

Faith Family Worship Guide – Week 18

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: Numbers 13:1-2, 25-29; 14:1-11

Questions:

- How can we know that God will always keep His word?
- Why should we trust God?
- Why do God's people often doubt that He will fulfill His promises?
- What happens to God's people when they do not trust Him?

Bottom Line: Because of God's character, we can trust that He will always keep His promises; therefore, Christ-followers should respond to God with faith and obedience.

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

- How is God different than anyone else?
- What is He like?
- What kinds of things are not too hard for God?
- Who always takes care of you?
- If you are a child of God, can you trust Him to take care of you too?

Children

- Read Numbers 13:1-2. Ask your children why Moses was sending men into the land of Canaan. Emphasize that God promised this land to them.
- Have one of your children read verses 25-29. Ask them to list what the spies discovered in the land. Why were the men afraid?
- Read Numbers 14:1-11. Ask your children why the people doubted God's promises to them. Ask your children if they can share about a time when they doubted God's goodness and faithfulness.
- Ask your children what happens when we trust God. What happens when we don't trust God?
- Tell your children that God is trustworthy even when life is uncertain. Ask your children to share some ways that they can remember God's faithfulness and trust Him more.

Students

- How can we know that God will always keep His word?
- Why should we trust God?

- Why do God’s people often doubt that He will fulfill His promises?
- What happens to God’s people when they do not trust Him?

SING

This week’s song is “This is Amazing Grace” written by Josh Farro, Jeremy Riddle and Phil Wickham. This song uses one of the most famous phrases in Christian music, “amazing grace”, to build even more upon the majesty of God. The song reminds us again and again of the depths of the Christ’s power. The song is written in a call and response form, as an example in the first verse, where the lyrics ask, “Who breaks the power of sin and darkness? Whose love is mighty and so much stronger?” and responds with, “The King of Glory, the King above all kings.” The format of this song allows us to each dwell on the nature of God and affirms that we see these attributes in Him and only Him. This song is a good reminder of all that God has done for us and of his unfailing love.

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

WHERE WE ARE IN THE STORY

Readings for May 5-11

Numbers 12-20 and Psalm 49-59

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 Israel continued on their journey from Mt. Sinai to the Promised Land, Aaron and Miriam rebelled by speaking against Moses and by attempting to subvert his leadership of the people (Num. 12). God quickly responded by striking Miriam with leprosy, emphasizing Moses’ God-given authority to lead the Israelites. Soon after this event, Israel arrived to the wilderness of Paran, which is the modern-day region of northeastern Sinai Peninsula and southern Israel. Because they were quickly approaching the Promised Land, God gave them directions to send twelve spies (one from each tribe of Israel) to scout out the land and to bring back a status report of the land itself, the people, the cities, and the produce. When the spies returned, they brought back evidence of the land’s fruitfulness (Num. 13:23), but their report focused on the fortified cities, the military strength of the nations living in the land, and the size of the Canaanites (Num. 13:25-33). They even mention descendants of the Nephilim living in the land (see Gen. 6:4). Whether or not this is the actual Nephilim (since the original people would have been destroyed in the Flood), their inclusion of this people group emphasizes their perception of the Canaanites’ superior size and strength.

The Israelites allowed their fear of the Canaanites to eclipse their faith in God and His promises. God had promised to give them the land (Gen. 12; 15; 17; Ex. 3; 24; Num. 13), and they had experienced His great power with the plagues, Passover, Exodus, and His provisions in the wilderness. Yet they did not trust Him enough to take the land in faith. Their

fear and distrust led them to complain and rebel against God. As a result, God judged Israel by sentencing them to forty years of wilderness wandering. It took the spies forty days to go through the land, so they would wander for forty years (Num. 14:34). During this time, the entire faithless generation of Israelites (all Israelites older than age twenty) would die, except for Caleb and Joshua who were the two spies who trusted God and advocated taking the land (Num. 14:20-38).

When the people learned of their consequences and when they saw the ten spies who gave the negative report die by a plague sent from God, they tried to course correct and head into battle against the Amalekites and the Canaanites, but they were defeated (Num. 14:36-45). It was too late. The Israelites could have had God's promise within two years of leaving Egypt, but they forfeited His blessing by their own faithlessness, heaping on themselves suffering and death.

Despite their sin, God remained committed to His promises (Num. 15:1-2), and He gave them instructions regarding sacrifices and how to respond when they sin unintentionally (Num. 15). While in the wilderness, the people discovered one of their own breaking the Sabbath by working. At this point, they faced a choice – would they keep God's commands in how they responded to his sin, or would they disobey God again? They responded with obedience this time, but this display of obedience was quickly followed by a mutiny against Moses and Aaron led by Korah (Num. 16). They opposed God's design in setting the Levites as the priests and in naming Aaron as the high priest, and God struck the rebels with a plague and reiterated His plan regarding the priests and Levites (Lev. 17-19).

As the people of Israel complain yet again – this time about their need for water (Num. 20:2-9) – Moses disobeyed God's instructions. Instead of speaking to the rock as instructed, he struck it, and Moses verbally lashed out against the people (Num. 20:10-11). Because of their disobedience, God did not permit Moses and Aaron to enter the Promised Land, and the chapter closes with the death of Aaron (Num. 20:22-29). Psalm 95 points God's people to this event at Meribah and exhorts us not to emulate the obstinate, ungrateful, and rebellious attitudes of the Israelites.

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:

- As a wisdom psalm, Psalm 49 warns against trusting in riches and in the things that the world offers, for it is foolish to spend one's short life on things that are not eternal. The righteous can know that the ungodly and the wealth of this world will not last. Only those who trust in the Lord will triumph in the end.
- Psalm 50 describes a courtroom scene in which God brings His case against Israel for their hypocritical worship of Him. They performed the prescribed sacrifices and rituals, but they sinned against God and others. As a result, they would be judged unless they changed their ways. This psalm warns believers against outward "worship" that lacks the trust and obedience that stems from an authentic relationship with God.
- Psalm 51 records King David's confession of his affair with Bathsheba and his murder of her husband (see 2 Sam. 11-12). This penitential psalm includes a cry for forgiveness (vv. 1-2), a description of why forgiveness is needed (vv. 3-6), a petition for forgiveness and spiritual renewal (vv. 7-12), and a vow to praise God (vv. 13-19). This psalm expresses our need for cleansing from sin in order to enjoy fellowship with the Lord. Like King David, we can confess our sin to God and receive forgiveness for our transgressions (1 Jn. 1:9). However, we must not live as though He offers cheap grace. Knowing that He will forgive does not give us license to sin.
- The superscription to Psalm 52 references an event that is recorded in 1 Samuel 22:17-23 when Doeg betrayed David by giving up his location to King Saul when David was on the run. The psalm pronounces judgment on those who deceive and who love evil. In contrast, the righteous will flourish like olive trees (v. 8). Because olive

trees live for hundreds of years and produce fruit that has a variety of uses, the psalmist draws upon this simile to emphasize just how fruitful and blessed the faithful will be.

- Psalm 53 describes the sinfulness of man and repeats the same content as Psalm 14. According to Dr. Allen Ross in *A Commentary on Psalms* (Vol. 2), “Psalm 14 seems to focus on comfort for the faithful; Psalm 53 stresses a warning for the wicked.”
- 1 Samuel 23 records the events of Psalm 54, and in this situation, the Ziphites gave up David’s location to King Saul who was attempting to kill David. David cries out to God for rescue and for vindication, expresses confidence in God’s help and protection, and promises to praise God for His deliverance.
- In Psalm 55, David expresses confidence in God despite the oppression of his enemies and the betrayal of a close friend. Despite the situation, David knew he could approach God with his concerns and appeal to Him to intervene because of God’s character.
- The odd superscription of Psalm 56 likely refers to a melody that was to be used with this particular psalm, and this psalm was written by King David regarding the events of 1 Samuel 21. Both Psalm 56 and Psalm 57 express confidence in the Lord who is over all.
- Psalm 58 stands as a lament about ungodly rulers, and the psalmist turns to God for vengeance and justice as he brings his charges against these corrupt leaders. This psalm demonstrates that it is acceptable to ask God to end the influence of ungodly leaders and to judge them for their wickedness.
- As a lament psalm, David composed Psalm 59 in light of the events described in 1 Samuel 19. He requests deliverance from his enemies, and after describing his perilous circumstances, the psalmist declares the sovereignty and strength of the Lord. His enemies do not operate outside of the Lord’s purview, and the psalmist petitions God to act in a way that the world will recognize *He* is Lord.