



Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resources 64.A

Engage

The story of Moses



The whole epic tale!

Once upon a time there was a king in Egypt. He was called a Pharaoh. He wanted his country to be the greatest & the mightiest nation. He noticed that there were a lot of children in Israel. He had fears that Israel would take over Egypt one day he gave an order saying, "Every son that is born in Israel has to be cast into the river".

There was a baby boy born in a Hebrew family – Israeli people were then called Hebrews. The mother hid the child for three months.

When she could not hide her son any longer she put him in a basket in the reeds in the Nile river. His sister stayed to watch the basket to see what would happen to him. The daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river. When she saw the basket, she sent her maiden to get it.

The baby was crying. She knew that it was one of Hebrews' children, but she wanted to keep him. The sister came to her and suggested a nurse. It was the child's mother. The mother got to have her baby back until he was weaned. She was able to teach him about what Hebrew people believed about God.

When it was time, she took him back to the Pharaoh's daughter. The new mother named the child Moses. She was raising Moses as her own son. He was educated, he was an army leader, but in his heart Moses was Hebrew. One day, Moses went out to his people & he looked at how hard they had to work for Egyptians.

Moses saw an Egyptian man beating a Hebrew. Moses was very angry and hit and killed the Egyptian & hid him in sand. Hebrew people did not like this – they thought it would get them into big trouble. Pharaoh was looking for Moses to deal with him. Moses ran away to the desert & he came to the land of Midian. One day Moses was sitting by the well, when seven daughters of a priest called Jethro came to give water to their sheep.

Then some shepherds came. They were mean to the daughters & they scared away the sheep. Moses helped the women: he drove away the troublemakers & helped to water the flock. Jethro was very pleased with Moses. He asked him to stay with them to take care of the flock.

Moses married Jethro's daughter Zipporah & they had a son.

One day Moses came to a mountain that was a very special place – people thought that it was a place where you could hear or feel God. He saw a bush in flames, but it did not burn. Moses was very curious, he came closer. Moses thought he heard a voice of an Angel speaking to him. He heard it say that he should go back to Egypt & ask Pharaoh to let the Hebrews go. He really didn't want to but he did.

So Moses came to see the Pharaoh. He said, "You've been mean & cruel to my people. Let my people go." Pharaoh did not want to let Hebrew people go. He needed them to build palaces and temples. There was a terrible plague. Moses said that it came from God. Pharaoh promised to release the Hebrew people as soon as the plague was over. This happened 10 times and the plagues got worse and worse. Finally, Pharaoh said, "Get out of my country, both you and all the Hebrews, the Jews."

All the Hebrew people quickly packed up their belongings & left Egypt for the new land that they felt God had promised them. By day there was a pillar of cloud, to show them the way, and by night a pillar of fire, to give them light. When Pharaoh & his army came close to the Hebrew people, Moses said, "God shall fight for you, and you shall hold your peace." The pillar of the cloud came between the camp of Israel & the camp of Egyptians. They all came close to a sea.

Again Moses felt as if he could hear God speaking to him, "Lift up your big walking stick and stretch your hand over the sea, and divide it and all of your people will be able to walk on the dry ground in the middle of the sea. Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and there was a strong wind all the night. The sea parted and there was a dry path to walk on. In the morning the Hebrews started to cross the sea. They were walking on the dry path, and the huge walls of water were on both sides of them. The Egyptians were behind the cloud till almost all the Hebrew people were through. They were waiting for the chance to go. As soon as the cloud moved away, Pharaoh and his army started after their slaves. When all the Hebrews crossed the Red Sea, Moses stretched his hand over the sea again and the water fell down over the Egyptians.

Moses and the Hebrew people now went out into the desert. During three days they did not have any water. When they finally came to the river & tasted it tasted bitter. Everybody complained. Moses found a special tree and threw it into the water. The water became sweet!

They came to a place called Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and ten palm trees. What shall we eat with the dates from the palm trees? Everybody was discouraged & complained again. Suddenly, strangely, they found they had lots of flour and everybody made lovely bread. Some people say it fell from the sky like snow. They had enough bread for 40 days. Moses said God was leading them all to a safe place called the Promised Land.

Again they got weary, discouraged & they were very thirsty. People started to grumble and moan about Moses & God again. Moses heard a voice that told him to tell a rock to give water – Moses was so cross with everybody that he hit the rock and water came out of it. Moses was sorry for being angry – he had heard a voice telling him just to ask for water from the rock. Moses was sad – it was then he realised that whilst he was leading everybody towards a special place he was not going to get there himself.

On the third month of their journey, they came to a huge mountain called Mount Sinai. Everybody could rest now, pitch their tents and wash their clothes. Moses, like everybody, was glad of the rest but he also knew, because he had heard or felt it inside, that he had soon to go up the mountain. There was something he was going to find out that was very, very important.

After three days there was lightning, thunder, smoke and fire on the mountain – everybody thought that God was on the top of the mountain. Moses went up the mountain. When he was there he felt that God was there. Strangely he knew God was telling him something about ten very important ways that everybody should live their life. It took a long time for Moses to hear and understand all of this.

He was away for 40 days – more than a whole month. All of the other people felt lost – they didn't know where Moses was and they felt that God had gone away from them. They wanted something to make them feel safe and special. They made a statue of a baby cow, a calf, out of real gold. They worshipped the statue because it was made of gold and it was of an animal that gave them food. They were happy – they had a big party.

But when Moses came back down he saw the golden calf & people dancing. He was so upset that he broke the big pieces of stone on which had been written the 10 ways that people should lead their lives. Moses broke the calf. Everybody was very sorry. Whilst the golden calf was like a God to them they had forgotten that there was something even more special to believe in that could help them more. Moses went back up the mountain for forty days and came back with more big pieces of stone with the special ways to live written on them. This time everybody waited and didn't worry.





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Children's work

Additional resources 64.B

Engage

When Moses was a baby



In Egypt there was a group of people called the Israelites. They believed in different things to the Egyptians and the Egyptians treated them very badly. However, the Israelites kept having lots of children so they grew and grew in number.

The Pharaoh, the 'king' of the Egyptians, did not like the fact that the Israelites were getting to be a bigger group of people. Therefore, he said that any baby boy born to Israelite parents had to be killed.

One day a boy was born to an Israelite mother. This mother kept her baby boy a secret so that he would not be found by the Egyptians. But when the baby was 3 months old, he was too big to hide any longer. Therefore, the mother hid him in a basket and put him into the reeds in the river, hoping that someone would find him and look after him. She told her daughter, the baby's sister, who was called Miriam, to watch from a distance to see what would happen.

The Pharaoh's daughter would often come to the riverbank to wash. She caught sight of the basket and asked her maidservants to drag the basket from the water. She saw the little baby inside the basket and started to cry because she felt so sorry for it. She realised that the baby boy was an Israelite baby but she still wanted to look after it.

She saw Miriam standing close by and asked her to find someone to look after the baby until it would not need milk anymore. Miriam went and fetched her mother, the baby's real mother (although the Pharaoh's daughter didn't know this). So the baby's mother nursed the baby until it was big enough to eat food and then the child was brought up in the Pharaoh's palace.

Extra ideas

Divide up a page into four (or more) sections. Ask the children to illustrate the story.

Ask a different child to illustrate a different part of the story. Put them in order.

Find Egypt on a map and/or show the children some pictures of Egypt.

The children could write out the words *Egyptians* and *Israelites* and decorate them. Younger children could colour in the letters that you have prepared in advance. Have some books available that have coloured pictures of ancient Egypt in.



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Additional resources 64.C

Engage

10 best ways to live



A version of the 10 Commandments

1. Don't serve other gods
2. Make no idols to worship.
3. Be serious when you say God's name.
4. Keep the Sabbath holy (Quakers might say keep each day holy)
5. Honour your mother and father.
6. Don't kill.
7. Don't break your marriage. (Quakers might say look after your special relationships as best as you can)
8. Don't steal.
9. Don't lie.
10. Don't even want what others have.

...and another that Jesus added much, much later:

Love God. Love people. God loves us.

I know. These are all hard. God did not say these are "ten easy things to do." They are Ten Best Ways to Live, the Ten Commandments. They are hard, perhaps impossible, but we are supposed to try.

Some questions to ask to help discussion:

I wonder which one of the Ten Best ways you like the best?

I wonder which one is most important?

I wonder which one is especially for you?

I wonder if there are any we can leave out and still have all we need.



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Children's work

Additional resources 64.D

Respond

Weaving activities



There are lots of ideas on the internet for paper weaving activities. Try searching *paper weaving* on YouTube.

Try doing it once with lots of talking and help and then again in a more quiet, contemplative way. Or spend the first 10 minutes with talking and the second 10 minutes in silence. You can talk about how the different ways felt with the children afterwards.

Alternatively try this:

- Fold an A4 sheet of paper in half *lengthways* (so that the fold runs from top to bottom).
- Keeping the paper folded, cut from the fold to about 2 cm from the edge. Cut every 2cm - although this does not have to be exact.
- Unfold the paper.
- Cut a second piece of paper into strips *lengthways*.
- Use the strips to weave in and out of the first piece of paper.
- Secure the ends with glue.
- Something along these lines is demonstrated here: <http://youtu.be/4dhBNMM6x2M>
- You can use two different coloured pieces of paper, old magazines (the covers will tend to work best as the paper is sturdier) or 'salvaged' paper from previous projects.
- You can do this with different sized pieces of paper as long as the two pieces are the same size.
- You can repeat and then stick the two pieces of weaving together to create a sort of envelope or basket.

Alternatively, try making baskets out of rolled up lengths of clay or plasticene.





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Engage

Other ways into the stories



Exile

Have a large cloth open on the central table. Have placed on it some of life's essentials (food, drink, some basic first aid, stamps perhaps, matches) and some other things too (like a photograph of your family, something sentimental – a rock you have kept since you were little, jewellery etc).

Let the children look at the objects and take one each and sit quietly for a few moments.

Explain that you have gathered things for going on a long journey and there is no time to pack much. Ask the children whether you have packed the 'right' things. Talk about why you chose what you chose. Are there other things that you should have packed?

What would they pack? How would they feel if they were going to be separated from their home or family?

The Old Testament

Depending on how many children there are and how much you have looked at the Old Testament, you could follow some sort of variation of this. You might find it useful to have available a copy of *Additional resources 59.A* with a picture 'The Big Bible Bookcase' from *Journeys in the Spirit Children's Edition Issue 59*.

Print or write out in larger letters some of the books of the Old Testament. Below are the first five.

Have objects, drawings, people's names that connect up with the books. Cut them up and match them if you can and let the children share what they already know. Have some bibles to look at while you do this.

Genesis

Adam and Eve

Exodus

Desert

Leviticus

Aaron the priest

Numbers

10 Commandments

Deuteronomy

Moses