

COVENANT PROMISES



FOR COVENANT KIDS

Discovering Jesus in Exodus



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Discovering Jesus in Exodus
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Dear Parents:

This series is our effort to put the concepts from *Heirs of the Covenant* and *Your Home—A Place of Grace* into stories for families. We want children to have the glorious experience of discovering Jesus on every page of Scripture. We want them to see what the disciples saw:

That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus. . . . While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, “What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?” And they stood still, looking sad. . . .

And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?”

And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. . . . And their eyes were opened and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight.

They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?”

And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, “The Lord has risen indeed. . . .”
(Luke 24:13ff.)

When our children see Jesus in all of Scripture, they will begin to see the covenantal framework of Scripture and of life. A covenant is a binding agreement. God bound Himself to His people in a covenant of grace. His relationship with His people is to be mirrored in their relationships with one another. The covenant is a way of life that flows out of a promise of life. A covenantal perspective will give our children the foundation for a robust faith and life. This comprehensive worldview will give them a passion to find others and proclaim, “The Lord has risen indeed!”

OUR PRAYER FOR THIS BOOK

Exodus confronts us with an emerging picture of the church. Adoption is a dominant theme. At Sinai God adopted Israel as His people. The church is the spiritual Israel.

Our prayer is that a biblical understanding of adoption will help shape our children's perspective of their identity in Christ. Whether your children are biological or adopted, our passion is for them to know that when God adopts us, we belong to Him and to one another.

Exodus challenges us to assume our privileges and responsibilities as a part of God's covenant family. The concept of covenant life is diminished in a culture of individualism where mutual good is sacrificed for personal pleasure.

Our prayer is that this book will awaken in children a transcendent wonder of the privilege of being a part of the church of the living God, an awareness of the responsibility of this privilege, and a deep and abiding love for God's church. We pray that families will learn how to live in covenant with God and with one another.



HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

We use these stories with children ages four to twelve. As younger children hear the stories, they begin to learn the language and ways of covenant life. Older children begin to comprehend a covenantal perspective of faith and life and to see how God's truth is integrated into all of life. The following questions guide us as we write, and we hope they will help you and your children think biblically and live covenantally. We pray that they will help you to discover Jesus in all of Scripture:

- What covenant promise do we see in this story?
- What do we learn about Jesus?
- What is our privilege and responsibility because of God's promise and His character?

Involve your children in the story. Let them answer questions and read the Bible verses.

Use the questions at the end of each story, but also engage your child in additional conversations to make application to his or her life.

We encourage you to memorize the Scripture verses with your children. If your children are younger, you may want to select one or two verses to memorize. Scripture memorization plants God's Word in their minds, and we can trust the Holy Spirit to use that Word to teach, convict, and convince them all through life.

*“For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed,
but my steadfast love shall not depart from you,
and my covenant of peace shall not be removed,”
says the LORD, who has compassion on you. . . .
“All your children shall be taught by the LORD,
And great shall be the peace of your children.”*

ISAIAH 54:10, 13

CHARACTERS

(These characters were introduced in *Big Truths for Little Kids* and *Discovering Jesus in Genesis*.)

Cassie and Caleb: This brother and sister are the primary characters in *Big Truths for Little Kids* and *Discovering Jesus in Genesis*.

Pop and Mimi: Cassie and Caleb's grandparents.

Sir John: An elderly gentleman who moved from Scotland to live with his daughter.

Miss Jenny: Sir John's daughter. She lives on the same street with Cassie and Caleb.

Granny Grace: This widow lives across the street from Cassie and Caleb.

Mary and Mac: Granny Grace's grandchildren. They came with their mom to live with Granny Grace when their dad left the family.

Daniel: He lives next door to Cassie and Caleb.

Hunter: The youth pastor at the church.

Pastor Scotty: The pastor of the church.

Angus and Susie: Pastor Scotty's children.

NEW CHARACTERS IN THIS BOOK

Heather: Pastor Scotty's wife.

Papa Sam and Mama Maggie: Pastor Scotty's parents.

Grace and Joy: Twins adopted by Pastor Scotty's family.

Shannon: Cassie and Caleb's older cousin.

James, Jason, Kellie, and Laurin: Cassie and Caleb's cousins.

Uncle Dean and Aunt Kathryn: Cassie and Caleb's uncle and aunt.

PART 1

THE COVENANT PROMISE

Part 1 forms the foundation for the rest of the book. In this section the children are introduced to Ephesians 1:3-7. This passage provides a schematic to understand all of Scripture. The concepts that are introduced in Part 1 are expanded throughout the book.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood. . . . (Ephesians 1:3-7 NIV)

Chosen

For he chose us in him before the creation of the world. . . . (Ephesians 1:4 niv)

Pastor Scotty sat at his desk reading his Bible. “I sure get excited about teaching God’s Word to our covenant children,” he said out loud. Then he laughed at himself for talking out loud when no one was there. He prayed, “Father, thank You for allowing me to teach Your children about Your grace. Please give the kids hearts to know You and to love You. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

He jumped up, grabbed his whistle, and bolted out the door. “Time to go!” he shouted as he hurried down the hall.

Pastor Scotty had been a football player in college. He was a pretty tough guy, but he had a big, tender heart that almost exploded with love for the kids in his church. One of his favorite things was playing with and teaching the children at Covenant Kids Club.

The kids were already gathering on the playground. “What’re we going to play?” they called as Pastor Scotty approached them.

“I’ve got a great game,” he answered, “but I need to choose a team. I choose Cassie, Caleb, Daniel, Mary, Mac . . .” On and on he went until he had chosen every child except Angus and Susie.

“Well, now I have my team,” he announced.

Angus and Susie knew that he was teasing them. Pastor Scotty looked at them and asked, “Who are you? Have I seen you before?” All the kids laughed.

“Dad, you’re so funny,” grinned Susie.

Angus just shook his head. “Well, he tries to be funny.”

“Come on. I guess I’ll choose you.” Pastor Scotty chuckled.

Susie and Angus thought it was cool being the preacher’s kids, and they loved the way their dad teased them.

“Well, now that that’s settled. What’re we going to play?” asked Caleb.

“Play? Oh, I hadn’t thought about a game. I just wanted to choose all of you because I love you so much,” joked Pastor Scotty. Then he divided them into two teams for a game of kick-ball.

When the game was over, everyone went inside for refreshments. “Hi, Miss Heather,” the kids called as Pastor Scotty’s wife greeted them.

“Give me a hug, and I’ll give you some cookies,” she said. The kids loved Miss Heather. She was as short as Pastor Scotty was tall.

When the children finished eating, they settled down for the lesson.

Pastor Scotty blew his whistle and said, “Let’s play football. It’s you against me! I’m big and you’re little, but if you think hard, you can beat me. The ball is on the twenty-yard line. Each time you answer a question correctly, you move your ball five yards. First question: If you are going to tell a story, where should you begin?”

“At the beginning,” the children responded.

“Nope!” said Pastor Scotty triumphantly. “Not this time. We’re going to start *before* the beginning. Turn to Ephesians 1:3-7.”

Pages turned and Pastor Scotty read:

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood. . . .” (NIV)



“Pastor Scotty,” exclaimed Mary, “that reminds me of what you did! You chose all of us to be on your team.”

Pastor Scotty’s whole face lit up in a grin as he shouted, “Go, Mary! You just moved the ball five yards. Now you’re on the fifteen-yard line. Let’s keep this drive going. *When did God choose us?*”

Everyone read the passage to find the answer. Daniel found it first and called, “Before the creation of the world.”

“See—I told you we were going to start before the beginning. Now we’re on the ten-yard line,” roared Pastor Scotty. “*Why did God choose us to belong to Him? Is it because we are so smart or good or cute? You’ll find the answer in Deuteronomy 7:6-8.*”

Pages turned as the kids tried to find the answer. Mac stood up. “I’ve got it. It’s because He loves us.”

Everyone clapped and yelled, “Five-yard line!”

“You’re almost ready to score, but let’s take a time-out. Mac, read the verses for us.”

Mac read:

“For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you . . . but it is because the LORD loves you. . . .”
(Deuteronomy 7:6-8)

“Pastor Scotty,” said Mary, “that reminds me of you too. You chose all of us to be on your team because you love us so much.”

Pastor Scotty threw his hands up in the air and shouted, “Touchdown!” so loudly the kids almost jumped out of their seats. Then he started doing his silly victory dance while the kids chanted, “Go, Pastor Scotty. Go, Pastor Scotty.”

Finally everyone calmed down. Pastor Scotty got a serious look on his face, and the kids knew that he was going to tell them something very important. They listened carefully. “I do love you, kids, but my love does not compare to God’s love for us. Before the world was cre-

ated, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit made a covenant, or an agreement, to redeem the people He chose in Christ to be His own. The glorious Creator God chose us in Christ, and He bound Himself to us in covenant love. Now that's big.”



LET'S TALK

Who are Pastor Scotty's children?

What is Pastor Scotty's wife's name?

What did God do before He created the world?

Why did God choose us?

Holy and Blameless

For he chose us . . . to be holy and blameless in his sight. (Ephesians 1:4)

“I wonder what Pastor Scotty has planned,” mused Caleb as they drove to the church for Covenant Kids Club.

“And why does he want our dads to come?” asked Cassie.

“Maybe you’re all in trouble, and he wants to tell your dads how bad you’ve been,” teased their dad as he parked the car.

“I don’t think so,” laughed Caleb. “I’m sure that whatever he has planned is wild and crazy.”

“What makes you think that?” quizzed his dad.

“Well, those towels you brought are a pretty good clue,” Caleb replied.

They climbed out of the car and ran to join the others who had gathered around Pastor

Scotty and Hunter, the youth pastor. Pastor Scotty

blew his whistle, and everyone got quiet. “We’ve got

a great game,” he announced. “Kids, you’re going

inside with Hunter, and your dads are going to

hide. Then you have to find an adult and tag

him. Let’s go!”

The kids followed Hunter. After a few

minutes he brought them back outside,

counted to three, and they were off. “This

is easy,” Mac shouted. “They’re all lined up

over there behind those bushes. Come

on—let’s go tag them.”



Pastor Scotty whispered to the dads, “Stay down, men. Don’t shoot until I tell you. We’ll wait until we see the whites of their eyes!”

The kids were running and yelling, “We see you! You can’t hide from us!”

The men stayed perfectly still until Pastor Scotty shouted, “Fire!”

Suddenly they stood up and blasted the kids with super-soaker water guns. The kids were so startled they didn’t move for several seconds. By this time they were drenched. Then the kids remembered their weapons. Hunter had given each of them a can of shaving cream. Now the dripping-wet kids charged the dads and covered them with foamy white stuff!

Pastor Scotty and Hunter were laughing so hard they almost lost their breath. Finally Pastor Scotty blew his whistle and shouted, “Truce!”

Dads and kids were a soggy mess. They wrapped up in towels, and everyone sat on the ground for the lesson.

“Let’s say the memory verses we’re learning,” began Pastor Scotty. The kids recited:

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood. . . .” (Ephesians 1:3-7 NIV)

“When did God choose us?” asked Pastor Scotty.

“Before the creation of the world,” answered the kids.

“What did God choose us to be?” asked Pastor Scotty.

They all said the verses over in their minds to find the answer. Angus called out, “Holy and blameless in His sight.”

“Touchdown!” yelled Pastor Scotty. He opened his Bible and read, “Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy . . . and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless” (Ephesians 5:25-27 NIV).

He closed his Bible and asked, “Does this mean that Jesus loves this church building and wants the building to be holy and blameless?”

“I don’t think so,” answered Daniel. “We learned in Sunday school that the church is God’s people.”

“Touchdown!” yelled Pastor Scotty. Then he grinned. “Well, does this mean that God does not want us to have stains or wrinkles? You kids look pretty wet and wrinkled to me.”

“And our dads are stained with shaving cream,” added Caleb.

“I think it means that He wants us to be cleansed from sin,” said Mary.

Pastor Scotty didn’t yell “touchdown” this time. He had the serious look on his face. The kids listened carefully. “You’re exactly right, Mary,” he said tenderly. “God is holy, and so there can be no sin in His presence. Jesus lived a holy and blameless life. He never sinned. Then He died in our place, and God put our sin on Him. When we trust Him for forgiveness, God declares that we are holy and blameless in His sight because of what Jesus did for us. Now that’s big!”

LET’S TALK

When did God choose us in Christ to belong to Him?

Why did God choose us to belong to Him?

What did He choose us to be?