



Overview:

In this series we'll fill in the gaps in your Old Testament knowledge, covering the stuff you may have missed in Sunday School.

Lessons:

1. The Snake on a Pole Numbers 21
2. Balaam and the Donkey Numbers 22
3. Samuel and the Voice 1 Samuel 3
4. Elijah and the Widow 1 Kings 17
5. Elisha and the Angel Army 2 Kings 6
6. Ezekiel and the Dry Bones Ezekiel 36-37



THE SNAKE ON A POLE

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Just before uttering the most famous verse in the Bible (John 3:16), Jesus made a reference to an obscure story in the Old Testament about a bronze snake. The whole thing proves that God had a simple plan for saving humanity all along.

- God's instructions to Moses were confusing for two reasons: _____ were bad, and so were _____. It took simple faith for the Israelites to obey. Numbers 21:8-9
- The bronze snake foreshadowed God's plan for _____ humanity. _____ became sin for those bitten by sin, so that we would be rescued by looking to the cross. John 3:15-16, 2 Corinthians 5:21
- Later in history, the snake on a pole became an _____ for the people of Israel. This is a reminder that God's message can get _____ in future generations. 2 Kings 18:4

DISCUSSION:

1. Rank your top three most hated creatures. Share any funny or not so funny encounters you've had with them.
2. Read Numbers 21:4-5. Describe the attitude of the Israelites at this point in the story. How can you relate to their attitude towards God?
3. Read Numbers 21:6-7. How did sending the snakes change the attitude of the people? Share a time when a negative consequence taught you an important lesson.
4. Read Numbers 21:8-9. Why do you think God would use a symbol to heal the Israelites? Why did it still take faith to be healed?
5. Read 2 Corinthians 5:21. How does this verse speak to what happened in Numbers 21 and John 3:15-16?
6. Read 2 Kings 18:4. Describe the difference in the attitude of the people in Numbers 21:8-9 versus in Hezekiah's day. What are some of the idols Christians worship today?
7. Do you recognize that you've been bitten by sin? Will you look to Jesus alone for salvation?

BALAAAM AND THE DONKEY

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The pagan prophet Balaam is most famous for his talking donkey. But the real story is what happened when he tried to curse the people of God just before they entered the Promised Land.

- God is fighting for our _____ and will do whatever it takes to get it. For Balaam, it took a _____ donkey. Numbers 22:21-23, 28-30, 31,35
- God is _____ and will always get his way. Balaam's prophecies affirmed the _____ that God had promised to Abraham.
- The _____ will never stop trying to curse God's people. Balaam couldn't do it through magic, so he did it through _____. Revelation 2:14

DISCUSSION:

1. Share a crazy story of how God has gotten your attention in the past.
2. Read Numbers 22:21-23,28-30,31,35. Do a quick review of the story from these verses. Who was Balaam? What was he instructed to do by the king of Moab?
3. Review the 4 promises to Abraham. Why do you think God reiterated these promises through a wicked prophet?
4. Read Genesis 49:10 and Numbers 24:17 and Matthew 1:1-16. What do these prophecies speak of in the future? What does Jesus' family tree reveal in Matthew 1?
5. Read Numbers 25:1-3 and Numbers 31:16. How did Balaam curse the Israelites in the end? Why do you think the Israelites fell for it?
6. Read Revelation 2:14. Who are the "Balaams" of our generation, and how are they trying to trip us up?

SAMUEL AND THE VOICE

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When you “hear” from God, how do you know it’s really him – or if you just manufactured it? The story of Samuel gives us three tests that are still valid today.

- Test #1: The _____. Does the message match up with what God has already spoken? 2 Timothy 3:14-15
- Test #2: Other _____. Do other trustworthy followers of Jesus affirm the message? 1 Samuel 3:8-10
- Test #3: Your _____. Are you really listening to God, or are you just trying to get your way? John 10:27

DISCUSSION:

1. Share a time you felt prompted to do something. How did you determine if it was from God? What happened?
2. Read 1 Samuel 3:1-8. Samuel was very faithful to God. Why do you think he missed that it was God calling him, not Eli?
3. Read 2 Timothy 3:14-15. Why should we test our thoughts against the Bible? Why should anything that contradicts the Bible be thrown away?
4. Read 1 Samuel 3:8-10. How did Eli help Samuel to discern God’s leading? Share a time you sought someone else’s counsel on an issue. How did that help you to gain clarity and direction?
5. Share a personal story or of a person you know who felt compelled to do something that went against God’s word and the advice of others. How did that situation play out?
6. Read 1 Samuel 3:10 and John 10:27. What does a heart of submission look like practically? What are some indicators of a hardened heart?
7. What are you praying about right now? How will you use the three tests to help you know if you’re hearing God’s voice?

ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW

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God doesn't always spare us from tough times, but we can trust him to provide creatively for our needs with every new challenge we might face.

- Sometimes God lets us go through _____ times, but he always has a purpose. 1 Kings 17:2-7, Deuteronomy 28:23-24
- God usually provides for us through other _____, whether we like it or not. 1 Kings 17:8-16
- The more we experience God's provision, the more _____ we can become. 1 Kings 17:17-18
- It's okay to _____ God - as long as it comes from a place of faith. 1 Kings 17:19-21
- Each new _____ creates a new opportunity to see how God will provide. 1 Kings 17:22-24

DISCUSSION:

1. Read Deuteronomy 28:23-24 and 1 Kings 17:1-7. Why did God allow famines and droughts to occur? Why do you think he didn't spare Elijah from this judgement even though he was faithful to God?
2. Share a time you experienced a drought (emotionally, spiritually or financially). How did that affect you? How did it affect your relationship with God?
3. Read 1 Kings 17:8-16. Why do you think God had Elijah go to a widow? How did the widow show great faith in this story? How has God provided for you through someone else's generosity?
4. Read 1 Kings 17-18. What does this passage reveal about the widow's heart? How do you see Christians act entitled today?
5. Read 1 Kings 17:19-20. What does this passage reveal about Elijah's heart? How can we discern if we're demanding things from God versus asking but trusting God's answer?
6. Read 1 Kings 17:22-24. Share a time you doubted God to intervene in a situation. Like the widow, how did you come to see God at work in the situation?

NOTES



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ELISHA AND THE ANGEL ARMY

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Are you surrounded by impossible situations that create fear and anxiety? So was the prophet Elisha – and his response teaches us three timeless lessons about the power of prayer.

- Prayer trains us to respond with _____ instead of fear in the midst of life's trials. 2 Kings 6:14-16, Philippians 4:6-7
- Prayer opens our eyes to a _____ battle that is more real than what we can physically see. 2 Kings 6:17, Ephesians 6:12
- Prayer _____ us to a God who can do whatever he wants, whenever he wants, however he wants. 2 Kings 6:18-19,21-22

DISCUSSION:

1. Share a time in your life that you were gripped with fear because of an impossible situation. What troubled you the most? How did you respond?
2. Read 2 Kings 6:8-16. What does this story reveal about Elisha's relationship with God? Why do you think he responded as he did compared to his servant?
3. Read Philippians 4:6-7. Identify the actions steps found in this passage. Share how prayer helped your anxiety in the past? Why do you think Paul include thankfulness?
4. Read 2 Kings 6:17 and Ephesians 6:12. What do you think about this idea that we are fighting a spiritual battle more than a physical one? How have you seen the enemy attack?
5. Review the Armor of God (Ephesians 6:13-18). How does each piece help us to fight our spiritual battles?
6. Read 2 Kings 6:18-19,21-22. Why do you think God ended the story this way instead of decimating the army? How have you been surprised by God's answers in your own life?
7. What does it look like for us to submit to God's way, even if the outcome looks different than we would like?

EZEKIEL AND THE DRY BONES

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God wants to restore us from brokenness – and he has the power to do it – as soon as we recognize our need for him.

- God's heart for his people is _____, not destruction. His primary motive for this is to demonstrate the greatness of his _____ to the watching world. Ezekiel 36:23-24
- Your part in spiritual renewal is to _____ you have a problem. God is actively working to open your eyes so you don't just go on your self-satisfied, myopic way. Ezekiel 36:14, Isaiah 57:15
- God himself does the real work of _____ renewal. Ultimately he does this through the cross of _____ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Ezekiel 36:24-26, John 5:24-25

DISCUSSION:

1. Have you ever experienced a time of spiritual renewal where you felt more connected to God than ever? Describe and share.
2. Read Ezekiel 36:1-12. Identify all that God is saying in this passage. How was God going to prove his power and authority?
3. Read Ezekiel 36:23-24. How have you seen God display his power in your life, especially during a tough time?
4. Read Ezekiel 37:11 and Isaiah 57:15. How do you relate to the words in Ezekiel 37? What does the Isaiah passage say we all need to have renewal?
5. Read Ezekiel 36:25-27 and 2 Corinthians 5:17. What does the Ezekiel passage say about the heart? How does Paul speak to this in 2 Corinthians? How have you changed since putting your faith in Jesus? In what areas are you still seeking change?
6. Read John 5:24-25. Our renewal happens through trusting in Jesus and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. How do you need to be awakened from the "dead"?

