Unit 4 • Session 4
Moses Was Born and Called

BIBLE PASSAGE:
Exodus 1–4

STORY POINT:
God called Moses to deliver His people from captivity.

KEY PASSAGE:
Hosea 13:4

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:
Is there anything God cannot do? God can do all things according to His character.

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Additional resources are available at gospelproject.com. For free training and session-by-session help, visit www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject.
Moses was born into a culture that hated his people. The Israelites—descendants of Israel (Jacob)—had set up their home in Egypt when a famine forced them to seek out food. They became so numerous that Pharaoh felt threatened and forced them into slavery. But their families still grew, and Pharaoh instituted an unimaginable method of population control: kill all of the baby boys.

Moses’ story is a clear picture of God’s sovereignty. Not only was Moses’ life spared by the Egyptian princess, Moses’ mother was able to care for him. Moses grew up in Pharaoh’s house and then spent years shepherding in Midian before God called him to his task.

Imagine the encounter between God and Moses at the burning bush. God drew a curious Moses to Himself and then spoke: “Moses, Moses!”

God identified Himself as the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. He testified to His own grace: “I have observed the misery of my people … and I know about their sufferings … I am sending you … so that you may lead my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt” (Ex. 3:7-10).

God revealed His name: “I AM WHO I AM.” The most basic and important fact about God is that He exists; He always has and always will exist. God does not change. God revealed to Moses who He is so that the people would trust in Him.

Help the kids you teach understand that God rescued Moses to deliver His people from captivity. Emphasize how the calling of Moses points to a greater calling and rescue—the call of Jesus to come to earth to save God’s people from sin.
Moses Was Born and Called

Exodus 1–4

Years after Joseph brought his family to Egypt, Joseph died. His family stayed in Egypt. They were known as Israelites because they came from the family of Jacob, who was called Israel.

A new pharaoh came to power, and he was afraid of the Israelites. The family had grown so big; Pharaoh worried they would join Egypt’s enemies and fight against him. Pharaoh made the Israelites slaves and gave them very hard work to do, but their families kept growing! 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 banks of the Nile River.

The baby’s older sister, Miriam, stayed nearby and watched the basket.

Soon Pharaoh’s daughter went to the river to take a bath. She found the basket and saw the crying baby. Pharaoh’s daughter felt sorry for the baby and wanted him to be her son. The princess named the baby Moses.

When Moses grew up, he saw an Egyptian man mistreating an Israelite man. Moses killed the Egyptian. Pharaoh found out what
Moses did and he was angry, so Moses fled Egypt. He **worked as a shepherd in Midian for many years.** Moses got married and had a family. **Still the Israelite people in Egypt were miserable, and they cried out to God. God heard them, and He planned to help them.**

One day, Moses saw a burning bush. 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.”**

Moses wondered if the Israelites even remembered God. “What if they ask for Your name? 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. **Moses still made excuses and said, “Please send someone else.” Now God was angry, but He agreed to send Moses’ brother, Aaron, with him. So Moses went to Egypt.**

**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.
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Welcome time
Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to share about a time someone gave them a job to do. Was the job easy or hard?

Activity page (5 minutes)
Invite kids to complete “The Name of the Lord” on the activity page. Guide kids to color in the spaces according to the key. Kids will discover a name of God.

SAY • If someone asked you, “What is your name?” what would you say? [Allow kids to respond.] In our Bible story today, a man named Moses asked God, “What if the Israelites ask for Your name? What should I tell them?” This is what God said: “I AM WHO I AM.” We’ll find out today what that means.

Session starter (10 minutes)
OPTION 1: Facts and footwear
Instruct each kid to take off one shoe and pile it in the middle of the room. Guide kids to stand in a circle around the shoe pile. Explain that when you say go, each kid should
grab a shoe from the pile that does not belong to him. Kids should find the person to whom the shoe belongs and find out three facts about her.

After a few minutes, calls for kids to stand in a circle. Each player should announce whose shoe he is holding and share the three facts he learned about that person. Continue around the circle until every kid has shared.

**SAY** • Have you ever met someone and been asked to take off your shoes? That may sound strange, but that’s what happened to Moses! Moses was working as a shepherd when God spoke to him. God said, “Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.” Today we will hear the beginning of Moses’ story and God’s plan for his life.

**OPTION 2: Animal identity**

Before the session, write the name of animals on separate index cards. Create one per kid. (Suggestions: dolphin, lion, zebra, eagle, and so forth.)

Use masking tape to affix an animal identity index card to the back of each child. Invite kids to ask each other yes-or-no questions to help reveal their animal identity, such as “Does my animal live in the jungle?”

**SAY** • In today’s Bible story God identified Himself as “I AM WHO I AM” (Ex. 3:14). Isn’t that a strange way to tell someone who you are? Let’s find out why God said that and what He meant.

**Transition to teach the story**
Countdown
Show the countdown video as you transition to teach the story. Set it to end as the session begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)
[Leader enters wearing an apron and carrying a Bible. A couple bags of flour and a few loaf pans are on a table.]
LEADER • Hi! I’m [your name]. Welcome to the Mishpacha (meesh pah HAH) International Bakery! Does anyone remember what mishpacha means? [Allow kids to respond.] Yes, it’s a word that means “family.”

Later today, I’m going to teach some new bakers how to make our famous potato bread. Each of these new bakers was specifically selected from a large number of applicants. We believe they are just the right people for the job. You know, that reminds me of the Bible story we’re going to hear today. God had a big job to be done, and He chose one man to do it.

Big picture question (1 minute)
LEADER • Before we get to the story, I want you to imagine something. Imagine you are working as a shepherd...
when God appears and tells you to go to the king of Egypt with a message. Thousands of people serve the king as slaves, and you are to say to him, “God says, ‘Let My people go.’” How do you think that would go? Would you be up for the task? As you hear today’s story, keep in mind our big picture question and answer: Is there anything God cannot do? God can do all things according to His character.

**Giant timeline (1 minute)**
Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

**LEADER •** We’ve been learning from the Book of Genesis about the family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God gave Jacob another name—Israel—and the family grew into a nation, the nation of Israel. Jacob’s family—70 people in all—had left the land of Canaan because of a famine and moved to Egypt, where Jacob’s son Joseph was a powerful leader. Jacob later died in Egypt. Years passed and Joseph died there too. But Jacob’s family grew even bigger. Listen closely to our Bible story today to learn more.

**Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)**
Open your Bible to Exodus 1–4. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Moses Was Born and Called.”

**LEADER •** What a story! Moses barely survived being a baby because Pharaoh wanted to stop the families of Israel from growing. Pharaoh’s daughter raised Moses as her own son, but when Moses got older he left Egypt and became a shepherd. Pharaoh made life hard
for God’s people by making them slaves. God saw everything the Israelites were experiencing. He heard their cries for help, and **God called Moses to deliver His people from captivity.**

You see, long before Moses was born, God made a covenant with Abraham. God told Abraham that his descendants would live in a foreign land and become slaves there. The people would be slaves for 400 years, but God would free them. [See Gen. 15:13-21.] In the next few weeks, we will hear exactly how God used Moses to rescue the Israelites.

What was the first thing God told Moses to do at the burning bush? [Allow kids to respond.] God told Moses to take off his shoes because he was on holy ground. The ground itself was not special; what was special was that God was there.

Then God told Moses to speak to Pharaoh. Moses asked God what His name was. Does anyone remember God’s answer? [Allow kids to respond.] Yes! God said His name is “I AM WHO I AM.” God’s name means that He is in control and He never changes. Moses tried to make excuses. How would you feel about going to speak to one of the most powerful people in the world? But not even Moses could stop God’s plan to lead His people to freedom.

**Christ connection**

**LEADER** • 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.
Questions from kids video (3 minutes)
Show the “Unit 4, Session 4” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about how they can know if God wants them to do something. Guide them to discuss ways they can be obedient to God if He wants them to do something.

Missions moment (3 minutes)
LEADER • The Bagbys* are missionaries living in Nepal because God has called them to go share the gospel there. They are normal Christians who have been given an important job to share with the Tibetan people in Nepal about God’s message of salvation. Watch this video to see how God is using the Bagby family to share the gospel with the Tibetan people.

Play the “Mountain Tops” missions video.

Key passage (5 minutes)
Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Hosea 13:4.

LEADER • God had a plan to bring His people out of Egypt. It was a big job, but is there anything God cannot do? God can do all things according to His character.

Lead kids in singing “You Know No God But Me.”

Sing (4 minutes)
LEADER • Isn’t it amazing to think about God being the same today as He was when He heard the cries of His people in Egypt? God cares about us. He loves us, and He is with us. Let’s sing.

* Name has been changed for security reasons.
Sing together “Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah.”

Pray (2 minutes)
Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • Lord God, thank You for Your Word. The Bible shows us that You care for Your people. You provide what we need, and You are in control of all things. Help us to come to You with our needs. Lord, You hear us when we cry out to You. Help us rely on You and not on ourselves. Amen.

Dismiss to apply the story
The Gospel: God’s Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word gospel. Clarify that the word gospel means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God’s punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It’s something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God’s family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He’s already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide I’m a Christian Now! for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.
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### Key passage activity (5 minutes)

Instruct kids to stand in a circle. Display the key passage poster and lead kids to read it aloud together. Then give one kid a ball. Instruct him to say the first word of the key passage and then toss the ball to another player. She should say the second word, pass it to someone else who will say the third word, and so on.

Continue until kids say the entire key passage. If a player drops the ball, instruct kids to start over. If kids complete the passage quickly, remove the poster and challenge them to play again and say the key passage from memory.

**SAY** • Does anyone want to try to say the key passage from memory? [Allow volunteers to recite Hosea 13:4.] If you haven’t memorized our key passage yet, we will have a few more opportunities to learn it.

### Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

Distribute Bibles. Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to Exodus 2. Explain to kids that the Book of Exodus was written more than 1,400 years before Jesus was born. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Exodus 2:23-25.

**SAY** • Moses had grown up in Egypt, and then he left and
went to the land of Midian. He was a shepherd there and probably thought his time in Egypt was over. But many years later, **God called Moses to deliver His people from captivity.**

Point out the locations of Egypt (H8) and Midian (I10) on the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Then ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. How did Moses first react when God called him to deliver His people from captivity? **Lead kids to recall that Moses had a lot of questions and excuses for why he wasn’t the right person. Moses even asked God to send someone else.**
   
   (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Ex. 4:10.)

2. What kind of people does God use in His plans? **Guide kids to recognize that God often uses ordinary people as part of His plan to show His power through them. God, working through Moses, would lead His people out of Egypt.**
   
   (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Acts 13:17.)

3. Do you think God could use you in His plan? In what ways? **Point out that God can use us even in our weaknesses. Moses wasn’t a strong speaker but confronted Pharaoh because God was with him. Emphasize that we can rely on God’s strength through us.**
   
   (Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 Cor. 1:26-27.)

**Activity choice (10 minutes)**

**OPTION 1: Missions backpack relay**

Pack two backpacks with a flashlight, Bible, folding map, and bar of soap. Place the backpacks next to each other on one side of the room.

Remind kids that the Bagbys are a missionary family in...
Nepal. The whole family hikes tall mountains in order to tell the Tibetan people living there about Jesus. The Bagbys usually carry a backpack with supplies as they go.

Instruct kids to line up at the back of the room and to form two teams for a relay race. Explain that the person in the front of the line will run to their backpack, pull out each item, and act out their uses. They must turn the flashlight on and off, pretend to read the Bible, open and fold back the map, and pretend to shower with the soap.

Then they must then put all items back into the backpack and hand it off to the next kid in line. The first team to finish wins.

SAY • It is very hard to get to most Tibetans living in the mountains of Nepal, but God has a plan to get the gospel to them. In our Bible story, God called Moses to deliver His people from captivity. Today, the Bagbys are telling Tibetans about Jesus because God called them to go to Nepal as part of His great plan!

OPTION 2: Create a hero
Give each kid markers and a piece of heavyweight paper. Instruct kids to fold the paper in half and turn it so the folded edge is at the top. Invite kids to draw a person figure on one side of the paper. The figure’s head should touch the top folded edge. Explain that kids should illustrate who they think of when they hear the word hero.

After several minutes, provide scissors and tell kids to cut out their heroes, being careful not to unfold the paper or cut across the top fold. If they wish, kids may color the other side of the paper as the backside of the hero.

Then kids can open their papers slightly and stand up their hero like a table tent. Ask volunteers to share what
makes their hero powerful.

**SAY** • God uses people like Moses in His plan—people like us. God uses people who aren't powerful because it shows that He is strong. God is the only One who has the power we need in every area of our lives. He has the power to free us from our sin.

**God called Moses to deliver His people from captivity**, but Moses wasn't the biggest hero in the story. The all-powerful God was! We aren’t the heroes of our story either, but when we obey God and rely on Him, we show the world that He is strong.

**Journal and prayer (5 minutes)**

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God’s glory and my good?
- Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas. Then pray, asking God to help kids boast only in the Lord. Pray that God would call them for His purposes and that He would be glorified in their lives.

As time allows, lead kids to complete “Sandal Sorter” on the activity page. Kids should cross out sandals as described and then reorder the other sandals to find today’s story point.

Tip: Give parents this week’s Big Picture Cards for Families to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.