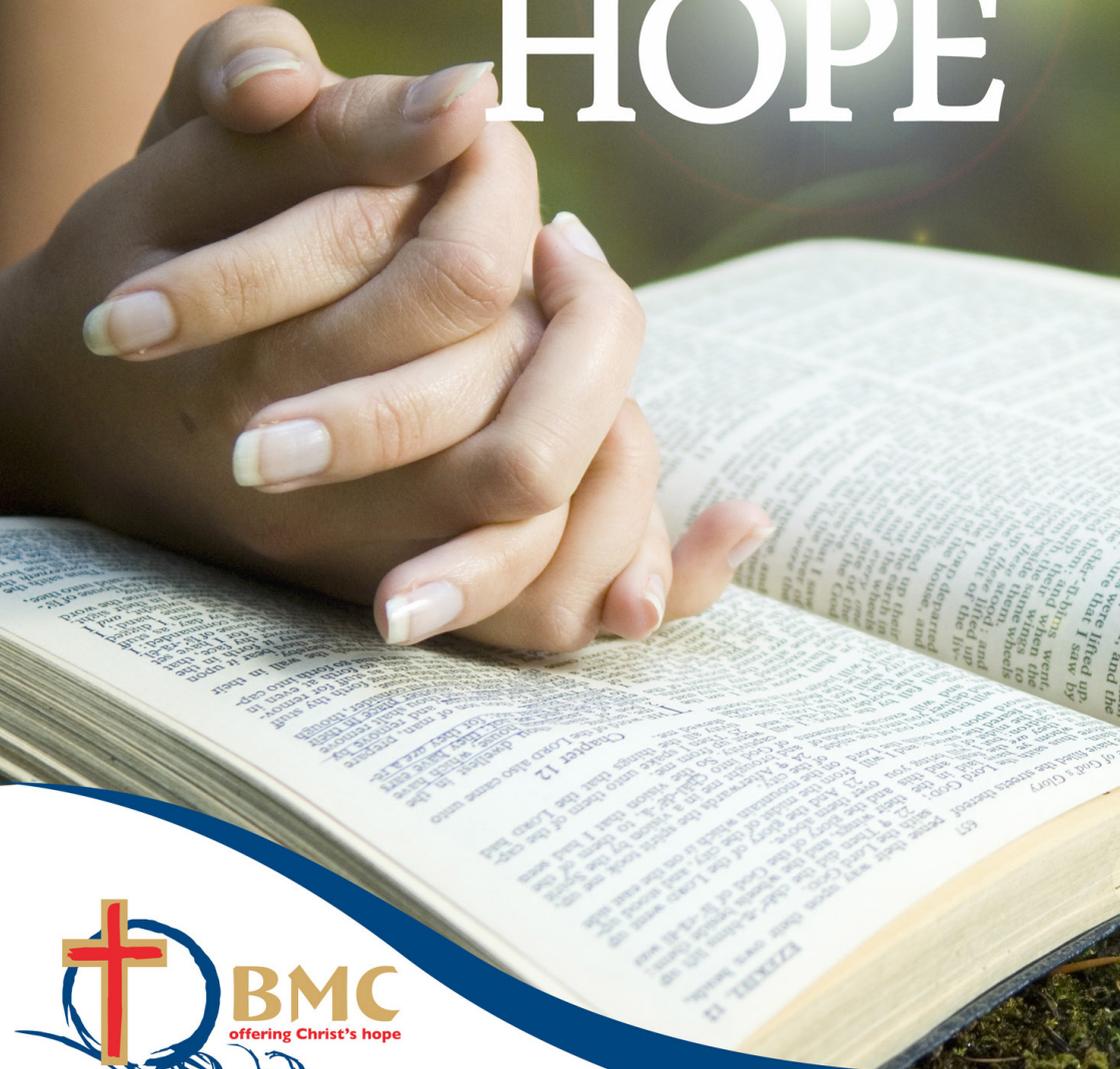
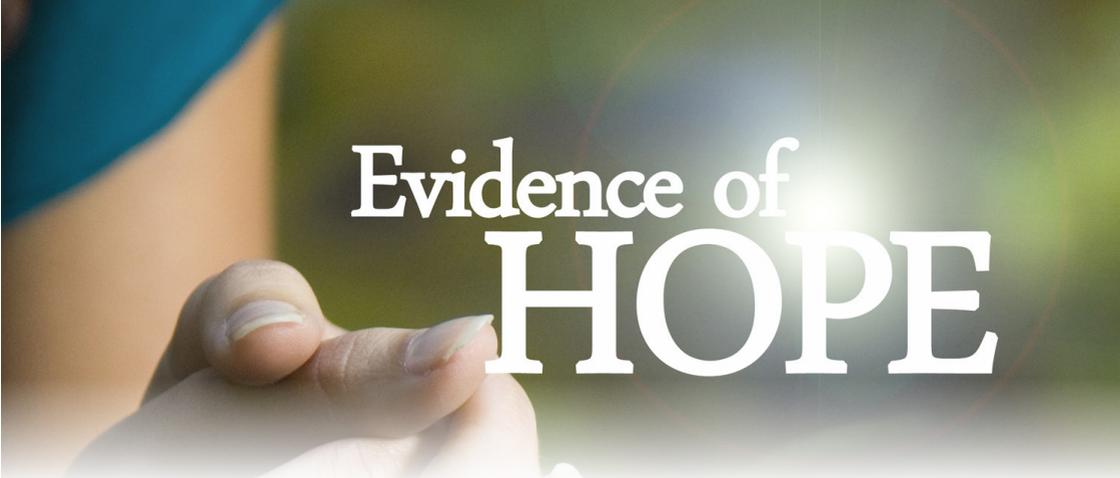


# Evidence of HOPE





# Evidence of HOPE

Dear Friends,

We are familiar with the miracles described in the Gospels and the Letters in the New Testament. But there are miracles in the Old Testament too. We may, at times, wonder how the Old Testament is relevant to 21st Century life, but some of these stories are being re-enacted today in fresh and exciting ways.

Sometimes we seem to hit a brick wall. We cannot see the way ahead and the view on either side is dark and difficult. At such times it is natural to question whether God is with us. Why would He have led us to such a desolate place? What is His plan? We cannot see through the barrier ahead of us; we have no idea how we are going to manage to survive, let alone move forward. Where is God in all this?

As 2014 begins we do not know what the future holds. But if we take time to look at the Old Testament we can see that, no matter how desperate the situation, God was there and He was the one who guided the people, provided for them, fulfilled their dreams, led them into action. In this series we look at how God cared for His people. We ourselves have been aware of that care in the past. Many of us will be aware of it right now. So why should we doubt that God will be with us in the future too?

How do we move forward? Let us examine together the impossible situations that were the root of some spectacular miracles in the Old Testament. What God has done He can do again. We pray that, as you discuss these acts of God, He will reassure you of His presence and reveal to you the way ahead through 2014.

God bless you,

*Mandy*

### **Exodus 14:22-31**

The exact place where the Israelites crossed the Red Sea is difficult to determine and scholars have offered various options and explanations of the event when the Israelite people walked through it to freedom. The most favoured situation seems to be in the neighbourhood of Suez. However the Hebrew term for the Red Sea is *yam suph* (literally Sea or Lake of Reeds as the language made no distinction between the two terms 'sea' and 'lake') so the region is not defined.

Perhaps time and familiarity have dulled any wonder we may feel of the amazing miracle that took place on that day. The Red Sea is part of the Great Rift Valley system – a rent in the earth's crust that is 2330 kilometres in length and 240 kilometres wide. At the northern end, the sea is divided by the Sinai Peninsula, the eastern branch being the Gulf of Aqabah and the western the Gulf of Suez. Surrounded by hot deserts, the summer water temperature is often 29°C. The waters hide dangerous coral reefs and strong north winds make it difficult to navigate.

When the Israelites arrived on the shore of this expanse of water it was easy for both the people and the Egyptians to believe that they had reached the end of the road. Trapped by the water on one side and the approaching Egyptians on the other, what hope was there for any of them? But God had other plans. Plans that none of the people there that day had any idea about. And He used a man and a staff to part the water and open the way through; and then, after a suitable delay which gave the Egyptians the confidence to follow, He closed the waters on top of them and freed the Israelites to go on their way deeper into the desert.

### **Family Time**

Talk together about a time when your family experienced a situation where you did not know what to do to get through it. How did it feel for each member of the family? Where was God in the situation? Would you do anything differently if a similar situation arose?

### **Daily Readings:**

#### **Sunday**

Exodus 12:31-42

How do you react to sudden change in your life?

Lord, Your plans are always to prosper and give me a hope for the future and no harm will befall me. Help me to confidently embrace the sudden changes that occur in my life.

#### **Monday**

Exodus 13:17-22

The pillars of fire and cloud showed God's clear guidance. What would you do if God gave you such clear guidance and yet seemed to be leading you into a desert place?

Father God, I trust You will lead and guide me each and every step of my journey through life.

### Tuesday

Exodus 14:1-9

What happens deep inside you when you know you are following God but others question your direction?

Lord, let me not waver in the faith, hope and trust that I have in You. **Reflection:** Isaiah 52:12b. *For the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rear guard.*

### Wednesday

Exodus 14:10-18

When have you been so 'stuck' in your life that you have called out to God for help? Tell God how you feel about His response to you.

You are my strong Deliverer – I will not be afraid.

**Declaration:** I will be still and see the salvation of the Lord!

### Thursday

Exodus 14:19-22

How deeply do you believe that God can work in any situation? Consider how you came to this conclusion.

Lord, Your mighty acts tell me clearly You are great and powerful. You care also for your people and protect them. I trust You to care and protect me also.

### Friday

Exodus 14:23-28

Do you try to follow God's instructions or ignore them? In the past, what has happened in your life when you have followed? And when you have ignored? Speak to God about this.

Almighty God, every day You do battle on my behalf and protect me from evil. Help me to turn to you in every crisis and remember You with every victory.

### Saturday

Exodus 14:29-31

God rescued Israel in a dramatic way. When have you seen God work dramatically?

Lord, I stand in awe of Your mighty deeds.

**Meditate:** On the glorious power of God at work in your life and praise Him.

## Session 1

Welcome: How do you react to change?

Worship:

Accountability: At which moment did you feel closest to God during the Christmas period? Why was this moment such a special one for you?

Word: Read: Exodus 14:22-31

1. Which of the daily readings so far has spoken to you most deeply?
2. Do you:

- a. Know where you are going to?
- b. Feel as if you have hit a brick wall?
- c. Need direction but cannot find it?  
Share with the group why you feel this way at the moment.
3. What are you doing at this time of your life to make sure you move forward and do not get stuck in a rut?
4. What do you think you need from others and from God to help you to do this?

### Ministry to Each Other

When we think of the Israelites in the desert we remember the pillars of cloud and fire that guided them day and night. God made the way clear for the people. Sometimes it is not so easy. Pray for one another that God will clearly define the way ahead for you as individuals, as a Group and for BMC as a whole.

### Reaching Out

Who do you know who is stuck in a rut? What can you do to help them become aware of this and to encourage them to move forward? Pray about this together before you leave and then take any action you feel God is leading you to do.



Nuweiba Beach - This is an aerial photograph that shows a possible site where the Israelites entered the Red Sea when God parted its waters. An amazing possibility, is that if this is indeed the site, the Israelites would have had a wall of water up to 90 stories high on either side of them.

### **Genesis 17:15-22; 21:1-7**

Sarai tagged along behind her husband as he followed the strange and terrifying call that God had placed on his life. We do not know much about Sarai other than that she was unable to have children. This was a fact and she must have often wondered how Abram could believe that he would have so many descendants 'like the dust of the earth' who would inherit the land.

Sarai was not mentioned in these early promises, and she could only believe that her inability to have a child was an obstacle in their fulfillment. Not having such a deep faith in God's promises as her husband, she decided to take matters into her own hands and persuaded him to have a child with Hagar, her maidservant. However the consequences, which were to reverberate down the generations to the present day, were not good.

But again, God had other plans, unknown to the people whom He had called to carry them out.

At the age of 90 Sarai became the only woman in the Bible to have her name changed by God. She became Sarah and God blessed her with a promise made to her in her own right (although spoken to Abraham) that she would bear a son and become the 'mother of nations' (Genesis 17:15-16). Suddenly, from being a character in the background of the story, Sarah is catapulted by God's radical grace (inherent in His promise), into the crucial role of being the mother of the promised son. Can we blame her for laughing? Whether it was from doubt or delight, her role changed and her husband's persistent faith was rewarded. Her son, when he was born just as God had promised, was named Isaac which means laughter.

In order to protect Isaac's inheritance Sarah sent Hagar and her son away into the desert. Although Abraham was upset about this God told him to follow Sarah's guidance as it was through Isaac that God's promise of descendants would be fulfilled.

### **Family Time**

Share with one another if you have ever had a prayer that God has not answered. What did this feel like? Was that prayer answered in a different way? How would you react if God answered that prayer now?

### **Daily Readings**

#### **Sunday**

#### **Genesis 17:15-16**

When have you received a promise from God? How did you feel?

Father God, by faith I choose to embrace and hold onto every promise You give me. You are truly an amazing God.

### Monday

Genesis 17:19-22

What is your biggest dream? Have you told God about it? Speak to Him now.

Lord, I bring my dreams and aspirations for the future before You today. Confirm, affirm and bless these as I journey with You.

### Tuesday

Genesis 18:1-8

When have you been blessed with astounding hospitality from someone you don't know very well? How did you feel?

Reflect on the people who have blessed you and graciously shared their lives with you.

Praise God for them and pray for them.

### Wednesday

Genesis 18:9-15

On a scale of 1-10 how would you rate the likelihood of God doing something that is seemingly impossible in your life? Why? Pray that God will increase your faith in Him.

Lord, let me not withhold any area of my life from You because I disbelieve in Your ability to address my need. I submit my life to you and confess my unbelief.

### Thursday

Genesis 21:1-7

God's promise is fulfilled and Sarah acknowledges that her son comes from God. Praise Him today for the greatest blessing in your life at this time.

Lord, I praise You for Your love and kindness toward me. Every blessing You pour out I turn back to praise! Blessed be Your Name!

### Friday

Genesis 22:1-14

If God asks for you to give Him your most precious possession how would you feel – and what would it be?

Lord, I pray for the strength and commitment to lay down my life in faithful service wherever You assign me.

### Saturday

Genesis 24:62-67

Sarah was blessed right to the end of her life when she saw her only son happily married. What is the greatest blessing you would like to receive from God during your lifetime? Thank Him in advance for His generosity to you.

**Response:** Bless the Lord O my soul, and all that is within me. Bless His Holy Name! He has done great things Hallelujah! Pray through Psalm 145.

### Session 2

Welcome: When did you laugh the hardest last week?

Worship:

Accountability: How were you able to encourage your friend who is stuck in a rut to move forward? What was their response?

Word: [Read: Genesis 17:15-22; 21:1-8](#)

1. Which of the daily readings has touched you most deeply?
2. How do you feel when God blesses you so abundantly that you can hardly believe it?
3. What has been your biggest dream that has been fulfilled? What are the results of that dream coming true?
4. What is your 'impossible dream' at this stage in your life?

### Ministry to Each Other

Encourage one another in regard to your 'impossible dreams' as you pray for one another.

### Reaching Out

How can you bless someone this week in an unexpected way?

### **Genesis 6:1-22**

Noah was a man who walked with God. He is described as being righteous and blameless. But he was the only one described in this way in his generation. The world around him was depraved and far from God for the descendants of Cain and Seth began to intermarry and they became an ungodly people.

Noah was a direct descendent of Seth, Adam's youngest son and when he was five hundred years old, he had three sons of his own, Shem, Ham and Japheth. It was Noah whom God commanded to undertake a task that must have seemed very strange at the time. But Noah had such a strong relationship with God that he did not question the command at all and began to follow the exact instructions that God gave him. Together with his sons, he began to build a boat of gopher wood (the only time this wood is mentioned in the Bible) and they followed God's plan meticulously, down to the last detail.

The task was strange, not only because they were not near any water, but also because they had to build such a large structure. Their neighbours must have mocked them – especially as time went on and nothing much happened to justify their work. It took them many years to complete the task.

But Noah and his family did not stop, and continued to follow God's instructions by completing the building and then stocking the boat with animals. The subsequent story of the flood is well known. We find ourselves asking, though, whether we would have persevered for such a long time to follow God's commands with no apparent end in sight – would we have given up? Would we have doubted whether we had heard God correctly? Or was this just a figment of our imaginations? How would we have dealt with the ridicule that must have surrounded Noah and his family for all that time?

Noah did not doubt – and he persevered. As a result he and his family and a whole group of animals were saved from the flood to begin life again. Could he ever have imagined that his patient perseverance would result in the preservation of the human race?

### **Family Time**

Go for a walk together. Talk about the things in creation that you can see and that you would miss if Noah had not been obedient.

### **Daily Readings**

#### **Sunday**

#### Genesis 6:9-22

How do you know when God is telling you to do something? Do you find it easy to follow His commands?

Holy Spirit, quicken and stir my spirit to discern and hear the voice of God. Strengthen my

commitment to be obedient to His instruction.

### Monday

Genesis 7:1-10

What happens when you follow God's commands carefully? And what happens when you don't?

Lord, on reflection I understand that obedience is better than sacrifice it brings favour, protection, blessing and provision.

**Response:** I choose to align myself to Your commands.

### Tuesday

Genesis 7:11-24

How do you react when you are waiting for God to act and it seems to take forever?

Father, as I wait upon You, teach me to be one who walks blamelessly before You. May I walk in peace and integrity in an often violent and corrupt world.

### Wednesday

Genesis 8:1-5

Slowly, slowly God restored the situation. What are you waiting for from Him at the moment?

Lord God, as I wait for You I have faith to believe that You are working for the good of all even when there are no visible signs at present.

### Thursday

Genesis 8:6-12

Praise God today for the times when He has acted in your life after a long wait.

Lord God, You are a faithful God. I praise, thank and trust You as you actively engage in every detail of my life.

### Friday

Genesis 8:13-22

How often do you make a point of praising and thanking God for answered prayer? Do so now for the blessings you have received that you take for granted.

Lord, Your love, mercy, and patience stirs within me a heart full of praise and thanksgiving.

**Response:** Sing a song of praise to the Lord today!

### Saturday

Genesis 9:12-17

The rainbow is a symbol of hope and promise. Where do you need a rainbow in your life today?

Father, the rainbow is a reminder of the covenant of love made and the promise of Your faithfulness to Your Word.

**Reflection:** His eternal presence and steadfast promises are at work in my life.

### Session 3

Welcome: Are you a person who is on time or always late? Why is this?

Worship:

Accountability: How did you encourage someone who is struggling during the week?

Word: [Read: Genesis 6:9-7:6](#)

1. Which of the readings for this week spoke to you most deeply?
2. How do you cope with waiting?
3. How do you respond to instructions from God that make no sense to you? Do you follow unquestioningly; or argue; or pretend you have not heard them and ignore them?
4. What happens when people make fun of us for standing up for what we believe is right? How long would we be prepared to keep going even though we do not understand?
5. Spend five minutes in silence asking God 'Where is one place you want me to step out in faith, Lord?' Share what you heard or what you felt about the question with the group.

### Ministry to Each Other

Pray for one another in the light of your discussions.

### Reaching Out

What task have you been asked to do by a family member, friend or colleague that you have been putting off? Take action this week to do this.



### **1 Kings 17:1-24**

At the time when King Ahab and his notorious wife, Jezebel, were ruling Israel and promoting the worship of Baal over that of Yahweh, the prophet Elijah comes onto the scene. Elijah and Ahab have a dramatic meeting when Elijah announces the arrival of a severe drought which would ruthlessly affect the claim that Baal was the god of fertility. It seemed that the drought was caused as an answer to Elijah's prayer rather than from any initiative that God may have taken (James 5:17). However, Elijah did not demand a drought. God's covenant with the people of Israel warned of no rain if they stopped worshipping Him and this was exactly what they were doing.

After announcing this drought Elijah left Ahab and hid at the brook Cherith. The location of this brook is uncertain but it was a wild area where a fugitive could find refuge and water to drink in the coming drought. Whilst Elijah was hiding here, God sent ravens to provide him with food until the brook itself ran dry.

When this happened, God instructed Elijah to go to Zarephath where he found a widow collecting sticks at the gate of the town. Elijah asked her for a drink and a piece of bread. On hearing that she was down to her last scrap of flour and drop of oil he reassured her and told her not to be afraid. He encouraged her to go home and do as she planned – to use the flour and the oil to make bread but first to make a small loaf for him and then make some for herself and her son. He assured her that if she did this, God would ensure that the flour and the oil would not run out for the duration of the drought.

Perhaps we have to ask ourselves whether we would have believed him.

The woman did believe and went home and did what Elijah asked. As a result she was able to make food for Elijah and her family every day right through the drought, *'in keeping with the word of the Lord spoken by Elijah'*.

### **Family Time**

Find a recipe for bread using oil and flour. Think about where the ingredients came from. Praise God for His provision in so many ways as you make the bread together and share it as a family.

### **Daily Readings**

#### **Sunday**

##### **1 Kings 17:1-6**

Elijah was about to begin his preaching career, so this was a strange command from God. How would you respond to an instruction that is so difficult to understand?

Lord God, every resource that I need comes from Your loving and gracious hand. I need not fear famine, drought or a storm for Your provision and protection is available at all times.

### Monday

1 Kings 17:7-12

How would you have reacted to such a request when you and your family were in such need? Reflect on these verses: Elijah needs faith to believe God. The widow needed faith to believe Elijah. Respond accordingly in prayer before the Lord.

### Tuesday

1 Kings 17:13-14

What experience have you had of God's abundant provision? Spend some time praising Him now.

Lord, I thank You for your promise of abundant life (John 10:10.)

**Declaration:** You are Jehovah Jireh the Provider of all things.

### Wednesday

1 Kings 17:15-16

God knows our every need. Praise Him again today for His care of you and your family.

Lord, in the face of Your goodness and graciousness I thank You for caring for me and my family.

### Thursday

1 Kings 17:17-18

When things began to go wrong the woman was angry with Elijah. What do you do and say when things begin to go wrong – especially when you are trying to follow God's lead?

Lord, please take me beyond my limited vision and faith to completely trust in You.

**Reflect** on His rich provision as He supplies all Your needs.

### Friday

1 Kings 17:19-23

Looking back at the story, the woman took a step of faith in feeding the stranger – with the result that her son was healed. What step of faith is God asking of you now?

**Meditation:** Faith is the step between promise and assurance.

**Response:** I walk by faith and not by sight.

### Saturday

1 Kings 17:24

What does it take for you to be able to believe that God is blessing you?

Sovereign God, open my eyes, ears and heart to embrace the truth that You desire to bless me. Psalm 5:12 Surely, Lord, You bless the righteousness; You surround them with Your favour as a shield.

### Session 4

**Welcome:** How many meals do you have in a day? Share with the group why this works for you (or, perhaps, why it does not work).

**Worship:**

**Accountability:** How were you able to bless someone in an unexpected way this week? What was their response?

**Word:** [Read: 1 Kings 17:1-24](#)

1. Which of the daily readings did God use to speak to you this week?
2. What 'jars and jugs' are running dry for you?
3. Do you expect the Lord do something miraculous for you? Why/why not?
4. How can the group pray for you to help you to trust God more deeply and rely on Him in your need?

### Ministry to Each Other

Pray for one another as shared above. Take time over this, listen to each other's prayers, rather than planning how you will pray and bless one another with this time. Remember that where two or three are gathered, Christ is there; and when two or three agree Christ responds in power.

### Reaching Out

How can you fill someone's jug or jar this week? With a visit, with a phone call, with a small gift? Name a person whom you know is lonely or in need of some love and offer them some act of love to fill their jug for them in the coming week.



### Genesis 32:22-32

Jacob fled for his life after deceiving his father and defrauding his brother out of his rightful inheritance (Genesis 27:41-46). During his flight he had a dream when he saw angels ascending and descending a ladder between heaven and earth with God Himself standing at the top. He understood this to mean that God was confirming the promise He had made to Abraham.

Jacob, always the bargainer, promised to serve the Lord if God would protect him and provide for him. Jacob marked the place as sacred where God had been present to him.

After a long time away, when Jacob had two wives, children and enormous flocks, he desired to return home. On this journey he had the counterpart event to his dream as he had left home. In spite of God's

promise of protection during the original dream Jacob was afraid to meet his brother Esau so he sent his family and some of his flocks ahead to greet Esau, whom he had heard was coming to meet him. Jacob himself stayed behind and spent the night talking to God.

During the night a man came to him and began to wrestle with him. The fight went backwards and forwards all night. Jacob was lamed by a dislocated hip, but he grasped the man and refused to let him go until he had received a blessing from him first. It was evident from the blessing that the man was God Himself for God gave him a new name – Israel, wrestler of God. The place where the event happened was called Peniel for Israel had seen the face of God there.

Jacob learned that life was not always easy. His lonely night vigil at Peniel, as his family went on without him, suddenly brought reality home to him. Life involved wrestling with God and assuming the responsibility of the heir to God's promises made to Abraham. Jacob took ownership of the responsibility and made an oath, binding himself to God.



## Family Time

What does your name mean? Research this together. If God had to give you a name what does the rest of the family think it would be?

### Daily Readings

#### Sunday

[Genesis 25:19-34](#)

From the start there was conflict between the brothers. Pray for the person who is the most difficult one in your life today.

Lord, I pray for (name). I pray for peace, healing, restoration and reconciliation in the midst of this painful and difficult relationship.

#### Monday

[Genesis 27:1-10](#)

Rebekah was cunning, favouring her younger son. She led him in a deceitful act. Pray for those who have tempted you or led you astray with forgiveness in your heart.

Reflect on the human tendency to seek more power and control.

**Response:** Lord, give me the attitude of Jesus who resisted temptation to enter into sin—who forgave all my sins.

#### Tuesday

[Genesis 27:11-29](#)

Jacob deceived Isaac. Ask God to forgive you for any unconfessed sin in your life.

Lord, unconfessed sin holds me in bondage. I repent. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me Ps.52:10

#### Wednesday

[Genesis 27:30-40](#)

When have you been deceived by someone? Pray that you may be given the grace to forgive them if you have not already been able to do so; otherwise praise God that you have been able to forgive.

Jesus, I release all bitterness and hatred toward others. Thank You for the power of the cross and the healing, peace and grace that I receive as I walk in forgiveness.

#### Thursday

[Genesis 27:41-45](#)

How do you feel when you know that you have done/said something wrong? What do you do – especially if you cannot put it right?

Lord, I come before your throne of grace and mercy and repent—Your sacrificial love and forgiveness I receive.

**Response:** a broken spirit and contrite You, God, will not despise.

### Friday

Genesis 28:13-22

What dream have you experienced whilst asleep that remains with you to this day? Could God have been saying something to you through it? Ask Him now.

Spirit of knowledge, wisdom, discernment and revelation I bring this dream before You. Speak to me and help me to interpret what You are saying to me.

### Saturday

Genesis 32:22-32

Jacob wrestled with God. What or who are you struggling with in your life at the moment? Spend some time giving the whole matter to God.

Lord, I seek Your blessing as I wrestle with weighty matters. I persistently press in to You and await breakthrough in due time and season.

## Session 5

Welcome: The name Israel means 'he struggles with God'. What name do you think God might give you? Ask the group for help here if you are struggling.

Worship:

Accountability: How did you 'fill someone's jug' this week? How did they respond?

Word: Read: Genesis 32:22-32

1. Which of the readings for this week spoke to you most deeply?
2. Jacob was refined by God – not an easy process. How has God refined you? Or is He refining you at the moment?
3. What are you wrestling with God about at this point in time?
4. Share with the group how you feel about this.
5. How can the group help you – prayer, encouragement, experience, etc.?

## Ministry to Each Other

Pray for one another in the light of your discussions. Encourage one another during the week.

## Reaching Out

Who do you know who is struggling with an issue at the moment? How can you encourage them?

### **Judges 4:4-24**

The author of Judges focuses on Deborah's capable leadership during a tough period in Israel's history. The role of the judges is not clear but some had a legal function whilst others were military leaders.

Deborah seemed to combine both roles with that of a prophetess. Only Samuel and Moses are mentioned elsewhere as holding all three roles. Deborah was possibly the wife of Lapidoth (although the name does not occur anywhere else, and the translation is unclear). She was a charismatic leader and became well known during the time Israel was subject to Jabin, the King of Hazor. Jabin had oppressed Israel for twenty years and the people had lost any sense of patriotism. Deborah would sit in her tent under a palm tree between Ramah and Bethel and act as a judge for the people who flocked to her. She roused Israel out of its lethargic state and made preparations throughout the land to break the yoke of bondage. Under God's instructions, she summoned Barak from Kadesh to lead the army into battle. He refused to do anything unless she accompanied him, which she agreed to do. However this changed Barak's destiny as he would not be accredited with the subsequent victory. That honour would be given to a woman instead. What opportunities did Barak lose by not following God's command and taking on the leadership by himself?

So it fell to Deborah to make all the arrangements, even down to giving the order to attack the army of Jabin, led by their general, Sisera. Sisera was killed by a woman, and the Canaanite army was almost annihilated during the battle. It was such a great and decisive victory that it was long-remembered in Israel.

Deborah wrote a hymn of praise in celebration of the victory God had won for Israel that day. This poem is one of the oldest portions of the Old Testament, dating back to about 1125 BC. It contains several historical events and examples of ancient Hebrew.

### **Family Time**

Deborah wrote a hymn of praise in celebration of this victory. As a family write a hymn of praise in celebration of what God has done / is doing for your family. Write/type this out, decorate it, frame it and hang it somewhere where it can be seen by everyone.

### **Daily Readings**

#### **Sunday**

##### Judges 4:4-8

Deborah was a leader for her time. Who do you lead – and how do they respond to your leadership?

Lord, You have chosen me to lead others. Give me the strength, integrity, courage and commitment to lead others well.

### Monday

Judges 4:9-13

Barak followed the orders Deborah gave him. How do you feel when someone gives you orders?

Father, as Barak recognized the anointing and authority of Deborah and respected her – help me to submit to those in authority over me.

### Tuesday

Judges 4:14-16

Deborah had a clear plan which was successful. How much time do you spend planning the major events in your life? Are you meticulous – or do you rush in?

**Meditate:** Psalm 16:3 Commit your work to the Lord, and then your plans will succeed. Wait upon the Lord and respond accordingly.

### Wednesday

Judges 4:17-24

Deborah's planning had been done with God and came about just as she said it would. What part does God play in your plans?

Lord, show me where I am making plans without consulting You and guide me so that my plans are in accordance with Your will.

### Thursday

Judges 5:1-12

Whatever good or bad things are going on in your life today spend some time praising God for the fact that He is with you.

Jesus, You are the centre. You are my strong tower, my high fortress and my deliverer. I praise and thank You the You never leave nor forsake me.

### Friday

Judges 5:13-23

When life is changing are you someone who moves forward, eager for a challenge, or do you hang back? Pray for God's wisdom regarding a challenge in your life today so that you know how to respond.

Lord, I choose to move forward resolutely in my strong belief and understanding that Your plans are to prosper and give me a hope and a future. I stand on Your Word.

### Saturday

Judges 5:24-31

Deborah led Israel through a turbulent passage in their history to forty years of peace. Whatever turbulence you are going through in life imagine coming out of it into peace in the presence of God. Praise Him for His presence even in the future.

**Affirmation:** The God of hope fills me with all joy and peace, as I trust in Him, so that I may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen! (Romans 15:13)

### Session 6

**Welcome:** Who is your champion? Who is always ready to stand up for you when you are down?

**Worship:**

**Accountability:** How successful were you during the week in completing a task you have been putting off?

**Word:** [Read: Judges 4:4-24](#)

1. Which reading for this week touched you most deeply?
2. What is so important to you (taking your family as a given) that you would stand up in defense of it whatever the cost?
3. None of us live to our full potential. What is stopping you from moving closer to attaining yours?
4. If you had Deborah's confidence, what would you attempt to do for God?

### Ministry to Each Other

Pray for one another in the light of your discussions. How can you encourage one another to move towards attaining your full potential?

### Reaching Out

Some tribes came to Deborah's aid whilst others did not. Who do you think is waiting for your help? Is the request reasonable or unrealistic? Will you help them or explain to them why you are unable to help? Make a decision this week and take some action in one way or another.



The remnants of the grave near Kedesh, attributed to Deborah





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## Small Group Facilitators

Speak to your own facilitator about helping to facilitate your group. Contact Mandy or Nadja at 011 463 2333 to start a new group and for details of the next Training Workshop or visit us at our Small Group Connect table in the Foyer at the start of every series.

**We will welcome you with open arms!**

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BMC exists to be an instrument of Christ's hope  
in a broken and fast-changing world

(Booklet Compiled by Mandy Hackland)

