



FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP GUIDE

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 in bold print for you. In this edition, you will also find an Advent Guide to help your family celebrate Jesus’ first coming and expectantly await his second coming.

Unit Four: **GOD'S PEOPLE IN EGYPT** **LESSON**

WEEK 1	Joseph Sent to Egypt.....	DEC 2
WEEK 2	Joseph Explained Dreams	DEC 9
WEEK 3	Joseph Saved His Family	DEC 16

Family Advent Guide

The Family Advent Guide may be used weekly from Dec 2 – Dec 24 or used daily in the week before Christmas.

WEEK 4	Moses was Born and Called	DEC 30
WEEK 5	The Plagues and the Passover	JAN 6
WEEK 6	The Red Sea Crossing	JAN 13

Unit Five: **TOWARD THE PROMISED LAND**

WEEK 7	Bread from Heaven	JAN 20
WEEK 8	Jethro Helped Moses	JAN 27
WEEK 9	The Ten Commandments	FEB 3

Unit Six: **WORSHIP IN THE WILDERNESS**

WEEK 10	The Golden Calf	FEB 10
WEEK 11	The Tabernacle was Built	FEB 17
WEEK 12	Rules for Sacrifice	FEB 24

Unit Four

GOD'S PEOPLE IN EGYPT

Key Passage

*But I am the Lord your God from the land of Egypt; **you know no God but me, and besides me there is no savior.***

Hosea 13:4 ESV

Big Picture Question

Is there anything God cannot do?

Answer: God can do all things
according to His character.

Unit Four Description

God used Joseph to provide for the people of Israel and bring them into Egypt where they would be saved from a great famine. God raised up Moses to rescue His people through miraculous signs and works. God saved His people from physical slavery like He would one day save His people from spiritual slavery by sending Jesus, a Deliverer greater than Moses.

Week One

JOSEPH SENT TO EGYPT

JOSEPH'S BROTHERS SOLD HIM INTO SLAVERY.

Family Bible Reading GENESIS 37:1-36

Family Devotional

Envy is the desire to have something that belongs to someone else. It could be wanting someone else's toys or wishing to be as popular as them. These emotions only lead to bad things—arguments, fights, hurt feelings, or worse! In Joseph's case, his brother's envy and hatred led them to sell Joseph into slavery and lie to their father about his death. Even though Joseph's brothers turned against him and tried to kill him, God protected Joseph and used him as a part of His plan to rescue his family.

The sin of envy is what causes us to want the right to do things our way instead of God's way. Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Sin is like a disease that spreads through the whole body, and we have all been infected. What starts as an envious thought quickly leads to hurtful actions and ruined relationships. Like God using Joseph to save his brothers, God has graciously sent His Son, Jesus, to be the Savior for all who believe in Him. Envy has no place in our lives anymore because, in Jesus, we have everything we need!

Family Activity

Joseph's story begins with a sign of favoritism by his father. This angered his brothers and caused them to despise Joseph. Unfortunately, favoritism can creep into our families just as easily if we are not careful. Take time this week to spend one-on-one time with each of your children. During the time, share reasons why you love them and how you see God working in their life. Ask the Lord to reveal and remove any favoritism in your family relationships.

Discussion Questions

1. Why did Joseph's brothers hate Joseph? What did their hatred cause them to do?
2. Can you think of a time when you felt envious—wanting what someone else had? How did that sin affect your behavior?
3. How did God protect Joseph? Why do you think God did this?
4. How is Joseph's story similar to Jesus?
5. How is Jesus' story even greater?

Key Passage

*But I am the Lord your God from the land of Egypt; **you know no God but me, and besides me there is no savior.***

Hosea 13:4 ESV

Big Picture Question

Is there anything God cannot do?

Answer:

God can do all things according to His character.

Week Two

JOSEPH EXPLAINED DREAMS

GOD GAVE JOSEPH POWER TO UNDERSTAND DREAMS.

Family Bible Reading GENESIS 41:1-40

Family Devotional

Have you ever watched flowing water run through a stream or river? No matter how much rock, trees, leaves, or other debris that sits in the way, the water always finds a way to keep on flowing. It just goes over, under, around, or pushes straight through. It is unstoppable!

Like Joseph, there are times in our lives when we face hard things that make us wonder what God is doing or if He is really in control, but the Bible gives us story after story of God working everything—even difficult situations—according to His plan and for His glory. Romans 8:28 says, “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.” God is accomplishing His plans in and through us—even as He works through the suffering and unfair things we sometimes experience. Through all circumstances, God’s plan is always accomplished—all for His glory and our good. No matter what obstacles stand in the way, God’s plans are unstoppable.

Family Activity

Bake bread or a similar treat (brownies, cinnamon rolls) together as a family. Give different members of the family different roles like measuring, mixing, kneading, or shaping the dough. Talk about the cupbearer and baker that Joseph met in prison. Discuss how God used them in His plan. Then, discuss how God might use your family to help others know Jesus and believe in Him.

Discussion Questions

1. How do you think Joseph felt when he was in prison?
2. Do you think Joseph felt like God was with him during those years in prison? Why or why not?
3. How did God use Joseph to glorify Himself and to help others during these times?
4. How was the suffering and death of Jesus a part of God’s plan? How does that unfair and awful event bring us good news?
5. Share about a time when you faced a tough situation or a time when you felt alone and forgotten. How did God help you during that time?
6. How can we know that God is always with us?
(See John 14:15-17)

Key Passage

*But I am the Lord your God from the land of Egypt; **you know no God but me, and besides me there is no savior.***

Hosea 13:4 ESV

Big Picture Question

Is there anything God cannot do?

Answer:

God can do all things according to His character.

Week Three

JOSEPH SAVED HIS FAMILY

GOD SENT JOSEPH TO EGYPT TO ESTABLISH A REMNANT.

Family Bible Reading GENESIS 45:1-28

Family Devotional

The movie *Despicable Me* introduces the evil villain Gru, who is on a mission to shrink and steal the moon. Gru's despicable plan includes stealing a shrink ray by adopting three orphans and using them to sneak into the base. As the movie goes on, Gru's evil plan backfires as his heart is softened and changed by the three girls who have joined his family. All the evil plans of Gru actually lead to a happy ending and a happy family!

The story of Joseph is not exactly like *Despicable Me*, but the whole episode does end with a happy ending and a happy family. After Joseph is placed in charge of the food supplies in Egypt, his brothers came to buy food from him so that they could survive. Even though the story began with an evil plan, God used Joseph to save his entire family from the famine. After the family had settled safely in Egypt, Joseph told his brothers, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives" (*Genesis 50:20*). God had a plan for Joseph's life. He allowed Joseph to suffer to rescue a whole nation. In a greater way, God planned for Jesus to suffer so that many—people from all nations—would be saved from sin. For those who believe in Jesus, the story has the happiest ending of all!

Family Activity

As a family, talk about what it would be like to not have enough food. Discuss the emotions or fears Joseph's brothers must have been facing. God used their hunger to bring them to Egypt, which ultimately led to their salvation from the famine. Gather food to donate to a food pantry or make a monetary donation to Arkansas Food Bank. Talk with your kids about how your family can provide for others' needs as a way to help them feel the love of Jesus and hear more about Him.

Discussion Questions

1. How did Joseph respond to his brothers visit to Egypt? How would you have responded?
2. How did God use Joseph to save his family?
3. in what ways do you see that this was all a part of God's plan?
4. Why is it hard to forgive people who have hurt us?
5. Why do you think God wants us to forgive people who have hurt us?
6. How has God provided forgiveness for the ways we sin against Him?

Key Passage

*But I am the Lord your God from the land of Egypt; **you know no God but me, and besides me there is no savior.***

Hosea 13:4 ESV

Big Picture Question

Is there anything God cannot do?

Answer:

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Family Advent Guide

Advent, formed from a Latin word meaning “coming” or “arrival,” helps us remember the coming of Jesus Christ. It’s the celebration of the first advent of Jesus on that Christmas morning and our anxiously awaiting His second coming as King of all kings. The season is a time for remembering and rejoicing, watching and waiting. It’s a time to reflect upon the promises of God and to anticipate the fulfillment of those promises. We take time to celebrate that God is faithful, has been faithful, and He will be faithful.

We are inviting your family to join together with millions of Christians around the world to prepare for the Christmas season through the observance of Advent. There are several different traditions people use to celebrate the Advent season. One popular tradition involves the use of Advent wreaths and candles. This symbolic tradition is borrowed from the emphasis throughout Scripture of Jesus Christ being the light of the world (Matthew 4:16; John 1:4-9, 8:12). Each week a new candle is lit in anticipation of the final lighting on Christmas Eve. Inexpensive Advent wreaths and candles can usually be found at stores such as Mardel, Hobby Lobby or Michael’s.

Advent is typically celebrated the weeks leading up to Christmas Day, but the best celebration is the one that matches the rhythm of your family. The activities in the Family Advent Guide can be used as weekly devotions for the traditional span of Advent (*December 2 – December 24*), or you could use one activity per day in the week leading up to Christmas Day. Do whatever best helps your family celebrate Jesus’ first coming and anticipate His second coming.

Family Advent Guide

WEEK/DAY 1: WE NEED HOPE

LIGHT ONE ADVENT CANDLE.

Family Bible Reading GENESIS 3; ROMANS 3:10-12, 23

Family Devotional

The world is a broken place – the news we read every day tells us that. As Christians, we understand that the cause of all brokenness in the world is the original sin of Adam and Eve. That sin has been passed on to every man, woman and child. Nothing has escaped its curse. That's why we must look outside of ourselves for our hope. We who need hope cannot be the source of our own hope. Jesus Christ is our only hope!

Family Activity

Gather the family around the table and prepare a bowl of ice cream for each family member. Discuss how good the ice cream will taste and how much each person enjoys it. Instead of sprinkles and chocolate syrup, top your bowl of ice cream with dirt and dish detergent. Explain to your family how the ruined ice cream reminds us that God's perfect creation was broken by sin. But remind them that God has a plan to make his creation new again through Jesus Christ and because of that we can have hope. Now prepare a new bowl of ice cream and enjoy it with your family!

Discussion Questions

1. In what ways do you try to find hope for the brokenness of life apart from Christ?
2. Romans 3:12 says that "no one does good, not even one." In what ways are the "good" things you do still stained by sin? Can we do good things for the wrong reasons?

End with Prayer

Pray together as a family for God's unconditional grace to be made real to you. Pray for family members and friends who are not saved to come to know God's saving grace. End your time together singing one or two Christmas worship songs.

Family Advent Guide

WEEK/DAY 2: GOD GIVES US HOPE

LIGHT TWO ADVENT CANDLES.

Family Bible Reading GENESIS 12:1-3, 15:1-6; GALATIANS 3:7-9, 27-29

Family Devotional

God promised Abraham that despite his age and the age of his wife, he would have an heir that would be a blessing to the whole world. God chose to bless Abraham as an act of grace, not because Abraham deserved it. And because Abraham believed the promise of God would be fulfilled, God considered Abraham to be righteous. How does Abraham relate to our salvation? First, Jesus Christ is the promised heir of Abraham who is a blessing to the world. Second, like Abraham, God chose us for salvation as an act of grace, and, like Abraham, we receive his blessing of salvation because we believe. We have hope because through Christ we are heirs of God's promise to Abraham.

Family Activity

Make a promise to your family about something you will do later in the week... maybe it's to get a Christmas tree, decorate the tree or make cookies, etc. Emphasize that you are making a promise and they will need to wait for this special activity until later in the week. Make the connection that God gave hope to Abraham and the whole world when He promised a Savior who would conquer sin and death. Later in the week, keep your promise to your family then read aloud 2 Corinthians 1:20. Talk about how Jesus is the fulfillment of every promise and everything we hope for and need.

Discussion Questions

1. Did it surprise you to realize that the promise of blessing made to Abraham was fulfilled through the coming of Jesus Christ?
2. God chose Abraham as an act of grace. He chooses us as an act of grace too. Do you struggle believing that God chooses you out of love, not because you deserve it?

End with Prayer

Pray together as a family for God's unconditional grace to be made real to you. Pray for family members and friends who are not saved to come to know God's saving grace. End your time together singing one or two Christmas worship songs.

Family Advent Guide

WEEK/DAY 3: HOPE IS NEVER LOST

LIGHT THREE ADVENT CANDLES.

Family Bible Reading ISAIAH 9:6-7

Family Devotional

Sometimes we lose hope because our circumstances become too difficult. The prophet Isaiah wrote at a time of crisis for Israel's southern kingdom, Judah. The leaders of Judah had turned away from believing in the promises of God and instead looked for security in the promises of the world. Although Isaiah prophesied judgment for Judah's sin, he also preached the "good news" that despite Judah's unfaithfulness, God would still be faithful to his promises. God would fulfill his promise to Abraham by bringing a savior into the world, and the savior would be the Son of God who would establish a kingdom that would last forever. Isaiah reminds us that we should never lose hope when God himself is the basis for our hope.

Family Activity

Hide a new toy or candy bar in a secret location of your house. Create a treasure map or series of maps that will lead your family throughout the house to find the treasure. After the treasure is found, talk about how important the map was for finding the treasure. God has promised us the greatest treasure we could ever want—a Savior. Share how the Bible serves as God's treasure map that leads us to find Christ.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it so hard to have hope when our circumstances are difficult? What does that say about where we look to find hope?
2. One of the titles of Jesus is Prince of Peace. In what way would you like for Jesus to increase your peace?

End with Prayer

Pray together as a family for God's grace in the midst of hardships your family, neighbors and friends may be facing. Pray also for unresolved conflict where God's peace is needed. Thank God that his faithfulness to himself and his promises are your real reason to have hope. End your time together singing one or two Christmas worship songs.

Family Advent Guide

WEEK/DAY 4: GOD GIVES US HOPE

LIGHT FOUR ADVENT CANDLES.

Family Bible Reading LUKE 1:26-56; 2:1-7

Family Devotional

For centuries Israel waited for its messiah to be born. Finally, the prophecies were being fulfilled, but not in the way Israel expected. Rather than being born in a palace to a princess, our savior was born in a manger to a young girl no one knew. The world values riches and power, but our savior was born into poverty. The way that the hope of God comes to us is usually not the way that we expect. Often God will demonstrate his power and glory using a means that is unexpected so that we will not be mistaken in seeing that it is God who is truly at work.

Family Activity

Choose a night this week to eat dinner and/or sleep on the floor as a family. Before eating or going to sleep, read Luke 2:1-7. Talk about the long journey, the stress, and the inconvenience of the events in these verses. While the surroundings of that night were less than ideal, Mary and Joseph found themselves sitting in the presence of their Savior. As a family, discuss some of the stresses or distractions of the Christmas season that can steal the focus and joy of Christ's coming. As you eat dinner or sleep on the floor, ask God to make this temporary discomfort a constant reminder that Jesus—the hope for the hopeless—is the real reason we celebrate Christmas.

Discussion Questions

1. Why would the God of the universe come to earth with such humble beginnings?
2. As Christians in America we often struggle with believing that hardships are a part of God's providential plans for us. What hardship has God allowed in your life to increase your hope found in him?

End with Prayer

Pray for the ways you and your family need to see God's hope in Jesus more clearly. Pray as well for our Christian brothers and sisters around the world who live with hardships we never face. End your time together singing one or two Christmas worship songs.

Family Advent Guide

CHRISTMAS EVE: HOPE IS HERE

LIGHT ALL FIVE ADVENT CANDLES.

Family Bible Reading LUKE 2:8-20

Family Devotional

Hope is not a feeling. Hope is a person! Tonight, we celebrate that the long-awaited promised Savior has been born. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, left the heavenly realms and took on our flesh in order to save us from the brokenness of sin. God is glorified in us when we worship him for the hope that has poured into us through Jesus Christ.

Family Activity

Choose a random time when the family is engaged in other tasks and hustle throughout the house blowing a trumpet, shouting, or banging on pots and pans. Do your best to startle and alert the family that something is happening. After the family is fully alert, sit down and discuss the feeling the shepherds might have had when the heavenly host of angels announced the birth of Jesus. Talk about how that might have been terrifying at first, but then very exciting to know that what you had hoped for had finally arrived! Read Luke 2:8-20 aloud for your family. Spend some time thanking God for the hope found in Jesus Christ!!

End with Prayer

Spend time in prayer giving God glory for all the ways that he is faithful to us. Thank him for providing for your salvation through Jesus Christ. Pray for those you know who are far from God. End your time together singing one or two Christmas worship songs.

Week Four

MOSES WAS BORN AND CALLED GOD CALLED MOSES TO DELIVER HIS PEOPLE FROM CAPTIVITY.

Family Bible Reading EXODUS 1:8-2:10; 3:1-17

Family Devotional

In 1939, DC Comics introduced the famous character known as Batman. Batman fought crime and enforced justice for the city and the people of Gotham. Whenever the peace of Gotham City was disturbed by criminals, the bat signal would light up the night sky. This signal was a call for Batman to come and save the city.

As we open the book of Exodus, we see a God speaking to Moses—not through a bat signal—but through a burning bush that never burned up. Why would God use such a dramatic sign to get Moses' attention? Because He was calling Moses to rescue God's people from slavery in Egypt. In Exodus 3:10, God says to Moses, "So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt." 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. We all love a good rescue story like the ones from comic books, but the story of Jesus' rescue for sinners is 100% true and even more amazing!

Family Activity

As you enter a New Year together, spend some time this week praying about a specific mission God might be calling your family to for 2019. It could be intentionally loving your neighbors, serving at church, or going on a short-term mission trip. Talk about it as a family, let kids be involved in the process, and then ask God for His power and help to complete the mission. Even if it feels too big, remember that God is bigger!

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Moses was afraid to obey God's call at first?
2. What might you be thinking/feeling/doing if God spoke to you like He did to Moses?
3. What does God's name, "I AM WHO I AM" mean?
4. How does it feel to know that God heard the Israelites cry for help? How does that motivate you to ask for his help?
5. How does the story of Moses help you to know ways God can use you for His glory?
6. Whose greater rescue does the story of Moses point us to?

Key Passage

But I am the Lord your God from the land of Egypt; you know no God but me, and besides me there is no savior.

Hosea 13:4 ESV

Big Picture Question

Is there anything God cannot do?

Answer:

God can do all things according to His character.

Week Five

THE PLAGUES AND THE PASSOVER

GOD DELIVERED HIS PEOPLE AND PROVED THAT HE IS THE ONE TRUE GOD.

Family Bible Reading EXODUS 12:31-42

Family Devotional

The plagues were full of destruction and even death. Someone might read that and wonder what was the point. Why did all of that happen? As God was delivering the plagues to Egypt, He said to Pharaoh, "For by now I could have stretched out my hand and struck you and your people with a plague that would have wiped you off the earth. But I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." (*Exodus 9:15-16*)

God used the plagues to make Israel trust Him and believe in Him as their God. God makes all things work together so that others would see His power and believe in Him. This is God's purpose in everything He does. This doesn't mean that God causes bad things to happen. Remember, God is good and He's not capable of being evil. Evil things happen because there is sin in the world, but God has power even over sin. While some kings may use their power to be harsh and terrorize their people, God has used His power to love us and send Jesus to save us!

Family Activity

Research the foods eaten at a traditional Passover Seder supper and prepare some of those dishes for your family. As you eat, talk about the symbolism of the foods and how the Passover pointed to Jesus.

Discussion Questions

1. Which of the 10 plagues sounds the worst/scariest to you? Why?
2. How were the plagues a demonstration of God's power?
3. Why did God tell the Israelites to spread the blood of a lamb on their doorposts?
4. How does this story help to explain why Jesus is called the Lamb of God?

Key Passage

*But I am the Lord your God from the land of Egypt; **you know no God but me, and besides me there is no savior.***

Hosea 13:4 ESV

Big Picture Question

Is there anything God cannot do?

Answer:

God can do all things according to His character.

Week Six

THE RED SEA CROSSING

GOD PARTED THE RED SEA FOR HIS PEOPLE TO CROSS.

Family Bible Reading EXODUS 14:5-31

Family Devotional

The Bible tells us that the Israelites has been in Egypt for 430 years, and there were now about 600,000 men leaving with Moses. If we add to that number the woman, children, and other Egyptians who wanted to be a part of the Israelites, we can estimate that there were around 2.5 million Israelites leaving Egypt! That's 3 times the number of people who live in Central Arkansas! Now think about all those people crossing the Red Sea on dry land while God held back the water. Amazing, right? Once again, God had demonstrated His power over creation and over the enemy so that His people could be free.

The Bible describes how our sin has made us enemies of God, but Ephesians 2:4-5 tell us how God has rescued us. It says, "But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved." When there was no way out and all hope seemed to be lost, God provided a way for the Israelites to be free. Likewise, when we were lost in our sin and without any hope of saving ourselves, God sent Jesus to rescue us from sin!

Family Activity

Fill a sink with water. Experiment with trying to hold back water with your hand. Discuss God's power over creation and how He is the only one who can hold back the waters as He did for the Israelites.

Afterwards, work together as a family to write praise songs to God. Talk to your kids about ways He has provided for you specifically. Thank Him by singing or reciting your songs.

Discussion Questions

1. How did God show His power to the Israelites?
2. What would you be thinking about if you were walking through the Red Sea with water on either side?
3. What effect did this experience have on the Israelites? How did they respond to God afterwards?
4. How is Jesus an even greater deliverer than Moses?

Key Passage

*But I am the Lord your God from the land of Egypt; **you know no God but me, and besides me there is no savior.***

Hosea 13:4 ESV

Big Picture Question

Is there anything God cannot do?

Answer:

God can do all things according to His character.

Unit Five

TOWARD THE PROMISED LAND

Key Passage

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

Matthew 22:37-39 NIV

Big Picture Question

What is God like?

Answer: God is holy, good, and loving.

Unit Five Description

Moses led God's people toward the promised land. God made a covenant with His people and gave them laws to guide them in how to live and to help them understand His perfect holiness. God's laws show that the only way to be right with God is through faith in Jesus, the only perfectly righteous One.

Week Seven

BREAD FROM HEAVEN

GOD PROVIDED FOR THE PHYSICAL NEEDS OF HIS PEOPLE.

Family Bible Reading EXODUS 16:1-36

Family Devotional

Did you know that the Guinness World Record for the largest chocolate peanut butter cup is more than 440 pounds? Or that the longest rolled fruit snack was as long as a football field at 300 feet long? In 2011, the largest hamburger for sale was created in California and weighed 777 pounds. Guinness World Record rules state that the food created for any world record not be thrown out but eaten by the public. The hamburger provided a lot of people with meals, and each person who bought a bite of the burger donated a dollar to the local food bank, so even more people were provided with meals.

God provided manna, a type of bread, and quail for the Israelites, and it was just what they needed to live for the 40 years in the wilderness. A peanut butter cup or fruit roll is not going to provide all the nutrients that we need, even though it can feed many people, and certainly not for 40 years. God provides what we need when we need it, just as he did for the Israelites.

The Lord is our Provider. Like He provided for the physical needs of His people in the wilderness, He provided for our spiritual needs by sending His Son, Jesus—the Bread of life (John 6:35)—so we can live forever.

Family Activity

Make a list of things you need to live, (shelter and clothing) and then make a list of blessings God has provided above your needs (such as ice cream, extra blankets, two coats or pairs of shoes, having a vehicle or two). Assign a different family member to read each of the following scriptures: Psalms 81:10, Malachi 3:10, and Philippians 4:19. Discuss how the whole Bible points to God's provision for us. See if your family can think of any other scripture that refers to God's provision. Read Romans 8:32 for the family. Remind kids that God not only provides for our needs and many of our wants, He provided Jesus to be the One who rescues us from our sin. Thank God for his care and providing for your needs.

Discussion Questions

1. What is God like? Answer: God is holy, good, and loving.
2. Why did the Israelites complain in the wilderness? What did it show about their trust in God?
3. How did God provide for the Israelites?
4. Why did God give rules about gathering manna?
5. What are ways we can learn to trust God each day?
6. How has God provided for us in Jesus?

Key Passage

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

Matthew 22:37-39 NIV

Big Picture Question

What is God like?

Answer:

God is holy, good, and loving.

Week Eight

JETHRO HELPED MOSES

MOSES NEEDED HELP TO LEAD GOD'S PEOPLE.

Family Bible Reading EXODUS 18:7-27

Family Devotional

Sometimes we can't do things on our own and we need help. Moses had the job of judging the people. Anyone who had any reason to complain stood around Moses all day, waiting to present their case. It was long and lonely work for Moses. Jethro, Moses' father-in law, observed this and saw that it was not good for Moses to do all on his own every day.

Jethro gave Moses advice about leading the people. He told Moses that it wasn't good to lead alone. He encouraged Moses to choose trustworthy men to act as judges over smaller groups of people. Then Moses would not have to work so much, and the people would not have to wait so long to solve their problems.

Moses needed others to help him lead God's people and teach them God's laws. Just as Jethro did not want Moses to lead alone, God does not want us to follow Jesus alone. God gave us brothers and sisters who love Jesus and encourage us to love God, obey God, and tell others about Jesus.

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. You could hold the door open at the store, make a meal for another family, or serve in a local ministry as a family. Read 1 John 3:23 and discuss how we can help by loving and praying for one another.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it sometimes hard to ask for help or advice? Are you willing to accept help or listen to the advice?
2. Who are some people that you can ask to help you?
3. Why is it important for believers to help one another?
4. How can your family members support and encourage one another to follow Jesus?
5. How can you help and support the leaders at your church?

Key Passage

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'
Matthew 22:37-39 NIV

Big Picture Question

What is God like?

Answer:

God is holy, good, and loving.

Week Nine

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

GOD GAVE RULES TO SHOW HOW TO LOVE HIM AND OTHERS.

Family Bible Reading EXODUS 19:16—20:21

Family Devotional

Have you ever played an unfamiliar game with someone that continually added rules to the game or changed them as the game went on? You might not know when you do something against the rules and get penalized, or the other players may not have the same rules as you and they get farther along in the game. It can be very hard to follow and even make you frustrated or angry. You just wish you knew what to do for you to win.

God gave the Israelites the Ten Commandments, not to save them, but to help them live with and love others. Everyone had the same ten commandments and they didn't change. The Israelites were guided by the law until God's promise to Abraham to send a Savior was fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Jesus 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*).

God's rules are good and are meant to help us love Him, love others, and live a life that is righteous. But the Bible is clear that we are all sinful and fall short of God's standard for holiness. Our obedience can't save us. Salvation is found in Jesus, the only perfectly righteous One. He takes away the sin of anyone who believes and welcomes them into God's family.

Family Activity

Play a game of "Red Light Green Light." Talk about what it would be like to play with no rules. Anyone could go anywhere because no "roads" would be marked. You might have multiple "crashes" as no one stopped or started when the colors changed. You might injure someone, or they injure you, or feelings might get hurt). Discuss how hard it is to follow God's rules perfectly. Then talk about how Jesus kept all the commandments perfectly on our behalf, and how we are saved by grace and not by following rules.

Discussion Questions

1. Name some of the commandments. Why did God give rules?
2. Why are the first four commandments important? What about the last six?
4. Is keeping the Ten Commandments easy or hard? Who can we ask to help us obey His Law?
5. Does God accept us based on our ability to obey His commands? Why or why not?
6. Who has always obeyed God's rules perfectly?

Key Passage

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

Matthew 22:37-39 NIV

Big Picture Question

What is God like?

Answer:

God is holy, good, and loving.

Unit Six

WORSHIP IN THE WILDERNESS

Key Passage

The Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him.

Exodus 15:2 ESV

Big Picture Question

What is worship?

Answer: *Worship is celebrating the greatness of God.*

Unit Six Description

As the rescued people of Israel traveled through the wilderness, God instructed His covenant people how to live holy lives in an unholy world. God also gave them rules for worship. God's law sustained their relationship with God until His perfect plan was revealed through Jesus Christ.

Week Ten

THE GOLDEN CALF

GOD DISCIPLINED HIS PEOPLE FOR WORSHIPPING A GOLDEN CALF.

Family Bible Reading EXODUS 32:1-10; 34:30-32

Family Devotional

Idolatry is often thought of as worshiping golden statues, like in our bible story. But in reality, an idol is anything a person puts in the place of God. Idols could be sports, toys, friends, or even family! Good things can turn into idols when we make them more important than God.

God led His people into the wilderness, but He did not leave them there alone. He was there with them, and He provided meat, bread, and water. But when Moses went up on the mountain and did not return for several weeks, the people felt abandoned. Instead of trusting God and being patient, they decided to make something new to worship. When God saw what they were doing, He sent Moses down the mountain at once.

The Israelites deserved to be punished for their sin against God, and in the same way, we deserve to be punished for our sin. But Moses asked God to forgive his people. He 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

Family Activity

Take some time this week to clean out a closet or toy box. As you prepare to donate or get rid of items, talk about how we all desire to have things that make us feel happy or more popular. Discuss with your kids how our “stuff” can be an idol—something that we love or trust to satisfy more than God. Ask God to cleanse your heart of any idols and to help you look to Him as your only need.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it wrong to worship anything other than God?
2. What are some reasons God deserves our worship?
3. What kinds of things do we sometimes worship instead of God?
4. Who talks to God for us when we sin?
5. How can we be forgiven when we sin?

Key Passage

The Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him.

Exodus 15:2 ESV

Big Picture Question

What is worship?

Answer:

Worship is celebrating the greatness of God.

Week Eleven

THE TABERNACLE WAS BUILT

GOD TOLD HIS PEOPLE HOW TO BUILD THE TABERNACLE WHERE HE WOULD DWELL WITH THEM.

Family Bible Reading EXODUS 35:30 – 36:2

Family Devotional

When we read about the construction of the tabernacle, we might think, “That sounds like a lot of detailed work” – and it was! But something else also stands out – the way that God stirred the hearts of His people to use their talents and resources to build 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. 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.)

As you talk to your kids about the building of the tabernacle, show them how 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) 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.

Family Activity

Use blankets and furniture to make an indoor tent. Climb into the tent and read the Bible together. Tell stories of times you felt God’s presence with you. Discuss the difference between the tabernacle and your family tent.

Discussion Questions

1. What was the purpose of the tabernacle?
2. Why does God want to dwell with people?
3. How does God dwell with His people today?
4. How can your family spend time with God?

Key Passage

The Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father’s God, and I will exalt him.

Exodus 15:2 ESV

Big Picture Question

What is worship?

Answer:

Worship is celebrating the greatness of God.

Week Twelve

RULE FOR SACRIFICES

GOD IS HOLY AND REQUIRES A SACRIFICE FOR SIN.

Family Bible Reading LEVITICUS 26:11-12, HEBREWS 10:8-18

Family Devotional

A lot of us use the term 'scape goat' as a way to describe how a person or group takes the blame for others. But did you know that term actually came from the bible? After sacrificing one animal, Leviticus 16:20 tells about how they would symbolically lay the sins of the Israelites onto a live goat, and then send the goat into the wilderness.

Leviticus is filled with rules and Laws that the Israelites were expected to live by every day. Even their rules had laws! They had rules for everything from guilt offerings to sickness. Not only that, but when they broke those rules, they were required to make an animal sacrifice to atone for their sins.

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. Jesus became our scape goat!

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*).

Family Activity

Use the internet to look up funny or crazy laws that are technically still enforceable in the United States. Talk about how those laws might have once filled a purpose but are no longer needed. Now, flip through the Book of Leviticus together and read some of the laws God gave the Israelites. Some of those laws are no longer needed, but they still show us how we are to relate to a holy God. Talk about some of the ways your family can still make sacrifices by giving something up as an act of worship to God.

Discussion Questions

1. Come up with a family definition of sin. Talk with your kids about ways you sin and some ways they sin.
2. How did people in the Old Testament pay for sin? How would you feel about your sin knowing that it cost the life of an animal?
3. Why don't Christians still offer sacrifices?
4. Who is our perfect sacrifice forever?

Key Passage

The Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him.

Exodus 15:2 ESV

Big Picture Question

What is worship?

Answer:

Worship is celebrating the greatness of God.

