

The Story

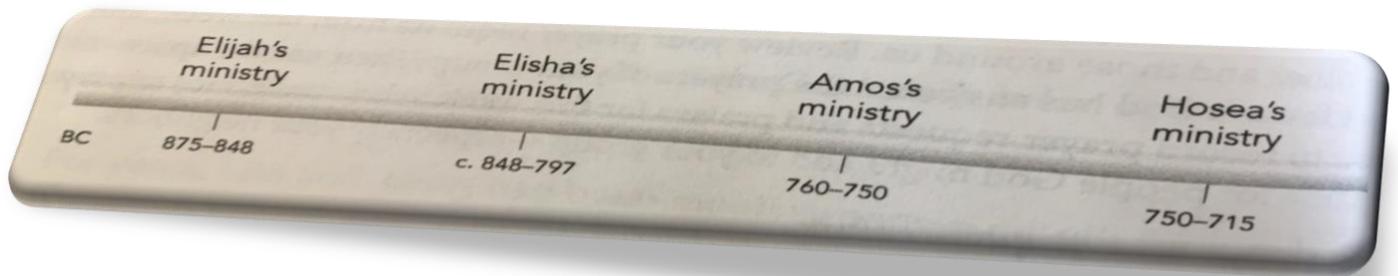
Session 16: "God's Messengers"

Buhler Mennonite Church Sanctuary (and BMC YouTube live-stream) – April 14, 2021

"I will heal their waywardness and love them freely, for my anger has turned away from them."

HOSEA 14:4 (NIV)

1. Opening & Praying



2. **Review:** As we go through *The Story* together, we want to learn how to tell the story. Commit Movement 2 & 3 to memory.

MOVEMENT 1: *"In the UPPER STORY, God creates the LOWER STORY. God's vision is to come down and be with us in a beautiful garden. The first two people reject God's vision and are escorted from paradise. Their decision introduces sin into the human race and keeps us from community with God. At this moment God gives a promise and launches a plan to get us back. The rest of the Bible is God's story of how God kept that promise and made it possible for us to enter a loving relationship with God."*

MOVEMENT 2: *"God builds a brand-new nation called Israel. Through this nation, God will reveal his presence, power, and plan to get us back. Every story of Israel will point to the first coming of Jesus --the One who will provide the way back to God."*

MOVEMENT 3: *"Jesus left the UPPER STORY to come down into our LOWER STORY to be with us and to provide the way for us to be made right with God. Through faith in Christ's work on the cross, we can now overturn Adam's choice and have a personal relationship with God."*

3. Introduction: WATCH THE SCRIPTURE VIDEO

"The late [USA] Supreme Court justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. is often misquoted as saying it is wrong to shout "fire" in a crowded movie house. What he actually said was that it is wrong to

falsely shout "fire" in a crowded movie house."

- **Reflect on it/Talk About It:** Tell about a time you saw a sign, followed what it said, and were glad you did. Or, tell about a time you missed or ignored a posted sign and suffered for it.



4. Know the Story: Pop Quiz

- What happened after Elijah defeated the prophets of Baal?
 - a. There was a great celebration and feast with the people of Israel.
 - b. The people attacked Elijah in anger for destroying their gods.
 - c. There was a tremendous rain that came down after a long time of drought.
 - d. The people went out to destroy all the temples of Baal.
- How did the LORD make an appearance to Elijah in the wilderness?
 - a. In a great and powerful wind.
 - b. In a gentle whisper.
 - c. In a rumbling earthquake.
 - d. In a blazing fire.
- How did Elijah die?
 - a. Jezebel killed him after he destroyed the prophets of Baal.
 - b. He died at the ripe old age of 157 full of life, wisdom, and blessing.
 - c. Elisha replaced him as Israel's prophet, so Elijah killed himself.
 - d. He didn't, because he was taken up in a whirlwind on a chariot of fire.
- In the battle against Aram, how did the LORD use Elisha to defeat them?
 - a. They were struck with blindness and led into their enemy's hands.
 - b. Fear overtook them, and they began to fight each other.
 - c. The LORD made the sun stand still in the sky as they fought.
 - d. Whenever Elisha's hands were raised, the Israelites were victorious.

5. Understand the Story: Video with Randy Frazee

Video Guide: As you watch the video use the following outline to record anything that stands out to you.

- The reason God divided the nation of Israel:
 - * *The secret of their success is their _____ .*
- The Northern Kingdom (Israel) & the Southern Kingdom (Judah):
 - * *God raised up prophets or _____ .*
- The prophets enter to give a loving and clear message from God:
 - * *God raised up prophets or _____ .*

6. Video Discussion/Journaling: Write down your answers.

- What part of Randy's teaching encouraged or challenged you the most? Why? Did anything jump out, calling you to action? Did anyone have an "aha!" moment?
- God still loves his people, still tenderly seeks to warn us when we are in danger. *Name some ways God posts a warning sign in the middle of the road as we travel through life.*
- Right after an amazing victory, Elijah faced one of his hardest times both spiritually and emotionally (1 Kings 19:1-9; *THE STORY*, pp. 206-207). *What did Elijah go through (emotionally, physically, and spiritually) and how did God seek to lovingly restore him?*

Tell about a time you hit a low spot in your faith shortly after a time of real victory or strength. *How can we be on our guard and prepared for spiritual attack in instances like these?*

- Through the prophets Amos and Hosea, God pointed out the people's sin and actions of rebellion (*THE STORY*, pp. 213-217). *What were some of Israel's sins and why do you think God was being so severe with them?*

God still speaks today. God is calling.
*The question is whether or not you will pick up
God's call and listen or will you send God into*

7. Personal Reflection:

God was very patient with the nation of Israel. For over two centuries and through the reigns of 19 kings, God kept loving, seeking, and sending his prophets with a call for God's people to come home. Finally, God said, "Enough!" and accomplished the plan of restored relationship with humanity through the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

Reflect on how patient God has been with you.

Identify patterns of sin in your life that seem to come back again and again.

Pray for power to see these and turn from them.

The secret of Israel's success was their God.
Their relationship with God was meant to cause other nations
to say, "*We want to get to know this God too!*"

8. Personal Action:

God is calling. Don't put God into voicemail. This week sit quietly in prayer and listen to God, a journal or blank piece of paper and pen in hand. Ask God a few simple, pointed questions and write down any words God places on your heart. Here are a few questions to ask God to get you started.

- *What have you done to show your love and patience for me?* (Thank God).
- *What are the behaviors and attitudes in my life that are not honoring you?*
(Commit to change)
- *How can I listen more closely to your Word and other ways you speak to me?*
(Seek to follow God's leading ... even when it is hard).

9. Double Check Your Pop Quiz [c/b/d/a]

Video Notes Answer Key: God / messengers / prostitute / Return / loves

10. Next Week: Session 17: "The Beginning of the End (of the Kingdom of Israel)" (Isaiah 55:1)".