

# **Set Apart**

**A Biblical View  
of Holiness**

Family Devotional



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This family devotional is designed to be used by parents with children from the ages of two to twelve.



# Fasting 101

## Connect

All of us have needs and wants. Needs are things that we cannot live without. Wants are things we would like to have. What are some of your needs? What are some of your wants? There are many things we need and want. But sometimes, we focus so much on our needs and wants that we put aside our relationship with God. Fasting lets us focus more on God by setting aside our needs and wants.

## What is fasting?

Fasting is stopping an activity (usually eating) for a period of time to know and hear God more. We replace eating or using our gadgets with time with God. This means praying, worshipping, and reading the Bible. These activities strengthen our relationship with God.

When our parents speak to us, we should pay attention and listen to them. Fasting helps us pay attention and listen to God. It helps us put aside distractions. We say to God, “I am going to listen to You because You are my Father. I trust You!”

Jesus gave us an example of fasting in Matthew 4. Jesus knew that He would need strength and power for His ministry. He prepared by fasting for forty days in the desert. During this time, He was tempted by Satan. His response to that temptation is the truth we can hold on to for strength when we fast:

*Jesus answered, “It is written, ‘Man must not live only on bread. He must also live on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”* **MATTHEW 4:4**

Fasting is usually keeping yourself from eating and drinking as you devote more time to God. But you can also fast from different media (TV, video games) and technology (gadgets, internet) if you cannot fast from food. The important thing is to keep your focus away from the things the world offers to spend more time with God.

## **BEFORE FASTING**

### **1. Pray**

Spend time reading the Bible before the fast. Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance in your prayers. Write down your specific prayer requests for your family, friends, church, and nation.

### **2. Commit**

Pray about the kind of fast that you will do and commit to it ahead of time. Ask God for grace to help you follow through with your decision. Also, ask your parents and maybe even your doctor if you are allowed to do a specific type of food fast.

### **3. Act**

If you will be fasting from food, start eating smaller portions a few days before you fast. Avoid sugary and fatty foods. Ask someone to be your prayer partner throughout the fast.

## **WHILE FASTING**

### **1. Focus**

Set aside time to read God's word and pray. This devotional will help you go through your fast. Just be ready to listen to God's voice and do what the Holy Spirit is telling you.

## **2. Pray**

If you can, join at least one prayer meeting in your church. Pray for your family, church, pastors, nation, campuses, and missions throughout the week.

## **3. Fill Up**

During mealtimes, if you're fasting from food, read the Bible and pray instead. Drink plenty of water and rest as much as you can. Keep in mind that you may find yourself becoming physically weak, tired, impatient, or irritated. If you're doing a different type of fast, read the Bible and pray during the time you would normally do what you are fasting from (for example, browsing through social media or playing video games).

# **AFTER FASTING**

## **1. Eat**

If you fasted from food, reintroduce solid food gradually. Your body will need time to adjust to a normal diet. Start with fruits, juices, and salad, then add more vegetables. Eat small portions throughout the day. It may be tempting, but try not to eat junk food and sweets right away. If you've finished a different type of fast, remember what God revealed to you as you spent time with Him. Take what you learned from the fast into your everyday life.

## **2. Pray**

Don't stop praying! Trust that God will keep His promises and knows what He's doing. Don't stop believing in and listening to God all year. Be in faith and expect God to answer your prayers!

# Our Plan

## Day 1

### FASTING OPTIONS

Social media fast

Gadget fast

Skip one meal

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer Meeting(s) to Attend: \_\_\_\_\_

### FAMILY MEMBERS

*Write down the names of the parents and kids who will do this type of fast for today.*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Day 2

### FASTING OPTIONS

Social media fast

Gadget fast

Skip one meal

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer Meeting(s) to Attend: \_\_\_\_\_

### FAMILY MEMBERS

*Write down the names of the parents and kids who will do this type of fast for today.*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Day 3

### FASTING OPTIONS

Social media fast

Gadget fast

Skip one meal

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer Meeting(s) to Attend: \_\_\_\_\_

### FAMILY MEMBERS

*Write down the names of the parents and kids who will do this type of fast for today.*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





# FOR THE REST OF 2024, WE ARE SEEKING GOD AND TRUSTING HIM IN THESE AREAS . . .

What are our prayer requests for the rest of 2024?

**My Family** (e.g., good health for parents and siblings)

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**My School** (e.g., good grades)

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**My Friends** (e.g., for friends to know Jesus)

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**Others** (e.g., for more people to know Christ)

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# Pray in Pairs

Each family member will pray with a relative or friend. Write down the prayer partner's name after each family member's name.

Family Member	Prayer Partner

*“Again, here is what I tell you. Suppose two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for. My Father in heaven will do it for you.”* **MATTHEW 18:19**



# Introduction:

# Set Apart by God

## CONNECT

Prepare:

- An empty bottle
- Water
- Oil

Fill an empty bottle halfway with water. Carefully add a few spoonfuls of oil. What do you see?



Next, shake the bottle and put it back on the table. Allow the bottle to rest for a few minutes. Did the oil mix with the water?

Let the bottle rest for a few more minutes. What do you see?

The oil and water do not mix. Even after you have shaken the bottle, you can still see the layer of oil on the surface of the water. This is due to the scientific composition of water. Its molecules do not allow it to mix with the molecules of oil.

Similarly, when we talk about being set apart, it means not conforming (or mixing) to how the world does things, but being separate from the world and following God.

## READ THE WORD

God is holy. This means that He is unique from everyone else and set apart from common things. He is set apart from everyone in His greatness. He is also set apart from everyone in His goodness. No one is like Him.

And because God is holy or set apart, He is also calling those who trust in Him to also be set apart. He says:

*“You must be holy. You must be set apart to me. I am the LORD. I am holy. I have set you apart from the other nations to be my own people.”* **LEVITICUS 20:26**

What does it mean for us to be set apart?

First, it means being set apart by God for Himself. God set us apart to be in a faithful relationship with Him and He calls us to live for Him. We no longer belong to ourselves but to God. God calls the shots; we don't. Our lives are to be devoted to Him.

Second, it means that God has set us apart from those around us. It does not mean that we distance ourselves from others, but that we are different when it comes to how we think, how we speak, and how we behave. We no longer copy the world; instead, we follow Jesus. It means that our lives should reflect Jesus. We are empowered by the Holy Spirit to live this when we reflect on the truth that God has set us apart for Himself. He transforms the way we



think, speak, and behave, so that others see who God is like when they see us.

## **HUDDLE**

### **Parents to Kids**

#### **2–6 years old**

- Do you want to obey God always? What do you think God wants you to do? (Consider giving some everyday scenarios and ask the child to think about what God wants them to do.)

#### **7–12 years old**

- How do you want to see yourself set apart from others?

### **Kids to Parents**

- What does it mean to reflect God in our lives?

## **PRAY**

Dear God, thank You for setting us apart for Yourself and Your purposes. Holy Spirit, guide and lead us to live in a way that will honor You. In Jesus' name, amen!

## **DISCOVER**

Have you ever read the book of Leviticus? Often we do not read this book with as much interest and zeal as we would read Genesis or Exodus, where exciting events took place.

The book of Leviticus outlines laws and rituals the Israelites had to do and perform in order to be purified. It lists ceremonies to be performed, sacrifices to be made, restrictions to be followed, among other things. At the center of the book, we find the

reason for all of it: God is calling the Israelites to be His people. As His people, they are to be separate from or unlike all the other peoples.

Today, as we live and commit to follow Christ, we are to be a separate people, too—separate from the world that calls us and draws us to live in its ways.



# Day 1:

# Set Apart for God's Honor

## CONNECT

Prepare:

- One thing that your kids love
- One thing that they don't like or is not worth much (e.g., an empty can or a used toilet paper core)

Put the item they like in shabby packaging (e.g., a crumpled paper bag or used paper). Put the item that they do not like in beautiful packaging (e.g., a nice box or paper bag).



Now, let them guess what is in both gifts. After everyone has made a guess, open them.

You can explain the activity like this: How a gift is wrapped is no indication of what it can contain inside. You can see from our example that the beautifully wrapped gift contained something worthless and the one that came in crumpled packaging had something nice inside.

## READ THE WORD

Have you heard of the saying, “Do not judge a book by its cover”? It means that we should not judge or value a person or thing by what we see on the outside alone. A lot more goes on inside and that is where the real value or importance lies.

We have learned that being set apart means that we are no longer living according to the ways of other people. We now live according to God’s ways. But more than just our actions on the outside, which other people can see, God also wants our hearts to be aligned to Him.

*<sup>1</sup>The Pharisees gathered around Jesus. So did some of the teachers of the law. All of them had come from Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup>They saw some of his disciples eating food with “unclean” hands. That means they were not washed. <sup>3</sup>The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands to make them “clean.” That’s what the elders teach. <sup>4</sup>When they come from the market, they do not eat unless they wash. And they follow many other teachings. For example, they wash cups, pitchers, and kettles in a special way. <sup>5</sup>So the Pharisees and the teachers of the law questioned Jesus. “Why don’t your disciples live by what the elders teach?” they asked. “Why do they eat their food with ‘unclean’ hands?” <sup>6</sup>He replied, “Isaiah was right. He prophesied about you people who pretend to be good. He said, ““These people honor me by what they say. But their hearts are far away from me. <sup>7</sup>Their worship doesn’t mean anything to me. They teach nothing but human rules. <sup>8</sup>You have let go of God’s commands. And you are holding on to teachings that people have made up.”*

**MARK 7:1-8**



Jesus rebuked the Pharisees because, at that time, they had made numerous rules for the people to follow. Some of the rules required people to keep their bodies clean (e.g., washing their hands, washing their cups). As a result, the people became so focused on following these rules to keep their physical bodies clean, but their motives were not right. They were filled with pride thinking that they were able to follow all the rules that were given to them, while looking down on those who were not able to follow them. They perhaps thought that their physical actions honored God, but their hearts were far from it. They had become focused on following the rules of men. They are like that beautifully wrapped gift that contained something worthless inside.

Honoring God is not simply about following a set of rules. It is about seeking God and His will. It is about devoting our hearts wholly to Him.

# HUDDLE

## Parents to Kids

### 2–6 years old

- What are some rules that you have to obey?

### 7–12 years old

- What are some ways you can choose to honor God at home? How about in school?
- How much of your heart do you think is devoted to God—30%? 50%? 80%? 100%?

## Kids to Parents

- Was there a time when you had to choose between following and honoring God and following what others said? What happened? Share it with your family.

Honoring God is a matter of the heart. We try to correct ourselves and our kids whenever something is wrong. But more than correcting outward behavior, we need to look at the heart. If we have a clean heart, this will eventually show in our words and actions.

Let us be in the habit of checking our motives. Keep seeking God. Ask Him to help you surrender areas in your life where you currently struggle to honor Him. Ask Him to help you be sensitive to hear and obey when He speaks to us. You know what? Jesus came so that we can have pure hearts. We can go to Him, and He will help us make our hearts clean.

## **PRAY**

Dear God, thank You for choosing us and for setting us apart. Please help us to turn our hearts to You and to surrender every area in our life to You. Remind us why You set us apart and placed the desire in our hearts to honor You. In Jesus' name, amen!

## **DISCOVER**

Who were the Pharisees?

In Jesus' time, they were leaders who oversaw the religious and political arenas of their state. They studied the Scriptures and taught people in the synagogues.

However, in interpreting the Scriptures, they added their own opinions to the teachings. Hence, they came up with additional rules which people must follow. Some of these rules were so complicated that they themselves found it difficult to follow them. They demanded that people follow them and, in the process, they forgot how to be compassionate to people.

Did you know that there were 613 rules that everyone should follow? The religious leaders were so hard bent on having people follow them that these rules became a false set of standards for people to follow. Instead of leading people to follow Scriptures, they led to follow the teachings of men. This was what Jesus was pointing out to them.

## Day 2:

# Set Apart to Make Disciples on Our Campuses

### CONNECT

Think of some traditions that your family has been practicing. They may be something you do every weekend, or on special occasions like birthdays, Christmas, New Year, or any other occasion. You may even have traditions for non-occasions, such as

summer or during other days. Share these as a family. If you can remember, share their origins as well. Were they handed down to you from your parents? Or did you and your spouse jointly decide to start new traditions? If so, share with your kids why you came up with the new traditions.



Traditions are beliefs or practices passed down from one generation to the next. They serve to strengthen bonds between one another and across generations. Some traditions have survived generations, while other traditions have changed or are no longer being done. The secret to keeping traditions alive is to pass them on. Once it is not passed on, it dies.

## READ THE WORD

When the Israelites were in the desert, God instructed them to tell their children about Him and His wonderful deeds.

*<sup>7</sup>Make sure your children learn them. Talk about them when you are at home. Talk about them when you walk along the road. Speak about them when you go to bed. And speak about them when you get up. <sup>8</sup>Write them down and tie them on your hands as a reminder. Also tie them on your foreheads. <sup>9</sup>Write them on the doorframes of your houses. Also write them on your gates.*

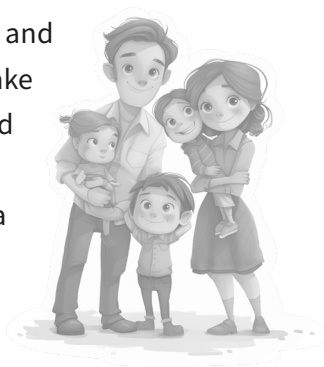
**DEUTERONOMY 6:7-9**

This command from God is serious and with purpose. When the Israelites failed to do this, a whole generation grew up not knowing God.

*All the people of Joshua's time joined the members of their families who had already died. Then those who were born after them grew up. They didn't know the LORD and what he had done for Israel. **JUDGES 2:10***

Being set apart for God is not an end. It is active, and the hope is to see the generations that come after to likewise live for God. It takes active involvement and participation. Teaching our children and the next generation takes a commitment. It will

not happen by chance. When parents and the older generation intentionally make the effort to pass on all they know and how they have experienced Jesus, generations will arise that will make a stand for Jesus.



## HUDDLE

### Parents to Kids

#### 2–6 years old

- Do you enjoy listening to stories from the Bible? Which one do you like the best? Why?

#### 7–12 years old

- Think of how God has been faithful to you personally. How can you share this to the generation coming after you?

### Kids to Parents

- How has God been faithful to you? Share stories with your kids.
- How can we as a family take part in making disciples on the campuses?

Whether you have one or more, we all have stories of God’s faithfulness in our lives. Actively share them with younger people—whether they are younger siblings, your children, your grandchildren, or your neighbor’s children. Be intentional in ministering to them and showing them the love of Jesus. God loves them, too, and doesn’t want them to live in sin and to perish.



## **PRAY**

Dear God, thank You for the lives of the young people. You love them so much. Use us to reach them, to show them Your love, to minister to them in ways they need. Give us wisdom on how to reach them, to speak their language, and to love them the way You love them. May they grow up knowing You and loving You, and may their lives be devoted to You. In Jesus' name, amen!

## **DISCOVER**

Some examples of young people in the Bible who grew up loving the Lord because someone took time to tell them about God:

- Samuel grew up under the guidance of Eli, the high priest during his time.
- Daniel's parents taught him well such that when he was in exile in Babylon, he always sought God.
- Joseph learned much from his father, Jacob, so that even when he was a slave in Egypt, he trusted God.
- Timothy was faithfully raised by his grandmother Lois and his mother, Eunice, to know and follow God. Timothy later became a constant companion of Paul in his missionary journeys.

Let this be an encouragement to us to make disciples of the young people around us.

**Day 3:**

# **Set Apart to Make Disciples in Our Communities**

## **CONNECT**

Give everyone a piece of paper.

Think of people you see regularly who are not members of your family. Examples include your neighbors, those you see in school, or those you work with every day. Write as many names as you can think of on the paper provided.

Share your answers with everyone. This list tells us who your community is. Even if they are not part of your family, you see them a lot and you remain connected with them.

After this, set your paper aside for a while.

## READ THE WORD

God loves the world so much that He has set apart His people to proclaim the gospel and make disciples of the people in their communities. This is why, more than ever, we are to live the message of love given to us by Jesus.

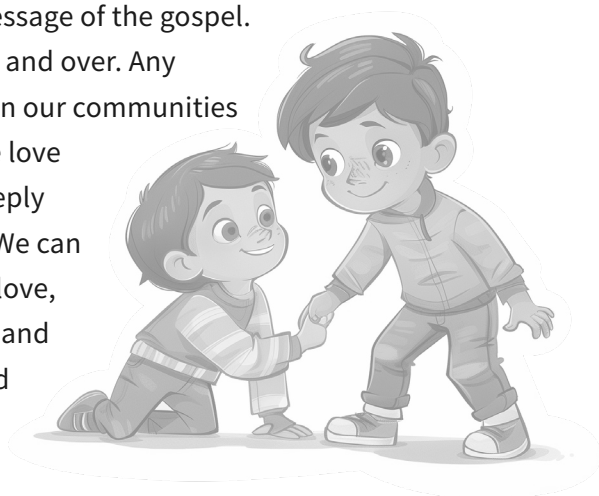
*<sup>30</sup>“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Love him with all your mind and with all your strength.” <sup>31</sup>And here is the second one. ‘Love your neighbor as you love yourself.’ There is no commandment more important than these.”* **MARK 12:30-31**

*<sup>27</sup>“But here is what I tell you who are listening. Love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. <sup>28</sup>Bless those who call down curses on you. And pray for those who treat you badly.”* **LUKE 6:27-28**

*<sup>34</sup>“I give you a new command. Love one another. You must love one another, just as I have loved you. <sup>35</sup>If you love one another, everyone will know you are my disciples.”*

**JOHN 13:34-35**

Love is the central message of the gospel. Jesus spoke of it over and over. Any impact we will make in our communities will be because of the love of God, which can deeply touch people’s lives. We can be channels of God’s love, especially to the hurt and broken people around us. Let us be open,



be bold, and be generous in showing God's love to people who desperately need it. It is through living a life of love that the community of people around us will know that we are truly Jesus' disciples and are proclaiming the truth about Jesus.

## HUDDLE

### Parents to Kids

#### 2–6 years old

- How do you treat other people? How do you speak to others?

#### 7–12 years old

- Do you think others can see Jesus in you based on the way you treat them? Share a story.

### Kids to Parents

- Do you have to show love to everyone, even to people you do not like? How?

Our lives speak a lot of what we believe in our hearts. As followers of Jesus, let our lives be a reflection of His love. More than what we say to others, it is through love, kindness, compassion, generosity, patience, and graciousness that they will see Jesus in our lives.

*<sup>8</sup>Most of all, love one another deeply. Love erases many sins by forgiving them. <sup>9</sup>Welcome others into your homes without complaining. <sup>10</sup>God's gifts of grace come in many forms. Each of you has received a gift in order to serve others. You should use it faithfully. <sup>11</sup>If anyone speaks, they should do it as one speaking God's words. If anyone serves, they should do it with the strength God provides.*

*Then in all things God will be praised through Jesus Christ. Glory and power belong to him for ever and ever. Amen.* **1 PETER 4:8-11**

Remember the list of people you made earlier? They are the people in your community, and Jesus loves them, too. Think of ways you can reach out to them. Let us be intentional in engaging and loving them in every way. Our hope is that they may encounter Jesus personally.

## PRAY

Dear God, thank You because You love all of us. Please help me share Your love with others. Help me reflect Your goodness and faithfulness to others. Give me patience and compassion so I may treat others well. Use me, Lord, to reach them—especially those who do not know You yet. In Jesus' name, amen!

## DISCOVER

Do you know that the commandments of Jesus teaching us to love are not new? God gave those same commandments to the Israelites centuries ago, back in the days when they were still in the wilderness.

*<sup>30</sup>“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Love him with all your mind and with all your strength.”<sup>31</sup>And here is the second one. ‘Love your neighbor as you love yourself.’ There is no commandment more important than these.”* **MARK 12:30-31**

*Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Love him with all your strength.*

**DEUTERONOMY 6:5**

*“Do not try to get even. Do not hold anything against any of your people. Instead, love your neighbor as you love yourself. I am the LORD.”* **LEVITICUS 19:18**

God’s commandments to us remain the same, whether centuries ago or today. He gives the same commandment because He is the same God and He loves us the same. He wants us to love Him and to love others because He is love. Isn’t that such a comfort that God never changes? Truly, we can trust and rely on Him.



# Conclusion:

# Set Apart to Make Disciples in Every Nation

## CONNECT

Have your children match the following:

1. A healthy fruit that you can eat or drink	a. Shirt
2. Something that you use to take notes in school or make cool drawings	b. Pineapple
3. Something you wear to keep your body clean from dirt while looking good	c. Pencil

Did you get all of the answers correct?

Each item has a specific purpose that only it can fulfill. A pencil can't do the same thing as a shirt, and vice versa. The



same is true for all of us. God has given us unique gifts and a specific place to fulfill His purpose in our lives.

## READ THE WORD

<sup>4</sup>A message from the LORD came to me. The LORD said,  
<sup>5</sup>"Before I formed you in your mother's body I chose you. Before you were born I set you apart to serve me. I appointed you to be a prophet to the nations."  
<sup>6</sup>"You are my LORD and King," I said. "I don't know how to speak. I'm too young."  
<sup>7</sup>But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I'm too young.' You must go to everyone I send you to. You must say everything I command you to say."  
<sup>8</sup>Do not be afraid of the people I send you to. I am with you. I will save you," announces the LORD.  
<sup>9</sup>Then the LORD reached out his hand. He touched my mouth and spoke to me. He said, "I have put my words in your mouth."  
<sup>10</sup>Today I am appointing you to speak to nations and kingdoms. I give you authority to pull them up by the roots and tear them down. I give you authority to destroy them and crush them. I give you authority to build them up and plant them." **JEREMIAH 1:4-10**

As a young boy, Jeremiah received these words from God. God told him that He knew him even before he was born, and that Jeremiah had been called to be a prophet to the nations. Jeremiah protested, but God assured him that He would be with him.

Jeremiah had a God-given purpose for his life. And from the Bible, we know that Jeremiah lived out that purpose. He became a prophet to the nation of Israel. Even if the people did not listen to him, he persevered and continued giving God's message to the people.



Today, we have a mandate from God to tell others about Jesus, in our homes and families, in school, in our communities, and in other nations. We have the most wonderful message to tell that people need to hear. Let us be bold and take part in this work of taking the gospel wherever people are.

## **HUDDLE**

### **Parents to Kids**

#### **2–6 years old**

- Think of ways you can tell your playmates and friends about Jesus.

#### **7–12 years old**

- How can you tell your friends who still do not know Jesus about who He is and what He has done for you?
- Ask God for a nation that you can pray for. Pray for this nation today.

### **Kids to Parents**

- How have you fulfilled God's command to tell others about Jesus?

As a family, think of ways you can take part in telling others about the gospel. Perhaps you can invite another family to church or share a meal with them. If you see they have a need, perhaps you can find ways to help them. There are many different ways to do this. Ask God to open doors and lead you to people who need to hear the gospel.

## PRAY

Dear God, thank You for setting us apart. Thank You because You have set us apart for Your honor. Please help me live it out every day. Help me be bold, to open my mouth, and to speak to others of You. God, we also pray for the nations that still need to hear about You. We pray that You give us ideas on how we can take part in bringing Your gospel not just to our nation but to other nations as well. In Jesus' name, amen!

## DISCOVER

Jeremiah served as a prophet to the people of Judah for over forty years. Even though it was a tough time for Judah, Jeremiah's message was not well-received. The message of judgment fell on deaf ears as people continued to live in disobedience to God.

But God is merciful. In this book, God offered a glimpse of the new covenant He intended for His people. This was fulfilled in Christ, and now people can know Him directly. This is where we are now. Through Jesus, we are able to enjoy a personal relationship with God and tell others about Him.

