

HEAVEN & EARTH

WEEK ONE LEADER GUIDE

"HEAVENS" IS THE SKY

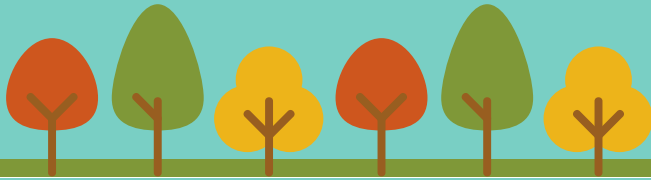
- IN GENESIS WHEN GOD MAKES THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, IT'S REFERRING TO THE SKY
 - GOD IS CREATOR, HE IS NOT BOUND TO ONLY EXIST IN WHAT HE HAS CREATED FOR HIS PEOPLE TO KNOW AND EXPLORE
- EVEN THOUGH WE THINK ABOUT THE SKY OR SPACE BEING WHERE GOD IS, THAT IS NOT WHAT HEAVEN REALLY IS.
- WE THINK ABOUT IT THIS WAY AND SO DID THE ISRAELITES BECAUSE THE SKY CAN SEEM SO BIG AND FAR AWAY. BUT IT'S STILL IN THE PHYSICAL REALM.
 - GOD EXISTS OUTSIDE OF ALL OF HIS CREATION, THE SKY OR "HEAVENS" IS IN HIS CREATION.
- THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE SKIES ARE NOT USED AS A METAPHOR FOR WHERE GOD IS
 - THE PSALMS USE THE BIG SKY THEY CAN'T SEE BEYOND AS A METAPHOR FOR WHERE GOD MAY BE.

WHAT'S THE POINT?

**GOD EXISTS OUTSIDE OF
CREATION**

READ:

**GEN. 1:1-10;
PSALM 14:2; 102:19; 103:19**



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WEEK TWO LEADER GUIDE

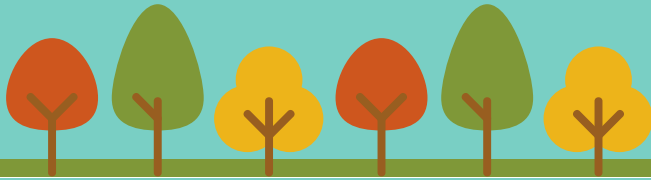
SO WHERE IS GOD?

- IN GENESIS WHEN GOD MAKES THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, "THE HEAVENS" IS REFERRING TO THE SKY
 - HUMANS SINNED WHICH IS WHAT SEPARATED US FROM PHYSICALLY DWELLING WITH GOD
- LATER IN THE BIBLE, GOD DWELLS WITH HIS PEOPLE THROUGH TEMPLES, WHICH WERE LITTLE POCKETS WHERE GOD ALLOWED HIS PEOPLE TO EXPERIENCE HIS PRESENCE.
- THE GARDEN WAS GOD'S ULTIMATE GOAL.
 - IN THAT TIME GOD DWELLED WITH HIS IMAGE BEARERS AND GAVE THEM CONTROL OVER EARTH, LIVING WITH THEM.
 - GOD'S DOMAIN AND THE HUMAN'S DOMAIN WAS THE SAME.
- SIN REMOVED US FROM GETTING TO BE IN THE DWELLING PLACE OF GOD

WHAT'S THE POINT?

GOD'S ULTIMATE PLAN IS TO
DWELL WITH US

READ:
GEN. 2



HEAVEN & EARTH

WEEK THREE LEADER GUIDE

REMOVED FROM HIS PRESENCE

- WE ARE NO LONGER IN THE GARDEN WITH GOD BECAUSE OF OUR SIN. WE ARE TOO IMPURE TO BE IN THE PRESENCE OF THE HOLY ONE.
 - SEPARATION COMES FROM THE DESIRE TO BE AUTONOMOUS AND CHOOSE GOOD AND EVIL FOR OURSELVES.
- GENESIS 3 SHOWS THE BEGINNING OF THE STORY OF GOD DRAWING US BACK TO HIM
 - THE REST OF THE BIBLE, AND ULTIMATELY JESUS, ARE THE CONTINUATION OF GOD'S DESIRE TO DRAW US BACK TO HIS PRESENCE.
- THEIR SIN SHOWS THE DISTRUST THAT ADAM AND EVE HAD THAT GOD'S PLAN WAS THE BEST PLAN FOR THEM.
- EVEN NOW WE HAVE THE DESIRE TO DECIDE GOOD AND EVIL FOR OURSELVES
 - WE DON'T TRUST THAT THE GOD OF THE UNIVERSE KNOWS BETTER THAN US

WHAT'S THE POINT?

SIN HAS SEPARATED US FROM GOD.

READ:

**GEN. 3:1-3
DEUT. 30:11-20**



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WEEK FOUR

GOD'S RESCUE MISSION

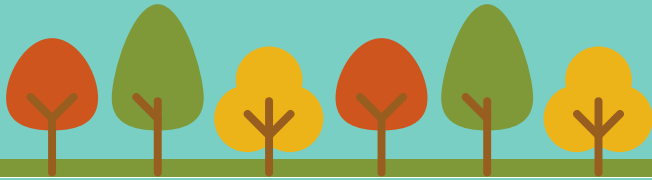
- THE TOWER OF BABEL WAS TRYING TO REACH THE REALM OF THE DIVINE, TO ATTAIN DIVINITY, POWER, AND HONOR ABOVE FROM GOD
- IN THEIR PRIDE AND IN TURNING THEIR BACKS ON GOD, HE CONFUSED AND SCATTERED THEM
- GOD USED THE PUNISHMENT OF THE PRIDE OF BABEL TO PLANT THE SEEDS OF HIS REDEPTIVE PLAN: ABRAHAM (GENEALOGY IN GEN. 11)
- GOD PROMISED THAT THE BLESSING AND ABUNDANCE GIVEN TO ABRAHAM'S FAMILY WOULD OVERFLOW TO ALL THE OTHER FAMILIES OF THE EARTH- HIS KINGDOM ON EARTH
- WHILE MAN TRIED TO ELEVATE THEMSELVES TO GOD USING THE BLESSINGS HE GAVE THEM, GOD'S PLAN WAS TO USE MAN TO BLESS AND BRING HIS KINGDOM TO EARTH (MICAH 4:1-2)
- WHILE WE WAIT FOR GOD'S ETERNAL KINGDOM TO COME ON EARTH, WE HAVE TO CONTINUE TO FOLLOW HIS WAY AND NOT OUR OWN, FOLLOWING HIM AS GOD AND NOT OURSELVES

WHAT'S THE POINT?

GOD'S PLAN FOR HIS KINGDOM IS BETTER THAN WHAT WE TRY ALONE

READ:

**GEN. 11:1-9; 12:1-3
MICAH 4:1-2**



HEAVEN & EARTH

WEEK FIVE

JACOB'S STAIRCASE

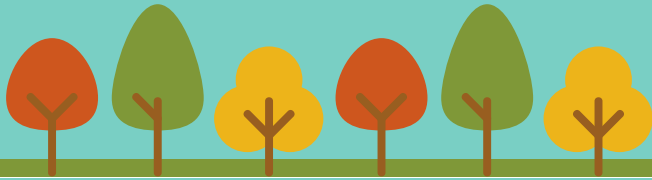
- JACOB'S DREAM WAS GOD SHOWING HIM THAT HE WAS CREATING A BRIDGE OR A PATH TO SPEAK TO HIS CREATION.
 - SIMILAR STONE STAIRCASES WERE COMMON LEADING UP TO TEMPLE, STAIRCASES PEOPLE WALKED UP TO SPEAK WITH THEIR GODS
- JACOB KNEW THIS WAS GOD CREATING A BRIDGE OF COMMUNICATION, THE MESSENGERS OF GOD (ANGELS) PASSED UP AND DOWN THE STAIRS
- THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF GOD IN PURSUIT OF HIS CHILDREN, USING INSUFFICIENT PEOPLE TO DO GREAT WORK
 - WE ENTER THE STORY TO AN ENCOUNTER BETWEEN GOD AND JACOB, WHO WAS A LIAR AND A DECEIVER UP UNTIL THIS POINT
- GOD SHOWS UP IN UNLIKELY SITUATIONS, AT UNLIKELY TIMES, TO UNLIKELY PEOPLE
 - JACOB WAS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE WILDERNESS, GOD SHOWED UP SOMEWHERE WE WOULD NEVER EXPECT
 - GOD HAS BEEN AND IS STILL AT WORK TO REACH HIS PEOPLE

WHAT'S THE POINT?

GOD IS AT WORK AND SHOWS UP

READ:

GEN. 28:10-22



HEAVEN & EARTH

WEEK SIX

GOD MAKES A HOME

- GOD'S PURSUIT OF HIS PEOPLE DIDN'T STOP AT REVELATIONS LIKE THE ONE JACOB RECEIVED
 - GOD'S DESIRE TO BRING HIS PEOPLE INTO HIS PRESENCE WAS UNRELENTING AND RESULTED IN A MORE PERMANENT SOLUTION.
- THE ISRAELITES, DESCENDANTS OF ABRAHAM AND JACOB WERE GIVEN SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS TO BUILD A HOME FOR GOD
 - THIS PLACE WAS A TABERNACLE, A PLACE WHERE GOD COULD DWELL AMONG HIS PEOPLE, AND HIS PEOPLE COULD BE NEAR HIM OFTEN
- THE TABERNACLE WASN'T A PERMANENT FIX TO THE PROBLEM
 - TO ENTER THE PRESENCE OF GOD THE ISRAELITES HAD TO SACRIFICE, AND THIS WAS ONLY TO GET TO THE VERY EDGE OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD
 - PRIESTS ACTED AS THE ADVOCATES FOR ALL OF ISRAELITES WHEN CLEANSING AND ENTERING THE HOLY OF HOLIES
- ALTHOUGH THIS WAS A WAY FOR GOD'S PEOPLE TO GET TO BE WITH HIM, THIS WASN'T THE BEST SOLUTION.

WHAT'S THE POINT?

GOD HAS CALLED HIS PEOPLE INTO RELATIONSHIP

READ:

EXODUS 29:42-46



HEAVEN & EARTH

WEEK SEVEN

GOD'S CONFUSING PRESENCE

- WHAT WE KNOW FOR SURE IS THAT THE BIBLICAL AUTHORS DIDN'T THINK GOD DWELLED ONLY IN THE SKY. AS WE ESTABLISHED IN THE PREVIOUS SESSION, THEY ALSO BELIEVED GOD DWELLED IN THE TABERNACLE. ISRAELITES ALSO KNEW GOD COULD APPEAR ON EARTH OUTSIDE THE TABERNACLE IN SURPRISING MOMENTS, SUCH AS WHEN HE SPOKE TO MOSES THROUGH A BURNING BUSH OR VISITED JACOB IN A DREAM.
- TEMPLE WAS A SYMBOL OF GOD'S DESIRE FOR HEAVEN AND EARTH TO BE REUNITED
- THOUGH GOD WAS ALREADY EVERYWHERE, THE ISRAELITES SENSED THAT HIS PRESENCE IN CREATION WASN'T WHAT IT WAS MEANT TO BE.
- THEY KNEW GOD'S PRESENCE WAS MORE THAN WHAT FILLED THE TEMPLE (1 KINGS 8:27; PSALM 139), BUT THEY DIDN'T HAVE ACCESS TO HIM OUTSIDE OF THE TEMPLE
- GOD'S SPECIAL PRESENCE IN THE TEMPLE WAS A SYMBOL OF FUTURE HOPE—A PROMISE THAT, ONE DAY, GOD'S FULL AND UNLIMITED PRESENCE WOULD FILL ALL OF CREATION.

WHAT'S THE POINT?

**GOD IS EVERYWHERE AND
CHOOSES TO BE NEAR TO US**

READ:

**1 KINGS 8:10-11; 27
PSALM 139:1-16**



HEAVEN & EARTH

WEEK EIGHT

LOOKING TO THE PROPHETS

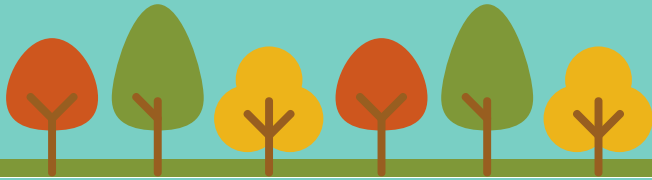
- THE PROPHETS CONNECTED TO GOD IN A WAY DIFFERENT FROM THE PRIESTS
 - GOD SPOKE TO INDIVIDUAL PEOPLE THROUGH DREAMS, REVELATIONS, OR JUST APPEARING
- WE LOOK AT THE PROPHETS AND SEE THE HOPE THAT THEY HAD FOR A FUTURE WHERE HEAVEN AND EARTH WERE REUNITED
 - THEY SAW THE PAST OF ISRAEL AND THE FUTURE BLESSINGS THAT GOD HAD IN STORE FOR THEM IN A WAY MOST OF ISRAEL DID NOT
- WE LOOK BACK AT THE PROPHETS TO SEE THE FULFILLMENT THAT GOD BROUGHT, THAT THEY DID NOT SEE
 - THEY HAD HOPE FOR THE FUTURE OF ISRAEL, THEY KNEW THAT GOD HAD A PLAN AND A PURPOSE FOR THEIR PEOPLE
 - WE NOW KNOW THAT THIS GREATER PLAN WAS REDEMPTION THROUGH JESUS
- THE HOPE THAT THE PROPHETS WERE SEEKING WAS JESUS
 - THEY HAD A HOPE TO REUNITE HEAVEN AND EARTH, WE SEE GOD'S PLAN TO REUNITE SPOKEN THROUGH THEM AND FULFILLED IN JESUS

WHAT'S THE POINT?

WE LOOK BACK TO THE HOPE
THE PROPHETS HAD

READ:

IS. 65:17-25



HEAVEN & EARTH

WEEK NINE

THE KINGDOM COME

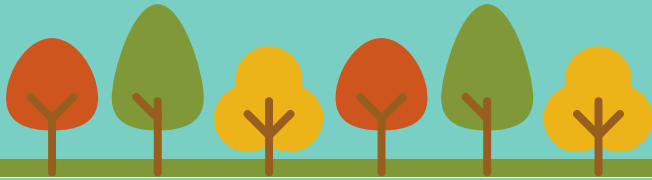
- THE HOPE OF REUNITING WITH GOD IS FULFILLED THROUGH JESUS
 - HE WAS THE ANSWER TO PROMISES LONG-AWAITED AND HE WAS CALLING THE PEOPLE INTO SOMETHING NEW
- JESUS' MESSAGE WAS THAT THE KINGDOM OF GOD WAS HERE
 - GOD'S PROMISE AND DESIRE TO BRING HIS PEOPLE BACK TO HIM WAS BEING FULFILLED
 - IT WASN'T JUST THROUGH THE TEMPLE OR PROPHETS, BUT THROUGH GOD HIMSELF
- JESUS' MESSAGE WAS RADICAL, HE WAS HERE TO BRING HEAVEN TO EARTH, IN A BIG WAY
 - HE WAS CALLING PEOPLE INTO DEPENDANCE ON GOD, INTO A KINGDOM SO DIFFERENT THAN ANYTHING ELSE
- THIS WASN'T JUST A MESSAGE FOR THE FUTURE, THE KINGDOM IS HERE NOW
 - THROUGH JESUS, GOD'S DOMAIN IS INVADING EARTH IN A BIG WAY, NOT JUST IN SMALL POCKETS OF HIS PRESENCE

WHAT'S THE POINT?

**JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO
GOD'S PROMISE**

READ:

MATT. 6:9-13



HEAVEN & EARTH

WEEK TEN

JESUS CAME AND DWELLED

- THE STORY OF JESUS RIDDING THE TEMPLE OF THE MONEY CHANGERS WAS ABOUT MORE THAN JUST HIM BEING ANGRY AT A MISUSE OF THE TEMPLE
 - JESUS' ANGER CAME FOR A PASSION FOR THE ISRAELITES TO REALIZE THAT THE TEMPLE WAS GOD WITH THEM
 - THE PEOPLE HAD BECOME NUMB TO THE FACT THAT THE TEMPLE WAS SPECIAL AND IMPORTANT
- JESUS WAS ALSO REVEALING A NEW ASPECT OF GOD'S REDEMPTION PROCESS
 - JESUS DECLARED THAT HE HIMSELF WAS THE TEMPLE, SAYING THAT GOD WAS WITHIN HIM
 - TO THE ISRAELITES THIS WAS A BIG STATEMENT, GOD DWELLED IN THE TEMPLE NOT IN PEOPLE
- JESUS WAS ON THE MOVE, HE BROUGHT GOD'S SPACE TO MORE THAN JUST CERTAIN PEOPLE OR CERTAIN SPOTS
 - JESUS IS GOD, HE WAS BRINGING HEAVEN TO EARTH WHEREVER HE WENT
 - HE WAS BRINGING THE KINGDOM OF GOD, DRAWING PEOPLE IN, HE IS GOD DWELLING AMONG HIS PEOPLE

WHAT'S THE POINT?

**JESUS IS GOD AND HE SAT,
SPOKE AND LIVED WITH HIS
PEOPLE**

READ:

JN. 2:13-22



HEAVEN & EARTH

WEEK ELEVEN

HUMANS AS GOD'S TEMPLE

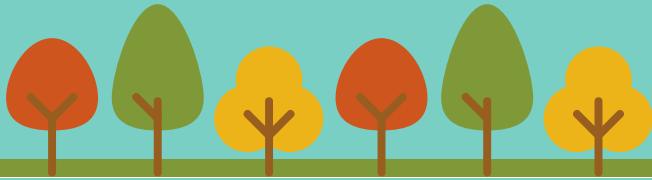
- WHEN JESUS DIED, HE PROMISED TO SEND THE HOLY SPIRIT AS A GUIDE TO CONTINUE HIS KINGDOM MISSION.
- WHEN THE FIRST BELIEVERS WERE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT, THEY BECAME MINI-TEMPLES IN WHICH GOD'S HOLY PRESENCE DWELLED.
- AS THE NEW TEMPLE, THE EARLY CHRISTIANS SAW THEMSELVES AS THE PLACE WHERE HEAVEN AND EARTH OVERLAPPED.
- NOW THAT THEY WERE WHERE GOD DWELLED, EARLY CHRISTIANS KNEW THAT THEY ALSO FULFILLED SOME OF THE ROLES OF THE FIRST TEMPLE (WORSHIP, PURITY, PRAYER, ECT.)
- THE DIVINE PRESENCE OF JESUS IS WITH HIS PEOPLE THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT, AND THIS REALITY SHOULD RESHAPE EVERY ASPECT OF OUR LIVES AND OUR BEHAVIOR.
- THE NEW TEMPLE IS SET APART FOR HUMANS TO REDISCOVER THEIR TRUE IDENTITY IN THE IMAGE OF GOD
- AS MINI-TEMPLES, FURTHERING THE KINGDOM BECAME TOP PRIORITY FOR CHRISTIANS. THEY WERE TOLD TO GO OUT TO ALL THE NATIONS TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS

WHAT'S THE POINT?

**WE ARE WHERE GOD DWELLS,
WHERE HEAVEN AND EARTH
MEET.**

READ:

**EPH. 2:19-22
1 COR. 3:16-17**



HEAVEN & EARTH

WEEK TWELVE

GOD'S DOMAIN AND OURS

- REVELATION GIVES US A PICTURE OF GOD'S PLAN FULFILLED, HIS REDEMPTION STORY COMPLETE- HEAVEN MEETING EARTH FULLY
- THIS IS A GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE OF GOD'S PEOPLE, WHERE THERE WILL BE MORE THAN JUST POCKETS OF GOD'S DOMAIN IN OURS
- THERE WILL BE A DAY WHEN WE WILL BE FULLY REUNITED WITH GOD
- AS CHRISTIANS, WE HAVE HOPE FOR THIS FUTURE WITH GOD
 - A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH MEANS RESTORATION, IT MEANS LIFE WITH GOD
- THE STORY OF THE BIBLE IS A RESTORATION STORY, IT IS THE PROCESS OF GOD CALLING HIS PEOPLE BACK TO HIM
 - WE HOPE FOR HEAVEN BECAUSE THIS WAS THE PICTURE THAT GOD INTENDED
- WE DON'T NEED TO KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT HEAVEN
 - THE POINT OF REVELATION IS NOT THAT WE COMPLETELY KNOW EVERYTHING, BUT THAT WE HAVE HOPE FOR THE FUTURE WE HAVE WITH GOD

WHAT'S THE POINT?

WE HOPE FOR THE WORLD
GOD INTENDED

READ:

MATT. 19:28-30
REV. 21:1-5