

Beginning

**TEACH YOUR CHILDREN
THE SCRIPTURES**

Beginning

Family Worship in Genesis

Joel R. Beeke and Nick Thompson



Reformation Heritage Books
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Beginning

© 2021 by Joel R. Beeke and Nick Thompson

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews. Direct your requests to the publisher at the following addresses:

Reformation Heritage Books

3070 29th St. SE

Grand Rapids, MI 49512

616-977-0889

orders@heritagebooks.org

www.heritagebooks.org

Printed in the United States of America

21 22 23 24 25 26/10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Beeke, Joel R., 1952- author. | Thompson, Nick (Theologian), author.

Title: *Beginning* : family worship in Genesis / Joel R. Beeke and Nick Thompson.

Description: Grand Rapids, Michigan : Reformation Heritage Books, [2021] |

Series: Teach your children the scriptures

Identifiers: LCCN 2021004405 (print) | LCCN 2021004406 (ebook) | ISBN

9781601788597 (paperback) | ISBN 9781601788603 (epub)

Subjects: LCSH: Bible. Genesis—Study and teaching. | Families—Religious life. |

Christian education—Home training. | Christian education of children.

Classification: LCC BS1239 .B44 2021 (print) | LCC BS1239 (ebook) | DDC

249—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021004405>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021004406>

For additional Reformed literature, request a free book list from Reformation Heritage Books at the above regular or email address.

Contents

Series Introduction..... ix

PART I: THE BEGINNING OF A WORLD (GENESIS 1–2)

1. In the Beginning, God 2
2. Our Triune Creator 4
3. The Light We See 6
4. The Air We Breathe 8
5. The Earth beneath Our Feet 10
6. The Great Lights above Us 12
7. The Animals We Love 14
8. Reflectors of God’s Glory 16
9. Kings over God’s Creation 18
10. Rest from Our Labors 20
11. Clay in the Potter’s Hands 22
12. Priests in God’s House 24
13. The Choice of Life or Death 26
14. The First Wedding 28
15. Naked and Unashamed 30

PART II: THE BEGINNING OF A WAR (GENESIS 3–11)

16. Our Ancient Foe 34
17. Our Tragic Fall 36
18. Our Death in Adam 38
19. It’s Not My Fault! 40
20. A Promise of War 42
21. Our Pain in the Present 44
22. Clothed by Grace 46
23. Kicked Out of Eden 48
24. Family Bloodshed 50

25. God's Promise Will Stand	52
26. Death Is Not the Final Word	54
27. A Faith That Longs	56
28. Only Evil Continually	58
29. Judgment or Salvation	60
30. God's Saving Provision	62
31. God Shut the Door	64
32. Floodwaters of Judgment	66
33. Remembered by God	68
34. A Sweet-Smelling Sacrifice	70
35. A New Adam	72
36. Redemption's Stage	74
37. A Bow in the Clouds	76
38. Noah's Failure	78
39. The God of Shem	80
40. A Troublesome Tower	82

PART III: THE BEGINNING OF A NATION (GENESIS 12–50)

41. Love toward the Unlovely	86
42. A Blessed Trunk	88
43. A Believing Pilgrim	90
44. Famine in the Land	92
45. Lift Up Your Eyes	94
46. God Most High	96
47. A Faith That Justifies	98
48. A Covenant Is Cut	100
49. Man-Made Salvation	102
50. The God Who Sees Me	104
51. Father of a Great Multitude	106
52. Blessing through Curse	108
53. Unto You and Your Children	110
54. Help My Unbelief!	112
55. God with Us	114
56. The Just Judge of All the Earth	116
57. Escape for Your Life!	118
58. Delivered Yet Again	120

59. Unto Us a Child Is Born	122
60. The Greatest Trial	124
61. A Ram Provided	126
62. A Permanent Inheritance	128
63. God's Angel Will Go before You	130
64. God Provides Once More	132
65. Finishing in Faith	134
66. Two Sons, Two Nations	136
67. Despising the Birthright	138
68. Like Father, Like Son	140
69. Tricked into Blessing	142
70. God's Ladder	144
71. Humility Comes Hard	146
72. A Nation Is Born	148
73. From Laban to Canaan	150
74. Wrestling with God	152
75. Brothers Reunited	154
76. A New Beginning	156
77. Funerals in the Promised Land	158
78. A Prince among Brothers	160
79. From Royalty to Rags	162
80. Grace Breaking Through	164
81. A Dark Providence	166
82. Dreams from a Dungeon	168
83. Exalted by God	170
84. At Their Brother's Feet	172
85. To Egypt Again	174
86. A Silver Cup, a Serious Test	176
87. I Am Joseph!	178
88. Your Son Is Alive!	180
89. Blessed through Joseph	182
90. Our Home Is Not in Egypt	184
91. The Lion of the Tribe of Judah	186
92. Finishing in Hope	188

Appendix: Remember: Bible and Catechetical Memorization during Family Worship	191
--	-----

Series Introduction

What is the chief end of parenting? The answer, implicit in Westminster Shorter Catechism 1, is that our children might—by God’s grace—be saved, glorify God, and enjoy Him forever. If you are a parent, your primary goal should not be to raise intelligent, successful, competent, and upright citizens. Of course you should be concerned about these things. But your primary concern ought to be God-ward for the good of your children’s souls and pre-eminently for God’s glory. As parents, we are to strive, in dependence on the Spirit, to help our children acknowledge that all things are from, through, and to God, and thus He is worthy of all glory (Rom. 11:36). We must aim to reach the consciences of our children, to call them to repentance and faith in Christ, and to beckon them to taste and see that the Lord is good in and through Jesus Christ (Ps. 34:8), so that they may delight themselves in Him (Ps. 37:4). By the Spirit’s grace blessing our parenting, we pray that our children will learn and come to experience at an early age the true happiness that Heidelberg Catechism 2 summarizes as consisting of three matters: “the first, how great my sins and miseries are; the second, how I may be delivered from all my sins and miseries; the third, how I shall express my gratitude to God for such deliverance.” Then our children will truly “glorify God and enjoy Him forever”—and this is the chief end of parenting!

Glorification and enjoyment, however, necessitate knowledge. Where God is not known, He will never be glorified and enjoyed. This is why the Westminster Shorter Catechism goes on to ask in question 2, “What rule hath God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him?” There must be a standard by which we know God and His requirements if ever we would glorify and enjoy Him. So what is it? The catechism answers: “The Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him.”

It is this conviction that has led us to write the Teach Your Children the Scriptures series. We are persuaded that teaching our children the Scriptures in a compelling, relevant, and holistic manner during daily family worship is one of the chief means by which the chief end of parenting is brought to pass. If we would direct our children to glorify and enjoy God, we must educate them

in the Old and New Testaments. Unfortunately, many parents feel inadequate when it comes to explaining and applying the Bible to their children. That is where this series comes in, seeking to provide a comprehensive guide for parents who desire to teach the whole counsel of God to their children in family worship. Our goal is to provide you with robustly biblical and Reformed family devotions that a child between the ages of five and twelve can understand but that will still edify the entire family.¹

In every devotion of this series you will find four sections, each beginning with the letter *R*—“Review,” “Read,” “Reflect,” and “Request.”² We have purposefully sought to make the format simple and memorable so that parents can recall and follow it even when this guide is not in hand. Below is an explanation of what you will find in each section and how best to utilize the material.

Review

In his classic book on teaching, John Milton Gregory described the mind as an artist that “sketches its pictures at first simply in outline, and in detached parts. Only after many returns to each part do its conceptions stand forth in full light and shade, perfect paintings, lifelike and complete.”³ It is important that we return to the same truths repeatedly with our children so that their thinking concerning God’s word goes from an indistinct, frantic sketch to a well-defined, vibrant portrait.

In this section you will find two questions to ask your children to help them review stories, doctrines, and applications discussed in recent devotions. As with all the questions in this guide, these are only examples provided for your assistance; they are neither questions you must ask nor are they the only possible questions to ask. Answers are provided directly underneath the appropriate question. When reviewing with your children, it is always helpful to ask

1. We are conscious that this is a wide age range that encompasses various levels of comprehension. For this reason, you may find certain questions or statements that will need to be simplified or amplified depending on the age of your child(ren).

2. There is one other *R* you ought to include in family worship—rejoice. God delights in the singing of Christian families. Lifting our voices in songs of praise is a wonderful and fitting way to respond to God’s gracious speech to us in the Scriptures. So while we have not provided guidance on what to sing, we encourage you to sing together as a family—and to sing with all your hearts! Also, at the end of each volume of this series, you will find an appendix that provides a guide for incorporating Scripture and catechetical memorization into family worship.

3. John Milton Gregory, *The Seven Laws of Teaching* (1886; repr., Moscow, Idaho: Canon Press, 2014), 117–18.

more general questions such as, “What book of the Bible have we been looking at this week?” or “What chapter of the Bible did we look at yesterday?” The questions provided in this section will be more specific than this, but certainly ask the more general questions as well. Getting our children talking about previous devotions serves to solidify God’s word in their minds and hearts and also helps them make connections between biblical stories and truths.

Read

As Christian parents, we must be absolutely convinced that our children will not glorify and enjoy God apart from regularly encountering the Scriptures. It is God’s word that is living and powerful (Heb. 4:12), always accomplishing the purpose for which God sends it forth (Isa. 55:11). It is God’s word that abides forever (Isa. 40:8), being the means through which spiritually dead sinners are born again (1 Peter 1:23). It is God’s word that works effectually in believers to make them more like Jesus (John 17:17), equipping them for every good work (2 Tim. 3:16–17).

In the “Read” section you will find two things. The first is a reference to the Bible passage from which that day’s devotion is derived. While all Scripture is profitable, not all Scripture is equally profitable, especially for children. For this reason, we have decided in this series not to cover every chapter and verse of the text, but only those passages that we deem most fitting for teaching children ages five through twelve. For a similar reason, we have chosen to focus on smaller passages (usually two to ten verses) rather than on entire chapters of the Bible. When teaching children, less is often more. Take time to read the passage slowly, with expression and reverence. If your child is old enough to read, consider giving him or her the opportunity to read a verse or the entire passage.

After the reference to the Bible passage, you will find a series of comprehension questions. For example, a devotion on Genesis 12:1–9 might ask the following:

- Who appeared to Abram?
- Where did God call Abram to go?
- What was Abram’s response to God?

Basic comprehension questions are important to teach our children to listen to the Bible, to gauge their understanding of it, and to help them articulate it in their own words. These questions can be asked after reading the whole

passage, but you will probably find it beneficial to ask them as you are reading through the passage to encourage attentiveness.

Reflect

The Westminster Assembly's *Directory for Family Worship*⁴ advises that the Scriptures should not only be read but also openly discussed and appropriately applied by the leader of the family—ordinarily the father.⁵ Our children need more than a mere comprehension of the basic contents of Scripture; they need it opened up and applied to them. This typically proves to be the most difficult part of family worship for parents. Many parents feel that to explain and apply a passage in a way that is understandable, engaging, and relevant to their children is beyond their abilities or that they do not have enough time to sufficiently prepare for this task each day. If this describes your situation, then this section is for you.

The first thing you will find here is the main idea of the passage. This is a concise statement of the key point of the text. You may choose to read this to your family or simply use it to help you stay focused as you teach the Scriptures to them. Following the main idea is a short devotion that will unpack the passage by exposition, illustration, and application—all at a child's level. Read this to your family in order to help them engage the text more deeply.

Following the devotion, you will find a series of application questions to facilitate discussion. When applying the Scriptures, it is important to have the whole person in view. We want the whole of the Bible to be applied to the whole of our child(ren). Thus, you will find a variety of questions here that seek to inform the head, engage the heart, and equip the hands. As with the questions under "Review" and "Read," these are examples of possible questions to ask, not questions that you must ask. There might be specific ways the text applies to your child or to a situation your family finds themselves in. We encourage you to personalize these questions and not to feel bound by what you find here. In other words, the questions we provide are intended to be servants, not masters. But whatever questions you ask, seek to drive home the truth of God's word to the whole of your child's humanity—head, heart, and hands.

4. For a modernized version of the *Directory for Family Worship*, see appendix 1 in Joel R. Beeke, *Family Worship* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2009), 49–59.

5. In the temporary or permanent absence of the father, the mother should undertake this task.

Request

God speaks to us through His word, and we speak back to God in prayer. There are few things that delight the heart of God like a family that really prays. In this final section, you will find a suitable prayer point related to the Scripture passage and devotion. Though we have provided this, we still encourage you to ask your children, “What would be a good thing to pray for in light of what we have seen in God’s word today?” You may find that your child suggests a better prayer point than the authors! But our hope is that these suggestions will help guide you in teaching your children to pray His word back to Him.

The Chief End of This Series

Our prayer is that God will use this series to equip many parents to lead their children to relish the unsearchable riches of God’s glory in Jesus Christ. Can you conceive of anything sweeter in this life than seeing your children loving God and walking according to His truth (3 John 4)? To the extent this happens, the chief end of your parenting will be realized. And if this series is of any assistance in such a weighty endeavor, then we will rejoice exceedingly!

—Joel R. Beeke and Nick Thompson

PART I

The Beginning of a World

GENESIS 1-2

In the Beginning, God

REVIEW

- What does *Genesis* mean?

It means “origin” or “beginning.” This book explains to us where everything came from, including you and me.

- Who wrote the book of *Genesis*?

Moses wrote Genesis with the help of the Holy Spirit. These are not just Moses’s words to us, but God’s words. Therefore, we need to listen carefully to them.

READ

Genesis 1:1; Hebrews 11:3

- When did God create?

In the beginning. Genesis begins at the very first moment of time.

- What did God create?

The heavens and the earth. This means absolutely everything.

- How did God create?

The writer to the Hebrews tells us that God made everything out of nothing. Before God created, there was nothing except God.

REFLECT

Main idea: The God who has always existed created all things from nothing.

Each of us has a birthday. It is a day we celebrate, often with cake, balloons, and presents. Your birthday is important because it is the day you were born into the world. Birthdays are a reminder that we have a beginning. We have not always been. There was a time when we were not. We learn in Genesis 1:1 that this is true of all things except for God. Everything in the world has a birthday. Everything in the world came to be at a certain point in time. Only God does not have a birthday. In the beginning, He already was. God has

always been, and He always will be. This is what we mean when we say God is *eternal*. He has no beginning or end. He simply is.

Moses tells us that God created all things, and He did so out of nothing. When you paint a picture, you decide what to paint and what shapes and colors to use, and you move the paintbrush to create strokes on the page. But in order to make a picture, you have to use paper, a brush, and paint that already exists. Whenever we make something, it is always from things that already are. But not so with God! Before God created, there was nothing but God. Not a speck of dust. Not a drop of water. Not a breath of air. Just God. He did not have a paintbrush and paint by which to color the sky blue and the grass green. He alone was. But unlike us, God has the power to create everything out of nothing. And that is precisely what He did. He created something even better than a beautiful painting—a beautiful world without paper, paintbrush, or paint. He simply spoke, and everything came into being. That is how powerful God is!

- What does it mean for God to be *eternal*?

God never had a beginning and will never have an end. He doesn't have a birthday, and He will never die.

- Why did God have to create everything out of nothing?

Because before He created, there was nothing but Him.

- Does everyone believe that God created all things?

No, some people don't believe in God or in creation. They say that the world, including you and me, came about randomly a long time ago. The Bible tells us that these people deny God and creation because they don't want to live for God, but for themselves (Rom. 1:18–32).

- How should we respond to God's power in creation?

It should lead us to worship Him, trust Him, and live for Him (Rev. 4:11).

REQUEST

According to Hebrews 11:3, it is by faith that we understand God's work of creation. Pray for faith to believe that all things are from God.

Our Triune Creator

REVIEW

- Who created all things?
The God who has always existed.
- What did God use to create?
He created all things from nothing. Before God created, there was nothing but Him.

READ

Genesis 1:2; John 1:1–3

- How does Moses describe the creation in the beginning?
Without form and void (empty). At this point, God had created the world, but it had not yet been set in order, nor were there plants, animals, and people living on it.
- Who was hovering over the waters at the beginning of creation?
The Holy Spirit. The picture is of a mother bird flying over her baby chicks (see Deut. 32:11). It shows the Spirit's care for the creation.
- Who is “the Word” that John speaks of? What was He doing in creation?
The Word of God is Jesus Christ. John tells us that everything is created through Him.

REFLECT

Main idea: The God of creation exists in three persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Back when Genesis was written, it was quite common for people to believe in many gods. There was the god of the wind, the god of the rain, the god of the sun, and many others. But Genesis, along with the whole Bible, makes clear that there is only one true God. It is this God who has created all things. He alone rules over the wind, rain, and sun. He is the Lord of heaven and earth. He is Lord over us.

The Bible also teaches that this one God exists in three persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God, we often say, is a Trinity. He is three-in-one and one-in-three. Such a truth is hard for us to understand. But we shouldn't expect to be able to understand everything about God. He is always greater than we could possibly think! We see in our reading today that the Son (John 1:1–3) and the Spirit (Gen. 1:2) were present and active in the beginning. Creation was not a work of the Father alone, but of all three persons of God.

Have you ever felt lonely and wished you had a friend to play with? Some people think that is why God created. They think He must have been bored or lonely, and so He created animals and people to make Himself feel better. But that is not true. The Father, Son, and Spirit have always lived in loving friendship with each other. They were never bored or lonely because they have always been together in perfect love and happiness. God did not create because He was empty but because He was full. God's love overflowed to create a world in which His beauty could shine. And He has created us to enjoy that love and beauty.

- Are there more gods than one?

There is but one only, the living and true God.

- What do we mean when we speak of God as a *Trinity*?

God is three-in-one and one-in-three. He is one God who exists in three persons. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are each fully God.

- Why did God create?

Not because He was lonely. Not because He needed us or any created thing. Rather, He created that He might display His beauty so that people like us could rejoice in it. That is what we were made for—to know and enjoy God.

REQUEST

The truth of God's Trinitarian nature is difficult for us to understand and embrace. Pray that God would grant clarity on this and lead your family to know and enjoy the love that has always existed between the Father, the Son, and the Spirit.

The Light We See

REVIEW

- What is something we have learned about God?
He is eternal, not having a beginning or end. He is the only true God. He is a Trinity, existing as Father, Son, and Spirit. He is perfect love.
- Did God create because He needed us?
No, God needs nothing. He created so that He might share His love and beauty with us.

READ

Genesis 1:2–5

- What did God create on the first day?
Light. Genesis 1:2 tells us that the world was covered in darkness. But then God caused light to come into the darkness.
- How did God create?
He spoke. This is why John calls Jesus “the Word.” Through God’s Word, the Son, creation happened. God spoke, and it was done.
- After separating the light from the darkness, what did God call them?
Day and night. It is God who has made each day to consist of a period of light and a period of darkness.

REFLECT

Main idea: On the first day of creation, God spoke light into the darkness; God does the same in our salvation.

Are you scared of the dark? If so, you are not alone. We were created for light, and without it we could not live. But at the beginning of creation, there was nothing but darkness. How could a world covered in a blanket of darkness be a proper home for us? It couldn’t. This is why God spoke. He commanded, and by the simple power of His word, light shined. There was no sun. There were no stars. There was no fire or electricity. But that did not make things

difficult for God. He spoke, and it was done. Light! A light purer and brighter than you could imagine entered into the darkness.

The Bible teaches that because of sin, the world is covered in darkness similar to what there was in the beginning. This is not darkness like when the lights are turned off at night, but a spiritual darkness. We are not able to see God, know Him, or enjoy Him. Our souls love the darkness of sin and hate the God of light (John 3:19). But something amazing happens through the gospel. When the Holy Spirit hovers over our dark souls in saving power, He turns on the lights. God's word causes the light of Jesus Christ to shine in our hearts. It is as if He says, "Let there be light!" and the light of the gospel enters in (2 Cor. 4:6). Jesus called this being "born again" (John 3:1-8). When God gives us new hearts, He makes us new creations, giving us spiritual life and enabling us to see, know, and enjoy Him. Apart from this work of God, our souls would remain forever in darkness.

- How could God cause light to shine without the sun and stars?
God did not need the sun or stars to create light. He is light (1 John 1:5). And He can cause light to shine simply by His power.
- How does God cause spiritual light to shine in our dark souls?
Through His word. Just as God spoke light into the darkness of creation, so too He speaks light into the darkness of our souls by the word of the gospel. But the light breaks into our hearts only when the Spirit works in saving power.
- Why do we need the Spirit to do this work of new creation in us?
Because apart from the new birth, we will never believe the gospel and receive its light in order to be saved.

REQUEST

Pray that your entire family would know this gracious, re-creative work of the Spirit and that He would cause each of you to see the light of the gospel in an increasingly clear manner.

The Air We Breathe

REVIEW

- What did God create on day one?
Light. He spoke, and light broke into the darkness.
- How is God's creation of light a picture of our salvation?
We are born in the darkness of sin. But when God saves us, He speaks spiritual light into our hearts by the word of the gospel. All this He does by the powerful working of the Holy Spirit.

READ

Genesis 1:6–8

- What did God create on the second day?
A firmament or expanse. We often call this the sky. The reason we have air to breathe is because of God's work in creating the sky.
- What did God call the sky?
In verse 8 He calls it "heaven." We normally think of heaven as the place where Jesus and the angels live. But in these verses it simply means the space above the earth. We will see on day five of creation that it is where the birds fly.
- What did God place below and above the sky?
Waters. God separated the seas below the sky from the clouds above the sky.

REFLECT

Main idea: God created the sky so that we could have air to breathe.

Many children want to be astronauts when they grow up. It is a job filled with the adventure of exploring outer space, with its stars and planets. Did you know that astronauts have to wear a space suit? This special clothing protects them from the dangerous and deadly gasses in the galaxy. It also provides them with air, which they need to survive, because once they get beyond the sky above the earth, there is none. And without air, they would die.

On the second day of creation, God formed a sky above the earth that would provide air for us to breathe. No other planet has air like ours. God made earth alone to be the home for people like us. That is why when astronauts go into space, they have to bring earth's air with them. God did not create the moon or Jupiter for us to live on. But on the second day of creation, He continued making a perfect home for us to live in—the earth.

Take a deep breath. The Bible says that God is the one who gives us life and breath (Acts 17:25). Every breath we breathe is a gift from Him. It is a sign of His mercy and love. God cares for us. And so every breath is a reason to praise and give thanks to Him. When you look up into the sky and enjoy its air, remember that it is God who has created this, and He has done so for us.

- What is one thing that makes earth different from every other planet?

God created it with a sky that would have air for people and animals to breathe. Without the air in the sky, we could not survive.

- What do we learn about God from His creation of air?

He is kind and loving toward people. Even when we sin against Him, He continues to give life and breath to us.

- How should we respond to God's gift of breath?

We should give thanks to Him and always remember that our life comes from Him. We should also tell our friends and neighbors to praise Him since they too have their life from Him.

REQUEST

Pray that God would help your family to see the Lord's kindness in every breath they breathe, that it might lead to thanksgiving and praise.

The Earth beneath Our Feet

REVIEW

- What did God create on the first two days?
God created light on day one so we could see. He created the sky on day two so we could breathe.
- What do these works show us about God?
He cares for us by providing a perfect home in which we can live.

READ

Genesis 1:9–13

- What did God do with the waters under the sky on the third day of creation?
He limited where they could go so that dry land appeared. Psalm 104:9 says that He sets a boundary, or fence, around the water. The seas cannot go farther than God allows.
- What did God name the dry land and waters after He separated them?
He named the dry land earth, and the waters seas. By creating the earth, God made a place for us to live.
- What did God cause to happen on the dry land?
He spoke grass, vegetable plants, fruit trees, and flowers into being. In this way, He provided people and animals not only a place to live but also food to eat.

REFLECT

Main idea: God created dry land for us to live on, setting a boundary between the earth and seas.

Have you ever seen a hurricane? It is a fierce storm that begins above the ocean. At its worst, a hurricane can create winds that blow at over 150 miles per hour. What makes hurricanes so dangerous is that they often reach land where people live. When this happens, a wall of ocean water forcefully covers

the earth, destroying houses, parks, and buildings, and, sadly, even killing people sometimes.

On the third day of creation, God placed a fence around the oceans, causing dry land to appear. This land, which He called *earth*, was full of mountains, valleys, deserts, and sandy beaches. And God created it for people and animals to live on. He set a boundary so that the waters would not cover the dry land. And He did this so that creatures like us could make our home on it.

This is what makes hurricanes so scary and abnormal. God did not originally mean for the waters to swallow up the earth. He made a clear separation between the water and the dry land. But when sin entered the world, all this changed. In the great flood, God covered the whole earth with water, and only Noah and his family were saved (Genesis 6–8). It was a sign of God’s judgment on the sin of humankind. Hurricanes today are similar signs of His judgment, though they don’t destroy the entire earth like the flood did. And yet, in spite of our sin, God, in His rich mercy, continues to provide dry land for us to live on.

- Why did God create dry land?

For people like us, as well as animals, to live on. Before the third day of creation, the earth was covered in water. We could not have survived had He not created the land.

- Why does God sometimes remove the boundary He set between the oceans and dry land?

Because of sin. God causes floods and hurricanes to happen as a sign of His judgment. But they were not a part of the original creation.

- What should these signs of God’s judgment lead us to do?

We should confess our sin to God, admit that we deserve His judgment, and receive the salvation He offers us in Jesus. We should also be amazed that God continues to protect us from the ocean waters. He gives us dry land to live on even though we sin against Him.

REQUEST

Pray that God would help your child(ren) to see that the earth beneath their feet is a sign of God’s mercy since we all deserve the floodwaters of His judgment.