

Lesson Summary

This lesson explains how to properly understand and apply the many stories found throughout the Bible. While narrative is one of the most engaging parts of Scripture, it is also one of the most misunderstood. Many people assume that if a Bible character acted in a certain way, we should do the same. However, the lesson makes clear that Bible stories are not primarily about us—they are about God and His work in history.

The lesson teaches that narratives record what actually happened, not necessarily what should have happened. Some actions in the Bible are examples to follow, while others are warnings of what not to do. To understand them correctly, we must consider the broader teaching of the Bible, the historical context, and the overall story of God's plan of redemption.

A key principle is that God is the true hero of every Bible story. Individual accounts fit into a much larger story of creation, redemption, and restoration. When we read narratives with this perspective, we avoid misapplying them and instead learn what they reveal about God's character, purposes, and ways of working.

Ice-breaker Question

Have you ever taken advice from a story or example that didn't work out the way you expected? What happened?

Discussion Questions for a Group; Journal Questions for Individual Study

1. Why is it important to remember that Bible stories are primarily about God rather than about us?
2. What is the danger of assuming that we should imitate everything a Bible character does?
3. How does understanding the difference between what happened and what should have happened change the way we read narratives?

4. What are the three levels of the Bible story, and how do they help us interpret individual accounts?
5. Why do people often misapply Bible verses or stories, especially in times of need or desperation?
6. How does understanding the context of passages like Jeremiah 29:11 change how we apply them to our lives?

Life Application Suggestions, consider and respond

1. When reading a Bible story, ask what it reveals about God's character rather than focusing only on human actions.
2. Take time to study the broader context of passages before applying them to your life.
3. Resist the temptation to look for quick answers; instead, commit to long-term growth in understanding the Bible.
4. Practice trusting God's overall plan, even when your personal circumstances are unclear or difficult.

Prayer Focus

Thank God for revealing Himself through the stories of the Bible. Pray for wisdom to understand His Word correctly, patience to study it deeply, and trust in His greater plan for your life.