

Faith Family Worship Guide – Week 17

MEMORIZE

- For those with 1st-5th graders at Brook Hills, focus on the verses that they are memorizing in Children’s Ministry for this unit, from now through the end of April.
 - 1st Grade – Matthew 22:37-39
 - 2nd Grade – Matthew 5:14-16
 - 3rd Grade – Proverbs 3:5-7
 - 4th Grade – Proverbs 4:10-15
 - 5th Grade – 1 John 4:9-12

READ

As our church reads through the Bible for the next two years, each day will include a chapter from both the Old Testament and the New Testament. As a family, decide if you want to read one or both of these passages. The Faith Family Worship Guide will look ahead to the readings for the upcoming week.

Read: Psalm 39:4-5

Questions:

- Why would the psalmist ask God to let him know how “fleeting” his days are?
- Why is it important to think about how short our lives are?
- How should this knowledge affect how you live each day?
- How should this knowledge affect sharing the gospel?

Bottom Line: Keeping in mind the brevity of life helps believers intentionally spend their lives for God’s glory.

SUGGESTIONS

These suggestions were created by the age-group ministry leaders as a way to help parents better communicate the biblical truths discussed in the Family Worship Guide. These suggestions are intended to help parents facilitate God-centered discussions with their children throughout the week (at the dinner table, in the car, during a family worship time, etc.).

Preschool

- Who loves you more than mommy or daddy? God does.
- Who always keeps His promises and takes care of us? God does.
- Who knows everything? God does.
- Who is with us everyday and helps us with anything we need? God is.
- Who should we worship and spend our lives praising everyday? God!

Children

- How long do you think you will live here on earth? Do you know exactly how long you will live? No, none of us knows exactly how long we will live. Let’s read God’s Word to see what He says about how long our lives really are.
- Have a child read Psalm 39:4-5. When you think about how long eternity is, how long are our lives here on earth in comparison? What do these verses say? (Verse 4 says our lives are “fleeting,” which is like saying it is very short.)
- Re-read verse 5. How does this verse describe our lives? (Like a “breath”.) How long is a breath? Not very long at all! Illustrate this by asking your child to hold their breath for as long as they can. Explain how even if we try really hard, a breath cannot last that long. In the same way, our lives are really not very long, even if we try as hard as we can to live on earth forever.
- If our lives are really short, how should we spend the brief time we have on earth?
- If our lives are like a “breath,” how should this affect the way we tell others about Jesus?
- Pray and ask God to help you realize how short your lives really are, and to spend our brief time on earth making His name great and sharing the gospel with others.

Students

- Before reading the passage ask your student(s) if they remember their favorite toy growing up as a small child. Ask them to describe it and why it was so important. Ask them if they remember the last time they played with it. Doesn't it feel like it was just yesterday?
- Now Read Psalm 39:4-5.
- David is asking God to show him his "end," and we all know that we will have an "end." Much like there was an end to the time when we played with a specific toy, there will be an end to our time in this life on earth as well.
- How could asking to see his future be helpful to him?
- Knowing what you know now, are there things you would change about your past? What would those things be? (Parents, be sure to share what you would change from your past as well.)
- How does this affect your thinking and decision-making moving forward?
- How should knowing a person's life change the way they live? Has it changed you?

SING

Let's continue in our family worship as we sing "This Is Amazing Grace" by Phil Wickham. As we continue this journey through the Bible, it is truly astonishing to see how every book and every story, in some way or another, points to the Author of our Salvation. As we dive into the rich history of Numbers and the beauty of the Psalms, let's celebrate God's story of redemption. Because of God's love for us, we are not far removed from these stories, but rather we are a part of God's big story of redemption. Let's relish in His grace today as we sing, *"Who breaks the power of sin and darkness, Whose love is mighty and so much stronger, The King of Glory, the King above all kings."*

Visit our website for a link to this song: www.brookhills.org/gathering/this_week.html.

WHERE WE ARE IN THE STORY

Readings for April 28 – May 4
Numbers 5-11 and Psalm 39-48

Where We Are In The Story (Numbers & Psalms)

Background of Numbers: Within two years of leaving Egypt, the Israelites arrive on the fringes of the Promised Land and enthusiastically send in twelve spies to scout the land, but instead of trusting in God's promises to give them the land, the people fearfully rebelled and made plans to return to Egypt (Num. 14:1-4). Written by Moses, this book contains the record of what happened to the Israelites during the forty years of wilderness wanderings that occurred because of their disobedience and doubt. The English title of Numbers refers to the prominent census accounts in the book that reflect the fulfillment of God's promise that none of the people who had experienced God's deliverance from Egypt would enter into the Promised Land, except for Caleb and Joshua (Num. 14:20-35).

Structure of Numbers:

- Numbers 1:1-10:10 occur while Israel is still at Mt. Sinai, and it picks up where Exodus leaves off.
- Numbers 10:11-12:16 describe the Israelites' journey from Mt. Sinai to the outskirts of the Promised Land.
- Numbers 13:1-20:13 contain significant accounts of disobedience by the nation, a Sabbath-breaker, Korah, and Moses, and it includes God's response and instruction in light of those events.
- Numbers 20:14-22:1 tell of Israel's military victories against several hostile nations and emphasizes God's preservation of His people.
- Numbers 22:2-36:13 conclude the book with a census of the people, a reiteration of the laws and feasts given by God, and a transfer of leadership from Moses to Joshua as the people prepare to enter the Promised Land after their wilderness wanderings.

This Week in Numbers: As God prepared the people to leave Mt. Sinai for the Promised Land, He gave them instructions for how to remain pure as they traveled to Canaan (Num. 5-10). This included what to do with lepers (Num. 5:1-4) as well as how to make reparations when committing an offense against another person (Num. 5:5-10) and how to respond when a woman is suspected of adultery (Num. 5:11-31). While the adultery test may seem unfair and severe to our Western perception (especially since only women were tested and not men), God places Himself as the ultimate Judge rather than having a human fulfill that role. Only God knew whether or not she was actually guilty, and He established the

proceedings in a way where He alone rendered the verdict of guilty or not guilty, which He did by what supernaturally happened after the woman drank the bitter, cursed water. In a society where a woman could have easily been unfairly charged for adultery because they were under the legal protection and jurisdiction of their father or husband, God graciously prevented men from being able to judge her.

Numbers 6 explains the details of the Nazarite vow, which Israelites could voluntarily take if they wished to separate and dedicate themselves to God, and it involved both dietary regulations and no contact with dead bodies. Nazarites, such as Sampson (Judg. 13-16), were visibly identified by their long hair, which was the reason for the prohibition against cutting their hair.

Numbers 7 depicts the people's devotion to God as they gave silver, incense, animals, and grain offerings for the sanctuary, and Numbers 8 follows by describing the consecration and the retirement plan for Levites. Before leaving Mt. Sinai, the people celebrated Passover for the first time since the original Passover plague in Egypt, and they learned how to observe the Passover when extenuating circumstances made them unclean and unable to participate in the celebration (Num. 9).

God supernaturally led His people through the wilderness, and He manifested His presence among the people by a cloud over the sanctuary during the day and by a pillar of fire over the sanctuary at night (Num. 9:15-23). When the cloud lifted, the people knew that it was time to pick up camp and move, and the priests would summon the people using two silver trumpets (Num. 10:1-10).

The people obeyed God as they set out from Mt. Sinai, and the Ark of the Covenant went before the people (Num. 10:33-36). Although they had experienced God's provision and power in tangible ways, the people began complaining as they journeyed from Sinai to the Promised Land, and God judged them by sending fire from heaven to consume some of the people (Num. 11). While God had given them manna to eat, the "rabble" among them expressed their discontent and cried for the meat and vegetables that they had in Egypt. This disgruntled group was the "mixed multitude" that chose to accompany the Israelites as they left Egypt (Ex. 12:38). Their desire for the previous life and their lack of satisfaction with God's care angered the Lord, and while He fed them with quail, He also struck them with a plague after spending a month watching their indulgence (Num. 11:18-21, 31-35). This demonstrated talionic justice where the punishment fits the crime, for what the people had so greatly desired became the source of their sickness and was loathsome to them.

Psalms

Background & Structure of Psalms: God used many different writers to write Psalms: David, Moses, the sons of Korah, Asaph, etc. The book is arranged in five parts, and this arrangement occurred after the people of Israel returned to the land after the Babylonian exile. A doxology concludes each book or arrangement of psalms (Psalm 41:13 for Book 1, Psalm 72:18-19 for Book 2, Psalm 89:52 for Book 3, Psalm 106:48 for Book 4, and Psalm 150:6 for Book 5), and the entire book of Psalms climactically ends with a grand doxology of several psalms (Ps. 146-150).

- Book 1: Psalms 1-41
- Book 2: Psalms 42-72
- Book 3: Psalms 73-89
- Book 4: Psalms 90-106
- Book 5: Psalms 107-150

This Week in Psalms:

- In Psalm 39, King David describes his efforts to keep silent in the presence of unbelievers about being chastened by God for sin he had committed. In the midst of suffering, he asks God for understanding of the brevity of life, and he hopes in the Lord and requests forgiveness for his sin and deliverance from his suffering.
- After describing God's saving acts, the psalmist of Psalm 40 expresses confidence that the Lord would not fail him in his current situation. The middle of the psalm focuses on dedication to the Lord, and the psalmist's devotion overflows from his praise of God. This devotion is what God desires instead of any ritual, tradition, or outward sign of obedience. Hebrews 10:5-7 quotes this psalm in reference to Christ, for the author of Hebrews recognized that this psalm found its fullest meaning in Christ's perfect dedication to the Father.

- In Psalm 41, King David describes how God sustained him when he was ill and protected him from his enemies and even from a close friend who had betrayed him during this time. King David notes how the Lord protects and delivers those who assist the needy and weak, and he gives thanks to God for His care of him. Psalm 41 concludes Book One of Psalms, and as the doxology of Book One, verse thirteen extols God as eternal and as the covenant God of Israel.
- Psalm 42 begins Book Two of Psalms. This section of Psalms continues to emphasize God's help in times of distress, but it also focuses on the believer's obedience. Psalm 42-43 stand as one psalm in Hebrew, and the refrain in Psalm 42:5, 11; 43:5 serve as evidence of their unity. In this lament, the psalmist expresses a yearning for the Lord despite feeling forgotten by Him. The psalmist's situation leads him to cry out to God for vindication against the ungodly who oppress him.
- In Psalm 44, the people of Israel remember God's faithfulness to their forefathers, and in this national lament, they question why He has allowed His people to suffer such a great military defeat. They do not understand why He did not answer their prayers for victory and why He did not help them. Although they do not understand His ways, they continue to express hope and trust in Him and in His steadfast love, and they urge Him to come to their aid.
- As a psalm about a royal wedding, Psalm 45 praises the virtues of the king and his bride. Although it would have been written for a particular king for his wedding, we do not know the identity of the king, but the psalm would have commonly been sung at royal weddings. It begins with description of the king (vv. 1-9), instructions for the bride (vv. 10-15), and a benediction for the marriage (vv. 16-17). This psalm also serves as a messianic psalm, for it ultimately points to Christ as the ideal king coming for His bride, the church. Hebrews 1:8-9 quotes Psalm 45:6-7 regarding the reign of Christ, and Revelation 19 records the marriage supper of the Lamb when Christ is reunited with His bride in heaven.
- Psalm 46 describes the strength, reliability, and security of God in times of trouble. His people can rest in His presence with them and His power to uphold and protect them. His victory is certain.
- Psalm 47 acknowledges God as King over all the earth, and the psalmist urges the people to praise Him for His authority and His power of all people. All people should praise Him because He is worthy of their praise as the Most High Lord. While this psalm originally was written describing God's power and victory over nations who opposed Israel, it also applies to God's sovereignty over Satan and all evil spiritual forces.
- The focus of Psalm 48 is Mount Zion or Jerusalem, which was the place of God's presence since it is where the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant resided. The city is beautiful and celebrated because God's presence was there. He is the One who should be praised, and the psalmist encourages the people to tell the next generation about the Lord and about His mighty works.