

## Faith Family Worship Guide – Week 19

### MEMORIZE

- For those with 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> 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.
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Grade – Matthew 22:37-39
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade – Matthew 5:14-16
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade – Proverbs 3:5-7
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Grade – Proverbs 4:10-15
  - 5<sup>th</sup> 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 63:1-8

#### Questions:

- What does it look like to “seek” God as a believer?
- Why is it important for the believer to seek God?
- Why should we praise God?
- What should we praise God for?
- How can we praise God?

**Bottom Line:** Because the believer knows who God is and has seen His goodness, the believer longs for God, experiences satisfaction and joy in his or her relationship with God, and praises God for who He is and what He has done.

### 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. Parents should prayerfully use these suggestions, and any other means necessary, to help their children discover the truths of God’s word and worship him together.

#### Preschool

- Who is God?
- What is He like?
- What has He done?
- Who deserves all our praise?
- What does it mean to praise God? Praise is telling of God’s greatness and His mighty deeds. It’s telling about who He is and what He’s done.
- What are some ways we can praise God?

#### Children

- Have you ever been really thirsty, maybe after soccer practice? Have you ever been really hungry, maybe when you didn’t eat breakfast before school?
- What was the first thing you looked for as soon as soccer practice was over? Did it seem like lunchtime would never get here?
- Think about that as we read Psalm 63:1-8 together. Take turns reading the passage aloud.
- Hunger and thirst are actually good things. Healthy bodies hunger and thirst. When you have the stomach bug you really don’t want to put anything in your mouth, do you?
- God gave us hunger and thirst so we would know we need something – food and water.
- Likewise, when we hunger and thirst for God, we know we need Him.
- Verses 3 and 5 tell us to praise Him with our joyful lips. Praise God aloud with your family for all He has done.

## Students

- It seems like this person has had an incredibly real and impacting experience with God. When was the last time you sensed God revealing Himself to you? (Ex.: when reading His word, experiencing Him working in the details of your life, seeing Him work in someone else's life)
- In addition to God revealing Himself to David in this Psalm, David speaks of his pursuit of God. How would you describe the chasing after God that David did?
- What action words does David use in his description of this pursuit? (seek, thirst, looked, bless, remember, meditate)
- In this Psalm there is a poetic description of David's relationship with God. How would you describe your relationship with God?
- In what ways would you like your relationship to look more like the one you read about in Psalm 63?
- What steps could you take on your part to strengthen the relationship?
- In what ways do you want to be held accountable for taking these steps?

## SING

This is a week that focuses on finding joy and satisfaction in our God and King. He is the One at the center of our lives, so our worship song this week is "Cornerstone". It highlights what we find only in Jesus ("my hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness"), declares that, "He is Lord, Lord of all", and recognizes what He has done for those who believe in Him ("weak made strong" and "faultless stand before the throne"). What joy and praise such lyrics elicit!

Visit our website for a link to this song: [www.brookhills.org/gathering/this\\_week.html](http://www.brookhills.org/gathering/this_week.html).

## WHERE WE ARE IN THE STORY

### Readings for May 12-18

Numbers 21-27 and Psalm 60-71

### 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 the Israelites wander in the wilderness, they encounter enemies (the king of Arad, King Sihon, and King Og), and they experience a foretaste of God's fulfillment of His promises to protect them, to fight for them, and to give them the land (Num. 21:1-3, 21-35). They received a taste of what could have been theirs sooner had they only trusted God in Numbers 13-14.

In between accounts of God-given military victories, Israel complains against God who disciplines them with a plague of fiery serpents with lethal venom (Num. 21:4-9). Their only means of salvation was to look at a golden serpent that Moses

fashioned and placed in the center of the camp. The bronze snake did not heal the people; the Lord healed those who heeded His instructions. The Israelites preserved the bronze snake as a memorial, but centuries later, the people turned to worshipping it, which led King Hezekiah to destroy it (2 Kings 18:4). Jesus referenced this same event in John 3:14-15 as He made a comparison between the bronze serpent and Himself. As the people looked upon the bronze serpent and were healed of their physical pain because of their sin, so those who look to Christ are saved from their sin and its effects. As the bronze serpent was raised on a pole, Christ was raised on a cross in order to provide a means of forgiveness and restoration.

Numbers 22-45 contains the oracles of Balaam, a diviner (Josh. 13:22), when the king of Moab sought his services to put down the Israelites as they journeyed through Moab. Although attempting to curse the Israelites, God prevented him from doing anything other than blessing them and prophesying what *God* put in His mouth, which included the destruction of Moab and the rest of Israel's enemies in the land. Despite God's miraculous intervention, the people began to "whore" with the women of Moab and to worship their gods with them (Num. 25:1-3), and twenty-four thousand Israelites died as a result of their apostasy. One Israelite man blatantly attempted to make amends through fornication with a Midianite, but although sex was part of temple life and worship practices in other religions, such practices oppose God's design for both sex and worship. Because Phinehas, a priest and a grandson of Aaron, responded swiftly and righteously to this man's sin by executing both him and the Midianite woman, God honored him by assigning the position of high priest to his line of descendants (Num. 25:10-13).

With such a high death count after the plague, God instructs Moses to take another census of the men who were twenty years of age and older and who were able to go to war (Num. 26), and God set forth that the list from this census would be used when dividing the inheritance of land among the twelve tribes. The instructions regarding inheritance transition to a situation where an Israelite father died without a son but with five daughters. These daughters of Zelophehad requested that they be given their father's name and portion to carry on instead of his line ending with his death. God directed Moses to transfer the father's inheritance to the daughters and created a precedent for how to handle similar matters in the future (Num. 27:1-11). Numbers 27 closes with a ceremony in which Moses commissions Joshua as his God-ordained successor.

## 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:

- King David wrote Psalm 60 as a communal lament offered after defeat in battle, likely by Edom since the superscription describes a time when the Israelites were fighting the Aramaeans in the north and were attacked by the Edomites in the south. The psalm acknowledges God's sovereignty over Israel's success and defeat in battle, and it pleads for God's deliverance and recalls God's words that Gilead, Manasseh, Ephraim, and Judah belong to Him (v. 7). These were all portions of Israel, and by naming them, the psalmist reiterated that *God* owned the land of Canaan, not the enemies of the Israelites who are listed in verse 8. As the psalmist lamented the nation's defeat, he also anticipates God to give victory to His people because of His promises (vv. 6-8, 12).
- Because Psalm 61 prays for the life and reign of the king, it is a royal psalm. In it, King David indicates that he is in some sort of trouble, and he cries out to God, the rock of protection who is exalted over all (vv. 1-2). The psalmist recognizes God's protection in the past (v. 3), petitions for access to God's presence (v. 4), prays for His continued support (v. 4), and promises to praise Him for His faithfulness (v. 8). The vows that the psalmist mentions are vows of praise, and they were part of the peace offering. When the offering was made, the

worshipper would grab the horns of the altar and declare to those in the sanctuary what the Lord had accomplished. The faithful respond to God with praise for what He has done.

- In Psalm 62, the psalmist expresses confidence in the Lord's character and deliverance in the midst of others are attacking him; knowing this about God is how the psalmist can wait in silence (v. 1). Organized into three stanzas of four verses (vv. 1-4, 5-8, 9-12), each stanza presents an overarching truth. (1) While the wicked attempt to assail the righteous, believers can trust God to act and rely on Him for strength (vv. 1-4). (2) Those who trust God direct others to place their faith in God and in His care (vv. 5-8). (3) The power and riches of the wicked will fade, and God will judge the wicked. Therefore, it is foolish to trust in anything other than the Lord (vv. 9-12).
- When David wrote Psalm 63, he was in the wilderness because of some sort of danger (v. 9), and he longed to be in the Lord's sanctuary in Jerusalem (v. 2). In verses 1-2, the psalmist states his desire for God, comparing his physical need for water in the wilderness to his great need for God, and he recalls when he worshipped God in His sanctuary. This meditation leads the psalmist to describe God's sufficiency and to praise of God as the one who truly satisfies (vv. 3-8). At the same time, this God will destroy those who oppose Him and His people, and the righteous can anticipate this day and praise God for His victory (vv. 10-11).
- David wrote Psalm 64 as a prayer for protection as he faced a threat on his life. However, even in the face of great danger, he displayed confidence in God's ultimate destruction of his enemies. While we may not all experience life-threatening situations like King David did, we can approach God with confidence in justice and in His ability to protect His people, and we can expect Him to act in His perfect timing and celebrate when He enacts His perfect justice.
- Psalm 65 focuses on God's provision for the life, particularly in enriching the earth, sending rain, and causing crops to grow. As Creator and Sustainer of all life, He deserves our thanksgiving for these things that we so often take for granted. Divided into two parts (vv. 1-8 and vv. 9-13), the first part describes why God's people owe Him their praise, and the vows that verse 1 references are the same vows that Psalm 61 references (see above).
- Psalm 66 is a declarative praise psalm because it begins with a proclamation of praise (vv. 1-4), a report of what God had done (vv. 5-12), a renewed vow of praise (vv. 13-15), and a description of what God has done (vv. 16-20). Ultimately, this psalm exalts God because He has delivered His people from bondage.
- Psalm 67 begins by citing Numbers 6:24, which is the blessing God gave Moses to speak over Aaron and his sons as the priests. Here, the psalmist directs the blessing to the Israelites, and the purpose of that particular prayer of blessing is for the world to know God's saving power (vv. 1-2). As a kingdom of priests (Ex. 19:6), God tasked Israel with being a light to the nations. God also calls believers under the new covenant priests (1 Pet. 2:9), and like the Israelites in the Old Testament, we are supposed to proclaim God to the nations.
- Overall, Psalm 68 focuses on the Lord's triumphant entry into His sanctuary, and it traces His leadership of the people from Egypt to the wilderness to the land of Canaan and, ultimately, to Mt. Zion, which was the site of the sanctuary in Jerusalem. God chose Zion as the site of His sanctuary over all other mountains and places (vv. 15-16), and the image of Him ascending that mount is one of a conquering King with other kings and nations submitting to Him and bringing tribute to Him. The psalmist celebrates the Lord's power and victory and calls others to join him in praising God (vv. 32-35). What is described in Psalm 68 was a literal reality for Israel, and Ephesians 1:20-23 and 4:7-10 presents the reality for believers in Christ who has conquered sin, death, and Satan and has ascended on high.
- Facing enemies who hated him without cause (v. 4), the psalmist claims that he bears reproach because of his zeal for the Lord and for His sanctuary (vv. 7-9). Even when suffering for his faith, the psalmist continued to pray to God and to praise Him, and as with the psalmist, God's people will face opposition because of their faith and obedience. Its many petitions for the wicked's destruction classifies Psalm 69 as an imprecatory psalm. This psalm, along with the other imprecatory psalms, were sung in the sanctuary because they expressed a hatred of sin, a zeal for God, and a desire for God's righteousness to be vindicated in the face of wickedness. The New Testament references this psalm in descriptions of Christ (Ps. 69:10, 22; Matt. 27:34-48; Mk. 15:36; Lk. 23:36; Jn. 2:17), of Judas (Ps. 69:26; Acts 1:20), and of the spiritually blind (Ps. 69:23-24; Rom. 11:9-10).
- Psalm 70 repeats the concluding five verses of Psalm 40 as it petitions God for help and for the destruction of enemies.
- Psalm 71 expresses the faith of an aging believer who looks back on God's provision in his own life (vv. 5-6) and who continues to trust Him as he looks toward the future (vv. 14-24). As one who had walked with God from his youth and has seen God work in the past (v. 17), the psalmist voices his confidence and trust in the Lord.