

# *Family Worship*

*David's Census & Suffering*

*4.7.2021*

# *Opening Prayer*

Our Heavenly Father, thank you for our family.

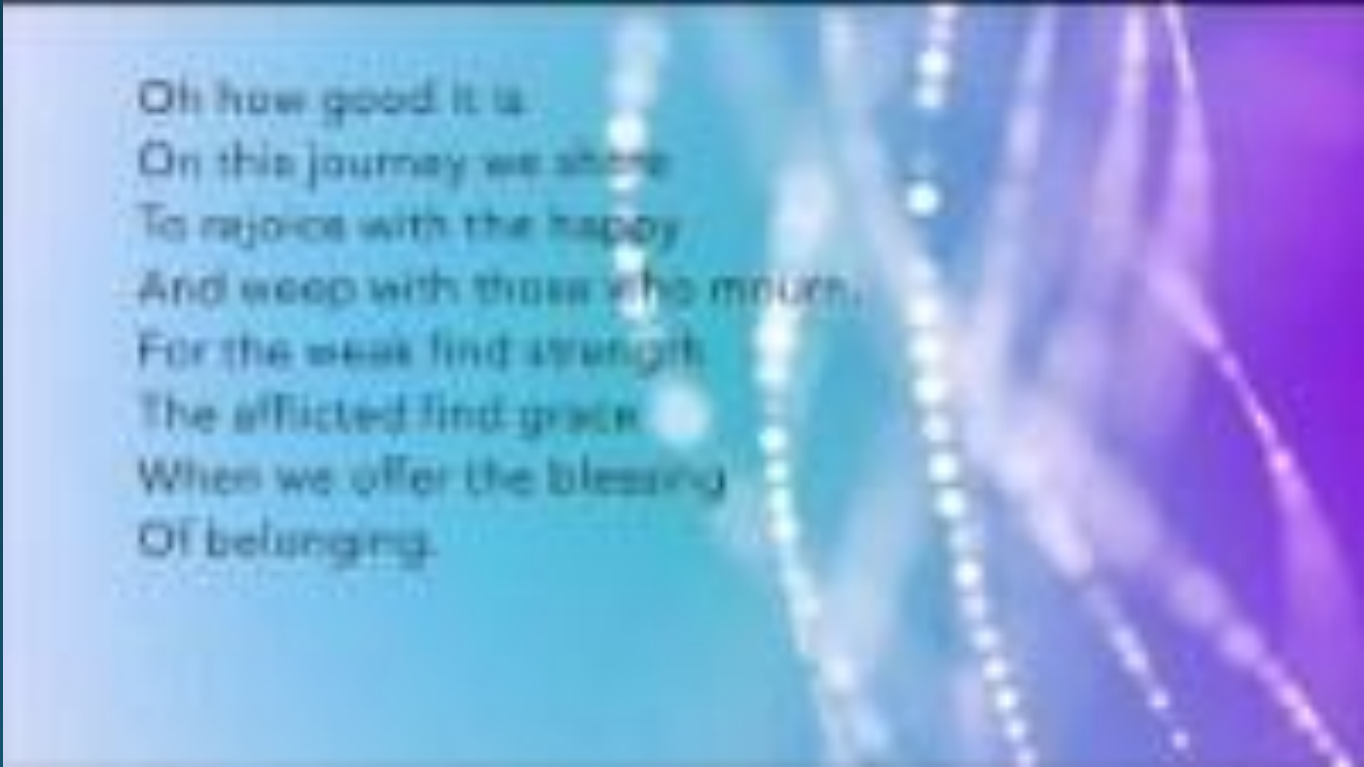
And thank you for the privilege of coming together for worship.

Help us to understand Your Word and obey it with a joyful heart.

In Jesus name, we pray. Amen.

# Oh How Good It Is

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7i3rNM6kgYo>



Oh how good it is  
On this journey we share  
To rejoice with the happy  
And weep with those who mourn,  
For the weak find strength  
The afflicted find grace  
When we offer the blessing  
Of belonging.

# *Catechism Time!*

Bible truths for teaching children

# Question 49

**Q:** Where is Christ now?

**A:** Christ rose bodily from the grave on the third day after his death and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**What does sitting a person at the right hand mean?**

It means giving the person the highest honour, power and authority.

**Bible verse (Ephesians 1:20,21)**

He raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

# Background

We have come to our last study of 1 and 2 Samuel. We started with Samuel anointing Saul as Israel's first king. Saul disobeyed God, and God appointed David to succeed Saul. David was a man after God's own heart - he was brave and trusted God to deliver him from all his enemies. But he also committed grave sins - he murdered his loyal soldier Uriah and married Uriah's wife. He repented and wrote Psalm 51 (read it if you can). He was not too good a father, and did not discipline his children. So his son Absalom revolted against him.

Now David is old and he is about to do something stupid (again)!

Let's Open Up the Bible

2 Samuel 24:1-4, 8-15

24 The Lord was angry with Israel again. He caused David to turn against the Israelites. David said, "Go, count the people of Israel and Judah."

<sup>2</sup> King David spoke to Joab, the commander of the army. David said, "Go through all the tribes of Israel. Go from Dan to Beersheba and count the people. Then I will know how many there are."

<sup>3</sup> But Joab said to the king, "May the Lord your God give you 100 times more people. And may you live to see this happen. But why do you want to do this?"

<sup>4</sup> But the king very strongly commanded Joab and the commanders of the army. So they left the king to count the people of Israel.



From Dan to Beersheba means the whole country, top to bottom



<sup>8b</sup> After 9 months and 20 days, they had gone through all the land. Then they came back to Jerusalem.

<sup>9</sup> Joab gave the list of the people to the king. There were 800,000 men in Israel who could use the sword. And there were 500,000 men in Judah.

<sup>10</sup> David felt ashamed after he had counted the people. He said to the Lord, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done! Lord, I beg you, forgive my sin! I have been very foolish."

<sup>11</sup> Before David got up in the morning, the Lord spoke his word to Gad. He was a prophet and David's seer. <sup>12</sup> The Lord told Gad, "Go and tell David, 'This is what the Lord says: I offer you three choices. Choose one for me to do to you.'"



<sup>13</sup> Gad went to David and told him. Gad said, "Choose one of these three things. Should three years of hunger come to you and your land? Or should your enemies chase you for three months? Or should there be three days of disease in your country? Think about it. Then decide which of these things I should tell the Lord who sent me."

3 Years of Hunger

<sup>14</sup> David said to Gad, "I am really in trouble. But the Lord is very merciful. So let the Lord punish us. Don't let my punishment come from people!"

3 Months of Defeat

<sup>15</sup> So the Lord sent disease on Israel. It began in the morning. And it continued until the chosen time to stop. From Dan to Beersheba 70,000 people died.

3 Days of Pandemic

<sup>16</sup> The angel raised his arm toward Jerusalem to destroy it also. But the Lord felt very sorry about the terrible things that had happened. He said to the angel who was destroying the people, "That's enough! Put down your arm!"

# Family Discussion

1. David wanted to count the number of people in the whole country. Is there anything wrong with counting people? What was motivating David to count his people? (Answer True or False)
  - He wanted to know if there were enough women to marry the men.
  - He wanted to show off his military strength.
  - He did not trust in God's power but relied on his military strength.
2. Was God pleased with what David did?

# Family Discussion

1. The opening of the passage sounds puzzling.

*"The Lord was angry with Israel again. He caused David to turn against the Israelites. David said, 'Go, count the people of Israel and Judah.'"*

2. This story was recorded in another book in the Bible. (1 Chronicles 21:1)

*"Satan was against Israel. He encouraged David to count the people of Israel."*

3. So was it Satan or God who caused David to count the people of Israel and therefore sin against God?

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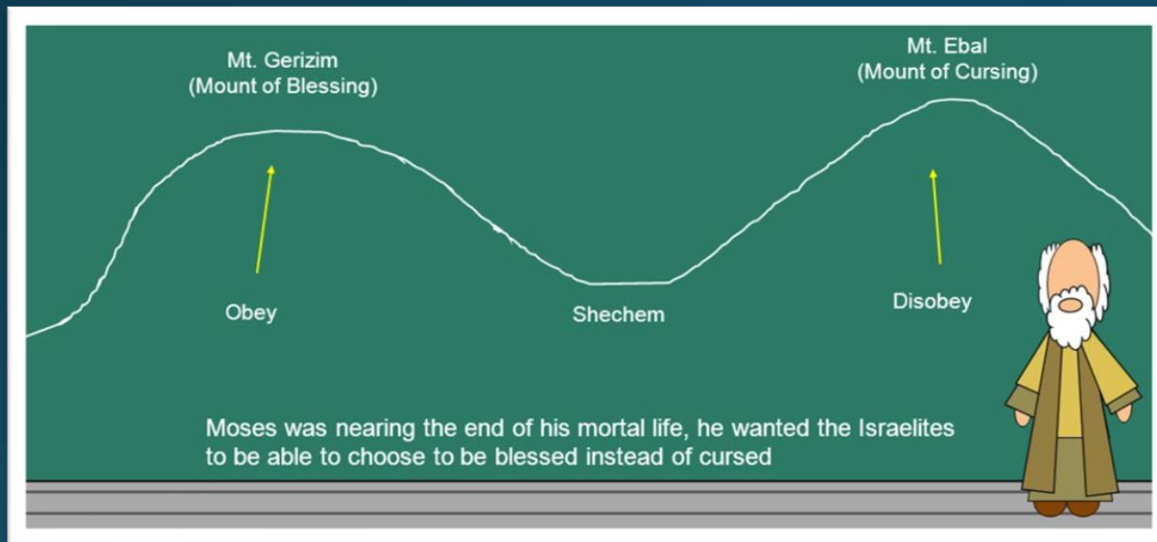


- "The Lord was angry with Israel again". This tells us that Israel had sinned against God though we are not told what Israel had done.
- God also allowed Satan to tempt David and cause him to sin.

- Now let's remember something important. God once made a covenant (agreement) with Israel through Moses. (Deuteronomy 28)

*You must completely obey the Lord your God. And you must carefully follow all his commands I am giving you today. Then the Lord your God will make you greater than any other nation on earth. Obey the Lord your God. **Then all these blessings will come and stay with you...***

*But you might not obey the Lord your God. You might not carefully follow all his commands and laws I am giving you today. **Then all these curses will come upon you and stay...***



Israel had 12 tribes. 6 tribes stood on Mount Gerizim to bless the people if they obeyed the Lord. 6 other tribes stood on Mount Ebal to announce the curses if people disobeyed the Lord.

Let's connect what we have learnt so far...

- ❑ The Lord was angry with Israel again because Israel had sinned.
- ❑ God allowed Satan to tempt David and cause him to also sin.

- ❑ The Israelites **suffered** because of their sins (including David's).
- ❑ Their **suffering** was the result of curses in the covenant.
- ❑ On the positive side, God used **suffering** to teach His people obedience.

Next we will learn about  
a man whose name is Job



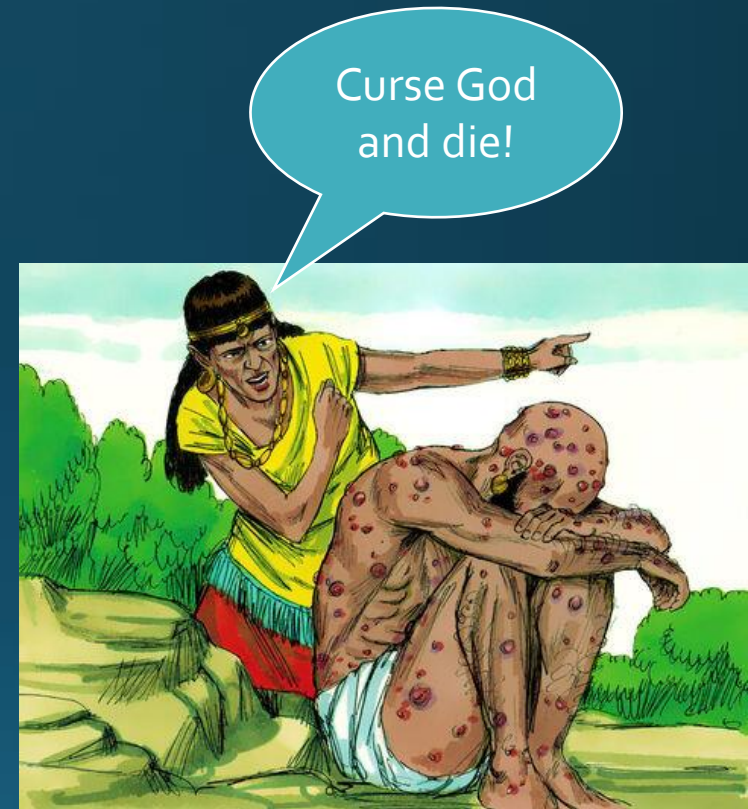


The Bible tells the story of a man called Job who is described as a good man who loves God. Satan challenges God, saying that Job is only good because he has a happy life. **God allows Satan to put Job's faith to the test by causing him to suffer.**

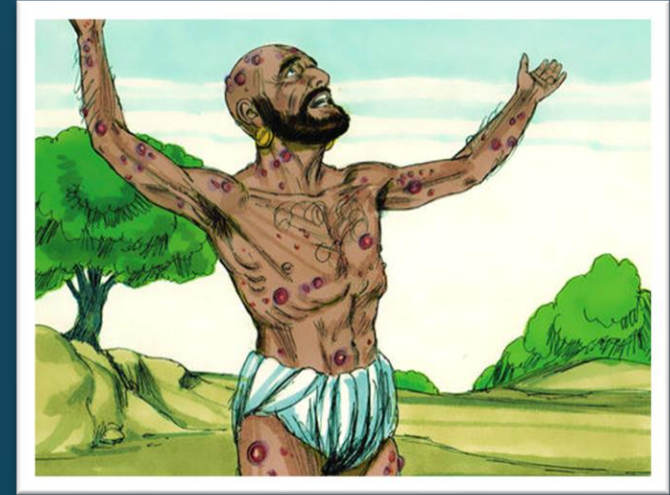
First, Job loses his livestock, his servants and all his children. He is devastated, but he remains faithful and praises God. Then he suffers horrible weeping sores all over his body. Job's wife tells him to reject God and to accept that he is dying, but Job refuses.

Eventually, God appears to Job. He asks impossible questions that show Job how little he can understand about God's ultimate plan. Job is humbled by this encounter, and at last appreciates that God's unlimited power cannot be fully understood by human beings.

Job never learns why he suffered, but God restores his health and gives him twice as much property as before, more children and a very long and prosperous life.



- ❑ In Job's most painful moments, he said, "I know that my Redeemer (Saviour) lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth."
- ❑ Job never learnt why he suffered. But when God showed him how little he knew about God's power and His ways, Job said, "My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you."



We can learn 2 things from Job:

1. Even though he could not make sense of his suffering, he had hope in God. "I know my Redeemer lives!"
2. Job was humbled when God finally appeared and showed him His infinite wisdom. Job had no further need for God to explain his suffering.



# Why do people suffer?

1. In the Old Testament, God made a covenant with the Israelites. Because they broke their promises by disobeying God, they suffered from the covenant "curses".
2. At times, suffering is the natural consequence of wrongful actions. For example, a man who takes drugs suffers brain damage.
3. At times, like Job, we don't know the reason of our sufferings.
4. At times, we suffer because God loves us and wants to discipline us. "The Lord disciplines the one he loves" (Hebrews 12:6a)
5. At times, we suffer as Jesus' followers because the world loves darkness instead of light (e.g. a Christian being bullied at school for not supporting LGBTQ)

- ❑ During times of suffering, instead of asking "why" or "why me", we can ask "where" → Where are you, God?
- ❑ God is with us in our suffering. Because Jesus suffered on the cross, He knows our pain. As we hope in Him, He will strengthen us and deliver us.

# *Family Prayer Time*

1. Thank God for His Word and help so we may learn from Him.
2. Ask your children to pray for what they have learned just now.
3. Ask your family how you can pray for them specifically.

# *Be Thou My Vision*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jIMhshpfoY4>

