

The Family: Teacher's topic guide

God is Love Year 8

Spiritual awareness: God cares for families

God is love. He loves every family and has provided families for love, care and protection. Living in families is God's plan. Every family is special. God provides for children and protects them, through the family structure. Children feel safe in the care of their parents. A family provides food, shelter and love.

People in families belong to one another. Parents love their children very much, and children love their parents. It is God's plan for family members to show love, respect, loyalty and support for one another. Family members must learn to trust each other, cooperate with each other and forgive each other.

Values; Our response to 'God is Love'

- **Love** for God and others
- **Forgiveness**
- **Kindness** and **patience** with others
- **Compassion**: a desire to help others
- **Thankfulness** to God and parents for His provision
- **Generosity**: Sharing with others the things that God has provided
- Feeling of **safety** and **security** through being a part of a family

Bible stories and passages

Luke 15:11-32 A story about a father who forgave his son.

Luke 2:41-52 A visit to the temple. Jesus obeyed His heavenly Father.

John 10- The Good Shepherd; our heavenly Father loves and cares for us.

Matthew 2 Baby Jesus was protected by the flight to Egypt

Exodus 1-2 Protection of baby Moses

Psalm 68:5-6 God cares for the orphans and protects widows; He gives the lonely a home to live in.

Bible Verses

2 Corinthians 6:8 I will be your Father and you shall be my sons and daughters.

1 John 3:1 See how much the Father has loved us! His love is so great that He has called us His children.

John 1:12 Those who receive become children of God.

1 Corinthians 13:4 Love is patient and kind.

Ephesians 6:1 Children obey your parents in the Lord.

Joshua 24:15 As for me and my family, we will serve the Lord.

Outcomes: Students will

- appreciate that God has created us to belong in families
- understand the love that God our Heavenly Father has for us
- understand that problems may arise within families, and not all parents are perfect, but God is the perfect Father
- understand who the people in their family are, where they were born and raised and how they are related to each other
- understand that families around the world may have different cultural traditions

- understand that there can be different types of families: large, small, single parent, extended, adopted (as in the case of orphaned children)
- describe the caring and protective roles of parents
- describe the responsibilities of children
- recognize that peace and harmony in families is achieved by living the way God wants us to live
- communicate stories of families and the past through photographs, belongings, books, oral histories, digital media, and museums
- Identify changes in family life over the past 100 years. Compare past and present.
- Communicate the value of the contribution of past generations to community life.
- Identify customs, practices, symbols, languages and traditions of their family and of other families.
- Identify characteristics that make another family different from or similar to their own

Outcomes for Heredity:

Students will:

- Understand that traits are observable characteristics that are passed down from parent to child, and are observable.
- an individual will have many traits they share in common with others.
- an individual's overall combination of traits makes them unique.
- Some traits are more common in a population than others.

Key Questions

What is a family?

Why did God choose to place us in families?

How does living in a family help us to get the things we need?

What are some of the problems family members may have in getting along together?

What should we do when we have family disagreements?

How can family members help each other in times of trouble?

How can you be helpful to your family?

How do parents expect their children to behave?

What does God expect?

Who made the rules for families?

What are some of the rules?

What differences are there between life in our great grandparents' day compared to today?

What family likenesses can be observed?

Activities for Family:

- Describe the family life of Jesus as a boy.
- Make a diagram of your family table, looking from above. Use a symbol for each member.
- List members of your immediate family. List other members (extended).
- Create a family tree of your family, yourself through to great grandparents.
- Write a recount of interesting stories that happened in your family history.
- Write a biography of the life of one of your grandparents (or great grandparents). Explain any differences in their ways of life compared to today.
- Discuss different types of families: large, small, single parent.
- Study the work of missionaries who provide homes for children who have been orphaned (Ps. 68:5). Write a report on one organization who has helped orphans.
- Discuss the way that God wants us to treat our family members: *love one another; show respect for parents; helpfulness; express thanks and appreciation; forgive one another*

- Interview 3 older people and record stories they remember about how things were different when they were your age (must include a grandparent).

Activity for Heredity:

Discuss likeness within families.

Divide students into groups of four or more. Have each student in the group complete an “Inventory of My Traits” to determine their unique combination of the traits described.

After students complete the survey, have them tally their group information on the data table and draw a bar graph

Inventory of traits (tick for yes, cross for no)

1. I have detached earlobes
2. I can roll my tongue
3. I have dimples
4. I am right-handed
5. I have freckles
6. I have naturally curly hair
7. I cross my left thumb over my right when I clasp my hands together
8. I can see the colors red and green (I am not color blind)
9. The hairline on my forehead is straight.
10. I am a: Male / Female

Assessment

1. Make a time-line that tells the story of your life... Where you were born, specific events throughout your life.
2. How has learning about families also taught me about God and the Bible?

Beacon Media student research cards: The Family; Heredity

Thinking skills: The Family

Biographies: Elizabeth Fry

Year 8 Art

God is Love

The Family

Biblical wall art and text: As for me and my family, we will serve the Lord. Joshua 24:15

Portrait Drawing

Students can draw a head and shoulders portrait of a family member. This can be a homework project, where the subject sits for 1 – 5 minutes a day for a week, or until the portrait is finished.

Students can make a cardboard frame for their portraits which can be put on display.

Book illustration

Students can write a story and convert their story into an illustrated book as follows:

1. A story book for a younger member of their family
2. A story book telling historical events from their family’s past. Students can interview grandparents, great aunts and uncles or other elderly members of their family. They can find out and record where the earlier family members came from, and any significant stories of the past as told by family.

Values education Year 8

God is Love

Compassion

God is a loving Father who understands how we feel. He knows when we are hurt. He cares for us like a shepherd. He loves people of all cultures and wants us to do the same.

Compassion is...

- knowing when someone is hurting
- doing my best to help when they are hurt
- giving up my own time to make someone feel better
- listening to someone's problems
- being sensitive to the needs of others
- trying to understand how people feel

Activities

1. Imagine that you are born blind.
What are some of the difficulties you face?
How would you like others to treat you?
2. How can we show compassion to people who live in places where there is famine?

What does the Bible say about compassion?

Luke 10:25-36 The Good Samaritan

Matthew 9:36 Jesus was moved with compassion.

2 Samuel 4 & 9 King David had compassion on the lame prince, Mephibosheth.

1 John 4: 7-8 God is Love

Romans 12:9 Love without hypocrisy

Matthew 5: 43-44 Love your neighbour

Psalms 23 The caring nature of the shepherd

John 10 The Good Shepherd

Thinking Skills Love Yr 8

<p>The Family 1</p> <p>What are 10 things you will not say to your children?</p>	<p>The Family 2</p> <p>You might well be a parent in 20 years time with 10 children... Write down the names you would call them and say why you chose each name.</p>
<p>The Family 3</p> <p>Design the most memorable feast/celebration that your family will ever have. Include the kind of food, who is invited and what entertainment will be provided.</p>	<p>The Family 4</p> <p>List 5 things that make your family different to others.</p>
<p>The Family 5</p> <p>Describe the perfect family and write 10 helpful commandments that teach family members how to be perfect family members.</p>	<p>The Family 6</p> <p>Write an acrostic for your family name. For each letter, write a worthy attribute that would make your family a strong family, e.g. "L" for loyalty</p>

Elizabeth Fry

Biography

Friend of prisoners

Born 1790; Died 1845

Elizabeth was called Betsy. Betsy Gurney lived happy life in her grand home near the city of Norwich in England. Her father was a rich man and very good to his seven daughters. They had fine clothes and everyone knew them by their scarlet cloaks. Betsy was especially proud of her purple boots with red laces. They all kept diaries and we can read in them of the mischief they got up to and the fun they had together. They loved dances and picnics.

Mr. Gurney was a Quaker. 'Quaker' was the name of a Christian denomination, also called 'The Society of Friends'. They had a very simple style of church service and they were opposed to violence and war. Every Sunday he took his daughters to the Meeting House in Norwich. The service was very quiet and often these lively girls were fidgety. But when Betsy was eighteen years old a Quaker from America spoke at the service and she was very touched by what the man said. She knew that God wanted love and service. She gave up bright clothes, and for the rest of her life wore the plain grey dress, white collar and white cuffs of the strict Quakers. She started a school for the village children at her home because she felt it was a special way of serving God.

But her greatest work was still to come. She fell in love with a good Quaker gentleman called Joseph Fry. Soon they were married and they moved to his fine house in London so as to be near his business. Several children were born to her and she was a busy mother, but she felt there was more she could do to serve God. She began to visit the sick and poor in London, bringing them help and comfort and the Good News of Jesus.

One day two visitors called on her. They had been visiting the men in the terrible Newgate Prison. It was the worst of the eighteen dreadful prisons in London. The governor would not let them visit the women prisoners. "Will you go?" they asked. The next morning Elizabeth Fry stood outside the prison gates and asked to see the governor. He was amazed at what she asked.

"They're like wild beasts!" he cried. "I have soldiers guarding them! I never go there myself if I can help it!" Quietly she insisted, and the governor gave in. The huge bolts were drawn back, the door opened, and the soldier slammed it shut quickly as soon as she was through. It was a dreadful sight. Three hundred women lived with their children in the filthy jail, without light or heat, without beds or wash-places, with nothing to wear but dirty rags. The children were starved and naked. The women fought like cats over any money a kind passer-by threw to them through the bars. As soon as they had money, they paid visitors and the guards to bring them alcohol and they got drunk. The laws that put these women into prison were very harsh. Some were in prison because they owed money and could not pay, others for stealing when they were very hungry and too poor to buy food. In those days, a child could be hanged for stealing.

The women stared at her that morning. She picked up a filthy baby and nursed him tenderly. Slowly the women came around her and she spoke to them of the love of God. Then she told them that God had sent her to them. "Let us help each other," she said. "Together we can make this prison a better place. God will help us to do it. Let us ask him." Then she prayed to God, and many of the women fell down sobbing and crying.

Elizabeth Fry never forgot what she saw and for the next thirty' years 'she never stopped working for women in prison. The very next day, and every day that she could, she visited the Newgate prison.

Other Quaker ladies joined her. Soon the women's ward was clean and neat, the terrible smell was gone and inmates didn't get so sick. The women got busy 'making clothes for themselves and their children. A girl who was in prison for stealing a watch became a teacher to the children, and Elizabeth persuaded the governor to let them have a small cell for their school. She brought food and clothing and medicines. After a time she brought the Lord Mayor of London and other important people to see the women's ward. They were amazed to find the women prisoners so neat and busy and well behaved.

They soon gave Elizabeth whatever she asked for her women -- regular food, clothing, work, more space, and women to look after them. One of the cruel punishments in those days was to send women to Australia in horrible convict ships. The women were put into open carts and pulled through the streets of London on their way to the ships - and people would laugh and jeer at them as they went. Elizabeth could not stop them be sent to Australia, but she made the prison governor put them into closed carriages so they would not be so ashamed. Elizabeth went with them to the ship, saw them settled on board, and made sure they had plenty of useful work to do during the long voyage. She arranged for the ships to be met in Australia, and organized a hostel where the women could stay until they found work and a home in their new land.

Elizabeth Fry used all her influence to improve the prisons. She went to Members of Parliament, judges, and magistrates to seek their help in her work. She visited prisons throughout England and spoke at meetings up and down the country, spreading her new way of treating those who had broken the law. "Prisons are not just places for punishing people," she said. "We must help them to lead better lives. Kindness will do much more than cruelty." Slowly through her tireless work her ideas spread. She went to Europe to visit prisons, bumping along in a horse-drawn coach over the dreadful roads of Holland, Belgium, Germany and Denmark.

Elizabeth Fry died in 1845. She was mourned by her own large family, but also by a far bigger family of women whose lives she had changed. Her memory lived on in her work. Never again could prisons be as they were when she found them. She showed the love of Jesus to those who had gone wrong and, by her work, changed the prisons of many lands.

Adapted from 700 Great Lives

Questions:

1. What was the state of the women in the prisons before Elizabeth Fry began to work for them?
2. Which country were prisoners sent to in those days as their punishment?
3. What year did Elizabeth Fry die? How many years ago was that?

Further Discussion:

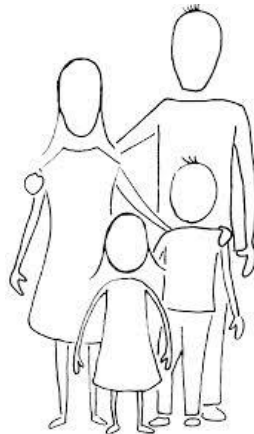
1. Elizabeth Fry became a leader to many different people. Name some. (women prisoners, ladies from her church, prison officials, the Lord Mayor of London, members of parliament, judges and magistrates.
2. Read Matthew 25:31-45. How did Elizabeth Fry carry out these words of Jesus?
3. Elizabeth Fry said, "Prisons are not just places for punishing people. We must help them to lead better lives. Kindness will do much more than cruelty." What is the attitude of our community towards people who have been to prison? What should the Christian attitude be?

The Family 1

Student activities

Love

- a) How do you show love to members of your family?
- b) How do they show love to you?
- c) Fill the gap, from Proverbs 18:24. There is a friend who sticks closer than a _____ . Who is this friend?
- d) The love we have for the members of our family is very special. Why is it different to the love you may have for a friend?
- e) Roman 12:9-10 tells us about brotherly love. What is special about brotherly love?
- f) What is the greatest love that can ever been shown? John 15:13.
- g) How does Jesus want us to love? John 13:34.
- h) Fill the gap, from 1 John 4:20-21 - If we hate our brother we cannot say that we _____ .



The Family 2

Forgiveness

Family members often have quarrels. This doesn't mean that they don't love one another. When we know someone very well, we sometimes say the things we are really feeling. Maybe these things upset family members. When we are at home, we sometimes forget to be as kind, or as polite as when we are at another person's house.

If we do not forgive one another, then the quarrel can go on for a long time. Sometimes people don't talk to one another. Sometimes people continue being angry with one another.

- a) What should we do when we have a quarrel with a family member?
- b) How soon should we forgive each other?
- c) What would you do if you wanted to say sorry, but the other person was still angry with you?
- d) There is a story in the Bible where there was trouble between brothers - one was Jacob and Esau. The story had a happy ending. Why?
- e) Read about a Father who forgave his son in Luke 15:11-32. What does this story tell us about God our Heavenly Father?



The Family 3

Support

A table has support. Its legs are its support. The table top cannot stay up by itself. It needs the legs to help. It's a bit like that with families. Families need to work together and stay together to help one another.

- a) Choose someone in your family. How can you be a support to that person?
- b) Write a sentence about a time when you showed support to someone in your family.
- c) Draw a picture of a family situation where the children are showing support to Mum or Dad. Here are some examples:
 - *Mum is having visitors to tea and the washing machine has just over-flowed. How can the children help?*
 - *Dad has to gather up the papers for recycling, and the garbage collection is due in 5 minutes. How can the children help?*

Family Job chart

Name	Job to be done	when
<i>Ben</i>	<i>Putting the bin out Washing dishes</i>	<i>Tuesday Wednesday</i>
<i>Naomi</i>	<i>Washing dishes</i>	<i>Monday & Thursday</i>
<i>Lisa</i>	<i>Minding little sister Washing dishes</i>	<i>Wednesday Friday</i>



The Family 4 Cooperation

It is important for family members to cooperate with each other.

- a) Write a sentence to explain what 'cooperate' means.
- b) Draw a picture or cartoon strip to show how family members cooperate with each other. Here are some examples:
 - *Dan has a difficult project and he can't understand all the instructions. How can Dad help?*
 - *Susan can't do up her shoe laces but her older brother can. The family is late in getting ready for school*
- c) Now write a list of family rules that would be important for cooperation in *your* family.. Examples:
 - Children go to bed at 8.30 p.m.
 - Children ask permission before watching T.V.
 - All family members clean up after themselves.
 - No one is to make unnecessary work for others.
 - All family members speak and act kindly towards one another.

Make a work chart to show how you and your brothers or sisters cooperate with Mum and Dad to get things done. Put the date at the top of the chart. Each person can put a tick next to their name when they've done the job.

The Family 5

The fruit of the Spirit

There are nine fruits of the Spirit. Do you know them? So far we have looked at the fruits of love and faithfulness, but there are seven more. The fruits of the Spirit are very important for every family.

- a) Look up Galatians 6:22-23. Write out these verses.
- b) Think of ways of showing the fruits of the Spirit in your family. Example:

LOVE... hugging my Mum

JOY ... making Mum a special present..

PEACE...not fighting with my little brother

PATIENCE...

KINDNESS...

GOODNESS...

GENTLENESS...

FAITHFULNESS...

SELF-CONTROL...

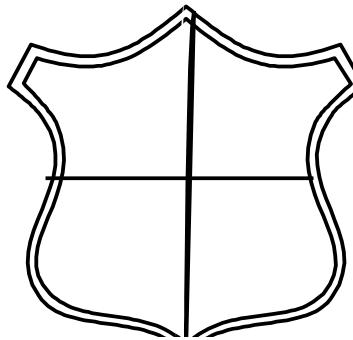
Draw a picture of each member of your family. Write a describing word underneath each person. Include your pets too if you like. Use some of the fruits of the Spirit to describe them.

The Family 6

Taking a look at families

1. My family

- a) Draw a picture of your family. Put them in order of size from the tallest to the smallest. Name each person.
- b) List the approximate ages of the members of your family.
- c) Write next to each name something that person is good at. Write something about their character that is special.
- d) Make a family shield. Copy this shape, but larger. In each section draw something that is special to your family, e.g. pets, house, sports, music.



2. The family of God

- a) What is the family of God?
- b) How is it like a real family?

3. Looking at families

- a) Sometimes we can tell that a family is a family simply by looking at them together. We are usually like one of our parents more than the other. Think about your family. Who is alike among your brothers and sisters? Who is like Mum? Who is like Dad?
- c) Family members can also be alike because of the way they speak or act. Write some sentences about your family. Who acts more like Dad? Who acts more like Mum?
- d) Draw two family members who look alike.

The Family 7

Heredity

Children look like their parents because of heredity. This means that similar traits are passed on from parent to child.

- a) Write the meaning of heredity from your dictionary.
- b) What kind of physical traits can be passed on?
- c) What personality traits could be passed on?

Family likenesses are passed on by genes. Genes are in our cells and are very tiny. Twenty thousand genes laid end to end would not even measure a millimetre. There are different kinds of genes. Each kind controls a particular feature. For example, there are pairs of genes for hair colour and eye colour, for skin colour and for height. Genes are made up of a special chemical called DNA. Why is it special? Because it can copy itself! Genes are like a set of instructions for how we are made. We have two genes for everything. One is from Mum and one is from Dad. These genes make us look a bit like Mum and a bit like Dad.

The first person to discover the idea of genes, was an Austrian monk called Gregor Mendel, back in the 19th century. He worked with pea plants. He studied the way the shape of peas, and the colour of the flowers, was passed on to the next generation. He worked out that there must be two copies of each gene in the pea. In each pair of genes, one is stronger than the other. We call the stronger gene the **dominant** gene.

Hair Colour

For hair colour, black is dominant over blonde hair.

What hair colour do these genes make?

- a) black and black
- b) black and blonde
- c) red and red

The Family 8

God created us to be like Him

God is our Heavenly Father, and we are His children. He has given to us aspects of his character.

- a) Write out the Bible verse, Genesis 1:27.
- b) God created us to be like Him in these ways:

loving kind forgiving

Can you think of some others?

- c) Not everyone lives as God wants them to live. This means that not everyone shows the character of God in their lives. Think of ways in which we can show more of the character of God in their lives.
- d) God is the perfect father. Not all fathers are perfect, but here are some similarities between human fathers and our Heavenly Father:
 - Provider
 - Protector
 - Creator
 - Someone who disciplines
 - Someone who loves
 - Someone who is in charge
 - Someone who forgives

Explain how God is the perfect Father.

God is the perfect Father because He

The Family 9

Adoption

Adoption means *taking up and treating as one's own*.

Some families adopt children. This means that a child from another family comes to live with a new family. Often the adopted children are babies when they come to live with the new family. Adoption may happen for a number of reasons. Perhaps the child's parents have died. Perhaps the parents can not look after the child for some reason.

Sometimes children from other countries are adopted because of poor conditions in that country. Sometimes people who have plenty, in countries like ours, give money to support children in poorer countries. They have a *foster* child. The child doesn't come to live with that family, but instead, money is sent each month to provide food and clothing for the child, who continues to live with his or her own family.

In the Old Testament we are told about a baby who was adopted by an Egyptian princess. His name was Moses.

1. Why did God allow this baby to be adopted? (Think about how God used Moses to help God's people.)

Did you know... that God adopted us?

Because of Adam and Eve's sin, humans are separated from God. However, because of Jesus' death on the cross He made it possible for all of us to become His children.

2. Write out these verses: John 1: 11 and 12

1. Read Romans 8:14 and 2 Corinthians 6:17-18. Who are the sons of God?

4. Read Galatians 3:23-26. How are we made children of God?

The Family 10

Family trees

We can divide family members into two groups:

immediate and extended

1. Make a list of your Immediate family

Your Dad, Mum, sisters and brothers

2. Make a list of your extended family

Your grandparents, aunties, uncles and cousins

3. Family trees in the Bible

In the Bible we can learn about family trees from the *genealogies*. Find out what these are.

Here are the first three generations of the family of Jesus, starting from Abraham. (A generation is the distance in time between parents and children.)

a) Abraham's son was Isaac

b) Isaac's sons were Jacob and Esau...

c) Find out which son - Jacob or Esau - carried on the family tree.

Abraham was a very important person because God chose Him to be the father of many generations. God planned that Jesus would come from Abraham's family.

d) What was the promise given to Abraham? (Genesis 12:2)

e) What was the promise given to Sarah? (Genesis 17:15-16)

f) What did Abraham have to do to inherit the promise? (Genesis 12:1)

g) What was the great nation that came from Abraham?

4. Draw your family tree

Heredity 1

Each person has special traits

Traits are the things that make you who you are: the way you look, your personality. The human body is made of cells, and inside our cells are genes. Genes play an important role in determining physical traits — how we look, our personality traits, our gifts and talents. They carry information that makes you who you are and what you look like: curly or straight hair, long or short legs, even how you might smile or laugh. Many of these things are passed from one generation to the next in a family by genes.

Think of a family that you know well. It can be your own family if you like. Name the family members. Explain how some of the traits of the parents are expressed in the children.



Heredity 2

What Is a Gene?

Each cell in the human body contains about 25,000 to 35,000 genes. Genes carry the information that determines your traits, which are features or characteristics that are passed on to you — or inherited — from your parents.

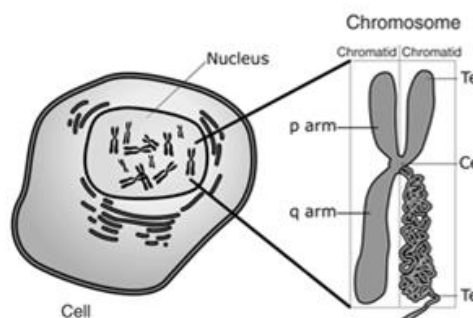
For example, if both of your parents have green eyes, you might inherit the trait for green eyes from them. Or if your mom has freckles, you might have freckles too because you inherited the trait for freckles. Genes aren't just found in humans — all animals and plants have genes, too.

Genes are so small that you can't see them. Genes are found on tiny spaghetti-like structures called chromosomes, and chromosomes are found inside cells. Your body is made of billions of cells. Cells are the very small units that make up all living things. A cell is so tiny that you can only see it using a strong microscope.

Chromosomes come in matching sets of two (or pairs) and there are hundreds — sometimes thousands — of genes in just one chromosome. Chromosomes are found in the centre part of the cell called the nucleus.

In humans, a cell nucleus contains 46 individual chromosomes, or 23 pairs. Half of these chromosomes come from one parent and half come from the other parent.

1. What is a cell?
2. What is a nucleus?
3. What are genes?
4. Where are they found?



Heredity 3

How Do Genes Work?

When a baby is being formed in the mother's womb, each pair of genes inside the cells, is carrying out a specific job. Within each pair of genes there are specific instructions—much like in a cookbook recipe — for making proteins in the cell. Proteins are the building blocks for everything in your body. Bones and teeth, hair and earlobes, muscles and blood, are all made up of proteins. Those proteins help our bodies grow, work properly, and stay healthy.

Genes come in pairs. Each of your parents has two copies of each of their genes, and each parent passes along just one copy to make up the genes you have. Genes that are passed on to you determine many of your traits, such as your hair color and skin color.

You also can see genes at work if you think about all the many different breeds of dogs. They all have the genes that make them dogs instead of cats, fish, or people. But those same genes that make a dog a dog also make different dog traits. So some breeds are small and others are big. Some have long fur and others have short fur. Some dogs have genes for white fur and black spots.

1. Where are genes found?
2. What instructions do they give to the body that is being formed in the mother's womb?
3. Why are there so many different breeds of animals?



Heredity 4

After their own kind

God created all the animals after their own kind, (Genesis 1:25). A *kind* is like a family of animals, like the dog family or the cat family. That means that only dogs can breed with dogs. Only cats can breed with cats. Donkeys can breed with horses because they both belong to the horse family.

Humans are the most special kind of being that God created. Humans cannot breed with animals. Humans did not come from monkeys. Monkeys are a kind of their own, totally separate from humans. Only humans have a free will to accept or reject Jesus, and to choose to live with God or not to live with God.

Some people ask, "If all people are descended from one family, what about apemen?"

The idea of apemen is an evolutionary idea, not a Biblical one. Some scientists claim that there are fossils that are between humans and apes, but this is really not the case.

Read and write out Psalm 139:13-15. Draw a picture of this.



Heredity 5

All people in the world are related to Noah

If all people descended from Noah's family, you might ask, "Why don't all people speak the same language?"

God created Adam and Eve to be the parents of everyone, so we are all related. And Adam's children, and their children after them, spoke the same language all the way to Noah. And then only Noah's family survived the Flood. So, all Noah's descendants spoke the same language even hundreds of years after the Flood. (Genesis 1:26-27)

Then something changed. After the Flood, Noah's descendants turned away from worshipping God. They did not spread out over the earth as God commanded, but instead built a huge tower to show how mighty they were without God. This made them feel like they didn't need God or His commandments. So, to force them to spread out across the world, God confused their language. Suddenly, people were speaking different languages and couldn't understand each other. People groups that spoke the same language started to move away from the Tower of Babel and the Tower was abandoned. (Genesis 11:1-9)

Noah and his family had genes for all the different traits that we see in all people groups today. But as people went off and lived in smaller groups (because of language), their children, and children's children expressed certain genetic traits, such as dark skin or light skin, blue eyes or brown eyes, curly hair or straight hair. *Draw a diagram to show how different people groups came about.*

Heredity 6

Where did all the races come from?

The Bible refers to people groups as 'clans of people' or 'nations', not different races of people like we hear about today. All people alive today are descended from Noah's family, but as family groups moved away from Babel, they became isolated from everyone else. Over time, different features became dominant in different populations, so that, for instance, people in Africa and the Australian Aborigines have darker skin than people in Europe do, and people in China and Japan have almond-shaped eyes. But all these differences are very minor compared to all we have in common. 'Race' is just a convenient word to use for the appearance and customs we associate with different people groups. (Genesis 10:32)

A great big family

Some people think some races are better than others, but this of course is not true. Because the Bible is so clear that we are one great big family, it teaches that we are really all the same. We may look different from each other, or have different customs or languages, but everyone is equally valuable.

The Bible says that in Christ, there is no Jew or Greek, which is another way of saying that all races are brought together. And it also says that in Heaven, people from every "tribe, tongue, and nation" will be there worshipping the Father and Christ. This is why it is so important for the Good News about Jesus to be preached in every part of the world.

Explain why different people groups have similar traits.