



S2.Lesson 22: Jesus & The Old Testament – A Little Becomes a Lot

Middle School Lesson Plans

Supplies Needed: Journals; Handout; tv or laptop to show movie clip (movie clip link is available at rfour.org/curriculum.html); 1 tissue box with a tissue count somewhere between 160 and 200 sheets

OPENING PRAYER

TELL

- Maybe you've watched the tv game show "Win it in a minute" and if so, then maybe you'll be familiar with our opening activity.
- We'll need one volunteer to hold the tissue box and we'll need one volunteer to pull the tissues out.
- (pick volunteers)
- The person who is pulling the tissues out, you only have one minute to do pull out all the tissues, one at a time.
- You may only use one hand and you may not switch hands once you begin.
- Any questions?
- Who thinks our volunteer will succeed? Who thinks they will fail?
- On your mark, get set...

DO One Minute Tissue Box activity

ASK

- Did our volunteer succeed!?
- So, to our volunteer, what do you think, was there a lot or a little of tissue?
- Class, do you agree or disagree with our volunteer? Why?
- What if we had used this box of tissue in the usual way, how long would it have lasted, do you think? (a couple of weeks, a month – if left in the classroom – at least half a year).
- How long did it last today (1 minute)
- Do you want to do it one more time? But with a different twist?
- Ok, then I need two different volunteers. [bring 'em up front]
- And what you're going to do is put the tissue back in the box. You have one minute!
- On your mark, get set, go!

DO One minute put tissue back in the box activity.

TELL

- Does it seem strange that the tissue doesn't all fit from where it came from?
- During this 3 week session, we are looking at things Jesus did during his life and ministry and comparing it to similar things that happened in the Old Testament.

- We're doing this session for a number of reasons – the main reason is to point out that what Jesus did, though impressive, was not new or unique to the Israelites understandings of how God can work through us, humans.
- Last week we looked at how Jesus raised a dead child to life and how the prophet Elijah did the same thing.
- This week we're going to read a story about Elisha, Elijah's student and eventual successor and Jesus and how they reveal God's abundance to others.

READ 2 Kings 4

1 The wife of a man from the company of the prophets cried out to Elisha, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that he revered the LORD. But now his creditor is coming to take my two boys as his slaves." 2 Elisha replied to her, "How can I help you? Tell me, what do you have in your house?" "Your servant has nothing there at all," she said, "except a little oil." 3 Elisha said, "Go around and ask all your neighbors for empty jars. Don't ask for just a few. 4 Then go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons. Pour oil into all the jars, and as each is filled, put it to one side." 5 She left him and afterward shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her and she kept pouring. 6 When all the jars were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another one." But he replied, "There is not a jar left." Then the oil stopped flowing. 7 She went and told the man of God, and he said, "Go, sell the oil and pay your debts. You and your sons can live on what is left."

READ Mark 6:32 - 44

32 And so Jesus and the disciples went away in the boat to a lonely place by themselves. 33 Now many saw them going, and knew them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns, and got there ahead of Jesus and the disciples. 34 So when Jesus went ashore he saw a great throng, but he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things. 35 And when it grew late, Jesus' disciples came to him and said, "This is a lonely place, and the hour is now late; 36 send the people away, to go into the country and villages round about and buy themselves something to eat." 37 But Jesus answered them, "You give them something to eat." And they said to him, "Shall we go and buy ten thousand dollars worth of bread, and give it to them to eat?" 38 And Jesus said to them, "How many loaves have you? Go and see." And when the disciples had found out, they said, "Five loaves and two fish." 39 Then Jesus commanded them all to sit in groups, by hundreds and by fifties. 41 And taking the five loaves and the two fish, Jesus blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples to set before the people; and he divided the two fish among them all. 42 And they all ate and were satisfied. 43 And the disciples took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. 44 And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men plus women and children.

ASK about the Elisha story

- In the Old Testament story, what does the woman need help with? (her husband died, she has no money, but there are bills that need to be paid off or else her sons will be made into slaves)
- What does the woman say she has in her house (a little bit of oil)
- What does Elisha tell her to do? (Gather up all the jars you can, then pour your oil in to it)
- So getting all the jars from neighbors is a little bit of work, don't you think. Do you think the woman was maybe thinking Elisha was wasting her time?

- Even if she did think he was wasting her time, she did it anyways. And what happened? (she filled up all the jars)
- Do you think she misunderstood how much oil she had? (seems unlikely)
- Because she trusted Elisha, what she had was enough..

ASK about the Jesus story

- In verse 32, where do Jesus, the disciples and the crowd end up? (a lonely place, which means far away from a villages and towns)
- How did they get there? (by running and by boat)
- So as the day wears on, what do the disciples want to do with the people in verse 36? (send them away so they can get food)
- What is Jesus' response to this idea? (He tells his disciples to feed the crowd)
- How do the disciples think they would do this? (by buying food for the people)
- So when Jesus realizes he's going to have to do this and he asks for how many loaves of bread there are, how many are there? (5)
- Do you think the disciples miscounted? (seems unlikely)
- So then Jesus takes the bread, blesses it, breaks it and gives it. Once he does this, what happens? (there's enough for everyone, with leftovers)
- What similarities do you see between the two stories? (Main similarities: A little turns into a lot with plenty leftover. Also, in order for a little to become a lot, the little has to first be used – the woman pours the oil, the people take the bread)

TELL

- So in our opening activity, one box of tissues turns into lots of tissues as we use it, right?
- A similar thing happens in the two stories that we read today: As the woman and as the people use the little that is available to them, it becomes enough.
- We're now going to watch a video with cartoon characters with British or Australian accents that will illustrate this idea a little more.
- It seems the bigger/older person in the clip is supposed to somehow be Jesus. I haven't seen the whole film so I can't tell you all that's going on. But as you'll see, you don't need to know all that's going on to understand the point of clip.

WATCH MOVIE CLIP from Adventures of Toby

ASK

- So did Toby want to share his Wheat Things? (no)
- Did he want it to be used? (no – he dives for the falling Wheat Thing)
- What eventually happens? (the one Wheat Thing turns into a Wheat Thing Tree that then turns into lots of Wheat Things trees)
- In order for the tree(s) to grow, what was the very first thing that had to happen? (Toby had to let go of what he had – he had to use what he had)
- How do you see this connecting to the stories that we read today? (the woman had to use the oil, the loaves had to be used – there also has to be some trust involved)

TELL

- There are other stories in the Old Testament where thousands are fed, in lonely places, like when the Israelites are in the wilderness with Moses and God sends them manna, a bread-like substance, every morning for them to eat.
- There's an Elijah story, too, that's about a little bit of food becoming more.
- But we chose this Elisha story to help show how the concept of a little turning into a lot due to trust in God was a concept that the Israelites would've been aware of and familiar with.
- And for the Israelites who weren't at the feeding of the thousands, but then heard the story, the first thing they would've connected it to is this Elisha story or the other two stories we just mentioned.
- And again, the thing to remember is that what Jesus did was not new to the Israelites. They had these stories that were ever-present in their consciousness.
- However, Jesus did these things on a much bigger scale and with greater ease than the characters in other stories.
- And Jesus tells us that if we follow him, we can do like he does.
- One of the things we will do when we follow Jesus is help others know the abundance of God.
- And that is the good news for today!

CLOSING PRAYER