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GOD AND *Israel* ORIGINS

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GOD & THE WORLD

WEEKS 1-4

GOD & ISRAEL

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LOVE
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BOOK

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Love This Book journal.

This year we'll take a journey through the entire story of scripture. This journal is designed to be our companion.

When we think of journaling, we might think of an English class project from years ago, or an empty notebook waiting to be filled with thoughts, dreams or random ponderings. This scripture journal is a bit different.

Each week, we'll focus on a set of scripture passages together. Once we've spent time reading God's Word, we can then reflect on what God is speaking into our lives. Taking the time to write our reflections can help us capture our thoughts and emotions. As these authors put it...

"As we journal [on God's Word] we pray to God, we ask ourselves probing questions, we think through issues, we put on paper the 'stuff' tumbling about in our heads. We become more connected with God, ourselves, and ultimately with others."

—Mindy & Jeff Caliguire, *Write for your Soul: The Whys and Hows of Journaling*

HOW TO USE THIS JOURNAL

Each week, you'll find four pages that contain the following sections:

Section 1: SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

In the first section, we'll give you an overview of the week's readings and you'll have space to read, reflect and respond to a set of Bible passages. Feel free to use this in any way that helps you connect with God. Perhaps you'll want to read all the passages in one day and reflect on those passages the next day. Or you could read one passage each day, reflecting and responding along the way.

READ: For each week, there are passages listed for each day (5x week). Begin by reading through the passage for that day. As you read, take notes about the words or phrases that stand out to you.

REFLECT: What main theme(s) is highlighted in the passage? What questions come to your mind? What insights do you have into God, His character or your own life as you reflect on this passage?

RESPOND: Thinking back over the passage, where do you sense God drawing your attention? Can you identify action steps to take in response? What can you offer back to God in prayer as a response to this passage? Take time to pray.

Section 2: PSALM

The Psalms are to be used for a time of prayer throughout each week. Sometimes they go along with the other readings, but often they're simply psalms that speak of God's character and the response of His people to who God is and what He has done. In this section, feel free to doodle, color, highlight or underline. Experiment—and see what helps you to connect with God!

"The Psalms are poetry and the Psalms are prayer... They are not provided to teach us about God, but to train us in responding to Him. We don't learn the Psalms until we are praying them."

—Eugene Peterson, *Answering God: The Psalms as Tools for Prayer*

Section 3: REVIEW

After the Scripture passages and Psalm pages, you'll find a third page with three questions that will prompt you to reflect on the readings for the past week. Take time to respond to these questions. Give yourself time to think over all the passages you've read for the week. What are the main themes God has impressed upon you in His Word?

Section 4: SERMON NOTES

Finally, we included a page for you to wrap up your week with sermon notes as you make your way through the Love This Book journey. Please consider bringing your journal with you to church each week!

We believe that this will be a useful tool to help you engage and grow as you read God's Word and as we commit as a church to Love This Book.

—Craig Gartland
Pastor of Spiritual Formation
Blackhawk Church

Bible Reading:

GOD & THE WORLD

WEEK 1

GENESIS 1-2:3; JOHN 1:1-18; PROVERBS 8; PSALM 104; PSALM 1

Overview: When we think of creation, we probably think of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. While the first chapter of Genesis is the most well-known creation account in the Bible, it is not the only one. Rather, it is one of the many. In these readings, we will encounter creation throughout the Bible from several different angles to consider alongside the common creation story, expanding how we not only see creation but also how we view our Creator.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

Psalm OF THE WEEK

PSALM 1:1–3

- 1 Blessed is the one
who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,
- 2 but whose delight is in the law of the LORD,
and who meditates on his law day and night.
- 3 That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither—
whatever they do prospers.

REVIEW of WEEK 1:

How does knowing that God has a plan for His creation influence the attitude you have toward the world around you?

What themes from Genesis 1 and 2 do you find in John 1:1-18? Reflect on the significance that Jesus has always been at the center of God's plan: through Him all things were made... the Word who became flesh and made His dwelling among us.

Psalm 104 is a song of worship to the God of the cosmos and all creation. Take time to pray thanking God for the expanse of His creation and His care for it.

MESSAGE NOTES
GENESIS 1

Bible Reading:

GOD & THE WORLD

WEEK 2

GENESIS 1-2; HOSEA 1-3; ISAIAH 54-55; REVELATION 22; PSALM 139

Overview: A lot of our lives are spent in relationships, with family, friends and significant others. It's not surprising, because God designed us to be in relationships. This week, we will explore the root of our desire for community through God's relationship with Israel, from the Garden of Eden in Genesis to it's restoration in Revelation. While we all know relationships certainly are not easy, we will be reminded of God's ability to renew everything to align with His initial vision for human relationships.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

Psalm OF THE WEEK

PSALM 139:1-6

- 1 You have searched me, LORD,
and you know me.
- 2 You know when I sit and when I rise;
you perceive my thoughts from afar.
- 3 You discern my going out and my lying down;
you are familiar with all my ways.
- 4 Before a word is on my tongue
you, LORD, know it completely.
- 5 You hem me in behind and before,
and you lay your hand upon me.
- 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
too lofty for me to attain.

REVIEW of WEEK 2:

As you reflect on Genesis 2, what impresses you most about God's plan for humans? How does being created in the image of God change your perspective on how you view your life and others?

Revelation 22 speaks of the culmination of God's plan – a setting right of His creation to His original intentions. What encouragement does this bring you? What implications does it have on how you live your life now?

Psalm 139 speaks of how God intimately knows us – and that there is nowhere we can go and be out of His presence. Take time to reflect back to God your thanks for how wonderfully you are made (v. 14). How can you make vv. 23-24 your own prayer?

MESSAGE NOTES
GENESIS 2

Bible Reading:

GOD & THE WORLD

WEEK 3

GENESIS 2-3; GENESIS 4-6; GENESIS 7-9; GENESIS 11; PSALM 51

Overview: The idea of human rebellion in relationship with God is uncomfortable. It seems confusing that humans would rebel against a perfect God's perfect plan. It feels unsettling that we continue to live in a world experiencing the impact of this initial instance of human rebellion. In these readings, we will look at Adam and Eve in this moment and then beyond their initial mistake to learn more about how and why the happenings in Genesis 3 continue to unfold, when God intended nothing but good for us.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

Psalm OF THE WEEK

PSALM 51:1–4

- 1 Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your unfailing love;
according to your great compassion
blot out my transgressions.
- 2 Wash away all my iniquity
and cleanse me from my sin.
- 3 For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is always before me.
- 4 Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight;
so you are right in your verdict
and justified when you judge.

REVIEW of WEEK 3:

Genesis 3-11 speaks primarily of humankind's rebellion against God's good plans and purposes for His creation. How does our response to God often reflect this?

Despite humankind's sin and rebellion, God continues to pursue a relationship with us and establish His covenant. What do you learn about the character of God as you reflect on this truth?

In Psalm 51, David cries out to God to respond to him in mercy and compassion in spite of his sin. Take time to come before God - with a contrite heart - and receive His gift of grace, mercy and unfailing love.

MESSAGE NOTES
GENESIS 3–11

Bible Reading:

GOD & THE WORLD

WEEK 4

GENESIS 3, 12–15; GENESIS 21–22; GENESIS 24; GENESIS 25:19–28:22; PSALM 47

Overview: In the world we live in today, you may find yourself asking God what He had in mind when He created the world, and you are not alone. This week, our readings will provide an answer as we read of God's plan for saving the world. In these passages, God calls Abraham into a new place to create a kingdom through which the Lord will bless the world. We will see God continue to work throughout the familial line of Abraham, providing hope that God is not done yet.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

Psalm **OF THE WEEK**

PSALM 47:8-9

8 God reigns over the nations;
God is seated on his holy throne.
9 The nobles of the nations assemble
as the people of the God of Abraham,
for the kings of the earth belong to God;
he is greatly exalted.

REVIEW of WEEK 4:

Genesis 12 onward speaks of God's plans and purposes in calling and establishing a covenant with Abram (Abraham). What do we learn about God in these passages?

What was Abraham's response to God's initiative? How do we see him both respond in faith and struggle in faith in these passages? How can this be an encouragement to us as we too are called to live by faith?

Psalm 47 speaks of God reigning over the nations and the earth belonging to Him. Take time to reflect and pray in response to this truth in the midst of the strife and struggles we see in the world around us.

MESSAGE NOTES

GENESIS 12:1-3; 15

Bible Reading:

God & ISRAEL

THE CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD **WEEK 5**

GENESIS 12, 29-32; GENESIS 37-40; GENESIS 41-43; GENESIS 44-47, 49; PSALM 105

Overview: We all have fought to be the favorite at some point, to have the most gold stars, to have our names be called, to be first in line, be the favorite child. This battle for recognition is nothing new. This week, we will see Jacob's children fight to be the leader of God's kingdom in Genesis and explore just what exactly qualifies one to be fit for kingship. The story may even have a surprise ending.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

Psalm OF THE WEEK

PSALM 105:1–9

- 1 Give praise to the LORD, proclaim his name;
make known among the nations what he has done.
- 2 Sing to him, sing praise to him;
tell of all his wonderful acts.
- 3 Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.
- 4 Look to the LORD and his strength;
seek his face always.
- 5 Remember the wonders he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced,
- 6 you his servants, the descendants of Abraham,
his chosen ones, the children of Jacob.
- 7 He is the LORD our God;
his judgments are in all the earth.
- 8 He remembers his covenant forever,
the promise he made, for a thousand generations,
- 9 the covenant he made with Abraham,
the oath he swore to Isaac.

REVIEW of WEEK 5:

The story of Joseph in Genesis 37-47 is well known to many of us. What new insights came to you as you read it afresh this week?

What do we learn about the character of God in the story of Joseph/Judah and their brothers? Take time to thank God for those truths of who He is.

Psalm 105 is a song of remembrance – remembering all the ways in which God has been faithful to His people. Take time to reflect and remember the ways in which God has been faithful in your life and give Him thanks.

MESSAGE NOTES
GENESIS 37-50

Bible Reading:

God & ISRAEL

THE SALVATION OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD **WEEK 6**

GENESIS 44; EXODUS 1-2; EXODUS 3-6:3; EXODUS 6:14-8; EXODUS 9-10; PSALM 136

Overview: In these readings, we will encounter the story of the life of Judah again, an unexpected tale of determination and fulfilled promises. Then we will continue on to the first ten chapters of Exodus. These chapters demonstrate a unified story of what God does after the Israelites are enslaved in Egypt up through the penultimate plague. We will see God's constant presence and provision in times of oppression for His people leading up to the Passover and the Exodus.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

Psalm OF THE WEEK

PSALM 136:1–9

1 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good.
His love endures forever.

2 Give thanks to the God of gods.
His love endures forever.

3 Give thanks to the Lord of lords:
His love endures forever.

4 to him who alone does great wonders,
His love endures forever.

5 who by his understanding made the heavens,
His love endures forever.

6 who spread out the earth upon the waters,
His love endures forever.

7 who made the great lights—
His love endures forever.

8 the sun to govern the day,
His love endures forever.

9 the moon and stars to govern the night;
His love endures forever.

REVIEW of WEEK 6:

The first few chapters of Exodus begin with the calling of Moses. In what ways can you relate with both his willingness and his reluctance to respond to God's call? What does this tell us about God?

In these passages we learn that God is not unresponsive to His people's suffering. What encouragement does this bring you? Where in your life are you in need of this reminder?

Psalm 136 keeps repeating the refrain, "His love endures forever." What impact has that had on you as you repeated these words? Where in your life can you pray back to God, "Your love endures forever?"

MESSAGE NOTES
EXODUS 1-10

Bible Reading:

God & ISRAEL

THE SALVATION OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD **WEEK 7**

EXODUS 11-12; EXODUS 13-14; EXODUS 15-16; EXODUS 17-18; PSALM 66

Overview: The story continues as the Israelites pursue freedom. This week, we will read about the final plague, the Passover, and the Exodus. The Red Sea will be parted, the Egyptian army will be destroyed, and Yahweh will be praised. There will be stories of deliverance but also great struggles. While the Israelites are free, they are also in the desert, a feeling we can all relate to.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

Psalm OF THE WEEK

PSALM 66:8-12

- 8 Praise our God, all peoples,
let the sound of his praise be heard;
9 he has preserved our lives
and kept our feet from slipping.
10 For you, God, tested us;
you refined us like silver.
11 You brought us into prison
and laid burdens on our backs.
12 You let people ride over our heads;
we went through fire and water,
but you brought us to a place of abundance.

REVIEW of WEEK 7:

In these passages in Exodus, God shows that He is bigger than the most oppressive of human rulers. As God rescues His people from Pharaoh, how is the blood on their doorways an act of faith and allegiance?

How does the delivery of the Israelites out of Egypt represent the freedom found through salvation? In what ways have you experienced God's saving power – not as freedom to autonomy, but freedom to obey and follow God?

In Psalm 66, the psalmist speaks of the faithfulness of God – which includes God allowing His people to go through hard times and experiences (vv. 10-12). In what ways can you give thanks to God for His faithfulness – even through trials?

MESSAGE NOTES
EXODUS 11-18

Bible Reading:

God & ISRAEL

THE LAW AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD **WEEK 8**

EXODUS 19-20; EXODUS 21-22; EXODUS 23-24; DEUTERONOMY 5-6; PSALM 19

Overview: The Ten Commandments may seem like more of a distant formality than a relevant law to us today. But this week, we will shift our views as we go with Moses to Mount Sinai, where he encounters Yahweh and hears Him speak the instructions that we still strive to live by. Our readings will give us several different glimpses into this encounter, and our psalm will directly address the Book of the Law. It is our challenge to see how the law created for the Israelites is still relevant to us today and learn more about our God that is a God of law but also of sanctuary.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

Psalm OF THE WEEK

PSALM 19:1–6

- 1 The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
- 2 Day after day they pour forth speech;
night after night they reveal knowledge.
- 3 They have no speech, they use no words;
no sound is heard from them.
- 4 Yet their voice goes out into all the earth,
their words to the ends of the world.
In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun.
- 5 It is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
like a champion rejoicing to run his course.
- 6 It rises at one end of the heavens
and makes its circuit to the other;

REVIEW of WEEK 8:

In what ways are the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20, Deuteronomy 5) at the center of the old covenant, a covenant that is about living out who God is for the sake of the world?

These passages make it clear that God's laws are for people who are in covenant or "right" relationship with Him - and that living out this relationship according to His intentions is how the world will know that they are the people of God. How is this still true for those who are followers of Christ? For you?

Psalm 19 reminds us that the "heavens" (the universe, the cosmos) declare God's glory. Take time to marvel at the complexity, beauty and grandeur of God's creation. Like the psalmist, pray back to God your thanks for how His creation declares His glory.

MESSAGE NOTES
EXODUS 19-20

Bible Reading:

God & ISRAEL

THE LAW AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD **WEEK 9**

EXODUS 19-20; 24; EXODUS 32-34; NUMBERS 12-14; HEBREWS 1-3; PSALM 106

Overview: God is a god that desires to be with His people. However, that may be hard when those people are a bit messy. We can all relate. Despite the establishment of the covenant, the people of God choose rebellion and false idols. They abandon trust and deny the Promise Land. This was a time of unrest, which will be reflected in our readings. While Moses could not deliver complete rest for the Israelites, this week points us toward the greater hope of Jesus's deliverance we get to live in today.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

Psalm **OF THE WEEK**

PSALM 106:6–12

6 We have sinned, even as our ancestors did;
we have done wrong and acted wickedly.

7 When our ancestors were in Egypt,
they gave no thought to your miracles;
they did not remember your many kindnesses,
and they rebelled by the sea, the Red Sea.

8 Yet he saved them for his name's sake,
to make his mighty power known.

9 He rebuked the Red Sea, and it dried up;
he led them through the depths as through a desert.

10 He saved them from the hand of the foe;
from the hand of the enemy he redeemed them.

11 The waters covered their adversaries;
not one of them survived.

12 Then they believed his promises
and sang his praise.

REVIEW of WEEK 9:

In Exodus 32 and Numbers 14 we have accounts of God's people rebelling and complaining against God. What led them to this breaking of covenant with God and giving up on God's plan, purposes and promises?

In contrast, Moses intercedes to God in Exodus 33 on behalf of His people and shows his desire to see God's glory. How can we nurture in our own lives this desire for God's presence and glory to be made known to the world?

Psalm 106 speaks of the "forgetfulness" of God's people - how they forgot what God had done, forgot the God who saved them. How can we be people who "remember" who God is and not fall prone to this kind of forgetfulness? Take time to thank God, who out of His great love, remembers us and saves us.

MESSAGE NOTES
EXODUS 32; NUMBERS 14

Bible Reading:

God & ISRAEL

THE LAW AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD **WEEK 10**

EXODUS 34, 37, 40; LEVITICUS 1-4; LEVITICUS 16, 19; LEVITICUS 23-25; PSALM 97

Overview: Sacrifice, Sabbath, rules and regulations. We tend to keep these words constrained to the world of the Old Testament. However, this week we will explore the purpose behind God's laws for living. How can a Holy God coincide with messy humans? The system of the sacred and the secular, while seemingly old fashioned, was a solution to a problem.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

Psalm OF THE WEEK

PSALM 97:8-12

- 8 Zion hears and rejoices
and the villages of Judah are glad
because of your judgments, LORD.
- 9 For you, LORD, are the Most High over all the earth;
you are exalted far above all gods.
- 10 Let those who love the LORD hate evil,
for he guards the lives of his faithful ones
and delivers them from the hand of the wicked.
- 11 Light shines on the righteous
and joy on the upright in heart.
- 12 Rejoice in the LORD, you who are righteous,
and praise his holy name.

REVIEW of WEEK 10:

The book of Leviticus focuses on offerings, sacrifices and sacred days for God's people under the old covenant. How would these practices be constant reminders to the Israelites of who they are as the people of God?

How would the practices of sacrifice and offerings help the Israelites remember the holiness of God and their need for forgiveness? How are we similarly a people in need of forgiveness and how is that need met in Christ?

The words of Psalm 97 remind us we worship a holy God. In what ways does the psalmist recount God's holiness and righteousness? Read the words of this psalm as a prayer of worship to God.

MESSAGE NOTES

EXODUS 34, 37, 40; LEVITICUS 1-4, 16, 19, 23-25

Bible Reading:

God & ISRAEL

THE LAW AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD **WEEK 11**

JOSHUA 1-3; JOSHUA 4-6; JOSHUA 7-8; JOSHUA 24, DEUTERONOMY 27-28; PSALM 37

Overview: Waiting for the fulfillment of a promise is no easy feat. Abraham's descendants waited years and even generations to get to the land God had promised them, but when God delivered, the people instantly chose rebellion. To us, this may seem strange, but we can see the challenges of waiting on the Lord in obedience in our own stories. These readings tell the tale of the struggle to remain faithful over time and obedient to God, even after God has fulfilled His promise.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

Psalm OF THE WEEK

PSALM 37:3-7

- 3 Trust in the LORD and do good;
dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.
- 4 Take delight in the LORD,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.
- 5 Commit your way to the LORD;
trust in him and he will do this:
- 6 He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn,
your vindication like the noonday sun.
- 7 Be still before the LORD
and wait patiently for him;
do not fret when people succeed in their ways,
when they carry out their wicked schemes.

REVIEW of WEEK 11:

The book of Joshua begins with bold and direct words to be strong and courageous and to mediate on the word - “day and night”. How do these prove to be critical words of wisdom and direction to Joshua from the Lord?

In Deuteronomy 27-28 and Joshua 24, the challenge for God’s people to choose obedience and faithfulness (over disobedience) to the Lord is made clear. How does the call to be strong, courageous and in the word apply to this – and to us today?

Psalm 37 speaks of not fretting, but rather trusting and waiting upon the Lord. As Christ followers, God’s promise is no longer “the land,” but in what ways are we still called to be people who trust and wait upon Him as our Lord?

MESSAGE NOTES

JOSHUA 1-8, 24

Bible Reading:

God & ISRAEL

THE LAND AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD **WEEK 12**

JUDGES 1–2; JUDGES 3–5; JUDGES 6–8; JUDGES 13–16; PSALM 36

Overview: This week's readings will tell the difficult story of Judges. After endless rebellion and oppression, the people finally turn to God. In response, God sends judges to the people, but this is troubling when the judges reflect the moral shortcomings of the people themselves. With time, the differences between the Israelites and Canaanites cannot be seen. As the downward spiral of humanity continues, the people will see the need for spiritual leadership in order to be in right relationship with God again, a notion that continues to ring true for us today.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

Psalm **OF THE WEEK**

PSALM 36:5–7

5 Your love, LORD, reaches to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the skies.

6 Your righteousness is like the highest mountains,
your justice like the great deep.

You, LORD, preserve both people and animals.

7 How priceless is your unfailing love, O God!
People take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

REVIEW of WEEK 12:

Judges is a sobering book recounting Israel's rebellion: their repeating - over and over - the pattern of crying out to God, only to fall back into "doing evil in the eyes of the Lord." What are the characteristics of their rebellion? God's response?

What stories strike you as most poignant in the book of Judges? Why? What do we learn in this book about God's patient endurance as well as the vulnerability to rebellion of God's people?

In Psalm 36, how is God's love in stark contrast with those who openly and willfully rebel against Him? Take time to confess any sin/rebellion in your own heart. Know that God extends His forgiveness and give thanks for His unfailing love.

MESSAGE NOTES
JUDGES 1-8, 13-16

Bible Reading:

God & ISRAEL

THE KINGS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD **WEEK 13**

JUDGES 19-21; DEUTERONOMY 17; I SAMUEL 8-12; I SAMUEL 13-16;
I SAMUEL 17-20; PSALM 14, 15

Overview: Interesting stories and complex characters are no rarity in the narrative of the Bible, especially in the storyline of the kingship. In the time of the Israelites, there was not always a king, but there was frequent chaos. And despite acknowledgement of God's selection for a king, things do not go according to plan. We see the first example of this as Yahweh assures the prophet Samuel that the people have not rejected him but have actually rejected Yahweh himself. And this will not be the last hiccup in the kingship as we continue with the stories of kings.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

Psalm OF THE WEEK

PSALM 15:1–5

- 1 LORD, who may dwell in your sacred tent?
Who may live on your holy mountain?
- 2 The one whose walk is blameless,
who does what is righteous,
who speaks the truth from their heart;
- 3 whose tongue utters no slander,
who does no wrong to a neighbor,
and casts no slur on others;
- 4 who despises a vile person
but honors those who fear the LORD;
who keeps an oath even when it hurts,
and does not change their mind;
- 5 who lends money to the poor without interest;
who does not accept a bribe against the innocent.
Whoever does these things
will never be shaken.

REVIEW of WEEK 13:

How is establishing the rule of kings for God's people God's response to the age of judges? What is behind Israel's desire to have a king? How does it differ from God's motivation?

In I Samuel 15, Samuel confronts Saul regarding his disobedience and rebellion as a king to God's plan. How do the words from Samuel to Saul - that God desires our obedience more than offering a sacrifice - cut to the heart of the matter?

In Psalm 14 and 15, whose refuge is the Lord? What encouragement is it to you that evil does not go unnoticed by our God? How does He make His presence known to those in need? In Psalm 15, what is the promise to those who choose righteousness?

MESSAGE NOTES

DEUTERONOMY 17; 1 SAMUEL 8-15

Bible Reading:

God & ISRAEL

THE KINGS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD **WEEK 14**

RUTH 1-4; I SAMUEL 24-27, 31; 2 SAMUEL 1-4; 2 SAMUEL 5-8, GENESIS 49:8-12,
JEREMIAH 33; PSALM 25

Overview: We hear a lot about David, but the familial context of the well-known king can often be forgotten. This week, we will hear about the surprising life of Naomi, the faithful woman God chooses to carry on the kingdom, the line of David. Yahweh makes a covenant with David, and through the new king, the prophecy Jacob spoke over his son, Judah, in Genesis will be fulfilled. However, desolation and hopelessness will taint the king's rule, making way for future promises of Yahweh's faithfulness to the line of David, including the coming of the Messiah.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

Psalm **OF THE WEEK**

PSALM 25:4–5

- 4 Show me your ways, LORD,
teach me your paths.
5 Guide me in your truth and teach me,
for you are God my Savior,
and my hope is in you all day long.

REVIEW of WEEK 14:

The book of Ruth recounts the selfless and sacrificial devotion of both Ruth and Boaz (reflecting God's character) – in contrast to the rebellion throughout Judges. How does this book reflect God's commitment to His plan and His gracious response?

I Samuel 16 onward focuses on David. What are the highlights of his life and kingship in these passages? In what ways do we see that he was "a man after God's own heart" (I Sam 13:14)?

In Psalm 25, we find the psalmist taking great comfort in the Lord in the midst of affliction. As you come to God and put your hope in the Lord, how can you grow in your trust and assurance of God's care like the psalmist?

MESSAGE NOTES

1 SAMUEL 16; 2 SAMUEL 7

Bible Reading:

God & ISRAEL

THE KINGS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD **WEEK 15**

2 SAMUEL 11-14; 2 SAMUEL 15-19; I KINGS 1-5; I KINGS 6-11; PSALM 32

Overview: This week, we will read to the end of David's life and into the life of his son, Solomon. These stories of a royal yet still human family are certainly not perfect. We will meet Bathsheba and watch David abuse his power. His life is a mix of both good and bad up to his death, and similar patterns will play out in his son's life. We will be reminded of the flaws of humanity, even in some of the greatest of heroes of the faith.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

Psalm **OF THE WEEK**

PSALM 32:1–2

- 1 Blessed is the one
whose transgressions are forgiven,
whose sins are covered.
- 2 Blessed is the one
whose sin the LORD does not count against them
and in whose spirit is no deceit.

REVIEW of WEEK 15:

Though a man after God's own heart, in 2 Samuel 11 onward we read of David's fall and rebellion against God. What characterizes David's demise as a leader and what are the ramifications – both in his own life and the lives of those around him?

Despite David's rebellion, how do we see the Lord continue to be a God committed to His plan and full of justice, yet also gracious in His response?

Psalm 32 begins with the theme of forgiveness. How can you make vv. 1-2 your prayer back to God? Thank God for the extent and depth of His forgiveness and that "the Lord's unfailing love surrounds the one who trusts in Him" (v. 10).

MESSAGE NOTES
2 SAMUEL 11; 1 KINGS 11