



Day 11

Today's Scripture: read **John 9: 1-7**

Lesson: I think this verse is a gift to us parents. Jesus addresses two of our biggest struggles, struggles many parents never have to tackle. First, he answers our questions, "Is it my fault? Did I do something wrong?" (We, as Moms and Dads to our precious little ones, know they didn't do anything to deserve poor health.) What was Jesus' answer to the question of guilt? It is no one's fault. Mom, Dad, *it is not your fault!* Oh, please, let that sink into your heart!

Next, he explains the big "Why" question. Don't we ask that too? Why did this happen, God? Why did You *allow* this to happen? Honestly, you may or may not like His answer. There may be times in your journey that His answer gives you peace and other times when you hate it. There was a period when my son was very little and facing so many scary things that I actually asked God to NOT use him any more to save other people. Shocked? Or do you relate?

I just could not stand to see my son suffer anymore for someone else, especially adults who chose to walk away from Him.

I've also come to know that God doesn't cause children to suffer to save anyone else. He may use their condition to soften hard hearts. He always works for good.

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Today, let's look at your feelings of guilt and how you feel about why all this is happening to you and your family. It's OK to be exactly where you're at. It's OK to feel what you are feeling. During our prayer time, we will give it all to God.

To help you weed through your emotions and thoughts, I'd like you to do a kind of fill in the blank. Think about the sentence starter provided and answer from your heart. As Jesus said in **John 8: 32**, "**Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free**".

I feel guilty that:

When I think about God using my child to reveal His works, I feel:



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Prayer: Let's take those feelings and lay them at the feet of Jesus. Maybe you're one who's really doing "OK" right now. That's wonderful! Use your answers to praise and thank Him.

If you unearthed some really messy stuff, that is so good! It's time to be free of that junk! Talk to our Father about your answers. Tell Him what you're feeling. Ask Him to help you be free of your fears, guilt, and hurt. Trust Him to guide you and love you through all of your emotions. Like yesterday, you can pray as David prayed - honestly and with emotion!

No matter which type of prayer you're praying, take the time to just BE with our Father. Let His presence be your encouragement.

Make a Plan: How can you be more aware of your feelings throughout your day so that you are more able to give them to God?

This section is going to be a little different than before. We'll be learning about God's name Yahweh Raah - "The Lord our Shepherd", and to study it we'll be looking at one particular chapter of the Bible.

I looked up the definition of "shepherd" in my dictionary and it can either mean "one who herds sheep" or "a religious leader". Pretty basic and bland definitions aren't they? There is nothing basic or bland about our Shepherd. **Psalm 23** shows us that He is so much more - and that's a good



thing! We sheep are pretty obstinate, foolish, and just plain difficult sometimes.

I don't know about you, but I've realized that I've become too familiar with **Psalm 23**. To me, it had become "that chapter about leading me to green pastures and through the valley of death". I found myself skipping it or ignoring it because I thought I knew it. Do you do that? Maybe you're like me or maybe not. Either way, let's look together at this chapter with new eyes and hearts listening to our Father so that we can find out more about who He is!

A wonderful way to gain new insights into a verse or chapter you've read many times is to read different versions of it. Tomorrow, we will look at The Message's version of **Psalm 23**. I love it! The words are so clear and too the point, so refreshing!