

GOD'S BIG PLAN

God Hears His People

Exodus 1-4

Supporting Scriptures: Genesis 15:13-14; Psalm 105:23-26, 139; Acts 7:17-35; Hebrews 11:23-27

Lesson Goals:

- To teach that God listens to those who are His.
- To teach that God has a plan for our lives.
- To teach that God wants to use us in His plan.

Scripture Memory

For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. Jeremiah 29:11 (NLT)

NOTE: Familiarize yourself with this story. Tell it as a STORY, not as "He said. . . She said" or read. To reinforce that these ideas are not your own, hold your Bible as you tell the story.

The Lesson:

Let's review what we have learned so far about God's Big Plan. (Review the previous stories, encouraging more and more students to share.)

What did God promise Abraham that He also promised to Isaac and Jacob? (A new people, or nation, and a place for those people.) How did God continue to keep His promise with Jacob? (He had twelve sons! God even changed his name - to Israel.) What happened to Joseph, one of Jacob's twelve boys? (He was sold to Egypt.) Have you ever thought that God knew that a famine was coming. To keep His promise of taking care of these new people, God blessed Joseph, even while he was a servant or in jail for something he didn't do. How did God use Joseph to save his family, those new people that were promised to Abraham? (He gave him the meanings of dreams, allowed him to interpret Pharaoh's dream, and had Pharaoh put Joseph as second-in-command of all of Egypt!)

We saw in the life of Joseph that God uses different circumstances to accomplish what He wants to do. Let's see what kind of people God chooses to use!

READ: Genesis 15:13-14 and Exodus 1:1-8 (Remember, hold the Bible, opened, throughout the story.)

For as long as Joseph lived with his family in Egypt, and even after his death, he was admired by those who remembered him. God had blessed Joseph. Even an Egyptian king, who would normally have been disgusted by a Hebrew shepherd, liked Joseph and looked to him for wisdom. But then the last pharaoh who remembered Joseph died. Egypt had a new king - a king who didn't know Joseph. This new king looked around and saw that his land, the land of Egypt, was filled with the sons of Israel. He was afraid because there were so many of them. "What if there were a war? Would they rise up and fight for Egypt's enemies?"

So these sons of Israel who had been protected from famine and preserved, or saved, according to God's promise became slaves in the land they had once been free in. They were made to work with bricks and in the fields. The new king thought that the hard work would keep them from growing in number. Boy, was he wrong! The sons of Israel grew and grew! And the king of Egypt got angrier and more scared. These sons of Israel had to be stopped, but how? Then he knew. The sons of Israel wouldn't keep growing if all of their baby boys were thrown into the Nile River! So that is what he commanded. And the Egyptians obeyed.

But there was one mother who had just had a son. He was a beautiful baby! She and her husband weren't afraid of this king and they hid their son. For three months they kept this beautiful baby a secret. And when they could keep him a secret no longer, the baby's mother got a basket and waterproofed it. Then, she put her baby in the basket and took him down to the river. She placed the basket in the river and it floated! She hid the basket in some reeds. And God, who had plans for the life of this little baby, sent someone to find him. God didn't send another Hebrew. No, He sent Pharaoh's daughter to the Nile and there she found the baby crying. And instead of obeying her father's orders, she felt sorry for the baby and took him back with her to the palace where she raised him. Pharaoh's daughter named the baby Moses, which means "taken out of the water."

Moses grew up in the palace with Pharaoh and his daughter. He was educated like the Egyptians. But when he was about forty years old, he chose God's people, his own people, over the riches and treasures of Egypt. He had an idea of the plan God had for him, but he tried to do it his own way and then without knowing where he was going or how things would work out, Moses left Egypt. He arrived in a place far away from Egypt called Midian. He settled down there, married, and took care of his father-in-law's sheep. While Moses was in Midian, the king of Egypt died. At his death, the sons of Israel cried out to God for help. God heard their cry and remembered his promise to Abraham. God began to prepare their deliverance.

One day, while Moses was out taking care of the sheep, he noticed something he had never seen before. Moses saw a thorn bush that was burning, but even as it was on fire, it didn't burn up. It just kept burning and burning. Moses could have just kept walking. Instead, he stopped and turned towards the bush to see what was happening, and when he did, God spoke to him out of the bush! "Moses, Moses!" "Here I am," Moses answered. "Take off your sandals, Moses. This is a special, holy place." Moses took off his sandals and walked closer. God explained, "I am the God of you father Abraham and Isaac and Jacob." Moses covered his face because he was afraid. God continued, "I've seen what My people, the sons of Israel, are going through in Egypt. I am going to rescue them and I want to use you!"

What? Use Moses! Moses made excuses and talked about how he wasn't ready and wasn't the one God should use, but in the end, Moses obeyed God. So Moses, and his wife and children, left Midian and headed back to Egypt.

Review:

Let's review what you have learned. Who would like to retell the story? (Ask your group if anything was left out or told inaccurately.) Would anyone else like to retell the story?

So, why was Moses' life spared when all of the other babies who were born about the same time ended up in the Nile? Do you think it was just because he was a beautiful baby? (No. God had a plan for Moses.) Moses was saved from death in the Nile River because God knew that in another eighty years, it would be time to rescue His people. God's plan was to grow Moses up in the palace, in the ways of the Egyptians, and then use him to rescue the sons of Israel.

Do you remember several weeks ago, that we talked about the biography God wrote about you before you were born? (Psalm 139) So, does God know what will happen to you in another five years? (Yes.) In ten? (Yes.) Even in fifty? (Yes.) So, if God knew what was going to happen to Moses, and if He knows what is going to happen to you, do you think He has a plan for you? (Yes.) The Bible tells us that God has a plan for each one of us. That plan includes me and you choosing to trust this God who loves us and has plans for us. His plans for us, included sending His One and Only Son, Jesus, to die on the cross in our place. Will you trust this wonderful, amazing God with your life? Do it today and experience the exciting adventure that awaits you by following Him!

**Planning for Next Week
Lesson 14 • Deliverance
Exodus 5-14**

PRESCHOOL LESSON

SING: “Every Day With Jesus,” or “Baby Moses”

SHARE: Many years after Joseph and his family lived in Egypt, the land was very full of their grandchildren and great grandchildren and even their great-great grandchildren. They were still living and doing well in Egypt, but then the last pharaoh who remembered Joseph died. Egypt had a new king - a king who didn't know Joseph. This new king looked around and saw that his land, the land of Egypt, was filled with the sons of Israel. He was afraid because there were so many of them. “What if there were a war? Would they rise up and fight for Egypt's enemies?”

This new king wanted to keep them from becoming too many, so he made them slaves in the land in which they had once been free. They worked with bricks. They worked in the fields. All this work didn't do what the new king thought it would and the sons of Israel grew and grew! And the king of Egypt got angrier and more scared. These sons of Israel had to be stopped, but how? Then he knew. The new king ordered his people to get rid of all the baby boys! And the Egyptians obeyed.

But there was a mother who had just had a baby boy. He was beautiful! She and her husband weren't afraid of this new, mean king. They hid their son for three months and kept him secretly. And when they could keep him a secret no longer, the baby's mother got a basket. She painted the outside of the basket with a thick paint that would keep the water out. Then, she put her baby in the basket and took him down to the river.

When she got to the river, she put the basket in the river and it floated! She hid the basket in some tall grass. And God, who had plans for the life of this little baby, kept him safe. God even sent someone to find him. God didn't send another mother, like the baby's. No, God sent Pharaoh's daughter to the Nile River! She found the baby crying. And instead of obeying her father's orders, pharaoh's daughter felt sorry for the baby and took him back with her to the palace. She took good care of the baby and raised him as her own. Pharaoh's daughter named the baby Moses, which means “taken out of the water.” Moses grew up in the palace with Pharaoh and his daughter. He was educated like the Egyptians. But God was getting ready to show Moses what amazing plans He had!

PRAY: Thank you, God, for planning amazing things for me, too.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Memory Verse Activity - Make a "Biography Book." Make a small book out of computer paper with a construction paper cover. Write on the front - "My Biography," or "A Book About Me." Print the memory verse on the inside.
- Bring a basket and a doll for younger students to play with. Reenact the story with them.
- Make an Old Testament "Memory Game" to review previous stories. On cardstock, print off questions that can be paired with the answer. To play, arrange cards, face down. Just as with any memory game, have a student choose one card. A second card is chosen, hoping to match the answer or question to the first card. Continue play until all cards have been matched.
- Try more Egyptian crafts! Coloring pages, hieroglyphics, Egyptian collars, etc. will be enjoyable for students of all ages.
- Provide craft supplies and encourage creativity in your students by prompting them to illustrate the story. They may choose to illustrate both parts or just one.
- Weave your own baskets for baby Moses.
- Make sandals from cardboard and jute, or yarn. These can also be used to reenact the story.