 2:6-16

### Family Devotional

After Joshua died, the Israelites disobeyed God and worshiped false gods. Soon, they completely ignored and forgot about the one true God. When, God let an enemy king take over the Israelites, they remembered how good they had it when they loved and obeyed God. They cried out, "Save us!" So, God raised up a judge named Othniel to rule over the Israelites. The land was peaceful for 40 years.

But, when Othniel died, Israel once again ignored God and forgot Him. So, God let the king of Moab attack the Israelites and defeat them. And once again, the Israelites remembered how good they had it when they loved and obeyed God. They cried out, "Save us!" God raised up another judge to lead the Israelites.

God's people were stuck in a terrible cycle. The Israelites would ignore God and fall into the hands of an enemy king. They would cry out for God to save them, and He would give them a judge to lead them back to Him. But in time, they would ignore God and forget about him again, then the cycle started over again! But each time, God was patient and displayed His grace by hearing their cries for help.

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. He alone can break the cycle of sin!

### Family Activity

Play a game of follow the leader while marching around the room. Have the leader walk in a funny way, sing a song, or dance while others follow their motions. Assign one family member to shout 'Repent' at any point during the game, at which point the entire family must turn and begin marching in the opposite direction. The person at the opposite end of the line is now the leader to be followed. After playing a few rounds, sit down and discuss what repentance means (*Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus*). Talk with kids about God's desire for people—including your family—to turn away from sin and follow Jesus.

### Discussion Questions

1. Describe the cycle that the Israelites were stuck in during the time of Judges.
2. Why did the Israelites forget about God? Why was it good that God allowed Israel to be overtaken by their enemies?
3. How are we like the Israelites? Will we ever stop sinning? (See *Romans 7:20-25*)
4. How is Jesus the One who can break the cycle for those who believe in Him?

### Key Passage

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

1 John 1:9 ESV

### Big Picture Question

What is repentance?

**Answer:**

*Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.*

# Week Ten

## DEBORAH AND BARAK

GOD USED DEBORAH, BARAK, AND Jael TO RESCUE HIS PEOPLE.

### Family Bible Reading JUDGES 4:1-5

### Family Devotional

Psalm 115:3 says, “Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.” This verse reminds us that God is wiser, more powerful, and more sovereign—that means in control—than we can even imagine. There are things that happen every day that don’t seem to make sense to us, but God is working all things according to His plan to bring glory to Himself.

This is an important fact about God for us to remember—especially when we see how the Israelites continued to live in the terrible cycle of forgetting God and then calling for His help. When the Israelites fell into the hands of the powerful king of Canaan, they called out to God for help and God sent Deborah. Through an outrageous battle, God used Deborah, Barak, and Jael to defeat Sisera and the Canaanite armies. Once again, the Israelites lived in peace for the next 40 years.

Even when we may not fully understand it, God does what is for His glory and our good. God fought for the Israelites and used Deborah, Barak, and Jael to defeat Canaan. In a similar way, God uses people and events to not only save us from our enemies, but to teach us about our ultimate good: salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ.

### Family Activity

Play a game with your kids where you hold your hands behind your back and let them take turns slipping their arms under yours to act as your hands. Let them “help” you make a sandwich and eat it. It’s fun to be the hands for someone else. This week be the hands for someone you know who could use some help, or for someone you see as you are out and about—hold the door open at the store or make a meal or cookies and deliver them to a new mom. Read 1 John 3:23 and discuss how we can help by loving and praying for one another.

### Discussion Questions

1. Why does God use people in His plans?
2. How can we know God’s plans are good?
3. When you first heard the story of Jesus, did God’s plan seem good? How were all the parts—even the worst—part of a plan to bring God glory and us good?
4. What are some ways our family can remember God and not forget His mighty works for us?

### Key Passage

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

**1 John 1:9 ESV**

### Big Picture Question

*What is repentance?*

**Answer:**

*Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.*



# Week Eleven

## RUTH AND BOAZ

GOD PROVIDED A REDEEMER FOR RUTH.

*Family Bible Reading* RUTH 1:1-5; 4:9-12, 14-17

### *Family Devotional*

Can you imagine what it would be like to go deep inside a cave with no flashlight? People have experienced this say it is one of the scariest places on Earth! The heavy darkness of an unlit cave is the ultimate example of what it means to feel alone and how scary that can be!

When we read the story of Naomi, we see how she was experiencing loneliness and sadness. Her husband and sons had died, and she was in a strange land with just her two daughters-in-law. So, Naomi decided she would return to her home in Bethlehem, but she gave permission for the two younger women to return to their families in Moab. But Ruth said to Naomi, “Where you go, I will go...your people will be my people, and your God will be my God.” So, the two women returned to Bethlehem together.

Ruth’s decision to follow Naomi was also a decision to trust and follow the one true God. The loneliness these widows had felt was now overpowered by the love they had for one another. And God continued to add to that family through Boaz—who married Ruth and bought back the land Naomi’s family had lost. Through Ruth and Boaz, God had completely restored the inheritance and the family of Naomi. Not only that, but Ruth and Boaz had a son named Obed. When Obed grew up, he was the father of Jesse, who was the father of King David! God made Naomi’s family a part of Jesus’ family tree!

Boaz was the family redeemer who cared for Ruth and Naomi when they were in such a great need. In a much greater way, Jesus is our Redeemer. When sin left us alone and separated from God, Jesus is the One who paid for our sins and adopts anyone who believe in Him!

### *Family Activity*

Do some research to discover more about your family lineage. Visit elderly relatives or go through photo albums to introduce your kids to their heritage. As you talk about your family, discuss the story of Ruth. Talk about what it means to be a part of God’s family and how Jesus has made that possible through His sacrifice.

### *Discussion Questions*

1. Why do you think Ruth decided to stay with Naomi?
2. How did Boaz redeem Naomi and Ruth?  
What are some ways he provided for them?
3. What did Jesus do to redeem sinners?  
How has He provided for us?
4. Think of someone who may feel lonely. How can our love for that person help them to see God’s desire to redeem them into His family?

#### *Key Passage*

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

**1 John 1:9 ESV**

#### *Big Picture Question*

*What is repentance?*

**Answer:**

*Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.*

# Week Twelve

## GIDEON

GOD SHOWED GIDEON THAT VICTORY COMES FROM HIM.

*Family Bible Reading* JUDGES 6:1-16, 36-40; 7:16-22

### *Family Devotional*

Remember that cycle that the Israelites were trapped in—the one where they would forget God, disobey God, and then cry out to God for help? Well, they were still spinning around in that terrible cycle!

After forgetting God and falling into the hands of an enemy, the people cried out, “Save us!” An angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon and said, “The Lord is with you, mighty warrior!” So, God chose Gideon to lead the battle and deliver the Israelites from the power of the enemy. Gideon gathered an army of men and prepared to fight.

But God told Gideon he had too many men! Now, most people wouldn’t believe that there is such a thing as too many soldiers when going into a big battle, but Gideon sent home all the men who were afraid to fight. He was left with 10,000 men, but God said that’s still too many! God gave Gideon instructions for dividing the men again, and Gideon was left with just 300 men. While that didn’t seem like enough to fight the enemy, that night God gave the Israelite army the victory over the Midianites and delivered them from the enemy!

The Israelites cried out to God because they knew they could not save themselves. Even Gideon was not enough to save them. but God used Gideon to help His people, but God fought the battle for them. The people needed someone who was might to save, and so do we! We tend to get trapped in that same terrible cycle of sin. Jesus Christ came to save us from sin because we cannot save ourselves. Only God, through Christ, can save us!

### *Family Activity*

Plan and run an experiment with your kids. Leave a bit of fleece or other absorbent cloth outside over night. See if it is wet the next day and check the ground around it. Talk about God’s power to do unexpected—even “impossible”—things, like the sign of the fleece of giving Gideon victory. Share with kids how sin separates us from God and how He sent Jesus in an unexpected way to be the One who saves us from sin!

### *Discussion Questions*

1. Why did the angel call Gideon a might warrior?
2. How does God’s use of weak people like Gideon and us bring Him more glory?
3. How do we know that God won the battle for the Israelites and not themselves?
4. Can we save ourselves from sin? Who can save us?
5. How has Jesus fought for us and won the victory over sin and death?

#### *Key Passage*

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

**1 John 1:9 ESV**

#### *Big Picture Question*

*What is repentance?*

**Answer:**

*Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.*

# Week Thirteen

## SAMSON

GOD GAVE SAMSON STRENGTH TO DEFEAT THE PHILISTINES.

*Family Bible Reading* JUDGES 16:4-31

### *Family Devotional*

Have you ever been in the kitchen when your mom is icing a cake that smells and looks delicious? You'd give anything just for a bite, and then it happens—she lets you lick the icing off the utensils! As good as licking the icing is, it's still nothing like getting to enjoy the whole cake. The icing is just a taste of something that will be better later!

In the story of Samson, we can clearly see details that remind us of Jesus' story—Samson's birth was announced by an angel, he was betrayed with a kiss for pieces of silver, he was arrested, mocked, and his death freed people from their captivity. But in the end, Samson wasn't perfect and therefore his death didn't give the people complete salvation. Only Jesus could do that!

Over and over again, the Israelites forgot God, turned away from God, and then cried out "God save us!" Each time, God sent a judge to deliver his people and save them from their enemy. But the cycle of sin keeping going around and around. This same cycle is in our lives. We have sinned and turned away from God, and when we realize how sin separates us from God, we should cry out "Save us!" Glory to God that He has heard those cries for help! He sent Jesus to die on the cross for our sin and be the perfect Deliverer! The freedom the people found in Samson's death was just a taste of the greater freedom that comes through Jesus! Through His death, we can have complete forgiveness and salvation!

### *Family Activity*

Work as a family to make a cake. Let kids choose the icing and decorations that will go on the cake. As you slice and enjoy the cake, discuss how the period of the judges in the Bible was a cycle of Israel rebelling against God and God redeeming His people. Talk about how each story we've been learning shows us God's love as He saves people from their enemies, but—like slices of a cake—those stories are meant to point us to the bigger story of God's great love and His ultimate act of salvation through the work of Jesus.

### *Discussion Questions*

1. How did God use Samson's death to help his people?
2. Why does God use us even when we sin? How does that bring Him glory?
3. How does God use Jesus' death to help us?
4. How is Jesus better than Samson?

#### *Key Passage*

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

**1 John 1:9 ESV**

#### *Big Picture Question*

*What is repentance?*

**Answer:**

*Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.*





