



Moses

MEETING AIM

To discover that God chooses us for a mission, just as he chose Moses.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Exodus 3:1-4:23

BACKGROUND

This session plan is designed to be used in a home setting or online using video-calling software. You could also run it in person, if restrictions allow.

The story of Moses is rich with stories of God's faithfulness and humanity's failings. While we often focus on the circumstances surrounding his rescue as a baby, this session instead looks at the way that God chose Moses to lead his people to freedom. Moses reveals much of his vulnerability, and yet God chooses to remind Moses that he will be with him at every point. Moses is not chosen because of his strengths, but because of what God can do in and through him.

STARTING OUT

5 MINS

Start your time together with some simple refreshments (if you can) and chat about your friends, what they mean to you, how you care for each other and how you show your care.

PLAY

10 MINS

There are different variations of this game that you can play. It could be as simple as taking turns to let a different child play the part of 'leader', playing out different physical actions for the other children to copy, or (if you're doing this at home) taking turns to move around the room in a line, with the child at the front selecting both the route to take, and the different ways to travel.

Explain that just as you have chosen different children to be the leader, God chose Moses to lead his people.

BIBLE STORY

10 MINS

You will need: a large tray filled with sand; plastic play people; small plastic 'bush' or cut-out picture; small red scarf to represent the fire; small plastic toy goats

You could begin the story by asking the children if they remember any stories about Moses and, if appropriate, remind them that he was the baby who was hidden in the bulrushes. Alternatively, if you think it will overcomplicate the storytelling for your group, you may prefer to tell this story in isolation.

Select a play person to represent Moses, and tell this story:

A long, long time ago lived a man called Moses. *Hold up a plastic figure.* He lived a long, long way from home and from his family. *Stand Moses in the tray of sand.* He worked as a shepherd. *Place the sheep or goats around Moses.*

One day, while he was out caring for his animals, Moses spotted the most surprising thing. He saw a bush that was on fire! *Wave the scarf over the bush.* But the bush did not burn up! What do you think Moses did? Well, he had to take a closer look...

As Moses got close to the burning bush, he heard a voice speaking to him. It was God, telling Moses that he had chosen him to do a very special and important job.

Back in Egypt, Moses' home, God's people had to work hard for the pharaoh, the king in a land called Egypt, and were not looked after well. God had seen how badly his people were being treated. He had a plan to set them free. He talked to Moses about this plan, and how he wanted Moses to help.

You might think that Moses was proud to be chosen by God. *Invite the children to show the appropriate emotions.* You might think that Moses was excited to help God set his people free. Actually, Moses was scared. Instead of saying yes to God, he found lots of reasons to say no! "I'm not brave enough," "I don't have the right words to say," "I might get it wrong"...

But God looked at Moses and said: "No, you are just right! I choose you to help me, and I will make sure you have all the help you need."

If you're doing this as a family, encourage your children to retell the story using the story materials..

CHATTING TOGETHER

5 MINS

Ask the children these questions, encouraging everyone to take turns to contribute:

- What is your favourite part of this story?
- How do you think Moses felt when God chose him?
- Have you ever been chosen to do a special job?
- What jobs does God give us to do?
- Do you want to say anything to God?

CREATIVE TIME

10 MINS

You will need: small handheld mirrors (or mirrors in the children's houses)

Make sure that each child can see themselves in a mirror. Ask the children to take a good look at themselves. Take a few minutes to talk about what they see when they look in the mirror. This could include details about physical appearance, such as eye colour and hair colour, or about the expressions they can pull. When God looked at Moses, he didn't see a shy, scared man, as Moses saw, but the man who would lead God's people to freedom.

Ask the children to look closely in the mirror. What do they think God sees when he looks at them? Give children time to respond. As appropriate, take the opportunity to speak truths into the children's lives about the way God sees them: children of God, known and loved by him.

PRAYER

5 MINS

Pray together as a group, encouraging the children to pray aloud, as they feel able. You may find it helpful to begin a prayer with the words: "Thank you, God, for loving me, as you loved Moses. Thank you for making me..." and invite the children to call out a word that describes how God sees them, as discussed in 'Creative time'.

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Passover

MEETING AIM

To discover how God set his people free.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Exodus 11-12 (Exodus 5-10)

BACKGROUND

This session plan is designed to be used in a home setting or online using video-calling software. You could also run it in person, if restrictions allow.

The story of the Passover is rich with symbolism and promise. There are some elements to this story which are more difficult to share with children, particularly those who are so young. But to miss these elements from the session fails to faithfully pass on the stories that we have been given. It is important during this session that time and space is given for children to ask their own questions about the story, as they begin to make sense of it and discover more about who God is and what he has done for us.

STARTING OUT

5 MINS

Start your time together with some simple refreshments (if you can) and chat about your friends, what they mean to you, how you care for each other and how you show your care.

PLAY

10 MINS

You will need: a selection of small-world play toys along a 'rescue' theme, such as police, fire and medical play figures and vehicles; playmats

Spend some time playing together with the children, re-enacting different 'rescue' situations, as initiated by the children. If you're meeting online, then ask parents or carers to provide some toys for their child to play with (or deliver some to their house before your session).

As you play, talk about the different ways that these people save others and invite the children to share their own experiences, as appropriate.

BIBLE STORY

10 MINS

Remind the children of the previous story, where God chose Moses to help set his people free and rescue them from slavery in Egypt. Explain that as you share the story, you will introduce some simple actions for them to join in with. Tell this story:

God had a plan to set his people free. He told Moses about his plan. He gave him messages to take to the pharaoh – the king in a place called Egypt. Moses told Pharaoh again and again about God's messages, but he wouldn't listen. Pharaoh did not want to let God's people go free.

God gave Moses one more message: "I am going to give Pharaoh and his people one more warning. One more chance to set my people free. You must tell my people to do exactly what I say. I will rescue my people."

Moses went to the pharaoh and passed on God's message. He told Pharaoh that if he didn't let God's people go free, the eldest son in every family would die. Pharaoh would not listen to Moses. He would not listen to God.

Moses went to God's people and passed on God's message. He told them to do exactly what God said. God's people listened to Moses. They listened to God.

God's people had a special meal of meat and flat bread. *Hold one hand flat, palm down over the other, rubbing them together. Mime eating.* They had to get ready to go before they ate, so they put on their shoes and held their walking stick ready in their hand. Mime putting on shoes and holding a stick. Then God's people had to take a brush and dip it in the blood of the animal they had eaten. They painted it on the door frame of their houses. *Mime painting up high in front of them.*

That night, God protected all those people who did as he said. But Pharaoh and his people did not do what God said so God kept his promise. The eldest son in every Egyptian family died. Pharaoh and his people were very sad. At last, they did as God had told them and let God's people go.

God had looked after his people. They followed his instructions and God set his people free.

CHATTING TOGETHER

5 MINS

Ask the children these questions, encouraging everyone to take turns to contribute:

- What is your favourite part of this story?
- What didn't you like about the story?
- How can we listen to God?
- Do you want to say anything to God?

CREATIVE TIME

10 MINS

You will need: a seder plate with a lamb bone, hard-boiled egg, horseradish, charoset (various recipes can be found online, including some nut-free), parsley and romaine lettuce; Matzos to represent the flat bread

Before the session, prepare a seder plate (more information can be found here). Share the different elements with the children. Explain that this is how Jewish families remember how God set them free from slavery today. Invite the children to taste different parts of the meal (or show them, if you're meeting online), talking about the things that it represents, about the flavours and textures and about why it is so important to still remember what God did for his people that day. (Check for food allergies if you're meeting in person.)

PRAYER

5 MINS

Talk to the children about how important it was for God's people to remember what God had done for them, and to thank God for setting them free. Invite the children to think about some of the things that God has done for them and to thank him, as you pray. Take turns to say: "Thank you, God, for..." You may want to thank God for this story, and for the things we can discover from it, as you close the prayer.

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Ten Commandments

MEETING AIM

To consider why God gave rules to his people and how they still help us today.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Exodus 19-20 (Exodus 14)

BACKGROUND

This session plan is designed to be used in a home setting or online using video-calling software. You could also run it in person, if restrictions allow.

The Israelites must have the reputation for the grumpiest, grumbliest people in history. For us, reading their story, we see a faithful God and a faithless people who failed to trust him. In truth, we find it as difficult to follow God's way today.

STARTING OUT

5 MINS

Start your time together with some simple refreshments (if you can) and chat about your friends, what they mean to you, how you care for each other and how you show you care.

PLAY

10 MINS

You will need: equipment for your chosen game

Begin the session by playing a game together which has easy-to-follow rules. For a family, this could be a game like snakes and ladders; for an online group, something like follow the leader or Simon says would be appropriate. Share the rules at the beginning to ensure everyone understands what they are allowed to do.

As you play the game, talk about the rules, as the opportunities arise. Don't interrupt the flow of the game, but take little opportunities to remind the children why they need to follow the rules and why they matter, as you play together.

BIBLE STORY

10 MINS

You will need: ten large white cards; paint and paintbrushes

Begin the story by reminding children of the previous story, where God had set his people free. Explain to the children that God's people had to travel through the desert to the special new home that he had prepared for them. Then tell the story:

God's people had been travelling through the desert and God was looking after them. He gave them food to eat and safe places to stay. Then God gave his people another gift – ten special rules to follow that would keep them safe.

God called Moses to climb up a mountain to meet him there. He told Moses the special rules. God wrote them on a block of stone.

As you share the following ten rules, paint a simple symbol on each card, as described below, and put on display. These should be done as simple line drawings to continue the flow of the story, but don't rush through the retelling. Children could count on their fingers to show the ten rules.

1. Put God first in your life. Nothing is more important than him. Paint a large number 1.
2. Only worship God. Paint a heart.
3. Treat God's name with respect. Don't say it as a bad word. Paint a speech bubble.
4. Keep the Sabbath day special. You can work for six days but on the seventh day, you need to rest. Paint someone sleeping, perhaps with 'zzz's.
5. Respect your parents. Paint a family.
6. Never hurt anyone. Paint a sad face, perhaps someone crying.
7. Keep wedding promises. Paint a bride and groom.
8. Don't take things that don't belong to you. Paint someone holding something in their hand.
9. Always tell the truth. Paint two people talking – each with a speech bubble.
10. Don't be jealous of other people's things. Paint two people; one looking unhappily at the other.

When Moses came down from the mountain, he shared God's rules with the people. I wonder how easy it was to keep God's rules?

CHATTING TOGETHER

5 MINS

Ask the children these questions, encouraging everyone to take turns to contribute:

- What is your favourite part of this story?
- When is it easy to follow rules?
- When is it more difficult?
- Why do you think God gave these rules to people?
- Do you want to say anything to God?

CREATIVE TIME

10 MINS

You will need: playdough

Give each child a small lump of playdough (you could drop some off to children before the session, if you're meeting online) and invite the children to create a model that either shows somebody following a rule, or breaking one. It may be obvious how this relates to the Ten Commandments or it may relate more to the rules that children are given in their homes, within the group or their care setting.

As they create their models, encourage them to talk about the different scenarios they think of. Where appropriate talk about how these rules relate to the Ten Commandments, but the purpose of the exercise is not to learn the ten rules, but rather to see how they relate to children's own lives and why they still matter to us today.

PRAYER

5 MINS

Explain to the children that as much as God wants us to follow these rules, he knows that as human beings, we all do things wrong and find it hard to always do the right thing. God has promised us that he will forgive us and give us another chance to try again, when we say sorry to him. Invite the children to think of something they want to say sorry to God for, either aloud, or simply to say sorry silently in their own minds as you pray for them all.

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Promised land

MEETING AIM

To discover how God faithfully keeps his promises.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Numbers 13-14, Joshua 3

BACKGROUND

This session plan is designed to be used in a home setting or online using video-calling software. You could also run it in person, if restrictions allow.

Despite God's proven track record for taking care of his people, God's people again got cold feet and chose to see the problems that lay before them. Their faithlessness would cost them dear: 40 further years of wandering, and a generation never seeing their promised new home. Yet through it all, God remained faithful and did indeed give them his people the promised land, just as he is faithful to provide for us today.

STARTING OUT

5 MINS

Start your time together with some simple refreshments (if you can) and chat about your friends, what they mean to you, how you care for each other and how you show your care.

PLAY

10 MINS

You will need: mirrors

Invite the children to experiment with pulling different faces to show different emotions, looking in a mirror as they do so (or looking at themselves on Zoom or similar), to see what those different expressions look like. Different emotions could include happy, sad, excited, nervous, scared or delighted.

After the first few examples, invite the children to think of their own ideas about which emotions to portray. You could pair the children together to show one another their different expressions, or involve your helpers in showing some different examples. As you explore different emotions with your faces, encourage the children to talk about different times when they have experienced these emotions.

BIBLE STORY

10 MINS

You will need: a large space to use to act out the story together; props as described below (optional)

Begin the story by reminding the children that God had promised to lead his people to the promised land. It was a place where they could be free and safe and enjoy their lives together. Moses had been chosen by God to lead his people to their new life. But things didn't exactly go to plan...

Gather the children together in one part of the room. In another area, set a circle of chairs to mark the promised land, and between the starting and end point, lay a large piece of blue fabric to represent the river. If you're meeting online, then encourage the children to move around their own space.

God's people journeyed towards the land that he had promised for them. *Walk around together in this part of the room.* God gave them food to eat and rules to follow. *Mime appropriate actions.* He looked after them.

Eventually, Moses and God's people came close to their new home. Moses chose twelve men to go ahead of them. They had to find out more about the place they were going to. Those men would have to look and see what the land was like, and who was living there.

Choose two or three children to represent the twelve, and send them to look in the promised land. You may wish to place an adult with them to help them act out the next part.

The group of twelve went to look in the promised land. They saw that it was just as good as God had promised. It was full of beautiful food and safe new homes. But ten of the men became scared. They were worried about how God would help them into the promised land. When they returned to Moses, they said that it would be difficult to take the land. *Bring the small group back to mime talking to the others.*

God was disappointed with the men. He was angry that they didn't trust him to look after them. Because they stopped the people going into the promised land, God made his people wander around in the desert for another 40 years!

Everyone should walk around in a circle for while being unhappy.

After 40 years, God's people were ready to go into the land that he had

promised to them. Not everyone lived long enough to see the promised land. Not everyone did as God had said. But God did exactly as he had promised his people. He gave them a new home in a beautiful land.

Walk together across the 'water' and into the promised land. Cheer as you do so.

CHATTING TOGETHER

5 MINS

Ask the children these questions, encouraging everyone to take turns to contribute:

- What is your favourite part of this story?
- How do you think God's people felt when they entered the promised land?
- Can you think of a time when you felt like this?
- Do you want to say anything to God?

CREATIVE RESPONSE

10 MINS

You will need: a selection of fruits, including grapes, pomegranates and figs

Invite the children to taste some of the different fruits, or show the children the fruit if you're meeting online (if possible, deliver some fruit to each child before the session so that they can taste them too). As you sample the fruits, talk about what the children think of each of them, perhaps which they most or least like, whether they have ever tasted them before.

Encourage the children to enjoy the different flavours and as you share the fruit together, talk about the special things that God prepared for his people in the promised land. Talk too about the things that God has given us to enjoy. (Be aware of allergy issues.)

PRAYER

5 MINS

Pray together as a group, inviting the children to join you by praying aloud. Begin the prayer by saying: "Thank you, God, for all the gifts that you give to us. Thank you, God, for..." and encourage the children to call out things they want to thank God for.

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