



The Salvation

Josh Morris

Focus Moses's staff represents the cross. When Moses struck the rock with his staff, clean water flowed freely; when the cross struck Jesus (the rock), living water was given. The budding of Aaron's staff represents the life and fruit that come through Jesus; Jesus is the bridge for God's kingdom to come on the earth.

Fun What was your favorite board game growing up? If you still play board games, what is your favorite now?

Review Key Scriptures: Exodus 17:1–7; Numbers 17:1–8

1. The staff brings living water.

Exodus 17 tells the story of the Israelites being thirsty and grumbling to Moses for water. God instructed Moses to take his staff and strike the rock. When Moses obeyed, fresh water flowed out of the rock and there was plenty for the people to drink. The imagery of the staff made of wood represents the cross, and the rock in this story represents Jesus—*our rock*. When the cross struck Jesus, living water was made freely available for all of us. Jesus is the One who gives us true, living water.

2. The staff brings new life.

Aaron was the first high priest from the tribe of Levi for the Israelites. When men from other tribes questioned Aaron's leadership, God instructed the head of each tribe to bring their staff as a sign. They were to leave their staffs overnight, and the man whose staff produced buds by morning would be the one God chose to lead. The next day, Aaron's staff not only brought forth buds but also

blossoms and almonds. The budding of Aaron's staff symbolized Jesus as the branch from the line of Jesse that would bring forth fruit.

3. The staff is a bridge.

Jesus told Nathanael that he was an Israelite with no deceit. Jesus acknowledged Nathanael's lineage from Jacob (who was a deceiver) and directly contrasted it by declaring he had none. Jesus also told Nathanael that He saw him under the fig tree. In essence, He was communicating to Nathanael that He knew his thoughts and prayers and was calling him to sit under Him as a disciple. Jesus also mentioned angels ascending and descending, which was a reference to Jacob's dream with the ladder. Through this interaction, Jesus communicated that Nathanael was about to witness great things in God's kingdom with his own eyes.

Group Dynamics Idea With Easter approaching soon, it's a great time for your group to be intentional about inviting unsaved friends to church. Take a few minutes to discuss this together. Encourage one another to make a list of neighbors, coworkers, or friends they can invite to church. Most people come to church because they are asked, and many people find a personal relationship with Jesus because someone was proactive about reaching out to them. Rally together as a group to make the most of this opportunity!

Discuss

1. When Jesus said He would give us living water, what do you think He meant?
2. How can the gospel be bitter to people (like the waters of Marah)? How does the gospel change to living water once people understand and receive the message of the cross?
3. Just like Aaron's staff brought fruit, how has your life become fruitful after you believed in Jesus and were born again?
4. If you were in Nathanael's place, how would you have responded if Jesus told you that you were about to witness with your own eyes His kingdom coming?
5. Nathanael sitting under the fig tree represented him sitting under the authority and teaching of the Messiah. What does it look like today for us to be under God's authority and to receive Jesus' teachings regularly?
6. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through this message?

Take Home

As we conclude, remember the following:

- Jesus brings us living water.
- Jesus brings new life.
- Jesus is the bridge for us to enter God's kingdom.

Prayer Heavenly Father, thank You for sending Your son Jesus. We receive the living water that You offer us, and we ask that our lives would bring forth fruit as we allow Jesus to work through us. We want to sit under Your authority and be taught by You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

New Leader Tip Be intentional about developing leaders in your group. Actively raise up and train other people in your group to lead. Identify one or two people in your group that could potentially help you as you lead. If this is new for them, begin by giving them a small responsibility. If they are more experienced in leading, maybe ask them to lead the discussion one week.