

A vibrant illustration of a red gift box with a yellow ribbon, tilted to show its open top. The box is surrounded by a variety of colorful confetti, including stars, squares, and triangles, along with several streamers in shades of blue, pink, yellow, and purple. The word "RECEIVED!" is written in large, bold, black capital letters across the center of the image.

**RECEIVED!**

**Family Discussion Guides**

School Year 2023-2024

## 16: Family Discussion Guide: Water From the Rock

**Read** the Bible passage aloud, and then answer the questions together. Be sure everyone has a chance to speak.

*In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the Lord's hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death." Then the Lord said to Moses, "I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions. On the sixth day they are to prepare what they bring in, and that is to be twice as much as they gather on the other days." So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, "In the evening you will know that it was the Lord who brought you out of Egypt, and in the morning you will see the glory of the Lord, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we, that you should grumble against us?" Moses also said, "You will know that it was the Lord when he gives you meat to eat in the evening and all the bread you want in the morning, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we? You are not grumbling against us, but against the Lord." Then Moses told Aaron, "Say to the entire Israelite community, 'Come before the Lord, for he has heard your grumbling.'" While Aaron was speaking to the whole Israelite community, they looked toward the desert, and there was the glory of the Lord appearing in the cloud. The Lord said to Moses, "I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, 'At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God.'" That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor. When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was.*

*There was no water for the people to drink. So they quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses replied, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you put the Lord to the test?" But the people were thirsty for water there, and they grumbled against Moses. They said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?" Then Moses cried out to the Lord, "What am I to do with these people? They are almost ready to stone me." The Lord answered Moses, "Go out in front of the people. Take with you some of the elders of Israel and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink." So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the place Massah and Meribah because the Israelites quarreled and because they tested the Lord saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"*

From Exodus 16:1-15, and Exodus 17:1-7, New Living Translation

### To Discuss

- Why were the Israelites complaining about Moses and Aaron leading them out of Egypt?
- What did God promise the Israelites he would provide daily if they would trust him? How long did God supply the Israelites with manna?
- When God wants us to do something He will provide a way for us to do what He has told us to do. God wants us to trust that He will give us what we need. Are there things that you know God wants you to do, but you've been afraid or hesitant to do them?
- What can you do to show God that you trust Him? As a family, pray and ask God to strengthen you and help you to trust that He will provide for you and your family?

## 17: Family Discussion Guide: Welcome to God's Family

**Read** the Bible passage below, and then answer the questions together. Be sure everyone has a chance to speak.

*A man had two sons. The younger son told his father, 'I want my share of your estate now before you die.' So his father agreed to divide his wealth between his sons. A few days later this younger son packed all his belongings and moved to a distant land, and there he wasted all his money in wild living. About the time his money ran out, a great famine swept over the land, and he began to starve. He persuaded a local farmer to hire him, and the man sent him into his fields to feed the pigs. The young man became so hungry that even the pods he was feeding the pigs looked good to him. But no one gave him anything. When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, 'At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger! I will go home to my father and say, "Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant."' So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him. His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son.' But his father said to the servants, 'Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him. Get a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet. And kill the calf we have been fattening. We must celebrate with a feast!' Meanwhile, the older son was in the fields working. When he returned home, he heard music and dancing in the house, and he asked one of the servants what was going on. 'Your brother is back,' he was told, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf. We are celebrating because of his safe return.' The older brother was angry and wouldn't go in. His father came out and begged him, but he replied, 'All these years I've slaved for you and never once refused to do a single thing you told me to. And in all that time you never gave me even one young goat for a feast with my friends. Yet when this son of yours comes back after wasting your money, you celebrate by killing the fattened calf!' His father said to him, 'Look, dear son, you have always stayed by me, and everything I have is yours. We had to celebrate this happy day, for your brother was dead and has come back to life! He was lost, but now he is found!'"*

From Luke 15:11-32, New Living Translation

### To Discuss

- Retell the story in your own words.
- What are the three things you found most surprising about this story?
- How did the younger son change his mind?
- How can you see the Father's love in this story?
- Why do you think the older brother was upset?
- Do you think the father loved his two sons differently? Why or why not?

## 18: Family Discussion Guide: Wisdom From Above

**Read** the Bible passage aloud, and then answer the questions together. Be sure everyone has a chance to speak.

*That night the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream, and God said, “What do you want? Ask, and I will give it to you!”*

*Solomon replied, “You showed great and faithful love to your servant my father, David, because he was honest and true and faithful to you. And you have continued to show this great and faithful love to him today by giving him a son to sit on his throne.*

*“Now, O Lord my God, you have made me king instead of my father, David, but I am like a little child who doesn’t know his way around. And here I am in the midst of your own chosen people, a nation so great and numerous they cannot be counted! Give me an understanding heart so that I can govern your people well and know the difference between right and wrong. For who by himself is able to govern this great people of yours?”*

*The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for wisdom. So God replied, “Because you have asked for wisdom in governing my people with justice and have not asked for a long life or wealth or the death of your enemies— I will give you what you asked for! I will give you a wise and understanding heart such as no one else has had or ever will have! And I will also give you what you did not ask for—riches and fame! No other king in all the world will be compared to you for the rest of your life! And if you follow me and obey my decrees and my commands as your father, David, did, I will give you a long life.”*

1 Kings 3:5-14, New Living Translation

### To Discuss

- Why don't you think Solomon asked God for riches or fame?
- How did God respond to Solomon's request for wisdom?
- One of Solomon's proverbs says that “wisdom is more valuable than rubies.” Why is wisdom valuable?
- Why do you think God gave Solomon riches and wisdom too?
- Does everyone value wisdom like Solomon? Why not? What do they value instead?
- What would you say if God said, “Ask me for whatever you want me to give you?”

## 19: Family Discussion Guide: A New Kind of Fear

**Read** the Bible passage aloud, and then answer the questions together. Be sure everyone has a chance to speak.

*One day Jesus said to his disciples, "Let's cross to the other side of the lake." So they got into a boat and started out. As they sailed across, Jesus settled down for a nap. But soon a fierce storm came down on the lake. The boat was filling with water, and they were in real danger.*

*The disciples went and woke him up, shouting, "Master, Master, we're going to drown!"*

*When Jesus woke up, he rebuked the wind and the raging waves. Suddenly the storm stopped and all was calm. Then he asked them, "Where is your faith?" The disciples were terrified and amazed.*

*"Who is this man?" they asked each other. "When he gives a command, even the wind and waves obey him!"*

**Luke 8:22-25, New Living Translation**

### **To Discuss**

- Are there fears both parents and children have?
- What is your greatest fear? What are you most afraid of?
- God wants us to have peace and free of fear. How can you invite God into your life/space in times when you are afraid?
- Spend time asking God to help you remove your and your family's fears. Ask God to give you peace and keep you calm when fear tries to take you over.
- Make a list of each person's fears. Add them into a bowl and declare God's word over them. "God hasn't given us the spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind. (2 Timothy 1:7)." Anytime that fear arises, proclaim God's word over fear.

## 20: Family Discussion Guide: God Heals, We Praise

**Read** the Bible passage aloud, and then answer the questions together. Be sure everyone has a chance to speak.

*The king of Aram had great admiration for Naaman, the commander of his army, because through him the Lord had given Aram great victories. But though Naaman was a mighty warrior, he suffered from leprosy.*

*At this time Aramean raiders had invaded the land of Israel, and among their captives was a young girl who had been given to Naaman's wife as a maid. One day the girl said to her mistress, "I wish my master would go to see the prophet in Samaria. He would heal him of his leprosy."*

*So Naaman told the king what the young girl from Israel had said. "Go and visit the prophet," the king of Aram told him. "I will send a letter of introduction for you to take to the king of Israel." So Naaman started out, carrying as gifts 750 pounds of silver, 150 pounds of gold, and ten sets of clothing. The letter to the king of Israel said: "With this letter I present my servant Naaman. I want you to heal him of his leprosy."*

*When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes in dismay and said, "Am I God, that I can give life and take it away? Why is this man asking me to heal someone with leprosy? I can see that he's just trying to pick a fight with me."*

*But when Elisha, the man of God, heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes in dismay, he sent this message to him: "Why are you so upset? Send Naaman to me, and he will learn that there is a true prophet here in Israel."*

*So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and waited at the door of Elisha's house. But Elisha sent a messenger out to him with this message: "Go and wash yourself seven times in the Jordan River. Then your skin will be restored, and you will be healed of your leprosy." But Naaman became angry and stalked away. "I thought he would certainly come out to meet me!" he said. "I expected him to wave his hand over the leprosy and call on the name of the Lord his God and heal me! Aren't the rivers of Damascus, the Abana and the Pharpar, better than any of the rivers of Israel? Why shouldn't I wash in them and be healed?" So Naaman turned and went away in a rage.*

*But his officers tried to reason with him and said, "Sir, if the prophet had told you to do something very difficult, wouldn't you have done it? So you should certainly obey him when he says simply, 'Go and wash and be cured!'" So Naaman went down to the Jordan River and dipped himself seven times, as the man of God had instructed him. And his skin became as healthy as the skin of a young child, and he was healed!*

*Then Naaman and his entire party went back to find the man of God. They stood before him, and Naaman said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel."*

**2 Kings 5:1-15, New Living Translation**

### ***To Discuss***

- How can we pray and serve others who are ill? How can we show them God's love?
- What gift did Naaman receive from God?
- What were the unique instructions Naaman was given?
- Has God healed someone in your family? Share what God did and how He is still healing us today.
- Naaman tried to pay for his healing, but we can't pay God for the gifts that He gives us. He wants us to respond with praise and gratitude. What are some ways we can show God we are grateful for the gifts that we received?