

GENESIS
 EXODUS
 LEVITICUS
 NUMBERS
 DEUTERONOMY
 JOSHUA
 JUDGES
 RUTH 1SAMUEL 2SAMUEL 1KINGS 2KINGS
 1CHRONICLES 2CHRONICLES EZRA NEHEMIAH
 ESTHER JOB PSALMS PROVERBS ECCLESIASTES
 SONG OF SOLOMON ISAIAH JEREMIAH LAMENTATIONS
 DANIEL JOEL AMOS OBADIAH NAHUM
 HOSEA HAGGAI HABAKKUK ZEPHANIAH
 ZECHARIAH
 MALACHI
 MATTHEW
 MARK LUKE
 JOHN ACTS
 ROMANS
 1CORINTHIANS
 2CORINTHIANS
 GALATIANS
 EPHESIANS
 PHILIPPIANS
 COLOSSIANS
 1 THESSALONIANS
 2 THESSALONIANS
 1 TIMOTHY
 2 TIMOTHY
 TITUS
 PHILEMON
 HEBREWS
 JAMES 1 PETER
 2 PETER 1 JOHN
 2 JOHN 3 JOHN
 JUDE
 REVELATION

GOD'S BIG STORY



Welcome to your “God’s Big Story” booklet. Please use this with your family over the next ten weeks as we explore together the amazing storyline of the greatest book ever written.

Name: _____

Age: _____

What is the most amazing fact that you already know from the Bible?



Did you know
that there are
727,969 words
in the Bible!

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CHALLENGE

There are 66 books
in the Bible. Can
you memorise
them in order?

Note for parents and carers

This booklet has been designed to be used by children approximately 7-10 years old. There is a complementary booklet for children aged 3-6 years old, which you can download from www.stjohnshartford.org if you feel it would be more suitable for your child.

Whilst your child should be able to enjoy doing most of this booklet on their own—we would love you to spend time talking with your child(ren) about what they have learnt. We hope that as a family you can join us altogether for the first part of our Sunday morning service, especially to watch the children's talk. You might like to suggest that your child then carries on with the booklet while you watch the rest of the service and listen to the sermon. Maybe you can then use talking about what has been done in the booklet to help start a weekly family devotional at a later point. Bible quotes are based on either the NIV or the ICB (International Children's Bible). If you don't have a copy at home, you can find both translations at www.biblegateway.com. If you have any questions about this material, please email teresa@stjohnshartford.org

Week 1— Jesus and the Bible

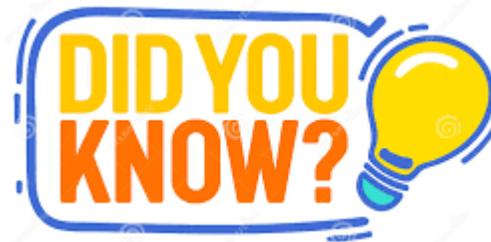
In Luke chapter 24, Jesus appears to His friends the disciples (this is after He has come back to life) and tells them that everything written in the Old Testament was part of His story. Jesus helped them to understand what had been written.

Look up Luke 24:44 and fill in the missing words;

“Jesus said to them, ‘This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the L__ of M_____, the P_____ and the P_____.’”

Think about ...

Is it better to read the Old Testament or the New Testament?



Fulfilled means “happened” or “carried out” or “achieved”

Week 1— Jesus and the Bible continued

It wasn't just the disciples that Jesus explained the meaning of the Old Testament to. Look up Luke 24:13 and read through to verse 35. Look at how similar Luke 24 verse 27 is to Luke 24 verse 44.

Think about ...

Jesus seems to want everyone to know that the Old Testament is part of His story.

What should we do about that?

(think about what the two people on the road to Emmaus did after Jesus had left them)



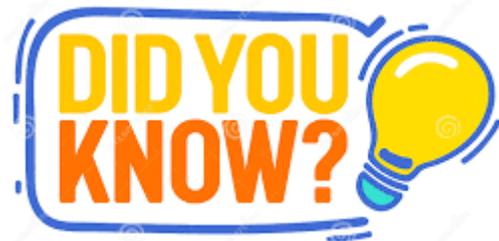
Ask Jesus to help you to want to read the Bible every day and to help you to understand it better.

Will you take up the challenge to read your Bible everyday—either on your own, or with someone in your family?

CHALLENGE

Week 2— Things Go Wrong

Find the very first page of your Bible. Read the story of Creation (Genesis chapter 1). Each time God makes something, He was pleased with it and said it was very good.



God's creation is truly amazing ...the deepest part of the Pacific Ocean is the Challenger Deep. It's about 11,000 metres deep. If you dropped Mount Everest into it, it would be covered by more than a mile of water!

Think about ...

Adam and Eve weren't the only people that God made. Look up Psalm 139:13-14. How does this make you feel?

Week 2— Things Go Wrong continued

Sadly, things went wrong. Adam and Eve chose to disobey God. They put their own selfish desires ahead of loving Him. God couldn't let them stay in the Garden of Eden, so they couldn't carry on walking and talking with Him as they were used to. You can read about this in Genesis chapter 3.

BUT

God didn't want things to stay like this. He wanted Adam and Eve (and all of us) to have a second chance to be His friend again. He had a plan to put things right by sending a Special Rescuer. Over the next few weeks, we will find out who that special rescuer is ...

Think about ...

We know that Adam and Eve felt bad after they had disobeyed God because they tried to hide from Him. How do you feel when you know you have let someone down?



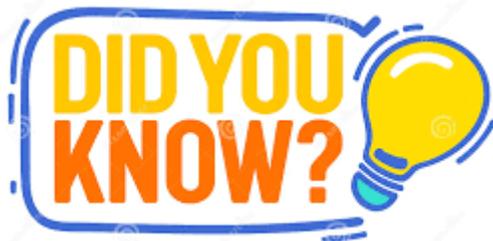
Take some time to say sorry to God for the times when you have disobeyed Him and done what you wanted instead. Thank God that He wants to forgive you.

Week 3— A Promise Made

Abraham and his wife Sarah are faithful followers of God. But they are sad that they don't have any children. They know they are too old to have a baby. One day, God spoke to Abraham. He said, "Look at the s ___. There are so many s _____ that you cannot count them. And your descendants will be too many to C_____." Fill in the missing words from Genesis 15:5

Abraham waits and waits and waits. He has to trust that God will keep His promise. Eventually, after many years, God gives Abraham and Sarah a baby boy! Abraham learns that God always keeps His promises.

Think about ...
How patient are you? Are you waiting for anything at the moment? Is there someone that you know who can help you to learn to be more patient?



"Descendants" mean children born to someone, but it also includes a person's grandchildren, great grandchildren and great, great, great ... grandchildren, continuing forever ...



Week 3— A Promised Made continued



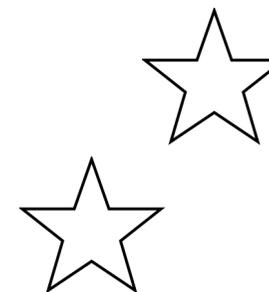
Later in the Bible, we find that one of Abraham's promised descendants will be the Special Rescuer ...

He will come to rescue everyone in Abraham's family.

Look up Galatians 3:29 and write it here: _____

Think about ...
If everyone who believes in God is counted as being a part of Abraham's family, then all the promises made to Abraham are true for us too.

Are they true for you?



Have you ever tried counting all the stars? Our galaxy, which is called the Milky Way, is so huge that scientists can only guess that there are between 100 billion and 400 billion stars in it!

CHALLENGE



Why not praise God for the awesomeness of His promise to Abraham and ask Him to help you to trust His promises.

The NIV translation mentions "seeds" and "heirs". These words are another way of saying descendants. You might like to look this verse up in the ICB translation. (see note on p3)

Week 4— An Eternal King

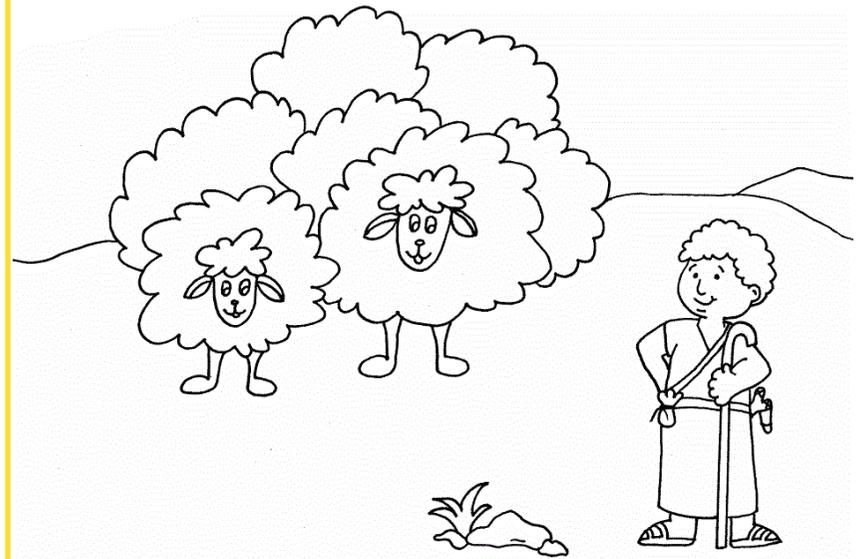
So, God has promised Abraham lots of children. One of his great, great, great, great (lots of greats!) grandchildren was a man called David. Everyone knew that one of Abraham's descendants would be the special rescuer ... could it be David?

Think about ...

When David was young he was a shepherd boy.
He had no idea that he would grow up to be
chosen by God to be a king.

What would you like to be when you grow up?

Ask the people in your family if they ended up
doing what they thought they would?



Week 4— An Eternal King continued

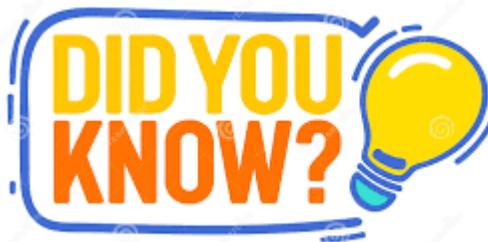
Read 2 Samuel 7:16. God is making a promise to David. He is promising that his family and kingdom will last forever. The special rescuer will be an Eternal King. Do you think the special rescuer is David?

ChALLENGE

Eternal means carrying on forever. God said His promised King will carry on forever. If you carry on counting forever, you get to infinity. Is it possible to count to infinity?



Say thank you to God that His promised rescuer will stay being our King forever.



You can make an “infinite” loop out of paper. It is called a Mobius strip and you can find simple instructions to make one on www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Mobius-Strip Why not make one and write out the words of 2 Samuel 7:16 on it.

Think about ...

When Elizabeth II was crowned Queen, she was given a Bible. As it was handed to her, the Archbishop said he was giving her “the most valuable thing that this world affords”. What is the most valuable thing that you own?

Week 5— A Perfect King

David was a good king. He did lots of wonderful things (you can read the story of how David defeated Goliath by trusting in God in 1 Samuel 17). He loved God and served Him well. But David wasn't perfect. He did bad things too (he stole someone else's wife, and then had her husband killed to try to cover it up. You can read this in 2 Samuel 11).

David couldn't rule perfectly because he was only a human. And he knows that he can't be the king forever. So he knows that he isn't the perfect King that God has promised to send to rescue us.

Think about ...

How do you feel about David? Do the good things he did outweigh the bad things that he did?

Do the good things that you do make up for the bad things that you do? How do you think God feels about this?

Week 5— A Perfect King continued

David knows that he can't be the promised rescuer, and not just because he isn't perfect. He knows that one day he will die. David isn't scared of dying because He trusts God. He knows that the special rescuer, the perfect King that God has promised, will one day end death forever. You can read this in Psalm 16. Can you trust God like David did?



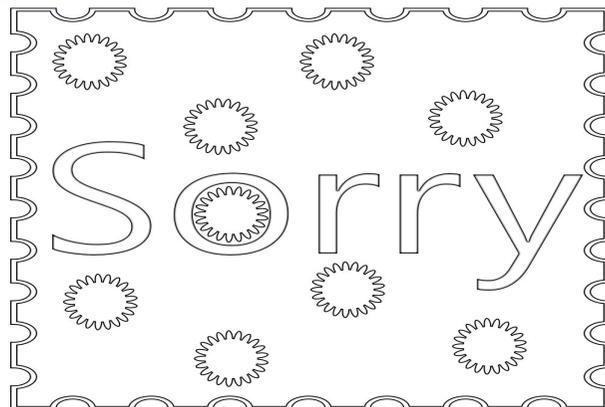
Ask God to forgive you for the times that you have messed up. Praise God that we have a Perfect King.



When David realised that he had messed up, he wrote Psalm 51 to say sorry to God.

CHALLENGE

Find 1 John 1:9 in the New Testament and see if you can memorise it.



David wrote a total of 73 psalms (like poems or songs). He sang to God when he was happy but also when he was sad, angry, scared, sorry and lonely. It is always good to tell God how we feel.

Week 6— Bridging the Gap

The story so far ... Humans messed up ... God will send a special rescuer ... a perfect King. The King will help us to be friends with God again, despite the bad things that we do. Today we meet a man named Job. Job was a wealthy man who was blessed with many good things by God. But God allowed all the good things to be taken away from him. Job was very sad. He kept asking God why bad things had happened to him. He knew that he wasn't perfect, but he understood that God hadn't done this as a punishment.

Think about ...
If you could ask God anything at all, what would it be?

Job 26:14b

Job 3:23

Job recognised God's enormity and his own smallness. He longed for someone to help him understand God better.

Look up these verses to hear what Job says.

Job 12:13

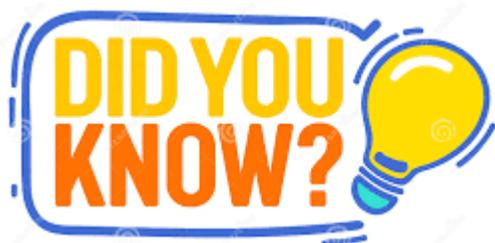
Job 6:13

Week 6— Bridging the Gap continued



Job's questions didn't get him any answers. His friends couldn't help him either. Job knew that he needed the special rescuer to fill the gap between himself and God. We need the rescuer to bridge the gap between us and God too.

Read Job 9:32-35 and 1 Timothy 2:5



“Arbitrator” and “mediator” are words used to describe the person that God sends to fill the gap. They mean someone who is a “go-between”, who can make peace between us and God, who can act on our behalf and be on our side when we stand before God's judgement.

Thank God that we can always talk to Him and ask Him our questions, knowing He will answer us.



ChALLENGE

Can you build your own bridge. You might like to do this with lego, or with objects such as books and tin cans. If you have marshmallows and spaghetti, you can have fun making amazing bridge structures.

Draw a bridge to fill this gap

Week 7— A Promised Shepherd

We've learnt that God's people were waiting for someone special. Fill in the missing words to remind you what He will be like. Clues are in the brackets if you aren't sure.

A s _____ r _____ (week 2)

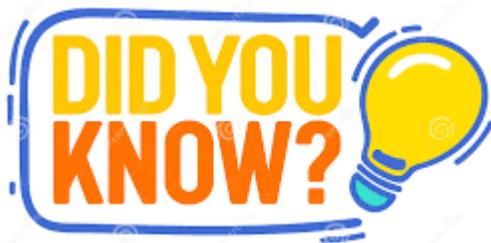
A p _____ descendant of A _____ (week 3)

He will an e _____ k _____ (week 4)

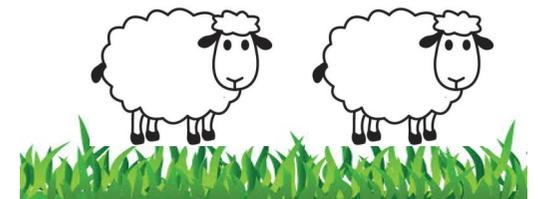
He will be p _____ (week 5)

A b _____ between us and G ____ (week 6)

Look up today's Bible verse, Ezekiel 34:23, to find out another way that God describes who He is sending. He will be a S _____



Shepherds are amazing people who do an important job looking after sheep. But in Bible times, shepherds were not respected. They were seen as being poor and smelly. No one thought they were important.



Week 7— A Promised Shepherd continued

Think about ...

God uses Ezekiel to tell His people that the Special Rescuer will be like a shepherd. A shepherd looks after his sheep. What things do sheep need?



There is a big difference between a shepherd and a king. How can one person be both?

Think about ...

If we believe in God, then we are one of the sheep in His flock. What do we need from God? How is this similar or different from a sheep?

CHALLENGE

Find John 10:14. Write it out and stick it up where you can see it and remember it.



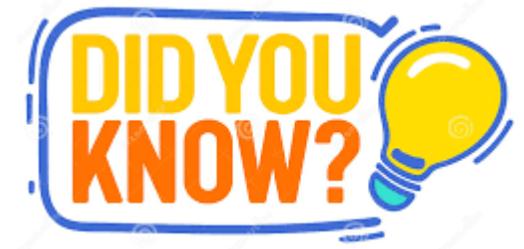
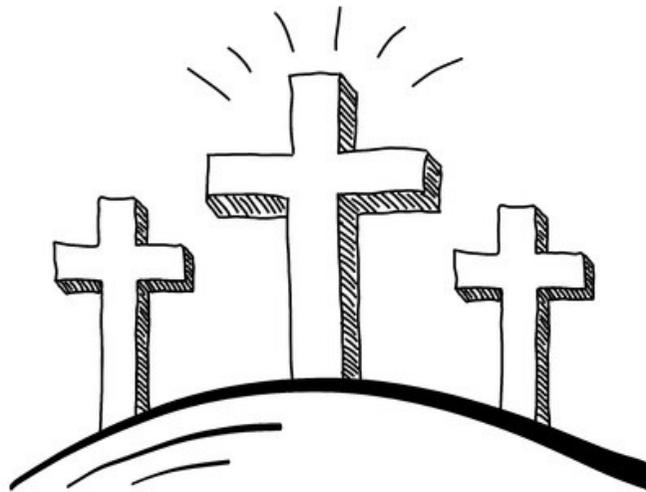
Thank God that He wants to take care of you, like a shepherd looks after his sheep.

Week 8— The King Comes

Jesus has told His friends and followers that He is the Good Shepherd. He has told them that He is the special rescuer that God had sent. Now Jesus is dying on the cross. The soldiers are joking that He can't be the real King. It doesn't look like He could be the one that God had sent. Will anyone realise that Jesus is the Promised King?

Think about ...

The soldiers made Jesus wear a crown made of thorns to mock Him. How do you think Jesus felt?



When Jesus died on the cross, He took the punishment for all the bad things that we have done. This made a bridge over the gap between us and God, so that we can be friends with God again. But first we need to say sorry to God, recognise that Jesus is our Special Rescuer and ask Him to be the King in our lives.

Week 8— The King Comes continued

There were two other people on crosses next to Jesus. One of them was angry with Jesus. But the other man knew that they deserved to be punished. He also knew that Jesus had done nothing wrong. Jesus was perfect. The man asked Jesus to remember him in His kingdom. He understood that Jesus was the Promised King. Jesus told the man that he could join Him in heaven. Have you realised that Jesus is the Promised King and our Special Rescuer? Read what happened for yourself in Luke 23:32-43 and then think about whether you would have asked Jesus what the thief on the cross did.

Think about ...

Lots of us try to be good enough to earn a place in heaven. Had the thief on the cross done anything to deserve Jesus' help? How does this make you feel?

CHALLENGE

The thief on the cross died shortly after He was saved by Jesus. He didn't have time to tell anyone else his amazing good news. But we can learn about what happened to him because people who were there saw it and wrote it down for us. Who could you write a letter to, to tell them about Jesus?



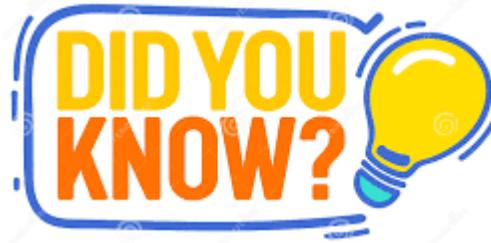
Thank God for sending Jesus to be our special rescuer. Thank Jesus for dying on the cross and taking the punishment for our sins, so that we can be friends with God again.

Week 9— The King is Proclaimed

Jesus is the King! Jesus is the Special Rescuer. Jesus is the one who God promised to send from Abraham and David's family. It didn't look like Jesus was the one that God had sent when He died on the cross, but He came back to life and is still alive today. So He is the Eternal King too!

Think about ...

How will everyone find out
this amazing news???



Proclaim means to tell, or shout or announce something important to those around you.

Lots of people saw what happened to Jesus. They saw Him die and they saw Him alive again. Lots of people heard about the amazing truth that He was God's promised rescuer. But not everyone knew about Jesus. So Jesus asked His friends to tell everyone in the whole world about Him. You can read this in Matthew 28:19-20.

Week 9 — The King is Proclaimed continued

Peter was one of Jesus' friends. When Jesus was arrested, Peter had lied about knowing Him. Sometimes it seems easier to lie about our faith than admit it to others. After Jesus had come back to life, He forgave Peter for this. Later, with the help of the Holy Spirit, Peter told thousands of people about Jesus. Read this for yourself in Acts 2.



Think about ...

When we find it hard to tell our friends or family about our faith in Jesus, we can be sure that Jesus will help us. Look again at Matthew 28:19-20. What does it say right at the end? How does this make you feel?

CHALLENGE

Will you take up Jesus' challenge to tell everyone about Him? Think of three people that you could tell the amazing good news of Jesus to. Write their names here



Pray for these three people now and try to remember to pray for them everyday.

Week 10— The King Returns

Abraham had to wait a very long time to see how God would keep His promise. God's people had to wait a very long time to see how God would keep His promise to send Jesus as their King. Now we are waiting too. But what are we waiting for?

If you are not sure, have a look at Philippians 3:20.



Jesus, our King, has promised that He is going to come back. He wants our world to be perfect again, just like it was when He was helping God to make it. Do you remember right back in Genesis 1, that everything God made was good? But our world is full of sad things and bad things. Jesus wants to put that right, but we have to wait until He returns.

Think about ...

What makes you feel most sad?

What are the bad things that you wish would go away?

Week 10 — The King Returns continued

The very last book of the Bible, Revelation, tells us how wonderful the new heavens and the new earth will be and what eternal life after Jesus' return will be like. We will be able to see Jesus the King sitting on His throne. Jesus promises that there will be no more death, sadness, crying or pain.

CHALLENGE

Take some time to read Revelation 21:1-5. Think about what the new heavens and the new earth will be like. Talk to a friend or someone in your family about how this makes you feel.

Think about ...

As we come to the end of our Big Story, what is the best thing you have learnt from the Bible?



Thank God that we can live with Him forever. Ask Jesus to come back soon.