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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: 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. Throughout the guide, you will also find pages to help the family get to know some of Fellowship’s Missionary Partners and pray for their ministry.

## *Unit One:* **GOD CREATED EVERYTHING** **LESSON**

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## *Unit Two:* **GOD FORMED A NATION**

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## *Unit Three:* **THE NATION GREW**

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<b>WEEK 11</b>	Jacob and Esau .....	<b>NOV 4</b>
<b>WEEK 12</b>	Jacob and Rachel .....	<b>NOV 11</b>
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# Unit One

## GOD CREATED EVERYTHING

### Key Passage

**All things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.**

Colossians 1:16b-17 NIV

### Big Picture Question

Who is God?

**Answer:** *God is our Creator and King*

### Unit One Description

*In the beginning, God created everything for His glory. He made people in His image. When sin entered the world through Adam and Eve, God revealed His plan to bring people back to Himself through a descendent—His own Son.*

# Week One

## GOD CREATED THE WORLD

GOD CREATED EVERYTHING, AND EVERYTHING HE CREATED WAS GOOD.

### Family Bible Reading

Genesis 1:1-25

### Family Devotional

Did you know that the largest animal that ever lived is the Blue Whale? Its body weight is heavier than even the largest dinosaur ever discovered! The Blue Whale is enormous—measuring up to 110 feet long and weighing over 200 tons! It would take 2,200 pounds of food to fill a blue whale's stomach, and they can eat more than 3 ½ times a day! That's more than 8,000 pounds of food. Imagine that grocery bill!

As you think about God's creation, the blue whale is a magnificent example of just how amazing God is. These giant creatures are living proof that our God is BIG—even bigger than the blue whale! Genesis 1 tells us that He created everything out of nothing and it was good. Take a moment to praise God for the wonderful world He has created. Thank Him for helping us to know more about Him through the things HE has made. Every part of creation exists to bring glory to God!

### Family Activity

Take some time this week to go on a nature walk through your neighborhood or a local park. As you spend time outdoors, talk as a family about all the things God created and how those things display God's awesomeness. Take a moment to read Colossians 1:16b-17 and thank God for His Son, Jesus, who is the Lord over all of Creation!

### Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think God created everything?
2. Can we create something out of nothing like God? What does this teach us about our relationship with God?
3. God created everything by speaking the words. What does this show us about God's power?
4. What do you think it means that everything was created for Jesus?  
(Hint: If all of creation was a display of God's power and goodness, then Jesus is an even greater revelation of this goodness and power!)
5. Ask each family member to tell about their favorite part of Creation and why he/she enjoys it so much. As a family, discuss how that part of Creation might teach us about God and His character.

#### Key Passage

**All things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.**

Colossians 1:16b-17 NIV

#### Big Picture Question

Who is God?

**Answer:**

God is our Creator and King

# Week Two

## GOD CREATED PEOPLE

GOD CREATED PEOPLE IN HIS OWN IMAGE, AND HE LOVES US.

### Family Bible Reading GENESIS 1:26-31

### Family Devotional

As a young girl, Amy Carmichael consistently asked God to change her brown eyes to blue. Her brother had blue eyes, and she wished that her eyes were blue. She would pray and ask God to make that change to her appearance, but it never happened.

As an adult, Amy Carmichael became a missionary who spread the Gospel in India for 55 years. She colored her skin with coffee so that she would have the appearance of the natives and be accepted in their culture. This helped her to gain their trust and tell them about Jesus Christ. One day, one of the Christian Indians said, "it's a good thing that your eyes are brown. If they were any other color, the people of India would not trust you or listen to you. If they were blue, you would be arrested at once, and your work here would be ended."

She realized that God had uniquely created her for a special purpose. As much as she wanted to look different and be different, God had made her according to the plans that He had for her life. There may be times when we wish we could change something about our physical appearance or our abilities, but God's Word reminds us in Psalm 139:14 that we are wonderfully created for the purposes and plans that God has for us.

### Family Activity

Read Psalm 139:14 for the family. Discuss what it means to be "fearfully and wonderfully made." Take turns giving compliments to other family members and how God has created them to reflect His beauty and His goodness. The compliments may focus on physical attributes but encourage family members to think of the way God has designed each person with unique talents, gifts, and interests that can be used for His glory.

### Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean to be made "in the image of God"?
2. How did God make us like Him? How are we different from God?
3. If everyone is created in God's image, how should we treat others?
4. What are some of the ways God has demonstrated His love for us?

#### Key Passage

**All things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.**

Colossians 1:16b-17 NIV

#### Big Picture Question

Who is God?

**Answer:**

God is our Creator and King

# Week Three

## SIN ENTERED THE WORLD

ADAM AND EVE BROKE GOD'S LAW, AND THEIR SIN SEPARATED THEM FROM GOD.

### Family Bible Reading GENESIS 2:16-17; 3:1-23

### Family Devotional

Did you know that it is against the law for anyone to walk their cow down Main Street after 1:00 pm on a Sunday? There is also a law in our state that says alligators cannot be kept in your bathtub! Where then am I supposed to keep my alligators?

These are real laws, but they're obviously very silly rules that aren't really necessary. When God gave Adam and Eve the rule to not eat the fruit of one tree, it wasn't just a silly rule. God gave that rule so that Adam and Eve could continue to enjoy an amazing relationship with Him. When they broke that rule, their sin broke their relationship with God. And ever since then, all people have been sinners who are separated from God.

But God still loves us! Romans 5:8 tells us that God has demonstrated this love by sending Jesus, just as He promised, to rescue people from sin and bring them back to God! Through faith in Jesus, we can once again have the amazing relationship with God that will last forever and ever.

### Family Activity

Make a list of your family rules. Spend some time talking about each rule and how it is for the good of the family. Talk about what consequences might result from breaking these family rules. Make sure kids understand that God's rules are for our good and our joy. Assign a family member to read Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23. Talk about how our disobedience—sin—separates us from God and breaks the relationship He wants to have with us. Read Romans 5:8 for the family. Make sure kids understand how much God loves us and how he demonstrated this love by sending Jesus to be the One who rescues us from our sin.

### Discussion Questions

1. How did the serpent trick Eve? Do you think Satan still tries to use this same trick?
2. How did sin change the world? What are some ways that we see the effects of sin in and around us?
3. How did God show His love for us even when we were sinners? (Romans 5:8)
4. What did God do to save sinners? How does it feel to know that God would do that for even just one sinner?

#### Key Passage

**All things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.**

Colossians 1:16b-17 NIV

#### Big Picture Question

Who is God?

**Answer:**

God is our Creator and King



# The Kannard Family

## ROME, ITALY

PARENTS: Clay & Lauren

KIDS: Caiden (15), Ava (12), Lila (9), Kian (2)



To help us get to know the Kannard family, we asked Lila to share about her life as a missionary in Italy:

### *Where do you live?*

We live in an apartment in the center of Rome.

### *Where do you attend school?*

I attend a public Italian school. I go to school from 8:20 am to 1:20 pm and eat lunch at home. We eat a late lunch. Then one day a week I go to school until 4:20 pm and eat lunch at school. I will be in 4th grade next year at a new school. Please pray for me to make new friends.

### *What are some of the chores you have to help your family?*

My chores are setting the table, cleaning the table and sweeping the floor after meals, and folding towels.

### *What is your favorite food and favorite dessert?*

My favorite food is pizza. My favorite dessert is stracciatella gelato, which is kind of like chocolate chip ice cream.

### *What do you like to do for fun?*

For fun, I like to go roller blading, to the beach, to my friends' houses and to get gelato.

### *Where do you attend church?*

Our church, *Breccia di Roma*, has a Sunday afternoon service. There is no Sunday school but in the beginning of the service we have something called "primi passi" (first steps). It is like a small bible lesson for children built into our service. The children stay with their parents in service.

### *If you could visit anywhere in the world, where would it be?*

If I could choose to visit anywhere in the world, I would choose France. I want to see the Eiffel Tower someday and maybe learn how to speak French.

### *What is your favorite part about being a missionary?*

My favorite part about being a missionary is serving God, telling people about Jesus, and growing up in a different culture.

#### **DID YOU KNOW ...**

Pizza, at least the kind we know with tomato sauce and mozzarella, was invented in 1889 by Raffaele Esposito, a baker in Naples, Italy. He cooked a special pizza with mozzarella, fresh tomatoes, and basil to represent the colors of the Italian flag and honor Queen Margherita. She enjoyed the pizza, and so modern pizza was created! To that we say... 'Thank you, Raffaele!'

**PRAY FOR THE KANNARD FAMILY** Pray for the Kannard family as they continue to share the love of Jesus with the people of Rome, Italy. Pray for Lila and her siblings as they move to a new school and meet new friends. Ask God to help the people of Italy know Jesus and believe in Him as Lord of all creation!



# Week Four

## NOAH AND THE ARK

GOD PUNISHED SIN BUT CHOSE TO RESCUE NOAH AND HIS FAMILY.

### Family Bible Reading GENESIS 6:9-22

### Family Devotional

When God asked Noah to build an Ark, it had to be a pretty odd request. First of all, it wasn't even raining yet. Second, why would God want Noah to bring 2 of each kind of animal onto the Ark? Why not just Noah's family? But what Noah didn't know was that God was ready to send out His punishment for sin that had spread across the whole Earth. Everything had been infected by sin, and therefore everything would be destroyed. Everything except Noah, his family, and the animals inside the Ark.

Because they were inside the Ark, they were saved from the flood. God showed His overwhelming love and kindness by giving them this way to be saved from the punishment of sin. The story of Noah, like every page of the Bible, actually points us to Jesus. God has shown us the same overwhelming love by sending Jesus to save us from our sin. Romans 8:1 says, *"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."* We can escape God's judgement against sin only through faith in Jesus Christ. Like Noah and his family found safety inside the Ark, we find our hope and salvation in Jesus! By trusting in Him, we are saved from the punishment our sin deserves.

### Family Activity

If you have younger children, take some time coloring rainbows on sheets of paper. Post the rainbows all throughout the house as reminders this week of God's promises to us—especially His fulfilled promise to send Jesus as the Savior!

If you have older children, follow online directions (<https://bit.ly/2JQXoiR>) for making an origami boat or a boat from other craft supplies. Take the boat to a pond or use your bathtub to test its floating ability. As you build the boat and test it out, have a conversation with kids about the story of Noah. Try to help kids understand why God punishes sin and how He has lovingly made a way—like the Ark for Noah—through Jesus for us to be saved.

### Discussion Questions

1. Why did God send a flood? What does this teach us about sin?
2. Why did God rescue Noah from the flood? Did Noah do something to deserve being rescued?
3. How does the story of Noah and the Ark point us to Jesus? How is Jesus an even greater rescuer?
4. How can we be saved from sin?
5. *For Older Kids:* If Jesus saves us from the punishment our sin deserves, why do we still experience pain and suffering? How should we handle this suffering? (For help, read Romans 8:18-39)

#### Key Passage

**All things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.**

Colossians 1:16b-17 NIV

#### Big Picture Question

Who is God?

**Answer:**

God is our Creator and King

# Week Five

## THE TOWER OF BABEL

PEOPLE TRIED TO BUILD A TOWER TO GLORIFY THEMSELVES INSTEAD OF GOD.

### Family Bible Reading GENESIS 11:1-9

### Family Devotional

After the flood, God told Noah and his family to “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the whole earth” (Genesis 9:1). As the number of people on the earth grew and grew, they disobeyed God’s command to spread and fill the whole earth. Instead, they clumped together and decided to build towers to show how great they were!

The people of Babel seemed to be accomplishing some amazing things. But these accomplishments were actually signs of how sinful their hearts had become. People chose to give glory to themselves instead of God. They ignored God’s plan, so God confused their language and scattered the people all over the earth. This was a reminder that God is greater than anyone and that He created us to give Him all the glory. And one day, Jesus will gather together all of God’s people—from every tribe and people who speak all kinds of languages—and they will worship Him together! (Revelation 7:9-10)

### Family Activity

Use a translation app, like Google Translate, to help your family learn some different languages. Have some fun saying common phrases in English and allowing the app to translate into other languages. Talk about how this story from Genesis 11 is the account for how the world received so many people groups and languages. Discuss how this division came as a result of sin, but how God’s plan still includes a time when every tribe and language will worship Jesus as Lord. Use the translation app to learn the phrase “Jesus is Lord” in other languages. End the conversation by thanking Jesus that He is Lord of all people and will one day have every language confess that He is Lord!

### Discussion Questions

1. Why was God not happy with the people and the things they were building?
2. What did God do to stop the people? Why did He do this?
3. What are some ways we try to make ourselves famous or seek glory for ourselves?
4. Why does God deserve all the glory? What are some ways we can glorify Him?
5. What will happen when Jesus brings His people back together one day?
6. What does this story teach us about God or about the gospel?

#### Key Passage

**All things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.**

**Colossians 1:16b-17 NIV**

#### Big Picture Question

Who is God?

**Answer:**

*God is our Creator and King*

# Week Six

## THE SUFFERING OF JOB

*JOB LEARNED THAT GOD IS GOOD, EVEN IN SUFFERING.*

### Family Bible Reading JOB 1:13-22; 42:1-3

### Family Devotional

If you read the newspaper or watch the evening news on TV, most of what you see is bad news. Sometimes it can cause us to ask: Why would God allow so many bad things to happen and so many people to suffer? When Job lost everything—including his family—he asked God a very similar question.

God reminded Job that He was all-powerful, always in control, and always good. Even though Job couldn't understand what God was doing, Job trusted in who God is. Through all the suffering, Job never turned away from God. In the end, God gave back to Job everything he had lost—and even more.

Romans 5:3-4 tells us that we can rejoice in suffering because “suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope...” Even when we don't understand the suffering that is happening to us or someone around us, we can trust that God is good, He is present, and He is in control. When we face the hard things in life, we can still trust in God and His plans. Need proof? Just think about the cross. At the cross, God used the ultimate pain and suffering to bring the ultimate Good News—our future and final salvation from sin.

### Family Activity

Identify a friend or family member who is currently sick or suffering from a hard situation. As a family, commit to pray for that person this week. Think of some tangible ways to comfort that person like visiting them, writing a card for them, or just a simple hug when you see them. If your family cannot think of anyone, consider visiting a local nursing home or hospital to comfort the residents. As you go throughout the week, talk with kids about how we can be a small comfort for those who are suffering because we can know and trust God as the ultimate source of comfort.

### Discussion Questions

1. What words would you use to describe how it feels when bad things happen to you or those around you?
2. Why do people sometimes suffer?
3. Would God still be good if He had not healed Job and given him back what he lost? Why or why not?
4. In what ways is God still good, even in suffering?
5. Read John 16:33. How do Jesus' words change the way we think about hard times or suffering?
6. When will all suffering and pain end?

#### Key Passage

**All things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.**

**Colossians 1:16b-17 NIV**

#### Big Picture Question

Who is God?

**Answer:**

*God is our Creator and King*

# Unit Two

## GOD FORMED A NATION

### Key Passage

**If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.**

**Galatians 3:29 NIV**

### Big Picture Question

*Why can we trust God?*

**Answer: We can trust God because He is faithful** and does everything for His glory and our good.

### Unit Two Description

God's plan to save people through Jesus began to take shape when God chose to bless Abraham's family by grace. He made a covenant with Abraham and promised him a new home and a large family. God also promised Abraham that one day all the people of the world would be blessed through his family—a promise that points to Jesus.

# Week Seven

## GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

GOD MADE A COVENANT TO BLESS ALL THE WORLD THROUGH ABRAHAM.

*Family Bible Reading* GENESIS 12:1-3; GENESIS 15:1-21

### *Family Devotional*

When God promised to bless Abraham and make his family as many as the stars in the sky, it would have been easy to doubt because Abraham, who was a very old man by this point, didn't even have children. But Abraham trusted God and believed in His promise.

In Abraham's time, a promise between kings or other important people was often times made with a ceremony like the one we read about in Genesis 15. The two people would sacrifice several animals and then walk by the dead animals as a way of saying, "May the same thing happen to me if I break my end of the promise!" But when it came time to celebrate the promise, God placed Abraham in a deep sleep. Instead of both of them passing between the animals, God passed by the animals just by Himself. This was God's way of saying that even though Abraham would mess up—and we would too—He was going to keep His promise to send a Savior through Abraham's descendants.

God promised to bless the whole world through Abraham, and many years later He kept that promise by sending Jesus to be born into Abraham's family. Through Jesus, all the people of the earth are blessed because He has the power to save us from our sins.

### *Family Activity*

Choose a clear night this week to go outside and stargaze. Challenge your children to count as many stars as they can. When they give up counting, talk about the covenant, or promise, God made to Abraham. Remind them that God's promise was to give Abraham as many descendants as the stars in the sky and be a blessing to many nations. This promise was ultimately fulfilled in Jesus! Jesus—born into the family line of Abraham—came to offer forgiveness and salvation to anyone who believes in Him. There is no bigger blessing than that! Read Galatians 3:29 and discuss how anyone who believes in Jesus is adopted as a son or daughter of God and is included in all the promises God has made!

### *Discussion Questions*

1. Why was it strange that God would promise to bless Abraham (Abram) with a big family?
2. Why do you think Abraham trusted God's promise?
3. What are some things that make it easier or more difficult for us to trust God's promises?
4. Why did God ask Abraham to sacrifice the animals and spread them apart along the path? What did this ceremony represent? How did God use this to show us how loving He is?
5. How did God bless the whole world—including our family—through Abraham and his family?

### *Key Passage*

**If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.**

Galatians 3:29 NIV

### *Big Picture Question*

*Why can we trust God?*

**Answer:**

**We can trust God because He is faithful** and does everything for His glory and our good.

# Week Eight

## ABRAHAM AND ISAAC

ABRAHAM TRUSTED GOD EVEN WHEN HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND GOD'S PLAN.

### Family Bible Reading GENESIS 22:1-18

### Family Devotional

Do you have a favorite toy or stuffed animal that you would never ever give away? Parents, do you have a favorite item—cellphone, TV, car with A/C—that you would never ever want to lose or be without? What would you say if God asked you to give up that special toy/item and never ever play with or use it again? Would that be difficult for you? We can all thank God for giving us the things that we love, but I imagine we would be upset if He asked us to give up something so valuable or special.

That's why the trust and obedience of Abraham is so special. When God tested Abraham's love, Abraham was faithful to do what God said—even the unthinkable assignment of sacrificing his one and only son. He obeyed God and led Isaac up the mountain toward the place where the sacrifice would be made. As Abraham prepared to do what God had asked Him to do, he was suddenly stopped by an angel of the Lord and saw that God had provided a ram to sacrifice instead of his son, Isaac.

Abraham showed his love for God by being willing to sacrifice his son Isaac. But God shows us an even-greater love by sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross. Like the ram that God provided to save Isaac's life, God provided Jesus to save sinners like us. God sent His only Son to be our substitute and die in our place. When we believe in Jesus and what He has done for us, we receive forgiveness and eternal life through Him.

### Family Activity

Invite another family to join yours on a hike. If you're up for the challenge, attempt to hike Pinnacle Mountain or the trails at Petit Jean with your family. As you hike, take the time to talk about the story of Abraham and Isaac. Ask children to describe what they would've been feeling if they were Abraham or Isaac. Ask them how they think Abraham trusted God in the midst of such a hard situation? Wrap up the hike by sharing with your family about how thankful you are for Jesus' sacrifice and his willingness to die in your place. Take a moment to say a prayer of thanks for the forgiveness and salvation that comes through faith in Jesus.

### Discussion Questions

1. What thoughts or emotions do you think Abraham would've been feeling in this situation?
2. What thoughts or emotions do you think Isaac would've been feeling in this situation?
3. Did Abraham know that Isaac would be OK? What helped him to trust in God's plans?
4. Why do you think God asked Abraham to sacrifice his son?
5. Why do you think Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son when God asked him to do so?
6. What does this story teach us about God or about the gospel?
7. How did God show His love for us?

### Key Passage

**If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.**

**Galatians 3:29 NIV**

### Big Picture Question

*Why can we trust God?*

**Answer:**

**We can trust God because He is faithful and does everything for His glory and our good.**

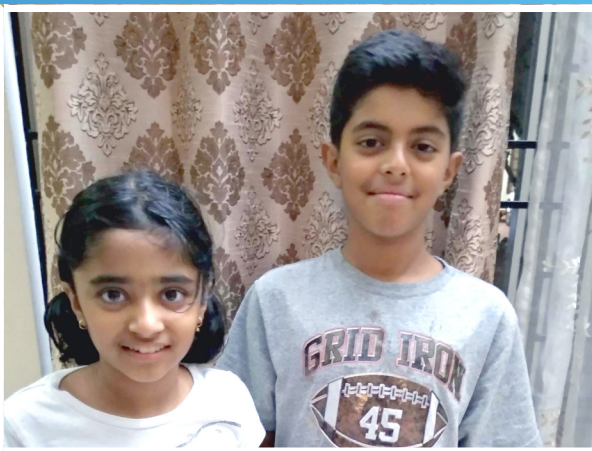
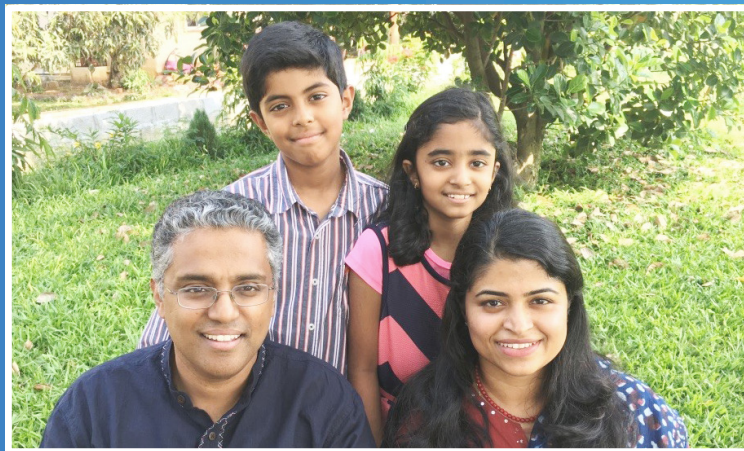


# The George Family

## HOSUR, SOUTH INDIA

PARENTS: Stephen & Rachel

KIDS: Ashish (11), Anjali (8)



To help us get to know the Georges, we asked Ashish and Anjali to share about missionary life in India:

### *Where do you live?*

We live in a town called Hosur in south India. Our house is located in a campus where about 200 people live and work.

### *What is the weather like where you live?*

The weather here is quite pleasant throughout the year except in summer (April & May). It can get very hot!

### *What are some of the chores you have to help your family?*

We have to walk our dog, bring milk from the dairy farm and help in unloading groceries.

### *Where do you go to school?*

We go to the school on our campus. It is a Christian school. There are about 3,500 kids here. We have made some friends with the kids at our school.

### *What languages do you speak?*

We are learning Hindi and Tamil at school. We speak only English now.

### *What is your favorite food?*

We like hot dogs (American food) and Puris dosa (Indian food).

### *Where do you attend church?*

We attend the campus church on Sundays. The service is 2 hours long. We also attend the Sunday School during the sermon time for adults.

### *What is your favorite song to sing at church?*

We like "I Surrender All" and "Above All Powers."

### *What is your favorite part about being a missionary?*

The best part is that we meet lots of people and we get to travel a lot.

#### **DID YOU KNOW ...**

*India is the 2nd most populated country in the world. There are approximately 1.35 billion people who live in India, which is roughly one fifth of the entire world's population. It is estimated that by the year 2030 the population of India could be more than 1.5 billion people, making it the most populated country in the world!*

**PRAY FOR THE GEORGE FAMILY** Pray for the George family and their work of sharing Jesus with the people of south India. Ask God to make Himself known to the many people who live in the country through the George family and their church. Pray for Ashish and Anjali as they continue make new friends in school.



# Week Nine

## ISAAC AND REBEKAH

GOD GAVE ISAAC A WIFE TO KEEP HIS COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM.

*Family Bible Reading* GENESIS 24:1-4, 10-27, 61-67

### *Family Devotional*

God's promise to Abraham included a family that would continue to grow and grow. God provided a son, Isaac, for Abraham, but in order for the family to continue growing, Isaac would need to find a wife. So, Abraham sent his servant to their home country to find the right woman to marry Isaac.

Can you imagine having that servant's job? Most of us have a hard-enough time picking out what we want to eat at a restaurant or what color shirt to wear for picture day, so I can't imagine the pressure of being the one to pick out a wife for my master's son. As the servant prayed to God for His help in finding the right woman, God answered his prayers and showed that He had a plan all along! Before the servant had even finished praying, Rebekah came out to draw water from the spring. She gave the servant and his camels a drink, just as the servant had prayed. Rebekah trusted God and agreed to go with the servant to marry Isaac.

As we've been learning about God's covenant with Abraham, we've asked the question: Why can we trust God? The answer is: *We can trust God because He is faithful* and does everything for His glory and our good. The story of Isaac and Rebekah is a great example of how God always has a plan and how His plans work for His glory and our good. God provided Rebekah as a wife for Isaac as part of His promise to bless the whole world through Abraham's family. One day, Jesus would be born into Abraham's family as the promised Savior. And as we learn more about Jesus, we clearly see that He is the ultimate proof that God's plans are for His glory and our good!

### *Family Activity*

Take a night this week to look through photographs or videos from your wedding. Share with your kids the story of how you and your spouse met and fell in love. If you are a single parent, take the time to look through pictures of your kids and talk about what it was like to welcome each child into your family.

Review the story of how God provided Rebekah as a wife for Isaac. Then, read Psalm 139: 13-18 aloud for the family. Talk about how God always has a plan for our lives—even before we were born. Remind children that we can trust God because He is faithful and does everything for His glory and our good!

### *Discussion Questions*

1. Why do you think the servant asked for God's help in finding a wife for Isaac?
2. How did God respond to the servant's prayer?
3. How did Rebekah show that she trusted God?
4. How was providing a wife for Isaac a part of God's promise to give Abraham a big family?
5. What has God provided for your family? How can you thank Him for those things?
6. What does this story teach us about God or about the gospel?

#### *Key Passage*

**If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.**

**Galatians 3:29 NIV**

#### *Big Picture Question*

*Why can we trust God?*

**Answer:**

**We can trust God because He is faithful and does everything for His glory and our good.**

# Week Ten

## GOD'S PROMISE TO ISAAC

GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM CONTINUED WITH ISAAC'S FAMILY.

### Family Bible Reading GENESIS 25:19-34

### Family Devotional

Do you always get along with your siblings? If you have a brother or sister, there's a pretty good chance that you've had an argument with them at some point. It seems to be those closest to us that can really get under our skin and upset us. But no sibling rivalry can be as nasty as the one between Isaac and Rebekah's twin boys, Esau and Jacob.

Esau was the oldest twin, which meant that he was the son who got the birthright, which included most of the inheritance. Jacob was the younger twin, but that didn't stop him from putting up a fight. Genesis 25 tells us that these brothers fought with one another even while they were in their mother's womb! When Rebekah asked God what was happening with her twins, God revealed that it was all a part of His plan.

Even though Esau was the oldest and rightful owner of the birthright, God's plan had Jacob growing up to carry out the promise God had made with their grandfather Abraham. Esau ended up selling his birthright to Jacob for just a bowl of soup. So even in this brotherly battle, God's covenant with Abraham continued to the next generation. God reminded Isaac of His promise and that Jacob was now the recipient to the wonderful blessings God had promised. Through Jacob's family, God would send the promised Savior to bring blessing and salvation to the world! And all this was a part of God's plan for His glory and our good.

### Family Activity

Be adventurous and plan a night to cook dinner as a family. Look online for a recipe for red lentil stew or another soup recipe that your family will enjoy. As you cook together, review the Bible story and talk about how your family is seeing God's plan through each story in Genesis. Discuss the ways in which God has already showed that He can be trusted to keep His promises. As you eat, go around the table and have each family member say which promise of God they are most thankful for. Then, have one family give thanks to God for all of His promises and their fulfillment in Jesus! (2 Corinthians 1:20).

### Discussion Questions

1. Why was it strange that God said the older son, Esau, would serve the younger, Jacob? Was this the normal practice of their culture?
2. What is a birthright? Why was it so important?
3. Why do you think Esau sold his birthright to Jacob? How was this a part of God's plan?
4. Why do you think God reminded Isaac of His covenant with Abraham?
5. What do those who believe in Jesus inherit as a "birthright"? (Read Galatians 3:29, Hebrews 11:16, Titus 3:7)
6. What does this story teach us about God or about the gospel?

#### Key Passage

**If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.**

Galatians 3:29 NIV

#### Big Picture Question

Why can we trust God?

Answer:

**We can trust God because He is faithful and does everything for His glory and our good.**

# Unit Three

## THE NATION GREW

### Key Passage

**I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.**

**Genesis 28:15 NIV**

### Big Picture Question

*Does God keep His promises?*

**Answer: God always keeps His promises** *because He is faithful.*

### Unit Three Description

*God's promises for Abraham and Isaac were promises for Jacob too. God showed Jacob in a dream that He would bless Jacob's family, which would grow to be a whole nation as a part of His plan to bring Jesus, the Savior of the world.*

# Week Eleven

## JACOB AND ESAU

REBEKAH AND JACOB TRICKED ISAAC FROM BLESSING JACOB.

### Family Bible Reading GENESIS 27:1-45; 28:10-19

### Family Devotional

Have you ever wanted something so badly that you'd do anything to get it...even lie or cheat? Sometimes the people who create video games will also create cheat codes. These cheat codes are made to give you a special advantage and easily win the game. Even when you likely could win the game on your own, you might be tempted to use the cheat code to make it easier or faster.

Even though God had already promised that He would continue His covenant through Jacob and now Esau, Rebekah and Jacob chose to trick Isaac. They dressed Jacob up and pretended to be Esau so that he could receive the father's blessing. God had told Rebekah—before her children were even born—that Jacob would carry on the promise He had made to Abraham. Rebekah and Jacob had a hard time trusting and waiting on God's promise, so they lied and cheated to get what they wanted sooner.

What is interesting in this story is that God kept His promise to Rebekah about Jacob even though they didn't trust in His timing. As Jacob's story continues, we see him creating a rock formation to remember how God visited him in a dream to repeat the promise He had made to Abraham and Isaac. That's the wonderful thing about God: He is faithful even when we are not. **God always keeps His promises because He is faithful!**

### Family Activity

Gather together scraps of colored paper, newspaper, or junk mail. Rip the paper into small pieces about the size of a quarter. As a family, work together to create a piece of mosaic art using torn pieces of colored paper, newspaper, or similar. Some ideas might be to create a cross, write your last name, or write the word "Promise" using the paper pieces.

As you work on the mosaic art, review the story of Jacob and Esau. Highlight the promise that God had made to Rebekah and how she and Jacob tricked Isaac because they struggled to trust in God's timing. Talk about some of the ways our own wants or selfishness can lead us into sin. Remind them that God was faithful to keep His promise to Rebekah even when she messed up. Like the torn pieces of paper forming a piece of art, God uses every part of our story—especially the bad or hard parts—to point us to Jesus. Wrap up by reminding the family of God's goodness and how he ultimately displays it by sending Jesus to die in our place. Through Jesus, God can take our broken lives and give new life that is for His glory!

### Discussion Questions

1. Did Rebekah and Jacob make a right choice or a wrong choice?
2. Why do you think they made that choice?
3. Why didn't God reject Jacob after he tricked Isaac?
4. After Jacob tricked Isaac and left home, what did God do to encourage Jacob?
5. How does God bless us through Jacob's family?
6. How can this story help us to trust God more when life happens differently than we plan?
7. What does this story teach us about God or about the gospel?

### Key Passage

**I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.**

Genesis 28:15 NIV

### Big Picture Question

Does God keep His promises?

Answer:

**God always keeps His promises because He is faithful.**

# Week Twelve

## JACOB AND RACHEL

LABAN TRICKED JACOB INTO MARRYING LEAH AND RACHEL.

*Family Bible Reading* GENESIS 29:1-35; 31:1-21

### *Family Devotional*

Go to the sink and try to hold the running water in your hands without letting a single drop escape. Can you do it? It's impossible. The water cannot be stopped because it will find every crack and opening to slip through. Even if you could hold onto it for a few seconds, the running water will quickly become too much and begin to overflow out of your hands. It's just impossible to stop the water!

This reminds us that nothing can stop God's plans. He is always faithful to do what He says He will do. As we follow Jacob's story, we see a lot of lies, tricks, and playing favorites that hurt people. All these bad things showed how Jacob, Laban and others failed to trust in God's plans. Each person tried to take control and make their own plans. But God used each part of Jacob's story—including the ugly parts—to accomplish His plan.

Nothing could stop God's plan for the family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Even though Jacob did not love Leah, God loved her and used her in His plan. Through the family of Jacob and Leah's son Judah, God would show His love for the world by sending Jesus to be the Savior He promised.

### *Family Activity*

As a family, practice memorizing the Key Passage (Genesis 28:15 NIV). Use the motions, play a game or make up a song to help with committing the verse to memory. After a few rounds of practicing the verse, take time to share with kids about a time in your life when you had to trust God's plans through a difficult situation. Be honest about your fears or struggles. Even if you weren't trusting in God at the time, talk with kids about how you saw God keep His promise to watch over and be with you.

### *Discussion Questions*

1. Have you ever been tempted to lie or be tricky to get what you want? What happened as a result?
2. How did God show love to Leah?
3. What are some ways God used Jacob's hard situation for good? What does this teach us about God's plans?
4. How has God shown His love to us?
5. Because God loves us, what are some ways we can show love to others?
6. What does this story teach us about God or about the gospel?

#### *Key Passage*

**I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.**

Genesis 28:15 NIV

#### *Big Picture Question*

Does God keep His promises?

Answer:

**God always keeps His promises because He is faithful.**

# Week Thirteen

## JACOB'S NEW NAME

GOD CHANGED JACOB'S NAME TO ISRAEL, THE NAME OF GOD'S COVENANT PEOPLE.

### Family Bible Reading GENESIS 32:1-32 & 33:1-4

### Family Devotional

Have you ever been afraid because you felt like a duck was watching you? If so, you suffer from Anatidaephobia, which is the scientific name for such a fear. And did you know that Hippopotomonstrosesquipedaliophobia is actually the fear of really, really long words? It's just cruel to give that fear such a long name!

The truth is we all have fears—some silly like these and some very, very real. Jacob's biggest fear was meeting his brother Esau again after hiding for 20 years. After all the lies, tricks and Esau's threats to kill him, Jacob's fears were probably not that silly. As he prepared to meet Esau, Jacob prayed to God for protection. God actually responded by meeting Jacob in the form of a man and wrestling with Jacob all through the night. At daybreak, God blessed Jacob and changed his name to Israel. God also softened Esau's heart and reunited the brothers to finally live together in their homeland after 20 years of fighting.

When Jacob wrestled with God and received a new name, God changed him from the inside out. From then on, Jacob would look to God instead of relying on himself. The same is true for us. When we trust in Jesus, God changes us from the inside out. Jesus forgives our sin, adopts us into His family, and gives us a new name—child of God! (John 1:12)

### Family Activity

Gather the family around the kitchen table. Place a saucer on the table. Sprinkle a generous amount of salt on the saucer, then sprinkle a layer of pepper over the salt. Explain that the salt represents the way God originally created people without sin and reflecting His image to the world. The pepper represents the sin that we are born in. Next, rub a plastic spoon multiple times over a microfiber cloth to build up a static charge on the spoon. Pass the spoon over the pepper and watch it "jump" off the salt.

Remind kids that, just like Jacob, we are all born in sin. There is nothing we can do to please God or earn His forgiveness. But God has shown His love by sending Jesus through Jacob's family to rescue us from sin. Like the spoon that removes the pepper from the saucer, Jesus' work on the cross removes our sin and offers us forgiveness if we believe in Him.

### Discussion Questions

1. Why was Jacob afraid? Would you be afraid in that situation?
2. Would you forgive Jacob if you were Esau?
3. Why did Jacob wrestle with God? What did He learn about God's power and control?
4. What does this story teach us about God's power and control over our future?
5. How did God bless the reunion between Jacob and Esau?
6. What can change us and give us new "names" in God?
7. What does this story teach us about God or about the gospel?

### Key Passage

**I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.**

Genesis 28:15 NIV

### Big Picture Question

Does God keep His promises?

Answer:

**God always keeps His promises because He is faithful.**



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# Thanksgiving

## FAMILY ACTIVITIES

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Thanksgiving week is a wonderful time to be with family and friends. It's also a great reminder to give 'Thanks' for the many blessings God has granted. As you prepare to celebrate this week, the following activities will help your family to practice gratitude.

### *The ABC's of Gratitude*

Begin by reading Luke 17:11-19 with the family. Discuss the story of the 10 Lepers and why only 1 returned to give thanks to Jesus when all of them had received such a miraculous gift of being healed. How easy is it to remember to give thanks for all the ways God has loved and blessed your family? Discuss some of the reasons why you might forget to actually pause and give thanks.

Explain to kids that you want to create something to remind you to give thanks for all God has done. As a family, make an acrostic of gratitude using all 26 letters of the alphabet. You will use each letter of the alphabet to think of something or someone for which they are grateful. For example, students may use the letter "P" to say that they are grateful for "Parents." Be creative and display the page or poster in the house as a reminder this week.

### *Giving Thanks in All Circumstances*

Begin by reading 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. Discuss some situations in which it is easy to give thanks and some that make thankfulness more difficult—like failing a test or fighting with a friend. Explain to kids that God doesn't expect us to be thankful for bad things, but He does want us to know that we can be thankful even while those things are happening because He is always good.

Read Romans 8:28. Remind your family that, in all things, God is in control. No matter what we're feeling or going through, God is good and His will is perfect. He never promises to keep us away from pain, but He does promise to be with us in the middle of it. That is a reason for us to be thankful.

End by leading your family in a time of "popcorn prayers." Invite them to stand and say a short prayer using the phrase, "God, I thank you for..." You can go in random order or move around the table. Help kids think of something if they struggle but encourage them to say whatever God brings to mind. This is a great prayer method to teach them to be comfortable talking with God.

### *If You're Thankful and You Know It*

Get the whole family involved and have a little fun singing the song, "If You're Happy and You Know It." Only this time, change the word 'happy' to 'thankful.' Take turns coming up with fun motions or actions to add to the song and sing as a family.

Read 1 John 4:11. Explain that one of the ways we can give thanks to God is by loving others the way He has loved us. And one of the ways we can love others is by saying 'Thank You' for the ways they have served or helped your family. Take some time to write thank you cards for someone like a teacher, coach, police officer, fireman or mailman. Make sure kids have the opportunity to deliver the note this week and give thanks to that person as an act of gratitude and worship.





