

Keys to I.S.R.A.E.L. FOR KIDS



Mediterranean Sea

Sea of Galilee

ISRAEL

Tel Aviv

Jericho

Jerusalem

Dead Sea

EGYPT

UR →

Beersheba

Mount Sinai

Gulf of Aqaba

SIX LESSONS TO
KEYS
TO
ISRAEL
UNLOCKING GOD'S TRUTH



LESSON 5

I.S.R.A.**E**.L. — **E**ducate

LESSON OBJECTIVE

This lesson will help Christian children understand that:

1. God's children needed to find out the facts about the land of "milk and honey" God had promised to them
2. God's children needed to believe and trust in the truth
3. Christians today need to learn about Israel and God's people by educating themselves and trusting in the truth.

KEY VERSE

*Guide me in your truth and teach me,
for you are God my Savior,
and my hope is in you all day long.*

— PSALM 25:5

MEMORY VERSE

*Guide me in your truth and teach me
for you are God my Savior...*

— PSALM 25:5

BIBLE BASIS

Numbers 13

SUPPLIES NEEDED FOR THIS LESSON

- | | | |
|---------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Index cards | • Glue | OPTIONAL: Pictures of the following |
| • Scissors | • Large piece of | (or the actual item): |
| • Bibles | construction paper | • Wheat |
| • Crayons | or cardstock | • Barley |
| | | • Grapes |
| | | • Figs |
| | | • Pomegranates |
| | | • Olive oil |
| | | • Honey |

Getting Started (*optional*)

TELEPHONE!

Prepare for the game

Before the children arrive, have a half dozen “messages” printed out on index cards. Make sure you have two sets of cards. Each set of cards should have the same message. You can use tongue-twisters, or other silly messages. Make sure they are easy for children to read, so the children won't stumble on hard-to-read words.

Here are some sample messages that you could use:

Twelve twins twirled twelve twigs.

She sells seashells by the seashore.

Five frantic frogs fled from fifty fierce fishes.

A big black bug bit the big black bear.

Bake big batches of bitter brown bread.

Four furious friends fought for the phone.

As the children come in, divide them into two teams and have them sit in two lines.

Tell them:

We're going to play a fun game that you probably have played before at birthday parties. It's called “Telephone,” and the object of the game is to pass along a silly message the quickest and the clearest!

1. I will give the first person in each line a message to pass along.
2. That person will whisper the message to the second person, who will then pass along what he or she heard to the next person, and so on.
3. We'll see who gets the message passed along the fastest — and which team comes closest to passing along the original message!
4. One more thing — you can only say the message once to the next person!

Everyone ready? Let's start!

Make sure you give both teams the same message!

You can play the game as many times as you like. When finished, wrap up the game:

Wow! That was fun, wasn't it? We got some pretty mixed-up messages, didn't we? We had fun sharing silly messages, but when we have an important message to share, we need to make sure everyone can understand what we are saying, and that information we are sharing is true.

Knowing the truth is very important! That's why our next KEY to I.S.R.A.E.L. is **E** for **E**ducate! God wants us to know the facts and the truth about His land and His people so we can help educate others about Israel, too! It's like our "Telephone game." God tells us, and then we can tell others!

What are some ways that we can educate ourselves when we want to know about something?

Allow for some answers. Then continue:

We can go on the internet. We can use Google and find out information about many different topics. Or we can go to the library and check out books. We can go to school and learn from our teachers. We can learn from our parents and other adults. But what do you think is the best way to find out the facts about God's people and Israel?

Allow for some answers. Then say:

That's right, the Bible! God Himself will help teach us the truth through His Word.

Let's listen to a few verses from the Bible:

*Guide me in your truth and teach me,
for you are God my Savior,
and my hope is in you all day long. — PSALM 25:5*

*I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go;
I will counsel you with my loving eye on you. — PSALM 32:8*

*His God instructs him
and teaches him the right way. — ISAIAH 28:26*

*But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you
into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will
speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet
to come. — JOHN 16:13*

NOTE TO TEACHERS:

*If you have older students,
have volunteers look up the
Bible verses and read them
aloud to the class.*

*Read as many of these verses
as time permits.*

Telling the Story

Introduce the story by saying to the children:

The Bible clearly tells us that God will teach us what we need to know, and that we can trust in Him as our guide. Our Bible story today takes place when the children of Israel were still in the desert after leaving Egypt. Moses wanted to know more information about the land that God had promised to Abraham years and years ago, so he sent 12 spies into the land to find out information.

VIDEO

Introduce the video and today's Key to I.S.R.A.E.L. — Educate:

Let's begin with a short video introducing our Key to I.S.R.A.E.L. for today and our Bible story, about what happened when the spies returned and gave their reports to Moses!

Show the video:



BIBLE STORY (NUMBERS 13:1-3; 17-33; 14:1-9) — GOD'S PEOPLE RETURN

Introduce the Bible story by saying:

Our story takes place in the desert, in the wilderness of Paran near the border of the land known as Canaan. This was the very same land that God had promised to Abraham years and years ago.

God told Moses, “Send 12 men to explore the land of Canaan, the land I am giving to Israel.” So Moses chose one man from each of the 12 tribes of Israel and gave them these instructions:

“Go up through the Negev and on into the hill country. See what the land is like and whether the people who live there are strong or weak, few or many. What kind of land do they live in? Is it good or bad? What kind of towns do they live in? Are they unwalled or fortified? How is the soil? Is it fertile or poor? Are there trees in it or not? Do your best to bring back some of the fruit of the land.” (Numbers 13:17-20)

All this would be good information for the people to learn about their new home. So the scouts set out and explored the land, about 500 miles from south to north and back again. When they reached the valley of Eshkol, they cut off a branch bearing a single cluster of grapes. It was so large that two men had to carry it on a pole between them! After 40 days, they came back to Moses with their report. First, they all gave Moses and the people the good news: *“We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit”* (Numbers 13:27), and they showed them the gigantic grapes, as well as some pomegranates and figs they had taken as well.



Then they gave the people the bad news: *“But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large”* (Numbers 13:28). They told Moses and the people that there was no way the Israelites could defeat these powerful armies and conquer these strong cities. One of the 12 spies, a man named Caleb, spoke up against the report and tried to encourage the people, “We should go up and take possession of the land. We can do it!”

But the ten spies were too afraid, and again they told the people, “We can’t attack these people. It can’t be done. They are stronger than we are, they are bigger than we are. We look like grasshoppers to them.” At that, all the people

believed the 10 spies and began to cry and moan, “Oh why did we ever leave Egypt? Why is the Lord taking us to this land only to have us die in battle? We should go back to Egypt!”

Then Joshua, another of the 12 spies, joined with Caleb and stood against the crowd, and told them:

“The land we passed through and explored is exceedingly good. If the LORD is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us. Only do not rebel against the LORD. And do not be afraid of the people of the land, because we will devour them. Their protection is gone, but the LORD is with us. Do not be afraid of them.” (Numbers 14:7-9).

But the people refused to listen to Caleb and Joshua. Perhaps you know what happened next. As punishment for not trusting in Him, God sent Moses and the people back out into the wilderness to wander for another 40 years. Not one of them was allowed to enter the land — except for Caleb and Joshua! They were the only two who had educated themselves about the land, who knew the truth, and who trusted in God to keep His promises.





TODAY'S STORY — ABRAHAM AND THE IDOL SMASHER

Introduce the Bible story by saying:

Today's story is based on the Jewish Oral Tradition, called the *Talmud*, teachings that were passed down through the generations since the giving of the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai. Jesus would have studied these teachings, too!

When Abraham was a young child he lived in a city named Ur. The people of Ur believed that statues made of wood, clay, metal, or stone were gods. These statues were called idols, and every family in Ur had their own collection.

One boy was different. One boy wondered how something made out of wood, clay, metal, or stone could possibly be powerful. That boy was Abraham, and he was the first in his land to recognize that there was one God.

Believing something that was different than what everyone else thought was dangerous in Ur. Abraham could get into big trouble if he told everyone what he believed. But that didn't stop him.

Abraham's father Terah made and sold idols. In fact, he had the biggest idol shop in Ur! One day Terah had to leave the store and asked his son Abraham to watch the store for a while. This was Abraham's chance to share the truth!

The first customer walked in and asked to buy an idol. "How old are you?" asked Abraham. "50 years old," replied the customer proudly. "So why would you want to buy an idol that is only one day old?" asked Abraham. "Surely you know more than it does!" The man left the store embarrassed that he had even considered buying a day-old idol.

The next customer walked in. It was a woman who had brought an offering for the idols. This gave Abraham an idea. In front of the horrified customer, Abraham destroyed almost every single idol in his father store, smashing them to bits and pieces with a large stick. Abraham left only one idol standing – the biggest one of them all. He put the stick in the hand of the statue, and waited for his father to come back to the store.

When Terah arrived back at the shop, he couldn't believe what he saw. His precious idols were shattered! "What happened? Who destroyed all the idols?" he demanded to know. Abraham explained, "A woman brought an offering, and all the idols argued about who would enjoy it first. Then that big idol destroyed all the others!" Abraham pointed to the big idol with the stick in its hand.

“That’s ridiculous!” growled his angry father. “Everyone knows idols are only statues and don’t know anything!” “Exactly!” said Abraham. “Idols are nothing more than wood, clay, metal, or stone. And yet you worship them!”

Terah was very angry with Abraham. He took him to King Nimrod and told him what his son had done. King Nimrod ordered that Abraham be thrown into a fiery furnace. King Nimrod, with an evil laugh, said “Let’s see your God save you now!” But do you know what? Abraham walked through the fire and not a hair on his head had been burned! The God of Abraham protected him.

From then on, slowly but surely, Abraham told others the truth about God. Abraham was educated, he knew the facts, and he trusted in God. And because of that, Abraham changed the entire world.

(Genesis Rabbah, Chapter 38)



Talk about it!

Use the following questions and discussion to help children understand how God's children needed to believe and trust in the truth and how Christians today need to learn about Israel and God's people by educating themselves and trusting in the truth. Use as many of the questions below as you like to discuss the main points of the lesson with the children. Your students may not know the answers to all the questions, but challenge them to think about possible responses before you share the answer. Choose questions that you think will enhance your discussion, and use others for background information if students have questions.

Why do you think Abraham was the only one in Ur to realize that idols were not really gods? How did he become the first person to know the truth?

Abraham discovered the truth because Abraham asked questions.

In Abraham's time and in our time, most people do things and think things just because everyone else around them is doing and thinking those same things. But Abraham decided to think for himself, ask questions, and honestly seek the true answers. Remember, we can always ask for God's help in finding the truth, as He promises us in Psalm 32:8, *"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you."*

What do you think Abraham was hoping would happen when he smashed all the idols in his father's store? Was he trying to make his father mad?

We know that Abraham was a very kind person. He dedicated his life to helping other people, like we see in Genesis 18 when he runs to greet and take care of the three strangers who visit him. It couldn't be that Abraham was trying to make his father upset. Rather, Abraham was hoping that his father would see the truth and change his life for the better. He wanted his father to know the truth because he loved his father. Just like Abraham, when we share what we believe and stand for the truth, we must always do it out of love, never out of hatred.

Why do you think Terah got so upset? Why didn't he listen to what Abraham was trying to tell him like the first customer who learned from Abraham and decided not to buy an idol?

There will always be people who do not want to hear the truth no matter how obvious it is — just like the children of Israel, who heard the good news about the land, but believed the bad report because they were afraid. There can be many reasons why people do not want to change what they believe. For Terah it could be that if he decided that idols were worthless, it would cost him his business and all the money he made selling idols. In Ur, it would have also made him outcast. Our job is to educate ourselves and share what we know. What others do is ultimately up to them.

What can we learn from Abraham's story and the story of the 12 spies to help us learn the truth about Israel and share it?

- **Like Abraham, we must always ask questions.** No matter what other people think or tell us about Israel, we must think for ourselves, ask questions, and seek out the answers through learning and education.
- **Abraham's story teaches us that what is popular isn't always right** and what is right isn't always popular, but we must choose to do what is right anyway.
- **Abraham, Caleb, and Joshua teach us to have the courage to speak the truth,** and be willing to stand up against the crowd in order to do so.
- **When we share the facts about Israel, we must speak from a place of love.** We must try to be as gentle and kind as we can when we want others to hear what we are saying.

Because Abraham, Caleb and Joshua were willing to stand up for the truth and trusting God, what happened?

Because these men were willing to stand up for the truth, God was able to use these men to further His plan for His children and for the world. As we have learned in our earlier lessons, Abraham was the recipient of God's promise for him to become the father of a great nation and that the land of Israel would always be the homeland of God's children. Caleb and Joshua were the only two men from the Israelites who left Egypt with Moses to enter the Promised Land. God appointed Joshua to lead His children into the Promised Land, and Joshua conquered Jericho and many other cities with God's help.

When we are courageous and stand for the truth, God can use us as well to help His children, Israel. Who knows what God will be able to accomplish through us!

Apply It!

Say to the children:

Who remembers our Key to I.S.R.A.E.L. for today?

Allow for responses, then say:

That's right! **E** is for **E**ducate. We learned from our Bible story and our story from the Jewish tradition, that it is important to educate ourselves and learn the truth about Israel, and then to have the courage to stand up and share that truth with others.

In just a few minutes, we are going to make a deck of cards — some have fun facts about Israel on them.

1. Cut out the cards and take them home to share with your family and friends.
2. Then challenge yourself during the week to discover more about God's Holy Land, Israel, that you can share with others by visiting the Keys to I.S.R.A.E.L. for Kids website, www.ifcj.org/keys.

Did You Know?
The cell phone was developed in Israel!



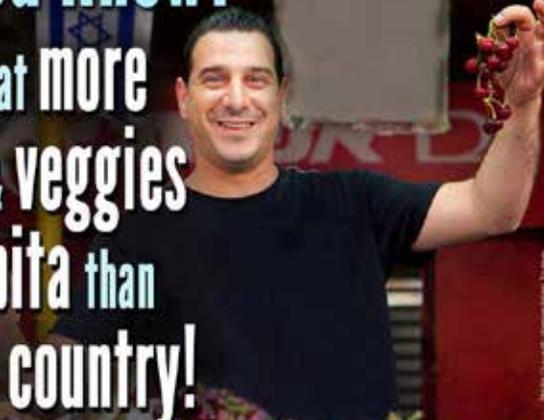
International Fellowship of Christians and Jews®
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Did You Know?
Shabbat is one of the most important holy days in Judaism.



International Fellowship of Christians and Jews®
IFCJ.org/ISRAELforkids

Did You Know?
Israelis eat more fruits & veggies per capita than any other country!



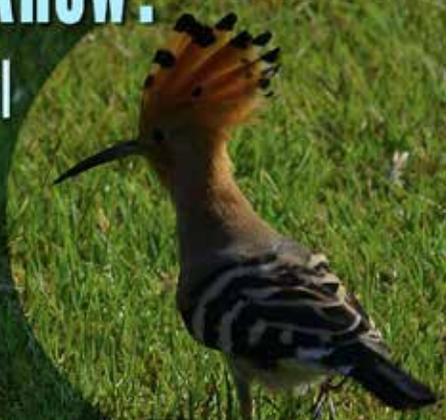
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Did You Know?
Over 7 million people speak Hebrew worldwide!



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Did You Know?
Israel's national bird is the hoopoe



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Did You Know?
The average ISRAELI eats over 20 PINTS of ice cream per year!



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Activity — Seven Fruits of Israel Placemats

Prepare for the activity

For this project, you will need pictures of the following (or the actual item):

- Wheat
- Barley
- Grapes
- Large piece of card stock or construction paper for each student
- Scissors
- Figs
- Pomegranates
- Olive Oil
- Crayons
- Honey
- Glue

Introduce the activity

In the book of Deuteronomy, the fifth book of the *Torah* that makes up what we call the Pentateuch, Moses was telling the people of Israel about the land that God had promised to them through Abraham — the land that was to become their home Israel. Listen to what he said:

For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land—a land with brooks, streams, and deep springs gushing out into the valleys and hills; a land with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey; a land where bread will not be scarce and you will lack nothing; a land where the rocks are iron and you can dig copper out of the hills. — DEUTERONOMY 8:7-9

That sounds like a wonderful place to live, doesn't it. In this verse, we learn about seven different foods that would nourish the people once they settled in the Promised Land. Can you tell me what those foods are?

Allow for answers. Then say:

In the Jewish faith, each of these foods, known as the Seven Fruits of Israel, represents a special characteristic:

- Wheat, kindness
- Barley, restraint or boundaries
- Grapes, beauty
- Figs, endurance
- Pomegranates, majesty
- Olives (oil), foundation
- Dates (or figs), kingdom

Today, we are going to make a placemat to take home to your family with the Seven Fruits of Israel.

NOTES TO TEACHER:

You might want to provide either pictures of each food item, or bring in the actual food, so the children will know how to color their fruits.

To make the placemats more usable, you can have them laminated and return to the children the next time you see them.

For older students, have them write one of the following Bible verses on their mat. Or you can type out one of the following verses, and have the children cut out the verse and glue it onto their placemat:

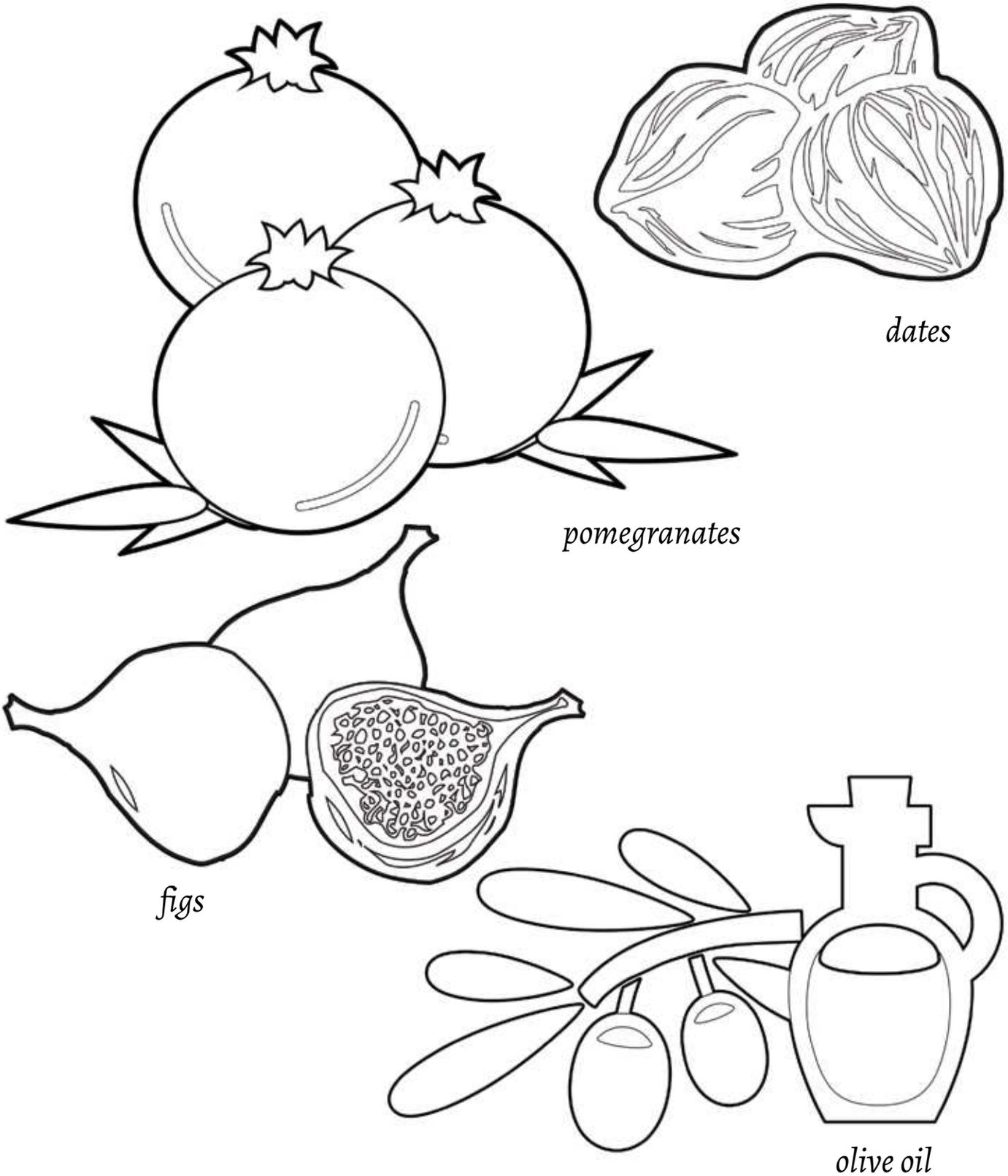
For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land.
— DEUTERONOMY 8:7

I would bring them out of Egypt into a land I had searched for them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the most beautiful of lands.
— EZEKIEL 20:6

“Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land,” says the LORD Almighty. — MALACHI 3:12

Activity — Seven Fruits of Israel Placemats

Color the different food items, cut them out, and then paste onto a larger piece of construction paper, or card stock.



dates

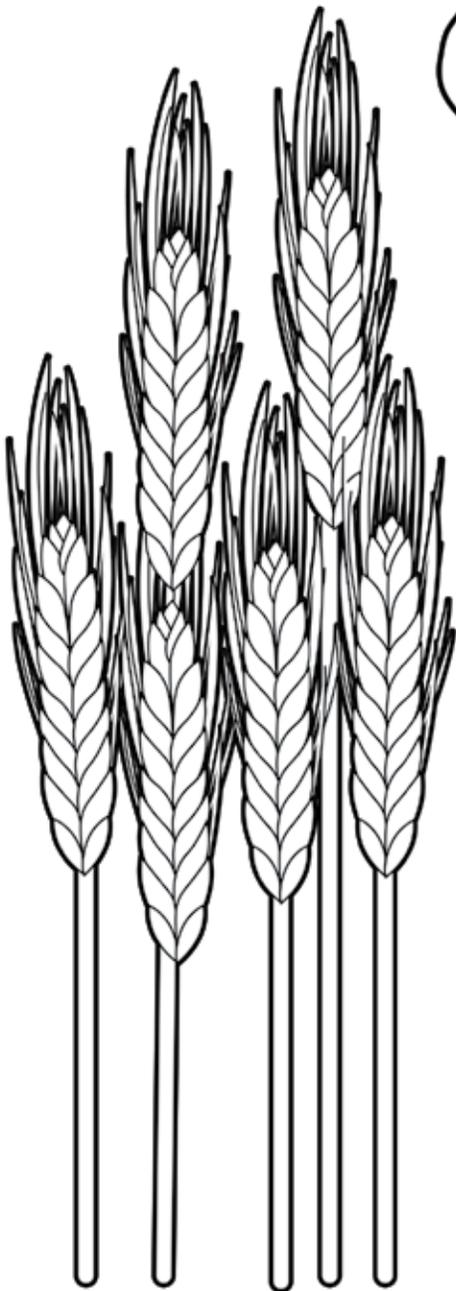
pomegranates

figs

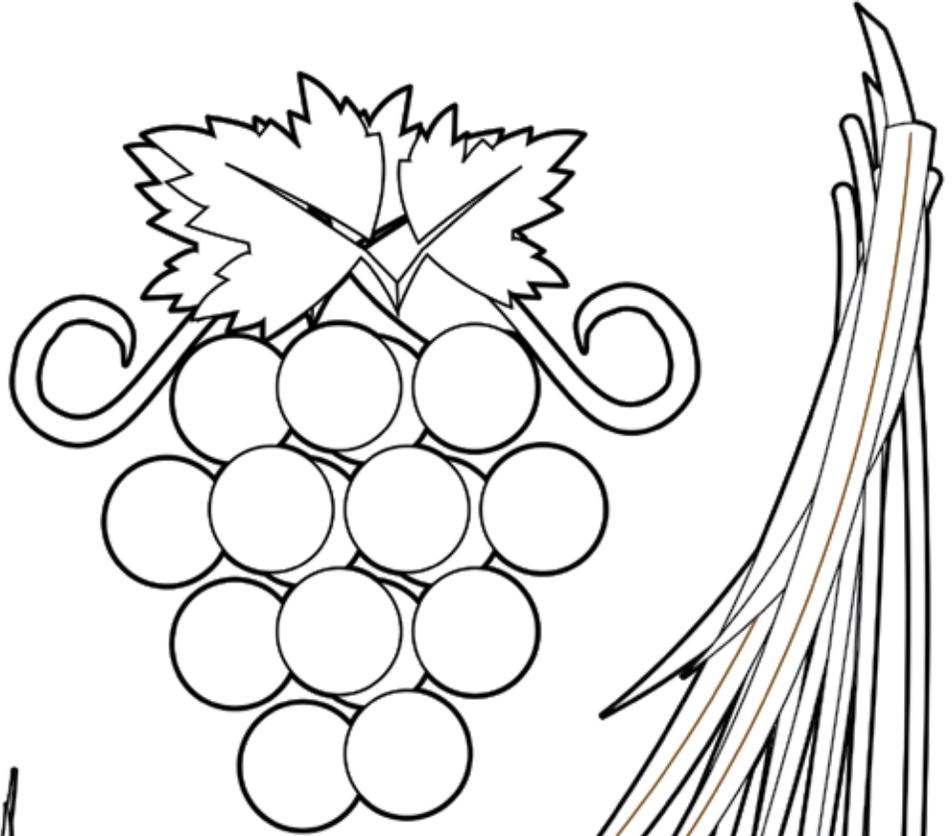
olive oil

Activity — Seven Fruits of Israel Placemats (*continued*)

Color the different food items, cut them out, and then paste onto a larger piece of construction paper, or card stock.



barley



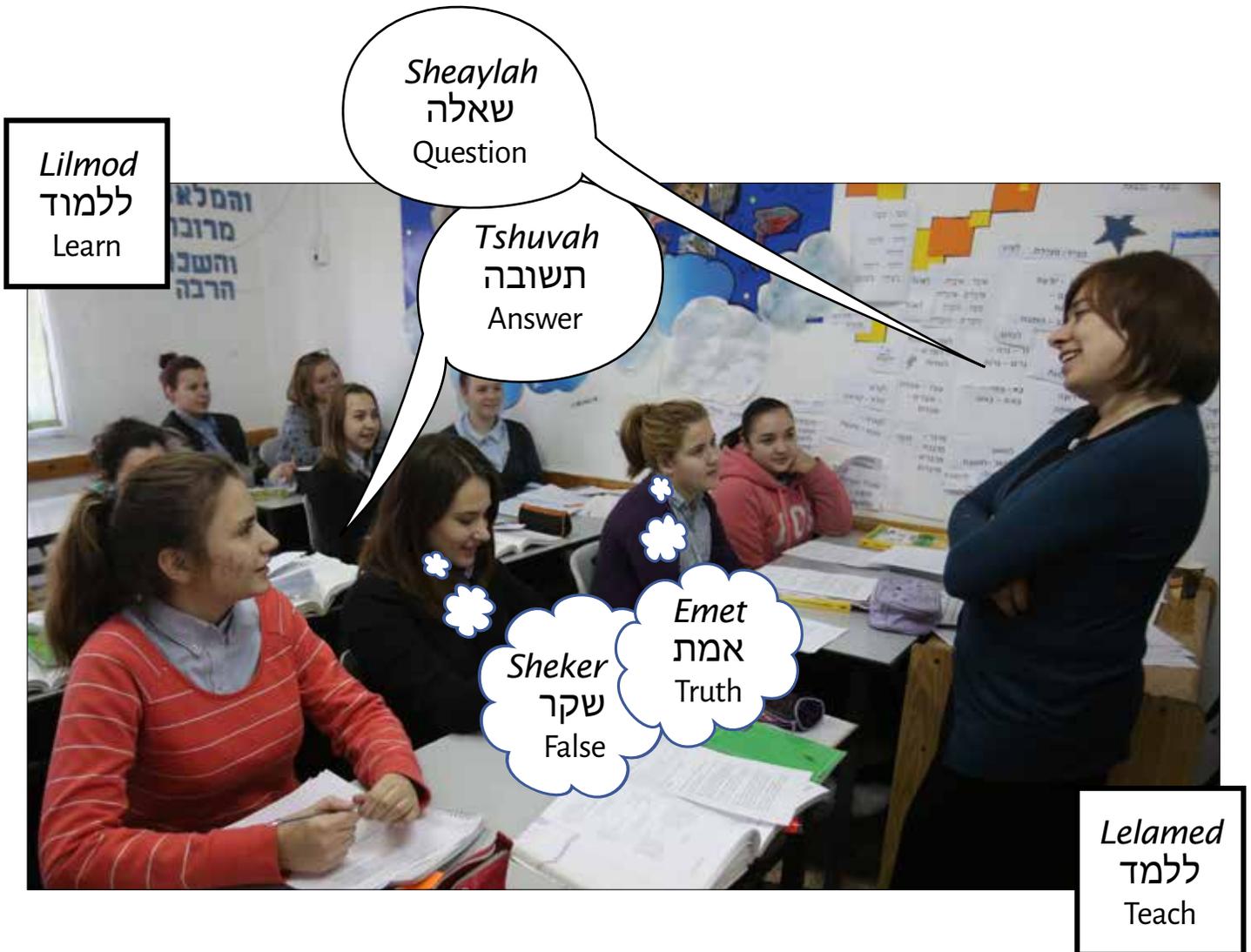
grapes



wheat

Let's Learn Hebrew

Listen to our Hebrew words for this lesson at www.ifcj.org/keys.



Your Key to I.S.R.A.E.L.

Make the key.

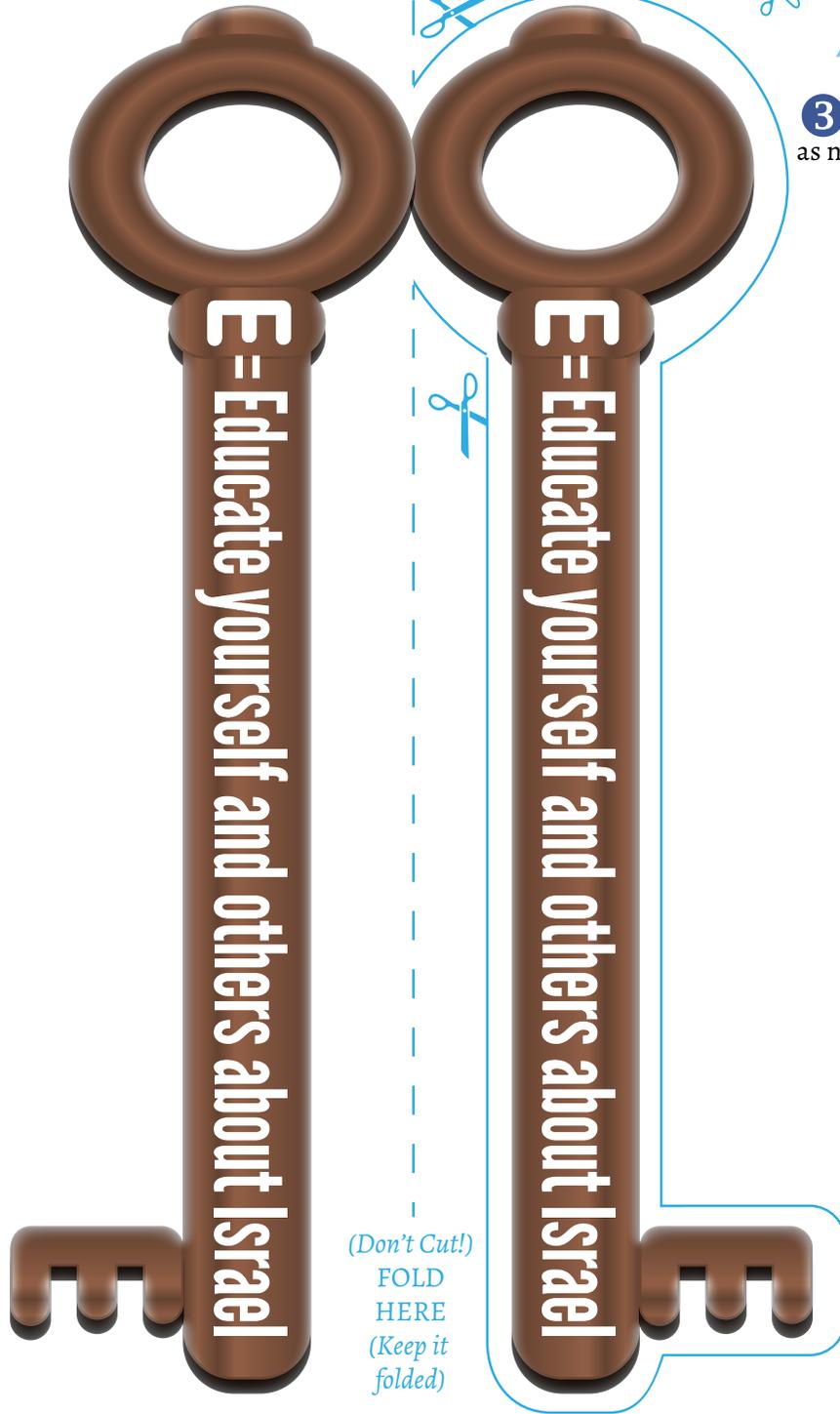
1 Fold on dotted line
(keep it folded)



2 With paper folded, cut along solid line



3 Tape as needed



(Don't Cut!)
FOLD
HERE
(Keep it folded)

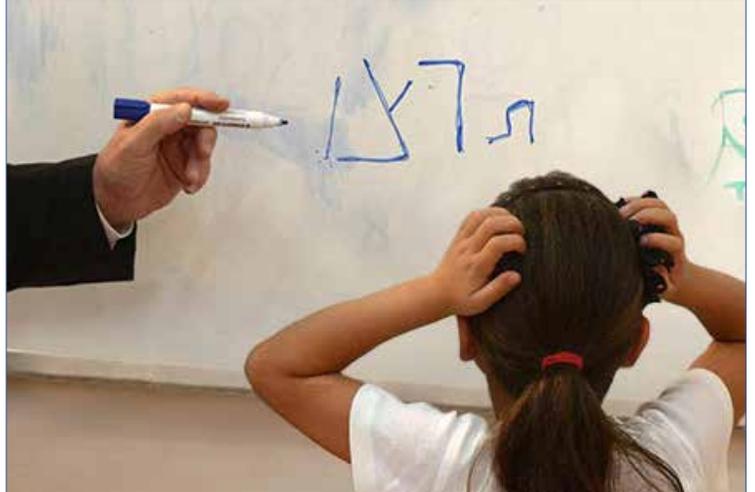
Family Time

THE POWER OF A GOOD QUESTION

*The discerning heart seeks knowledge,
but the mouth of a fool feeds on folly.*

— PROVERBS 15:14

If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. — JAMES 1:5



It's been said that Eskimos have around 50 words for what we call “snow.” This attests to the importance of snow in the life of an Eskimo.

Similarly, the Jewish people have around 20 different terms for the word “question,” because questions are central to living a life with a thirst for biblical wisdom and knowledge.

In the Bible, parents are commanded to educate their children about the Exodus story.

However, instead of directing parents to tell the story, God tells parents to answer their children's questions about what happened. We read: “*In days to come, when your son asks you, ‘What does this mean?’ say to him, ‘With a mighty hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt...’*” (Exodus 13:14). The Bible doesn't command us to lecture our children about the story of the Exodus. Rather, we are to train our children to ask questions—and when they do, we are to answer them accordingly.

Why is it so important to ask a question rather than to be told what is important to know?

Isadore (Israel) Rabi, a Jewish physicist who won the Nobel Prize given in recognition his great achievement in that field, was once asked why he had become a scientist. He answered: “My mother made me a scientist. When other children came home from school their mothers would ask, ‘what did you learn today?’ But my mother would say, ‘Izzy, did you ask a good question today?’ Learning to ask questions is what made me a scientist.”

When we ask questions, we are more open to learning. We demonstrate our hunger for knowledge and our thirst for wisdom. When we ask questions, we are admitting that we don't know something. There is a space inside of us that wants to be filled with something that we don't have. We are open to receive something new, something meaningful, and something significant in our lives. We are open to receiving the truth.

The Hebrew word for “knowledge” is *chochma*. Broken down, that word becomes *coach mah*, which means ‘the power of asking “what?”’ Never underestimate the power of a good question. Good questions lead to powerful wisdom!

In Proverbs we read: “*The discerning heart seeks knowledge, but the mouth of a fool feeds on folly.*” It's so easy to accept what everyone else is saying, even if it may be untrue. But if we want to find the truth about anything, we must have a heart that is willing to seek it. We have to be willing to look for the truth, to question what we are told, and to expose any untruths, or lies, we may find.

Never stop asking questions! It is through our asking and searching that we will find invaluable wisdom to guide us throughout our lives. Ultimately, as we read in the book of James in the New Testament Bible, we can ask God to help us find the truth, to give us wisdom, and He will do so generously: *“If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you”* (James 1:5).

What good question can you ask today? “How can I make the world a better place?” “Do things always have to be as they are?” “What would I try if I wasn’t afraid to fail?” Or simply, “Can I be just a bit better today than I was yesterday?”

The more we ask, the more we’ll know. The better the questions, the greater the wisdom to follow!

FAMILY TALK

1. Kids: Think of five questions to ask your parents about themselves that you would like to know. For example, “How did they meet?” “What is their favorite color?” “What is their favorite thing to do?” “What was the best day of their life?” “What was the hardest thing they ever had to do?”
2. Why do you think asking questions helps you learn more than just listening?
3. As a family, go around the table and tell each other the one question you would most like to ask God if you could.
4. As a family, pick a topic that you’d like to know more about. For example, how cheese is made, how big the Universe is, what makes plants grow, etc. Begin the learning process by writing down all the questions you can think of relating to your topic. Decide how you will find the correct, most reliable answer – then set out to find them!
5. What are five questions you have about Israel? Where can you find correct and reliable answers to your questions?
6. One of Israel’s greatest difficulties today is the lies that her enemies spread about her. How might you seek out the truth about Israel? How can you spread the truth?