

Study Series: Seamless

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Lesson Title: “The Kingdoms and the Prophets” (pp. 60-72)

Session 5

October 2, 2022

The main point of this lesson is: Despite His people’s frequent wickedness, God used kings and prophets to fulfill His promises and to refocus His people’s attention on His seamless plan.

Focus on this goal: To help adults, in spite of their sinfulness, find encouragement in God’s promises and plan

Key Bible Passage: 1 Samuel 9–Malachi

To the Leader: Creating a timeline will be extremely helpful for your group. Read through this study to determine how best to arrange that timeline so you can record pertinent information on it during the session.

Before the Session

Create a timeline by writing horizontally on a large writing surface: United Kingdom; Divided Kingdom; Exile; Post-Exile

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

Invite adults to share what they use to stay focused (examples: eyeglasses, headphones, planner, stress ball). Read the main point of this lesson statement (p. 70). State: No matter the distractions going on in our lives, when we focus on God’s character, promises, and plans we find encouragement to stay true to Him.

Step 2. King Saul

Recall from Session 4, Day 5 (pp. 55-56) why the Israelites demanded a king. Note: When we focus on being like everyone else, we look less at God. When we lose focus on God, we fall. Use the second paragraph of Day One (p. 60) to relate how that happened to Saul, Israel’s first king. Discuss Day One, activity 1 (p. 60).

Ask a volunteer to read 1 Samuel 16:1. Invite adults to share what they recall about God’s choice of David.

Invite adults to state what David is probably best known for (1 Sam. 17). Note that David grew more popular, and Saul grew more jealous. Discuss Day One, activity 2 (p. 61).

Give highlights from 1 Samuel 19–30 and read 1 Samuel 31:1-6.

Step 3. King David

Write David under “United Kingdom” on the timeline. Note 2 Samuel 7 is a major milestone in God’s seamless story; summarize that chapter.

State 2 Samuel 11 marks a major shift in David’s life. Invite volunteers to summarize what occurs in Chapter 11. Assert David lost focus and he fell.

Note that David repented when confronted with his sin. Acknowledge we may wonder why God took the throne away from Saul for his sin, but not from David. One reason could be that Saul responded to confrontation with an apology and excuses, while David responded with heartfelt and humble repentance. The most important reason is God’s promise in 2 Samuel 7:16.

Stress David did experience great loss, however. Read 2 Samuel 12:7-14.

Read the Day Two paragraph (p. 63) beginning with, “I don’t come to this story . . ..”

State: When life is tragically hard, we must keep focused on the truth that God is ultimately good.

Step 4. The Temple

Recall from Session 4 (Day One, p. 48) that “our gracious God gives us life where we deserve death, but He also allows us to suffer consequences as a result of our disobedience.” Second Samuel sadly recounts the fulfillment of 2 Samuel 12:7-14. Very briefly summarize 2 Samuel 13–24.

To help maintain focus on God’s seamless story, explain the similarities and differences between 1–2 Samuel, 1–2 Kings, and 1–2 Chronicles.

Explain David passed his throne and plans for building the temple to his son Solomon (write Solomon under “United Kingdom” on the timeline). Discuss Day Three, activity 1 (p. 64). Assert: If we want to finish strong, we must maintain focus on God.

Explain what happened after Solomon died. Write Israel and Judah under ‘Divided Kingdom” on the timeline. Under “Exile” record Israel’s destruction in 722 BC and Judah’s fall and the destruction of the temple in 586 BC.

Explore why the destruction of the temple was so devastating to God’s people (reading a portion of Solomon’s prayer at the dedication of the temple in 1 Kings 8 might help with that discussion).

Under “Post-Exile” write Cyrus’s proclamation. Discuss Day Three, activity 2 (p. 65). Write Ezra, Nehemiah under “Post-Exile,” explaining those books provide historical details of the return and rebuilding.

Step 5. The Prophets, Part 1

Request adults flip through their Bibles as you note that Esther occurred during the exile, Job occurred during the time of the patriarchs, Psalms are songs from Israel’s entire history, and Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon are credited to Solomon. That takes us to the prophets, which don’t follow the biblical events chronologically, but rather fit into the timeline from the time of the Divided Kingdom to the Post-Exilic period. Explain why they are called Major or Minor Prophets.

Use Day Four (pp. 65-67) to write the appropriate prophets on the timeline next to “Israel” or “Judah” under “Divided Kingdom” on the timeline. Note all these prophets relayed warnings of God’s judgments but also assurances God would remain true to His promises and fulfill His plan of redemption and restoration.

Discuss Day Four, activities 1 (p. 66) and 2 (p. 67).

Step 6. The Prophets, Part 2

Use Day Five (pp. 67-69) to write the remaining prophets in their appropriate locations on the timeline.

Discuss Day Five, activity 2 (p. 68-69) to explore a fraction of the predictions the prophets made about Jesus.

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

Read the last paragraph of Day Five (p. 69). Ask: How can keeping our focus on these truths keep us from falling and encourage us to stay true to God?

Close in prayer.

