



# STORIES *of* FAITH

## DEVOTIONAL GUIDE





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## STORIES OF FAITH

After our really slow crawl through the book of James, we are going to do a bit of an overview of the early books in the Old Testament. Springing out of the list of people in Hebrews chapter 11. To get a cohesive picture, we will read through much of Genesis and Exodus, then sprinkle in some Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, and Samuel. All the while looking for **stories of faith** that we can connect to our own story of faith.

These people from Hebrews 11 are a lot like us, more than we realize.

Not one of them was superhuman. Not one of them was better equipped to believe God than we are. Not one of them failed to struggle with the calling? How do I know? Because each one was commended for his or her faith. The evidence of faith always indicates the existence of a viable alternative. That which is completely obvious and explainable is not faith.

- Beth Moore, in *Believing God*

I have longed to see this hard to define quality grow in my own life, and I imagine you do as well. Let's learn together from the many visual aids in the stories recorded for us.

Remember to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to lead and guide as you read.



# WEEK 1

SUNDAY (6/7/20) SERMON NOTES

## MONDAY (6/8/20)

### Read Genesis 1 and 2

These chapters may be very familiar, but try to read them with fresh eyes. The Hebrew word for created - *bara* - refers to something brought from nothing - an act that only God can perform.

② What does it teach you about God when you see the physical world respond to His command?

② Why do you think that God creates two sexes?

② How do you see evidence of God's care and love for Adam (and later for Eve)?

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- ② At the end of chapter 2, God institutes the male-female marriage plan, and Jesus later reaffirms and echoes this in the gospels. Why do you think that He plans it this way?

In the final verse, we are told that they were naked and felt no shame. It's hard for me to picture, being completely transparent, completely vulnerable, and feeling absolutely no shame over anything about me.

- 🏠 Spend some time quietly reflecting on the reality that God sees every aspect of you.

*He is not ashamed to call you His own.*

*He is delighting over you.*

*He sacrificed much to have a relationship with you and you are tremendously valuable.*

*Let Him speak that over you today.*



② How do you see evidence of God's care and love for Adam & Eve in chapter 3?

② Continuing the hard story, how do you see God reaching toward Cain in chapter 4?

② Verse 7 always reminds me of the New Testament verse that describes Satan as a roaring lion, wanting to devour us. And we just read in the spring in James, that we are tempted by our own evil desires. In your life right now, how is God reaching out to you to help you overcome an area of sin that wants to destroy you?

 Something happens in 4:26 that prompts people to again call on the name of the Lord. Spend some time right now praying and calling on His name, or parts of His character that you love.

## WEDNESDAY (6/10/20)

 Read Genesis 6 and 7

② It is challenging to picture God being grieved and filled with pain. How does this enlarge your view of Him?

② At this point in history, no rain had fallen on the earth. Imagine yourself being Noah. What are you thinking as God tells you to “get to work?”

② Why do you think Noah finds favor in God’s eyes?

② What is the difference between being righteous and being blameless?

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# THURSDAY (6/11/20)

## Read Genesis 8 and 9

Noah gets a lot of words here in Genesis!

I once read that when the Bible records God’s “remembering,” it always precedes action on His part. It isn’t like he actually forgot Noah and his family were in the boat and that the earth was flooding. But His remembering meant that it was time for His action. And Noah builds an altar and sacrifices to the Lord.

- ② What surprising thing does the Lord promise here? Any speculations on why He makes this vow?
  
- ② How does being an image bearer of God impact or change how you see yourself?
  
- ② How does it influence how you treat others?
  
- ② When you realize that the rainbow is significant and a result of God’s covenant, what do you think about when you see one today?

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## COME TO THE ALTAR

Think back through your significant times with the Lord. Times He has provided, times He has “shown up” and loved you or someone you loved. Perhaps you are in a significant time right now. All throughout the Old Testament altars were built so that the people would remember how God had provided, or what had been revealed about Him through His name. And their remembering of who God is was designed to influence their behavior - developing trust.

In the back of this guide on page 78, there is going to be a page set aside for you to record the times in Genesis and Exodus when altars were built, why they were built and what they signified.

- ② What would be a way that you could “build an altar” to help you remember God’s faithfulness in this season?

## FRIDAY (6/12/20)

### Read Genesis 11 and 12

If you thought Noah received a lot of words in Genesis, today we meet Abraham.

② Why does it seem that God chose Abraham?

② What kinds of things do we learn about him in this chapter?

② Why does he build an altar?

We are going to keep track of how Abraham (and others) responds to God, what we learn about his character, and how he lives. He is called the friend of God. God calls us His friend, and I want to live well as His friend. I want to learn from Abraham, Noah, and all the others that we will read about. We will read about their victories and their failures.

We are also going to keep track of altar building and see what we can learn! These themes help us unite the whole story of the Bible as one larger story told in small chunks.



## SATURDAY (6/13/20)

### Read Genesis 15

② We've only known Abraham a bit so far, but what do you think he might be fearing (God tells him to not be afraid)?

② Based on his response, what is he learning about God's character?

② What kind of relationship have they already developed such that Abraham feels good to ask the questions?

 Where are you at in your obedience to what you know is good to do? Sit and spend some time asking the Holy Spirit to show you- not for the purpose of any condemnation, but for the purpose of growing in the desire and the practice of obeying.

## SUNDAY (6/14/20)

Today, let's check into the Bible Project's video about the first 11 chapters in Genesis.

Sit back, relax, and enjoy their creativity!

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQI72THyO5I>



# WEEK 2

SUNDAY (6/14/20) - SERMON NOTES

## MONDAY (6/15/20)

 **Read Genesis 16 and 17**

② How do you empathize with Sarai (later God changes her name to Sarah), and her desire to have a child?

② Picture the dynamic between Hagar and Sarai once Hagar is pregnant, why do you think Sarai begins to mistreat her?

② Imagine the situation that Hagar is in, brought to her by the people she sees worshiping God. I love how God intervenes into these three lives in the next few chapters. We certainly see flaws in them, but hopefully we also see honest people trying to follow God. What do you appreciate about how God reaches out to Hagar?

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## TUESDAY (6/16/20)

### Read Genesis 18 and 19

I continue to find God & Abraham's relationship so interesting and encouraging. As well as the interchange between God and Sarah and His "yes, you did laugh."

② What stands out to you today in the relationship between God and Abraham?

② How does this impact your picture of prayer?

② Again we see a picture of a man (Lot) who cares for and wants to protect the angels, and then offers his daughters up. The good and the bad on display for all generations to read. Why do you think God intentionally shows both?

The Moabites and Ammonites descend from Lot's daughters (again more good and bad on display), and one famous Moabite we won't get to read about in this devotional is Ruth. You can read her story in the book of Ruth.

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- ② How does this showing of the good as well as the bad and confusing encourage you in your daily walk with Jesus?
- ② What pops out in the story of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah?



## SODOM & GOMORRAH

While this passage describes the events surrounding the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, other passages give insight behind God's judgment. For example in Ezekiel 16:49-50 it says, “<sup>49</sup> Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy. <sup>50</sup> They were haughty and did detestable things before me. Therefore I did away with them as you have seen.” In Jeremiah 23:14 it states, “And among the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen something horrible: They commit adultery and live a lie. They strengthen the hands of evildoers, so that not one of them turns from their wickedness. They are all like Sodom to me; the people of Jerusalem are like Gomorrah.” In the Gospels, Jesus states that cities that do not show hospitality to his disciples were worse than Sodom and Gomorrah (Matthew 10:9-16; Luke 10:8-12). You can see from these passages God's overall posture towards sin and sanctity of human life.

## WEDNESDAY (6/17/20)

 Read Genesis 20

② What are your thoughts as you read this story?

② Based on God's promise to conceive a family through Abraham and Sarah, what is risked by the lie?

② This is the second time we've seen Abraham do this. What is he struggling to learn? Why do you think this is his default?

② Why do you think God intervenes?

② How has the Lord intervened in your life to protect you or provide for you?



# THURSDAY (6/18/20)

## Read Genesis 21

I always think it's funny that verse 2 highlights Abraham's old age when Sarah is the one who gave birth well into her old age!

- ② The name Isaac means "he laughs." Why is this appropriate for them?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ② What does the birth of Isaac teach us about God?

Hagar had been given to Sarah as her maid and therefore Sarah could dismiss her. But because Sarah had given her to Abraham and she bore a son to him, she was elevated to the status of a wife and sending her away would be similar to divorcing her, although she would gain her freedom.

- ② What do you learn about Abraham's character throughout this sending away?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ② Hagar is afraid. Think about what makes you afraid. As you sit and think about what is causing the fear, where is God in the midst of the story?

## FRIDAY (6/19/20)

### Read Genesis 22

Ahhhh - this is a hard to read story.

- ② What do you discover about Abraham in this chapter?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ② Moriah would be a three day journey. Isaac was old enough to carry wood for the fire and ask questions (and old enough to run away when he realized that he was the sacrifice). What can you see in his character during this scene?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ② In verse 8 the Hebrew word for “will provide” is *raah* which literally means “to see to” or “to attend to”. From Hebrews 11:17-19, what can we speculate was going on in Abraham’s head?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ② Where do you need God to provide today? Do you believe that He will provide? What has grown this faith in you?

## SATURDAY (6/20/20)

### Read Genesis 24-25:11

The characters in this chapter are so amazing to me, each in their own story. Not everyone marries, but if we do, God is still very concerned about the person we choose. Even our closest friends are important choices as these people influence us greatly.

② Why do you think Abraham is so concerned about who Isaac is going to marry?

Q We are going to look at each character and how they demonstrate their faith through their actions. James taught us this spring that our faith is proved genuine by our actions - not by our words. How do you see faith in each of the characters below:

- Abraham?
- In the servant?
- In Rebekah?
- In Isaac?

② Abraham is very specific in his request of the Lord. Jesus, in **Mark 10:46-52**, also asks this man to be specific about his request. Why do you think it is valuable to speak specifically in our requests to God when we pray for ourselves as well as for others?

## SUNDAY (6/21/20)

Today is a day for grace! Spend time praying, sitting and enjoying the Father's presence, or catch up in the devos!

Relax and breathe deeply!

Below is the link to watch the second part of Genesis: Chapters 12-50 from the Bible Project.

 <https://youtu.be/F4isSyennFo>



# WEEK 3

SUNDAY (6/21/20) - SERMON NOTES

## MONDAY (6/22/20)

 **Read Genesis 26** (*refer to chapter 20*)

 Describe the faith you see in Isaac as evidenced here:

 Describe a time in your life recently when you responded to a situation in great faith:

 Describe a time when you responded with doubt or *hedged your bets*:

 What determines how you will respond? How can you grow in responding in faith?

## TUESDAY (6/23/20)

 Read Genesis 27-28

### THE BLESSING

The blessing that they were seeking is one that would transfer leadership of the clan to the next generation (Zondervan's Bible Commentary). The administrator (usually the firstborn) would preside over family events as well as determine the timing and division of the inheritance. Though Esau had earlier (chapter 25) traded away his birthright (for a bowl of stew), he could retain control of the estate through this blessing. The blessing would also be a proclamation of destiny for the sons. It was believed to be binding once the words were spoken - hence Isaac could not take them back even when it was revealed that he had been tricked.

What we believe always gets worked out in what we do. Belief precedes behavior. We can say all day long that we believe and trust in God, but if we manipulate, control, lay down in self pity we reveal much more about where our trust lays.

Each of the players in this story display faith and disbelief along the way. We are no different than they are. Let's look at each character and see what their actions reveal to us.

Faith Demonstrated

Disbelief Demonstrated

Jacob:

Esau:

Rebekah:

Isaac:

 Reflect on your actions over the past 24 hours and write down when you demonstrated faith and/or disbelief.

 Jesus asks a man in the gospels if he believes that He (Jesus) can heal his son. The man replies, “I do believe, help me with my unbelief.” Spend some time asking the Holy Spirit to show you areas of disbelief, areas where you are trying to control outcomes, as well as areas where you are growing in trust.

## WEDNESDAY (6/24/20)

### Read Genesis 29-30

I love the characters in Genesis that we get to see for many chapters. We can see their faith grow and develop just as ours does. OK, it is just me or is 29:25 a crack up verse... “When morning came, there was Leah.” Like he hadn’t noticed who was in bed with him?! What a drama we are reading about! It’s good to have our focus on seeing faith in our characters. Or a lack of faith that can teach us about ourselves.

- ② Where do you see Jacob trusting in himself instead of his God?
  
- ② What about Leah? What do we learn about her? What about Rachel?
  
- ② In their relationships and their responses, where would you long to see a different more faith-filled response?
  
- ② Both of the women seem to see children and Jacob as the fulfiller of their dreams and needs. We all have needs for security, acceptance, and love. The trouble comes when we seek to get those needs met in ways that are either outright sin, or sneakier sin/control/manipulation. Where do you see this potential trouble in your own life?

## THURSDAY (6/25/20)

### Read Genesis 31-32:21

② In 31:42, Jacob does not seem to have his own relationship with God. How does this change during these chapters?

② Where do you see faith growing in Jacob?

② Is there a relationship in your life that has been fractured the way that Jacob & Esau's has been?

① Jacob recognizes that he has been so greatly blessed by God. Take some time and write out specific ways that you have been blessed and you can point directly to God for those blessings.



## FRIDAY (6/26/20)

### Read Genesis 32:22-32 & Genesis 33

Sometimes I just want to sigh when I read about Jacob's responses. I see his faith growing, and then I see him lie and I feel sad. But I know that there is also this contradiction in myself.

② In the past few days, where have your actions contradicted your faith?

② Where do you see a lack of faith in him?

A friend said to me today, "the Lord has really been after me to forgive someone." What a blessing that no matter how old we grow, the Holy Spirit is still *after us* to produce more and better fruit in our lives.

 Write out a prayer of thanks to the Lord for where you see Him *after you*.

## SATURDAY (6/27/20)

### Read Genesis 37

In chapter 35 God changed Jacob's name to Israel, and we see Israel build an altar to remember. Continue to record these altars on the page in the back!

Israel (Jacob) had obviously not learned the lesson regarding favoritism during his own childhood and passes this down yet another generation. I am reminded of what we learned this Spring in the study of James and how God specifically commands us to not show favoritism.

② In your own family, what traits have been passed down from your parents that you would like to see the Lord change in you?

② Where have you seen the Lord change you? Or where would you like to cooperate for some future change?

② Why do you think God gave Joseph the dreams that he had?

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② Picture the scene where he shares these with the older siblings. What do you think motivates them to respond as they do?

② How do you think favoritism plays into the events recorded here?

② How is this generational sin damaging to all that it touches? The favorite and the non-favorite?

 Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you any areas of generational sin that are lodged in your character and behavior.

# SUNDAY (6/28/20)

Grace Day!

Today is a day to be slower. We've been reading a lot, and even though it is a story, perhaps you need some grace and time to catch up.



# WEEK 4

SUNDAY (6/28/20) - SERMON NOTES

## MONDAY (6/29/20)

### Read Genesis 38

Well, some family dysfunction, or rather some more family dysfunction! Makes me feel at home reading the scriptures. God is no stranger to our unhealthy styles of relating! He just wants us to cooperate in the change.

② How has it seemed that living amongst a pagan culture has impacted Israel's family?

② Where do you see faithless action for both Tamar and Judah?

② In Matthew 1, Tamar is listed as 1 of 5 women in the lineage of Jesus. Jesus, descended from the line of Judah, is familiar with generational sin and poor choices. How does it encourage you that these two are direct descendants of Jesus?



## TUESDAY (6/30/20)

### Read Genesis 39-40

We are back to Joseph and the saga following his being sold by his brothers into slavery. Remember in James this spring we read about how trials develop our perseverance and faith? We can watch this happen in Joseph and marvel at his responses.

- ② Where do you see faith developing in these 2 chapters?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ② I love that in each situation, we are told “the Lord was with him.” It reminds me of Hagar early in Genesis when she called God “the God who sees me.” In your current situation, how do you sense that the Lord is with you?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ② In the midst of hard times, why do you think Joseph does not turn away from God in anger?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ② How do you respond to the Lord during trials and pain?



## THURSDAY (7/2/20)

### Read Genesis 42-43

I love this story on a variety of levels!

- ② Since we are on the lookout for faith, how do you see evidence of Joseph's faith here?
  
- ② Where have the brothers grown? Not grown?
  
- ② What about Israel (Jacob)? How is his faith in evident?
  
- ② How has Judah in particular grown since we saw him in the story with Tamar?
  
- ② Joseph's steward says a curious thing in 43: 23. How do you think he comes to know about God?

## FRIDAY (7/3/20)

 Read Genesis 44-46:7

The drama continues!

- ② Why do you think Joseph deceived them this second time?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ② What do you think he was accomplishing by putting the cup in Benjamin's sack?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ② Where is faith and growth evident in Judah's response?

 Think of a situation in your own life where you were angry or wondered why God would allow something like that to happen. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to give you perspective on how that situation could be fertile ground for your growing deeper roots.

## SATURDAY (7/4/20)

### Read Genesis 47-48

So Israel (Jacob) goes to Egypt and settles with his family. This had to be a sweet time for him. Jacob immediately blesses Pharaoh.

② Is there someone older in your life who has blessed you, spoken truth over you, or influenced you?

He also spends time explaining the promises that God had given him and how they were being fulfilled.

② Who is someone in your life that has pointed out how God is at work in and through you?

 Genesis 48:15-16 are just beautiful verses. If you were to write a few verses about who God has been to you, what would you say? Think of the characteristics describing who He has been in your life. Write them here:

## SUNDAY (7/5/20)

 **Read Genesis 49:29-50:26**

I always like to give us Sunday to relax and reflect, but we are on a mission to finish Genesis, so we have a few verses to read this morning.

② As you reflect back on the book of Genesis, including these chapters here, how would you describe God?

② One last time! What does Joseph's faith look like?

I know we've read a chunk each day, and we will continue into Exodus. These chapters and stories are so essential for us to understand our faith as well as the heritage passed down to us. God tells Abraham that he will be the Father of many nations, and that all nations will be blessed through him. He shows him the stars and speaks of his descendants. If you have placed your faith in the saving work of Jesus, you are one of those descendants.

Take a listen to this old song and reflect:

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eeFwHhgx2L4>



# WEEK 5

SUNDAY (7/5/20) - SERMON NOTES

## MONDAY (7/6/20)

Let's sit today and listen to the story of Exodus as told by the Bible Project friends. Today we will hear the description of chapters 1-18, and later we will do the rest!

 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jH\\_aojNJM3E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jH_aojNJM3E)



## TUESDAY (7/7/20)

### Read Exodus 1-2

God made a promise way back in Genesis 15 to Abraham. We are going to see it be fulfilled over these next few weeks. These two chapters cover a lot of years!

- ② How has the climate changed for the Israelites?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ② How do we see racism at work between the Egyptians and the Israelites? (at least that is what I see in the king when he says “there’s a lot of them, and they are getting more numerous, they may turn on us...”)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ② How do you see God’s sovereignty at work in these chapters?

Moses is born a Levite. The Levites would become the tribe of the priests, the people who would be the ones leading the people to walk righteously before God. Moses obviously knows that he is an Israelite, which is interesting to me.

- ② Why do you think he chooses to identify with the Israelites now when it seems like he had not previously?

In verse 24 we see again that “God remembered” phrase. Reminiscent of Noah in the ark, God’s remembering is always accompanied by His moving, his action.

- ② How has God used a hard situation in your life to point you towards Himself?

Moses lives in exile for a long time. Probably so long that he has no thoughts of his former life in Egypt.

- ② We’ve all, in the social distancing, been in a sort of exile. What kinds of things did you see God teach you through that time?



## WEDNESDAY (7/8/20)

### Read Exodus 3-4

② In 3:5-7 God teaches Moses (and us) about Himself. How does He describe Himself?

② How do you think it impacts Moses that God connects him to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?

② In verse 14 we see God explaining to Moses that He is the self-existent one, the I AM. Verse 15 explains that He is the LORD, Jehovah. How could this have encouraged Moses?

② How has God been patient with you in times of questioning or pain?

 Spend some time just sitting with Him knowing that His eyes are on you.

## THURSDAY (7/9/20)

 Read Exodus 5 - 6:12 and 6:28 - 7:7

② I find it interesting that God reveals His names and character differently at various times and with various people. What do you appreciate about that?

② What put you in a place where you feel closed off to the Lord's words? Can you relate to this? What moves your spirit to soften and be in a place to listen?

I love it that Moses is 80 years old! I hope to still be listening to the Lord, to be asking questions, and to be obeying when I am 80 and beyond!

② Ask the Holy Spirit to show you your heart right now. Is your spirit soft to listen? Are you in a place of obedience or disobedience? Do you obey quickly or delay? Do you make excuses? Ask the Spirit to give you a picture of a more mature 'you'.



# FRIDAY (7/10/20)

## Read Exodus 7:8 - 8

In this season of COVID19 perhaps we can relate more to the devastating effects the plagues had on Egyptian life.

### The Plagues On Egypt (Exodus 7-12)

- **BLOOD** (7:14-24)  
The Nile, along with all of the water in Egypt, turns into blood. But Pharaoh does not let the Israelites go.
- **FROGS** (7:25 - 8:15)  
Frogs cover the land of Egypt. Pharaoh promises to let the Israelites go, but changes his mind.
- **GNATS** (8:16-19)  
The dust turns to gnats, which cover the people and animals of Egypt. But Pharaoh does not let the Israelites go.
- **FLIES** (8:20-32)  
Flies fill the houses and land of Egypt. Pharaoh promises to let the Israelites go, but changes his mind.
- **LIVESTOCK** (9:1-7)  
All of the livestock of the Egyptians die. But Pharaoh does not let the Israelites go.
- **BOILS** (9:8-12)  
Festering boils break out on the Egyptians and their animals. But Pharaoh does not let the Israelites go.
- **HAIL** (9:13-35)  
Hail strikes down everything in the fields - humans, animals and trees. Pharaoh asks for forgiveness and promises to let the Israelites go, but changes his mind.
- **LOCUSTS** (10:1-20)  
Locusts devour every tree and plant in the land of Egypt. Pharaoh asks for forgiveness, but does not let the Israelites go.
- **DARKNESS** (10:21-29)  
Darkness covers the land of Egypt for three days. Pharaoh promises to let the Israelites go, but changes his mind.
- **FIRSTBORN** (11:1-10; 12:29-32)  
Every firstborn son and firstborn of the cattle in Egypt dies. Pharaoh finally lets the Israelites leave Egypt, only to change his mind and pursue them to the Red Sea.

 What are your thoughts reading this section?

Many of the plagues were said to confront a specific Egyptian God.

② How does the God of the Israelites demonstrate His superiority through them?

② Why is it actually a loving thing for God to demonstrate His power in contrast to either their lifeless deities or those deities animated by Satan?

 List the plague, who was impacted and how Pharaoh responded:

Plague

Who is impacted?

Pharaoh's response

# SATURDAY (7/11/20)

 Read Exodus 9 - 10

 Continuing on, list the plague, who was impacted and how Pharaoh responded:

Plague

Who is impacted?

Pharaoh's response

② In 9:13-17, what is God explaining to Pharaoh?

② In chapter 10, we see Pharaoh's officials give him wise counsel that he ignores. Who around you gives you counsel? Are they wise? How do you respond?

# SUNDAY (7/12/20)

Grace. Ahhhhhhh.

- 🕒 Spend some time just being with the Lord. Perhaps share with him your thoughts and feelings as you've read through the plagues.



# WEEK 6

SUNDAY (7/12/20) - SERMON NOTES

## MONDAY (7/13/20)

 **Read Exodus 11**

② How are you feeling reading this?

② What do you think it means that “the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart?”

② Why is a soft heart necessary to grow and produce the best fruit we can?

 Spend some time sitting, praying, and asking the holy Spirit to show you places in your heart that are hard. Ask Him to help you change and grow softer.



## TUESDAY (7/14/20)

 Read Exodus 12

 Explain in your own words the name *passover* for this event:

 Explain also:

Why the blood?

Why the lamb?

Why the bitter herbs?

Why remove the yeast?

 In what ways is this all reminiscent of the Cross?

 Spend some time reflecting on your own story. What happened in your circumstances, what did God move in order for you to know Him personally and become a son or daughter in His family?

## WEDNESDAY (7/15/20)

### Read Exodus 13:17 - 14

Wow! The herd of Israelites was 2-3 miles long. That stretches from The Beacon all the way to Camp Ray Bird. And all those people walked across on dry land.

② Imagine seeing the pillar of cloud and fire. What do you think you would learn from that experience?

② Even after all the Lord had just done in Egypt to deliver them, the people respond in complete fear when they see that they are being pursued. What do you think could have helped them to respond differently?

② What brings out the fear in you?

Q Is there a situation right now that the Lord is asking you to be still and to trust Him?



## THURSDAY (7/16/20)

### Read Exodus 16 - 17

I know that I am so often just like the Israelites. But we will see them over and over resort to grumbling and complaining instead of trust and rest.

- ② What is your default in anxious situations?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ② How have you learned to trust? Or if trusting is still really hard, who can you reach out to and ask for prayers for this?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ② Manna literally means “what is it!” How does the Lord test and grow their faith using the gift of the manna?

God shows more of His character and personality here being their Provider (Jehovah-Jireh) and their Banner (Jehovah-Nissi). And Moses builds another altar.

- ② What is he remembering with this altar building?

## FRIDAY (7/17/20)

We are going to finish listening to the story of Exodus and this will fill in any gaps for chapters that we are not reading!

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b0GhR-2kPKI>



# SATURDAY (7/18/20)

## Read Exodus 19 - 20

The Lord tells Moses that the Israelites will be His treasured possession out of all the other nations if they follow Him. If you read the rest of the story, we learn that even though they do not follow well most of the time, He remains faithful.

② In 19:16-20, God gives the people a picture of himself. How does this compare with the picture that you carry in your mind of Him?

 List out the commandments:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

② In Mark 12, Jesus says that the whole law is summed up in the two commands “love God” and “love your neighbor as yourself.” How do you see this worked out in the above 10?

# SUNDAY (7/19/20)

Grace

This morning, sit and ponder the great majesty of God. The picture of Him with fire and smoke, speaking out the commands with a loud trumpet.

I do not always picture God in His majesty, but I want to see Him in that more consistently so that I will truly realize that my faith can rest in Him, His character and His promises.



# WEEK 7

SUNDAY (7/19/20) - SERMON NOTES

## MONDAY (7/20/20)

### Read Exodus 32 - 33:6

Can you imagine being Moses - who held his arms up to part the Red Sea. Now surely God had parted the waters and dried up the ocean floor- but Moses was the “front man.” And then the people refer to him in 32:1 “as for this fellow Moses, who brought us up out of Egypt, we don’t know what has happened to him.” Therefore the logical plan was to make their own gods.

- ② What’s Aaron’s part in leading the people astray? What makes you sad in his response?
  
- ② It is sobering to think that 3000 people died that day. What part does their own sin play? And what part does Aaron’s leadership fail them? How is Moses’ leadership different?
  
- ② Who do you lead? Who are your followers? James warned us this spring that we are accountable for how we lead others. (James 3:1)
  
-  Spend some time just sitting with the Lord and asking the Holy Spirit to show you yourself. If someone had followed you all day yesterday, would they have been drawn closer to Jesus because of how you lived and walked? The Father wants to show us ourselves so that we can be more conformed into the image of His son.

## TUESDAY (7/21/20)

### Read Numbers 20 (remember Exodus 17)

The notes in my bible say that this may have been the start of the 40th year of their time in the desert. 40 years earlier, Moses was instructed to take his staff and bring water from a rock (Exodus 17) in response to the peoples grumbling. This would have been the children of those people and again they were grumbling. It always brings me to tears thinking of Moses leading the grumblers for 40 years, and in his anger, sinning in this way.

 What is the sobering warning here?

 Why do you think God judges Moses so strictly?

 Spend a few minutes reflecting on areas in your own life where you may be allowing sin and rebellion to gain a foothold.

## WEDNESDAY (7/22/20)

### 🔍 Read Deuteronomy 31

Moses tells Joshua twice to be “strong and courageous” and tells him three to four times to not be afraid or terrified! That might terrify me!

- ② How does Moses act as a strong father to Joshua through this process?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ② What fears do you think the people might have watching this transfer of leadership right before such a huge task for them (entering in and taking the Promised Land)?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ② How does He show care for them in the song He has Moses write?

All of these strong words from the Lord and from Moses about the unfaithfulness of the people is said (it seems) in the hearing of Joshua. He would be their leader and they would be unfaithful.

- ② Think of a time when you have led someone well, only to have them turn away from how you instructed them. How did you feel?



## THURSDAY (7/23/20)

 Read Deuteronomy 32:1-9 & Deuteronomy 34

-  What are the characteristics of the Lord that you read about here?
  
-  What do you think it means that “the Lord’s portion is His people,” “His inheritance?”

When I think of the words portion & inheritance I think of the death of my grandmother. She loved me and left me something of hers that was special to her. When the Lord says that His people are His portion, it makes me feel beloved and valuable. All the more knowing that we are called His inheritance. Moses had explained this earlier to the Israelites in Deuteronomy 4:20.

-  How does God demonstrate to Moses that He cares for Him and sees his pain of not crossing into the Promised Land?

 Spend some time reflecting and perhaps journaling how it makes you feel to know that you are so prized by the Father.

## FRIDAY (7/24/20)

Take this morning to listen to the story of Joshua as told by our friends from the BibleProject:

 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JqOqJIFF\\_eU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JqOqJIFF_eU)



- ② Did anything in particular strike you in the transfer of leadership between Moses to Joshua?

# SATURDAY (7/25/20)

## Read Joshua 1

② In this chapter as well as twice in Deuteronomy 31, God tells Joshua to be strong and courageous. What do you think were some possible things Joshua was fearing?

② Can you imagine following Moses as the next leader - talk about some insecure feelings! How does God pave the way for this transition in ways that would be meaningful to Joshua?

② How have you seen God reach into the areas where you have fear and insecurity?

② What are some fears and insecurities you would like to hand to Him today?

# SUNDAY (7/26/20)

Grace

We've covered so much ground in the past 7 weeks. Like we have been running along after the Israelites and watching their growing.

Spend some time this morning sitting and catching your breath! Just *be* with your Father who delights in you.



# WEEK 8

SUNDAY (7/26/20) - SERMON NOTES

## MONDAY (7/27/20)

### Read Joshua 2

I remember reading this as we went through the book of James in our last devotional. Just amazed at Rahab's response.

- ② How had the Lord gone before the spies to prepare Rahab to receive them?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ② Why do you think they chose a prostitute's house to enter? We don't know for sure that they knew in advance, but certainly at some point they knew because it is recorded here.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ② We read in Matthew 1:5 that Rahab is one of 5 women listed in the genealogy of Jesus. What does this say about God's character that she is so highly esteemed?

## TUESDAY (7/28/20)

### Read Joshua 3

I love that the Lord sees Joshua so individually when He says that He is going to show the people that He is with Joshua as He was with Moses. How comforting in the midst of this huge task of leading hundreds of thousands of people.

 Write out the sequence of events as they would have happened for the common person following the ark:

- ② Why do you think the Lord did not stop the waters as they approached?
  
- ② Suppose you are a priest, how are you feeling heading into the water's edge as the river is rushing?
  
- ② Why do you think they obeyed the Lord?
  
- ② Today, in front of you, what is raging past you in your life? What does it look like to trust the Lord with those raging waters? What practical steps could you take to walk in that trust & faith?

## WEDNESDAY (7/29/20)

### Read Joshua 4

OOOOOHHHH I love this chapter!!!

❓ How would you feel if you were a priest and as soon as you step out of the river the water rushes past you?

❓ Why the stones? What purpose do they serve?

I've loved times hiking in the mountains and coming across piles of stones. I learned that these are called 'cairns'. Wikipedia says this: *A cairn is a man-made pile of stones. The word cairn comes from the Scottish Gaelic: càrn. Cairns have been and are used for a broad variety of purposes, from prehistoric times to the present. In modern times, cairns are often erected as landmarks, a use they have had since ancient times.* See the picture on the front of this book!

These stones remind me of the altars that we kept track of in Genesis. Altars built to remind the people of God's character, of a way that He protected them, or a way that He revealed Himself in a fuller way.

❓ Think through the last year. How has God made Himself more known to you? What new name can you call Him because of experiences this past year?

❓ How could you build an altar or cairn to mark this growing?



## THURSDAY (7/30/20)

 Read Joshua 5:13 - 6

If you've never seen the Veggie Tales short video based on the story of the fall of Jericho, it's worth the half hour to watch! Forever embedded my brain is a couple peas mocking the Israelites for marching around the city. If you have 3 minutes extra, here is the link!

 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QXM2o\\_Hb9Ls](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QXM2o_Hb9Ls)



Let's think about just a couple people: Joshua, Rahab, and the average Israelite.

- ① For each one, where do you see evidence of faith growing and blossoming?
  
- ② How does the Lord use their circumstance to grow their faith?
  
- ③ In what circumstance is the Lord growing your faith right now? Are their ways that you are dragging your feet and resisting His faith lesson?

## FRIDAY (7/31/20)

### Read Hebrews 11

We have seen the live stories of most of the characters listed here. We've heard sermons as well on many of those same people.

② Who stands out to you for their faith and why?

② What will you take away concerning your own faith from these weeks of reading?



## SATURDAY (8/1/20)

### Read Hebrews 11:40

This verse is so aspirational.

Together with us, these Old Testament saints are perfected. How that works, I have no idea. But I surely want to carry on the torch of faith for my family, my “tribe” of friends that are like family, and those whose lives I touch routinely.

Write out a prayer right now about where you would love to see faith grow in you. Perhaps you think of a specific circumstance, perhaps it’s a character issue or quality you want to address. It’s bound to be different for all of us.

Ask the Lord to give you the desire to grow a deep faith. Remembering Hebrews 11:6 that without this faith, I cannot please Him and neither can you. Write out your heart:

## SUNDAY (8/2/20)

As traditional, prop your feet up and just be in the Lord's presence. Perhaps continue to reflect on the thoughts and prayer from yesterday. Take a deep breath in His presence.



## ALTARS IN SCRIPTURE

Using this space provided, record the times in Genesis and Exodus when altars were built, include why they were built and what they signified.





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**Know. Be. Do...** *Together*

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