

protects Abraham again in **Genesis 20**. Isaac arrives in **Genesis 21**, and then becomes the basis of the greatest test to Abraham's faith in **Genesis 22**. Note the repetition of those promises again at the end of chapter 22!



Chapter 22's test of faith awes us but we do well to remember that God had carefully grown Abraham's faith over a long period of time. Look back at your own faith development. What can you do today that you couldn't do when you first became a Christian? How is God's working through His Word, His providence, and His people growing your faith?



The sacrifice of Isaac is hard to understand for children. First, make it clear that God would never have allowed Abraham to kill his child. Secondly, kids need to be led to understand that sometimes obeying God does mean we have to do something very difficult but we want to obey God and do as He says even when it is hard.

Week 5 - Genesis □ 24 □ 25 □ 26 □ 27 □ 28



Our story is in transition toward a new character, Isaac. **Genesis 24** shows the elaborate precautions Abraham takes to make sure Isaac doesn't marry a Canaanite woman. God is at work again, answering prayer and blessing Abraham's family *as He promised*. **Genesis 25** ends Abraham's story and places two new characters center stage: Jacob and Esau. Note the repetition of Abraham's promises to Isaac in **Genesis 26**. Isaac promptly duplicates the mistakes his father made and is protected by God just as Abraham was. Lies and deceit seem to be part of Jacob's standard operating procedure, and work again in **Genesis 27** to steal the blessing. As we are watching the promises of God, this blessing is very important. Jacob's trickery results in him being sent away where God gives to him the promises of Abraham (vv. 3-4, 13-15). What will God do next with this crafty grandson of Abraham's?



Already the Bible is stressing a distinction between Abraham's people and the people of Canaan. How is that to be lived out among God's people now (see James 1:27)? Watching Jacob trick his way to what he wants (and end up having to run for his life) provides a good place for us to think about reaping and sowing (Gal 6:10). Do you use any methods to get what you want, deciding the end justifies the means? How much like Jacob are we?



The two boys, Esau and Jacob, provide lots of fodder for talking about family relationships, disobeying parents and fighting among siblings. Some talk about the importance of the blessing in chapter 27 will help your family see how much this really mattered. Again, stress that God's promises dominate everything that is going on. Jacob receives those promises in chapter 28 and will be cared for by the Lord even in a foreign country. Help your children grow in their trust of the Lord!

The GPS Reading Map provided by the
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God's Plan of Salvation

Your
map to
Bible
Reading
2012

Readings for
January

Welcome to a unique Bible reading plan that will help you draw closer to God as you understand the "big picture" of His word and will. Our goal with this reading plan is simple: we want to understand the Bible's over-arching theme. Lots goes on in Scripture but its main theme is God's plan of salvation. As we study the pieces of the Bible individually it can be easy to miss seeing how the pieces of the Bible fit together to show us God's program to redeem sinful people because of His great love for them. The GPS Bible Reading Map is designed to make certain this theme is consistently set before the reader and tie the daily readings to it. In short, we will read the Bible story so we can understand the theme of the Bible story. It's going to be a great year!

Week 1 - Genesis □ 1 □ 2 □ 3 □ 4 □ 6



The Bible is all about Jesus (Luke 24:44-47) but it doesn't begin with Jesus. It begins with the creation of our world and tells us what is wrong with it. This week we will read about that beginning. **Genesis 1** stresses the power of God, along with the uniqueness of human creation. Nothing else is said to be made "in God's image" (v. 26). **Genesis 2** follows up with more detail on the creation of humans, giving us the story of woman's creation. **Genesis 3** is the decisive chapter in this week's reading. Here sin enters the world, changing everything. Man's relationship with God is ruptured so Adam and Eve are forced to leave the Garden and the wonderful fellowship with God they enjoy there. **Genesis 4** finds sin getting worse, and traces the lineage of two kinds of people: Cain and Seth. Cain's people are wicked while Seth's descendants worship God (v. 26). **Genesis 6** begins the Noah story.



These sections in our reading map will highlight "bumpy" spots in the road where we may be confused or have tough questions about the reading. For example, many wonder where Cain got his wife in Genesis 4. The answer is "We don't know" and we can't let that distract us from keeping our eye on the main theme in the chapter.



These “rubber meets the road” segments will give us some applications of the readings so we can put the Word in play in our lives. First, consider and pray about the power of God as seen in Genesis 1 and 2. Second, ask yourself if you take sin as seriously as God does in chapter 3. Finally, think about your worship and what Cain and Abel can teach us about worshipping God.



“In the minivan” is designed to give families some discussion and application starters as they read through the GPS Reading Map together. This week there needs to be a lot of conversation about God being our Creator and therefore having authority and power over us. When we make something, we expect it to do what we made it do. So does

God! We are His creation and thus must do what He made us to do: serve and worship Him. Children should also be led to talk about sin, what it is, and why God took the transgression of chapter 3 so seriously. What Adam and Eve did may appear to be minor to children but it was not. Finally, talk about how sin multiplies (by chapter 6 nearly the whole world is under its sway). What did Noah and his family do that made them different?

Week 2 - Genesis □ 7 □ 8 □ 9 □ 11 □ 12



This week we are continuing the Noah story, in **Genesis 7-9**. The Bible cites this as an example of God’s grace (6:5), and that’s a good theme to watch for in the story. **Genesis 11** shows that even after the fresh start the flood provided people get right back to defying God and sinning as quickly as possible. **Genesis 12** is one of the most important passages in all of the Old Testament. Here God begins His plan to redeem sinful people by calling Abram out of Ur so that the Lord can begin building a holy nation that will follow Him and teach the world of Him. That nation, promised in verse 2, will be the Israelite nation. The blessing of verse 3 (demonstrated in verses 10-20) will ultimately be fulfilled by Jesus Christ (see Galatians 3:16).



The end of Noah’s story is troubling (9:20-29). There is much debate about what Ham did but we should remember that in Old Testament culture just making fun of a patriarch would be tremendously insulting and so it is not necessary to the story that Ham did anything more.



Do you regularly meditate and praise God for His grace? This week is a good week to do so. Grace is all through the Noah story, and can even be found in God’s gracious decision not to destroy the Babel Tower builders but instead disperse them. Most importantly, God graciously calls Abram as the beginnings of His plan to save sinful people. What if God didn’t care about us? What if God refused to help us? Think more about God’s grace this week!



Children will be fascinated by the Ark story. Talk about being on a boat that long and encourage your family members to imagine what that would be like. Genesis 11 provides a place to emphasize obedience, as the people there were defying God’s order to populate the whole earth by trying to stay in one place. Finally, Abraham needs to be seen as a huge character in the Old Testament but it needs to be made plain

that he was not (by any measure) perfect when God first chose him. The end of chapter 12 makes this clear. Help your children see that God can work with us even when we’re imperfect and that He works to grow and develop our faith even as He did Abraham.

Week 3 - Genesis □ 13 □ 14 □ 15 □ 16 □ 17



Lot becomes a key figure in our reading this week but while he makes an interesting character study and we can learn much from him, we want to keep our eye on God’s promises to Abraham as God works through him. God has promised Abraham protection and blessings and these promises are kept abundantly in **Genesis 13**. Again, God cares for Abraham in **Genesis 14**. Quickly we are learning to trust God. When God promises God delivers! **Genesis 15** restates and reaffirms the promises of chapter 12, showing their significance.

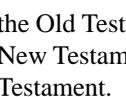
Abraham makes a mistake in **Genesis 16**, but God is still working with him as **Genesis 17** shows. Again, the promises are stated and amplified. Seeing these promises come to pass is the defining issue of the Old Testament.



Don’t get lost speculating about Melchizedek in chapter 14. There is much we don’t know and much we will learn later in Hebrews. At this point we are given what we need to know: he is a king and priest and servant of God. He is also clearly superior to even someone as great as Abraham.



Where does faith come from? From hearing God’s Word (Rom 10:17). But faith only comes from the Word of God when we are looking for it. We need to watch how trustworthy God is and how He always keeps His promises so that Scripture can build faith in our hearts. Make it a practice to underline places God keeps His word as we are reading, or perhaps start a list on one of the blank pages in the back of your Bible. You may be surprised at how often the Bible makes the point that we can trust God!



The promises to Abraham are repeated twice in our reading this week. The temptation will be to work with other parts of the reading that are more “story” and so more teachable. Yet parents want to make sure they are making the main thing the main thing, and the main thing here is God’s promises to Abraham. Talk about repetition, what it means, and why God keeps repeating His promises to Abraham. The rest of the Old Testament is shaped by them. We will be watching these promises come to pass all the way to the New Testament. Make sure your family understands that this is the basic “map” for the rest of the Old Testament.

Week 4 - Genesis □ 18 □ 19 □ 20 □ 21 □ 22



The depth of Abraham’s relationship with God is seen in **Genesis 18**. Notice again it is about the promises and that it is now time for Isaac to be born. Despite every obstacle, God’s word will be fulfilled! **Genesis 19** ties up the loose ends of Lot’s story, as well as providing an important teaching point for Abraham to use with his household (vv. 27-29 tie to 19:8). God