



Early Childhood Storytelling

Leader Guide

For Children Ages 3–5
Who Have Not Finished Kindergarten



1



God Saves Baby Moses

Exodus 1:8–14, 22;
2:1–10

**God finds me
when I have
troubles.**

**Call upon Me
in the day
of trouble;
I will
deliver you.**

Psalm 50:15

2



Ruth and Naomi

Book of Ruth

**God finds me
when I'm
lonely.**

**Fear not,
for I am
with you.**

Isaiah 41:10

3



Jesus and Zacchaeus

Luke 19:1–10

**God finds me
when I'm
lost.**

**You are
precious in
My eyes . . .
and I love you.**

Isaiah 43:4

4



Jesus Rises from the Dead

Luke 24:1–12

**God finds me
when I think
there's no hope.**

**You, O Lord,
are my hope,
my trust.**

Psalm 71:5

5



Jesus Appears to Paul

Acts 9:1–19

**God finds me,
no matter
my sin.**

**Christ Jesus
came into
the world to
save sinners.**

1 Timothy 1:15

Early Childhood Storytelling Leader Basics

How Does Early Childhood Storytelling Work at VBS?

One of the sites early childhood children visit after the Opening is Early Childhood Storytelling. Kids move in Teams—groups of five children, one Team Leader, and one Helper. Ask your Director how many Teams will visit your site each rotation and how many rotations you will do each day.

What You Do

- Share God’s Word with the children, helping them discover how the Bible account applies to their everyday lives. Though the site is called Storytelling, these are not made-up stories—they are the true Word of God! Every day, children will hear about the Father’s love for them in Jesus Christ. Storytelling is engaging, memorable, active, and fun!
- Decorate this site, asking others to help.
- Share the Take-Home Point with actions.
- Direct and lead Bible Storytelling activities.
- Supervise Teams as they review the Bible story and do activities in the *Early Childhood Leaflets*.

Prepare

Read the accounts from the Bible, the five lessons in this guide, and the Leader Devotions so you can accurately and engagingly share the Word of God. Ask your Director for access to these and other materials from the *Director Guide*, the *Director USB*, or the online digital content center.

Pray

Ask God to bless your work and to prepare the hearts of the children and the families you will reach. Pray that the Holy Spirit would work through His Word to create and sustain faith.

Look the Part

Each day, props and/or costumes will be suggested to help capture kids’ interest. You can add your own ideas as well. Be creative!

Recruit Help

Having helpers to handle props and assist Team Leaders makes for a smoother presentation. Practice beforehand so each person knows his or her part. Middle or high schoolers make great Site Helpers!

Show Enthusiasm

Be an active, involved, and enthusiastic storyteller! Use lots of voice inflection and dramatic gestures in your presentations. As you tell these exciting Bible accounts, keep kids interested by using props and moving around the area. Help kids hear, see, touch, smell, move, think, and feel. Children learn and remember best by using all these God-given senses for learning.

Role of Team Leaders

Team Leaders develop relationships with the children in their groups and work to keep them involved, focused, and connected. At Storytelling, they lead their Teams as you request. They also use the “Early Childhood Leaflet Guide” found at the end of each lesson (also on the *Director USB* and in the digital content center) to direct children through the *Early Childhood Leaflets*, if you choose to use them at this site.

Site Setup and Decorating

- Transforming your area into a tropical island is a breeze! Try one or more of these ideas. Use green plastic tablecloths, fabric, and backdrops to cover walls and tables. Add silk greenery or hang premade *Tropical Leaf Decorations* and *Tropical Flower Decorations*. Make a dormant volcano by covering a pile of boxes with green fabric and flowers. Create a plumeria grove by twisting craft paper into branches and adding tissue-paper flowers. Pile craft-paper boulders or drape a gray tarp over a large box to make a cave. Use a long piece of blue fabric to make a winding river leading down to the sandy canvas-tarp beach. Don’t forget to use the fun images on the *Decorating Posters*!
- Hang the Early Childhood Storytelling Site Sign (available in the *Decorating Posters*) near the entrance to the room.

Take-Home Point

Each day has a new Take-Home Point. You will say the Take-Home Point and Teams will respond, “**Jesus came to seek and to save!**” using these actions: **Jesus came** (*point index finger to palm of each hand, then make beckoning motion*) **to seek** (*hold hand above eyes, looking around*) **and to save** (*form a cross with both forearms*)!

We want to know what you think!

Fill out a survey at cph.org/vbsfeedback. Thank you!



Lesson 1

God Saves Baby Moses

Exodus 1:8–14, 22; 2:1–10

Take-Home Point: God finds me when I have troubles.

Bible Memory Verse: Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you. Psalm 50:15

Preparing for the Lesson

Bible Points to Emphasize

Bible Background: Each of the exciting Bible narratives you will share with the kids at VBS shows how God seeks and finds us in every situation we encounter in life.

The people of Israel were God's special people. They were the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Joseph, one of Jacob's twelve sons, rescued his family during a famine by bringing them to Egypt, where they remained for around four hundred years. Jacob's family grew to be a large nation of over a million people, and the pharaoh became afraid of them. Pharaoh tried to control them by making them slaves and mistreating them. He even commanded that every Israelite boy that was born should be killed.

Trusting that God would care for him, Moses' mother placed him in a basket in the Nile. God moved Pharaoh's daughter to adopt Moses as her own. Later, God would work through Moses to free His people from slavery in Egypt.

Law: Sin and evil in the world cause suffering and threaten our safety.

Gospel: Our heavenly Father sees the troubles we are experiencing, and He cares. He intervenes to help and save us.

Island Connection: *Winding river.* Rapids, waterfalls, crocodiles—troubles abound in island rivers and in life! God knows our troubles, and He cares. He helps and saves us.

Jesus came to seek and to save! God saw the troubles of His people in Egypt. He saved Moses' life and delivered His people from their troubles. God finds us in our troubles too. He sees our struggles, and He cares. He helps us and saves us from our greatest troubles through Jesus.

Supply List

Materials for Storytelling

- Bible
- Long, wide strip of blue fabric or a large blue blanket
- Potted plants or paper bags painted green with strips cut along the tops to make grass
- Basket, baby doll, and crown
- Aprons, robes, or Bible-times clothing (2 sets)
- Small container of crayons for each group (if using *Early Childhood Leaflets*)

Leader Costume

- Bucket hat
- Life jacket
- Canoe paddle

Getting Ready

- Read Exodus 1:8–14, 22; 2:1–10, “Bible Points to Emphasize,” and the Lesson 1 Leader Devotion (ask your Director for a copy of the Leader Devotions).
- Review the lesson and practice.
- Set up a river with grass on the edges. Use a long, wide strip of blue fabric or a large blue blanket for the river. Use potted plants or paper bags painted green with strips cut along the tops for the grass.
- Set the basket with a baby doll, a crown, and aprons or Bible-times clothing in your Storytelling area.
- If you are using the *Early Childhood Leaflets* at this site, photocopy or print out the “Early Childhood Leaflet Guide” (found at the end of this lesson) to give to each Team Leader.

Bible Story Experience

Welcome the children. If children are in Teams, show Leaders where they should sit with their groups.

Welcome to the Storytelling station! I'm [your name], and I'm excited to share the Good News about Jesus with you this week!

Take-Home Point

At Vacation Bible School, we have a special way to remind one another that Jesus came to seek and to save us. I'll say our Take-Home Point for the day, then we will all say, "Jesus came to seek and to save!" using these actions: **Jesus came** (*point index finger to palm of each hand, then make beckoning motion*) **to seek** (*hold hand above eyes, looking around*) **and to save** (*form a cross with both forearms*)!

Today we're learning that **GOD FINDS ME WHEN I HAVE TROUBLES.**

TEAMS: JESUS CAME TO SEEK AND TO SAVE!

Lead into the Bible Story

Wear a hat and life jacket and hold a canoe paddle.

Welcome to our tropical island! I'm wearing my hat and life jacket, and I have this paddle so we can explore our island's winding river! Will you join me on a river ride?

Lead children in playing a game of follow the leader.

Stand up. Follow me. Let's make a line. Put on your life jacket. Mime putting on life jacket while children imitate you. **Grab your paddle.** Mime picking up paddle. **Let's go!** Walk in a line. **What a beautiful river!** Paddle. **Whoa! Watch out for the rocks!** Turn and twirl while walking in the line. **Oh no! Waterfall straight ahead!** Bend down and then get back up. **Crocodiles!** Snap your arms like a crocodile's mouth. **Everyone, see those tall grasses over there?** Put your hand over your eyes. **Let's get to safety!** Have everyone sit down. **That was a wild river! I'm glad these tall grasses are here for us to have a safe place.**

Today we are going to hear a story about a river. This is a true story from the Bible. We are going to meet baby Moses, who will grow up to rescue God's people from their troubles.

Take off hat and life jacket and put canoe paddle aside.

Tell the Bible Story

Hold up your Bible. **The story I'm going to share with you is from the Bible, God's Word. We know that everything in the Bible is true!**

Have a basket with a baby doll to place in the river.

Have a crown for the princess to wear and aprons or Bible-times clothing for Moses' mother and Miriam.

Today we're going to talk about how God finds us when we have troubles. Troubles are things that make us feel sad, scared, hurt, and alone. In our story today, God's people have a lot of troubles. We will learn how God protected baby Moses from trouble so that he could grow up and save the people from their troubles. Will you help me tell the story?

Ask children to follow along doing the actions with you.

A long time ago, God's people were living in the land of Egypt. They grew strong (show muscle arms) **and had many children.** (rock baby in arms) **A new king** (mime putting crown on head) **became the ruler. He was a mean king** (make a mean face and shake index finger) **and did not like God's people.** (shake head no) **The new king made a bad rule. The king said, "Let us destroy every baby boy that is born to God's people and throw them in the river."** (make a sad face while hugging self and shaking head no)

When it was time for Moses to be born, his mommy wanted to keep him safe. Choose a child to be the mother of Moses and put the apron or Bible-times clothing on the child. **Moses' mommy had to think of a plan.** (tap forehead with finger) **God gave her a great idea! She would hide Moses in a basket and place the basket in the river.** Give the child acting as the mother the baby doll and have the child put the doll in the basket in the river. **The water rocked baby Moses to sleep.** (place head and hands together on side of face and close eyes) **Sleep, baby Moses, sleep.**

Moses' mother sent his sister Miriam to watch over him. Choose a child to be Miriam, put the apron or Bible-times clothing on the child, and direct the child to stand behind the grasses watching the basket. **Miriam was a good helper and she stood nearby to watch.** (shield hand over eyes) **One day a princess—the mean king's daughter—came to the river.** Choose a child to be the princess and place crown on her head. **The princess saw baby Moses in the basket in the river.** (point to baby in the river) **God worked in the princess's heart so she would feel love for the baby.** (place hands on heart) **Miriam jumped out from where she was hiding and ran to the princess! She said, "Should I find someone to help you with the baby? Would you like that?" "Yes," said the princess.** (nod head)

Miriam brought Moses' mother to the princess. Have Moses' mother come forward. **The princess said to her, "Will you take care of this baby until he is a little older?"** Have Moses' mother nod yes and take the

baby. **Moses' mommy took good care of baby Moses for the princess.** (rock baby) **When he was older, it was time for Moses to go live with the princess.** (pump arms, walking to the palace) **The princess taught him many things and how to be a leader so one day Moses could save God's people.**

God saved Moses. Many years later when Moses was grown, through Moses, God would save His people from the mean king and lead them to a new land.

God was with Moses. God is with you too. God loves you so much that He sent His Son, Jesus, to be your Savior. Jesus came as a baby, but He didn't stay a baby. He grew up, died on the cross to pay for your sins, and rose again from the dead! Jesus loves you and saves you from your troubles. Jesus has come to seek and to save the lost!

Say the Take-Home Point with the actions:

SAY: GOD FINDS ME WHEN I HAVE TROUBLES.

TEAMS: JESUS CAME TO SEEK AND TO SAVE!

Review the Bible Story with Actions

Review the Bible Story by having the children do the actions with you as you speak.

Let's review the story about how God saved baby Moses from his troubles. Repeat after me and follow my actions.

A basket for a little boat,

In the river it did float, (*cup hands palms up to form basket*)

To help a little boy to hide—

Baby Moses safe inside. (*gently rock cupped hands*)

One day a princess bathed nearby. (*mime washing arms*)

She heard baby Moses cry. (*frown and turn fist to eyes*)

The princess peeked at him and said, (*shield hand over eyes*)

"You'll be mine," and kissed his head. (*blow a kiss*)

When I am all alone and scared, (*make a scared face with wide eyes*)

God keeps me safe, as He declared. (*give self a hug*)

Because our God loves me and you, (*point to self and to others*)

He keeps us safe—it is true! (*give self a hug*)

Early Childhood Leaflets

If you are using the *Early Childhood Leaflets* and they have not already been handed out, give them to the Team Leaders. Give each group a container of crayons. Team Leaders will lead their groups in discussion and leaflet activities. Instructions for using the leaflets are in the "Early Childhood Leaflet Guide," found on the next page. Give a copy to each Team Leader.

Pray Before They Go

Lead the group in this closing prayer: **Heavenly Father, You save us from our troubles. You sent Jesus to rescue us from sin, death, and the devil. You are always with us. Help us to call upon You and follow You. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

Notes:

Early Childhood Leaflet Guide

Team Leaders: Use this sheet to guide your group through the *Early Childhood Leaflets*.

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Psalms 50:15

Bible Story Review

Give an *Early Childhood Leaflet* to each child. Make sure each child's name is on his or her leaflet.

Direct children to look at the picture on the front of the leaflet as you discuss the following questions:

- **How did baby Moses' mother keep him safe?** (She hid Moses in a basket in the river.)
- **Who found baby Moses and took care of him?** (The princess of Egypt)
- **What did Moses do when he grew up?** (He led the people out of slavery in Egypt.)
- **How did Jesus save us from our greatest troubles?** (Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins.)

Leaflet Activities

Have children open the leaflet and lead them in completing the activities.

Left-hand page: **Color baby Moses and the basket. God helped the princess find Moses and save him from his troubles. When Moses was grown, God worked through Moses to save His people from their troubles in Egypt.**

Talk about how God saw baby Moses' troubles and sent people to keep him safe. **God sees us when we have troubles too, and He sends people to help us. Who helps you when you are sick or sad or hurt?** Listen to responses. Prompt children to think about parents, teachers, and friends. **God sees all our troubles and He cares! He loves you and helps you, just as He helped Moses.**

Right-hand page: **Color the heart and the cross by each child. Sometimes we have troubles. God finds us when we have troubles, and He helps us. Jesus came to save us from our greatest troubles. He loves you!**

Point to each picture and talk about the troubles the child is having. **Who could help each child? How could you help?** Ask children to think of a time they had trouble and someone helped them. How did they feel after they were helped? **Our greatest trouble is our sin. Jesus came to pay for our sins. He loves you and forgives you!**