



The Story @ Home

PK-2¹⁹¹⁶

Living the Word: Teaching

Kids God's Story

Narrative Lectionary, Year 4 (2017-2018)

Lesson #4-1

Genesis 1:1-2:4a

This Week

The Narrative Lectionary, just like the Bible itself, begins with the story of creation. This is a story of beginnings. In fact, our name for this book of the Bible, Genesis, comes from the Greek word for "origin."

Story Summary

God's Good Creation

In the first verse of Genesis we meet the main character of the Bible: God. Genesis introduces God as the Creator of all things. This creation is good. The story of creation in Genesis repeats over and over that what God created was called good. And if God called the world of energy and matter good, then it is good! Not only does the story of Creation emphasize that all of creation is good, but it also emphasizes that humans (both male and female) are created in God's image. This lesson reminds us that each of us is special and beloved of God, and that we have the responsibility to treat all other image-bearers of God with love and respect.

Practice: Worship

Each lesson incorporates one of four spiritual practices: worship, prayer, service, or fellowship. This week we begin with worship. As a family, go outside and look around at God's beautiful creation. Take turns naming what you see, then thank God together for God's good creation"

Next Week

Next week, the early story of God's provision for God's people continues as we look at how God provides for Abraham.

The Point

God's blessings begin with the careful work of creating an ordered world.

Bible Nuts & Bolts

What is the Bible?

"In addition to exploring the lectionary text of the week, each lesson will introduce something about the structure of the Bible to the students. This week, students discovered that the Bible is not truly one book, but instead a library of books put together into one volume. You can also think of the Bible as a book series. As in many book series, there are the individual stories told in each book, but there is a larger story or plot arc that includes the entire series. The Bible does not follow one human character throughout the different books; instead the main character is God. The Bible is God's story of love and faithfulness to God's whole creation



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Lesson #4-2
Gen. 21:1-3; 22:1-14

Last Week

Last week, we began the year at the beginning of the Bible, learning about the story of Creation from Genesis 1:1-2:4a.

This Week

This week we focus on the birth of Sarah and Abraham's son Isaac, although the text also includes the "Sacrifice" or "Binding of Isaac."

Story Summary

God's Good Creation

The story of Abram (later renamed Abraham) takes up the majority of the book of Genesis. God promises to bless Abram with a very large family and a land of their own. God makes these big promises despite the fact that Abram is 75 years old and Sarai (later renamed Sarah) is 65 and they have no children. God repeats the promise many times throughout the next 25 years. While Abraham and Sarah may not have always been patient, they waited faithfully. Isaac was born; however, the promise of a new land would take almost five hundred years to come true.

Practice: Worship

In the story today, Abraham and Sarah wait for a very long time for God's promises to be fulfilled. Sometimes it is difficult to sit and wait, especially if children need to be quiet. Today they learned a way to pray to help them in these quiet, worshipful moments. Invite children to teach this prayer and use it in your family devotional time.

The Point

God can provide even in the midst of an impossible situation.

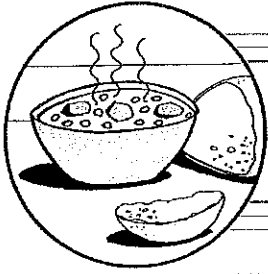
Bible Nuts & Bolts

Origin Stories

This week, your child was introduced to the idea of genealogies, or family trees, in the Bible. As anyone who has tried to read large chunks of the Bible knows, the Scriptures have a lot of genealogies (or "begats" in the King James Version)! In the story of God as revealed in the Scripture, God chooses to work through families to bless the whole world, as God promised Abram (Abraham) in Genesis 12:3.

Next Week

Next week, we will continue to learn about Abraham's family, hearing the story of Isaac's sons Jacob and Esau (Genesis 27:1-4, 15-23; 28:10-17).



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Narrative Lectionary, Year 4 (2017-2018)

Lesson #4-3
Genesis 27:1-4, 15-23; 28:10-17

Last Week

Last week we learned the story of the patience and faith of Abraham and Sarah, and the birth of their son Isaac. God always keeps the promises that God makes.

This Week

Continuing the story of Abraham's family, Isaac is now an old man with two sons of his own. The youngest son, Jacob, tricks his father into giving him the blessing that should be reserved for Esau, the eldest.

Story Summary

Stolen Blessing, Blessed by God

Jacob's early story is a bit rocky. He deceives his father Isaac into believing that he is his older brother Esau, hoping that Isaac will give him Esau's blessing. The plot works. But now, alienated from his brother, Jacob leaves his family and travels alone to the wilderness. That is when something unexpected happens: God comes to comfort Jacob and promises him great blessings.

The Point

God can turn people's deceptions into an occasion to provide blessings.

Practice: Worship

Whenever we express our gratitude to God, or ask for God's help, or even share our heartbreak with God, we are worshipping. Sometimes it helps for us to use a physical reminder of our experience of God's presence, and create a touchstone that we can come back to when needed. Find something in your home that your family can use as a physical reminder that God is always with you. Use it as a centerpiece when you worship together.

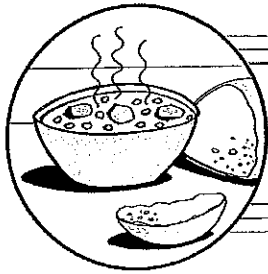
Bible Nuts & Bolts

Bible Citations

To hear God's story, we need to be able to read God's Word. No other book functions like the Bible, and learning to find passages is a skill that needs to be taught. If we had to simply read through the entire Bible every time that we needed to find a single verse, it would be time consuming and frustrating. Creating an understanding of the use of Bible citations will help students learn to study the history of God and God's people.

Next Week

Next week we continue the story of God's blessings by learning about Moses. God is able to work through a flawed and reluctant man to save God's people from slavery.



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Lesson #4-4
Exodus 2:23-25; 3:10-15; 4:10-17

Last Week

Last week we learned about Jacob, who stole his brother Esau's blessing. Even though Jacob was dishonest, God promises to make a nation out of his family.

This Week

We learned about God choosing Moses to lead the Israelites.

Story Summary

Moses: Equipped by God

God's desire for Israel is to free them from slavery, but to accomplish that God must find a spokesperson to confront Pharaoh and lead the people to an unknown land. God picks Moses. A very timid Moses presents several arguments against God's plan. God patiently promises that God will always be with Moses. Moses is not some perfectly courageous hero, but a regular person who doubts his ability to do great things. Like many of us, Moses doesn't see himself as worthy of God's grace. This reminds us that it is not necessary for us to have certain gifts to serve God, but only to trust God.

Practice: Worship

Learning to share our faith can be difficult. Moses struggled with what God had called him to do, just as we might struggle with talking about what we believe. Help children find a way to use the simple prayer cards that they made in class, and watch for ways that you can open the door to faith conversations in your own life.

The Point

God blesses reluctant messengers and uses them to bless others.

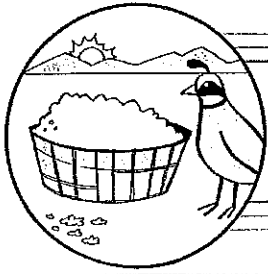
Bible Nuts & Bolts

The Exodus Story

We have moved from Genesis, the Beginning, to Exodus, the great "Moving Out" story. God's promise to Jacob has been realized. Generations of Jacob's family have grown into the nation of Israel. However, this nation had no real home of its own, and had settled within the borders of Egypt. Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt, became intimidated by the rapid growth of the people of Israel, and decided to treat them as slaves, hoping this would weaken their numbers. God continued to prosper the people during their 400 years in slavery, and in our story today calls on Moses to bring the people out of slavery. The Exodus, then, is the people moving out of slavery to find a new homeland. It is as the people of Israel move from slavery to freedom that they fully recognize themselves as a people of God, and flourish in that identity.

Next Week

Next week we conclude our unit, God Provides Blessings, with the story of God providing for the Israelites as they wander in the wilderness.



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Lesson #4-5
Exodus 16:1-18

Last Week

Last week, we heard of Moses being called by God to lead God's people out of slavery. In spite of Moses' protests and insecurities, God worked through him to free the Israelites.

This Week

God's loving provision provides the focus for this lesson in this story of manna, or bread, from heaven.

Story Summary

God Provides Gifts from Above

Even after experiencing the miracles of the ten plagues, the institution of the Passover, and the parting of the Red Sea, the Israelites still did not trust God or Moses. In their distrust, the people began to worry that they were going to die of hunger in the desert. Now, the people have run out of food and began complaining loudly about their leader, Moses. They wished they had died in Egypt rather than die of hunger in the desert. Despite their lack of trust in God, God lovingly provides for them the miraculous manna, bread from heaven.

Practice: Worship

Thankfulness is an important component of worship, and there are many ways to show our thanks to God. Make a list of things for which you are thankful. Choose one each day and say a prayer of thanks to God.

The Point

God sends blessings even when God's people complain and grumble.

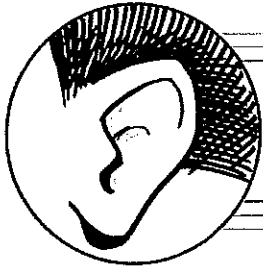
Bible Nuts & Bolts

The Torah

Torah is the Hebrew word that is often translated "Law" in the Bible. However, the word Torah does not just signify a list of rules to follow, but instead means "teaching, instruction, or guidance." God gave the Torah to Moses on Mount Sinai not to keep the people in line, but to teach them the best way to live, the way of justice, truth, and love. Jesus summarized the whole Torah by combining the call to love God completely and to love our neighbors as ourselves. Though not covered in this lesson, the word "Torah" can also be used for the first five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

Next Week

Next week we begin a new unit, "Called by God." Though he is still a child, Samuel hears and responds to God call.



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Lesson #4-6
I Samuel 3:1-21

Last Week

Last week's passage finds the Israelites still wandering in the desert, and the story shows God's provision during their desperation (Exodus 16:1-18).

This Week

1 Samuel begins to reveal the story of God's honoring the desire of the people for a king, but only in God's time and in God's way.

Story Summary

Listening for God's Call

God calls Samuel when he is only a boy. Samuel does not recognize God's voice at first, and seeks counsel from his elder, Eli. When Eli asks what God told Samuel, Samuel tells him the truth, even though it is a judgment against Eli. The story of Samuel helps us to understand that there is no age limit on God's call. God sends all of us into the world to share God's story and to work in God's name. The community of God is built when we work together, young and old, to bear witness to God's story.

Practice: Service

When God calls, we respond. Often, this response may take the form of service to our brothers and sisters in Christ. We serve others because of God's call, which sends us out from the doors of the church into the world around us. This week we talk about Samuel relying on the wisdom of his elder, Eli. As a family, seek a way to serve the elders in your community.

The Point

God will bless and equip us to do great things.

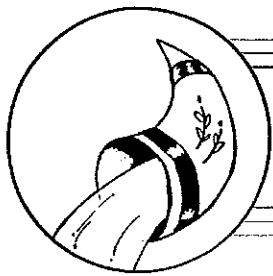
Bible Nuts & Bolts

Ancient History

We all have stories of personal and family history that have shaped who we are today. In the same way, the Bible is part of our own history and story. Just like our own stories, it is helpful to understand the context in which Biblical texts were written. Learning about ancient history helps to clarify customs and cultures that seem strange to us today, and will help build a framework for our understanding of God working throughout history to bless and call God's people.

Next Week

Next we move into the rise of the monarchy and eventual rise of David as the King ordained by God.



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Lesson #4-7
1 Samuel 16:1-13; Ps. 51:10-14

Last Week

1 Samuel begins to reveal the story of God's honoring the desire of the people for a king, but only in God's time and in God's way (1 Samuel 3:1-21).

This Week

Today we move on to the rise of the monarchy and eventual role of David as the king ordained by God.

Story Summary

Our world teaches us to look on outward signs of worth, such as a person's appearance or wealth or power. But God sees things differently. God could see David would be a good king, even if he looked just like a little kid to the rest of the world.

Even Samuel has difficulty figuring out which man should be king when he sees the men lined up. But as we learned last week, Samuel has cultivated a listening heart from a very young age, and can hear and recognize God's voice.

Practice: Service

We may not feel that we have much to offer to others, but each of us can give in some way. Because God can see the hidden truths in our lives, God also knows what we are capable of and calls us to service that matches our special giftedness. Talk about what gifts you have that you can use to serve others and serve God.

Next Week

Next week, Solomon oversees the building of the temple, creating a permanent place for the Israelites to worship their God.

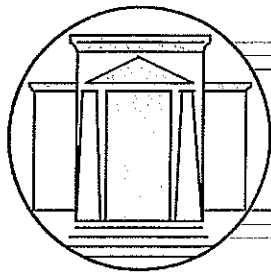
The Point

God sees past both our accomplishments and our mistakes, and recognizes what is within our hearts.

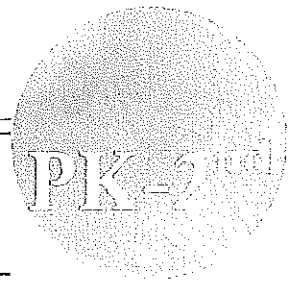
Bible Nuts & Bolts

Old Testament and Divisions

The Old Testament is divided into four sections: the Pentateuch (or Torah), Historical Books, Writings or Wisdom Literature, and Prophets. These divisions help to identify the themes and types of literature of the books. The Pentateuch includes books from Genesis through Deuteronomy. Historical Books include Joshua through 2 Chronicles, and tell the history of Israel. Writings, or Wisdom, Literature is found from Job through the Song of Solomon, and includes poetic books such as the Psalms. Finally, the Prophets report the word of the Lord, and continue from Isaiah through Malachi.



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Living the Word: Teaching Kids God's Story
Narrative Lectionary, Year 4 (2017-2018)

Lesson #4-8
1 Kings 5:1-5; 8:1-13

Last Week

Last week we learned about the rise of the monarchy and the eventual role of David as the King ordained by God (1 Samuel 16:1-13).

This Week

This week, Solomon oversees the building of the temple, creating a permanent place for the Israelites to worship their God.

Story Summary

The people of Israel were united under one king and in one permanent place of worship, the temple. For Israel, having a permanent central temple serves as a reminder of whom and whose they are called to be. God honors the temple by filling it with God's presence. But God's presence is overwhelming for those present, and they can only bear it for a short time. This is a reminder that although we might build earthly spaces to honor God, and God honors our attempts at faithfulness, we can never truly contain or even understand all of God's glory.

Practice: Service

We continue our focus on the spiritual practice of service. We recognize that God is present throughout our world, and not only in our places of worship. How can your family volunteer to do something helpful for the church building itself?

Next Week

Our final week of the Called by God unit will focus on the story of Elijah's call in the wilderness.

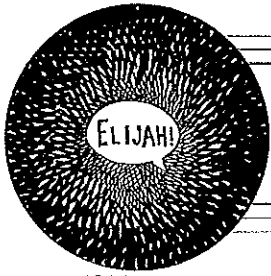
The Point

We give the best of ourselves when we work to fulfill our callings.

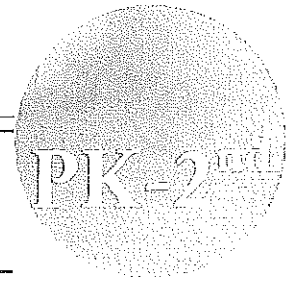
Bible Nuts & Bolts

The Temple

According to the Bible, King Solomon built the temple as a replacement of the tabernacle in order to provide a more suitable and centralized place of worship. This temple was also home to the Ark of the Covenant, which was likely destroyed during the Babylonian conquest. While the temple is similar to our churches of today, there are also a number of differences.



The Story @ Home



Living the Word: Teaching Kids God's Story
Narrative Lectionary, Year 4 (2017-2018)

Lesson #4-9
1 Kings 19:1-18

Last Week

Last week, Solomon oversaw the building of the temple, creating a permanent place for the Israelites to worship their God (1 Kings 5:1-5; 8:1-13).

This Week

Our final week of the Called by God unit focuses on the story of Elijah's call in the wilderness, and God's provision for Elijah.

Story Summary

No matter how he felt or what he did, Elijah was loved and cared for by God. Even as Elijah begged for his life to be taken from him, God was present. An angel was sent with food and drink to sustain his body and to provide a gentle touch on two different occasions. And even as Elijah talked of being alone, the Lord sent him out to fulfill his work with promises of seven thousand Israelites who would remain. In the midst of their own difficult times, students can see God's love and promises in the world around them.

Practice: Service

An angel visited Elijah to help provide for his physical needs and bring God's message of love and mission to Elijah. There are times in each of our lives that we have relied on the words and actions of one another in order to get by. Serving and loving one another is part of what makes God's presence known in each of our lives.

The Point

God can come to us and power and glory, but sometimes chooses the quiet way.

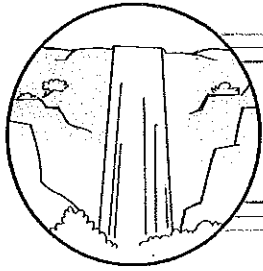
Bible Nuts & Bolts

The Divided Kingdom

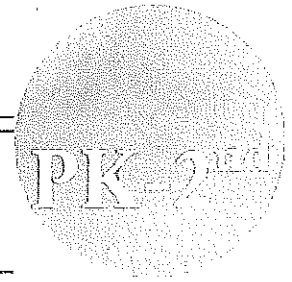
Last week we talked about Solomon building the temple while he was the king of Israel. After Solomon's death, however, the kingdom split into a northern kingdom (Israel) and a southern kingdom (Judah) with a different series of kings in each area, most of who caused destruction. In the south, there were a few good kings such as Hezekiah and Josiah. In the north, however, the kings condoned the worshipping of idols. The most famous worst king in the north was Ahab. He is in power in today's text.

Next Week

Next week we begin a new unit, looking at God's promises. Even in difficult times, God remains with and protects God's people.



The Story @ Home



Living the Word: Teaching Kids God's Story
Narrative Lectionary, Year 4 (2017-2018)

Lesson #4-10
Amos 1:1-2; 5:14-15, 21-24

Last Week

Our final week of the Called by God unit focused on the story of Elijah's call in the wilderness, and God's provision for Elijah (1 Kings 19:1-18).

This Week

This week we begin a new unit, looking at God's promises. Even in difficult times, God remains with and protects God's people.

Story Summary

In the northern kingdom of Israel, the people were oppressing the poor. This was a time of increased prosperity in the divided kingdom and produced a powerful upper class. Especially in Samaria, the rich and powerful were abusing their wealth and privilege. God loved the people and God wanted them to change (repent). Amos draws upon Deuteronomy's covenantal (promise) language and thought. God established a covenant with Israel and required that they live in accordance with it. When the commandments were not kept, Amos called for repentance.

Practice: Prayer

Prayer as a spiritual practice provides a powerful connection with God and God's word. There are many different ways to pray, and we will explore a variety of them in the coming weeks. This week, try to find one time each day to share prayer concerns and pray together as a family.

Next Week

Next week, we read the story of the prophet Isaiah, who foretells the birth of Jesus hundreds of years before the event.

The Point

Amos reminds us to seek God, hate evil and serve others.

Bible Nuts & Bolts

Prophecy

Reading Biblical books of prophecy can be challenging for children and adults alike. It deviates from the stories we typically focus on in the lectionary. Prophecy is not only about the future, but can also deal with an immediate situation. The words of Amos are very relevant to us today as we hear the admonition against oppression and immorality. Amos lets us know that God calls us away from consumerism and unfaithfulness, tying together the worship of the one true God with how we live our daily lives.



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Living the Word: Teaching Kids God's Story
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Lesson #4-11
Isaiah 9:1-7

Last Week

Last week we began a new unit looking at God's promises. Through the story of Amos, we learned that even in difficult times, God remains with and protects God's people (Amos 1:1-2; 5:14-15, 21-24).

This Week

This week Isaiah reminds us that God is always with us, and that God's light will shine even in our periods of darkness.

Story Summary

God's people were experiencing a dark time. The darkness that the people have lived and walked in is not literal darkness, but figurative language. This is addressed to a people who have known oppression and violence (Isaiah, 9:4-5), and most likely hunger due to famine or destruction of crops (verse 3a). Yet in the midst of this darkness, God promised the coming of a Messiah who would bring light, peace, and joy. This Messiah is promised to bring an ever-expanding and everlasting kingdom in which will be justice and righteousness.

Practice: Prayer

There are a variety of ways to pray. Today, students names persons for whom they are thankful, and prayed a responsive prayer of thanks for their light and influence. As a family, name those people who have been a light in your life. As each person is named, respond with, "Thanks, God, for the light!"

Next Week

Next week we continue to hear about God's promises of hope as Jeremiah paints a vision of a better future.

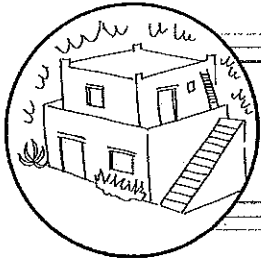
The Point

The prophet promises the people a new king, one that will be the presence of God's light in the world.

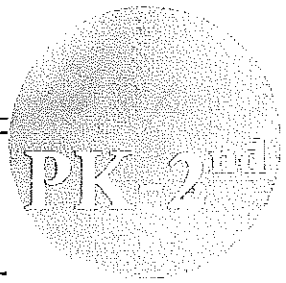
Bible Nuts & Bolts

The Messiah

This lesson will introduce the meaning of the word "Messiah," which means "Anointed One" in Hebrew. Samuel marked David as the new king of Israel by pouring oil on his head, or anointing him. Anointing was the way that the Israelites set apart their kings, priests, and prophets for the work God had given them. However, God had given promises throughout the Scriptures of a coming Servant who would bring salvation to God's people and peace to the world. This Servant was understood as the promised Messiah. This Messiah was revealed in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, who in the common Greek language of the time was called the Christ, which is Greek for "Anointed One."



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Lesson #4-12
Jeremiah 29:1, 4-14

Last Week

Last week Isaiah reminded us that God is always with us, and that God's light will shine even in our periods of darkness (Isaiah 9:1-17).

This Week

The story of God's people is not always an easy one. The promises of God seem to have come to an end as the temple has been destroyed and God's people have been scattered.

Story Summary

God's people have been sent into exile. They are alone, abandoned, and without their spiritual and cultural center, the temple. The period of exile continues for 70 years. As they wait, God's people are encouraged to make a home where they are, to live and contribute and be an influence on their communities. In time, they will come to see God's ultimate plan and purpose. Even though things seem difficult and hopeless, God is with them. In our own dark and lonely moments, as we wait for God's plan to be revealed, God is with us.

Practice: Prayer

Prayer can serve many purposes. We might praise God, seek an answer to questions, pray on behalf of others, or even disagree with God. Regardless of the purpose, prayer enhances our relationship with God. Sit together in a room, but face different directions. Pray silently. Turn around, join hands, and close with a prayer together.

Next Week

Next week God is present even in the fiery furnace with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

The Point

Jeremiah reminds God's people that God provides a future full of hope.

Bible Nuts & Bolts

The Exile

After the death of King Solomon, Israel was divided into two kingdoms. The northern kingdom was Israel, and the southern kingdom was Judah. In 722 BCE, the Assyrians gained control of Israel. One hundred years later, the Assyrian capital of Nineveh fell to the Babylonians. To help keep the country safe, the kings of Judah began to pay tribute to Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian king. After the rebellion of King Jehoiakim and King Zedekiah, however, Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem in 586 BCE, destroyed the temple, and sent God's people away. This time in Babylon, known as the exile, lasted for 70 years. It seemed like a desperate time in which God had abandoned God's people, but God continued to protect and be with the people even during these difficult times.