

LESSON 1

WATER FROM THE ROCK

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Cares about Our Needs

SCRIPTURE: [Exodus 17](#)

GOD'S BIG STORY: God has faithfully rescued His people, but they're now thirsty and complaining in the desert. God responds with kindness, providing water for them from a rock because He cares about our needs.

Activity: Moses Says

Worship

God's Big Story

Prayer and Blessing

INVITATION***We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...***

I sometimes feel bad for Moses. As someone in ministry, I'm sure you understand why. I mean, this poor guy was just trying to be a shepherd in Midian and the next thing he knows, he's pastoring thousands of people in the desert with no apparent destination in mind. I'm quite sure Moses faced a daily onslaught of questions, concerns, ideas, and inquiries, and I'm sure he was exhausted.

I'm sure of that because Moses was human. And so are we. Each one of us. We get tired. We don't always have the answers.

In these situations, what are we to do? I love what Moses did. He went to God. He didn't go in some pious or religious way. He went to God in sheer desperation. Take time to read [Exodus 17:1-7](#).

God did what God does. He showed up in an unexpected way to care for the people's needs. He told Moses to hit a rock and water would gush out. I promise you that was never in Moses' "Next Steps for Israel" plan. And yet, that's exactly where God showed up.

Where is God showing up for you? If you are feeling weary, take a note from Moses' book. Go to God. Cry out to Him. He cares for you, so tell Him about your needs. Be honest. But also, be ready. God may show up in an unexpected way for you too.

DID YOU KNOW?**FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS****WHO?**

Moses has led the people of Israel away from Egypt and into the desert. He has been serving as the leader of Israel and God's representative to the community of Israel. God speaks directly to Moses like a person speaks to a friend.

WHAT?

The Israelites find themselves in need of water and, instead of asking God for water, they violently grumble and complain. Moses goes to God with their complaints along with his own. God responds by meeting their need through Moses in a public display of His power.

WHERE?

The Israelites are in the Desert of Sin, a geographic area between Elim and Mount Sinai. The place where the rock was struck is called by Moses "Massah and Meribah" which means "testing and quarreling" because "the Israelites quarreled and ... tested the Lord" ([Exodus 17:7, NIV](#)).

WHEN?

Scripture indicates the Israelites were in Egypt for 430 years ([Exodus 12:40–41](#)) and wandered for 40 years ([Numbers 14:34](#)). This narrative happens after the Red Sea crossing ([Exodus 15](#)), fresh water at Marah ([Exodus 15](#)), and the provision of manna and quail ([Exodus 16](#)).

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

God's provision for Israel, despite their complaints, is a testament to God's patience with all of us. He is, "slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness" ([Exodus 34:6, NIV](#)). Jesus is the greatest expression of God's love and faithfulness ([John 3:16](#))!

Activity: Moses Says

“Moses Says” is like “Simon Says,” but simpler and no one will get out. Model any actions that you say. Gather the kids together. **In God’s big story today, God used Moses to give water to the Israelites.**

We’re going to play a game called Moses Says. Whatever Moses says, we do! Ready? Moses says touch your nose. Touch your nose. Continue calling out and modeling directions.

- Stomp your feet.
- Touch your shoulders.
- Clap your hands.
- Sit down.
- Stand up and touch your toes.
- Pat your head.
- Give yourself a hug.

Leader Tip: Sing “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes” to kick off the Moses Says game and remind toddlers of the names for different body parts.

Clean Up

At the end of free play...

Play the Clean Up video and encourage kids to help clean up toys to prepare for snack and story.

Snack

Supplies: Small paper cups, cheerios, and pitcher of water

Gather kids at chairs around snack tables and serve cheerios and water. While kids are busy eating, begin the Bible story.

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, [Toddler Story Pictures](#)

Ahead of time, print the [Toddler Story Pictures](#). **Our God's big story today is a great story from the Bible about a person named Moses.** Encourage the kids to say, "Moses." **Let's find out from the Bible what happened to Moses!**

Let's sit down. Gather kids together. Make sure everyone can see the pictures you'll use to tell God's big story. **Today in God's big story, we'll learn how God showed care for the Israelites—God's people.**

Hold up Story Picture 1 and read the corresponding text on the back. The God's Big Story Script is listed below as well.

Hold up Story Picture 1. **A long time ago, God's special people—the Israelites—were held captive in the land of Egypt. God sent Moses to lead them out of Egypt so they could learn to follow God. But there was no water to drink! The Israelites complained to Moses. They asked why Moses brought them there** ([Exodus 17:3](#)). Hold out hands, palms up.

Moses asked God what to do ([Exodus 17:4](#)). Make praying hands and look up to the ceiling. **God told Moses to hit the rock with his walking stick. God promised water would come out of the rock for the people to drink** ([Exodus 17:5–6](#)).

Hold up Story Picture 2. **Moses obeyed God. Moses hit the rock with his walking stick. Hit the ground with your hand. Water gushed from the rock—enough water for everyone to drink!** Have kids clap. **God loved the Israelites and took care of them in ways they thought were impossible.**

God loves us and always keeps His promises. Just like God cared about the Israelites and their needs, God also cares about our needs.



Prayer and Blessing

Let's talk to God.

God, thank You for always knowing what we need. You can provide for all our needs. Thank You for Your love. Help us trust You and to be thankful this week. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands were open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: **May God draw near to you this week. May He remind you, through His Holy Spirit, that He is always with you and cares about all your needs.**

Worship

SUPPLIES: Worship music videos

Today, we're learning that God cares about our needs. We learned in God's big story how God gave the Israelites water from a rock! Let's sing to thank God for caring for us!

Play songs and encourage the kids to sing and dance with you.