

Celebrando la Navidad con El Niño Dios



 **WEEK 2**
Jesus as a Loving Friend –
Experience God's Love (*Chesed*)

Theme: Jesus as a Loving Friend – An opportunity to experience God's Love (*Chesed*)
This week, we invite your child to discover Jesus as a loving friend who is always there to care for them. God's love for us is deep and unchanging, often described by the Hebrew word *Chesed*: a love that is full of mercy, kindness, and loyalty. While we can never fully understand the vastness of God's love, we can experience it through Jesus, who shows us how to love others and be loved by God.



Experiencing God's Love: Understanding *Chesed* and Friendship with Jesus

God is love, and His love for us is called *Chesed* in Hebrew, as seen in the Old Testament. This love is steadfast, loyal, merciful, and it is the gentle and compassionate care that shows us that God's love never ends. It is a love meant to be received and shared.

God is love, and He has always desired a relationship with us. He loves us unconditionally and wants to be present in our daily lives. This week, as your child cares for Baby Jesus, help them experience this love as something real and present in simple actions.

Emphasize to your child that God wants to be their friend and share His love with them. This week focuses on receiving God's love (*Chesed*), that is always with us. As we receive it, we grow closer to Him and learn to share it with others.

Encourage your child to experience *Chesed* through care for the Baby Jesus. The baby is a tangible expression of God's love, something we can see, feel, and understand. You might say: "God's love is like a warm hug that never goes away. When we care for Him, we show we understand God's love. And just like we show love to Baby Jesus, we can share that love with others because God's love is meant to be shared."

At this stage, children think in both mythical and literal ways, needing concrete examples to understand abstract ideas like love. By caring for the Baby Jesus image, your child engages with God's love in a way they can see, touch, and feel, helping them connect to the love God has for us.

This week, remind your child that caring for Baby Jesus is a way of experiencing God's love. As they talk to Him, carry Him, and show Him care, they can begin to feel the presence of Jesus, letting His love fill their hearts and guide their actions toward others.

In these small acts of love, your child will feel how close Jesus is, and how His love is always with them. This is the beginning of understanding *Chesed*, God's never-ending love.



How to Pronounce "Chesed"

Chesed is a Hebrew word that describes God's faithful, never-ending love.

Pronunciation: KHEH-sed

The "ch" sounds like the Spanish "j" in José

The emphasis is on the first syllable

You can tell children:

Use the word *Chesed*

The Hebrew word *Chesed* (pronounced KHEH-sed) describes God's steadfast, faithful, and merciful love, a love that is always present, no matter what. As you guide your child this week, remind them of this special word to help them understand the depth of God's love.

For example, you might say:

- "Did you know in the Bible there's a special word, **Chesed**, that describes God's love? It means His love is so big and strong that is always present!"
- "God is **Chesed**, that means God's love is big, strong, and never-ending. God is love, and everything He does shows how much He cares for us. God loves you so much and wants you to feel that love in your heart every single day."
- "God's **Chesed** is like a promise that He will always love us. Can you imagine that kind of love while you are holding Baby Jesus?"
- "When God fills us with His **Chesed** (love), it's like a cup being filled with water from a faucet—it overflows because there's so much! God gives us so much love that it can't stay inside; it spills out and we can share it with others around us. Let's always remember to let God fill us with His love and share it with the people we meet."

Use this opportunity to weave **Chesed** into your conversations, so your child can connect their care for Baby Jesus with God's unshakable love for them and the world.

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Praying With Baby Jesus

Help your child connect with Baby Jesus through simple prayers. These moments of prayer will encourage your child to build a relationship with Jesus and feel His presence in their daily lives.

Suggested Prayer Ideas:

Here are some suggestions for praying with Baby Jesus, inviting your child to reflect on love and experience God's presence:

1. Prayer of Reflection on Love

Begin by holding Baby Jesus in your hands and guiding your child to imagine what it would be like to feel God's love. You might say: "God's love is like a warm hug that never goes away. We can feel His love when we are still and listen. Let's sit quietly for a moment and feel how much God loves us."

Encourage your child to sit still with Baby Jesus for a few minutes in silence, inviting them to reflect on the love they feel. You could ask:

"What colors or feelings do you think you would use to describe God's love for you? Is it warm, soft, bright, or peaceful?"

After a moment, ask your child to share their feelings or any thoughts that come to mind.

2. Reflecting with Scripture

Read the passage from 1 John 4:7:

"Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God."

Invite your child to imagine what God is saying in this verse. You could say:

"God calls us 'beloved,' which means we are deeply loved. Imagine Baby Jesus calling you 'beloved.' How does it feel to hear those words from Jesus?"

Then, encourage your child to sit quietly and reflect on what they think Jesus wants to say about love. You might guide them by asking:

"If Baby Jesus were here with us, what do you think He would want to say to you about God's love?"

3. Experiencing God's Love in Silence and Music

Play soft, peaceful music that reflects God's love, or allow a quiet moment. As your child sits with Baby Jesus, help them focus on the presence of God's love.

"You are loved by God, just like Baby Jesus. Let's listen to the music and feel God's love around us."

Ask your child afterward:

"What did you feel while you were listening to the music? Did you feel God's love close to you? Can you imagine God smiling at you, happy to be with you?"

4. Sitting in the Sun with Baby Jesus

Take a moment outside, sitting in the sun with Baby Jesus in your hands. Feel the warmth and invite your child to reflect on God's love in this moment.

"Just as the sun warms us, God's love is always with us, shining in our hearts. Let's hold Baby Jesus and imagine how God's love is like the warmth of the sun."

Ask your child:

"What do you think Baby Jesus would want to say to you about God's love? How do you think He wants to show you His love today?"

Encourage your child to speak from their heart and share what they think God would say about love, reassuring them that love is always there.

These moments of prayer invite the child into a personal encounter with God's *Chesed* (love), helping them feel God's love tangibly through simple, beautiful acts of reflection, imagination, and stillness.



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Activities to Try This Week - try one or more of the following activities with your child

1. Storytime with Baby Jesus - Jesus, the Good Shepherd

- Activity: Read or tell the story of Jesus as the Good Shepherd from John 10:11-18, where Jesus talks about how He is the shepherd who loves and cares for His sheep. Explain that just like a shepherd cares for his sheep, Jesus loves and takes care of us. Use simple language and illustrations to bring the story to life.
- What to Say: "Jesus is like the Good Shepherd. He loves each of us so much, just like a shepherd loves and cares for each of his sheep. Jesus is always looking out for you, taking care of you, and keeping you safe. Just like Baby Jesus, who watches over you with love."
- Objective: Help your child understand that Jesus, the Good Shepherd, is someone who loves and takes care of them, always guiding them with His love.

2. Quiet Time with Baby Jesus

- Activity: Set aside a few minutes each day for your child to spend quiet time with Baby Jesus. They can hold Him, sing a lullaby, whisper their thoughts, or just sit quietly, imagining Him as a friend.
- What to Say: "When we are quiet with Baby Jesus, we can feel His love. Let's imagine Him smiling at us because He's so happy to be with us!"
- Objective: Foster a personal connection with Baby Jesus, encouraging your child to see Him as a loving friend who is always close.

3. Making a Gift for Baby Jesus

- Activity: Help your child create a small gift for Baby Jesus, like a drawing, card, or simple craft. Let them present the gift to Baby Jesus, expressing their friendship.
- What to Say: "When we give a gift to Baby Jesus, we're showing Him how thankful we are for His friendship."
- Objective: Teach your child that friendship involves care and giving, strengthening their bond with Baby Jesus.

4. Friendship Bracelet

- Activity: Make two simple bracelets with beads or yarn—one for Baby Jesus and one for your child. Place the one for Jesus near Him as a sign of their friendship, while your child wears theirs as a reminder.
- What to Say: "This bracelet shows your friendship with Baby Jesus. Every time you see it, you can remember that Jesus loves you and is always with you."
- Objective: Give your child a tangible way to feel connected to Baby Jesus as a friend.

5. Love and Kindness Jar

- Activity: Decorate a jar together, calling it the "Love and Kindness Jar." Each day, add notes to the jar that show your actions of thanks to Baby Jesus.
- What to Say: "God's **Chesed** fills our heart and overflows in the way we show love for others."
- Objective: Encourage your child to reflect on Jesus's love and how they can share it with others through acts of kindness.

"Chesed is God's special love."

You can say:

"**Chesed** is a special kind of love that only God has. It's not like the love we feel for our favorite toy or even the love we have for our family. Those are beautiful kinds of love, but **Chesed** is bigger. It's a love that never goes away and doesn't depend on what we do. It's a love that's always there, like the sun shining in the sky, even on cloudy days.

When we talk about God's **Chesed**, it's a love that is strong and forever. Even when we forget to love, or when we make mistakes, God never stops loving us. **Chesed** is God's way of saying, 'You are my child, and I will always love you, no matter what.'"

This makes it clear to a child that Chesed is unique and reflects God's way of loving us.