

“The *Busy Family Devotional* is so simple and accessible! A great resource for busy parents to help families connect with God. Fantastic to have a whole year’s worth of content too!”

Joanna Adeyinka-Burford, TV presenter, actor and author

“My family is like Lucy’s: we need this book to give us another chance at opening the Bible together. Simple, manageable, and deep enough to get us all thinking.”

Ed Drew, Faith in Kids

“This family devotional has clearly been created by an expert who knows just what families are looking for. Each part has been carefully and thoughtfully considered. My husband loved the ice breaker that got us to think more widely about the topic. I love the symbol that works for younger kids who just want to colour (or cover in stickers!) but is abstract enough to help older kids stay visually focused. The questions have been very cleverly worded to be multi-age and open-ended. As a family with teenagers and a younger child, I can see us devouring this devotion in much less than fifty-two weeks and asking for more by the end!”

Joanne Gilchrist, writer and Director of Ruach Resources, the home of the God for Kids app and books

“Lucy Rycroft has achieved the impossible: a genuine family devotional that will suit a wide range of ages including the adults, that covers the whole story of the Bible and that feels entirely manageable even in the mess and confusion of busy family life. Snap it up: Lucy knows her stuff, and this will work!”

Amy Scott Robinson, author and performance storyteller

“Lucy has created a book that gets families directly into the Bible in a totally accessible way. My family will be talking about what we’ve read well beyond the initial reading because of the great

discussion and prayer prompts. This is the perfect way to help kids develop a sense of the timeline of the Bible without overwhelming parents.”

Christie Thomas, award-winning author of *Fruit Full: 100 family experiences for growing in the fruit of the spirit*

“Lucy Rycroft has been encouraging and resourcing family faith for years with practical and realistic wisdom. As a parent of four children, she knows how busy family life can be and what is possible with children of different ages and personalities. This book is a light and simple invitation to families to jump into Scripture together without the pressure of preparation, activities, or planning. It can be done in the car, while you are waiting for your other child to get out of swimming, or wherever you find yourself with a slice of time. Exactly what busy families need!”

Rachel Turner, founder of Parenting for Faith

For Joel, Lois, Zac and Ben (and Al) –
thanks for being such willing guinea pigs
for a gazillion different family devotional resources over the years
(and probably more to come – sorry!).
Hope you enjoy this one.

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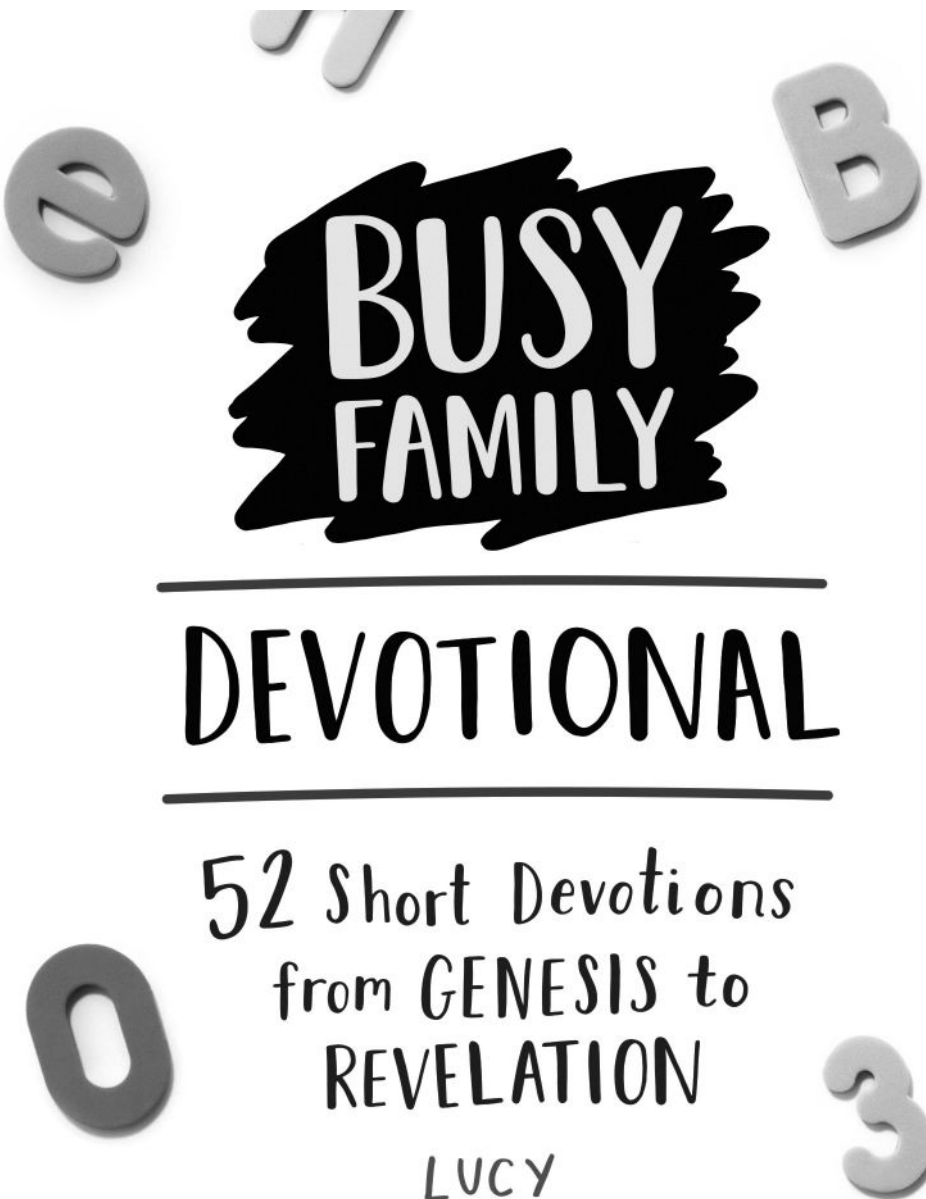
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BUSY FAMILY

DEVOTIONAL

52 Short Devotions
from GENESIS to
REVELATION

LUCY
RYCROFT



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Hello, busy parent!

OK, so I don't know you – but if you're a parent, I'm making a wild guess that you're busy. Life is full on with kids, isn't it? Running about from A to B, juggling work deadlines, school runs, hospital appointments, football training, music lessons... oh, and remembering to keep everyone fed and dressed in the midst of all this.

(True story: today my boys walked out of a party without their shoes on. I won't tell you how far they walked before I noticed. Or the fact that they didn't seem to notice at all.)

Above all the chaos and busyness of a modern family, though, is one thing that is so much more important than whether your kids cleaned their teeth this morning – and that is nurturing our children's relationship with Jesus through God's Word, the Bible. It is the one treasure worth selling everything for, the one aim worth sacrificing academic success for, the one foundation worth building in our children's lives. But fitting this into busy family life sometimes feels impossible. What to do?

That's where this book comes in. Treat it like a **Best Friend to Busy Christian Parents Everywhere**. Your unofficial guide to leading your children through Scripture. A resource to help you all (because family devotionals aren't just for kids, right?) grow in understanding and relationship with the God who created and loves you.

It's short – that's deliberate, because the Bible can speak for itself. Commentaries and reflections have their place, but when you're

short on time, focus on the Bible, rather than someone else's interpretation.

It's simple – that's deliberate, too. You don't need to find glue sticks and pom poms; nor do you need to plan in special activities in order to "complete" each devotional. These can be fun, of course, but when time is short and the mental load is heavy, you don't need one more thing to add to your schedule.

Maybe you'd call yourself a Christian. Maybe you wouldn't – perhaps someone's gifted you this book so you're just being polite in opening it up. It really doesn't matter. I'd encourage you – wherever you feel you are on your faith journey – to start using this guide together as a family.

You don't need a theology degree or any specialist Bible knowledge – everything you need is right here.

My prayer is that this book would help your whole family draw closer to Jesus. Will you pray that with me?

With love,

Lucy x

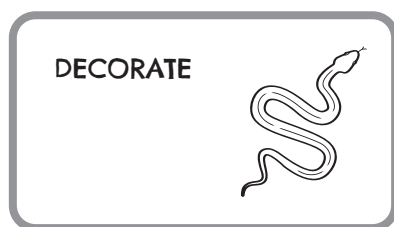
(Your friend and comrade in busy parenthood)

How to use this book

There are fifty-two devotions in this book – it doesn't take a genius to work out that the idea here is to do one per week for a year. You, of course, do entirely as you wish. No one's checking up on you because we're all too busy running after our toddlers or keeping our teens from devouring the entire contents of the fridge.

Do them more frequently and get the whole thing done and dusted in a few months. Or spread it out more sparsely. Whatever works for you.

Each devotion consists of:



A SYMBOL – decorate these when you've read each devotion as a helpful prompt to remember the story and your discussion.

AN ICE BREAKER – just a bit of fun really, don't worry if you can't think of a specific answer; you'll find these questions provoke discussion rather than set answers, and that's all good! Please be prepared as grown-ups to share your own answers too – this will deepen the relationship between you and your children as they

learn more about you, and perhaps learn about some incidents from your life before they were born.

CONTEXT – some words to connect the previous reading with the one you're about to read.

READ THE STORY – choose any Bible translation, although I recommend International Children's Bible, New International Version, or New Living Translation. If you don't have a Bible to hand, then you could look up the passage online at:

www.biblegateway.com

DISCUSS – three questions, at least one of which is more “open”; if you're met with blank faces for the closed questions, it may be helpful to re-read the section of the reading which contains the answer.

PRAYER PROMPT – moving away from the classic “Thank you, please, sorry” way we often teach our kids to pray, these prayer prompts are more to instigate conversation between your child and God. My thanks to the wonderful Rachel Turner for introducing me to this concept.

MEMORY VERSE – please don't try to attempt to learn every single one! We try one a month (absolute tops) in our household, but do what works for you. They're there to use if they're helpful; they're not there to stress you out.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Timeline – at the end of the book the stories have been set out as a timeline and this will provide a visual help to track where you are in the Bible, and give you a basic idea of how the stories fit together.

WEEK 1:

The Tempting Fruit

ICE BREAKER

If you could only eat one fruit for the rest of your life, which would it be?

READ THE STORY

Genesis 3:1–9

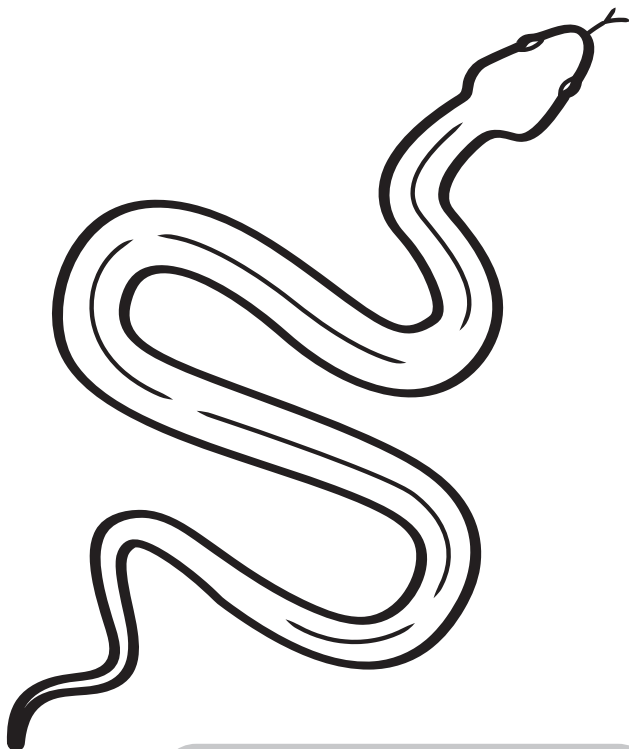
CONTEXT

God creates the most beautiful world... and humans to live in it! But there is one rule: no munching the fruit from the tree of knowledge. God knows that if Adam and Eve eat from that tree, some of their new knowledge will spoil their happiness.

DISCUSS

- Why did Eve, and then Adam, eat the fruit?
- How do you know that Adam and Eve felt miserable and ashamed for disobeying God?
- What do you think might have happened if they hadn't eaten the fruit? Would life be perfect now?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Tell God about a time you made a bad choice, and – if you can remember – how it made you feel.

MEMORY VERSE

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge.” Proverbs 1:7

WEEK 2:

The Sky's the Limit

ICE BREAKER

What is the highest point you've been to? What was the view like?

READ THE STORY

Genesis 11:1–9

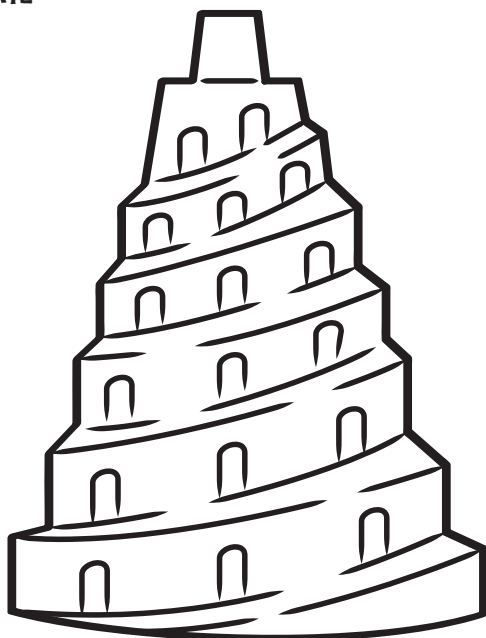
CONTEXT

Adam and Eve have been sent out of the garden, but God still protects them and cares for them. Over time, however, their children and their children's children turn away from God and start treating each other badly. God sends a flood to destroy all this evil but protects faithful Noah and his family. The flood dries up. Life will be better now all the evil has gone... or will it?

DISCUSS

- Why did the people want to build a tower?
- Why did this make God sad?
- Is it wrong to want to be famous?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Tell God what you love most about his creation. It could be a favourite animal, a favourite spot in nature, or anything he has made!

MEMORY VERSE

**“Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise;
his greatness no one can fathom.”** Psalm 145:3

WEEK 3:

Hagar Runs Away

ICE BREAKER

Have you ever held a really young baby? Who was it?
How old were they?

READ THE STORY

Genesis 16

CONTEXT

God has stopped people from destroying the earth with their evil actions, but that doesn't mean that humans stop messing up! Even Abraham (Abram) and Sarah (Sarai), who had a lot of faith, didn't always find it easy to trust God.

DISCUSS

- Why was Sarai so keen for Abram to marry Hagar?
- How do you think Hagar felt in the desert?
- How did God make Hagar feel?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Tell God about a time you've felt lonely – perhaps at school, in bed at night, or when you were ill. Next time you feel this way, ask God to comfort you, as he did Hagar.

MEMORY VERSE

“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.” Jeremiah 29:13

WEEK 4:

Jacob's Dream

ICE BREAKER

Can you remember any of your dreams? If so, share what happened!

READ THE STORY

Genesis 28:10–22

CONTEXT

Abraham and Sarah eventually have a baby called Isaac – and when Isaac grows up, he has twin baby boys called Esau and Jacob. And as they grow up, they don't like each other very much. Jacob tricks Esau out of something very valuable: his father's blessing and inheritance – and then, worried that Esau might take revenge, he runs away from home.

DISCUSS

- Where was Jacob when he had this dream?
- What did God promise Jacob in the dream?
- How did this dream make Jacob feel?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Do you need help with something at the moment? Ask God for what you need.

MEMORY VERSE

**“The LORD is with me; he is
my helper.”** Psalm 118:7

WEEK 5:

Slave in Charge

ICE BREAKER

Who do you know who is “in charge” of something?
(You could think of the person in charge of your school/ nursery, your church, your family, your clubs and activities, your local shop...)

READ THE STORY

Genesis 39:1–6

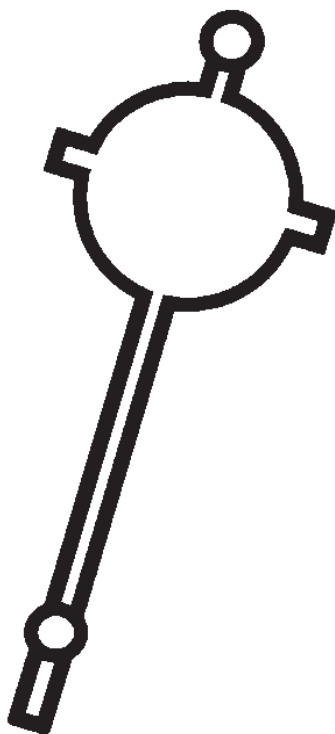
CONTEXT

God keeps his promise to Jacob, who goes on to have twelve sons. One of them, Joseph, is not much liked by his brothers (do you spot a pattern here?), and eventually they sell him to some traders travelling to Egypt. In Egypt, Joseph is sold on as a slave, but God is with him and helps him to do well.

DISCUSS

- Why did Potiphar make Joseph his special servant?
- Why do you think Joseph worked hard when he'd been so badly treated?
- Do you think God can bring good out of bad situations?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Tell God about a hard situation that either you or someone you know is going through right now.

MEMORY VERSE

“We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him.” Romans 8:28

WEEK 6:

The Missing Cup

ICE BREAKER

If you have siblings, how well do you get on with them? If you don't have siblings, think of a friend who does; how do they all get on?

READ THE STORY

**Genesis 44:1–13,
45:1–15**

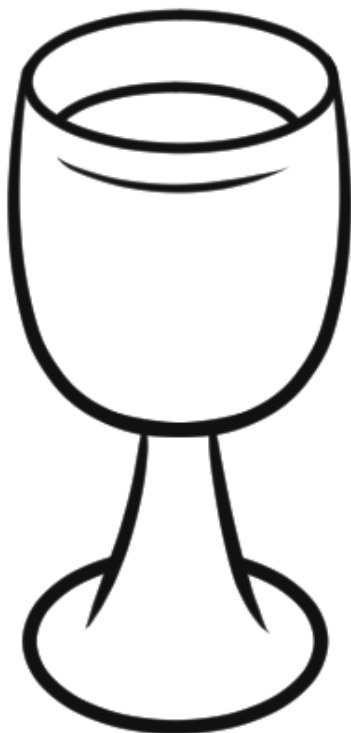
CONTEXT

God has blessed Joseph's work so much that he is now the prime minister of Egypt. When there's a famine in his home country of Israel, Joseph's brothers travel to Egypt to buy food and end up in front of him. It's been many years and they don't recognize Joseph, but he recognizes them. He sets them a challenge to see if they've changed from the jealous brothers they were when they sold him into slavery.

DISCUSS

- Where did Joseph plant the missing cup?
- Why do you think Joseph didn't tell his brothers who he was straight away?
- How do you think Joseph can forgive his brothers for what they've done?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

If you have siblings, ask God to help you get along well. If you don't, then pray for a friend to get along well with their siblings.

MEMORY VERSE

“Forgive as the Lord forgave you.” Colossians 3:13

WEEK 7:

God Calls Moses

ICE BREAKER

What's the best fire you have ever seen?

READ THE STORY

**Exodus 3:1–14,
4:1–17**

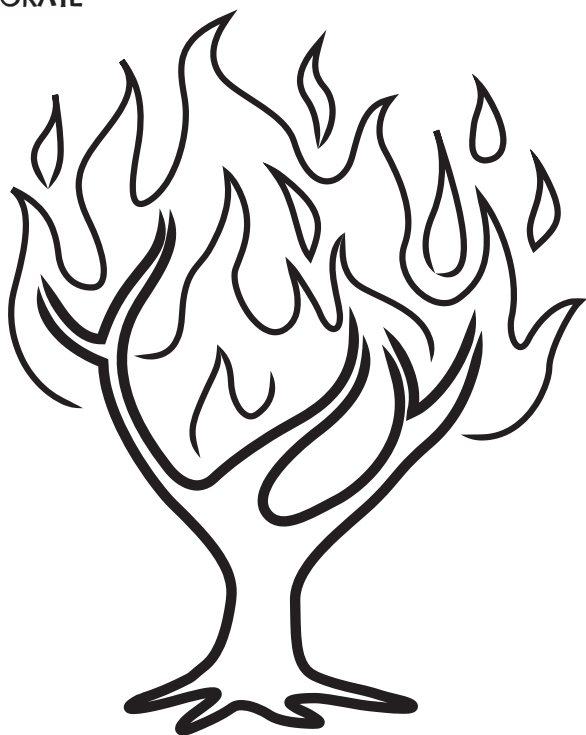
CONTEXT

Joseph's family settle in Egypt, but many years later their descendants (the Israelites) are being treated badly as slaves for the Egyptians. The Israelites call out to God to rescue them, and he has one person in mind to lead them out of Egypt.

DISCUSS

- Why did Moses say no when God first told him to lead his people out of Egypt?
- What did God say to Moses to reassure him?
- Why do you think Moses eventually agreed to do it?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Tell God about something you're scared of.

MEMORY VERSE

“Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God.” Isaiah 41:10

WEEK 8:

God Leads the Way

ICE BREAKER

Have you ever lost your way on a journey? Perhaps a family walk which ended up being longer than planned, or a road-trip where the SatNav let you down?

READ THE STORY

Exodus 13:17–22

CONTEXT

Moses goes to Pharaoh to ask him to let the Israelites go. Pharaoh says, “No!” After ten plagues, however, Pharaoh has no choice left but to say yes, and the Israelites (God’s people) are on their way to the land God has promised them.

DISCUSS

- Why didn’t God want his people to take the shortest route?
- What did God provide to guide his people?
- How would you have felt being guided in this way?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Think about an event or decision you have coming up soon. Ask God to guide you through it.

MEMORY VERSE

**“Your word is a lamp for my feet,
a light on my path.”** Psalm 119:105

WEEK 9:

The Ten Commandments – Loving God and Others

ICE BREAKER

Share some of the rules you have at school, nursery, home or in other groups you're part of. Why do we have these rules?

READ THE STORY

Exodus 20:1–17

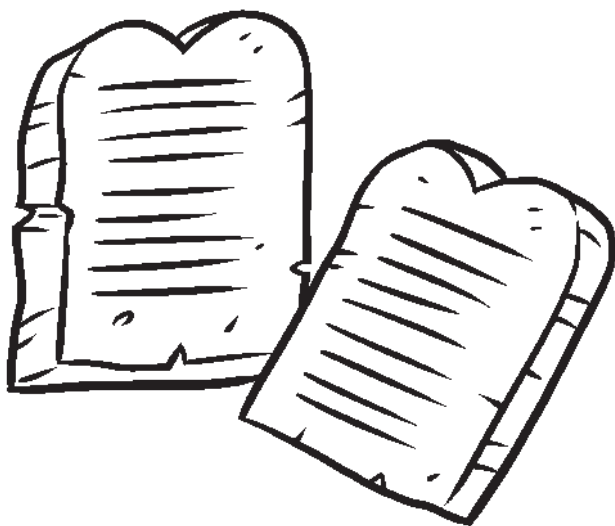
CONTEXT

The Israelites aren't finding it very easy to obey God while they travel together to the Promised Land. They grumble that they don't have enough to eat or drink, and that they'd be better off going back to slavery. So God calls Moses up a mountain and gives him something very special to pass on to his people.

DISCUSS

- Why did God give his people rules?
- Do you think anyone would ever be able to keep all those rules? Why/why not?
- When we break God's rules, there is good news! What is it? (Hint: check out today's memory verse!)

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

How have you loved God or others recently? If there's anything you need to say sorry for, tell God now.

MEMORY VERSE

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins.” 1 John 1:9

WEEK 10:

“We Can’t Do It!”

ICE BREAKER

Has anyone ever told you something you found hard to believe, but which was actually true?

READ THE STORY

**Numbers 13:25 –
14:9**

CONTEXT

The journey to the Promised Land has taken a long time, but finally God’s people arrive at the border. It is an area called Canaan. Moses sends twelve spies into Canaan for six weeks, to thoroughly explore the land and report back.

DISCUSS

- Why don’t the spies think the Israelites can move into Canaan?
- What do Caleb and Joshua think about this?
- What makes these two spies so brave?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Is there something you find hard to believe about God? Ask him to help you.

MEMORY VERSE

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.” Proverbs 3:5

WEEK 11:

Rahab Saves the Spies

ICE BREAKER

What is the most impressive, interesting, or beautiful city you have ever been to or seen pictures of?

READ THE STORY

Joshua 2:1–22

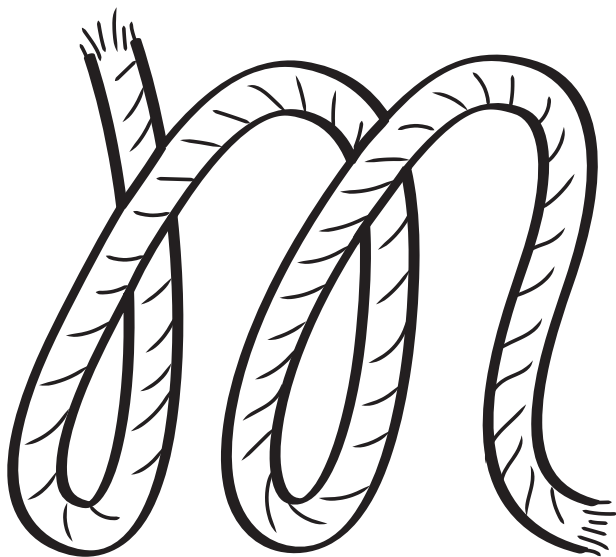
CONTEXT

Because God's people didn't trust he would give them the land of Canaan, they are told they won't enter the Promised Land. So they wander in the desert for many years. Moses grows old and dies. God calls Joshua to lead the Israelites on their journey, and they start to move into the land of Canaan – starting with the city of Jericho. Joshua sends out two spies to explore the city, but they are spotted entering the house of Rahab.

DISCUSS

- How does Rahab save the men?
- Rahab is not an Israelite, so why does she save Israelite spies?
- How do the spies promise to repay her? (Look ahead to Joshua 6:25 to see whether they kept their promise!)

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Think about where you need protection in the near future – a sport or active hobby, a day trip, a long car journey – and ask God to keep you safe.

MEMORY VERSE

“I will say of the LORD, ‘He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.’” Psalm 91:2

WEEK 12:

The Walls Fall Down

ICE BREAKER

Can you remember the last thing you owned which broke? How did you feel?

READ THE STORY

Joshua 6:1–25

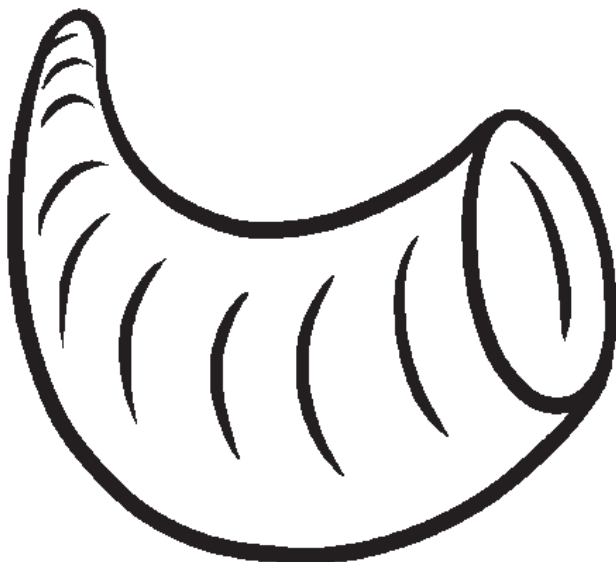
CONTEXT

The Israelite spies return to Joshua; everyone gets excited, knowing that God is going to give them the land of Canaan, starting with Jericho. In order to get there, the Israelites have to cross the River Jordan. Getting many thousands of people across a flowing river is no easy feat, but God performs a wonderful miracle and they cross safely. Then he gives them the strange instructions to march around Jericho seven times, blowing their trumpets, without attacking.

DISCUSS

- What does God ask the soldiers to do?
- Why is this strange?
- Who is responsible for the Israelites capturing Jericho, and why?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Ask God to help you hear him,
trust him, and then obey him.

MEMORY VERSE

**“Seek first his kingdom and his
righteousness, and all these things will
be given to you as well.”** Matthew 6:33

WEEK 13:

Deborah and Barak

ICE BREAKER

What kind of tasks do you enjoy helping others with?

READ THE STORY

Judges 4:1–16

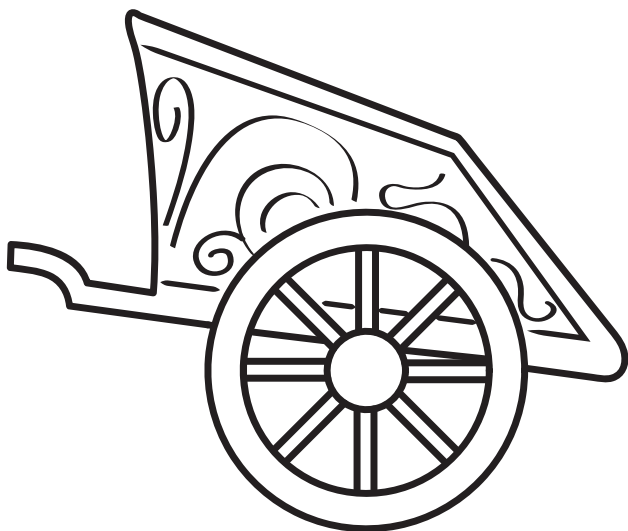
CONTEXT

God's people settle in Canaan, but after many years Joshua dies and the people forget about God and how he has commanded them to live. They start to worship other gods and act cruelly toward one another. So God sends leaders to help them live in a better way; these are called judges and there are twelve of them. Judge number four – and the only woman amongst them – is called Deborah.

DISCUSS

- What's going wrong for Israel?
- Why doesn't Barak want to fight General Sisera?
- What does Deborah do?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Tell God about someone who helped you recently – or someone you were able to help.

MEMORY VERSE

“Keep me safe, my God, for in you I take refuge.” Psalm 16:1

WEEK 14:

Trumpets and Lamps

ICE BREAKER

What is the loudest noise you have ever heard?

READ THE STORY

Judges 7:15–23

CONTEXT

After Deborah, the next judge is Gideon. God calls him to lead Israel, even though he is young and nervous. In the reading today, Gideon is preparing to lead his soldiers into battle against the Midianites. Even though he has a very small army, God has told him to make it even smaller. Eventually, with just three hundred men left, Gideon and his army advance.

DISCUSS

- What do Gideon's soldiers carry with them?
- How much fighting do Gideon's soldiers have to do?
- Which Bible story does this remind you of? (Hint: if you can't think, look back a couple of weeks!)

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Even though you may be small,
our God is very big and powerful.
Praise him for this!

MEMORY VERSE

**“Don’t let anyone look down on you
because you are young, but set an example
for the believers in speech, in conduct,
in love, in faith and in purity.” 1 Timothy 4:12**

WEEK 15:

Ruth and Naomi

ICE BREAKER

What was the last meal you ate? How long ago was it?

READ THE STORY

Ruth 1:6–18, 2:1–12

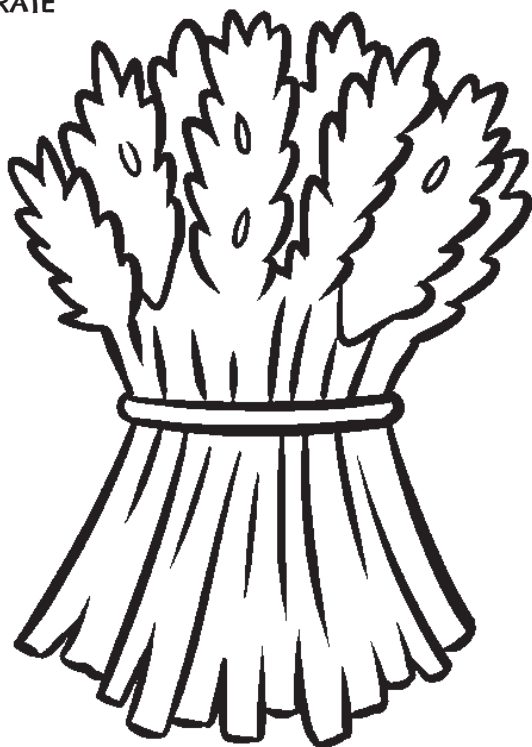
CONTEXT

Do you remember there were twelve judges of Israel? Our reading today takes place in the time of these judges – we don't know exactly when. Imagine you're watching a play, and the scene changes. We're no longer in Israel, but in the nearby country of Moab. Elimelech and his wife Naomi have moved there with their two sons because of a famine in Israel. The two sons grow up but sadly Elimelech dies. Then after the boys get married, they die too. Naomi is left with her daughters-in-law Orpah and Ruth in a foreign country. She plans to go back to Israel.

DISCUSS

- What brave decision does Ruth make?
- What does Ruth do to provide for herself and Naomi?
- Why is it good that Ruth goes to Boaz's field, rather than that of another landowner?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Talk to God about people in the world who don't have enough to eat, and ask him to provide.

MEMORY VERSE

"Give us today our daily bread." Matthew 6:11

WEEK 16:

“I’m Listening, Lord”

ICE BREAKER

What is the strangest noise that has ever woken you up?

READ THE STORY

1 Samuel 3:1–18

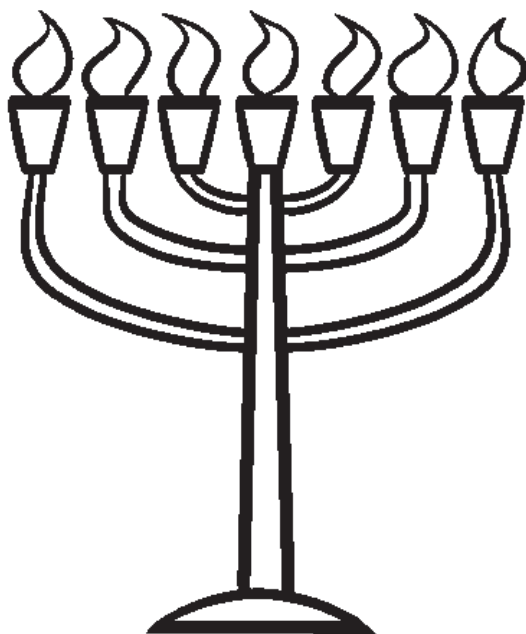
CONTEXT

Some years after Ruth died, a woman called Hannah desperately wanted a baby. She prayed to God and said that if he gave her a baby, she would give him back to God. Her prayers were answered, and she gave birth to a boy whom she called Samuel. Hannah was as good as her word: once he was old enough to leave her, Samuel was taken to live in God’s temple, growing up under the care of Eli.

DISCUSS

- When Samuel hears his name, who does he think is calling him?
- Why does Eli think Samuel is hearing God’s voice?
- How would you feel if God gave you such a difficult message to pass on?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Thank God that he never leaves you, even at night. If you want to, why not tell him that you're listening and invite him to speak to you now?

MEMORY VERSE

“The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is majestic.” Psalm 29:4

WEEK 17:

The Giant's Challenge

ICE BREAKER

Who's the tallest person you know? Or the tallest person in your class/school?

READ THE STORY

1 Samuel 17:12–37

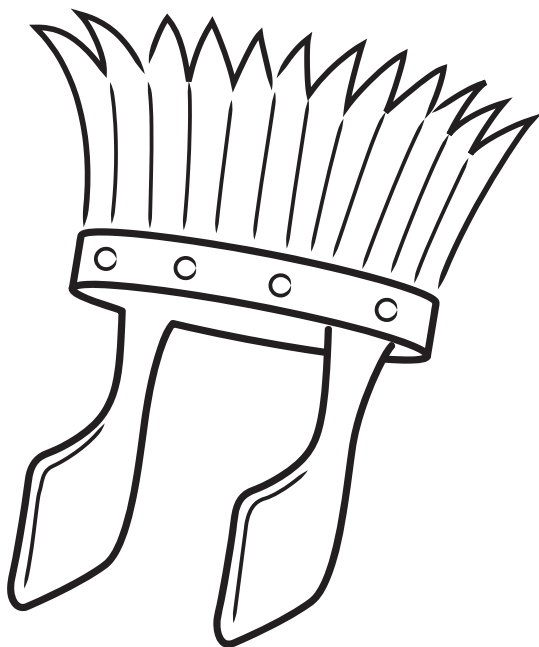
CONTEXT

God's people have asked him for a king. Although God is sad that they don't want *him* to be their king, he gives them what they want. Samuel (now grown up) anoints King Saul, but he doesn't turn out to be a very good king. So God sends Samuel to anoint David (Ruth's great-grandson) as king to follow Saul; however, it will be a few years before he's on the throne. The event in today's reading takes place in that time between David being anointed and becoming king.

DISCUSS

- Why are the Israelites terrified?
- Why isn't David scared?
- Why do you think David is so confident that he can fight Goliath?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Is there anything happening soon
that you're feeling anxious about?
Tell God.

MEMORY VERSE

**“When I am afraid, I put my
trust in you.”** Psalm 56:3

WEEK 18:

Danger Signal

ICE BREAKER

What makes a good friend?

READ THE STORY

**1 Samuel 20:1–15,
35–42**

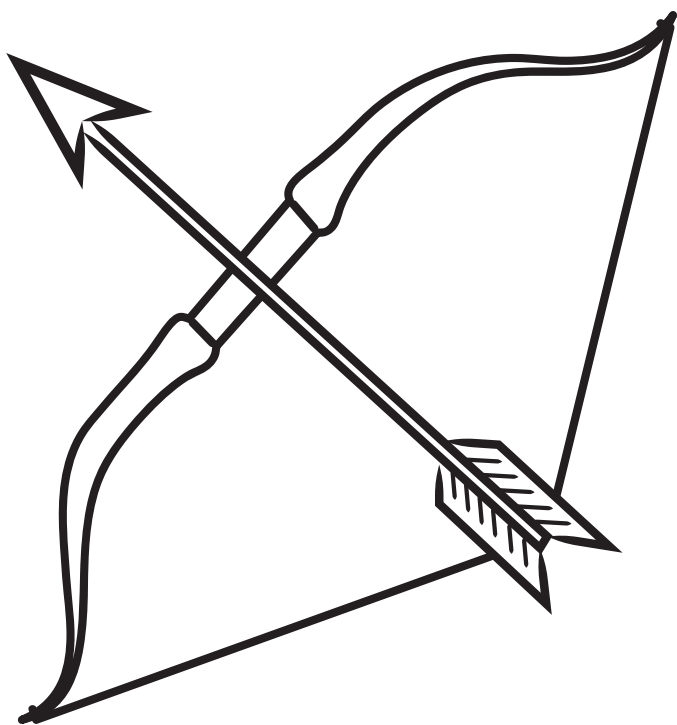
CONTEXT

While he is waiting to become king, David wins many battles for King Saul. But instead of feeling grateful, Saul feels jealous: David is becoming more popular than him. Meanwhile, David has become best friends with Jonathan, Saul's son. Jonathan is a very loyal friend to David.

DISCUSS

- At the start, does Jonathan believe that his father, King Saul, would harm David?
- What changes Jonathan's mind?
- What promise does David make to Jonathan?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Tell God about your friends. Ask him to help you be a good and loyal friend.

MEMORY VERSE

“A friend loves at all times.” Proverbs 17:17

WEEK 19:

Nabal the Fool

ICE BREAKER

Can you think of a time when you were really hungry?

READ THE STORY

1 Samuel 25:2–39

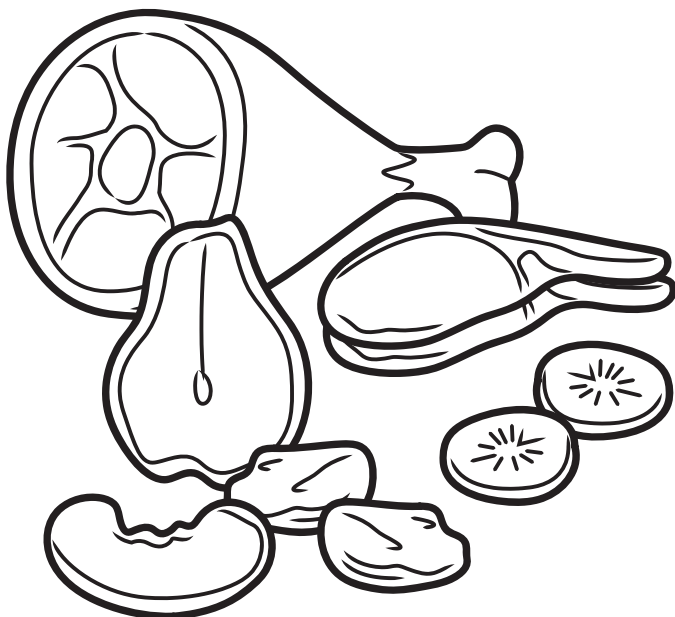
CONTEXT

David has managed to keep out of King Saul's way. He is safe – and the time for him to become king is drawing near. But for now he is living in the desert with some friends.

DISCUSS

- Why does David expect food from Nabal?
- What surprises you about Nabal's response?
- How does Abigail bring peace to the situation?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Ask God to help you to be generous with what you have.

MEMORY VERSE

“God loves a cheerful giver.” 2 Corinthians 9:7

WEEK 20:

David Keeps His Promise

ICE BREAKER

Do you ever make promises?
Can you think of one
you've made?

READ THE STORY

2 Samuel 9:1–13

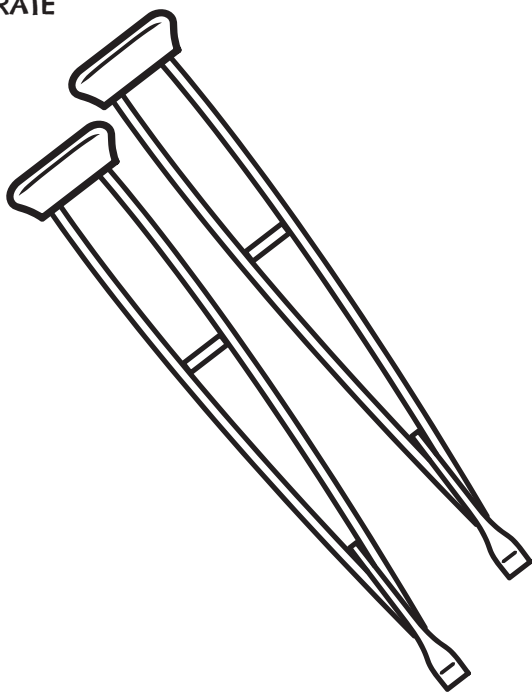
CONTEXT

David has become king. In those days, it was common for a new king to destroy anyone related to the previous king, in case they threatened to take the throne back and cause trouble. But do you remember the promise King David made to his best friend Jonathan, the son of the previous king, Saul? (Clue: look at week 18!)

DISCUSS

- What does Mephibosheth expect will happen to him in King David's court?
- What actually happens?
- What does this teach us about how we should care for others?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Tell God about someone you know who is ill or in a difficult situation.

MEMORY VERSE

“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress.” James 1:27

WEEK 21:

Solomon's Dream

ICE BREAKER

If you could have any of these things, which would you choose? Unlimited money, unlimited time or unlimited wisdom?

READ THE STORY

1 Kings 3:5–15

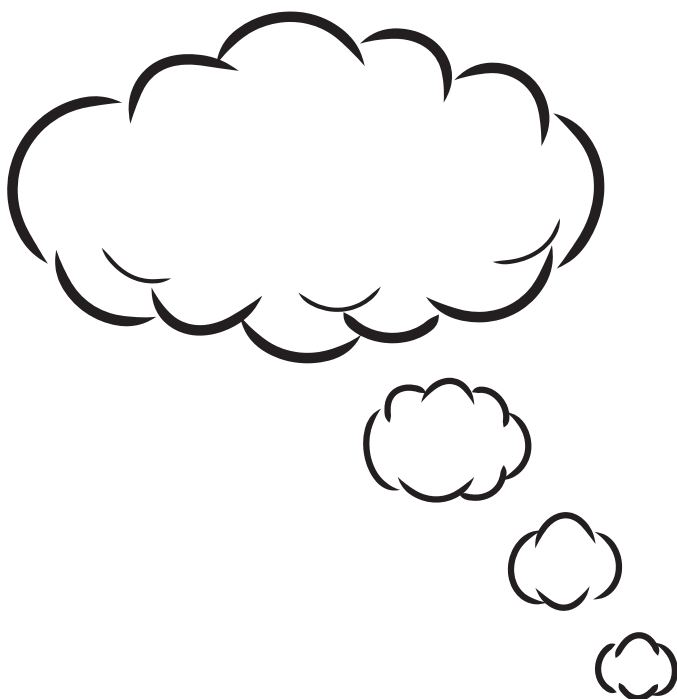
CONTEXT

After a long and successful reign, King David grows old and his son Solomon is anointed to be the next king. Once King David dies, King Solomon takes over the rule of Israel. It is a daunting task.

DISCUSS

- What does Solomon ask God for?
- Why do you think he asks for this?
- What are the benefits to God giving him this?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Ask God for wisdom as you live your life and make decisions.

MEMORY VERSE

“If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously.” James 1:5

WEEK 22:

Building God's Temple

ICE BREAKER

What was the last thing you built? Lego, craft project, brick tower, model kit, furniture, something else?

READ THE STORY

**1 Kings 6:11–38,
8:6–12**

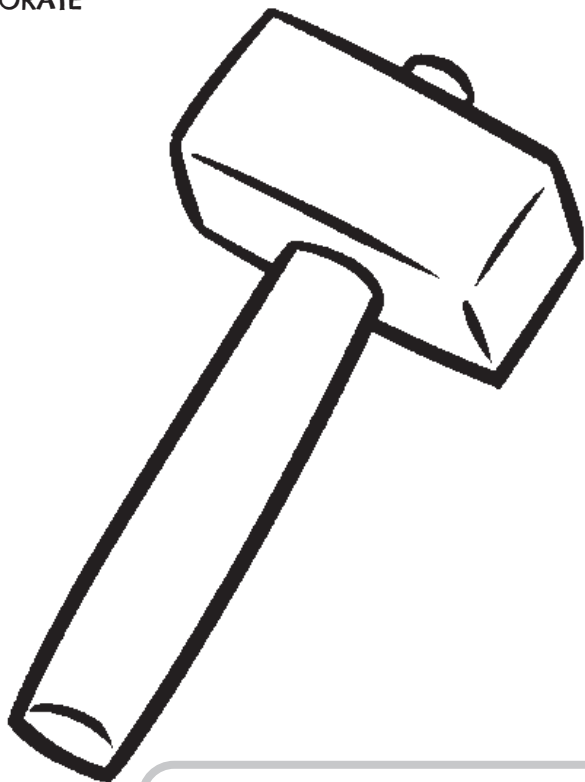
CONTEXT

A few years into King Solomon's reign, it is time for him to do something very important. He is to follow the instructions given to him by his father, King David, for building a magnificent temple where people will be able to come and worship God.

DISCUSS

- What clues does the reading give you about how beautiful the temple must have been?
- What kind of tools or machinery would be used in making such a temple today?
- Why do you think Solomon and his workers took on such a difficult task?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Thank God for the talents and abilities he's given you. Ask him to help you use them well.

MEMORY VERSE

“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works.” Ephesians 2:10

WEEK 23:

The Food That Never Ran Out

ICE BREAKER

How good are you at sharing?
Be honest!

READ THE STORY

1 Kings 17:8–16

CONTEXT

King Solomon rules Israel for forty years. After he dies, there is disagreement about who should be the next king, so God's Promised Land is split into two: Israel and Judah, each with their own king. Then comes a succession of kings who aren't faithful to God's ways. One of the worst is King Ahab and his controlling wife, Queen Jezebel. During their rule, there is a faithful prophet called Elijah who always does what God says – even when it puts his life in danger. But God always looks after him. There is a drought in Israel, and God has directed Elijah to go to a town called Zarephath, to the north of Israel, where he will get food from a widow.

DISCUSS

- Why doesn't the woman feel able to give Elijah any food?
- Elijah makes a big promise! Would you have believed him?
- Why do you think the woman believes Elijah?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Ask God to help you share,
especially when it seems like you
don't have enough.

MEMORY VERSE

“Ask and it will be given to you.” Matthew 7:7

WEEK 24:

God Sends Fire

ICE BREAKER

Do you like competitions?
Have you ever won a prize?

READ THE STORY

1 Kings 18:20–40

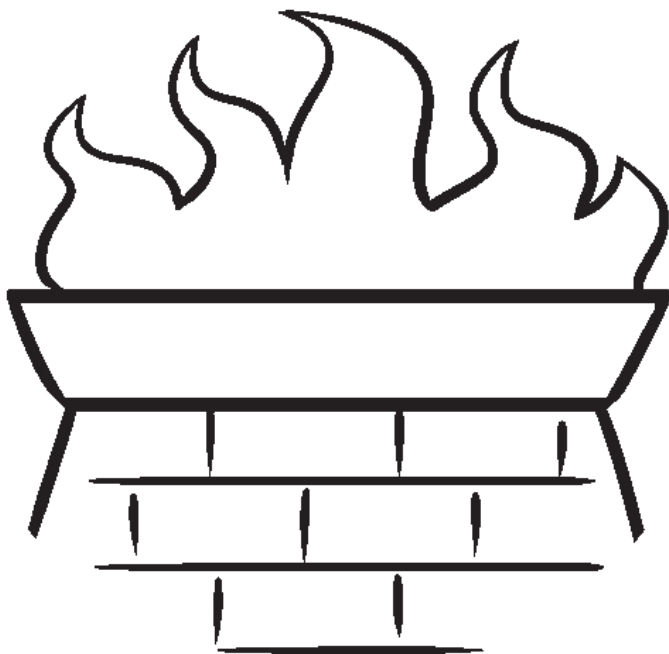
CONTEXT

The drought we read about in the last reading is still going on – there has been no rain for three years. King Ahab blames this on Elijah, but Elijah has told him clearly that the reason there has been no rain is because the king and his wife, Queen Jezebel, have ruled the country in a manner that has shown no respect for God. They have been worshiping Baal instead. Elijah has called King Ahab and the people of Israel to the top of Mount Carmel for a special competition to see who the real God is.

DISCUSS

- What is the test that Elijah suggests for both Baal and God?
- What do the Baal worshipers do to summon fire? What does Elijah do?
- Why did Elijah make the test harder by pouring water on the altar?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Thank God that he will always win every competition! Tell him how great he is.

MEMORY VERSE

“The LORD your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves.” Zephaniah 3:17

WEEK 25:

The Still, Small Voice

ICE BREAKER

Have you ever experienced strong winds, heavy rain, or an earthquake?

READ THE STORY

1 Kings 19:4–18

CONTEXT

After the episode on Mount Carmel, Queen Jezebel is not happy with Elijah, and threatens to kill him. So, Elijah runs away. Tired and hungry, he grumbles at God. He can't see that any of his words or actions have made any difference: people are still worshipping Baal, and King Ahab and Queen Jezebel still won't praise and respect God. God provides Elijah with food and water in the desert to show that he cares for him. Elijah carries on his journey until he comes to Mount Sinai – where God gave Moses the Ten Commandments. There he prepares to spend the night in a cave.

DISCUSS

- What is Elijah complaining about?
- Which three dramatic events occur next?
- Why do you think God speaks in a still, small voice rather than through the loud, dramatic events? What does he say?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Are you feeling fed up with anything right now? Tell God about it.

MEMORY VERSE

**“Out of the depths I cry to
you, LORD.”** Psalm 130:1

WEEK 26:

Alive Again

ICE BREAKER

What is your most precious possession?

READ THE STORY

2 Kings 4:18–37

CONTEXT

Elijah has grown old and died. But the companion God provided for him, Elisha, continues his work, travelling and telling people about God. When he arrives in Shunem, he makes friends: a wealthy farming couple who build a special room for him so that he always has a place to stay when he visits. Elisha wonders how he can repay their kindness. The one thing they do not have is a son, so Elisha prays, and God miraculously gives them a son. But several years later, the boy becomes ill and dies. His mother sets off quickly to visit Elisha.

DISCUSS

- The woman has lost her precious son. Why does she blame Elisha?
- Why do you think Elisha gives his servant Gehazi his stick?
- Who brings the boy to life again?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Tell God about a friend or relative
you'd love to get to know him.

MEMORY VERSE

**“I have come that they may have life,
and have it to the full.”** John 10:10

WEEK 27:

Special Training at the Palace

ICE BREAKER

Do you, or anyone you know, eat a special diet – through choice, allergies, or religion? Talk about what is/isn't allowed for them.

READ THE STORY

Daniel 1:1–17

CONTEXT

Many years have passed. Elisha has died. Israel and Judah have had a succession of kings who have not honoured God in how they've led their people. As a result, God has allowed them to be attacked by the Babylonians. Jerusalem has been destroyed, and all the Israelites have been exiled to Babylon. Their king – King Nebuchadnezzar – is on the lookout for some promising young people to become his advisers.

DISCUSS

- What is King Nebuchadnezzar looking for in his future advisers?
- God allowed his people to eat some meat, so why do you think Daniel and his friends chose to eat a vegetarian diet?
- How did God value their choice?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Do you find it difficult to be loyal to God when you're in a situation with few other Christians? Tell God about it and ask him to give you strength at these times.

MEMORY VERSE

**“For I am not ashamed of the gospel,
because it is the power of God that brings
salvation to everyone who believes.”** Romans 1:16

WEEK 28:

Four Men in the Fire

ICE BREAKER

Talk about a large statue or monument that you've seen – either in real life or in a photo.

READ THE STORY

Daniel 3:8–30

CONTEXT

Daniel and his three friends (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego) have impressed King Nebuchadnezzar so much that they have secured top jobs as his advisers. But it is tough to work for a king who puts himself first, when you are someone who puts God first. Nebuchadnezzar has a huge statue built – of himself! When the music begins, everyone is commanded to bow down and worship this statue. But Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refuse – as God's people, they worship God alone.

DISCUSS

- How does the king punish Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego for refusing to worship him?
- What frightens the king once the punishment is being carried out?
- Earlier in the story, the three men say that God is even able to save them from the fire. But whether he chooses to save them or not, they will be loyal to him. Why do you think they can say this?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

The three men did not even smell of smoke when they stepped out of the fire! Remember that God is a powerful God; ask him for something which seems impossible right now.

MEMORY VERSE

“Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me.” Psalm 23:4

WEEK 29:

Dry Bones Come Alive!

ICE BREAKER

Have you seen a human skeleton before? Perhaps in a museum or on an X-ray? What did it look like?

READ THE STORY

Ezekiel 37:1–14

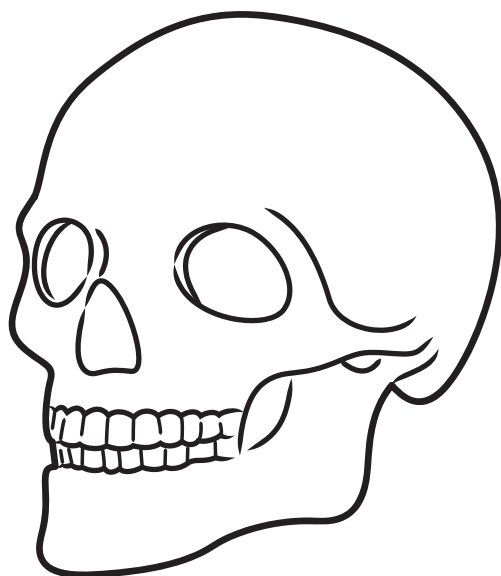
CONTEXT

Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were four of the young men who King Nebuchadnezzar wanted to train up to work in his palace. Another one is Ezekiel – but God has different plans for him. Ezekiel is to be a prophet: someone who will give God's messages to his people while they are captives in Babylon. Some of these messages won't be easy for them to hear, but Ezekiel will need to be faithful to God and tell the truth, even when it's difficult.

DISCUSS

- What is the very strange vision that God gives to Ezekiel?
- What happens to all these dry bones?
- What do these bones represent? Is this an encouraging message?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Tell God about something you're growing tired of. Perhaps it's a chore at home or a subject at school. Ask him to give you new life and excitement about it.

MEMORY VERSE

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” 2 Corinthians 5:17

WEEK 30:

The New Temple

ICE BREAKER

What is the most impressive building you've seen or visited?

READ THE STORY

**Ezra 4:1–5, 24,
5:1–2, 6:14–15**

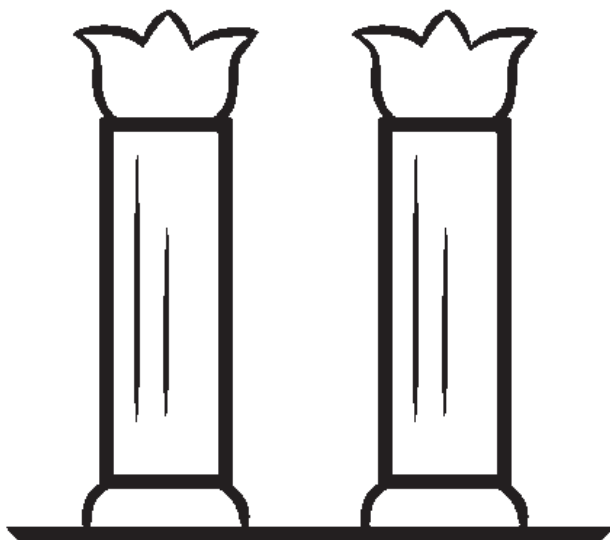
CONTEXT

After nearly seventy years of being in Babylon, King Cyrus allows God's people to return to Jerusalem. They are led by a priest called Joshua – and Zerubbabel, the grandson of King Jehoiachin, who was king when they were taken into captivity. Do you remember the magnificent temple Solomon built? King Cyrus tells the Israelites to rebuild it when they get to Jerusalem and returns to them all the temple treasures that King Nebuchadnezzar stole. But when they arrive, they find it completely destroyed. It is going to be costly to build a new one from scratch.

DISCUSS

- What problems do the Israelites face in the first part of this story which make them stop building?
- Which two prophets helped to get the work started again?
- Why was it so important to have a place to worship God?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Spoiler alert: since God gave us his Holy Spirit to live inside us (more later!), we can worship God wherever we are! Why not do that now? You could play a worship song to help you.

MEMORY VERSE

**“Sing to him a new song; play skillfully,
and shout for joy.”** Psalm 33:3

WEEK 31:

A Day to Be Remembered

ICE BREAKER

If a banquet were to be held for you, which foods would be on the table?

READ THE STORY

**Esther 7:1–7,
8:1–8, 9:28**

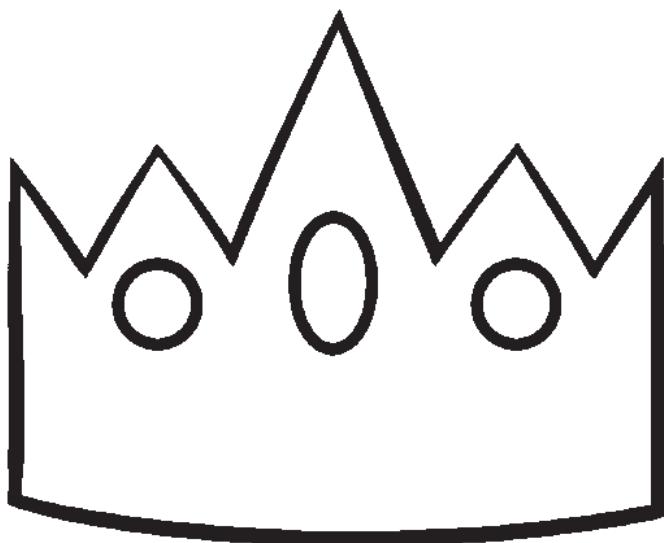
CONTEXT

Some of God's people choose to stay in Babylon, part of the vast Persian empire. King Xerxes, the Persian king and most powerful man in the world, is looking for a new wife, and chooses an Israelite girl, Esther. Queen Esther lives faithfully for God in a palace where no one else worships him. Her cousin, Mordecai, has warned her of a terrible plot that the king's prime minister Haman has been planning: to kill all of God's people. Esther knows she must act quickly.

DISCUSS

- What is King Xerxes' reaction to Haman's plan?
- Why can't King Xerxes change his order?
- Jews still celebrate how they were saved from Haman with an annual festival called "Purim". Why do you think this is so important to them?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Where do you find it hard to stand up for God? Tell him now, and ask him to give you strength.

MEMORY VERSE

“Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong.” 1 Corinthians 16:13

WEEK 32:

The Lesson of the Little Worm

ICE BREAKER

Can you think of a time you were really hot? How did the heat make you feel?

READ THE STORY

Jonah 3:3 – 4:11

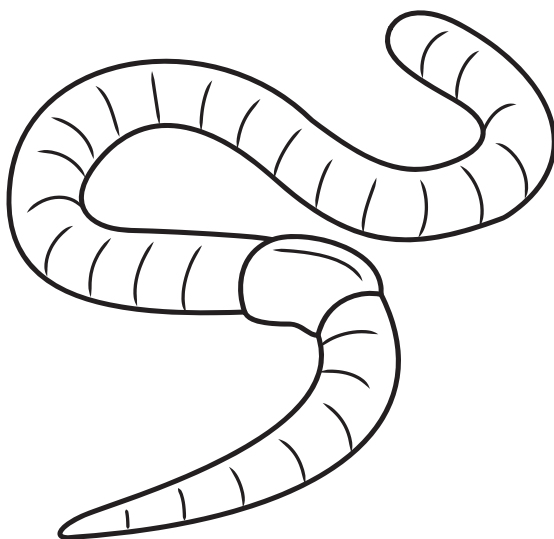
CONTEXT

Do you remember Elisha? The piece of history we'll read about today is set just after Elisha – perhaps around the same time as Esther, but in Israel, not Babylon. Jonah is an Israelite prophet, sent to warn the people in Nineveh to stop ignoring God, repent, and turn to him again. Jonah isn't keen to do this: he thinks the Ninevites deserve what's coming to them! But after running away from God and spending three days in the belly of a big fish, Jonah reluctantly goes where God initially called him.

DISCUSS

- What is the result of Jonah's preaching in Nineveh?
- Why is Jonah angry about this?
- Is there anyone (or a group of people) who you would prefer God not to forgive?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

God forgives everyone who comes to him and says sorry – even if they’ve done something really bad. This includes you! It means that nothing you do ever needs to separate you from God. Tell him how you feel about this now.

MEMORY VERSE

“Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.” Luke 6:36

WEEK 33:

The Shepherds' Song

ICE BREAKER

When was the last time
you heard some really good
news? What was it?

READ THE STORY

Luke 2:8–20

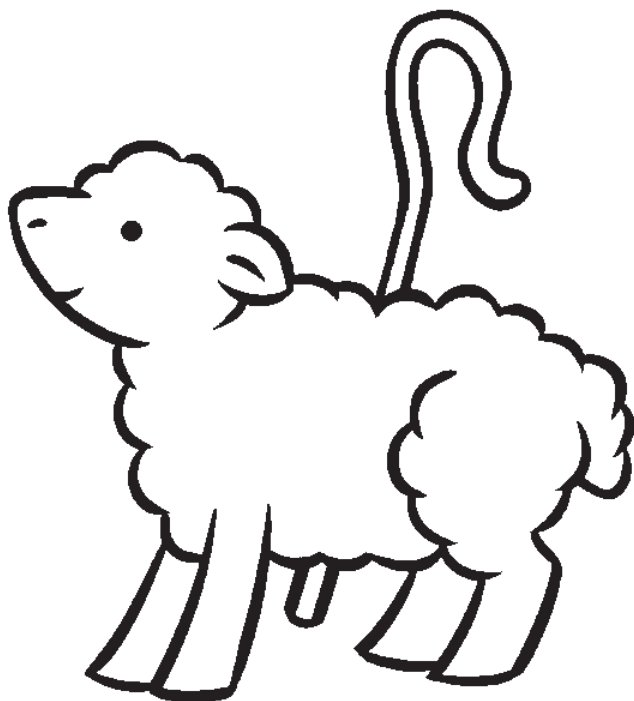
CONTEXT

Fast-forward seven hundred years... we're now in the New Testament, which tells the story of Jesus, and what happened because of his life. For thousands of years, ever since Adam and Eve ate "The Tempting Fruit" (remember Week 1) people have been separated from God. The only way we could be friends with him is by keeping the Ten Commandments all of the time – which is impossible! So God has the ultimate Rescue Plan in mind to bring us back to him for good, and it starts with a baby, born in a humble stable in Bethlehem.

DISCUSS

- Which unusual visitors came to the shepherds?
- Why do you think the shepherds believed them?
- The shepherds didn't have much money or power. Why do you think God wanted them to be first to hear about Jesus?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Tell Jesus about your best way to celebrate his birth at Christmas.

MEMORY VERSE

“There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” Galatians 3:28

WEEK 34:

A New Leader

ICE BREAKER

Have you ever met a famous person? Or seen them from afar? How did you feel?

READ THE STORY

John 1:29–42

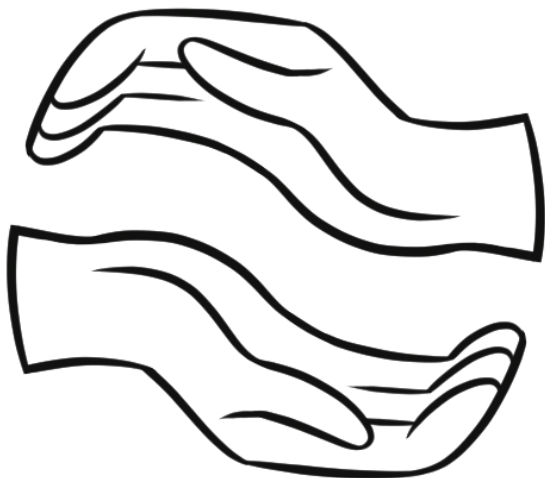
CONTEXT

Jesus grows up and learns the trade of his carpenter father Joseph. When he is thirty years old, he is ready to begin teaching others about God and how to be friends with him for ever. Meanwhile, John the Baptist (Jesus' cousin) has been getting people ready to hear Jesus' message by calling them to say sorry to God and be baptized in water to show they are ready for a new life. John has many followers, but in today's reading he points them toward Jesus.

DISCUSS

- What does John tell his friends about Jesus?
- How does Jesus welcome the two men who hurry after him?
- What do you think Jesus means by giving Simon the name Peter, which means the "rock"? What image does this bring to your mind?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Jesus can be your friend if you ask him to – but he is also God's anointed king! Tell Jesus how you feel about being friends with the king!

MEMORY VERSE

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16

WEEK 35:

Wine for the Wedding

ICE BREAKER

Have you been to a wedding before? What was it like?

READ THE STORY

John 2:1–11

CONTEXT

Jesus has now chosen twelve men to be his disciples, or special friends. They go everywhere with him, learning from his teachings and miracles. Jesus and his disciples often hang out with people who are unpopular or unclean – because God has come for them too, to invite them to be his friends and join him in his forever kingdom. Today, however, Jesus and his disciples have been invited somewhere a bit more glamorous.

DISCUSS

- What is the problem at this wedding?
- What does Jesus do?
- Jesus turns water (used for the strict hand-washing rules) into an abundance of wine (used for fun and enjoyment). What does this tell you about God's kingdom?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Tell Jesus what would be at your dream party. Would you have funfair rides, a chocolate fountain, go-karting or something else?

MEMORY VERSE

**“You turned my wailing into dancing;
you... clothed me with joy.”** Psalm 30:11

WEEK 36:

The Friend at Midnight

ICE BREAKER

Have you ever wanted something so much that you did a lot of persuading to get it?

READ THE STORY

Luke 11:5–13

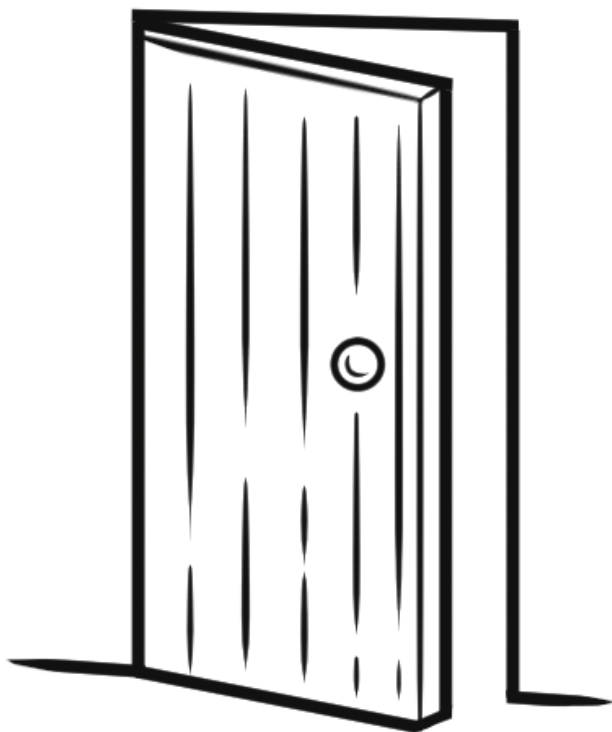
CONTEXT

Jesus is travelling around with his twelve disciples, teaching people about God's kingdom and what it means to live for him. He often uses stories to help his listeners understand important truths about life with God. In today's reading, his story is teaching people about prayer: how to talk to God.

DISCUSS

- What does the person in the story do when faced with no food in the house?
- How is God different from this friend?
- What does this teach us about how we should pray to God?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Tell God about what you want today.

MEMORY VERSE

“Delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.” Psalm 37:4

WEEK 37:

The Big Dinner Party

ICE BREAKER

Have you ever been invited to something you couldn't go to? How did that feel?

READ THE STORY

Luke 14:16–24

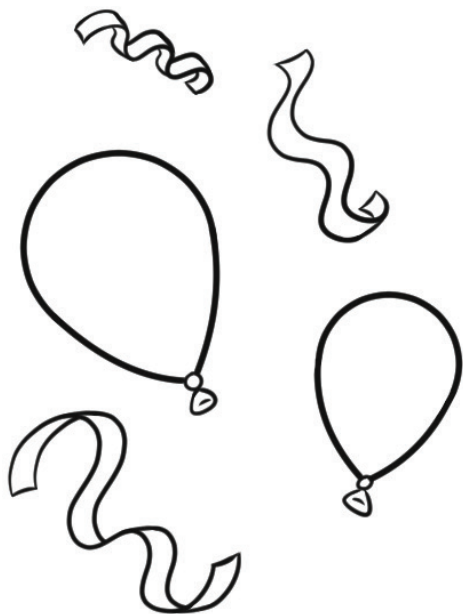
CONTEXT

Today Jesus is telling another story – to a select group of listeners in somebody's private home. These people probably thought they were very holy and would definitely be going to God's big party in heaven one day. But Jesus wanted them to think differently.

DISCUSS

- What are the three reasons people give for not being able to come to the party?
- How does the master respond?
- What does this tell you about the sort of people God wants to welcome into his kingdom? How does this make you feel?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Tell God about the best party or event you've ever been to. Remember: God's party in heaven will be even better – but we need to say we're coming first!

MEMORY VERSE

“Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven.” Matthew 5:12

WEEK 38:

Two Very Important People

ICE BREAKER

Can you think of a time when you were really ill or injured?
What was it like?

READ THE STORY

Mark 5:21–34

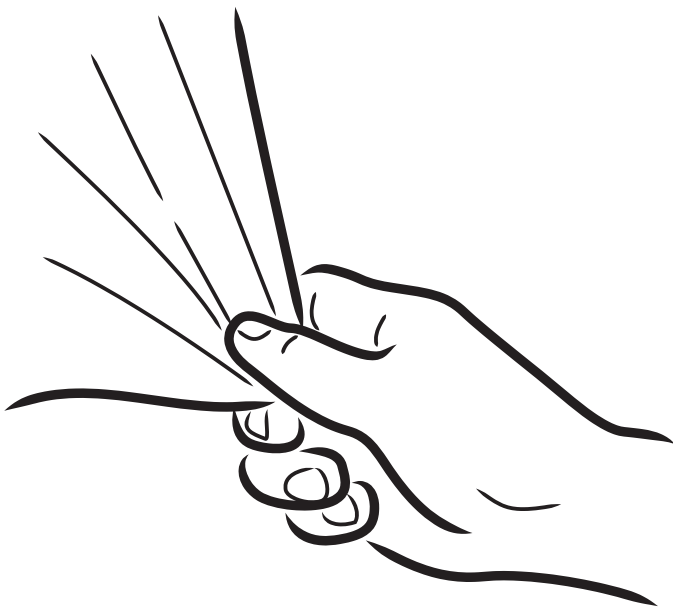
CONTEXT

As well as travelling around and teaching people, Jesus is also using his God-given power to heal people: those who can't walk, those who are blind, those who are ill. In today's reading, we hear about two people who needed Jesus to heal them.

DISCUSS

- What does Jairus need from Jesus?
- What does the woman need from Jesus?
- After this incident Jesus goes to Jairus's house, where his daughter has already died, and brings her back to life! What does this reading tell you about the kind of people Jesus has time for?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Is there a way you'd like Jesus to heal you today? Or someone you know? Ask Jesus now.

MEMORY VERSE

“Is anyone among you sick?...

Pray over them.” James 5:14

WEEK 39:

The Enormous Picnic

ICE BREAKER

What is your most-liked picnic food? Do you have a preferred picnic spot?

READ THE STORY

John 6:1–13

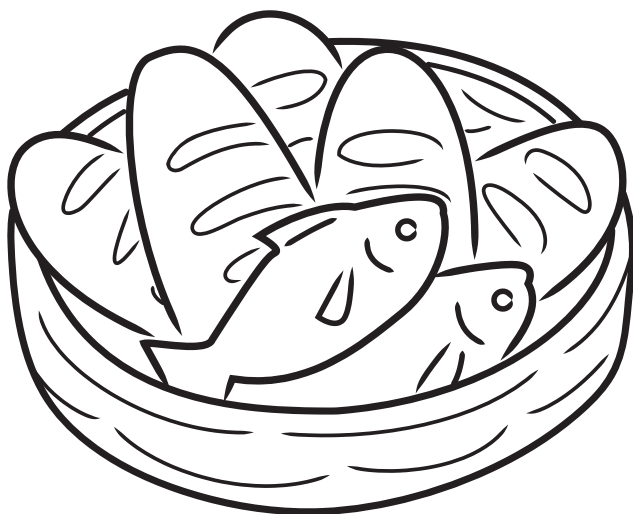
CONTEXT

Jesus continues to travel, teach, heal, and do amazing miracles to show people what God's kingdom is like. It's exhausting – Jesus and his disciples need a rest. But God has something for them to do before they get their rest.

DISCUSS

- The disciples are disappointed not to get their rest; how does Jesus react?
- Why do you think the boy offers his lunch? After all, it's not going to feed thousands of people, surely?
- Do you think the boy ended up with less to eat, the same amount, or more than he'd come with? (Clue: read the last few sentences of the story to make your guess!)

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Tell God about a time you ate with lots of other people. How did it feel? Did people share what they had?

MEMORY VERSE

“You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion.” 2 Corinthians 9:11

WEEK 40:

The Lost Sons

ICE BREAKER

Have you ever spent a lot of your money on something, only to find out it wasn't as good as you thought?

READ THE STORY

Luke 15:11–32

CONTEXT

Today Jesus is telling another story – or “parable”. He usually tells parables to answer questions, or respond to complaints, from those around him. In this case, some of the religious people and teachers are annoyed that Jesus is spending time with people who break God's law. They don't yet understand that Jesus has come to show them God's love, and that anyone can be forgiven, as long as they say sorry to God and allow him to change them and guide them.

DISCUSS

- Why does the younger son want to leave home?
- When he runs into problems, what solution does the son come up with?
- How does his father respond unexpectedly?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Is there anything you need to say sorry to God for? Say it now – and remember there is *nothing* too big for God to forgive!

MEMORY VERSE

**“Your love, LORD, reaches to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the skies.”** Psalm 36:5

WEEK 41:

A Glimpse of Glory

ICE BREAKER

Which place do you find the most quiet and peaceful? It could be a corner or room in your home, school, church or somewhere in the open air.

READ THE STORY

Luke 9:28–36

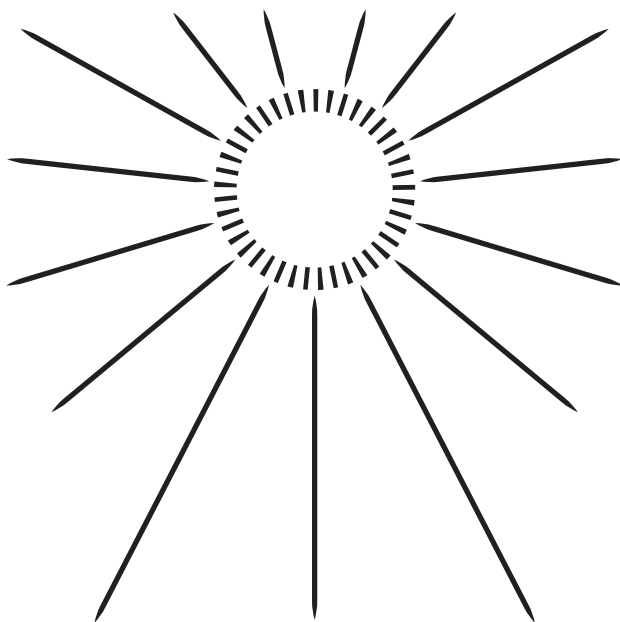
CONTEXT

Everyone wants to see Jesus. Everywhere he goes, there is a crowd of people waiting for him to teach them and heal them. But Jesus knows he needs to rest too. So one day he takes three of his disciples – Peter, James, and John – up a mountain so that they can spend quiet time with God, away from the crowds.

DISCUSS

- What unusual sight woke the disciples up?
- What were Jesus, Moses, and Elijah talking about?
- Close your eyes and imagine you're seeing the same sight. What does it teach you about Jesus?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Go somewhere quiet and have a peaceful moment with Jesus. Tell him what you think about this story and what it says about him.

MEMORY VERSE

“Who is he, this King of glory? The LORD Almighty – he is the King of glory.” Psalm 24:10

WEEK 42:

The Soldier's Servant

ICE BREAKER

Which people in your life do you care deeply for?

READ THE STORY

Luke 7:1–10

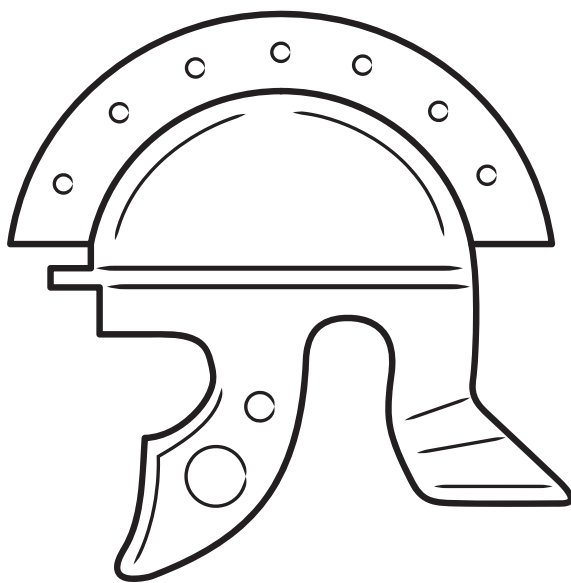
CONTEXT

Today we read another of Jesus' healings. But there are some important differences. Firstly, the person is not asking for his own healing, but healing for someone he cares deeply about. Secondly, Jesus heals without even going near the man who is unwell. Listen to the reading with these things in mind.

DISCUSS

- What does the Roman centurion ask for?
- The centurion is very powerful. How do we know this? And how does he show humility in front of Jesus?
- Why is Jesus so amazed at the centurion's faith?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

It doesn't matter where people come from or who their family is, Jesus welcomes all of us with arms wide open when we come to him in faith. Ask him for something you need right now – either for you, or for someone you know.

MEMORY VERSE

“Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.” Romans 15:7

WEEK 43:

The Loving Welcome

ICE BREAKER

Can you think of someone who really welcomes people into their home? How do they make you feel when you visit? What kind of things do they do or say?

READ THE STORY

Luke 7:36–50

CONTEXT

Today, Jesus has been invited to the house of a Pharisee called Simon. This man wants to find out more about Jesus and what he teaches – but he’s about to get a very unexpected lesson.

DISCUSS

- What does the uninvited woman do to Jesus?
- Why does this bother Simon?
- What has “saved” this woman? Why does she need saving?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Ask Jesus to give you an opportunity to do something for him in the next few days. It could be something practical, something which shows love to others, or simply singing a worship song to him.

MEMORY VERSE

“God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.” John 4:24

WEEK 44:

The Watcher from the Tree

ICE BREAKER

Do you enjoy climbing trees?
Why/why not?

READ THE STORY

Luke 19:1–10

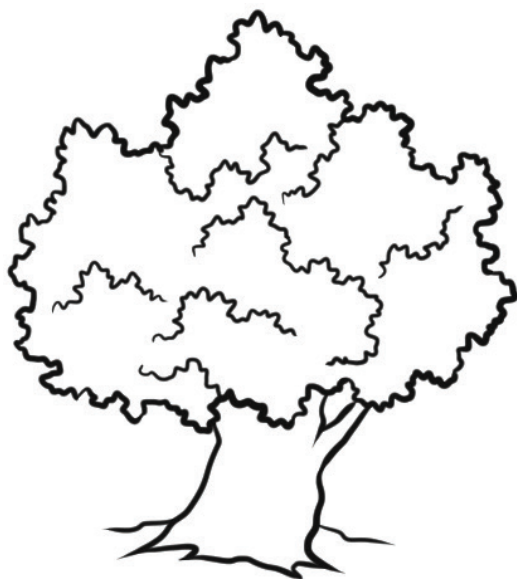
CONTEXT

Jesus has been teaching his listeners all about God's kingdom. He has made it clear that everyone is welcome – not just “religious” people who follow the law, but people who have made mistakes. Today's reading tells of another encounter with a man who everyone thought was too bad to be saved.

DISCUSS

- Why do people hate Zacchaeus?
- How does Zacchaeus change after meeting Jesus?
- Why do you think Zacchaeus wanted to live differently after meeting Jesus?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Does reading about Jesus make you want to do anything differently? Talk to him about it.

MEMORY VERSE

“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.” Galatians 5:1

WEEK 45:

“Lazarus, Come Out!”

ICE BREAKER

Do you have best friends?
Who are they?

READ THE STORY

John 11:1–7, 17–44

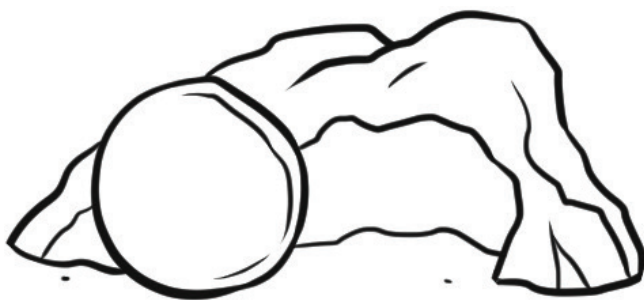
CONTEXT

Some of Jesus’ best friends are sisters Mary and Martha, and their brother Lazarus. One day, Lazarus gets ill. He gets worse and worse, and eventually Mary and Martha send Jesus a message to ask for his help. Jesus doesn’t go straight away but carries on teaching and healing for two days. Eventually, he and his disciples leave for Lazarus’ house in Bethany – but it is too late: Lazarus has died.

DISCUSS

- How does Jesus react to Lazarus’ death?
- How does Jesus bring Lazarus back to life?
- Jesus tells Martha he is “resurrection and life”. What do you think this means?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

This is a pretty amazing story! Tell God how you might have felt if you were Mary or Martha.

MEMORY VERSE

“I am the resurrection and the life.” John 11:25

WEEK 46:

The Passover Meal

ICE BREAKER

Can you remember a special meal you've eaten? Maybe Christmas, your birthday or a special event at church?

READ THE STORY

**John 13:21–27 and
Mark 14:22–25**

CONTEXT

Jesus has come to Jerusalem, and it is time for him and his disciples to eat the Passover meal – an important Jewish festival, celebrating the time God led his people out of slavery in Egypt (see Week 8 to remind yourself of this story). Jesus has surprised everyone by washing their feet – something usually only servants would do. Because he knows he won't be around for much longer, Jesus wants to show the disciples how important it is to love and care for each other.

DISCUSS

- Who does Jesus know is going to betray him?
- What does Jesus say the bread and wine represent?
- Many Christians remember what Jesus did when they have Communion (sometimes called “The Lord’s Supper” or the “Eucharist”). Why do you think this is important today?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Ask God to remind you of this story next time you share a meal with your family.

MEMORY VERSE

“Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.” 1 Corinthians 12:27

WEEK 47:

Thomas's Story

ICE BREAKER

Have you ever seen something “too good to be true”? Maybe an exotic animal, a beautiful piece of countryside, an impressive building or even a person doing something incredible.

READ THE STORY

John 20:24–29

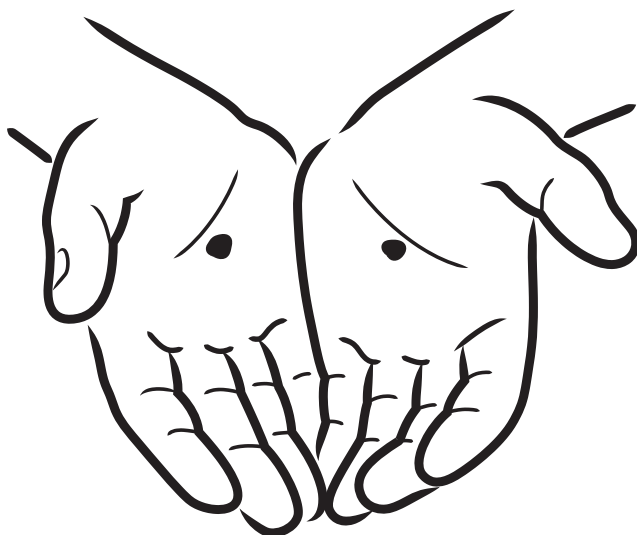
CONTEXT

Jesus is betrayed by Judas, handed over to the authorities, and nailed to a cross. He dies. Three days later, his friends visit the tomb to discover it empty. They run back and tell the rest of his disciples, but one of them is very doubtful. Surely Jesus coming back to life is impossible?

DISCUSS

- Why doesn't Thomas believe that Jesus has come back to life?
- What does Jesus invite Thomas to do, to prove it's really him?
- Jesus says there is a special blessing for those who trust him without seeing him in person. That's us! Do you find it easy or hard to trust Jesus? Why?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Whether you find it easy or hard to trust Jesus, ask him to draw close to you now and strengthen your faith.

MEMORY VERSE

**“Blessed are those who have not seen
and yet have believed.” John 20:29**

WEEK 48:

God's Spirit Comes

ICE BREAKER

Can you speak any foreign languages? Share some phrases.

READ THE STORY

Acts 2:1–14

CONTEXT

Jesus has appeared to many of his followers since being raised to life again – at one point, over five hundred of them at once! He is definitely not a ghost, as his friends can touch him, and he can eat food. But the time has come for him to go back to heaven. Before he goes, he promises that God will send his Holy Spirit to help them and instructs them to wait in Jerusalem for this special gift.

DISCUSS

- Why is Jerusalem packed with people?
- Which unusual things happen to Jesus' disciples early on the Sunday morning?
- Peter goes on to explain what's happening. Can you explain what you think is going on?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Thank God for the power of his Holy Spirit. Ask the Spirit now to help you become more like Jesus.

MEMORY VERSE

“When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit.” Ephesians 1:13

WEEK 49:

The Roman Soldier

ICE BREAKER

Have you ever been to visit, or had to stay with, someone who was from a very different background to you?

READ THE STORY

Acts 10:17–48

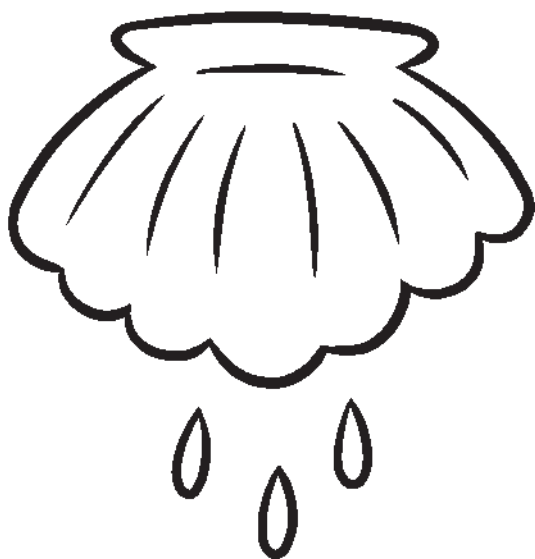
CONTEXT

Since the Holy Spirit came on the disciples in Jerusalem, exciting things have been happening! In the power of the Holy Spirit, the disciples have been telling people about Jesus, healing people, and even raising a woman from the dead. Just before the events in our reading take place, Peter has had a strange vision from God, in which God seemed to be telling him that the animals the Jews considered “unclean” were now to be considered “clean”. What could it mean?

DISCUSS

- How has Cornelius shown faith in God up till this point?
- What does Peter now realize that his vision from God must have meant?
- Why do you think God prepared Peter with that vision? Why didn't he just send Peter to Cornelius's house?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Is there anyone you sometimes leave out of things because they are different to you? Chat to God about them. Remember: he made them and he loves them!

MEMORY VERSE

“So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them.” Genesis 1:27

WEEK 50:

Singing in Prison

ICE BREAKER

Which song do you most like singing to Jesus?

READ THE STORY

Acts 16:23–40

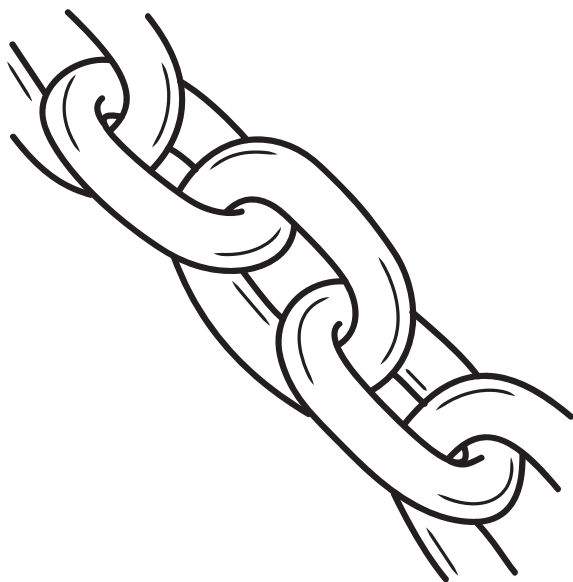
CONTEXT

Telling people about Jesus at this time was dangerous. The Jewish leaders did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah – and, in any case, didn't like the fact that everyone was starting to listen to Peter and Paul, rather than to them. Those who preached about Jesus risked their lives. As we begin today's reading, Paul and Silas have just cast out an evil spirit from a girl who was earning money for her owners through telling fortunes. Without the evil spirit, she would not be able to tell fortunes and therefore not earn any money. Her owners are furious and have Paul and Silas thrown into prison.

DISCUSS

- What is surprising about Paul and Silas's attitude in prison?
- Why do you think the prison officer is so worried?
- Paul and Silas put God first, even in a very hard situation. How did this lead to a brilliant outcome?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Tell God about something difficult you've been through. Was it easy or difficult to put God first at this time?

MEMORY VERSE

“Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because... that person will receive the crown of life.” James 1:12

WEEK 51:

Letter from James

ICE BREAKER

When was the last time you wrote a letter?

READ THE STORY

**James 1:22–25,
2:1–5, 3:1–10**

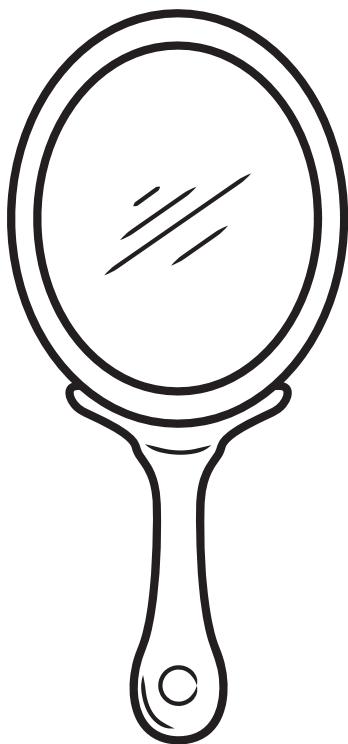
CONTEXT

It is an exciting time: the church is growing as Peter, Paul, and others preach boldly about Jesus. Many are being healed, and many are receiving the Holy Spirit. There is also a lot of persecution (threats and violence against believers), but this forces people to spread out, moving to new places and telling even more people about Jesus. New churches spring up all over the place, and the apostles write letters to the believers to encourage them and teach them how to live for God. Today we're going to read a letter written by James, Jesus' brother. He did not believe that Jesus was God's Son until he saw him alive after his resurrection. Then he was converted and later became leader of the church at Jerusalem.

DISCUSS

- What does James say we should do when we hear God's word?
- How are we to treat rich people and poor people?
- Why is the tongue so powerful?

DECORATE



PRAYER PROMPT

Ask God to help you understand
and obey his word.

MEMORY VERSE

“Faith without deeds is dead.” James 2:26

WEEK 52:

A Glimpse into Heaven

ICE BREAKER

When and where have you felt the happiest?

READ THE STORY

**Revelation 4:1–6,
5:1–7, 21:1–5, 15–21,
22:1–5**

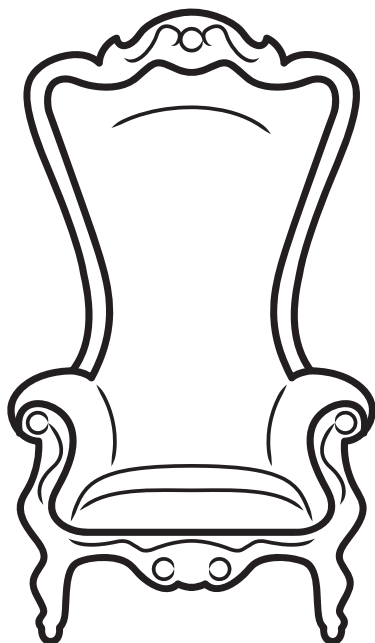
CONTEXT

The final book of the Bible – Revelation – is not a letter, but a vision that the apostle John was given. It can be quite a complicated book to understand but gives us a wonderful glimpse into heaven. Even the best, happiest place on earth cannot compare with what God is preparing for us!

DISCUSS

- How is God described in John's vision?
- How is Jesus described, and why is this unexpected?
- Read again the description of the new heaven and new earth. What are you looking forward to most about heaven?

DECORATE



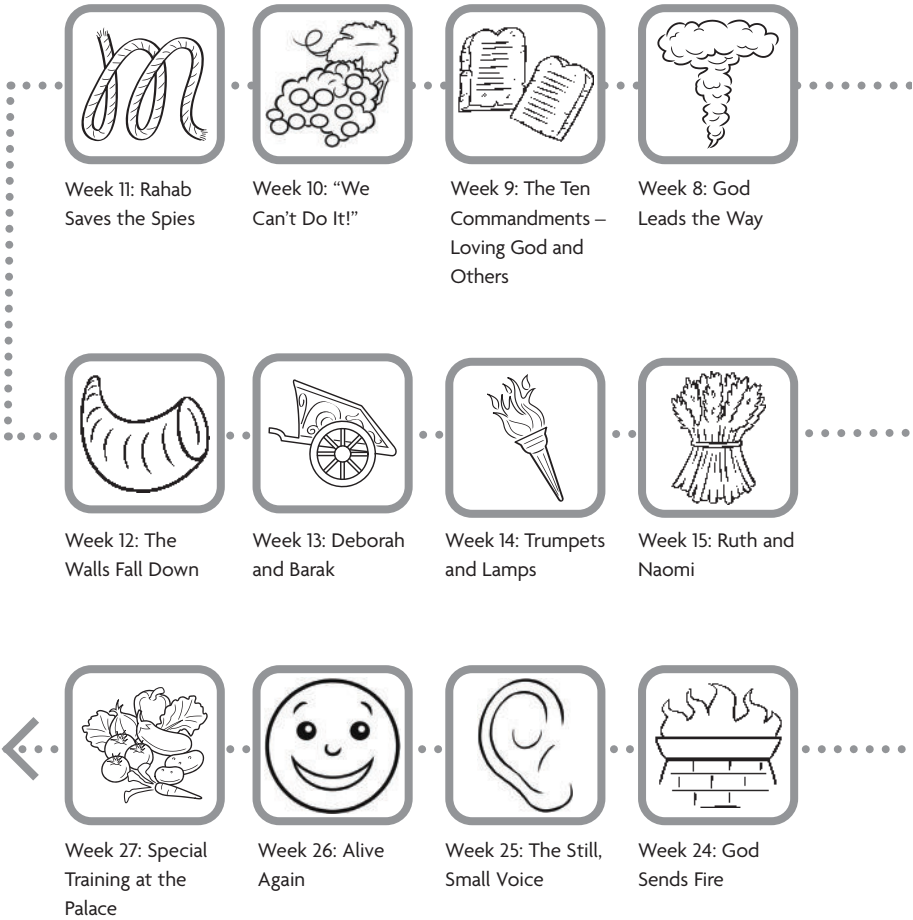
PRAYER PROMPT

Praise God for the aspects of heaven that you're most looking forward to.

MEMORY VERSE

“God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them.” Revelation 21:3

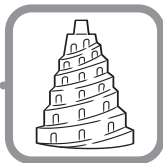
Timeline



OLD TESTAMENT



Week 1: The
Tempting Fruit



Week 2: The Sky's
the Limit



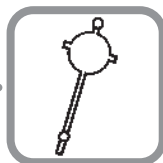
Week 3: Hagar
Runs Away



Week 7: God Calls
Moses



Week 6: The
Missing Cup



Week 5: Slave in
Charge



Week 4: Jacob's
Dream



Week 16: "I'm
Listening, Lord"



Week 17: The
Giant's Challenge



Week 18: Danger
Signal



Week 19: Nabal
the Fool



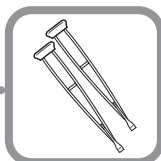
Week 23: The
Food That Never
Ran Out



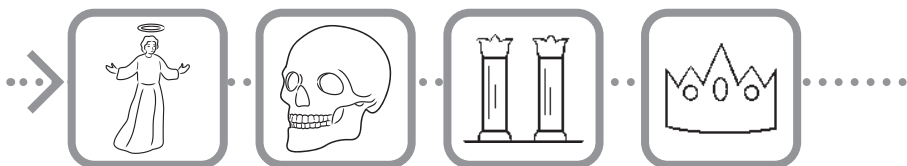
Week 22: Building
God's Temple



Week 21:
Solomon's Dream



Week 20: David
Keeps His Promise

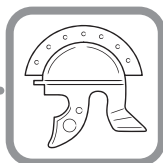


Week 28: Four
Men in the Fire

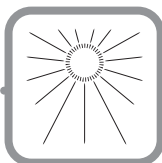
Week 29: Dry
Bones Come
Alive!

Week 30: The
New Temple

Week 31: A Day to
Be Remembered



Week 42: The
Soldier's Servant



Week 41: A
Glimpse of Glory



Week 40: The Lost
Sons



Week 39: The
Enormous Picnic



Week 43: The
Loving Welcome



Week 44: The
Watcher from the
Tree



Week 45: "Lazarus,
Come Out!"



Week 46: The
Passover Meal



Week 32: The Lesson of the Little Worm

**NEW
TESTAMENT**



Week 33: The Shepherds' Song



Week 34: A New Leader



Week 38: Two Very Important People



Week 37: The Big Dinner Party



Week 36: The Friend at Midnight



Week 35: Wine for the Wedding



Week 47: Thomas's Story



Week 48: God's Spirit Comes



Week 49: The Roman Soldier



Week 50: Singing in Prison



Week 52: A Glimpse into Heaven



Week 51: Letter from James

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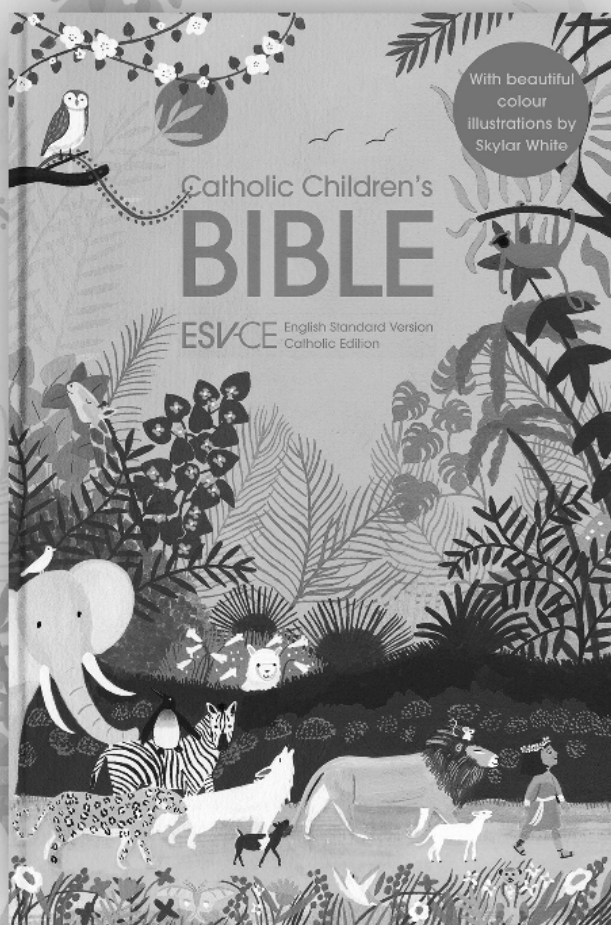


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