



UNIT 4 | SESSION 1

GOD CALLED MOSES

EXODUS 1-4

KEY PASSAGE:

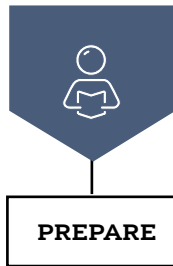
Numbers 23:19

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Does God keep His promises? Yes, God always keeps His promises because He is faithful.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

God saved Moses' life and called him to rescue God's people from slavery. The calling of Moses points to a greater calling and rescue—the call of Jesus to come to earth to save God's people. Jesus gave up His life to save us from slavery to sin.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

Moses' life was in danger from the moment he was born. He was an Israelite—a descendant of Israel (Jacob)—living in Egypt after Jacob's family had moved there, seeking food during a famine.

Four hundred years later, this family had grown and multiplied. Moses' parents, Amram and Jochebed, likely lived in fear of the pharaoh who ruled Egypt and took drastic measures to oppress the Israelites. Could God's promises for His people stand against such opposition?

Jochebed hid her baby boy as long as she could—about three months—before she put him in a basket among the reeds of the river. She couldn't have known that Pharaoh's daughter would find him and want to raise him as her own, or that the princess would let Jochebed care for him until he was old enough to be raised as an Egyptian prince. She couldn't have known that her son would grow up to deliver the Israelites out of Egypt. But God knew. All along, God had a plan for Moses and His people.

God appeared to Moses years later. Moses was a shepherd then, having grown up in Egypt's royal household only to flee as a murderer to Midian. There, Moses started a family and worked as a shepherd, perhaps never imagining he would see Egypt again.

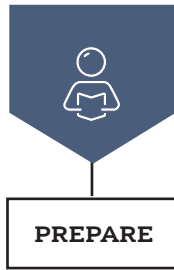
But one night, God drew a curious Moses to Himself and spoke through a burning bush. You see, God remembered the promise He made to Eve in Genesis 3. He remembered His covenant with Abraham in Genesis 12, which He repeated to Isaac and Jacob. So many years had passed, but God remembered His promises.

Moses was inadequate for the task of rescuing the Israelites, but God promised His power and presence. So in the early chapters of Exodus, we see Moses return to Egypt to confront Pharaoh—acting as a mediator between the Israelites and their burdensome king.

As you consider Moses' calling, look forward to an even greater calling and rescue—the call of Jesus to come to earth to save God's people from their sin. Jesus is greater than Moses. Moses delivered God's people from physical captivity; Jesus delivers God's people from captivity to sin and death.

PEOPLE TO KNOW

Moses: a biblical patriarch; chosen by God to lead His people out of captivity and to the promised land. Moses was an Israelite and a descendant of Levi. He wrote Genesis–Deuteronomy under inspiration from God.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

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



WELCOME

Activity Page

- “Connecting to God” activity page

Session Starter (Option 2)

- pushpin or small nail
- plastic cups, 1 per kid
- string or twine



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- Countdown video

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- “God Called Moses” video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- “Unit 4, Session 1” questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- “The McDonalds to Tanzania” missions video
- world map

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- tennis balls, 1 per group
- “Unchanging God (Numbers 23:19)” song
- worship song of your choice (optional)



LOVE

Discussion & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- Printable: “Medical Missions Theater”
- bowl
- adhesive bandages
- permanent marker

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



WELCOME Kids

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

SAY “Have any of you ever been selected for a special job, like being a line leader at school or being the captain of your sports team? Today we will learn about a man God called to do something very important. His name was Moses, and when God called him for a special job, Moses made excuses! We’ll learn more soon.”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete the “Connecting to God” activity page.

SAY “At first, it may not have been obvious what that picture was, but by the time you completed it, you could tell it was a burning bush. Today we will learn about the time God used a miraculous burning bush to speak with Moses. The bush burned without being destroyed by the fire.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: CALL SIGNS



Invite the kids to sit in a circle. Help the kids come up with nicknames they will use as their call signs during the game. Once every kid has said his call sign, select a kid to start the game by pretending to radio another kid using that kid’s call sign. That kid will answer and then call another kid by her call sign. The goal is to pass the call within the circle as quickly as possible without repeating any call signs.

Example play:

“Come in Lone Wolf this is Pack Mule, over.”

“I read you loud and clear Pack Mule, over.
Come in Flutterby this is Lone Wolf, over.”

“I read you loud and clear Lone Wolf, over.
Come in Bike Path, this is Flutterby, over...”

SAY “Call signs help you get someone’s attention or know who you are talking to. What might God’s call sign be?”

OPTION 2: CUP PHONES

Before the session, use a pushpin or small nail to poke a single hole in the bottom of each plastic cup. During the session, form pairs of kids and give each pair two cups and a 5-foot length of string or twine. Help the kids thread the string through the holes in the cups, tying knots in both ends of the string so that the bottoms of the cups both face inward. Demonstrate how the cup phones are used and allow the kids to whisper messages to one another with their phones.

SAY “Those cup phones carry the vibration of your voice along the string to the other cup. When telephones were first invented, they changed a vibrating voice signal into an electric signal to pass along wires. Today, we can pass those signals through the air as radio waves. We don’t need a phone to communicate with God!”

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





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

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

SAY “ Hey everyone! I’m thrilled you are all here. We have been working our way through the Bible in chronological order—that means the order in which events occurred. Did any of you bring a Bible with you today? [Allow responses and distribute a classroom Bible to any kids who need one.] That’s awesome! The Bible is God’s Word. It teaches us everything we need to know about God and about ourselves in order to love God and live for Him.

One thing we can find lots of in the Bible are promises that God has made to His people. God has made many promises, and in many cases we can read about the way God kept each one. But what about the promises God has made that haven’t happened yet? That’s what I want us to think about for the next few weeks. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “ We use a big picture question to help us focus our learning and direct us to see specific true things the Bible can teach us about God and ourselves. For the next few weeks, I want us to think about this question and answer: **Does God keep His promises? Yes, God always keeps His promises because He is faithful.**

This is important to understand because it allows us to understand that whenever we find a promise in Scripture that hasn’t come true yet, it means God isn’t done with that part of His plan yet. We can study God’s Word and see many examples of promises that God already fulfilled, and that helps give us hope for the promises that we must keep waiting on. Here, I’ll show you what I mean. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ If you have been attending for a while now, you may remember that God created everything perfectly, but it wasn’t long before Adam and Eve chose sin and the world broke. Later, God chose a man, Abraham, and promised him a few things: Abraham would be the father of a huge family, his family would have a land of their own, and they would be blessed in order to bless the whole world. But God also told Abraham that his family would spend 400 years as slaves!

Abraham saw God’s faithfulness when Isaac was born. Isaac had 2 sons, and one of his sons, named Jacob, had 12 sons! Joseph, one of the 12, was sold as a slave and sent to Egypt. Over time, God made him a very important government official. When a famine hit, all of Jacob’s family moved to Egypt to live with Joseph. That’s about where our story today picks up. The nation of Israel lived in Egypt and they were growing fast! ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

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

Open your Bible to Exodus 1–4. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “God Called Moses.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

GOD CALLED MOSES

“**Joseph’s family in Egypt grew** even after Joseph, his brothers, and their families died. **All the people in this family were known as Israelites** because they came from Joseph’s father Jacob, who was also called Israel.

When **a new pharaoh** came to power in Egypt, he **was afraid of the Israelites**. Pharaoh worried they would all fight against him. **So Pharaoh made the Israelites slaves** and gave them very hard work to do. **Still, their families grew. So Pharaoh ordered for all their baby boys to be killed.**

Around this time, a woman gave birth to a son. She hid him as long as she could, and then **she put him in a basket and set it along the bank of the Nile River**. Soon **Pharaoh’s daughter** went to the river to take a bath. She **found the baby and** felt sorry for him. Pharaoh’s daughter **wanted the baby to be her son. The princess named the baby Moses.**

Moses grew up as a prince in Egypt. **One day, he saw an Egyptian man mistreating an Israelite man. Moses killed the Egyptian and fled** from Egypt. **He worked as a shepherd in another land** for many years. **Back in Egypt, the Israelite people were miserable. They cried out to God, and God heard them.** He had a plan to help them.

One day, Moses saw a bush on fire. The bush was not burning up! Suddenly, **God called from the bush: “Moses, Moses!”**

Moses replied, “Here I am.”

God told Moses to take off his sandals because Moses was standing on holy ground. **Then God said, “I have seen how My people are suffering. I want you to lead them out of Egypt** to a good land I have for them.”

“What if they ask for Your name?” Moses said. “What should I tell them?”

“I AM WHO I AM,” God said. “Tell them: I AM has sent me to you.”

“What if they don’t believe me?” Moses asked.

So God gave Moses three miraculous signs to prove that God had appeared to him: Moses’ staff would turn into a snake, his hand would become diseased and then healed, and water from the river would turn into blood. **But Moses still made excuses.** He said, “Please send someone else.” **God was angry but agreed to send Moses’ brother, Aaron, with him.** So Moses went **to Egypt.**

STORYTELLING TIPS

Make faces: Whenever someone in the story could feel an emotion, prompt the kids to make the face they would feel if they were in that situation.

Use props: Whenever an object is mentioned, hold up a matching prop (basket, branch of a bush, sandal, snake, water).



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Christ Connection: God saved Moses' life and called him to rescue God's people from slavery. The calling of Moses points to a greater calling and rescue—the call of Jesus to come to earth to save God's people. Jesus gave up His life to save us from slavery to sin. ”

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Wow, what a story! I love seeing the way God works all the little details to be part of His plan. With God, there really are no coincidences. God led His people to Egypt while Joseph was alive, but after Joseph died, a new Pharaoh came to power and saw the growing Israelite nation as a threat. But even in the middle of an evil plan to kill the Israelite baby boys, God saved the life of Moses—even placing him in Pharaoh's household as his grandson and a prince!

I want to pay special attention to what happened when God spoke to Moses. How did Moses react? [Allow responses.] That's right! Moses made excuses. 'What if they ask Your name?' 'What if the Israelites don't believe You spoke to me?' 'I am not a good speaker!' 'Send someone else!'

But no matter how many excuses Moses had, God's plan did not change. God promised to be with Moses. God promised to give Moses power to perform miraculous signs to prove that God was with him. God promised to give him words and help him speak. He even promised to send Aaron, Moses' brother, with Moses. All these promises lead us back to our big picture question: **Does God keep His promises? Yes, God always keeps His promises because He is faithful.** God can be trusted to keep all His promises. He always has, and He always will. Each of God's promises to Moses were part of God's even bigger promise—to someday send a Rescuer who would rid the world of sin. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ God saved Moses' life and called him to rescue God's people from slavery. The calling of Moses points to a greater calling and rescue—the call of Jesus to come to earth to save God's people. Jesus gave up His life to save us from slavery to sin. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 4, Session 1” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. What does God's name—I AM WHO I AM—mean?
2. What other names of God do you know, and what do they mean?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

SAY “ Today, we heard the story of God's calling Moses to take a message to Pharaoh. Thousands of years later, Jesus rose from the dead and called His followers to deliver a message to the whole world. He told them to go and teach people about Him in all of the different nations. This calling is known as the Great Commission. Jesus wants people all over the world to know Him and



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

worship Him. Today, we're going to meet a family who followed Jesus' instructions by going to be missionaries in a country called Tanzania, which is in Africa. ”

Show Tanzania on a world map. Then play the missions video. Guide the kids to name some ways that they can pray for the McDonald family. Ask a volunteer to pray.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Numbers 23:19 together. Invite the kids to sit in a circle. Give a kid a tennis ball and ask her to say the first word of the key passage before passing the ball to her left. That kid will say the next word and pass the ball again. Continue until every kid has had a turn to say at least one word and the key passage is complete. You may choose to form smaller groups of 4–6 kids and give each group a ball.

SAY “ Our key passage comes from the Book of Numbers, in which God's people were wandering in the wilderness. They often struggled to trust God, but God wanted them to know that He is faithful and keeps all His promises. God doesn't lie or change His perfect plans. We can trust Him to keep all His promises. ”

Lead kids to sing “Unchanging God (Numbers 23:19).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

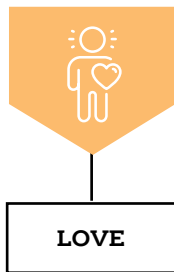
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning from **LEARN** to **LOVE**.

SAY “ God, thank You for loving us and keeping Your promises to us. You are good and faithful to us, even though we are so often unfaithful to You. Give us wisdom and courage to know what Your will is for our lives and obey You instead of making excuses. Amen. ”

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





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles. Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to Exodus 1–4. Remind the kids how to use the table of contents to find books in the Bible. Explain that the name Exodus means “exit” or “escape,” and this book tells of how God helped His people escape slavery.

Choose a volunteer to read aloud Exodus 1:8-11. If there are no strong readers in your group, ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud. Consider pointing out the location of Egypt on the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. (H7)

SAY “ God’s people were growing from a large family into a large nation. Pharaoh and the Egyptians were terrified the Israelites would overpower them if there were a war, so the Egyptians enslaved the Israelites, forcing them to do all kinds of difficult work.

Thankfully, even in the middle of such a hard and sad situation, God was still working His plans. God had promised that His people would spend time as slaves, but He had also promised that their slavery would not last forever. **Does God keep His promises? Yes, God always keeps His promises because He is faithful.** ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

| **SAY** “ Why do you think Moses made excuses when God called him to set the Israelites free? ”

Help the kids think through the heart of Moses’ excuses. Moses likely felt afraid that he’d be killed if he returned to Egypt. He also may have been comfortable in his new life, so he didn’t want to give it up to do such a hard job. At the core of any excuse is usually fear or laziness. When asked to do something difficult, we may be afraid of what will happen to us or afraid to fail. We may feel like obedience is too difficult or won’t leave us time for what we want.

| **SAY** “ Why did God grow angry with Moses’ excuses? ”

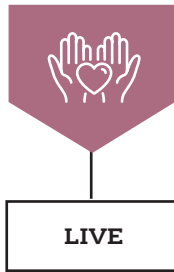
Remind the kids that it isn’t wrong to tell God what you think and fear, but help them to see that Moses’ excuses were moving beyond telling God about his fear. Moses was basically telling God that he did not think God could be trusted to help him and be with him. God had promised to help Moses, to give Moses power, and to lead Moses. When Moses continued asking God to send someone else, Moses showed he did not trust God’s promises.

| **SAY** “ What excuses do you make when you don’t want to do what God has commanded? ”

Guide the kids to start by think about some of the commands we see in the Bible, such as loving our enemies, sharing the gospel, or studying His Word, the Bible. Encourage the kids to be honest about excuses they make, and the fear or laziness that may fuel such excuses. Encourage the kids by reminding them that God loves us and will help us obey.

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





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: MEDICAL MISSIONS THEATER



Before the session, use a permanent marker to write *Pray for the McDonalds* on the wrappers of adhesive bandages. Prepare one per kid. Choose a volunteer to draw a “Medical Missions Theater” card and act out the medical treatment on the card. The rest of the group will try to guess the treatment. When someone guesses correctly, he becomes the next actor. Ask the kids to name things that might be difficult about moving from their home to another country.

SAY “ When God called Moses to go to Egypt, Moses made excuses because he was afraid. It probably wasn’t easy for the McDonalds to leave their life in the US, but they chose to obey God and use their medical training to reach people in Tanzania with the gospel. ”

Give each kid a bandage and encourage them to use it as a reminder to pray for the McDonalds at home.

OPTION 2: EXCUSES, EXCUSES



Invite the kids to sit in a circle. Select a kid to start the game by asking the kid to his right to do something. It can be a silly request, an impossible favor, or something more realistic. She must come up with an excuse as to why she cannot accomplish the task, and pass the request to the kid on her right, who will also come up with an excuse. If a kid cannot think of an excuse, the round ends, and it becomes the next kid’s turn to make a new request.

SAY “ God commanded Moses to go and speak to Pharaoh, telling him to let the Israelites go free. But instead of trusting God, Moses came up with excuse after excuse.

Some commands, like the command to share the gospel, are for all believers, but we don’t always do a good job obeying God. What are some excuses you might make to avoid obeying God? Can you think of any ways to help yourself stop making excuses to obey God more completely and joyfully each day? ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

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

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

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.