

# The Books of History

(God's True Story)

## Pre-Session Warm Up

[Teacher, discuss with your class how the Word of God is nourishing like the bread of life. Before class cut a slit in the bottom of a round loaf of French bread and pull out a little of the bread. Tuck a pocket-sized New Testament in the loaf. During the pre-session activity, have the children come and break bread with you. They will be amazed to find the Bible inside the loaf and will make the connection between the Word of God and the bread.]

Today we're going to learn more about this very special book, called the Bible.

## Opening Prayer

Father, we are so blessed to be able to read Your word! Thank You for giving us these special messages that give us everything we need for life and godliness. This morning, I pray that you would guide us in Your truth and teach us what we cannot learn in school. In Jesus name, we pray. Amen.

## Memory Verse:

*Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. (Matthew 24:35)*

## Lesson

### The History Books

We divide the books of the Bible into groups. The first five books in our Bible are called *The Books of Moses* or sometimes just *the Law*, because they tell of God's Ten commandments and other instructions. The next 12 books are called the *Books of History*. These books tell us the history of God's chosen people, the Israelites.

Open your Bible to the Table of Contents and let's read the names of the History Books together. (Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther.)

### Joshua

In Joshua, we read about Moses' death and the new leader God chose, Joshua. This book tells us the exciting stories of how God helped the Israelites conquer the people living in the land that was promised to them. There were many battles. Have you ever heard the story about Joshua and the battle of Jericho? In every battle the Israelites learned that when they obeyed God, they came out winners; but when they disobeyed Him, they lost. What an important lesson! Just before he died, Joshua challenged God's people to fear the Lord and to serve Him (Joshua 24:14).

### Judges

In Judges we learn about what happened to the Israelites after they settled into the Promised Land. Time and again the people of Israel forgot about God and all that He had done for them. They sinned against Him by worshiping other gods. So, God punished them by allowing them to be delivered into the hands of enemy nations. Then God raised up judges. Are you familiar with Gideon and Samson? These judges made the people face their sin and reminded them of God's Word. Finally, the people confessed their sin and turned back to God. Each time, God loved them so much that He forgave them. This happened over and over again. We have such a loving and patient God! This is a picture of how we do things that go against God's will, but if we confess our sins and turn from them, God is faithful to forgive us.

The end of the book of Judges tells us the sad state of the nation of Israel.

Judges 21:25

*In those days Israel had no king; all the people did whatever seemed right in their own eyes.*

After all that God had done for them, they still chose their own way instead of His. Again, that is so much like us. Time and again we make choices to go our own way instead of God's.

### **Ruth**

The book of Ruth is a bright spot during the dark days of the judges. It tells how, after the death of her first husband, God provided Ruth a new husband named Boaz. This reminds us of God's love for us. Boaz rescued and cared for Ruth. Our Savior Jesus Christ shows His love in an even greater way by saving us and caring for us.

### **1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, and 1 & 2 Chronicles**

In the books of 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, and 1 & 2 Chronicles, there are no longer judges leading Israel; there are kings. God chose Saul to be the first king. But Saul disobeyed God and God chose another, David.

As a boy, David had been a shepherd. He loved God very much. David wrote many songs that we sing even to this day while he was sitting out with his sheep on the hillsides around Jerusalem. David was also very brave and killed a giant named Goliath.

After David's death, his son Solomon became king. Solomon built a beautiful temple for God's people to worship in. It was a magnificent place, a type of heaven. But soon God's people began to neglect their worship of God. Their nation became divided. Finally, both halves were conquered and God's people were carried off to other nations as slaves. And God's beautiful temple was destroyed.

### **Ezra**

The book of Ezra was written about 80 years after the Israelites returned from captivity in Babylon. Ezra records how the temple was rebuilt and then challenged the people to worship God properly.

### **Nehemiah**

In the book of Nehemiah we learn of Nehemiah's work to rebuild the walls around the city of Jerusalem.

### **Esther**

Finally the book of Esther tells of a young woman who was used by God to save the Israelites from being killed off.

Throughout the Books of History, we see God at work in people's lives. God never changes. He still works in our lives every day.

Malachi 3:6a

*"I am the LORD, and I do not change..."*

What pleased Him in these stories will please Him today. If you and I want to please God, we need to read and remember these lessons from Israel's history.

1 Corinthians 10:11

*These things happened to them as examples for us. They were written down to warn us who live at the end of the age.*

All these lessons were written down so that we could read about them and learn from them.

We've only talked about the first 17 books of the Bible. We divided those books into two groups: the Law and History. Next week we will learn about the books of Poetry.

All the books in the Bible make the whole picture — it's the whole puzzle put together. They tell one complete story — God's plan of redemption.

## Closing Prayer

Father, it's so good to know that You are in control of everything that happens in our lives and that You are working it all out. Thank You that you've made sure that we have Your story written down so that we will not be caught off guard. The Bible is about Your story, His-story. Continue to give us a love for our Bibles so that we may know and love You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

## Learning Activities

### Books of the Old Testament Song

(To the tune of "Did You Ever See a Lassie?")

*Let us sing the books of Moses, of Moses, of Moses,*

*Let us sing the books of Moses, for he wrote the law.*

*First, **Genesis**; second, **Exodus**; third, **Leviticus**; fourth, **Numbers**;*

*And the fifth is **Deuteronomy**, the last of them all.*

*Let us sing the books of history, of history, of history,*

*Let us sing the books of history, which tell of the Jews.*

*There's **Joshua**, and **Judges**, and the story of **Ruth**.*

*First and second **Samuel**; and two books of **Kings**;*

*There's two books of **Chronicles**, which give us the records;*

*Then **Ezra**; **Nehemiah**; and **Esther**, the Queen.*

## Game Center

### ***Puzzle Relay Race***

Reading the Bible is like putting together a puzzle. All the stories we read in the Bible help us to see a true picture of what God is like, so we can know and love Him. [Teacher, for this game use any puzzle with about a dozen pieces for each team. Or, make a puzzle by printing the memory verse on a piece of card stock and cutting it into puzzle-like pieces. Use a different color for each team.]

1. Divide group into teams of six to eight students.
2. Have a puzzle for each team.
3. Have Teams form lines.
4. Mix up puzzle pieces and place them about 20 feet from the teams, keeping each team's pieces separate.
5. At your signal, the first student from each team runs to his or her team's puzzle pieces, gets a piece, returns to his or her line and tags the next student to run to the puzzle and get a piece.
6. Students continue until all pieces have been collected.
7. Then students on each team work together to assemble their puzzle.

Option: Print Matthew 24:35 on index cards, one word on each card. Play relay as instructed above, substituting index cards for puzzle pieces and having teams put cards in correct verse order.

