

## LIVING THE WORD—Week 17 (Sun., May 17 – Sat., May 23)

### *The God of the Mighty Acts: the Great Story of God's Relentless Love*

*Key Verse: Exodus 34:6—“Jehovah, Jehovah, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger and abounding in merciful love and faithfulness.”*

We have come to the end of our journey through the great story of God's relentless, unfailing, merciful love—and we find ourselves back where we began. God's first mighty act was to create the heavens and earth. He put the man and woman he created in a garden to eat of the tree of life and dwell in the presence of God. The story ends with the promise that God will create a new heaven and new earth, and his children will again dwell in his presence, eating of the tree of life in the garden of God.

This story has shown us again and again the truth of who God is. God abounds in steadfast love, even when his people persist in sinning against Him. God has revealed His glory and goodness through creating the world and providing for His creatures. God has revealed His faithfulness through making and keeping his promise to Abraham. God has revealed His power and righteousness through delivering His people from slavery and giving them His great Law. God has revealed Himself as the great King and the loving shepherd through his selection of the shepherd David to be prince over His people. God has revealed his judgment and mercy through sending Israel into exile and returning a remnant to the Promised Land.

God has revealed Himself most fully through sending His Son, the Word become flesh. The truth of who Jesus is and what His kingdom means has been revealed through His miracles. The grace and power of God has been most fully revealed through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. God's powerful presence among his people has been revealed through pouring out His Holy Spirit and creating a community of believers who live by that Spirit. God will ultimately be revealed when Christ appears to bring to fulfillment all the promises and purposes of God.

In our first lesson, we quoted Lavender and Holloway about what makes Christian spirituality unique:

Christian spirituality is a lived relationship with the God revealed in the Bible. He is a God with a story, a history with humanity. He made us, pursued us, even died for us. He wants to be our God and for us to be his people.

Let's continue to live in a vital relationship with the God revealed in the Bible—the God of the mighty acts, the God who abounds in merciful love, the God who came to us in Jesus Christ!

#### **Next Week: 1 Thessalonians 1**

**Memory Verses:** Exodus 34:6; Deuteronomy 6:4-5; John 3:16; Ephesians 4:4-6

**On the Mountain** (“Love God”—set aside 30 minutes this week for quiet time with God)

1. Read Exodus 34:6 several times. Meditate on God as he is described in the prayer.
2. Reflect on how God has revealed this truth about himself through his mighty acts.
3. Reflect on how God's description of himself is or is not a description of you.
4. Thank God for his gracious and merciful love. Pray that you could be more like Him.

**In the Gathering** (“*Love Each Other*”—discuss with your home church or small group)

1. If you had to pick one mighty act from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament which you think reveal God most fully, which would you pick and why?
2. How has this study changed or enhanced your understanding of God?
3. How has this study changed or enhanced your understanding of the Bible?
4. How has this study impacted your understanding of God’s call in your life?
5. In Nehemiah 9, the people of Israel look back over the story of God and His people in the Old Testament, and they pray a prayer of praise and confession. Looking back over the story of God and His people in the New Testament and the centuries since, what kind of prayer should we pray today?
6. Do you have anything to share from your time with God, your family, or in the world?
7. Pray together using your suggestions from question #5 and/or the suggestions below for “In the World.”

**Around the Table** (“*Love Your Family*”—sit at home and talk together as a family)

1. Can you say the memory verses we learned? (If not, read them together again.)
2. Can you say the mighty acts of God we have talked about in this study?
3. Which lesson was your favorite? Why? What does it tell us about God?
4. If you had a friend who didn’t know much about God or the Bible, could you use what you learned to tell your friend about God?

**Into the World** (“*Love the World*”—prayerfully consider God’s mission for us in his world)

1. Pray for people who don’t know the one true and living God and have put their trust in something other than the God who made them and loves them.
2. Pray for those who may believe in God, but have a mistaken understanding of who he is and don’t know his steadfast, unfailing love in their lives.
3. Pray that God will use you to help people around you see and know the love of God.