

The Gospel Project for Adults, Winter 2018-19
Interactive Teaching Tips for Adults, Unit 4, Session 6

Introduction: *Discuss the spiritual aspects of following someone.*

Ask these questions: “Have you ever seen children following a teacher? What about animal babies following their mother?” Then show the video of curious cows following an old dog around a field (2 minutes, 40 seconds): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d5twRq_1eUo

Pose this question to group members: “What spiritual implications might we draw from this video?”

Introduce today’s session by saying, “Today we’ll look at the pillar of fire and cloud leading the children of Israel out of Egypt. Consider analogously then whom you might be following in your own life.”

Point 1: *Highlight the utility of the unbeaten path.*

After discussing Exodus 13:17-22, show group members the following map: <http://www.bible.ca/archeology/maps-bible-archeology-exodus-route-overview.jpg>

Point out the route taken by the Israelites. Ask, “Was the way they went the most direct route to the promised land of Canaan?” Point out the rationale given by Exodus 13:17: “God did not lead them along the road to the land of the Philistines, even though it was nearby; for God said, ‘The people will change their minds and return to Egypt if they face war.’” (Exod. 13:17).

Ask the following questions: “Can you look back at your own life and see some indirect or inefficient paths you’ve taken? Can you praise God for His protection and providence during these onerous journeys or apparent excesses? Or does it inspire you to confess your own wandering heart and sin?”

Encourage group members to seek God’s guidance each day and in every situation. Affirm they can trust Him even when the path is not direct.

Point 3: *Compare the exodus with other great escapes.*

Say something like the following: “Before we get to the last passage of the session, let’s consider some of the most famous examples of people breaking out of captivity.” Read a few of the examples from the interesting article “Here’s how inmates used helicopters, yoga and fruit to escape prison”:
<https://www.cnn.com/2015/06/08/us/amazing-prison-breaks/index.html>

Then ask, “What made these escapes notable or amazing?” After reading the allotted verses from Exodus 14, ask, “How is the Israelites’ escape—probably 1-2 million or so people walking out of four centuries of captivity (see 12:37-38)—even more amazing?” Keep directing group members back to the power of God and His glory displayed through the Red Sea crossing.

Conclusion: *Consider God’s sovereignty in His plans for His people.*

Invite a few volunteers to read aloud Genesis 15:13-16 from a variety of translations. Say something like, “These were the words of the Lord to Abraham more than 600-800 years before the Israelites would walk out of slavery in Egypt.” Help group members to recognize that all of the events that led Israel to Egypt and out of it—the new homeland, the enslavement, the plagues, and even the freedom—were always part of God’s plan.

Challenge group members to trust God in each step of their own lives. Put the following statement into your own words: “Just as God had a plan for the Israelites as His covenant people and brought it to pass, He has a plan for each of us as members of the body of Christ, His covenant people.”

Teaching Tip of the Week

This session lends itself well to the study of geography related to the Bible. If possible, hang a large map of the areas near Egypt and Canaan during the Iron Age or, if more convenient, a map of ancient Israel. If finding such a visual is not feasible for your group, encourage group members with maps in their copies of the Bible to sit near those who do not have them.