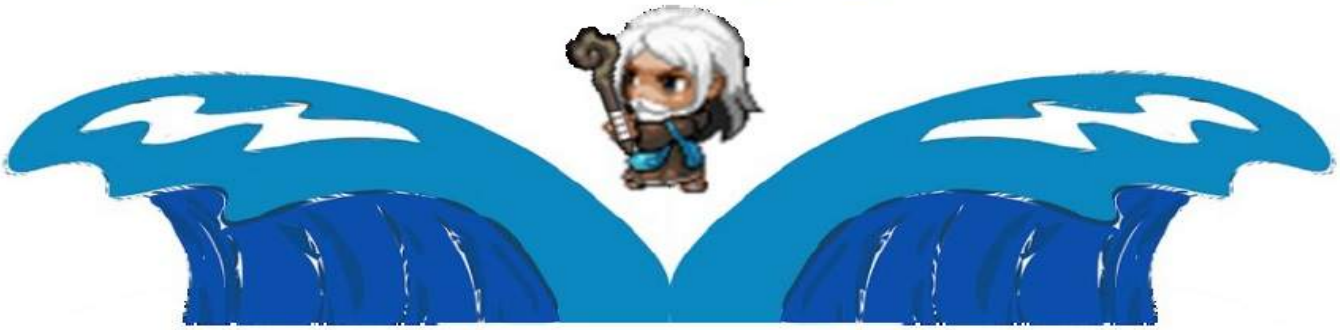


Slaves to Conquerors:

Children Sunday School Lessons on Exodus through Joshua



by Rev. Steve Wilson



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Preparing for the Exodus

Greetings, brothers and sisters! Here are 3 full-length Sunday School lessons you can use to set the stage for teaching about the Exodus from Egypt.

This first collection of lessons includes:

Shiphrah and Puah Do What is Right – two midwives listen to God instead of Pharaoh

God Gives Moses' Mom a Great Idea – the saving of baby Moses, and God's leading in our lives

Moses and the Burning Bush – God assures Moses that He'll give him the help he needs

All of these lessons are told as a first-hand story from one of the people involved. Kids will hear from Shiphrah, Moses' sister Miriam, and Moses himself.

Besides the story and discussion questions, you'll also find ideas for games, crafts, and snack activities.

If you want to teach the Exodus stories a different way, be sure to check out my **Children's Sermons about the Exodus**. You'll find object lessons you can use to tell every major story in the Exodus narrative.

Recommended Extras

You don't need anything extra to use the lessons. I will, however, provide some suggestions you might find helpful. You can use these resources in addition to or instead of the ideas I've provided.

Here are the resources I recommend for the entire series. I'll list story-specific resources at the end of each lesson.

The Complete Illustrated Children's Bible – for telling the stories with beautiful artwork and Biblical accuracy

The Beginner's Bible: Timeless Stories for Children – for telling the stories to younger children

Manga Comic Book: Mutiny and Melech – for your classroom or church library

My Big Book of Bible Heroes Devotional – a devotional to recommend for families or older students

Bible Fun Factory: Volume 2, Volume 3, and Joshua – additional or substitutional material for your lessons

Shiphrah and Puah Do what is Right

Use this Exodus children's Sunday School lesson to teach kids about doing the right thing, even when it's difficult.

Needed: volunteer to play Shiphrah (you can be Shiphrah if you want), baby doll, soft play balls or scrap paper to make paper wads

Game: Simon Says – You give students commands of what to do, acting out the motions. The trick is that you have to say, "Simon says…" to do the action. Sometimes, you'll give a command and act out a motion without saying, "Simon says" first. If students listen to you and complete the command, they're out. Sometimes, you'll act out a different motion than you tell the students to perform. If they perform the wrong action, they're out.

Play until only one student is left in the game. Let them be Simon for the next round and continue playing as long as time allows.

Lesson: (Note: Always allow students enough time to think about and answer the questions before clarifying the teaching.)

Ask students, What would you do if your teacher or your parent asked you to do something wrong? Would you do it?

What if you knew you would get in trouble if you didn't do what they told you to do?

What if the king or the president asked you to do something wrong? Then, would you do it?

Well, today we're going to meet a woman who believed in God and would not do the wrong thing that her king told her to do.

(Ask Shiphrah to come in.)

(Shiphrah reads the following script based on Exodus 1:1-21.)

Shiphrah: (enters, carrying a baby doll) Hello, everyone! My name is Shiphrah. Can you say that? Everyone say, “Shiphrah.” Very good!

Well, a long time ago, I lived in Egypt. The people of Israel were living in Egypt because when Joseph told Pharaoh what his dreams meant, Pharaoh made Joseph the second-in-command over the whole country. Joseph told his whole family to move to Egypt with him, and that’s what they did. Jacob and all of Joseph’s brothers and their whole family moved to Egypt to be with Joseph.

But, then, Joseph died, and a new Pharaoh became king. He didn’t know about how Joseph had been second-in-command, and he didn’t care about us Israelites. In fact, he started to be afraid of us because there were so many of us Israelites in Egypt. He thought that if he let us keep having more babies and getting bigger, then we might try to join up with his enemies and leave the country.

So, because the new Pharaoh was afraid of us Israelites, he turned us into slaves and made us build his buildings for him and do all of the farming work. Pharaoh and the Egyptians were very mean to us by making us be their slaves, but God was still with us. He kept letting us have babies so that there kept being more and more Israelites.

Of course, that made that mean old Pharaoh even more afraid of us. So, one day, he called me and my partner, Puah, into his palace. Puah and I were both nurses who helped take care of the other Israelite women when they were having their babies. Pharaoh told us (using a lower voice), “Shiphrah and Puah, I don’t want the Israelites to have any more baby boys. Those boys could grow up to be warriors that might fight against me. So, when you go help take care of the Israelite women when they’re having their babies, I want you to look and see if their baby is a boy or a girl. If it is a girl, you can let her live. But if it is a boy, I want you to kill him.”

Puah and I were so afraid. We knew Pharaoh would be mad at us if we didn't kill the baby boys, but we couldn't do that. We knew that God said killing was wrong. So we didn't do it, even though we were afraid of what Pharaoh might do to us for not listening to him.

When Pharaoh called us back into the palace and asked us why we hadn't been killing the Israelite baby boys, we lied and told him that the Israelite women kept having their babies before we could get there and kill them.

God was so proud of us for listening to Him and not killing the baby boys, that He let us have babies of our own.

(Have students thank Shiphrah.)

Review Questions
Why was Pharaoh so mean to the Israelites? (He was afraid they would join up with his enemies and fight against him.)

So, Pharaoh made the Israelites be his slaves. Then, what did he do to try to make it so that there wouldn't be any more Israelite baby boys? (He told the Israelite nurses, Shiphrah and Puah, to kill the baby boys when they born.)

Did God want the nurses to kill the baby boys? (No.)

Did the nurses do it? (No.)
Do you think it would be hard for them to not listen to Pharaoh? (Yes.)

Pharaoh told the nurses to do something wrong, but they listened to God instead of Pharaoh. It was probably hard for them to do the right thing because they knew they could get in trouble. Pharaoh could even have had them put to death for disobeying him. But they did the right thing, and God rewarded them for it. Sometimes, it's hard for us to do the right things, but if we listen to God instead of other people, He will reward us.

Game: Pharaoh Says – Tell students that you want them to practice not listening when someone tells them to do the wrong thing. You're going to

play Simon Says, but, now, they should only listen to you when you don't say "Pharaoh says" first. If anyone does do what you tell them when you say, "Pharaoh says…," they're out.

Game: Despite All Obstacles – Set up an obstacle course with two mirror paths. Divide the students into two teams. One student from each team runs the obstacle course at a time while the other team members line up along the length of the obstacle course. When they're not running, the members of the opposite team throw soft balls or paper wads at the runner from the sidelines.

If a student makes it through the obstacle course without being hit, they score a point for their team and return to the sidelines. If they are hit, they go to the sidelines to throw but not run again. After each pair runs the course, gather the balls or paper wads again for the next two to run.

The game ends when all the students have run the course. The team with the most points wins.

Afterward, explain that we have to do the right things in life even when it seems difficult. There might be things that get in the way of us doing the right thing. There might be people who try to keep us from doing the right thing like Pharaoh tried to stop Shiphrah from doing the right thing. But we have to keep doing what we know is right.

Closing Prayer: Father God, You always help us to know what the right thing is. We pray that You'll give us the courage to do what You want us to do even when other people try to stop or tell us to do the wrong things. We want to follow You above everyone else. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Recommended Extras

The Israelites are Slaves – free coloring and activity pages.You'll also find a craft to make paper chains to remind kids that the Israelites were slaves in Egypt.

God Gives Moses' Mom a Great Idea

Use this children's Sunday School lesson on the birth of Moses to teach kids why they should always listen to what God tells them.

Needed: volunteer to play Miriam (you can be Miriam if you want), baby doll, basket, paper to make journals, crayons or colored pencils

Intro Activity: Brainstorm – Tell students that you want their help to create a new product or solve a problem. First, ask them what product they want to design or what problem they want to solve. Then, guide them with questions on how they might accomplish their goal. Affirm every idea and try to work it into the product or solution.

When you're finished, say, Those were some great ideas you all had! Today, we're going to hear about how God gave someone a great idea.

Lesson: Say, Last week, we met a woman named Shiphrah. She was a nurse who helped the Israelite women have their babies when the Israelites were living in Egypt. Does anyone remember what Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, told Shiphrah to do when she saw an Israelite baby boy being born? (Pharaoh told her to kill the Israelite baby boys.)

Why did Pharaoh tell her to do that? (He was afraid the Israelites would grow up and join his enemies and fight against him.)

Did Shiphrah do it? Did she kill the Israelite baby boys? (No.)

Shiphrah did what was right and listened to God instead of Pharaoh.

Well, today we're going to meet someone else who is going to tell us a little bit more about what happened when the Israelites were in Egypt.

(Ask Miriam to come in.)

(Miriam reads the following script based on Exodus 1:22-2:10.)

Miriam: (enters, carrying a baby doll) Wow! Look at all these great kids. Hi, kids! My name is Miriam, and I want to tell you a little bit about my brother, Moses, today. Is that okay? Are you ready to hear my story?

Great! Well, a long time ago, when we were living in Egypt, the Pharaoh told Shiphrah and Puah, the nurses, to kill all the baby boys as soon as they were born. But Shiphrah and Puah wouldn't do it. So, Pharaoh ordered all of the mothers to kill their baby boys by throwing them in the river and letting them drown.

Does that sound very nice? Would you throw your baby in the river and let it drown? No, of course, you wouldn't. And my mom didn't want to do that, either. So, when she had a baby boy, my little brother, she hid him for three months and didn't let Pharaoh or any of his guards know that she had him.

But after three months, it started to get too hard to keep him hidden. She knew that Pharaoh's guards would find him sooner or later and, when they did, they would kill him. So God gave my mom a plan. She put my baby brother in a basket (put baby doll in basket) and put the basket by the river. Then, she told me to hide by the edge of the river and watch him to make sure that the basket didn't go into the water or anything.

So, that's what I did. I watched the basket, and I watched it and watched it…until someone started coming down to the river. You'll never guess who it was. It was the princess, Pharaoh's daughter! She was coming down to the river with her servants to take a bath in the river.

Then, she looked over and saw my baby brother's basket. She sent her slave to pick up the basket and bring it to her, and she found my baby brother inside. My baby brother was crying, and the princess felt sorry for him. She decided to keep him for herself!

Then, I came out of my hiding spot and ran over to her. "Do you want me to find someone to take care of him for you?" I asked the princess.

She said yes, so I went and got my mom. My mom took care of my baby brother for the princess, and the princess named him Moses. That's how my baby brother was born, and that's how he became a prince in Egypt. The princess adopted him as her own son.

But it's all because God gave my mom the idea to put him in the basket by the river. God knew that the princess would come and find him. God knew that the princess would take care of him. Isn't that a great story?

(Have students thank Miriam.)

Review Questions
What did Pharaoh say to do to all the Israelite baby boys? (Drown them.)

Who gave Moses' mom the idea to put him in a basket by the river? (God.)

What happened to Moses when his mom put him in the basket? Did he drown in the river? (No, the princess found him, and he was allowed to live.)

Who got to take care of Moses after the princess adopted him? (Moses' mom.)

Do you think you should listen to God if He gives you an idea? (Yes.)
We should also listen to what God is telling us because God always has the best ideas. He saved Moses from being killed and even made it so that his mom could keep taking care of him. If we listen to God, He can protect us and make good things happen for us too.

So, let's remember to trust God and do what He tells us.

Craft: Idea Basket – Give children paper to make journals out of. You can give them staples or string to bind the journals. On the front of the journal, have them draw Moses' mother getting the idea to put Moses in the basket.

Explain that this is their journal to write down ideas that God gives them. It can be a great way for them to think about what God might be leading them to do in their daily lives or what direction He might want them to follow as they get older. Get them started by telling them to write “Ideas of what God wants me to do today…” on the top of one page and “Ideas of what God wants me to do in my life…” on another page.

Game: Finding Moses – Tell the students to close their eyes. Then, take the baby doll and basket (or a smaller version of it) and hide it somewhere in the room. Tell students to open their eyes and find the baby Moses. The first student who finds it gets to hide it for the next round.

An alternative would be allowing the student to hide themselves. In that case, they are Moses, and their hiding place is the basket.

Closing Prayer: Lord, we thank You for giving us all great ideas of what You want us to do, just like You gave Moses’ mom the idea of how to save Moses in the basket. Help us to always listen to You so that we can follow Your plan in our lives.

Recommended Extras

Superbook: Let My People Go – an animated video from the updated Superbook series, includes time-traveling children who learn lessons from the story

The Greatest Adventure Stories from the Bible: Moses – animated video with time-traveling teenagers who witness the Biblical story, realistic art style

Greatest Heroes and Legends of the Bible – another animated video with a Disneyesque art style and no time traveling

The Prince of Egypt –a full-length movie with a few additions to the Biblical story

The Beginner's Bible: Baby Moses and the Princess – an illustrated storybook for younger kids

God Protects Baby Moses and Baby by the River – free coloring and activity pages

Protected to Save: A Tale of Two Babies – a lesson showing the similarities between Moses' birth and Jesus'

Moses and the Burning Bush

Use this children's Sunday School lesson about God talking to Moses from out of the burning bush to teach kids how God helps us when He calls us to do something.

Needed: volunteer to play Moses (you can be Moses if you want), long stick for a staff, flashlight, supplies to make a snack (optional: things to burn)

Optional Intro Activity: Gather a variety of items that will burn or melt, including a twig from a bush. Before lighting each item on fire, ask students what they think will happen. Save the twig for last.

Explain that we can make some things that won't be damaged by fire, but it's very rare. Say, And, of course, we can't make a bush or a tree or any kind of plant that won't burn. But in today's story, we're going to hear about a bush that didn't burn up when it was on fire.

Lesson: Ask students, What are some things that you're good at?

What are some things that you're not very good at? (The teacher should also share something they're not good at.)

What would you think if God told you it was really important for you to do something that you weren't very good at? Would you try to do it or would you tell God that you're not good at that thing and that He should ask someone else to do it?

Well, today we're going to meet a man who did ask God to find someone else to do it, and we're going to see what God said to him.

(Ask Moses to come in.)

(Moses reads the following script based on Exodus 2:11-4:17.)

Moses: *(enters, carrying a staff)* Well, hello everyone! My name is Moses. You might remember that I was the baby who the princess found by the side of the river. My mom put me there because Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, had told the Israelites to put all of their baby boys in the river and let them drown. But my mom didn't put me in the river. She put me in a basket by the side of the river so that I wouldn't drown. That's when the princess found me and adopted me as her own baby.

I grew up and was a prince. How would you like to be princes or princesses?

Well, it was pretty nice. But, then, I started thinking about the Israelites. I was an Israelite, and I had become a prince, but the rest of the Israelites were still slaves. Would you like to be a slave?

No, being a slave is no fun. Your masters are mean to you, and you have to do hard work all day long. I went out one time and saw one of the slave bosses beating up an Israelite slave. It made me really mad to see that Egyptian slave boss beating up an Israelite slave. So, I looked around and didn't see anyone else. I went up to the slave boss and killed him. I know I shouldn't have done it. I should have just broken up the fight. But I let myself get too angry, and I killed him.

The next day, I went out again, and I saw two Israelites fighting. I told them that they should be friends and not fight, and one of them asked if I was going to kill him like I killed the Egyptian slave boss.

I didn't think anyone had seen me kill the Egyptian, but I guess the Israelite the slave boss was beating must have told what I did. When Pharaoh heard about what I did, he tried to kill me, but I ran away.

I went to another country called Midian. When I got there, I saw these shepherds picking on some girls and their sheep. The girls were just trying to get some water out of the well for their sheep, but these other shepherds came up and cut in line and made the girls leave so that the shepherds could give their own sheep some water. Do you think that was very nice of the shepherds to do that?

I didn’t think it was very nice, either. So, I fought the shepherds and let the girls come back. They were so thankful that I helped them that they invited me to go stay at their dad’s house and work for him. Eventually, I married one of those girls and had two baby boys with her.

I stayed in Midian for many years and helped the girls’ father, Jethro, take care of his sheep. I became a shepherd like them. But one day, when I was taking care of the sheep, I saw something strange. Up on the mountain, there was a bush on fire. But the bush wasn’t burning up. It was as if the fire wasn’t doing anything to it. So, I thought, I have to go up and get a closer look to see why the fire isn’t burning up the bush.

I climbed up the mountain and, when I got close to the bush, I heard God talk to me out of the bush. He told me to stop and take off my shoes to show respect for Him. He said, “I am God. I have seen how mean the Egyptians are being to the Israelites by making them be their slaves. I have come down to rescue the Israelites out of Egypt and take them to their own country. And I want you, Moses, to be their leader. I want you to go talk to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt.”

I couldn’t believe what God was saying. I was very afraid, and I said, “God, what if the Israelites don’t believe that You sent me to be their leader?”

God said answered, “What do you have in your hand?”

I said, “My staff.”

God said, “Throw your staff on the ground.” I threw it on the ground *(throw staff on the ground),* and God turned it into a snake! He said, “Pick it back up.” I picked it up, and God turned it into a stick again.

Then God said, “Put your hand inside your robe.” I put my hand inside my robe and, when I pulled it out, God had made my hand all scaly and gross, like I had a disease on my hand. He told me to put my hand back in my robe, and this time, when I pulled it back out, it was totally normal again.

God said, “If the Israelites don’t believe I sent you to be their leader, turn the staff into a snake and make your hand turn diseased and then normal again, and they will believe you.”

But I was still afraid and nervous, and I said, “But God, I can’t be the leader. I’m not a good speaker. I get nervous when I have to talk in front of big groups.”

Then God said, “Don’t worry. I will help you.”

But I said, “No, God. Let someone else be the leader. I don’t want to do it.”

Then, God got very mad at me. He said, “You’re the person I chose to be the leader. Now, stop making excuses. I told you I would help you. I’m also sending your brother to help you, but you’re the person I chose to be the leader. Now, do it.”

And that’s how God made me the leader of the Israelites. I’ll come back next week and tell you how God helped me and the Israelites escape from Egypt.

(Have the students thank Moses.)

Review Questions

God told Moses that He had come to rescue the Israelites out of Egypt because the Egyptians were being mean to them and making them be their slaves. God cared about the Israelites. Do you think God cares about you when people are being mean to you or when bad things are happening to you? (Yes.)

God always cares about us, and He will always help us, just like He said He was going to help the Israelites. Sometimes, God wants us to help other people, though, just like God wanted Moses to help the Israelites. So, if you see someone that needs help, remember that God wants you to help them.

What did God say when Moses said he didn’t want to be the leader because he wasn’t good at it? (God said he would help Moses.)

Do you think God can help you with the things you're not good at? (Yes.)

If God tells you to do something, He will always help you to do it.

So, let's remember to help people when they need help and to trust God to help us do the things He tells us to do.

Game: Holy Ground – Divide students into two or more teams for a relay race. Dim the lights. Tell students that when you shine your flashlight on them and call their name, they have to stop whatever they're doing and take off their shoes before they continue. You can even shine your light on kids who are still standing in line for their turn. The first team to have all of their runners complete the race wins.

Afterward, say, I had you take off your shoes just like God told Moses to take off his shoes. Does anyone remember why God told Moses to take off his shoes? (Because God said Moses was standing on holy ground.)

We have to remember how special God is and we need to show Him respect. In those days, they took off their shoes to show respect. Today, we can show respect to God by stopping what we're doing and listening to God when He wants to talk to us. We can show respect by paying attention in church. We can show respect by listening when someone is praying or reading the Bible or teaching us about God. Those are all ways that we can show God that we understand how special He is.

Play the game again if time allows.

Snack Activity: Supplying the Need – Tell students what to do to make their snack, but only give them what they need one step at a time. If you had a bowl of fruit salad, for example, you would put the bowl of fruit salad in front of them and tell them to scoop some out for themselves. When they say that they don't have a spoon to scoop with, give it to them. When they complain that they don't have bowls, give them some. Next, tell them to put some whipped cream on their fruit salad. When they complain that they don't have whipped cream, give them the container.

When they have all they need, say, When God asks us to do something, He always gives us everything we need. He might not give us everything right away, but, if we trust Him, He will give us all the help that we need.

Closing Prayer: Father, we thank You for always helping us to do what You ask us to do. Help us to trust You as You lead us in each of our lives. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Recommended Extras

God Talks to Moses and Moses and the Burning Bush – free coloring and activity pages

The Great I Am – free children's sermon about God's name of I Am and how it relates to us

The Exodus

Now, we're discussing the Israelites' Exodus from Egypt and how God cared for them directly afterward.

In this collection, we'll see:

The Plagues of Egypt and Crossing the Red Sea – God saves Israel, and He saves us!

God Gives the People Manna – We can always trust God to provide

Help Each Other Pray! – Just as the Israelites won their first victory, we win when we help others

You'll find "first-hand accounts," discussion questions, games, crafts, and other activity ideas to help kids learn the most from your time together.

The Plagues of Egypt and Crossing the Red Sea

Use this children's Sunday School lesson to teach kids about how God saved the Israelites and how He saves us.

Needed: volunteer to play Moses (you can be Moses if you want), long stick for a staff, index cards with plagues written on them, flashlight, baby doll, basket, blanket

Game: Wrapping Baby Moses – Remind students of how Moses' mother put him in a basket and put him by the river for the princess to find him. Half of the kids line up on one side of the room, the other half on the other side. In the middle of the room are a baby doll, a blanket, and a basket. On "Go," one student from one side of the room runs up and wraps the baby in the blanket and places it in the basket. As soon as the baby is in the basket, a student from the other side of the room runs out and unwraps the baby. Then a wrapper wraps, etc. The goal is to see how much time it takes for every student to complete their part. Play a couple of rounds, switching which side wraps and which side unwraps. Try to beat your previous times.

Game: Moses and the Burning Bush – Remind students of how Moses saw God talking to him out of the burning bush and had to take off his shoes to show respect for God. Kids run in a semi-lit room. When someone turns on a light or shines a flashlight, everyone has to stop and take off their shoes as quickly as they can. Take turns letting people turn on the light or have the flashlight.

As an alternative, you could play Holy Ground from the previous lesson.

Lesson: (Note: Always allow students enough time to think about and answer the questions before clarifying the teaching.)

(Ask Moses to come in.)

(Moses reads the following script based on Exodus 4:18-14:31.)

Moses: (enters, carrying a staff) Hello again, everyone! I came to tell you a little more about my story. Last time, I said that God talked to me out of that burning bush and told me that He wanted me to be the leader who would bring the Israelites out of Egypt so that they wouldn't be slaves anymore. I didn't want to be the leader. I was too afraid. But when God says something, you just have to trust Him and do it. So, I took my wife and kids and started on my way back to Egypt.

God sent my older brother, Aaron, to help me, and when we got back to Egypt, I told all the Israelites that God cared about them and wanted to take them out of Egypt so that they wouldn't have to be slaves anymore. I showed them how God could make my staff turn into a snake and how God could make my hand get a disease but then get better.

After that, Aaron and I went to the palace to talk to Pharaoh. I told Pharoah, "God says to let His people go."
But Pharaoh said, "I don't believe in God, so I'm not going to let the Israelites go. In fact, now I'm going to make their work even harder."

So, Pharaoh told the slave bosses to be even meaner to the Israelites. But God said, "Pharaoh will let the Israelites go because I will make him let them go."

The next morning, Aaron and I went back to talk to Pharaoh. I said, "God says to let His people go."

Pharaoh said, "What can you do to prove that your God is real and that I should listen to Him?"

Aaron took my staff and threw it down on the ground, and God turned into a snake. But, then, Pharaoh's magicians did a magic trick to make it look like their staves also turned into snakes. My staff then swallowed the magician's snakes, but Pharaoh still wouldn't listen to God and let the Israelites go.

So, the next morning, Aaron and I went back to Pharaoh. He still wouldn't let the Israelites go, so God told us to turn all the water in Egypt into blood. Aaron hit the water of the river with his staff, and all the water in Egypt turned into blood. The fish in the river died, and no one could drink any water. But, then, Pharaoh's magicians did a magic trick to make it look like they could turn water into blood too. So Pharaoh still wouldn't listen to God and let the Israelites go.

A week later, Aaron and I went back to Pharaoh and said, "God says to let His people go." Pharaoh still wouldn't listen, so God made frogs, thousands and thousands of frogs, come and cover the whole country. They were jumping up on people's tables and bothering everything. They were really annoying.

Finally, Pharaoh asked us to pray for God to take away the frogs. But, when we did, and God took away the frogs, Pharaoh said he still wouldn't listen to God and let the Israelites go.

This kept happening. God made gnats come and bother everyone. Then, He made flies, more flies than you've ever seen, come. Next, God made all the cows in Egypt die, but let the cows that Israelites had live. Then, He made sores and a painful rash come out on all the Egyptians. Next, He made big hail fall on the Egyptians, like big rocks falling out of the sky. It crushed all of the farmers' food and made holes in the buildings. Then, God sent a bunch of locust insects to eat the rest of the Egyptians' food. After that, God made it totally dark for three days in Egypt. Nobody could see the sun or the moon or the stars for three days except for the Israelites. And, every time, Pharaoh still wouldn't listen to God and let the Israelites go.

Finally, God told me to tell all the Israelites to kill a lamb and to put its blood on the doorframes of their front doors. That night, God sent His angel to kill all of the firstborn children in Egypt. The angel killed the oldest child in every house. But, he skipped the houses of the Israelites, because when the angel saw the blood on the doorframes of the Israelites' front doors, he would skip that house and not kill any children living there.

Pharaoh woke up in the middle of the night and saw that even his oldest child had been killed by the angel. Then he told the Israelites and me to leave right away. He was afraid that God might do something worse to him if he didn't let us go. The other Egyptians even gave us money so that we would be nice to them and leave as fast as we could. None of the Egyptians wanted God to punish them anymore.

So in the middle of the night, I took all of the Israelites and left Egypt. We weren't slaves anymore. God had said that He would make Pharaoh let us go, and that's what He did. God didn't want to do all of those bad things to the Egyptians. If Pharaoh had listened, God wouldn't have had to do all those things. But we were happy because God had freed us from our slavery.

That night, we camped by the sea. But, Pharaoh decided he wanted to chase us and bring us back to Egypt to be his slaves. So, he sent his army to attack and bring us back.

But do you think God would let Pharaoh take us back to be his slaves again?

No, God put a wall of fire between us and the Egyptian army so that they couldn't get to us. Then, God said, "Moses, stretch your staff out toward the sea." I did, and God started moving the water in the sea to the right and to the left so that there was a wall of water on both sides of us but dry ground in the middle.

God told me, "Lead the Israelites through the sea on the dry ground." By the morning, we had all crossed through the sea on dry ground. When we were on the other side, God moved the wall of fire so that the Egyptians could see us on the other side of the sea. They started to run through the sea on the dry ground to chase us, but then, God said, "Stretch your staff out toward the sea again."

I did, and God made the wall of water on the right, and the wall of water on the left come back down and drown the whole Egyptian army so that they couldn't get us.

And that's how God rescued us from slavery in Egypt.

(Have the students thank Moses.)

Review Questions
Why did Moses' staff eat the magicians' staves? (To show that God is more powerful than the magicians' magic tricks.)

What did God want Pharaoh to do? (God wanted Pharaoh to let the Israelites go out of Egypt and to stop making them be slaves.)

What did God do when Pharaoh wouldn't listen to Him? (He punished the Egyptians and even sent an angel to kill all of the firstborn children.)

Why didn't the angel kill any of the Israelites' children? (The Israelites put the blood of a lamb on the doorframe of their houses. When the angel saw the blood, he knew not to enter that house.)

As Christians, we're also saved by the blood of a lamb. The Bible tells us that Jesus was the lamb that was sacrificed for all of us. Because of His blood, God doesn't punish us. Jesus' blood saves us, just like the blood of the lamb saved the Israelite children.

Game: Impersonating the Plagues – Give each child or group a card with a plague written on it. They have 2 minutes to figure out how to act out that plague without using words. The plagues are the river turning to blood, frogs everywhere, gnats everywhere, flies everywhere, cows dying, sores on everyone, hail, locusts eating everything, total darkness, death of the oldest children. You can also act out the plagues as a whole class.

Why did make all those terrible things happen to Egypt? (God was punishing Pharaoh because he wouldn't listen to God.)

Do you think you should listen to God when He tells you to do something? (Yes.)

Pharaoh sent his army to get the Israelites, but what did God do for the Israelites? (God parted the sea and let the Israelites pass through so that the Egyptians couldn't hurt them. Then, He made the water come back down and drown the Egyptian army.)

When you find yourself in a hard situation, do you think God can rescue you like He rescued Moses and the Israelites?

Game: Crossing the Red Sea – Divide students into two teams. One team is the Israelites, the other the Egyptians. Have the Israelites stand a few feet in front of the Egyptians. Tell the Israelites to run in a certain direction when you say, "Go." Tell the Egyptians to chase the Israelites, but they can't cross a certain line. Don't tell them where the line is. Let the Israelites cross the line. When the Egyptians do, tell them they're out because they crossed the line. They'll complain that this isn't fair, but explain that this is what God did for the Israelites. He let the Israelites cross the Red Sea (the line), but not the Egyptians. He protected the Israelites but destroyed the Egyptians.

Closing Prayer: Lord, thank You for this lesson about how You saved the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. We also thank You for saving us by the blood of Jesus. Help us to always listen to You like Pharaoh should have. Amen.

Recommended Extras

The Beginner's Bible: Moses and the King – an illustrated storybook for younger children

The Ten Plagues, The Passover, Moses Leads the People out of Egypt, and Through the Red Sea – free coloring and activity pages. The first lesson in this list also includes a memory match game.

Moses Crossing the Red Sea – a free lesson that includes an activity in which kids name their fears and then brainstorm about how God can help them

Parting the Red Sea – a water-parting demonstration using pepper and dish detergent

God Gives the People Manna

Use this children's Sunday School lesson to teach children about God's provision.)

Needed: pair of adult shoes, hat, Desert Survival Gear Relay game cards (use clip art or photos of various items), drawing paper, crayons or colored pencils

Intro Game: Desert Survival Gear Relay – You will need an adult-size pair of shoes and a large hat as well as game cards with necessary and unnecessary items pictured on them. Children will run a relay race against the clock to collect all the necessary things that the Israelites needed in the desert.

The first person in the line wears the shoes (because the Israelites were walking through sand and that's pretty difficult) and the hat (to keep the desert sun out of their eyes). On "Go," they run to where the game cards are and select something they think the Israelites would have needed. They run back to their team and give the shoes and hat to the next person, and the game continues.

If a team-member selects an item that the rest of them think is unnecessary, they have to run back and get something else. The game is finished when all of the necessary items have been collected. The students need to work quickly to get the best time because the Israelites had to leave Egypt and go into the desert in a hurry.

When all of the necessary items have been collected, however, point out that none of the cards had any food or water on them. Tell them that God gave the Israelites their food and water and then hand them the cards picturing those things.

Lesson: (Summarize Exodus 15:22-16:36 using the following story and asking the included questions as you read.)

After God brought Moses and the Israelites out of Egypt, they had to walk through the desert for three days and couldn't find any water to drink.

Everyone, act like you're walking through desert… Now, act as if you're walking and you're really thirsty.

Where were the people walking? (In the desert.)

How long did they walk without finding any water? (Three days.)

Do you think you would get thirsty after walking in the desert and not having any water for three days? (Yes.)

Finally, on the third day, the people did find water.

Everyone, look happy and excited.

But, when they tried to drink it, it tasted bad because there was something wrong with it. They couldn't drink it. So, they all got grumpy and started complaining to Moses and to God.

Everyone, look grumpy.

When the people did find water, what was wrong with it? (It tasted too bad to drink.)

Were the people happy that they couldn't drink the water? (No, they were frustrated.)

Would you be frustrated if you were them? (Yes.)

Then, Moses prayed to God, and God told him to throw some wood into the water. When Moses threw the wood in, the water tasted better and was okay

for the people to drink.

Everyone, look happy.

What did Moses do when the people couldn't drink the water? (He prayed to God for help.)

Did God help them? (Yes.)

How did God help them? (He made the water good to drink.)

When you have a problem and get frustrated, do you think you can pray to God, and God will help you? (Yes.)

After God gave the people water to drink, they again went out walking through the desert. They had to keep walking through the desert to get to their new home, the place where Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph had all been from before the Israelites moved to Egypt.

Everyone, pretend like you're walking in the desert again.

While they were in the desert, they ran out of food and started to whine and complain because they were so hungry.

Everyone, act like you're hungry.

They even said that they wished they had stayed slaves in Egypt so that they could at least have some food.

What was the problem this time? (They were hungry and couldn't find any food in the desert.)

So, God said to Moses, "Moses, I'm going to give the people food to eat." And Moses said to the people, "Stop whining and complaining against God and saying that you wish you were still slaves. God's going to give us

food.” And that night, God sent a bunch of birds, hundreds and thousands of them, that came and landed in the people’s camp.

Everyone, act like birds coming in for a landing. And they caught the birds and cooked them and ate them. Act like you’re catching birds and then cooking and eating them.

When they woke up the next morning…

Everyone, act like you’re waking up…

…there was a bunch of bread lying on the ground.

What did God do for the people? (He made a bunch of birds fly in and land on the ground for them to eat and He made bread appear on the ground.)

The people called the bread that God gave them manna. Everyone say, “manna.” God told them only to take as much of the bread as they needed for that day.

Everyone, pretend like you’re taking a little bit of bread off the ground.

He promised to send them more manna the next morning. But, some people gathered more bread than they really needed.

Everyone, pretend like you’re taking a lot of bread off the ground. They kept it until the next day.

When they woke up the next day…

Everyone, act like you’re waking up…

…that left-over bread that they had kept was all moldy and covered in maggots.

Everyone, show me your best “gross face.”

God told them only to collect as much as they needed for that day, but some people wanted to get more. Why do you think they collected more? (They didn't trust God that He would give them more the next day.)

What happened to the left-over bread? (It got maggots on it and got all moldy.)

God gave fresh bread to the people every day, but on Saturday, He told them to collect a little extra. He told them to collect enough for two days – for Saturday and Sunday – because He wasn't going to give them any bread on Sunday. He wanted them to be in church…

Everyone, pretend like you're in church…

…and resting the rest of the day on Sunday…

Everyone, pretend like you're resting…

…instead of going out and collecting the bread.

What happened on Saturday? (God gave them enough bread for two days.)

Why did God give them enough for two days on Saturday? (Because people aren't supposed to work on Sunday or do other things. They're supposed to use their time to go to church and to rest.)

Do you think the people should have complained against God about not having any water or food? (No.)

What should they have done instead of complaining? (They should have prayed and asked God to help them.)

Can we pray when we need God to help us? (Yes.)

Craft: Drawing Your Prayer – Have students draw a picture of something they might need and how God might supply that need. When they're finished, ask for volunteers to share.

Snack: Manna – Give each child a slice of bread with honey on it. Tell the children that the manna God gave the Israelites was bread that tasted like it had honey in it.

Closing Prayer: Father God, we thank You that You always know what we need and You're always there to help us. We pray that You'll help us to trust You and pray to You when we need something. In Jesus' name, amen.

Recommended Extras

God Gives Manna to Eat – free coloring and activity pages

Help Each Other Pray!

Use this children's Sunday School lesson about Moses to teach kids about praying with others.

Needed: Nothing

Intro Activity: Stick 'Em Up! – Hold a contest of who can keep both arms raised in the arm the longest. Next, have students form a circle and hold hands as they all raise their arms. Time how long they can all keep their hands raised.

Lesson: (Summarize Exodus 17:8-16, using the following story and asking the included questions as you read.)

While the Israelites were walking in the desert…

Everyone, pretend like you're walking through the desert…

…on their way to their new home that God was taking them to, they got close to the town of Rephidim.

Where were the Israelites going? (To their new home that God was taking them to.)

When the Israelites got close to Rephidim, the people of that town, called the Amalekites… Everyone, say "Amalekites"… came out and attacked them!

Everyone, act like you're about to fight someone.

Why do you think the Amalekites attacked the Israelites? (Affirm all reasonable responses. Suggest that maybe the Amalekites were afraid that the Israelites were coming to attack them. Suggest that maybe the

Amalekites wanted to take all the Israelites' things for themselves. The truth is we don't know why the Amalekites attacked.)

So, Moses said to his helper, Joshua, "Joshua, choose some of our men and go fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow, I will stand up on the top of that hill with the staff of God in my hands." So, the next day, Joshua went out to fight the Amalekites.

Everyone, act like you're about to fight someone.

And Moses and his brother Aaron and Hur climbed up to the top of a high hill.

Everyone, act like you're climbing up a high hill.

When they got to the top of the hill, Moses held up his hands really high over his head.

Everyone, lift your hands up high and keep them there.

And when Moses lifted his hands high in the air, he was reaching up to Heaven, to God. As long as Moses had his hands reaching up to God, God made it so that Joshua and the Israelites were winning the fight against the Amalekites.

But, after a while, Moses' arms got tired, and he had to bring them down. He had to stop raising his hands to God.

Everyone, bring your hands back down.

And when Moses brought his hands down from reaching up to God, Joshua and the Israelites started losing the fight. So, Moses' brother Aaron and Hur hurried up and helped Moses keep his hands up, reaching up to God.

Everyone, grab hands and help each other keep your hands up.

And God helped Israel win the fight!

Why was Moses was holding up his hands? (He was holding up his hands to God for God to help them.)

When Moses was holding up his hands to God, who was winning? (The Israelites were winning.)

When Moses got tired and stopped holding up his hands, who was winning then? (The Amalekites.)

What did Aaron and Hur do to help Moses? (They held his arms up.)

When you have a problem in your life like the Israelites had a problem when the Amalekites attacked them, do you think you could reach up and ask for God's help? (Yes.)

How do we ask for God's help? (We pray.)

And what if we get tired of praying? Can we ask someone to help us pray like Aaron and Hur helped Moses keep his hands up? (Yes. We can ask our parents or our teachers at church or our friends to help us pray, and God will help us with our problem. And we should also ask other people if they want us to help them pray too.)

Game: Stick 'Em Up! Round Two – Play the intro game with everyone holding hands to see if the group can beat their previous time.

Game: Amalekites vs. Israelites – Divide students into two teams for a game of tag. When you raise your arms, the Israelites chase the Amalekites. When you lower your arms, the Amalekites chase the Israelites. The team who tags everyone on the opposite team first wins. Play as long as time allows.

Prayer Activity: Have students form groups of three and take turns sharing prayer requests and then praying for one another.

Following this lesson might be a great time to do a series of lessons on the **Ten Commandments**. You'll find those lessons in a separate book called The Lord's Top Ten. Otherwise, continue the narrative series.







Baseball







40 Years in the Desert

This collection of children's Sunday School lessons covers:

The Giving of the Law and the Golden Calf – fighting peer pressure and idolatry

Why We Can't See God – the hope Jesus gives us to see God in Heaven

Changed! – communicating with God lights up our souls

The Giving of the Law and the Golden Calf

Use this children's Sunday School lesson about the golden calf to teach kids about peer pressure, idols, and why God punishes us.

Needed: Nothing

Intro Activity: Peer Pressure Playacting – Have students form groups of three. Give them a few minutes to think of how to act out a scene in which one or two of them pressure the other(s) to do something wrong. Then, all the groups perform their scene for the class.

You can allow them to think of their own scenarios or give them cue cards to base their scene on. Ideas include Smoking, Drinking, Doing drugs, Stealing, Lying, Making fun of someone, Cheating, Cursing, Telling a Dirty Joke, and Watching a TV Show they Shouldn't.

Lesson: (Note: Always allow students enough time to think about and answer the questions before clarifying the teaching.)

(Summarize Exodus 19-34:7, using the following story and asking the included questions as you read.)

After God brought Moses and the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt, God told Moses to come up on Mount Sinai with Him so that He could give Moses the laws that the people were supposed to follow. No one else was allowed to come up on the mountain or else they would die. The people saw God coming down like a fire on the mountain. There was a lot of smoke, and the mountain shook like there was an earthquake. And the people heard God's voice, sounding like thunder, but they couldn't understand what He was saying. Only Moses could understand what God was saying.

Moses was up on the mountain for forty days and forty nights, not eating or drinking anything, but just listening to God give him the laws that the

people were supposed to follow. God gave Moses two stone tablets and wrote the Ten Commandments on them with His own finger.

At the end of the forty days, it was time for Moses to come back down the mountain. God said, “Moses, I am very angry with the Israelites because they have done something very wrong. They have made an idol while you were up here on the mountain and they are pretending that the idol is Me.”

What is an idol? (An idol is a statue that people pray to and worship.)

Why do you think God doesn’t want people to make a statue of Him? (No one knows what God looks like. And God is too great to make a statue of. Any statue we make of God wouldn’t be good enough. It could never show how special God is.)

And God said, “Moses, because the Israelites are worshipping and praying to the idol they made and pretending that the idol is Me, I am going to kill all the Israelites as a punishment.”

But Moses said, “No, God, don’t do it, please. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and how You promised to give their grandchildren the whole land of Canaan. You can’t kill their grandchildren, the Israelites, or else You would be breaking Your promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

Then, God told Moses that He would not kill all of the Israelites. Moses went down the mountain and saw the idol that the people had made. It was a golden calf, a baby cow made out of gold. Moses was so mad that the people were worshipping and praying to the idol instead of God that he threw down the stone tablets God had given him with the Ten Commandments written on them.

He grabbed his brother, Aaron the priest, and said, “Why did you make this idol?”

Aaron said, “You were up on the mountain so long, we didn’t know what happened to you. The people told me to make an idol, and I did. They gave

me some of their gold earrings, and I made it into this golden calf."

Why did Aaron make the idol? (The people told him to.)

Do you think we should listen to people when they tell us to do the wrong things? (No.)

Then, Moses took the golden calf idol and melted it in the fire. He took the ashes and put it in the water, and made the people drink it to show them the idol is not the real God since it can be broken.

Then, Moses yelled, "Whoever is on God's side, come to me!"

All of the Levites, the priests, and the priests' helpers, came to him. Moses said, "This is the punishment for worshipping the idol. All of you take your sword and kill the Israelites for their punishment."

The Levites attacked the Israelites who wanted to keep worshipping the idol instead of God, and they killed about three thousand people.

The next day, Moses prayed to God again and asked God to forgive the Israelites for making the idol. God said, "I will forgive them, but first, I am going to punish them more so that they know not to worship idols ever again." Then, God made a lot of the Israelites get sick and die. After that, the punishment was over.

God gave Moses two more stone tablets with the Ten Commandments written on them because Moses broke the first two when he threw them down. And God said, "I love My people, and I will forgive them whenever they do something wrong, but I will also punish them when they do something wrong so that they know not to do it again."

Game: The Punishment Grid – Make a grid on the floor with half the number of columns as students you have in your class. There should be ten rows. Form the students into two teams and have the students stand beside

their teammates on each side of the grid. Each student starts behind one column on the grid.

As you ask questions, students will move forward on the grid until the two teams meet in the middle. You'll ask a question, and if students think the answer is true, they'll raise their hand. If they think the answer is false, they'll keep their hands down. If they get the answer right, they move up one square. If they get the answer wrong, they move back to their previous square.

When the students meet, the team with the most right answers chases the other. They are the Levites chasing the Israelites after the incident with the golden calf. The round is over when the Levites tag all the Israelites.

Play again, continuing down the list of questions and then asking some of the trickier questions over. If both teams do equally well, rule that the winners from the last round are now the Israelites, and the opposite team is the Levites.

Ask the following questions and give a brief explanation of the right answer afterward.

Questions:

1. An idol is a statue made to look like God.
2. It's okay to do something wrong if everyone else really wants you to do it.
3. It's okay to make a statue of God because God likes statues.
4. Aaron didn't have a choice to make the idol. He had to do it.
5. We can make statues of Jesus, but not God.
6. God punishes people because He doesn't like them.
7. Everyone knows what God looks like.
8. Something isn't wrong if everyone else is doing it.
9. God likes it when we make idols of Him because they help us worship Him better.
10. We can make statues of regular people in the Bible.

Closing Prayer: Father, You are a good God. We know that You only punish us to teach us what is right. Help us to follow You in everything we do. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Recommended Extras

Bedtime Bible Stories: The Golden Calf –a very detailed and illustrated storybook

The Golden Calf – free coloring and activity pages

Why We Can't See God

Use this children's Sunday School lesson about Moses seeing God's back to teach kids about when we'll be able to see God.

Needed: a mask, poorly made food items

Intro Activity: Too Much! – Set out 3-5 poorly made food items for kids to try if they're brave enough. They should all be safe to eat, but obviously wrong just by appearance.

Some ideas are a drink mix thick with too much sugar, nuts drowning in salt, applesauce dark with too much cinnamon in it, a salad covered in too much dressing, noodles with too much pepper piled on top, and brownies soupy with too much oil.

When kids do or do not try your concoctions, ask them what's wrong with them. Show them that they all have too much of something. All the ingredients you used are good, but sometimes we can't too much of a good thing.

Lesson: Ask students, Where do you think God lives? (Listen for responses, but lead them to understand that God lives in Heaven.)

Does God ever let us see Him? (Lead the students to understand that people don't normally see God.)

Do you think it would be neat to see God? (Lead students to understand that we should all want to see God because He made us and loves us.)

Why do you think we don't ever see God now? (Affirm that the Bible gives us the answer to why we can't see God.)

Some people have seen God before.

Who were the first two people? (Adam and Eve.)

Do you think Adam and Eve ever saw God? (Yes.)

Adam and Eve saw God all the time. God would come down and visit with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

But, then, Adam and Eve sinned.

What did Adam and Eve do that was wrong? (They ate from the tree that God told them not to eat from.)

And what is the punishment God made for sin? (The punishment when we sin is that we die.)

So, after Adam and Eve sinned, God did not visit them anymore because they had sinned. God is perfect, and He can't be around someone who has sinned.

Have you ever looked up into the sun? What happens?

It hurts to look at the sun. In fact, you could go blind if you look at it too long because the sun is too bright for our eyes. God is kind of like that. After people sinned, they couldn't look at God because He was too much for them. Their sin made it so that they couldn't be around God or see God in the same way that they used to.

Have any of you ever done something that was wrong? Have you ever sinned? (Lead to students to understand that they have.)

That's why we can't see God. Just like Adam and Eve, we have all done wrong things. We have all sinned. If God visited us and let us see Him, He would be too much for us.

God couldn't even let Moses see Him because even Moses sinned and did things that were wrong sometimes, like when he killed the Egyptian slave

boss who was beating an Israelite.

(Have students take turns reading Exodus 33:18-23 or read it yourself if your students aren't old enough.)

Why wouldn't God let Moses see His face? (Because Moses had sinned and God would be too much for Moses if he saw God's face.)

But God wanted to visit His people. He wanted to be with them even if He couldn't let them see Him. So, He told Moses and Bezalel to build the Tabernacle, the first church. And He told Bezalel to make a special room. It was called the Holy of Holies. And God lived in the special room called the Holy of Holies. No one was ever allowed to go into that room because if they did, they would see God and God would be too much for them. So, no one went in there. No one could see God. But, at least they knew that God was right there with them, in the Holy of Holies in the church.

So, we can't see God right now because God won't let us see Him because of our sins. He would be too much for us. And that's why God stayed in the special room in the church.

But what if God wanted to come down out of Heaven or wanted to come out of the special room in the church to be with people? Is there any way God could do that, but still not let us see His face so He wouldn't be too much for us? (Listen for responses, but then, pull out your mask and put it on.)

See, I'm here with you right now, but you can't see my real face, can you? That is what God did when He became Jesus. God is a Spirit, but God put on a human body and became Jesus. Jesus' body and Jesus' face were like a mask God put on so that He could come to be with us, but not let us see His real face so He wouldn't be too much for us. God was in Jesus. God was right there with His people, but they didn't see God. They only saw Jesus.

(Have students take turns reading John 1:14 and 18 or read it yourself.)

When God put on a body and became Jesus, what did Jesus come to do? What was His mission? (Jesus came to teach us and to show us God's love and God's power by the miracles He did and all the people He healed. Finally, Jesus came to die for us on the cross.)

What does Jesus dying on the cross do for us? (Jesus died on the cross so that our sins could be forgiven.)

Jesus died and went to Hell for three days, taking the punishment for all of our sins. He volunteered to die and go to Hell in our place so that we don't have to die and go to Hell. Jesus loves us that much to do that for us. Now, if we believe in Jesus, God forgives us for every wrong thing that we've ever done.

When Jesus died and went to Hell for three days, did He stay dead? Did He stay in Hell? (After three days, God brought Jesus back to life and then, a little while later, God brought Jesus up to Heaven to be with Him again.)

And after Jesus went back up to Heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit down to His followers on the day of Pentecost.

Where does the Holy Spirit live? (If you believe in Jesus, the Holy Spirit lives inside of you.)

Because you've been forgiven for your sins by Jesus' death on the cross, the part of God that is the Holy Spirit can live inside of you even though you still do things that are wrong. Because you believe in Jesus, you've already been forgiven for those wrong things that you still do.

But even though we've been forgiven and the Holy Spirit lives inside of us, do we ever get to see God? (We still can't see God because we still do things that are wrong, even though we have been forgiven for those things.)

But one day, we will see God. Does anyone know when we will see God? (We will see God in Heaven.)

When we die, God will make us perfect so that we never sin or do anything wrong again. Then, we will go to Heaven, and we will be able to walk right up to God and see Him how He really is, and we'll be able to talk to Him and ask Him things and be with Him forever.

Game: Holy Light – Play a game of Red Light, Green Light with the change of turning the light on and off. Students run from one side of the room to the other when the lights are dimmed. But when you turn the lights on fully, they have to stop and shield their eyes. If they keep running when the light is on, God is too much for them, and they're out. The winner is the first one who makes it to the other side of the room.

Closing Prayer: Lord, You are a holy God, and we thank You for protecting us by not showing Yourself to us yet. We also thank You for sending Jesus to die for us so that we can be forgiven for our sins. We look forward to the day when You will make us perfect, and we will be able to see You in Heaven. Amen.

Changed!

Use this children's Sunday School lesson about Moses Teach children about talking and listening to God.

Needed: a flashlight, drawing paper, crayons or colored pencils, string and hole punch or a stapler

Intro Activity: Storytelling Sequence – Kids sit in a circle, each telling one sentence of a story. When it's their turn to make up a sentence, they hold the flashlight under their chin so that it lights up their face as if they were at a campfire telling ghost stories.

Lesson: Ask, How many of you have ever been really happy and excited before?

When was the time that you were the happiest and excited?

Show me how you looked when you were the happiest and excited.

Oh, wow, your faces just lit up with those great smiles.

There was a time when Moses' face lit up, too, even more than yours did.

(Have students take turns reading Exodus 34:29-35, read it yourself, or summarize it.)

The Bible tells us that Moses' face was shining because he had been talking to God. Do you think Moses would have been happy and excited to be talking to God? (Yes.)

Getting to talk to God is the best thing ever. And we can all talk to God every day, can't we? What are some ways that we can talk to God? (We can talk to God by praying and reading our Bible and coming to church. When

we do those things, we can talk to God, and God can talk to us in our hearts.)

Now, when Moses talked with God, his face was changed. He got all shiny. And when we talk to God, something about us changes us too. When we talk to God, we get happier, and we start to love God more, and we want to do the things that are right and make God happy.

But do you think Moses' face would have stayed lit up if He never talked to God again?

(Read 2 Corinthians 3:13.)

Moses' face would light up when He talked to God. But afterward, the light would start to fade. Then, it would come back the next time He talked to God.

It's the same with us too. If we go a long time between talking to God, our spirits start to fade. We start to lose the good changes that God made in us. That's why we should talk to God every day. Every day, we should read our Bibles and pray so that we can keep growing in God and keep those good changes coming in our lives.

Craft: Learning to Listen – Give students drawing paper and instruct them to draw three scenes of them listening to God. They can then add more paper to their project to make a journal. Instruct them to write down any prayers that they say to God or anything that God says to them in church, through the Bible, or through their prayer time.

Game: Changed! – Divide students into two teams and play freeze tag, one team chasing and tagging the others. When someone is tagged, they freeze in place.

Every few moments, say, "God spoke to (the name of one of the frozen students). That student then unfreezes and can run to touch and unfreeze

other frozen teammates. After a few seconds, call, “And the glory faded.” That student then freezes in places again.

The round is over when all students on one team are frozen. Play again, switching which team is chasing the other.

Game: Storytelling Sequence – play the game from the intro activity again for as long as time allows.

Closing Prayer: God, we thank You for speaking to us just like You talked with Moses. We pray that You will help us to be happy and excited to keep talking to You and we pray that You will change our hearts so that we will live for You the best that we can. Amen.

Building the Nation

It takes a lot to build a bunch of slaves into the nation that God wants them to be. Here are some of the lessons the Israelites had to learn.

Helping to Build the First Church – how were the Israelites supposed to worship?

Following God's Lead – how could they know what God wanted them to do?

God Chooses the Leaders – where did the people fit into God's plan?

These are questions that we need to answer too, and, thankfully, the lessons God gives us through the experiences of the Israelites helps us to do just that. Kids will learn about humbly using their talents for the good of God's church. They'll also learn about Christ's sacrifice for them and how they can listen for God leading them in their daily lives. This is a power-packed collection of lessons that, while not based on the most popular stories, has some important messages for all of us.

Helping to Build the First Church

Use this children's Sunday School lesson about the Tabernacle to teach kids about the Church and what Jesus did for us on the cross.

Note: This lesson could be divided into three lessons if you wish: Building the First Church, Bring Our Offerings, and What They Did at the First Church

Needed: paper, crayons or markers, offering plate, a supply of coins, (optional: soft play balls or paper wads)

Intro Activity: What Can You Do to Help? – Have the students draw themselves doing one thing that they can do to help at the church. Help them think of something if they can't come up with something on their own.

Lesson: (Note: Always allow students enough time to think about and answer the questions before clarifying the teaching.)

Summarize Exodus 35:30-36:7, using the following story and asking the included questions as you read.

After God brought the Israelites out of Egypt and gave them His rules, the next thing they had to do was build the first church so that they could worship God in it. The first church was called the Tabernacle.

Then, Moses said to the Israelites, "See, the Lord has chosen Bezalel and has put the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, to live inside of him and has given him talents and skills to build the Tabernacle church and to make all the furniture and decorations for the church. And God has made people to help him."

God gave Bezalel three things. What were they? (The Holy Spirit to live inside of him, talents and skills to build the church, and people to help him.)

Do you think God could give you the Holy Spirit to live inside of you? (Yes. The Holy Spirit lives inside of everyone who believes in Jesus.)

Do you think God can give you talents and skills to help at church? (Yes. God gives everyone some kind of talent. It's different for everyone. We have to think about what kinds of talents and skills God has given to us and to think about how He wants us to use those skills to help at church.)

Why do you think God gave Bezalel people to help him at the church? (Building the church and making everything was a big job. God knew that Bezalel would need help. That's why we need to help at church too. One person can't do it all by themselves. We all need to do our part to make it the best it can be.)

So, Bezalel started working to build the Tabernacle church, just like Moses had told him. But he needed some things to do his work.

If you were building a church, what kinds of things would you need? (Suggestions could include wood, metal, cloth, etc.)

So, the rest of the people brought their offerings to Bezalel at the church so that he could buy the things he needed.

Do you think our church needs money to do the things we do? (Yes.)

What kinds of things does our church need money for? (Paying the pastor and the other workers, paying our electricity and water and gas bills, money to help people, etc.)

Where does the church get the money for that stuff? (From people's offerings.)

Just like the people needed to bring their offerings to the church back in Moses and Bezalel's time, so we need to bring our offerings to church now.

And the people brought so much offering to the church, that Moses said, “We have enough money, everyone! Stop bringing your offerings!”

Do you think Moses was happy that the people had brought enough money? (Yes.)

And we can be happy to have enough money for our church, too, but to make that happen, everyone has to do their part in bringing their offerings.

If you get an allowance or you get birthday money or anything like that, you should learn how to do your part by bringing part of that money to the church and giving it as an offering to God.

Game: Give it Away – Divide students into two teams. Give one team a handful of pennies. Have them keep as much as they think they need, giving a rationale for each cent. Question their decision on what they need to keep their money for and what they don’t. You are trying to get them to see the difference between needs and wants.

Tell them to give away the rest, putting it into an offering plate. The leader takes some of that money, explaining that it’s for the church to pay its bills, and then gives the rest to the other team. Now, ask the second team to keep what they need from what they’ve been given by the first team. Again, they put their extra into the offering.

Then, the leader pulls out more money to give to the first team to reward them for their generosity. The more they gave away during their round, the more they receive as a reward from God. They are also given the offering from team two. This is how offering works and how God rewards us for it.

Play three rounds. At the beginning of each round, the money that the teams kept is “spent” on their necessities and recycles back into the leader’s supply.

Lesson continues: When the Tabernacle, the first church, was finished, what do you think the people did there? (Help students brainstorm to name

some of the things we do in church today, explaining that those things that we do are some of the same things that they did back then.)

One thing that the Israelites did back then that we don't do today is they killed animals during church!

God's rule is that when someone does something bad, when they sin, they are supposed to be put to death. When you sin, God says you have to die. That's the punishment.

But God doesn't want you to die, and He didn't want the Israelites to die, either. So, He made a way for the people to be forgiven when they sinned so that they wouldn't have to die.

God said that if you did something wrong and sinned, you could bring an animal, like a sheep or a cow, to the church, and then, the pastor, whom they called a priest back then, would kill the animal, and the animal would die instead of you.

It was like God was pretending that the animal had done the wrong thing and could be punished instead of you. When the animal was killed, God forgave you for what you had done.

Do we still do that today? Does the pastor kill animals in church? (No).

How can we be forgiven for the wrong things we've done? (Listen to responses).

Instead of killings animals to take our punishment for us, Jesus came and died on the cross and took our punishment. Jesus died so that we don't have to. When we believe in Jesus, God forgives us for all of our sins.

Jesus coming to die for us was like someone volunteering to get spanked or grounded for us when we were the ones who did something wrong. Jesus loved us enough to come to die and go through the worst punishment ever

so that we could be forgiven for our sins. When we believe in Jesus, God forgives us and takes us to Heaven when we die.

So, let's remember that we can all do things to help in church as Bezalel did. We can all bring our offerings to church to help the church pay for things as the Israelites did. And we can do all the things that Israelites did in the first Tabernacle church in our church, except Jesus came to die for us and forgive us for our sins so that we don't have to kill animals anymore.

Game: Taking Our Place – Play a game of dodgeball with soft play balls or paper wads. When one team starts to accumulate a lot of players in the "Out" zone, run in and say that you'll take their place being out. They can get back in the game. Do the same for the other team. Keep doing it as long as time allows. Then, explain that just like we were taking the place of people who were out, Jesus took our place on the cross. He took our punishment so that we could be forgiven for our sins.

An alternative is a game of two-team tag. Take the place of students who are tagged and out of the game.

Closing Prayer: Father, thank You for giving all of us ways that we can help in Your church. And thank You for sending Jesus to die for us so that we could be forgiven for our sins. Help us to live for You every day and to do our part to help Your church. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Recommended Extras

God's Special Tent – an in-depth about how the Tabernacle was constructed, how the Israelites worshipped, and what the priests did. It's from a Christian perspective and reinforces the message of Jesus as our once-for-all sacrifice.

Tabernacle 3D Puzzle – a puzzle from Christian company Hark! Use it to talk about the Tabernacle and what the Israelites did there.

The Tabernacle Workbook – includes reproducible worksheets, crafts, and recipe ideas you could try in class

Spiritual gifts test – free inventory to help kids discern how they can be part of building of God's Church

The Tabernacle – free coloring and activity pages along with a pattern to make your own cardstock replica

Following God's Lead

Use this children's Sunday School lesson about Moses leading the Israelites to teach children about what it means to follow God.

Needed: newspaper or current events magazine

Intro Game: Simon Says – Students follow your commands and motion when you say, "Simon says" first. If you don't say, "Simon says" before the command, and they do it anyway, they're out. If they follow a motion that doesn't match the "Simon says" verbal command, they're out. The winner is the last one in the game.

End by bringing everyone back into the game and telling the group that you're going to take them on a journey. Have them follow you, mimicking your motions, on a journey through the church.

Lesson: Summarize Numbers 9:15-23, using the following story and asking the included questions as you read.

After God brought Moses and the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt, they had to walk through the desert to get to their new home, the place where Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph were all from before Jacob and Joseph and all his brothers moved to Egypt.

While they were in the desert, God gave them the Ten Commandments and told them to build the first church, the Tabernacle. When the people of Israel had built the Tabernacle, a cloud from God came down and floated above the whole building. It stayed there all day, and, at the end of the day, when it started to get dark, the cloud turned into a pillar of fire. In the morning, it was a cloud again. And it kept going like that every day. In the daytime, a cloud covered the Tabernacle, and, at night, fire covered it.

Sometimes, the cloud would float up above the Tabernacle and start moving to someplace else. When the people of Israel saw the cloud move, they

knew that was God was telling them that He wanted them to move too. So, they would pack up all their things, pick up the Tabernacle, and follow the cloud wherever it went.

Why did the people move when the cloud moved? (Because that was God telling them that He wanted them to move.)

If the cloud didn't move on some day, the people wouldn't move, either. They would wait until God made the cloud move. Sometimes, God would make the cloud stay where it was for a long time, and, sometimes, He would make the cloud stay there for only one day. However long the cloud stayed there, the people of Israel stayed where they were. And if it moved, they moved with it. Whatever the cloud did, the people followed God's command and followed it.

Why did the Israelites stay where they were if the cloud stayed where it was? (If the cloud stayed where it was, that was God's way of telling the people that He didn't want them to move yet.)

So, God used the cloud to tell the Israelites where to go and what to do. Do you think God could tell you where to go and what to do? (Yes.)

Does anyone remember a time when God told you to do something?

What kinds of things could you use to help you know what God wants you to do?

God uses the Bible to tell us, or prayer, or our conscience. Sometimes, the Holy Spirit living inside us gives us a feeling of what we should do. Sometimes, God uses other Christians to help us know what to do. Sometimes, something happens in our life to tell us.

(Tell a story about a time God led you to do something through one of these ways or through another method.)

One time, a man was driving in another country, and he was taking Bibles to people who didn't know about God. But before he got there, a big snowstorm started, and his car began sliding all over the road because the snow was so slippery. He crashed his car in a ditch and didn't know what to do. A few minutes later, an old man came out and took him to his farm. When they got there, the old man asked if he had brought the books. He said, "What books?" and the old man said, "The books about God."

The man had been taking Bibles to other people down the road, but God had made his car crash here so that he could give the old man a Bible too. Sometimes, things happen in our life to help us know what God wants us to do. If his car hadn't crashed, he never would have known that he was supposed to give a Bible to that old man. So, look for what God is doing in your life. Go where He wants you to go and do what He wants you to do just like the Israelites did when they followed the cloud.

Game: What Does God Want? – Have the students pair up and read through a newspaper story. Their goal is to determine what God would want in the situation. Try to avoid taking sides on political issues, but speak in general terms.

Prayer Activity: Have the students sit quietly in prayer. Direct them to listen for one thing God wants them to do today. Ask for volunteers to share afterward.

Bible Activity: Have the students choose a random Bible story to read on their own. Ask them to find one thing that God wants to say to them through that story. Again, ask for volunteers to share what they found.

Game: Simon Says – Play the intro game again, reminding students that we want to follow God whenever He tells us to do something.

Closing Prayer: Lord, make us be like the Israelites who only moved when You told them to. We only want to do what You tell us. Help us to pay attention to all the ways You can speak to us. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Recommended Extras

The Israelites Follow God – free coloring and activity pages along with a board game

God Chooses the Leaders

Use this children's Sunday School lesson about Moses and the Israelites to teach kids about using our talents in the way God calls us to.

Needed: Nothing (you might need some supplies depending on which activities you pick for the Talent Time game)

Game: Talent Time – Have students perform a mix of activities to show that everyone has different talents.

Some examples include running a race, seeing who can kick a ball or paper wad the furthest, seeing who can do math problems the fastest, seeing who can answer the most questions about the Bible, seeing who can bust out the best dance moves or sing the best, seeing who can tell the best joke or do the best funny voice

You can run the game as a Decathlon with different stations or as a talent show with volunteers to perform in each category. At the end, you can ask for volunteers to show any talents that you didn't already name.

Lesson: Ask students, How do people pick their leaders?

What does a leader have to be good at?

If you're with your friends, who gets to be the leader?

How do we pick our leaders for the country, like the president?

How do we pick our leaders in the church?

(Summarize Numbers 16, using the following story and asking the included questions as you read.)

One day, while Moses and the Israelites were living in the desert after God freed them from slavery in Egypt, four men named Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and On started making trouble for Moses and his brother, Aaron. They said, “We are all God’s people. Why does Moses get to be the leader? And why does his brother, Aaron, get to be the priest? Why can’t we be the leaders?”

Do you think the four men should be allowed to be the leaders?

Should anyone have a chance to be the leader if they want to?

When Moses heard the four men saying this, he got down on his hands and knees and prayed. Then, he stood up and said to the four men, “Tomorrow, the Lord will show you who the leaders are supposed to be. You will all get your chance to try to be the priest, and whoever God chooses, that person will be the priest.”

So, the next morning, Aaron and all four of the men and the four men’s followers came to the Tabernacle church. Then, God made it so that the ground started shaking and an earthquake happened. The ground split apart under the four men’s feet, and they fell down into the crack. The ground closed back up, and the men were smooshed and buried in the crack. Then, God sent fire down from Heaven and burned the four men’s followers. Only Moses and Aaron were left because they were the ones whom God had chosen to be the leaders for the people.

Why do you think God killed those four men who wanted to be the leaders?

The four men were trying to take over being the leader from Moses and Aaron. God had already picked Moses and Aaron to be the leaders.

Remember that God has given us all talents and made us good at different things. He made some people to be good at making things and some people to be good at singing and playing music. He made some people to be good friends toward people, and He made some people to be good leaders. You have to do what God has made you good at.

You can't be the leader if God has made you good at something else. If you want to be the leader, you have to wait to see if God has picked you to be the leader. If God hasn't picked you to be the leader – if He's picked you to do something else – then you shouldn't try to be the leader.

What do you think God has picked you to do? What has He made you good at?

We all have to do our part and use the talents that God gave us. But, let's say you do think God made you to be a leader. Does that mean that you have to be the main leader?

God might want you to be a leader who helps the main leader.

(Summarize Exodus 18:13-26.)

One time, Moses was trying to be the leader all by himself. Everyone would bring him their questions and problems. Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, said, "Moses, you can't keep being the leader all by yourself. You'll wear yourself out! Choose some other people to help you."

Jethro gave Moses a plan to make different levels of leaders. Some leaders were leaders over 1,000 people. Some leaders were leaders over 100 people. Some leaders were leaders over 50 people. Some leaders were leaders over ten people. And Moses was the leader of all of them.

The leaders who were leaders over ten, 50, 100, or 1000 people helped Moses as the main leader.

So, even if we think that God wants us to be a leader, we have to think about whether He wants us to be the main leader or a leader over a smaller group who helps the main leader.

There's nothing wrong with being a leader who helps and there's nothing wrong with not being a leader at all. God made us all to be good at different things, and He wants us all to do our part with the talents He gave us. He

doesn’t want us to try to be the leader if He didn’t choose us to be the leader.

Game: Pyramid Race – Students divide into teams to build a human pyramid as quickly possible. Point out that the person on top of the pyramid looks like the leader. But they couldn’t be on top of the pyramid if their other teammates hadn’t helped them. The main leader needs other leaders to help them, just as Moses needed other leaders to help him.

Mix up the teams and play again.

Closing Prayer: Father, You gave us all of us talents and You chose all of us to do different things in life. Help us to know what You want each one of us to do so that we can serve You in the best possible way. In Jesus’ name we pray, amen.

Entering the Promised Land

We're finally here. The Israelites are about to step into the Promised Land! Unfortunately, we have to deal with a troublesome king, a horde of snakes, and the death of our beloved leader first. So, in this collection of 4 lessons, you'll find:

Balaam and the Talking Donkey – listening to God before other people

Moses and the Bronze Snake – thanking God for His blessings

The Death of Moses – the hope we have in the resurrection

Joshua and the Walls of Jericho – looking forward to our Promised Land of Heaven

Balaam and the Talking Donkey

Use this children's Sunday School lesson about Balaam and the talking donkey to teach kids to listen to God before other people.

Needed: soft play balls or paper wads

Intro Game: Simon Says – Students follow your commands and motion when you say, "Simon says" first. If you don't say, "Simon says" before the command, and they do it anyway, they're out. If they follow a motion that doesn't match the "Simon says" verbal command, they're out. The winner is the last one in the game.

Play a few rounds with the winner becoming the new Simon

Lesson: (Note: Always students enough time to think about and answer the questions before clarifying the teaching.)

Ask students, What should you do if someone tells you to do something, but you know that thing is wrong?

What if it's your parent or a teacher telling you to do the wrong thing? Should you do it then?

What if the President of the United States told you to do something bad? Would you do it?

Well, today we're going to learn about a man whose king wanted him to do something God said was wrong.

(Summarize Numbers 22-24, asking the included questions as you read).

One day, when Moses and the Israelites were walking in the desert…

Why are Moses and the Israelites walking in the desert? Can anyone tell me?

The Israelites were slaves in Egypt, but God used Moses to rescue the Israelites from slavery. They were walking through the desert to their new home in Canaan, but when the people got to Canaan, they were afraid to go attack the people living there and take over, even though God had told the people that He would help them.

So, to punish the people for not trusting Him to help them, God told them that they could not go live in Canaan. They had to wait until every adult at that time had died and then God would take their children into Canaan to live there. So, now in our story, the Israelites still have to live in the desert until all those adults who didn't trust God to help them are dead.

So, one day, when Moses and the Israelites were walking in the desert, they came close to the country of Moab. Balak, the King of Moab, saw the Israelites passing by and was afraid. "These people are going to take over my country!" he said.

Do you think King Balak was right? Were Moses and the Israelites going to take over his country?

Moses and the Israelites were eventually going to take over Canaan, but they were just passing by Moab. They didn't want to attack King Balak or his country.

But King Balak was afraid, and he sent his advisers to the prophet Balaam. "Balaam," they said, "please come and curse the Israelites for us since they are our enemies and have come to attack us."

Do you think Balaam should put a curse on the Israelites?

Balaam answered the advisers, "Stay the night with me, and I will tell you what God says in the morning."

That night, God told Balaam, “Do not curse the Israelites. They are My people, and I have blessed them.”

So, Balaam woke up the next morning and told the advisers that he would not go with them to curse the Israelites.

When King Balak heard what Balaam said, he sent more advisers to him and offered to give Balaam money and treasures if he would come to curse the Israelites for him. But Balaam wouldn’t go curse the Israelites. “Even if King Balak gave me all the money in his palace,” he said, “I would not disobey God. But stay the night with me, and I will see if God tells me anything else.”

That night, God told Balaam, “Go with the advisers, Balaam, but be careful to do only what I tell you to do.”

So, Balaam woke up the next morning, got on his donkey, and went with the advisers to meet King Balak. As the donkey was walking, an angel came and stood in front of the donkey with a sword in his hand. Balaam couldn’t see the angel, but his donkey could. The donkey turned off the road and started walking through a field.

Why do you think the donkey did that? Why did he just turn off the road and start walking through the field? (Because the donkey saw the angel standing in his way with a sword in his hand.)

Then, Balaam beat his donkey and made him get back on the road. A little while later, the donkey was walking through an alley with buildings on both sides of him. The angel came and stood in front of him again, and the donkey had to smoosh himself against one of the walls to avoid the angel. Balaam’s foot got smashed against the wall, and he beat his donkey again.

Do you think Balaam should be beating his donkey like that?

Finally, the angel came and stood in front of the donkey one more time.

What do you think the donkey's going to do?

This time, the donkey just stopped. He refused to go even one step further and just lied down on the ground. Balaam was so angry that he took a stick and started beating the donkey. Then, God made it so that the donkey could talk, and the donkey said, "Why have you beaten me these three times? Aren't I always such a good donkey for you?"

Then, God made it so that Balaam could see the angel with his sword in his hand. "Do not beat your donkey," the angel said. "And remember, only do what God tells you to do when you meet King Balak."

When King Balak saw Balaam coming, he said, "Finally! Why didn't you come the first time I sent for you, Balaam?"

"I'm here now," Balaam answered. "But I can only say what God tells me to."

Then King Balak said, "Put a curse on these Israelites for me."

But instead of cursing the Israelites, Balaam blessed them! King Balak was angry and said, "Balaam, I said for you to curse the Israelites, not bless them. Now, I'm not going to give you any of the money I promised you."

But Balaam answered, "I told you, I can only say what God tells me to." Then, Balaam went home and so did King Balak.

Did Balaam do the right thing? (Yes.)

Balaam did what he knew God wanted him to do, even though the king wanted him to do something different. For us, we have to listen to our parents and our teachers and the government, but we always have to remember to listen to God first. Even if everyone else tells us to do something, we have to listen to what God tells us to do first.

Game: Balak Says – Tell students that you want them to practice not listening when someone tells them to do the wrong thing. You're going to play Simon Says, but, now, they should only listen to you when you don't say "Balak says" first. If anyone does do what you tell them when you say, "Balak says…," they're out.

Game: Despite All Obstacles – Set up an obstacle course with two mirror paths. Divide the students into two teams. One student from each team runs the obstacle course at a time while the other team members line up along the length of the obstacle course. When they're not running, the members of the opposite team throw soft balls or paper wads at the runner from the sidelines.

If a student makes it through the obstacle course without being hit, they score a point for their team and return to the sidelines. If they are hit, they go to the sidelines to throw but not run again. After each pair runs the course, gather the balls or paper wads again for the next two to run.

The game ends when all the students have run the course. The team with the most points wins.

Afterward, explain that we have to do the right things in life even when it seems difficult. There might be things that get in the way of us doing the right thing. There might be people who try to keep us from doing the right thing like King Balak tried to keep Balaam from doing the right thing. But we have to keep doing what we know is right.

Game: Alex and Alicia - Help students apply the lesson by giving advice to two fictitious students.

Story #1: Alex's Test. Alex's teacher at school has been telling the class that God didn't Adam and Eve. He's been saying that humans evolved from a kind of ape millions of years ago. Alex doesn't believe that because he believes what God said in the Bible. But now, it's time to take the test. And the question reads, "Where did humans come from?"

What should Alex do in this situation?

(Alex should write that some people believe humans evolved from a kind of ape millions of years ago, but that he believes what the Bible says. He should do what God wants him to do instead of doing what his teacher wants.)

Story #2: Alicia's Bad Babysitter. Alicia's parents were going out on a date by themselves one night, so they asked their teenage neighbor girl, Nicole, to come to stay with Alicia for the evening. After they ordered pizza, Nicole and Alicia wanted to watch TV. Nicole turned the TV to a show Alicia wasn't allowed to watch. When Alicia told Nicole that her parents didn't let her watch this show, Nicole laughed and said, "It's okay. You can watch it. Just don't tell your parents."

What should Alicia do in this situation?

(She should tell Nicole that she doesn't want to watch the show. If Nicole doesn't change the channel, Alicia should leave the room. She should do what God wants her to do instead of what her babysitter wants her to do.)

Closing Prayer: Lord, we thank You that You always tell us the right thing to do. Make us brave so that we'll never be tempted to listen to someone else instead of You. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Recommended Extras

When God Made Balaam's Donkey Talk – an illustrated storybook

Moses and the Bronze Snake

Use this children's Sunday School lesson about Moses and the bronze snake to teach children both how we are saved and to be grateful for the blessings God gives us.

Needed: drawing paper, crayons or colored pencils, soft play pall

Intro Game: Thanks Toss – Students stand in a circle and randomly toss a ball back and forth. Whenever someone catches the ball, they have to name one thing they're thankful for, but it can't be anything anyone else has said.

Lesson: Ask students, Have you ever just had a bad day, when it seemed like nothing was going right for you?

What should you do on a day like that? Should you complain about things and get all grumpy? What should you do?

One thing you can do when you're having a bad day is to think about all the good things you have in your life and thank God for those good things. Then, maybe that will help you to stop thinking about the couple of bad things that are happening that day.

Today, we're going to learn about a group of people who just liked to complain.

(Summarize Numbers 21, asking the included questions as you read.)

One day, when Moses and the Israelites were walking in the desert…

Why are Moses and the Israelites walking in the desert? Can anyone tell me?

The Israelites were slaves in Egypt, but God used Moses to rescue the Israelites from slavery. They were walking through the desert to their new

home in Canaan, but when the people got to Canaan, they were afraid to go attack the people living there and take over, even though God had told the people that He would help them. So, to punish the people for not trusting Him to help them, God told them that they could not go live in Canaan. They had to wait until every adult at that time had died and then God would take their children into Canaan to live there. So, now in our story, the Israelites still have to live in the desert until all those adults who didn't trust God to help them are dead.

So one day, when Moses and the Israelites were walking in the desert, the people started to complain. "Why did you bring us out of slavery in Egypt just to make us walk around in the desert?" they said. "There's no food here, there's no water, and we're sick and tired of this manna bread that God keeps giving us to eat!"

Do you think the people should be complaining about things like that?

Which do you think would be better, to have to work all day as a slave or to live in the desert? Living in the desert would be much better than being a slave, but the people are complaining that they're not still slaves in Egypt!

What would have happened if the people had trusted God and gone in to attack the Canaanites and taken over their land?

The people would be living in their new homes by now instead of living in the desert. So, the people created their own problems by not trusting in God.

But did you notice what God was still doing for the Israelites? (He was still giving them manna bread to eat every day.)

Did God have to give them food? (No, He could have let them starve and die in the desert, but instead, God loved the people and took care of them by giving them the manna bread.)

So, because the Israelites were complaining and not being grateful to God for rescuing them from slavery in Egypt or for giving them the manna bread every day, God decided to punish them. He sent poisonous snakes to slither in among the complaining Israelites and bite them. Many of the people died from the snake bites. Then, the people and said to Moses, “We’re sorry for complaining against God. Please pray for us so that God will take the snakes away.”

Do you think it was good for the people to say they were sorry for complaining? (Yes, they did the right thing by saying they were sorry. God always wants us to admit what wrong things we did and say that we’re sorry for them.)

Then, Moses prayed, and God told him, “Make a snake out of metal and put it high up on a pole. Then, when a snake bites someone, that person can look up at the snake, and I will heal them from their snakebite so that they won’t die.”

Do you think it’s nice that God said He would heal the people from their snakebites?

The people said they were sorry for complaining, so God forgave them and gave them a way to be saved from the snakes.

God gives us a way to be saved, too, doesn’t He? How can we be saved when we do wrong things?

God says that if we believe in Jesus and ask God to forgive us for the wrong things that we’ve done, then He will forgive us and save us from going to Hell when we die. All we have to do is look up to Jesus, who died on the cross for us.

Game: Complaining Communication – The leader starts off telling a fictitious story about something bad that happened. The students’ goal is to then think about all the good things that might have happened afterward.

An example might be, “I went to the fair the other day and dropped my ice cream cone.”

The students could then add, “But the ice cream vendor saw what happened and gave me a new ice cream cone for free. Then, someone stole a lady’s purse, but the thief slipped on my spilled ice cream, and the police caught him. One of the people who saw it was an old friend of one of the police officers. They hadn’t seen each other in years, but when the person saw the police officer arresting the thief, they gave each other their phone numbers. Another person…”

Let kids be as imaginative as possible and ask them questions to prompt their creativity. The only point of the game is to think of how good things outweigh the negative in most situations.

Craft: Thank You Letter to God – Ask kids to write or draw a thank you letter to God for all the blessings He’s given them. Direct them to remember to include Jesus dying on the cross for us.

Closing Prayer: Father, we thank You for all the good things You’ve given us in our life. Help us to be grateful and not complain. We especially thank You for sending Jesus to die on the cross for us so that we could be forgiven for our sins. Amen.

Recommended Extras

Moses and the Bronze Snake – an illustrated storybook

The Brass Serpent – free coloring and activity pages

The Death of Moses

Use this children's Sunday School lesson on the death of Moses to teach kids about the importance of obeying God and the hope we have in the resurrection of the dead.

Needed: a balloon, a box large enough to put the balloon in

Intro Game: Don't Let it Fall! – Gather students in a circle. As you toss a balloon up into the air in the middle of the circle, call one of the student's names. That student must run to hit the balloon back into the air before it touches the ground. The student next to them then runs to hit the balloon. The round continues until the balloon hits the floor.

Play as many rounds as you like. The last time the balloon drops (or if it ever pops), announce, "I'm sorry, kids. The balloon has dropped for the last time and now, it's dead. Let's have a funeral for our dear balloon."

Gather the balloon and place it in the box. Say a few words over it and invite others to do the same.

Lesson: Say, it wasn't too sad when our balloon "died," but it can be very sad when a person dies. Today, we're going to learn about when Moses died.

(Summarize Numbers 20, Deuteronomy 34, and Jude 9, asking questions as you go.)

One day, when Moses and the Israelites were walking in the desert…

Why are Moses and the Israelites walking in the desert? Can anyone tell me?

The Israelites were slaves in Egypt, but God used Moses to rescue the Israelites from slavery. They were walking through the desert to their new

home in Canaan, but when the people got to Canaan, they were afraid to go attack the people living there and take over, even though God had told the people that He would help them. So, to punish the people for not trusting Him to help them, God told them that they could not go live in Canaan. They had to wait until every adult at that time had died and then God would take their children into Canaan to live there. So, now in our story, the Israelites still have to live in the desert until all those adults who didn't trust God to help them are dead.

So, one day, when Moses and the Israelites were walking in the desert, they ran out of water.

Is it a problem for people to run out of water? (It's a big problem. People need water to live.)

So the people came to Moses and started fighting with him about it. "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt?" they said. "We should have stayed slaves in Egypt. Then we would at least have water to drink!"

Moses went out to the Tabernacle church and bowed face down on the ground to pray. Then, God said, "Moses, take your staff and go to the large rock that is in front of all the people. Tell the rock to make water and water will come out of it. Then, you and the Israelites and all the animals can drink."

What is Moses supposed to do to make water come out of the rock? (He's supposed to tell the rock to make water.)

But Moses was so mad at the people for fighting with him, that he took his staff and hit the rock! "Do I even have to make water come out of this rock for you to listen to me?" he yelled. Then, water did come out of the rock, and the people and the animals drank. But God was not happy with Moses.

Why do you think God was not happy with Moses? Did Moses do anything wrong in this story?

Moses hit the rock when God told him to talk to the rock, and he made it sound like he was the one making the water come out of the rock instead of God.

So, God said to Moses, “Moses, you will not lead the Israelites into the country of Canaan. You will die in the desert.”

That was the punishment God gave Moses for not obeying His command. God gives us commands, too, doesn’t He? How does God give us His commands?

God gives us His commands in the Bible. We want to make sure we’re always following God’s commands so that He won’t have to punish us. God doesn’t want to punish us. He would much rather we listen to His commands and do what He says.

A few years later, God told Moses to pick the next leader for the people, and Moses picked a man named Joshua. Then, God told Moses to climb up a high mountain. From on top of that mountain, God showed Moses the whole country of Canaan. “This is the country I promised to give to Abraham and his children and his grandchildren forever. This is the country your follower, Joshua, will take the people into and give them to be their own country. I have let you see it, but you will not go there, Moses, because you disobeyed Me at the rock.” Then, Moses died, and God buried him up on top of the mountain.

Do you think it’s sad that Moses died?

I’m sure all of the Israelites were sad because Moses was a good leader for them. He was their teacher and their pastor and kind of like their king. He was the one who brought them up out of slavery in Egypt and took care of them in the desert. He was the one who gave them all of God’s rules and told them everything God wanted them to do. So, it was very sad when he died.

One interesting part of the story, though, is that nobody could ever find where God buried Moses. They looked, but no one could ever find Moses' body up on that mountain. Do you know why?

It's because the devil wanted Moses to stay dead and buried up there on that mountain, but an angel came and took Moses' body to Heaven, and God brought Moses back to life in Heaven.

(**Teacher's Note:** We know that God raised Moses because he appeared with Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration. Elijah was the prophet who didn't die but was taken to Heaven in a chariot of fire.)

And we know that God will do that for all of us one day, too, don't we? When Jesus comes back, He will bring us all back to life, even the people who have already died and gone to Heaven. He will bring our bodies back to life, and we will all live with Him forever and ever.

Bible Activity: Finding God's Commands - Have students randomly open to a page in the Bible and find a command of God. Help those who can't find one that's obvious and let everyone share what they found.

Game: Don't Let it Fall! (Take 2) – Play the intro game again, taking the balloon back out of the box or blowing up a new one. Explain that even though your balloon was dead, it came back to life just like Jesus will bring all of us back to life when He comes again.

Game: Resurrection Tag! – Divide students into two teams and play a game of freeze tag. When students get tagged, they freeze in place. They are Dead. Every few seconds, the leader runs through the playing field, pretending to be Jesus. When Jesus runs through, the Dead are unfrozen.

Perform this action a few times and then switch which team is chasing the other.

Closing Prayer: Lord, we thank You for the hope we have in Jesus that even if we die, we will live again with You. Help us to listen to and obey

Your commands our whole lives so that we'll be ready for Jesus to come back. Amen.

Recommended Extras

Water from the Rock – free coloring and activity pages

Joshua and the Walls of Jericho

Use this children's Sunday School lesson about Joshua and the battle of Jericho to teach kids about the Promised Land of Heaven.

Needed: two ropes or jump-ropes, an illustration of the Ark of the Covenant, a world map or globe, a map of the Exodus journey

Intro Game: Crossing the Jordan – Place two ropes parallel to each other on the floor. Explain to the students that the space between the ropes is a raging river. If they touch it, they'll be swept away and drowned. Now, have students jump across the "river" one at a time or in a group. Continue to widen the area between the ropes until it is impossible to cross. Ask, How are we going to get across the river if we can't jump over it? I guess we'll have to find out in our Bible story how the Israelites crossed a big river like this.

Lesson: Summarize Joshua 1-6, asking the included questions as you read.

The Israelites had been living in the desert for a long time, ever since Moses freed them from slavery in Egypt. But now, Moses was dead and the time had come for the Israelites to go into their new home, the country of Canaan that God had promised to give them. Their new leader, the man whom Moses had picked to be the next leader, was named Joshua.

"Joshua," God said to him, "I will be with you and will help you just like I was with Moses and helped him. Now, be strong and brave because you are the leader who will bring the Israelites into their new home."

What do you think Joshua will have to do to bring the Israelites into their new home?

He will have to fight the people who are already living in Canaan and make them move out so that the Israelites can have their country.

Why do you think God would let Joshua and the Israelites take over someone else's country?

The people who were living in Canaan were bad and didn't believe in God, so God was punishing them and giving their country to the Israelites instead.

So, Joshua told the Israelites, "Get ready and get all your stuff packed up. In three days, we will cross the Jordan River and start taking over the land of Canaan."

That night, Joshua sent two men to go spy on the city of Jericho in the country of Canaan. They found a prostitute named Rahab in Jericho and went to sleep in her house for the night.

But someone went and told the king of Jericho, "Two men from the Israelites came into the city tonight to spy on us."

So, the king of Jericho sent his soldiers to Rahab's house. The soldiers said, "Rahab, send those two spies out to us so that we can kill them."

But Rahab helped the two Israelite spies hide under a pile of hay she had and she told the soldiers, "Those two men came here, but they left. They're not here anymore." Then, when the soldiers left, Rahab went and told the two Israelite spies, "I know God is going to give you our country. We've heard about how God brought you out of slavery in Egypt and made the water of the Red Sea divide in two so that you could walk across on dry ground. Now, look, I have been nice to you and didn't tell the soldiers you were here. So, please be nice to me and do not kill my family or me when you come in to take over our country."

"We won't kill you or your family," the two spies answered, "just as long as you don't tell anyone that we're here." Then, Rahab helped the two men escape the city, and they returned to Joshua.

A couple of days later, Joshua led the people out of their camp and up to the Jordan River. The Jordan River was a big river, and it was flooding over the sides when the Israelites got there. The people all wondered, “How are we going to get across such a big river?”

How do you think the people will get across the river?

God told Joshua, “Tell the priests to walk into the river first, carrying the Ark of the Covenant with them.”

Does anyone know what the Ark of the Covenant was?

(Show your picture of the Ark of the Covenant.)

The Ark of the Covenant was a special chest inside the Tabernacle church. It held the two stone tablets that God wrote the Ten Commandments on, a piece of the manna bread that God gave the Israelites the whole time they were in the desert, and Aaron’s staff with flowers growing out of it to show he was the one God chose to be the first priest. God’s Spirit sat on top of the Ark of the Covenant in between two statues of angels.

So, Joshua told the priests to take the Ark of the Covenant and to walk into the river. As soon as the toes of the priests’ feet touched the water, the water of the river stopped flowing! The people could still see the water a few miles away, but it wasn’t moving toward them anymore. It was just standing still! So, all the Israelites walked on the bottom of the dry river and crossed into the country of Canaan. As soon as all the Israelites were across, God made the water of the river start flowing again.

Joshua and the Israelites crossed the Jordan River and marched toward the city of Jericho. When they got close to the city, a man came and suddenly stood in front of Joshua. The man had his sword out, so Joshua asked him, “Whose side are you on? Are you on our side or are you on our enemy’s side?”

Whose side do you think the man is on?

“I’m on no one’s side,” the man said. “I am an angel, the commander of the Lord’s army, so I have come to you.”

“Does God have a message for me?” Joshua asked.

“Take off your sandals,” the man said, “because you are standing on holy ground.” So, Joshua took off his sandals.

Then, God said to Joshua, “Joshua, I will help you defeat Jericho and its king and its army. Here’s what you have to do: Take your whole army and do a full march around the city for six days. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times and then, have seven priests blow on their trumpets. When the seven priests blow on their trumpets, all of the soldiers in your army should yell as loud as they can, and then, I will make the walls of Jericho fall down so that your army can run in and attack the city.”

So, that’s what Joshua and the Israelites did. They marched around the city one time for six days, and then, on the seventh day, they marched around it seven times. Then, the priests blew their trumpets, the army yelled as loud as it could, and God made the walls of Jericho fall down! The whole Israelite army ran in and attacked the city, but they did not hurt Rahab or her family because she was the one who had helped the spies get away when they came to spend the night in her house.

This is the first battle that the Israelites fought to take over their new home. God helped them to defeat the people of Jericho and God helped them to defeat their other enemies as well. Eventually, the Israelites conquered the whole country of Canaan, and they renamed it the country of Israel.

Map Activity: Making it Real! - Show your map or globe and have students search for the country of Israel. Then, show your map of the Exodus journey. Point out Egypt, where the Israelites were slaves, the Red Sea where they crossed out of Egypt on dry ground, and God drowned the Egyptian army, the area west of the Jordan where the Israelites wandered in

the desert, and the Jordan River where they crossed into the largest portion of Canaan.

Game: Holy Ground – Divide students into two or more teams for a relay race. Remind students of how the angel told Joshua to take off his shoes because he was standing on holy ground. Dim the lights. Tell students that when you shine your flashlight on them and call their name, they have to stop whatever they're doing and take off their shoes before they continue. You can even shine your light on kids who are still standing in line for their turn. The first team to have all of their runners complete the race wins.

Afterward, say, I had you take off your shoes just like the angel told Joshua to take off his shoes. Does anyone know why the angel would tell Joshua to take off his shoes?

We have to remember how special God is and we need to show Him respect. In those days, they took off their shoes to show respect. Today, we can show respect to God by stopping what we're doing and listening to God when He wants to talk to us. We can show respect by paying attention in church. We can show respect by listening when someone is praying or reading the Bible or teaching us about God. Those are all ways that we can show God that we understand how special He is.

Play the game again if time allows.

Closing Prayer: Father, we thank You for the lessons You teach us through Moses and Joshua. We see how You led the Israelites out of Egypt into the land You promised to give them. And we know that You're leading us too. You're leading us to Heaven. We pray that we'll always listen to You so that You'll be with us our whole lives and that we'll be with You when we die. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Recommended Extras

The Greatest Adventure Stories from the Bible: Joshua and the Battle of Jericho – animated video with time-traveling teenagers who witness the Biblical story, realistic art style

Greatest Heroes and Legends of the Bible: Joshua and the Battle of Jericho – another animated video with a Disneyesque art style and no time traveling

Jericho's Tumbling Walls – an illustrated storybook

Maps –a physical world map, a globe, and a set of Bible maps for your classroom

Rahab and the Spies and The Walls of Jericho Fall – free coloring and activity pages