

May 3 Elementary

Bible Passage: Moses' Farewell / Deuteronomy 31–34

Story Point: Moses reminded the people to keep God's covenant.

Memory Verse: "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths." Proverbs 3:5-6 ESV

Big Picture Question: What does it mean to sin? To sin is to think, speak, or behave in any way that goes against God and His commands.

Christ Connection: *Moses was a good leader for God's people. No other prophet in Israel was like Moses—until Jesus came. The Bible says Jesus deserves more glory than Moses. Jesus is our perfect leader. He died and was raised so that Moses and every believer in all of time can enter the promised land of God's kingdom.*

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* BIBLE STUDY TIPS FOR PARENTS:

Decades had passed since God used Moses to rescue the Israelites from slavery and lead them toward the promised land. The Israelites had not trusted God then and had refused to enter the land.

After 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, the Israelites were once again at the edge of the promised land. But this time, it was a whole new generation of Israelites—many of whom had not even been born when the people left Egypt and came to this land the first time. Their leader, Moses, was 120 years old.

Moses wrote the Book of Deuteronomy to tell the people all that God had done for them and to repeat the laws and instructions that God had given His people. At the end of the book, God told Moses that Moses would soon die, never setting foot in the promised land because of his disobedience. (See Num. 20:12.) Instead, God chose Joshua to lead Israel into the land.

God also revealed to Moses that even though Israel had just endured 40 years of punishment for not trusting Him, the people would abandon God again. Having the laws written out would not be enough to keep the Israelites from breaking their covenant with God. Moses emphasized that obedience would lead to blessing and life, but disobedience would lead to curses—namely, exile from the land.

Moses went up to a mountain where he could see the land that God had promised to give to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Then Moses died there.

Moses wasn't perfect, but he was a good leader for God's people. No other prophet in Israel was like Moses—until Jesus came. The Bible says Jesus deserves more glory than Moses. Jesus died and was raised so that Moses and every believer in all of time can enter the promised land of God's kingdom.

***STORY:**

SAY • God had called Moses to rescue the Israelites from slavery in Egypt and lead them to the land of Canaan. **Joshua and Caleb trusted God to give His people the promised land**, but the rest of the Israelites did not. They refused to go in.

So God made them wander in the wilderness for 40 years. Now the Israelites were back at the edge of the promised land. The people who refused to trust God had died, and a new generation had grown up. For 40 years, Moses had led the people; but because Moses had disobeyed God, he was not allowed to enter the promised land. Today's Bible story is called "Moses' Farewell." It is about the message Moses gave to the Israelites as they got ready to enter the promised land without him.

Use the Bible storytelling tips below to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video, or both!

Moses' Farewell: Deuteronomy 31–34

Moses was old, and he knew he would not enter the promised land. So Moses gave the Israelites a message before they went into the land of Canaan. Moses told the people he could not lead them into the promised land, but the Lord would get them there. **God would go before them and defeat their enemies. Moses explained that Joshua would be their new leader.** Moses assured the people that they didn't need to be afraid. God would be with them and would not leave them.

Then Moses wrote down God's law and gave it to the priests. He told the priests to read the law to the people every seven years. This way, the people would listen, remember, and follow the law, and they could teach it to their children. The priests put the law with the ark of the covenant.

God told Moses and Joshua to go to the tabernacle. The Lord appeared in a thick cloud and made Joshua the Israelites' new leader. "Be strong and courageous," God said to Joshua. "You will bring the Israelites into the promised land, and I will be with you."

God told Moses to write down a song and teach it to the Israelites. The song warned the Israelites that if they disobeyed God, disaster would come to them. So Moses wrote down the song and read it to the Israelites so they would remember God's words. Moses said, "These words are your life."

Finally, Moses blessed all of the tribes of Israel and praised God. “How happy are you, Israel!” Moses said. “Who is like you, a people saved by the Lord? He protects you and fights for you. Your enemies will be afraid, and you will defeat them.”

Then Moses went to the top of a mountain where he could see the promised land across the Jordan River. Moses died there and was buried, and the Israelites wept. Then the people turned to Joshua, their new leader who would take them into the land God promised.

SAY • Moses had been the Israelites’ leader for many years. I wonder if the Israelites felt sad that Moses wasn’t going to lead them into the promised land. But Moses said God had chosen a new leader for them: Joshua.

Remember, Joshua was one of the scouts who went into the promised land 40 years earlier. In the next few weeks, you’ll hear more about Joshua.

Going into a new place with a new leader can be scary, but Moses encouraged the Israelites. He told them that God would be with them, and He would fight for them. **Moses reminded the people to keep God’s covenant.** Moses taught the people a song and told them to remember God’s words. Moses died and was buried. Then the Israelites looked to Joshua as their new leader.

***Christ Connection:**

Christ Connection: *Moses was a good leader for God’s people. No other prophet in Israel was like Moses—until Jesus came. The Bible says Jesus deserves more glory than Moses. Jesus is our perfect leader. He died and was raised so that Moses and every believer in all of time can enter the promised land of God’s kingdom.*

SAY • Moses wasn’t perfect, but he was a good leader for God’s people. No other prophet in Israel was like Moses—until Jesus came. The Bible says Jesus deserves more glory than Moses. Jesus is our perfect leader. He died and was raised so that Moses and every believer in all of time can enter the promised land of God’s kingdom.

***GOSPEL PLAN:**

(Included in the Activity Pages)

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.

***PRAYER**

SAY • Lord God, You love us. We see in Your Word how You have cared for Your people and provided leaders for them. We pray for the leaders in our church and in our community. We thank You for providing Jesus as not only our perfect leader but also our Savior. We trust in Him and look forward to one day fully entering Your Kingdom to live with You forever. Amen

***KEY PASSAGE / MEMORY VERSE:**

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths." Proverbs 3:5-6 ESV

SAY • Moses had spent 40 years in the wilderness with the Israelites. As the children grew into adults, he got to know them. He knew that even though they experienced the consequences of disobeying God, they would not always be faithful to Him.

We disobey God when we trust in ourselves instead of trusting in Him. But as our key passage shows, God's ways are better than our ways. Life works best when we trust God and obey Him.

***DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

COMPREHENSION:

- How many years did the Israelites wander in the wilderness? (40)
- Who would lead the Israelites after Moses died? (*Joshua, Deut. 31:7*)
- What did Moses tell the priests to read every seven years? (*the Book of the Law, Deut. 31:9-10*)
- Moses told the people that God's Word was their _____. (*life, Deut. 32:46-47*)
- What did God allow Moses to see before he died? (*the promised land, Deut. 34:1*)

- What did Moses tell the people in his farewell? (*Be strong and courageous. God will go ahead of you. God will defeat your enemies for you. Do not be afraid, and so forth; Deut. 31:3-6*)
- What did Moses warn would happen if the people stopped loving and obeying God? (*Disaster would come on them; Deut. 31:29; 32:23*)

YOUNGER:

Open bibles to Deuteronomy 31–34. Explain that Deuteronomy is the last book of the law. Briefly discuss Bible divisions and how we use them to organize the Bible.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

- Why did Moses tell the people to be strong and courageous? *Guide kids to discuss that following God is not always easy. Sometimes we face scary or difficult situations. We are often tempted to distrust God or turn away from Him to do things our own way. But God's ways are always best. It takes strength and courage to obey God.*
- What are some things we may do today that require strength and courage? *Guide kids to talk about the difficulty of obeying God even today. We may not fight physical battles, but spiritual warfare still happens all around us. We need strength and courage to obey God just as the Israelites did.*
- What are ways God helps us fight spiritual battles? *Guide kids to discuss Jesus' taking our punishment. He sent the Holy Spirit to live in us and guide us. We also have God's Word to learn from, and we can pray to God for help. We also have other believers who comfort and encourage us or point us to God when we are wrong.*

Say • **Moses reminded the people to keep God's covenant.** Jesus kept God's covenant perfectly and died for us. He sent the Holy Spirit to help us.

OLDER:

Open Bibles to Deuteronomy 31. Remind kids that today's Bible story comes from Deuteronomy 31–34. Explain that Deuteronomy was written by Moses and is the last of the five books called the Law.

Challenge kids to identify the four books that come before Deuteronomy (*Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers*) and the book that comes after it (*Joshua*).

Say • The Israelites were getting ready to go into the promised land. **Moses reminded the people to keep God's covenant**, and then Moses died. God chose Joshua to lead the people.

Read aloud Deuteronomy 31:1-3. Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

- What did Moses say God would do for the Israelites? *Guide kids to recall that Moses said God would protect and fight for Israel. With His help, they would defeat their enemies.* (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Deut. 33:29.)
- Why is it important to remember God's Word? *Guide kids to discuss that by spending time in God's Word, we learn and remember what is true about God and about ourselves. When we forget the truth, we turn away from God and live for ourselves. Scripture gives us hope and compels us to live for Christ.* (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Rom. 15:4.)

- What do you think is the most important thing you can do in your life? *Allow kids to discuss what they hope to accomplish. Kids might talk about being kind or becoming famous, but guide them toward the fact that the most important thing we can do is commit our lives to Jesus and tell others about Him. Our life on earth is temporary, but the work we do for Jesus lasts forever.* (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Eph. 5:15-17.)

***ACTIVITY:**

ACTIVITY PAGE & COLORING PAGE

Invite kids to complete the “Born to Lead” activity page and coloring page. Instruct kids to use the space provided to draw a picture of what they imagine a good leader looks like.

Say • Moses was a good leader, but he was not perfect. When Moses disobeyed God in front of the people, God decided that Moses would not get to go with the people into the promised land. Today we will hear some of the last things Moses said to God’s people before he died.

REMEMBER THIS

Write a 10-digit number on a piece of paper. (Example: 5553017838) Guide kids to read the number aloud. Then tape paper over the number to conceal it and challenge kids to say the number from memory. Uncover the number and allow them read the number two more times. Cover the number. Have child recite the number.

Now on the other side of the paper list five random words. Invite kids to read the words once. Then cover them and challenge kids to recite the words. Uncover the words so kids can read them two more times. Cover the words and ask child to recite them. Repeat as time allows.

Say • Studies show that when you read something for the first time, you remember 10 to 25 percent of it. When you read it two or three times, you remember up to 90 percent of it. Repetition helps us remember!

In today’s Bible story, Moses said that the people needed to hear God’s law over and over so they would remember it. **Moses reminded the people to keep God’s covenant.**

BOUNDARY BALL

Mark a tape line on the floor at one end of the room. Give your child a foam ball or tennis ball..

Each kid will stand about 10 feet away and throw the ball underhanded (roll, toss, or bounce) toward the tape line. Explain that you should aim for the ball to stop close to the line without going over. Identify the winner.

Say • In the Bible story today, Moses got so close to the boundary line of the promised land. But he was not allowed to cross into the land. For 40 years, Moses had led the people; but because Moses had disobeyed God, he was not allowed to enter the promised land. Moses told the people he could not lead them into the promised land, but the Lord would get them there. **God would go before them and defeat their enemies. Moses explained that Joshua would be their new leader.** Moses assured the people that they didn’t need to be afraid. God would be with them and would not leave them.

DO AS I DO

Form pairs, you and your child or your children together. Each person will take turns being the leader. One will face another, and the leader in each pair will make movements or silly faces while the partner tries to mimic the movements. Make sure each do both roles.

Say • Leading by example is often a great strategy for helping others. Today we learned about Moses' final instructions to God's people before he died. After this, they couldn't directly follow Moses' example, so they'd have to remember his words to them from God. **Moses reminded the people to keep God's covenant.** Moses wasn't perfect, but he was a good leader for God's people. Before Moses died, he handed over the leadership of Israel to Joshua.

No other prophet in Israel was like Moses—until Jesus came. The Bible says Jesus deserves more glory than Moses. Jesus is our perfect leader. He died and was raised from the dead so that Moses and every believer in all of time can enter the promised land of God's kingdom.