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.

Play Stations (can save for end of class OR skip the sand!)

SUPPLIES: shallow bin, sand, digging toys, small people figures, play dough, coloring utensils, The Bronze Snake Coloring Sheet (1 per kid)

Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help you get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas about what we'll be learning today?

- **Play Station: Sand Sensory Bin**

Set up: Fill a shallow bin with sand and digging toys and set out small people figures.

Play: Invite the kids to play in the sand. Tell the kids they'll hear about some people wandering in the desert, which is filled with sand. Invite them to draw wandering paths in the sand with their fingers and use the small people figures to travel the paths in the sand.

- **Play Station: Play Dough Snakes**

Set up: Set out play dough.

Play: Show the kids how they can roll the play dough between their hands to create snakes. Older kids could even create a pole and wrap a snake around it to help them think about what happens in God's big story.

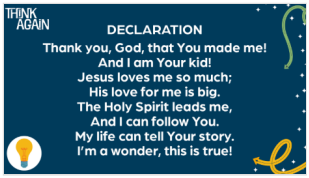
- **Play Station: The Bronze Snake Coloring Sheet**

Set up: Ahead of time, print one copy per kid of the coloring sheet and set out coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids can also turn the sheet over and draw a picture of what they think the desert looks like.

Declaring God's Wonder

SUPPLIES: Early Childhood Declaration Slide



Thank You, God, that You made me! *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Make prayer hands, then point up to God and to yourself.

And I am Your kid! *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Put your hands on your hips.

Jesus loves me so much; *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Spread your arms out wide to your side one at a time, then pull them in for a hug around your chest.

His love for me is big. *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Hold your arms up high and wide above your head.

The Holy Spirit leads me, *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Bring your arms down from above, making a path in front of you.

And I can follow You. *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
March in place like you're following the leader.

My life can tell Your story, *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Hold your hands in front of you like an open book.

I'm a wonder; this is true. *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Put your hands up, shake your fingers, and celebrate ("praise hands").

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, Bible Story Picture

Bible Time Rhyme

Say the Bible time rhyme (with motions) each week with the kids before the Bible story, to remind kids that what they're about to hear is part of God's big story.

I open my Bible and what do I see? *(Hold your hands together, then open your palms, as if opening a book.)*

God's big story, waiting for me! *(Point to yourself.)*

Let's start by reading part of God's big story from the book of Numbers in the Bible.

Read the God's Big Story Script provided or read Numbers 21:4–9 from the Bible. You can print the Bible Story Picture to give kids a visual depiction as you tell the story

GOD'S BIG STORY SCRIPT

SUPPLIES: tape (prep only), God's Big Story Pictures (1 set)

> **Leader Tip:** This story can be deep for preschoolers. The main point for them to take away is that only God has the power to save. He saved the Israelites, and He saves us today!



Before kids arrive, print and tape the God's Big Story Pictures in order around the room. Gather the kids together at the first picture and have them sit down. (Can do this in the chapel room if needed or even in the other Sunday School classrooms after class is over!)

The pictures will help us understand the story today. We'll travel from picture to picture, kind of like how God's people traveled in the story.

A long time ago, God's people, the Israelites, were slaves in Egypt. God rescued them. He led the Israelites through the big, dusty desert. God gave them rules to help them live in a good way. God promised to bring them to a beautiful, new home. It was going to be a land just for them.

Guide the kids to Picture #1 and have them sit down.

But the people sinned and disobeyed God. They did not listen to God. They forgot how good God had been. The Israelites walked in the wilderness for 40 years.

When they were traveling, sometimes the people obeyed God. Sometimes they did not. They complained to Moses, their leader. The Israelites got tired. They asked for food. God sent them

food, called manna, every day. But they wanted different food. They complained about the food! God did so much for the Israelites. But they forgot everything God did for them.

Let's wander around the room and then go to Picture #2 and sit down. Have kids follow you as you "wander" around the classroom before sitting down at Picture #2.

Because they disobeyed and complained, God sent snakes into their camp. The snakes bit some of the people, and they got very sick. Then the people realized they had done wrong. They went to Moses and said, "We're sorry! Please ask God to help us!" So Moses prayed for the people.

God told Moses what to do. God said, "Make a snake out of bronze and put it high up on a pole. If anyone gets bitten, they can look at the bronze snake—and they'll live." Let's wander around the room and then go to Picture #3 and sit down. Have kids follow you as you "wander" around the classroom before sitting down at Picture #3.

Moses did what God said. When people looked up at the bronze snake, God made them better!

God wanted His people to know that He is powerful and kind. God is the one who saves!

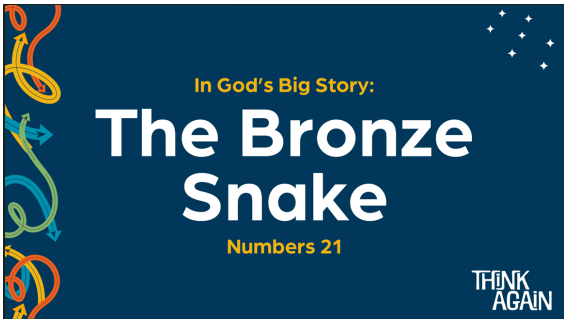
The people who were bitten lived when they looked up at the snake Moses had made. God showed mercy. Mercy means being kind and forgiving, even when someone doesn't deserve it. God saved His people from the snake bites. A long time later, Jesus told a man named Nicodemus something special. Jesus said that just as the Israelites looked up at the snake and were saved, anyone who believes in Him will be saved too.

Let's wander around the room and then go to Picture #4 and sit down. Have kids follow you as you "wander" around the classroom before sitting down at Picture #4.

This picture shows us that Jesus died on the cross. Jesus died to save us. God forgave His people and saved them, even when they sinned and complained. Even when they forgot about Him, God still loved them and took care of them. God loves us, forgives us, and helps us too. God saves us through Jesus. We can follow Him, worship Him, and trust Him because only God saves!

Watch God's Big Story

Watch the The Bronze Snake God's Big Story Video! Worship available on computer!

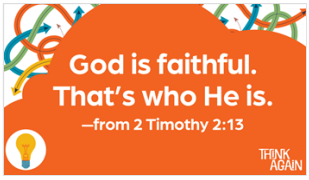


Word of Wonder

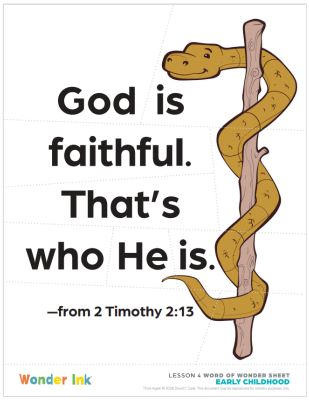
SUPPLIES: Bible, scissors (prep only), Word of Wonder Sheet, Think Again Word of Wonder Slide

> **WORD OF WONDER**
>
> **God is faithful. That's who He is.**
>
> —from 2 Timothy 2:13

Cut the pieces apart. Hide the pieces around the room.



Display the Word of Wonder Slide. **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.



Our Word of Wonder is from 2 Timothy 2:13. We're learning that only God saves. We can trust that God will save us because He is faithful. Our Word of Wonder reminds us God is faithful—that's who He is!

In today's story, God told Moses to make a bronze snake to save the Israelites from the real snakes that were hurting them. I've hidden several papers around the room that each have a word and a part of a puzzle on them. When I tell you to start, go look for a piece of paper, and once you find one, bring it back and sit down. Once we have all the pieces of paper, we'll put the pieces together to see the picture, and I'll read what the words say.

Allow time for kids to find the pieces of paper. Once all pieces have been found, allow the kids to help you put them together in order. **Wow! It's a snake on a pole. In God's big story, God gave the**

people a way to be saved—by having Moses create a bronze snake on a pole. God gives us Jesus so we can be saved. God is faithful! The words in the picture are our Word of Wonder. Let's say our Word of Wonder together. Say the verse several times together.

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

- **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.*

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- **Who is the only One who can save us?***(God)*
- **Why can we trust that God will save us?** *(The Bible tells us; God is faithful and keeps His promises.)*

Circle Time: Hide and Seek Review

SUPPLIES: Hide and Seek Review Sheet



Before kids arrive, print the Hide and Seek Review Sheet and cut apart the cards. Gather the kids in a circle and lay the six picture cards out on the floor in the middle of the circle.

We learned today that God forgave His people and saved them, even when they sinned and complained. Even when they forgot about God, He still loved them and took care of them. Do you remember what God told Moses to hold up to save the people? Hold up the picture of the snake and allow the kids to respond.

God had Moses hold up a pole with a bronze snake on it. I have a picture of a snake that is going to help us review our lesson. Everyone, close your eyes, and I'm going to hide the snake under one of the pictures.

Encourage kids to close their eyes or turn around so they can't see as you hide the snake picture under one of the picture cards. Have the kids say the following with you: **"Snake, snake hiding from me. Under which picture will you be?"** Then allow one kid to pick up a picture card and see if the snake is underneath it. If he finds the snake, he can answer one of the discussion questions. If he doesn't guess correctly, another kid can guess where the snake is hiding. Repeat until all questions have been answered.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **Have you ever seen a snake? Would you be scared if you did see one?**
- **Where were the Israelites wandering?** *(the desert)*
- **How did the Israelites react to having to wander in the desert?** *(They complained.)*
- **Who did God tell to make a bronze snake and put it on a pole?** *(Moses)*
- **What did the Israelites forget that God could do?** *(save them)*
- **How do you think the Israelites felt when they realized God saved them?**
- **Who is the only one who has the power to save us?** *(God)*

In our game, the snake was hiding behind different pictures. In today's story, the snakes came right where the Israelites lived and hung out. Do you think the Israelites were scared? Allow the kids to respond. **God wanted His people to remember that only God saves.**

Prayer and Blessing

Close in prayer together. Encourage the kids to clap and cheer as you tell God, “Thank You.”

God, thank You (clap and cheer) **for saving us. Help us always remember that only You can save us. 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!