Sunday, November 22nd

LESSON 4 **FOR LEADERS**

THE BRONZE SNAKE

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

The Israelites were wandering in the wilderness because of their unfaithfulness. In Numbers 14, the people refused to trust that God would give them victory in the new land He promised them. As a result, they wandered in the wilderness for 40 years.

WHAT?

The people were bitten by venomous snakes as again they refused to trust God, complained against Moses, and complained against God. Their mistrust of God, despite experiencing His goodness firsthand, was a constant issue.

WHERE?

The king of Edom would not let the wandering Israelites pass through his land, so they had to take the long way around his kingdom. During this long journey, the people again got impatient and began to grumble against God.

WHEN?

God made the people wander in the desert for 40 years, until everyone from the generation that left Egypt had died. They would not get to enter the promised land for themselves because they had been so unfaithful to the God who had rescued them.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

God used a snake—the very thing that hurt the Israelites—to heal them, showing that He has power over all. Jesus later referenced this story (John 3), saying that He would be lifted up and that whoever looks to Him will be saved.

Activity: Sand Sensory Bin (I will provide this activity, but if the room is extra crowded, you can skip it!)

SUPPLIES: sand, bin

Fill a bin with sand.

Greet the kids warmly and welcome them to church.

Welcome! Today we're going to talk about people who walked in the desert for a long time. Deserts have lots of sand. Let's have fun using our fingers to draw in the sand. We can even pretend our fingers are walking in the desert, like the people in our story. Let's find out more and get curious!

Set out a bin filled with sand. Give kids time to explore the sand. Show them how they can use their fingers to draw pictures in the sand and how they can pretend to walk their fingers through the sand.

Activity: Wiggling Snakes

SUPPLIES: gummy worms (please try not to let them eat them!)

Can you show me how snakes move? Allow kids to respond. **Yes, snakes slither and wiggle! Let's see if we can make these gummy snakes wiggle!**

Hold up the gummy worms or snakes and pretend to make them wiggle. Toss them into the air and let them fall onto the ground around the kids. Encourage the kids to avoid touching the pretend snakes as the kids run around the room. Watch closely to make sure the kids don't eat the gummy candies.

In God's big story today, we're going to hear about some snakes that wiggled and slithered all over the place. The people in the story turned from God and started to complain, and God used the snakes to remind the people of something very important: that only He can save! Our Wonder Truth today is: ONLY GOD SAVES.

Encourage the kids to do the following motions while you repeat the Wonder Truth. Older toddlers can say the words with you as they do the motions.

ONLY GOD—*Point up.*

SAVES—*Wrap your arms around yourself as if hugging yourself.*

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, The Bronze Snake Bible Story Picture

Gather the kids together and have them sit down. Tell them today's part of God's big story comes from the book of Numbers in the Bible. Show them a Bible and point out where the story is in the Bible.

Our part of God's big story today is about a man named Moses. Can you say, "Moses"? Pause to allow the kids to respond. **Moses and God's people, the Israelites, were in the desert. Let's hear the story!**

Use the script provided. Use the Bible Story Picture to give kids a visual depiction as you tell the story.

We're going to wander around the room as we listen to the story because the people in the story were wandering in the desert. Invite the kids to follow you and listen as you wander and tell the story.

God saved His people, the Israelites, and took care of them. He told them how to live and promised to lead them to a special land that would be their home. But the people didn't always listen to God and obey Him.

They forgot all the amazing things God had done for them and how He had taken care of them. They had to walk in the desert for a long time. Pretend to walk a long time and get hot and tired. **They complained and didn't want to listen to Him anymore. Can you say, "Waa, waa, waa"?** Allow kids to do so. **So God sent snakes. Pretend to slither like a snake!** Allow the kids to slither like snakes.

The people cried out and asked God to save them. Can you say, "Save us"? Allow kids to respond. **God told Moses to put a fake snake on a pole, and when the people looked at it, they would be saved from the snakes.**

God still continues to look out for us today! Say "Yay!" with me. Allow kids to respond. **God saves us through Jesus, and He is the only one with the power to help us because only God saves!**

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bible, Think Again Word of Wonder Slide

WORD OF WONDER

God is faithful. That's who He is.

—from 2 Timothy 2:13

Display the Word of Wonder Slide or Video, if using. **Our Word of Wonder for the Think Again series is from 2 Timothy 2:13. Let's practice saying the Word of Wonder together.** Open a Bible to 2 Timothy 2:13 and practice the verse with the kids

- **GOD—***Point up.*
- **IS FAITHFUL.—***Give two thumbs-up (one on each word).*
- **THAT'S WHO—***Put your arms out in front of you, palms up (one on each word).*
- **HE IS.—***Point up (once on each word).*
- **FROM 2 TIMOTHY 2:13—***Hold your hands open in front of you, as if holding a book.*

Prayer and Blessing

Pray with the kids and thank God for saving us.

Let's pray and talk to God.

God, thank You for reminding the Israelites that You could save them, and thank You for saving us too! We love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands are open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: May you remember that just as God saved the Israelites, He has the power to save you as well! Always remember that Jesus is the only way to eternal life. May you remember that only God saves!

Activity: Stay Away from the Snakes

SUPPLIES: yarn

Ahead of time, cut a handful of pieces of yarn at various lengths. These will be the pretend snakes.

This game is similar to The Floor Is Lava. Have the kids spread out around the room.

The Israelites wandered around the desert for many years. We're going to pretend we're the Israelites wandering in the desert. When I say, "Go," you're going to walk and wander all around the room. But you have to stay away from the snakes. When I shout "snakes," I'll toss some pretend snakes (hold up the yarn pieces) **onto the ground, and you must get really far away from them.**

Allow kids to walk around the room while you periodically call out "snakes" and toss the yarn pieces onto the floor. Play several rounds.

Today we learned from God's big story that only God saves! He saved His people from the snakes, and He saves us through Jesus!