

Tutorial Guide: *Finding Our Place in the Old Testament Story*

Goal: To explore the story of the Old Testament with a focus on the Exodus, and to reflect on how these ancient stories connect to our lives today.

1. Why Read the Old Testament?

Summary:

The Old Testament was Jesus' Bible. It tells the story of God and his people before Jesus, and helps us understand the bigger picture of the Bible. It's full of questions about who God is, who we are, and how to live in relationship with God and others.

Discussion Prompts: (Pick 1 or 2 as appropriate for your group)

- What comes to mind when you think of the Old Testament?
 - Why do you think Christians still read it today?
 - Do you think you can understand Jesus properly without knowing the Old Testament?
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2. The Big Story of the Old Testament

Summary:

The Old Testament tells one big story with many smaller parts. It begins with creation and moves through promises, struggles, exile, and hope. The story shows God's faithfulness even when people are not always faithful.

Story Arc:

→ Creation → Fall → Covenant → Redemption → New Creation

Discussion Prompts: (Pick 1 or 2 as appropriate for your group)

- If you had to guess the "plot" of the Old Testament, how would you describe it?
 - Where do you think most people find themselves in this kind of story?
 - What kinds of things might we learn from a story that includes failure and hope?
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3. The Beginning of the Bible – Big Questions in Genesis 1–11

Summary:

The Bible opens with a group of stories that deal with life's biggest questions — about the

world, about people, and about God. These stories are found in the first part of the Bible, in a book called *Genesis*, chapters 1 to 11. Even if they sound ancient or strange, they raise questions we're still asking today.

The stories include:

- **The Creation of the World** – How did everything begin? What is the purpose of life?
- **Adam and Eve** – Why is the world both beautiful and broken?
- **Cain and Abel** – Why do people hurt each other?
- **Noah and the Flood** – What happens when things go very wrong? Is there hope?
- **The Tower of Babel** – Why are people divided? Can we ever come together?

These stories aren't just about the past. The rest of the Bible keeps coming back to these same ideas — about brokenness, trust, purpose, and the hope that God hasn't given up on the world.

Discussion Prompts: (Pick 1 or 2 as appropriate for your group)

- When you hear stories about how the world began, what kinds of questions do they make you ask?
- Why do you think the Bible starts with stories like these?
- Do any of the themes — like conflict, failure, or hope — still feel real in today's world?
- What might it mean that even in stories of failure, God keeps trying to work with people?

4. The Exodus: From Slavery to Freedom

Summary:

The Exodus is one of the biggest moments in the Bible. It tells how God rescued his people from slavery in Egypt and led them to freedom. This story is about trust, struggle, and learning to follow a new way.

Key Themes:

Freedom, identity, trust, leadership, worship

Discussion Prompts: (Pick 1 or 2 as appropriate for your group)

- Why do you think a story about being freed from slavery is so important?
- What might “freedom” mean for people today — in practical or spiritual ways?
- Can you think of a time you wanted to “go back” to something that felt safe, even if it wasn't good?

5. Living and Worshipping Well

Summary:

After leaving Egypt, the people had to learn how to live in relationship with God. Books like Leviticus and parts of Exodus teach about holiness, worship, and justice. Not everything applies to us now, but the core idea is that God is holy — and we're invited to reflect that.

Discussion Prompts: (Pick 1 or 2 as appropriate for your group)

- What does “holy” mean to you?
 - How do we worship well — not just in church, but in everyday life?
 - Are there parts of life you think God cares about that we often ignore?
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6. Wandering in the Wilderness

Summary:

The book of Numbers tells the story of two generations: one that left Egypt and one that entered the promised land. It includes moments of doubt, rebellion, hope, and leadership. It shows how hard it can be to trust when the journey is long.

Discussion Prompts: (Pick 1 or 2 as appropriate for your group)

- Have you ever felt like you were “in the wilderness” — stuck or unsure of what’s next?
 - What helps people keep going during difficult or confusing times?
 - What do you think God might want us to learn in seasons of waiting?
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7. Looking Ahead: Our Place in the Story

Summary:

The story of Exodus shaped Jesus’ life and mission. The same themes — freedom, trust, worship, and community — continue through the New Testament and into our lives today. We’re part of the same story of hope and restoration.

Discussion Prompts: (Pick 1 or 2 as appropriate for your group)

- What part of today’s conversation stood out to you?
 - Do you see yourself in this story? If so, where?
 - How might the Old Testament help shape how we live as Christians today?
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