

MOSES LED THE ISRAELITES

EXODUS 17-18



KEY PASSAGE: Psalm 34:17

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why does sin separate us from God? Because God is holy, sin has broken our relationship with God.

CHRIST CONNECTION: Moses was a great leader, but he was just a man. He was not able to meet all the needs of all the people by himself. Jesus is fully man and fully God. He is able to hear and respond to all of our prayers, and His death and resurrection provide salvation to everyone who trusts in Him.

STORY POINT: God provided help for Moses to lead the people.



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

Exodus 17 and 18 reveal God’s faithfulness to help Moses in the difficulties of leadership. From the Amalekite battle to his daily struggle to teach and judge God’s people, Moses’ human limitations were evident as he came to the end of himself and depended on God to supply him with the support needed to fulfill his role as leader of the Israelites.

How was Moses ill-equipped to take on the strains of these circumstances? How do we see our own need for Jesus in today’s text?

Though Moses led with humble obedience, he could not independently fulfill all the requirements of his role. As Joshua led Israel in war, Moses was responsible for interceding on behalf of the Israelites. When the Israelites were battling the Amalekites, God allowed Aaron and Hur to assist Moses as his arms grew heavy, and God declared that He would blot out the memory of this foe under heaven. When God’s words rang true, Moses declared God to be his victory, the One in whom he placed his trust.

Later, Moses recounted to his father-in-law God’s faithful deliverance in every hardship since their departure from Egypt and went on to explain his responsibilities as leader. Jethro believed Moses’ role was too big for one man and wisely instructed Moses to select other like-minded men to serve alongside him. He explained that the delegation of these roles would help not only Moses, but the rest of God’s people too. God, in His grace, provided the right men to assist Moses in these responsibilities. In both times of need, God graciously provided for Moses.

Teach the kids in your group that God helps us in our times of need, just as He did for Moses. Even more, God provides our greatest need: a Ruler like Moses to perfectly and completely instruct and judge His people—a role that could only be fulfilled through His perfect Son, Jesus. Moses’ leadership was a shadow of Christ’s greatness to come. Pray for boys and girls to see the salvation Christ offers them today, our greatest help for our greatest trouble.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10-15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25-30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- "Crack the Code" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- music



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video
- Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- "Moses Led the Israelites" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- "Unit 4, Session 5" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- "Chinese Lantern" printable, 1 per kid

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- "He Rescues Us (Psalm 34:17)" song
- worship song of your choice (optional)
- index cards



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- brown craft paper
- washable paint
- paper plates
- wet wipes
- paper towels

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** 🗨️ When was a time you needed someone to help you? How did he or she help you? 🗨️

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Crack the Code” activity page.

| **SAY** 🗨️ Today, we’ll see how **GOD PROVIDED HELP FOR MOSES TO LEAD THE PEOPLE.** 🗨️

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: FREEZE DANCE

Choose one kid to be the leader. Play music and direct the leader to hold up her arms. Challenge kids to follow the leader and dance or move about the room when her arms are in the air. Tell kids that as soon as she drops her arms they must freeze, even while the music continues to play. Kids who do not freeze are out. Play as time allows.

SAY 🗨️ Moses was the leader of God’s people, the Israelites. Today, we will see how **GOD PROVIDED HELP FOR MOSES TO LEAD THE PEOPLE.** When Moses and the Israelites were at war, he needed help to keep his arms raised. God provided Moses with men who helped to raise Moses’ arms in the air so Israel would win the battle. Let’s get ready to learn more about the help God provided for Moses. 🗨️

OPTION 2: HOW CAN YOU HELP?



Form kids into groups of three or four. Provide kids with a problem and challenge kids to figure out ways they could help with the problem. Consider using some of the examples below:

- A friend lost her pet.
- Your mom has to do the dishes and the laundry.
- Your brother’s room is a mess, and he can’t play until it’s clean.
- Your friend doesn’t know how to work a new toy.

Invite groups to share their responses for how they could help with each problem.

SAY 🗨️ We all need help sometimes. Thankfully, God has provided people in our lives who can help us. We can also be a help to others. Today, we’ll see how Moses needed help leading God’s people. 🗨️

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)



Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Welcome, kids! My name is [your name], and I am glad we can learn more about God from His Word. We’ve learned how God helped His people, the Israelites, in many ways. He rescued them from Egypt, parted the Red Sea, and provided for them in the wilderness. Today, we will learn how **GOD PROVIDED HELP FOR MOSES TO LEAD THE PEOPLE.** [Display the Story Point Poster.]

Did you bring your Bible? If so, please hold it up high. [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Before we open God’s Word, let’s prepare our hearts and minds for what He wants to teach us today. Pray with me: ‘Dear God, You are good to provide help when we need it. Help us see how You care for Your people through Your Word today. Amen.’ ”

Worship

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)



Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

* There's Nothing that our God can't do
* Firm Foundation (He won't)
* offering.



SAY “ Why does sin separate us from God? [Allow responses.] Because God is holy, our sin has broken our relationship with God. Let’s repeat the answer again: **Because God is holy, our sin has broken our relationship with God.** ”

How does God forgive our sin? [Allow responses.] God forgives us when we turn away from our sin and trust in Jesus. God knows our need to be forgiven and provided Jesus to meet that need. Today, as we learn how God provided the help Moses needed, we can be reminded of how God has provided Jesus so we can be made right with God. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ God rescued His people from slavery in Egypt by showing His great power through the ten plagues. God led His people to the Red Sea by cloud and fire and then parted the Red Sea so they could be rescued from their enemies. Last week, we saw how God provided for their needs as they started their wilderness journey by giving them food and water. Today, we will see how **GOD PROVIDED HELP FOR MOSES TO LEAD THE PEOPLE.** ”



LEARN the Bible Story



1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Exodus 17:8–18:27. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Moses Led the Israelites.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

MOSES LED THE ISRAELITES

“ God led His people through His servant, Moses. When Amalek came to fight the Israelites, Moses sent Joshua to lead the battle for Israel. While Joshua was fighting, Moses, Aaron, and another man named Hur went to stand on a hill nearby.

Whenever Moses held up his hand with God’s staff in it, Israel would be winning! But whenever he put his hand down, Amalek and his army would start winning. Aaron and Hur helped Moses keep God’s staff in the air, and Joshua defeated Amalek and his army.

A man named Jethro heard about everything God had done for His people. Jethro was the father of Moses’ wife, Zipporah. He came to visit Moses along with Moses’ wife and sons. Moses shared all that the Lord had done to Pharaoh and the Egyptians, and how God had rescued the Israelites from all their hardships in the wilderness. Jethro said, “Blessed be the LORD who rescued you from the power of Egypt and Pharaoh! I know the LORD is greater than all gods.”

The next day, Moses sat down to hear from his people and to help each person who needed his advice or guidance. He did this each day, from morning until evening. Jethro saw this and said, “What you are doing is not good. You will wear yourself out and be unable to help the people. You can’t do this task alone.”

Jethro told Moses to select other trustworthy men who worshiped God to give guidance in the smaller matters so that Moses could focus on the bigger issues. Moses took Jethro’s advice and selected additional men to help him. All the people’s needs were met.

Christ Connection: Moses was a great leader, but he was just a man. He was not able to meet all the needs of all the people by himself. Jesus is fully man and fully God. He is able to hear and respond to all of our prayers, and His death and resurrection provide salvation to everyone who trusts in Him. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Introduce it: Introduce Joshua as a special helper to Moses when you mention him in the story. Tell kids that Joshua will come up later in the Bible as an important leader for the Israelites.

Shout it: Invite kids to shout “God is the greatest” when you mention how God is greater than all gods.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ God’s people faced challenges in the wilderness. Today, we learned that the Israelites were attacked by the Amalekites—a people who hated the Israelites. But God was with His people. How did God help Moses win the battle? [Allow responses.] When Moses held his staff high in the air, Israel would be winning. But Moses grew tired, and when his arms fell, Israel would start to lose. God helped Moses by providing men to hold up Moses’ arms. God provided exactly what Moses needed to lead the people in victory.

Then we learned that Moses’ father-in-law, Jethro, saw how Moses was trying to meet the needs of all the people on his own. How did Jethro help Moses? [Allow responses.] Jethro helped Moses see that he needed a team of wise men to meet with the people. The team of men helped the people with smaller concerns while Moses could handle the bigger concerns. **GOD PROVIDED HELP FOR MOSES TO LEAD THE PEOPLE.** We need help like Moses. God gives us people who can help us when we’re in trouble or need advice. Most importantly, God provides us with people who can help us learn about Jesus and how He saves us from sin. God has also given Christians the Holy Spirit, who is our Helper. The Holy Spirit helps lead believers in truth and helps them grow to be more like Jesus.

Moses was a great leader, but he was just a man. He was not able to meet all the needs of all the people by himself. Jesus is fully man and fully God. He is able to hear and respond to all of our prayers, and His death and resurrection provide salvation to everyone who trusts in Him. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ God knows we all need help because no one can save themselves from sin. No one is powerful enough or good enough to take away their sin. God provided the help we need by sending Jesus to die for our sins. Jesus took our punishment for sin and then rose from the dead three days later. We are saved from sin and death when we trust in Jesus. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the [Gospel Plan Poster](#) to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 4, Session 5” [Questions from Kids](#) video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Does God always hear our prayers when we pray? Why?
2. God wants us to pray to Him. How can you make prayer a daily part of your life?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

SAY “ Lottie Moon worked long and hard to help the Chinese people. She defended the Chinese people who were persecuted for believing in Jesus, and she risked her own health during a famine. Many Chinese people lost their lives during the famine, and it eventually took Lottie’s life as well. A few months before Lottie died in 1912, she had written, ‘If I had a thousand lives, I would give them all for the women of China.’ ”



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

Tell kids that Lottie was like a bright light shining in a dark world. Share how telling others about Jesus helps them see their need for a Savior.

Provide each kid with a “Chinese Lantern” printable. Invite kids to color and decorate their lantern. Then follow the directions on the printable to create the lantern. Remind kids that Jesus is the Light of the world who saves people from their sin.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Before the session, write one or two words of the key passage on individual index cards. Create a set for each group of three or four kids. Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Psalm 34:17 together.

| **SAY** 🗣️ Let’s practice our key passage together to help us remember that God is our Rescuer. 🗣️

Form kids into groups of three or four. Provide each group with an index card set of the key passage. Challenge groups to work together to put the words in the correct order. Once complete, direct kids to shout out the key passage. If time allows, play again.

Lead kids to sing “He Rescues Them (Psalm 34:17).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

| **SAY** 🗣️ Dear God, thank You for always being present in our lives. You are our Rescuer, Protector, and Friend. Help us tell others about You and Your Son, Jesus. Amen. 🗣️

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Exodus 17. Tell kids that throughout the Bible God's people gave names to certain places that reflected God's character or actions. Remind kids that Abraham called the place where God provided the ram in place of Isaac "Yahweh-Jireh" in Genesis 22. Explain that in today's story Moses named an altar Yahweh-nissi which means "The LORD Is My Banner."

Consider pointing out the area between Egypt (H7) and Mount Sinai (I9) on the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Exodus 17:15 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY ☞ Moses built an altar and named it 'The LORD Is My Banner' as a reminder of how God fought for His people and won. God provided help for Moses to keep his arms raised high like a banner. God promised that He would defeat Israel's enemies.

God sent Jesus to defeat our enemies: sin and death. When we trust in Jesus, we no longer need to fear the punishment sin brings. God is powerful to save us and help us live for Him. ☞

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY ☞ Jethro gave Moses good advice. Who are people in your life that help you follow God? ☞

Answers will vary. Remind kids that we all need people to help us follow God and encourage us to obey Him. Tell kids that often parents, grandparents, church leaders, and even our Christian friends are people God gives us to help us follow Him. Encourage kids to surround themselves with people who love them and help them follow God.

SAY ☞ Is anyone as powerful as God? Why not? ☞

Discuss how God alone is all-powerful and no one is greater than Him. Remind kids that God won the victory against the Amalekites and provided His people with the help they needed. Tell kids that God is powerful to save them from sin. Remind kids that Jesus defeated sin and death, and they can be saved when they trust in Him.

SAY ☞ How is Jesus greater than Moses? ☞

Tell kids that Moses was just a man. Explain that he was sinful and needed God to save him. Remind kids that Jesus never sinned and that only He can save people from sin. Tell kids that Jesus is God in human form. He is the Creator, Savior, and the King of kings. Encourage kids to remember that Jesus hears our cries for help and is able to help us.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: THE LORD IS MY BANNER

Tape a large piece of brown craft paper to a wall. Label the paper *The LORD Is My Banner*. Provide kids with washable paint placed on paper plates, wet wipes, and paper towels. Invite kids to place their hand in the paint, allowing for a thin layer of paint to cover their hand. Direct kids to make their hand print on the banner. Then lead kids to use the wet wipes to clean the paint off their hand. Kids may dry their hand with a paper towel.

Then invite kids to share ways they can give thanks to God. Write their responses next to their hand print. Leave the banner in the room as a reminder of God's help for His people.

SAY *“GOD PROVIDED HELP FOR MOSES TO LEAD THE PEOPLE. We can lift our hands to God in praise for all the ways He helps us. Most importantly, we can praise Him for providing Jesus to rescue us from our sin. When we trust in Jesus, we can tell others how God can rescue them as well.”*

OPTION 2: QUIZ TIME!



Play a true or false review game by reviewing today's story. Call out different statements such as "Aaron and John helped raise Moses' arms" or "Jethro gave Moses good advice." Consider also calling out statements kids have learned about the Bible such as "The Bible is divided into the Old and New Testaments" or "Moses wrote the book of Isaiah." Direct kids to stand if the statement is true or remain seated if the statement is false. Play as time allows.

SAY *“As we continue to learn from God's Word, we can be reminded of what is true about Him. We can take these truths and store them in our hearts so that we not only remember them but live by them. God calls us to trust Him and live in a way that shows others what He is like. Through Jesus and the Holy Spirit, God helps His people live in ways that please Him and bring Him glory.”*

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.