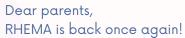
RHEMA 2022 PARENTS GUIDE

PRAYER AS A MEANS OF GRACE

Reading God's Word with our children



This time, we will embark to read on the topic of prayer! It is our hope that every member of the family can participate, no matter how old or young. Let God's Word draw us closer to Him and to each other! This parent's guide serves to assist you as you endeavour to read God's Word with your children. This parent's guide serves as your assistant as you endeavour to read God's Word with your children. It is also meant to complement the main devotional booklet to help you and your family study, reflect and discuss the daily bible passage. This guide is catered for children aged 4 and above.

Recall RHEMA: Read, Hear, Meditate, Act

These are the 4 steps for our Bible reading movement. Through these 4 steps, we hope for our congregation (children included!) to move from reading to acting out God's Word.

Focus on the Family^{*} has some pointers for us to consider as we read and study the Bible with our little ones:

R. E. A. D

READ: Just like how we eat everyday, reading the Bible is essential for us in our Christian life and growth.

This starts through the simple act of reading (and hearing)! As we bring our children before God's Word, we too entrust them to the teachings of His Word in their lives. For younger children, you can read to them. For older children, encourage them to read it with you, or let them read it on their own. You may use the NIV version provided in our devotional booklet or you may also consider using the International Children's Bible (ICB) version^ where some words are simplified for our little ones to better understand.

Make sure to avoid the "this is the way it's always been done" mindset. Your goal is to ignite a passion for the Bible in your child!

*You may read the article using this link: <u>https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/teaching-your-kids-to-read-the-bible/</u> ^ You may find the ICB version here: <u>https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?</u> search=Genesis+1&version=ICB **ENGAGE:** Ps 119:11 says, "I have stored up Your word in my heart, that I might not sin against You." This point helps our children connect with God's word. To do this, think about what interests your child. Do they connect better by drawing? Then encourage them to doodle pictures, or create a mind map based on what they read. Do they connect better by listening or by acting it out? Then consider reading the passage dramatically, using different tones and moods, adding in actions if it helps your child keep engaged. If you can tie in their Bible reading to something that God has given them a passion for, it will be much more effective and enjoyable to store up God's Word in their hearts!

Do also encourage your child to pick out words, phrases or even themes they discover in their Bible reading time. They can keep a notebook to record these words down. (Preferably one they have been using at Church School classes)

APPLY: The Bible instructs us to be doers of the Word and not hearers only. (James 1:22) We assist our children by helping them bridge the bible to their everyday life. Some of the daily pointers will include an application or a challenge for your child. Encourage them to share with you how they would like to apply that passage in their lives. Remember to follow-up with them! So that they can follow through with their ideas. You can also come alongside to provide suggestions and guide their thoughts. Remember to not simply tell them what they should do.

DISCUSS: We learn and remember best, not by simply hearing, but by doing and saying them out loud. As we read, encourage your child to use their minds to ponder on the words and share any questions they may have. Be receptive to listen to their point of view and keep the conversation open! Create a safe environment for discussion in your home, so that your child may also feel comfortable sharing their thoughts, questions, and even doubts and concerns. You won't know all the answers to the questions they may have, and that's okay. Be open and honest and be willing to dig into God's Word together to talk through things. Their conversations with you can go a long way to help them be comfortable in sharing their faith with others in the future!

PRAY: As this Rhema series is focusing on prayer, we will include a "prayer" component where suggestions will be provided on how to pray together at the end of the session. We hope that this will be a good opportunity for us to build up our children's prayer life and the prayer life of our families, too. Remind our children that prayer is talking with God. They don't need to contain big, complicated words or be of a certain "standard". Our prayers are sometimes better when they are simple and straight from our hearts. Encourage your child to start praying on their own, if they haven't already started. God is listening, even if it's just one sentence! God will surely be listening!

We will be sharing this with the children in Church School, to help them see how a prayer can look like. These components can also be seen in the Rhema prayer segments.

How to use each day's pointers:

Each day contains some guiding questions with suggestions for prayer. Feel free to adapt, adjust and rephrase the questions according to your child's age and level of engagement. Do take some time beforehand to go through the day's content and consider what you want to share

Bible-reading timing and arrangement:

Pick a suitable time slot for this bible reading time! One suggestion might be to do this Bible reading time as part of your child's bedtime routine The session should span about 10-15mins with a time of prayer at the end. Once this becomes a habit, we encourage you to continue with this Bible reading routine even after this Rhema cycle is over!

If a daily Bible reading practice seems intimidating for you or your child, consider starting at a pace that is more manageable. For example, start with twice a week, and increase the frequency once you are comfortable. We invite you to **take the lead**! Lean on God's wisdom and strength as you nurture your child's bible-reading and prayer life! The church is praying with you as you embark on this journey. Have a great time of bible-reading with your child!

Overall structure and weekly themes: Week 1: Prayer and the Character of God Week 2: Dealing with Impediments to Prayer Week 3: Prayers of Petition and Intercession Week 4: Praying as We Are Week 5: Psalms, the Prayer Book of the Bible (Part 1) Week 6: Psalms, the Prayer Book of the Bible (Part 2)



22 AUGUST (MON) LUKE 1:46-55

PRAYING TO A MIGHTY GOD!

This bible passage is called "The Magnificat," that is, Mary's song of praise. After the angel Gabriel came to Mary and told her about baby Jesus, she went to her relative, Elizabeth's house. It is there where Mary sang her song of praise to God. You may read about this from Luke 1:26-45.

Discuss:

- 1.In verse 49, Mary sang that God, "the Mighty One has done great things." What great things of God did Mary sang about from verses 50 to 55? (Hint: look out for the action words!)
- 2.How do you think Mary was feeling after she heard the news from angel Gabriel? What caused her to praise God like that?



- Apply:
 - 1.Do I think God is mighty too? What other great things have God done?
 - 2. What do I hope our Mighty God will do in our world today?



Pray:

Using what you have shared, praise God for the great things He has done. We can also ask Him to continue doing great things in our world today.

23 AUGUST (TUES) COLOSSIANS 1:15-20

JESUS, THE ULTIMATE SON!

Who is "the Son"mentioned here? Yes the Son is Jesus! Let's have a look at what the apostle Paul said about Jesus.

Discuss:

 Can you count how many times the word "all" appeared in this passage? (Did you know that sometimes, bible writers repeat words to hint to us about the focus of the passage. Here, Paul is telling us that EVERYTHING, all things are under the rule and lordship of Jesus!)
What else does this passage say about Jesus?



Apply and Pray:

We can use these bible verses in our prayer too! Let us give it a go now!



O Lord, all things are created through You and in You, all things hold together. We pray that Jesus will continue to rule all things in heaven and on earth and be the head of the church! Help us to trust in You God and in all that You are doing! In the mighty name of Your Son, Jesus... Christ, Amen. (We used words from verses 16, 17 and 18 for our prayer!)

Explain some terms:

"Firstborn from among the dead" means that Jesus was the first to experience resurrection and new life. Jesus won over death and came back to life and so, He was the first among those who have died to receive new life! "Reconcile" means to make peace. We were once enemies with God because of our sin. Jesus patched back our relationship with God through His sacrifice on the cross!

24 AUGUST (WED) SONG OF SONGS 7:10-13

GOD'S BELOVED!

Is this your first time reading Song of Songs? Song of Songs is a collection of love poems between a man and a woman who love each other (Like two people writing love letters to each other!) The book celebrates love as designed by God in marriage. We can also understand these verses as describing God's love for His people.



Engage:

Try reading the passage in a poetic way, like reading a little love poem! See if you can experience how much the writer feels belonged and loved by the person she is writing to.

Discuss

Pray:

Read verse 10 again! In the same way, we also belong to God and are loved by Him! His desire is also always for us! In what ways do I feel God's love for me? (If a child says that they do not feel God's love, we can encourage them by sharing how God loves us by providing for our needs, or loves us through other people, like parents and family members. Encourage them to also open their eyes and heart to see God's love in their lives)

Give thanks to God for His great love for us, and tell God how much you love Him!



Here is a song with lyrics from these verses: <u>His Banner Over Me is Love</u> Have a listen!



25 AUGUST (THURS) 1 SAMUEL 3:1-14

LISTENING AS WE PRAY!



Note: You can consider reading till verse 10, as God's judgement upon the house of Eli may be quite confusing for the children. You may conclude that God indeed spoke to Samuel after that.

Engage:

As this passage is relatively long, consider role playing to make the reading experience fun. Assign everyone with one character (God, Eli, Samuel) including a main narrator. You can dramatise it too! **Discuss:**

- 1. Why do you think God continues to call Samuel even when Samuel went to Eli at each time? (Because God wants to teach Samuel the lesson of listening. God is also patient with Samuel)
- 2. What are some things we can learn from Samuel?



Apply:

Have I heard God speaking to me before? (Sometimes it may not be an audible sound, but it can come from God speaking to us through the bible, through the words of our parents and friends, or through a thought or word that appears in our head!)

• (For older children) What are some challenges I face when I try to listen to God?

Pray:

Do you know that praying is more than talking to God? It is also about God talking to us. As God listens to our prayer, we also listen to what He has to say. For today's prayer time, try spending some quiet moments listening to what God has to say to You after you have prayed. Breathe slowly and ask God to open your heart to listen! Try it!

26 AUGUST (FRI) LUKE 11:1-4

THE LORD'S PRAYER!

Did you know? The Lord's Prayer is also written in Matthew 6:9-13. You may read that passage too!

Discuss:

Can you spot the verses where Jesus praised God, asked God for what we need and repented (asked God for forgiveness)? (Verses 2, 3 and 4)

Jesus showed us that when we pray, we also praise God, tell God what we need and ask God for forgiveness.



Apply and Pray:

Pray the Lord's Prayer together as you end the session. (A nice paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer written by Sally-Lloyd Jones can be found here: <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLoWBKEQLf4</u>, you may pray along to this too!)

Explain some terms:

"Hallowed" means holy is God's name. Here Jesus is praising our Father God, and giving Him the glory and honour He deserves.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CALLING GOD 'FATHER'

Jesus began His prayer by calling God our Father. He also tells His disciples to pray to God their Father. When we call God "Father", we remember our important relationship with God! <u>We are</u> <u>His children and that is why we talk to God</u>, why we pray. We continue to pray because we know who we are praying to: we are praying to our Father <u>who loves us</u>! Do you love talking to your daddy? Do you ever stop talking to your daddy just because he made you upset? In the same way, even when we don't feel like it, even when praying can sometimes be hard, we still pray and talk to God because He is our loving Father in heaven!

WHY CAN'T I FIND THE LAST LINE OF THE LORD'S PRAYER (FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, THE POWER AND THE GLORY FOREVER AND EVER) IN THE BIBLE?

This last line was added as part of a response by the early Christians in their worship. In the early church, when the elder led the Lord's Prayer, the people would respond with this last line. It is also a doxology or an ending praise giving God all the glory. So the Lord's prayer that we pray today dates all the way back to as early as the second century (200 AD), to the early practices of worship by the first Christians! Even though it is not recorded in the bible, this last line is a

<u>celebration of God's kingly rule over all</u>! When we pray this, we also say that the kingdom, power and glory belongs to God

forever and ever!

Challenge: Memorise the Lord's Prayer if you can! This is a good way to keep God's Word in us.



THE LORD IS MY ROCK!

Discuss:

Circle out the words that the psalmist used to describe God. (Strength, rock, fortress, deliver, rock, shield, horn of salvation, stronghold)

Engage:

Find out how a "fortress" and a "stronghold" looked like and what it was used for in the past. Explore and find out together! Knowing this will help us better understand and appreciate the psalm.

Apply:

The psalm praised God for who He is! — our strength, our firm foundation, a safe place where we can run to. Was there a time when God saved me from trouble? Or when God became my help? (Parents, take this time to also share with your children about how God had been your strength and rock. Your stories can bring God's Word to life!)

Pray:

Use the words from this psalm as part of your prayer! You may add in your own words too! Take time to thank God for being our rock and our strength.

28 AUGUST (SUN)

REST & REVIEW!

Discuss:

How has it been reading God's Word and praying together? What have you learnt in the past week?

You are doing a great job so far! 5 more weeks to go :)

29 AUGUST (MON) 1 JOHN 4:7-12

L-0-V-E!

Discuss:

- 1. How many times did the word love appear in this passage? Count and underline them.
- 2.What does this passage tell us about love? (Love comes from God, God showed us His love by sending Jesus, God loves us very much, and so we should love one another)
- 3.What happens when we love one another? (God lives in us, and His love is made complete in us)

Apply:

Have I been loving those around me? What can I do to love one another more?

Pray:

Give thanks to God for His love! Commit what you have shared on loving others more. May God empower us to act in love!

30 AUGUST (TUES) ISAIAH 44:6-11

NO OTHER ROCK!

This passage can be split into 2 sections: verses 6-8 and verses 9-11. In verses 6-8, God speaks and puts up a challenge to find a god that is greater, He then concludes saying "no there is no other Rock; I know not one." Verses 9-11 talks about idols and the people who made them. What happens to those who cast idols?

Discuss:

- 1.What does God say He is in verse 6? (King, Redeemer, the Lord Almighty, the first and the last, apart from Him there is no God)
- 2. What does verse 9 say about idols and those who made them? (Nothing, worthless, blind, ignorant, to their own shame) Compared these answers to those in Q1.

Apply:

- (For younger children) Parents, you may share with your children about some idols of today, things that we tend to put too much focus and trust on. (Eg., money, school and achievements)
- (For older children) Shape the above into a question: What are some things that distract me from trusting only in God?

Pray:

Dear God, our Lord Almighty, You are our King and Redeemer! Apart from you there is no God. Give us strength to cast aside anything that seeks to take Your place in our hearts. Help us to trust in You alone! In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

31 AUGUST (WED) MATTHEW 26:36-46

WATCH AND PRAY!

Engage:

For this passage on Jesus praying in Gethsemane, consider role playing to make the reading experience fun. Assign one to be Jesus, one to be the narrator, and others to be the disciples who keep on falling asleep. You can dramatise it too or use little figurines to represent the different characters.

Discuss:

- 1. Why were the disciples falling asleep when Jesus told them to keep watch and pray? (Their bodies were weak, their eyes were heavy)
- 2.Why do you think Jesus brought the disciples with him to the garden? (Hint: read verse 38, Jesus was overwhelmed with sorrow and he wanted the disciples to keep watch with Him, to offer him support when he needed it)

Apply:

Have I ever fallen asleep while praying too? Share difficulties and challenges when it comes to praying.

Pray:

Tell God with all honesty about your difficulties with praying. Ask God for strength to continue praying even when it is hard.

1 SEPTEMBER (THURS) PSALM 139:1-16

EVER-PRESENT GOD!

Note: A simpler children's version of Psalm 139 is available as a book, "Near" by Sally Lloyd-Jones. This youtube video shows the book's pages that you may read along to: <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUW-0jJFtzs</u>

Discuss:

(These verses may be tough for our younger children to understand, so parents can guide them slowly to answer the following questions) 1.Look at verses 2 to 5, how much does God know about us?









2.What does verses 7 to 12 tell us about God's presence? (God is everywhere! And He will be with us always no matter where we are!)

These verses tell us that God knows us completely and He is also always with us. Verses 13-16 tells us that God already sees us and formed us when we were so tiny in our mother's womb! How wonderful is that! Praise God!

Pray:

Pick some verses from this psalm and turn it into a prayer to God.

2 SEPTEMBER (FRI) MARK 9:2-9

THE GLORY OF JESUS!

Note: This passage allows for some role play and dramatic reading. Read the passage with appropriate actions and voices to engage our children with the Word.

Discuss:

Imagine that you are one of the disciples and you see Jesus in His glorified form. How would you feel and react? Would you be like Peter, not knowing what to say?

Apply:

Take a walk in a beautiful park, or wait to see a sunrise or a sunset. Experience and see God's glory in what He has made in the world around us! We can also see God's glory in other people too, in how we love and care for one another.

Pray:

Dear God, teach us to behold Your glory each and everyday! Give us eyes to see Your glory in the things and people You have made. Guide our mouths and hands, that all we say and do may bring glory to Your name! In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.



Here is a video link to the story: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KfT5mInsr9A

3 SEPTEMBER (SAT) MATTHEW 11:25-30

COME TO ME!

In this passage, Jesus was speaking to a crowd. As he spoke, he said a prayer to God (verses 25-26), shared about his special relationship with the Father (verses 27) and invites people to come and find rest in him (verse 28-30).

Discuss:

Do you find it difficult to live as a Christian? What are some challenges you face? (Maybe it is about praying and reading the bible every day. Maybe it is about doing everything in God's way. Parents, you can share your experience too!)

Jesus invites us to commit these difficulties to Him!

Apply and Pray:

Tell Jesus that you want to find rest in Him and commit what you have shared to Him. You can also tell God what is making you tired and ask for God to give you strength!

WHAT DO 'THESE THINGS' MEAN? AND WHY IS IT REVEALED TO LITTLE CHILDREN?

The "things" that Jesus is talking about are the Godly truths taught by Jesus and the truth about who He is. Jesus said that the wise and learned will not receive it because they would not be open to it, thinking that they know better and relying on their human cleverness. In contrast, "little children" refer to those who are <u>humble and open</u> to receive God's truth, those who see their need and <u>dependence</u> on God. Those who are like children will receive Godly truths.

UNDERSTANDING JESUS' YOKE

The "yoke" that Jesus is talking about is something that people use to make the

carrying of heavy things easier. Imagine the people then carrying a heavy stone. This stone represents all the laws the people needed to follow to lead righteous lives. Now Jesus comes along and offers to take this heavy stone from them, and ask the people to follow Him. Jesus tells the people that they no longer need to stress over fulfilling the laws through their own efforts, instead they can lead righteous lives by <u>following Jesus' ways and</u> <u>building a relationship with God</u>. This way of following Jesus will give them rest as they no longer need to carry the heavy stone!

4 SEPTEMBER (SUN)

REST & REVIEW!

Discuss:

How has it been reading God's Word and praying together? What have you learnt in the past week? You are doing a great job so far! 4 more weeks to go :)

PRAYERS OF PETITION & INTERCESSION

ASK AND IT WILL BE GIVEN!

Discuss:

- 1. Have you ever wanted something so badly that you kept on asking for it, and in the end it was given to you? (Share positive experiences where the thing asked for is good, and the manner in asking was good too).
- 2. What is Jesus telling us about God our Father in this passage? (that He gives good gifts to us, His children. Even better than what our parents can give us)
- 3.What is God our Father giving us? (Look at verse 13. The Holy Spirit who will be with us always!)

Apply and Pray:

What are some things you would like God to give you? Let God know your requests in prayer.

DOES THIS MEAN THAT I CAN ASK GOD FOR ANYTHING, AND IT WILL BE GIVEN TO ME?

God is our heavenly Father who loves us and wants the best for us. Now would your father give you something if he knows it is bad for you? For example, I do not think God will grant you your wish if you ask for harm on another person? Or if you ask to successfully cheat in an exam? This means that God will not give us ANYTHING, but <u>will answer</u> <u>us according to His best plans for us</u>. When Jesus says these words in Luke, he also wishes that we follow him in saying, "yet not as I will, but as You will."

Explain some terms:

"Shameless audacity" means boldness and being persistent. For this passage it means asking boldly and asking over and over again, and not being afraid of one's reputation.

6 SEPTEMBER (TUES) ROMANS 8:31-37

WINNERS IN GOD!

15

This passage tells us that God is the one who graciously gives us all things. We see this because He gave us His only Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus who is alive today is also interceding for us! This means that Jesus is also speaking to God for us. Through Jesus we are made right with God! With our Mighty God on our side, the last verse then

PRAYERS OF PETITION & INTERCESSION

says, that we are more than conquerors! That means not only can we overcome hard things through God, we also celebrate and share in God's victory!



Discuss:

What do you think can separate us from Christ's love? (Nothing!) **Apply:**

Do you see God providing you with many things in your daily life? Do you believe that you are made right with God when you believe in Jesus? (Parents, take this time to affirm your child's faith. Let them know that they are saved through Jesus, and nothing can separate them from God's love.)

Prav:

Dear God, thank you for graciously giving us Your Son, Jesus Christ! We believe that Jesus died for us, and is alive today. We thank you for Your love. Help us to be strong in You as we celebrate and share in Your victory. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Challenge:

Memorise verse 37. This is a good way to keep God's Word in us.



THE GARDENER, THE VINE, THE BRANCH

The "I" in this passage is Jesus! Jesus is talking to His friends, telling them to always stay connected to Him!

Engage:

Head outside and take a look at a tree or a plant. See how the branches are connected to the main tree stem and how the branches hold leaves, flowers and fruits. This passage tells us that Jesus is just like this big stem! (in the verse Jesus calls himself the "vine" which is just like the stem for plants that crawl) We are the branches, and God is the gardener who makes sure that we are all healthy and growing.

Discuss:

What will happen to the branch if it is cut off from the stem? (It will stop growing) What does this say about us when we are cut off from Jesus?



Apply:

How can we stay connected to Jesus?



Pray:

Tell God that you want to stay connected to Jesus and to keep on growing in Him.

Listen to these songs in English <u>(Grow, grow, grow</u>) and Mandarin <u>(天父的花园)</u>!

18

8 SEPTEMBER (THURS) MATTHEW 6:25-34

DO NOT WORRY!



Engage:

Look out of your windows and see if there are any birds outside. Where do you think the birds get their food from? Today's passage tells us that God is the one who feeds these birds! God also makes the flowers grow and rain to fall on the trees and grass. As we see how God takes care of the world around us, do you think God takes good care of you too?

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Apply:

Does God take care of me and give me what I need?

• (For older children) How can I seek God's kingdom and righteousness in my life?

Pray:

The passage tells us to not worry because we have a God who loves us and takes care of us. If there is anything you are worried about now, tell them to God. (For younger children who may not understand what "worrying" is, we can ask them if there is anything that makes them sad or afraid. Give some examples too)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO SEEK FIRST HIS KINGDOM AND RIGHTEOUSNESS?

It means to <u>put God first in all we do</u>. Seeking His kingdom is wanting what God wants for our world (for example, for the poor and hungry to be fed, that justice protects the innocent). To seek God's righteousness is wanting to do what is good and pleasing to God in our lives. This can mean showing God's love to our friends and family, reading His Word, talking to Him through prayer. The verse tells us that as we follow after God's heart and put Him first, He will provide for all our needs!

9 SEPTEMBER (FRI) COLOSSIANS 1:9-14

PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER!

This passage was written by Paul and his team to the Christians at the church in Colossae. The "we" stands for Paul, while the "you" are the Christians.

Discuss:

What did Paul pray for the Christians? (Hint: find out from "we continually ask God...", spot the actions words! "Fill you", "you may live", "bearing", "growing"...)

Apply:

Have you prayed for other people before? Who do you pray for and why do you pray for them?



Pray:

Think of 1 or 2 persons you want to pray for! God has given us the great chance to pray for others, let's do it now! You can use today's passage to pray too! Start from "We continually ask God (v9)..." to "thanks to the Father. (v12)"

10 SEPTEMBER (SAT) EPHESIANS 6:13-20

STAND FIRM IN PRAYER!

Engage:

Paul talks about the full armour of God from verses 13-17. Read the passage slowly and pick out the armour pieces! Can you spot the belt, the breastplate, the shoes, the shield, the helmet and the sword? Can you imagine what this armour looks like? Use the words in the passage and draw out your armour of God! Discuss:

How does Paul tell us to pray? (Hint: see verses 18) Notice that Paul also told the Christians to pray for him! (v19)

Pray:

Verse 18 tells us to 'keep on praying for all of God's people.' Continue to think of 1 or 2 names to pray for and pray for them!

PRAYING AS WE ARE

11 SEPTEMBER (SUN)

REST & REVIEW!

Discuss:

How has it been reading God's Word and praying together? What have you learnt in the past week? You are doing a great job so far! 3 more weeks to go :)

12 SEPTEMBER (MON) ISAIAH 55:1-9

SEEK THE LORD!

Today's passage is a long one! Have you been invited to a birthday party before? Will the card tell you that there will be lots of food, games and fun? Yes! Well, this passage is also like an invitation card! And who is the one inviting us? It is God! God invites us to come to Him, and he will give us what we need. We will focus on verses 6 to 7.

YOU AKE INVITED

Discuss:

- Look at verse 7, who is God calling to come to Him? (the wicked and the unrighteous)
- 2. What would God do for them if they choose to leave their evil ways? (Have mercy on them, and freely pardon them. That means God will forgive them)

Apply:

(For older children) Have you ever called on God and you felt like He wasn't there? Share your experience. (Parents, be open to listen to what your child has to say, listen to their struggles, acknowledge and pray for them)

Pray:

This passage tells us to seek God and to call on Him. We will try something now! Tell God, "Dear Lord, I come before you today. Speak to me, for I am listening." Spend the next 5 minutes listening to God, closing your eyes. Do you hear any words popping in your head? Or any picture in your mind? Spend some time in His loving presence.

13 SEPTEMBER (TUES) ROMANS 1:16-20

THE GOSPEL AND GOD'S POWER

This passage is written by Paul to the Christians in Rome. He talks about the Gospel and those who have received it — some have received it by faith, while some have rejected it.

Discuss:

Who does Paul say salvation is for? Salvation is for _____

(everyone who believes. Note that "believing" is important! The Gospel can be shared with us, but it will only take root when we believe in Jesus Christ!)

Apply:

Step outside of your house and breathe in some fresh air! Look around you at the trees and at nature. Verse 20 tells us that we can see God through the things He has made. Can you see God in the world around us?

Pray:

Open up your palm and pray to God. Ask Him to continue showing Himself to be true in your life. Pray also for your friends and family who have not believed in Jesus yet. Pray that Jesus will show Himself to them too!

14 SEPTEMBER (WED) ROMANS 12:3-12

BEING PART OF GOD'S FAMILY

Have you seen a picture of how your body looks on the inside? Our body is made up of bones, muscles, and many different organs like our lungs, heart, eyes, ears, and so on. Do you think they all do the same thing for your body? No, they all do different things for us! So Paul uses this picture of the body to tell Christians that they are also a small part of God's big body! We all do different things and contribute differently.

Discuss:

Paul says that we each have our unique "gifts" according to the grace given to each of us! Think of it like your superpower given by God, used to love and serve others! What are some gifts mentioned by Paul in verses 6 to 8?

Apply:

- 1. What do you think are your gifts? (Think about what you are good at, or what you love doing!)
- 2.Paul tells Christians about some things they can do from verses 9 to 12. Pick one of them to practise and do this week!

Pray:

Give thanks to God for your gifts and pray for what you plan to do this week. Ask God to give you strength to continue doing what is good.

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15 SEPTEMBER (THURS) JOHN 17:20-26

JESUS' PRAYER!

In this passage, Jesus prays for all believers of God just before He went to the garden of Gethsemane and was arrested to be crucified.

Discuss:

What did Jesus pray for the believers? (Hint: verses 21 and 26) (that they may be one, and that God's love may be in them)

• For older children: Do you think Christians are united as one in our world today? What makes you think so, or not think so?



Apply and Pray:

Pray for Christians all around the world! You can pray the same prayer as Jesus: for all Christians to be one in God, and for God's love to be in each and everyone of them, and anything else that God puts in your heart!

16 SEPTEMBER (FRI) 2 CORINTHIANS 3:12-18

FREEDOM IN JESUS CHRIST!

To better understand what Paul is talking about, read Exodus 34:29-35 about Moses and the veil. This passage is a little hard to understand, but to put it simply, Paul talked about the Israelites whose minds were dull and hearts were veiled because they did not trust in God and His plans. But when anyone believes in Jesus, this veil is taken away, and we can have freedom in Jesus! As God's people, we can then be transformed to be more and more like Jesus and also share in His glory as what is said in Romans 8:17.

Discuss:

How will the veil be taken away? (When someone turns to the Lord, that means, when someone believes in Jesus)

Apply:

How can you grow to be more and more like Jesus?

Pray:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe in You! I thank You because in You there is freedom! I pray to grow and be more and more like You. Guide me to do what is good, that I may bring glory to You in what I do. I also pray for my friend/family member who has not believed in you:

___(name)____. I pray that one day, he/she will come to believe in you too. In Jesus' name, Amen.

PRAYING AS WE ARE

WHAT IS THIS "VEIL" THAT PAUL IS TALKING ABOUT?

If you read Exodus 34:29-35 you will read about Moses going to speak with God in the mountain. When he came down his face shone from God's glory and the people were afraid to go near him. So Moses put a veil or a cloth over his face every time he came down from speaking with God. Paul talked about this event because back then, God's people were hard-hearted. Even after all the mighty things God has done, the people still had <u>stubborn hearts</u> and did not trust God. So Paul used this example to say that those with a veil covering their hearts are those who <u>still refuse to believe in Jesus and put their trust in Jesus</u>. Their hearts remain hard and stubborn. This veil also represents the laws and the old covenant that is fulfilled in Jesus! That is why, only <u>when someone</u> <u>believes in Jesus will this veil be taken away</u>!



PRAY CONTINUALLY!



This is the final part of Paul's letter to the Thessalonians. What can see from Paul's final encouragement to them?

Discuss:

- 1. Can you see how each verse contains one encouragement from Paul? Slowly list out what Paul is encouraging the Christians to do.
- 2.From this list, what are the things Paul told believers to do? What are they NOT to do?



Apply:

From this list, pick out 1 thing you would like to do more of. **Pray:**

Pray and ask God to help you with that 1 thing you decided to work on! You can also use verses 16 to 18 as part of your prayer.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO PRAY CONTINUALLY?

Does this mean that I need to put my hands together, close our eyes and pray the whole day? Not really! But what it means is that <u>we can always</u> <u>talk to God, at any time of the day</u>! When you wake up, you can say "good morning God!" When you go to school, you can say "Give me a good day of learning, God!" God is with us all the time and that is why we can talk to Him any time, any part of the day! Imagine that God is a good friend who is always next to You! When we talk to God all day and everyday, we are praying continually.

PRAYING WITH THE PSALMS

18 SEPTEMBER (SUN)

REST & REVIEW!

Discuss:

How has it been reading God's Word and praying together? What have you learnt in the past week? You are doing a great job so far! 2 more weeks to go :)

GETTING TO KNOW THE PSALMS!

For the next two weeks, we will be seeing how the book of Psalm teaches us about prayer. The book of Psalms is also known as the "Prayer Book of the Bible"! Because it contains many prayers of God's people to God! Some of these prayers were written like a song or a poem, while some were written for Israel's worship to God. We can use these verses in our prayers too! (Note: Parents, as some of the psalms are quite long, it will be good if you can focus on 1-2 verses, to make the reflections more targeted)

19 SEPTEMBER (MON) PSALM 1:1-6

THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED!

Psalm 1 describes two types of people, the righteous who ponder on God's law day and night and choose to obey God, and the wicked who choose to disobey God and do what is evil in His sight. Now which side would you want to be on?

Discuss:

- 1.Look at verse 3, how is the righteous described to be like? (like a tree...)
- 2.On the flipside, look at verse 4, how is the wicked described to be like? (like chaff...)
- 3. How does verse 6 tell us about the different ways of the righteous and the wicked? (The Lord watches over the way of the righteous, and the way of the wicked leads to destruction)

Apply:

Which side would you want to be on? The righteous or the wicked? Do you think it is tough to obey God all the time? And to ponder on His words day and night?



Pray:

Dear God, give me strength to delight in You and to have You on my mind and heart day and night. I pray to continue learning from Your Word. In Jesus' name, Amen.



To learn more about Psalm 1, watch this little <u>video lesson</u>!



Explain some terms:

"Chaff" is the dry, hard casing of grains and wheat that is thrown away as waste material and ploughed into the soil. The wicked are described as chaff who will be thrown off and forgotten in the end. Verses 5 and 6 also say that the wicked will not stand before God in judgement and their ways will lead to destruction in the end.

20 SEPTEMBER (TUES) PSALM 120:1-7

I CALL ON THE LORD!

The psalmist in Psalm 120 is in a foreign place and found surrounded by lying lips and deceitful tongues, and so the psalmist calls to God for help.

Apply:

- For younger children: Was there a time when a friend was not nice to you? What do you do?
- For older children: Have you met with friends/classmates who were untrue and dishonest? What do you do?

This psalm tells us that we can ask God for help in difficult times like that.

Pray:

Just like the psalmist, we can ask for God's help when we face difficult situations. We can also ask God to save us from difficult people. Take time to pray to God now. (If you are not in a difficult time, give thanks to God!)

WHERE IS MESHEK AND KEDAR?

Meshek is to the far north of Israel, while Kedar is the Arab neighbours of Israel to the south-east. In the psalm, Meshech and Kedar represent the nations outside of Israel who do not know God and where God's people are dispersed to.

WITH YOU THERE IS FORGIVENESS!

In today's psalm, the psalmist is crying to God for help again. Is he asking for God's help against enemies? Or can it be about something else? Read on and find out!

Discuss:

- 1.Some of the psalms in the bible have "turning points" where it goes from feeling hopeless to finding confidence in God. Can you find the turning point in Psalm 130? (Hint: A "turning point" can be found with the word "But")
- 2. Why do you think the psalmist is crying to God? Look at verse 3 to 4 for clues. (The psalmist may have sinned against God, and is asking for God's forgiveness)

Apply:

Is there anything that you would like to ask for God's forgiveness? We do not need to hide or fear! We can pray and tell God we are sorry.



Pray:

Take time to tell God if there is anything you are sorry about. Pray this prayer below:

Dear God, with You there is forgiveness. In You I put my hope, With you there is unfailing love! Thank You God for never giving up on us. In Jesus' name, Amen!

WHAT IS THE PSALMIST WAITING FOR? (VERSE 5-6)

Even though we can infer that the psalmist has sinned and spoke of God's forgiveness. He is not waiting for forgiveness because he already trusts that God will forgive when he confesses his sins to God. Rather, the psalmist is **waiting for God Himself.** The verses say "I wait for the Lord." Because of his sins, the psalmist's relationship with God is now broken and so he is waiting

for that relationship with God to be restored. Again, he is sure that it will be restored because he described the waiting as how the watchman waits for the morning. Yes, there is waiting, but the morning will surely and eventually come after the night is over. The hope in God is one that will not fail! Yes the night may be long but the morning will come and it is certain! The same goes for us too! Sometimes when we have done wrong, God does seem far away. But if we confess our sins, God will forgive and we can draw near to Him again — that we can be certain about!



22 SEPTEMBER (THURS) PSALM 116:1-7

GOOD AND GRACIOUS GOD!

Again! Today's psalm is about crying out to God. Something different is that this psalm is hopeful from the beginning! Do you think there are more reasons for the psalmist to cry to God? Read, discuss and find out!

Discuss:

Why do you think the psalmist is crying to God? Read verse 3-4 and guess why. (The psalmist was likely very sick and that is why he talked about being tangled by "death" and overcomed by thoughts of the "grave". In his sickness he cried out to God to save him)



Apply:

Have you been very sick before or know of someone who was very sick before? In sickness, have you called to God for help, and experienced His grace and love upon you? (Parents, you may also share your own experience to the children)



. Pray:

You may give thanks to God for His love and grace, for healing you and for listening to you! You may also pray for someone you know who is sick, or who is still recovering. You may use verses from the psalm as part of your prayer!

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23 SEPTEMBER (FRI) PSALM 8:1-9

CROWNED WITH GLORY!

Psalm 8 is a praise psalm! The psalm praises God for His name and all God has done in all the earth! The psalm also tells us about a special place God has given to man.

PRAYING WITH THE PSALMS

Discuss:

What does this psalm tell us about how God made us to be? Look at verses 5 to 8. (God made us a little lower than angels, God crowned us with glory and honour. God made us rulers over His creation)

Apply:

How would you want to live as a glorified child of God? (You can think of how you want to show others God's love!) How would you want to take care of God's creation?

Engage and Pray:

If you can, take a step outside to look at God's creation, or look out your window. Take time to understand why the psalmist praised God like this. Now it's your turn! Praise God for who He is, and ask God to give us strength to do what He called us to do.

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PRAYING WITH THE PSALMS

DEFENDER OF THE WEAK!

Discuss:

- 1.Can you spot a "turning point" in this psalm? Look out for the key word! (Verse 14, the psalm tells us that while there are those who reject God, God's focus is actually turned to another group of people: those who need him, and who call out to Him)
- 2. What does this psalm tell us about God and what God can do?

Apply:

Can you think of any group of people who needs God's help? It does not have to be people whom you know! You can think of those who do not have parents, those who are bullied by others, those who are poor.

Pray:

2

Pray for the group of people you thought of. You may use verses 14, 16, 17, 18 as your prayer!

IS IT OKAY TO TELL GOD TO 'BREAK THE ARM OF THE WICKED MAN'?

Part of Psalm 10 calls God to break the wicked's arm and to call them to account. Does that sound too angry for Christians to do that? The bible does tell us to love our enemies, but we also note that there are psalms in the bible that call on God to judge and punish the wicked and the enemies. These psalms are called "<u>imprecatory psalms</u>." The presence of these psalms in the Bible shows us that it is okay to be angry against evil things that we see! Because God also will not tolerate evil and unrighteousness. Think of a time when you see something terrible! Maybe a friend getting bullied, or a war that is killing innocent people. God does not call us to suppress our emotions. Instead, <u>He calls us to talk to Him when we get</u> <u>angry, like what the psalmists do</u>. We can pray these psalms when we see evil and unrighteousness happening around us! Yet one thing to note: <u>we leave the action and judgement to God</u>.

25 SEPTEMBER (SUN)

REST & REVIEW!

Discuss:

How has it been reading the psalms and praying together? What have I learnt in the past week? You are doing a great job so far! 1 more week to go :) Press on!



26 SEPTEMBER (MON) PSALM 22:1-11

YOU MADE ME TRUST IN YOU!

Psalm 22 is also known as the "Psalm of the Cross", the best description in all the bible of Jesus Christ's crucifixion! We see this psalm as a foretelling of the suffering of Jesus on the cross.

Discuss:

There are a few turning points in this psalm where the psalmist goes from crying and complaining to God to finding trust in God. Can you spot these points? (Hint: Look for "Yet" and "But")

Apply:

Do you think the psalmist was very honest with God about how he is feeling? Do you think we can also let God know how we are feeling in our prayers?

Pray:

With honesty, tell God how you are feeling. If you had a bad day, then tell Him how bad it was! If you had a good day, then tell Him how good it was! End the prayer giving thanks for the day that has passed no matter how good or bad, and continue to put your trust in God, like the psalmist.

27 SEPTEMBER (TUES) PSALM 46:1-11

OUR GREAT AND MIGHTY GOD!

Understand more about Psalm 46 by watching this video lesson!

Engage:

Do you know what a "fortress" looks like? Do an image search to understand why the psalmist used this term. What image comes to your mind when you think about protection and safety? Think of an example unique to you! (Eq., God is my bomb shelter, God is my excavator.)

Apply:

Verse 1 tells us that "God is our refuge and strength." Have you felt God's protection over you?

• For older children: Verse 10 says "Be still and know that I am God." - Is it difficult to see God strong and mighty in our everyday lives? Can we be still before God?

Pray:

You may use verses 1-3 and 7 to praise our mighty God!

Did you know? "The Lord Almighty" is also translated as "The Lord of hosts" or "The Lord of angel armies"! That means that God is like the commander of armies of angels! Our God is mighty and powerful! We can trust God to be our protector!

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28 SEPTEMBER (WED) PSALM 23:1-6

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD!

Understand more about Psalm 23 by watching this <mark>video lesson</mark>!

Discuss:

- 1.What does the psalm tell us about God our Shepherd and what He does for us? (Hint: Find the verse that starts with "He" and "You", these verses tell us about God)
- 2. What does the psalmist say he will do? (Hint: Find the verses that start with "I")



Apply:

Have you experienced God as Your Shepherd? Think of a time when God gave you what you needed, or when God protected you against harm, or when God guided you to do the right thing.



Pray:

Read out this whole psalm as part of your prayer!

Challenge:

Try to memorise this entire psalm! It is good to store God's Word in our hearts.

29 SEPTEMBER (THURS) PSALM 121:1-8

THE LORD WATCHES OVER!

Discuss:

 How many times did the psalmist say that God "watches over"? Have a count! (5 times! When a phrase or word is repeated, an emphasis is made by the psalmist! This one tells us that God is the one who will watch over us, no matter where we are)
Slowly read the psalm to see how God is watching over all of us.



Apply:

Do you sense that God is also watching over you wherever you go? **Pray:**

Pray this psalm before you go to bed tonight! Or before you go to school tomorrow. We know that God will watch over us now and forevermore! You may also pray the words of this psalm for a friend or a loved one!



Listen to this mandarin song that uses words from this psalm: <u>保护我的是耶和华</u>

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30 SEPTEMBER (FRI) PSALM 150:1-6

PRAISE THE LORD!

This psalm is full of praise to God! Count how many times the word "praise" appears in this psalm!

Discuss and Engage:

What does the psalm tell us about where we can praise God (v1)? About why we praise God? (v2) About how we can praise God? (v3-5) and about who can praise God? (v6) You can use actions to describe each point! Or draw this beautiful praise out!

S)

Apply:

What other things can I praise God for? How can I praise God today? (Note: We can praise God with every part of our being! And with all that we do! For example, I can praise God by singing songs, by praying, by obeying my parents, by being diligent in my school work)



Pray:

You can write out your own praise psalm and tell God why you want to praise Him and how you want to praise Him. (I praise

you God for_____! I praise You with ___

Use this as your prayer to God.

You may also read this psalm as a prayer.

1 OCTOBER (SAT)

HOORAY!!!

We have reached pass the 40th day! Well done everyone! We have completed Rhema 2022!

Discuss:

- 1. How do you feel about reading God's Word everyday? What was something good about it? How was it difficult and challenging?
- 2.Work out a routine to read God's Word regularly so that we can continue to grow in God!

Dear parents, Thank you for using the guide! What a wonderful accomplishment! We rejoice with you as you continue to build these wonderful habits with your family! As you continue to nurture your child in God and in His Word, we ask for the Father's heart and strength to be with you!



SOME REFERENCES:

(As the daily passages came from many different bible passages, it is hard to track down all the references. Just some of them are included here)

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