



Between the Lines

Challenges and Insights from the Old Testament

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FREE SAMPLE LESSON

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Introduction

Between the Lines takes a unique approach for a Bible study: each lesson begins with a poem, written to explore the truths, insights, and challenges nestled *between* two consecutive verses of Scripture in the Old Testament.

When I originally wrote the poems you will find here, I did so because I was struck by the drama in these Old Testament stories – a drama that wasn't shouted from the actual text, but that took place literally after the close of one verse and before the start of the next.

Between the lines, between the verses, I found a wealth of pain, longing, emotion, conflict, and challenge. It is that drama that these poems seek to capture.

After each poem, you will find a page of questions relating to the issues that the poem raises. These questions are meditative and discussion-oriented in nature, appropriate for both personal devotion and small group settings. They are designed to add not only to our understanding of the Old Testament stories, but to our appreciation and application of eternal truths in our own lives.

Take your time. Explore the truths that God has revealed in these verses. And go forth changed and renewed.

Lesson 1

What Have I Done?

Adam

Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.

And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

Genesis 3:7-8

What Have I Done?

I remember my thoughts –
cool, crisp, clear
logical precision to rationalize desire.
I loathed obedience,
freely choosing the reins of slavery.
I craved the promised knowledge,
power.
I received what I wanted –
with a vengeance.
Now I know.
I know what I have lost:
relationship ruptured
in one act of lust.
I know what I have gained:
self
exalted in tyrannical rule.
And in the forest shadows,
I hear mocking laughter.

I know things that before
were hidden in mystery:
Shame.
Guilt.
Sin.
Truths once shielded
from my innocent eyes.
My eyes are open, now.

I know myself in intimate ways:
I am naked.
Helpless.
Lost.
I gloried once in my body
myself.
Spirit, soul, and body
perfectly joined
a rejoicing communion.
Now I raise defenses without
trying to hide
the nakedness within.

And I can hear God walking
I can hear Him calling.
He calls me by name.
I hear the longing in His voice,
the empty loneliness in His heart;
I slip further into shadows.
One question alone echoes
in the barren wind
across my mind:

What have I done?

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Questions for Thought

- ☞ What strikes you from this poem? What insights does it give you?
- ☞ Have you ever rationalized sinful desires? What were the circumstances?
- ☞ Consider James 1:13-15 and I John 2:15-16. What do these verses tell you about the progression of sin?
- ☞ Why might you not want to be obedient to God?
- ☞ What have been some of the consequences of your own disobedience to God?
- ☞ Imagine what a perfect relationship with God would be like. What would characterize that relationship? What images come to mind?
- ☞ Consider Revelation 21:1-7 and Revelation 22:1-5. What are you most looking forward to in heaven?
- ☞ Is sin ever as sweet as we imagine it will be when we are desiring something we shouldn't have?
- ☞ Describe what it feels like to be burdened with shame and guilt. What does it do to your relationship with God?
- ☞ When you get defensive because you have been caught in sin, what do you do?
- ☞ When do you feel most vulnerable? Why?
- ☞ When you have unconfessed sin in your life and you hear God calling you to repentance, how do you respond?
- ☞ Consider John 3:16 and Romans 5:5-11. Do you ever struggle with understanding that God truly loves you - even though you are a sinner? Why?
- ☞ Take time to pray. Confess any sin, and meditate on the love of God, his forgiveness, and his joy at being in a love-relationship with you.