



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.

**WORD OF WONDER:** God can do more than we could ever imagine. —from Ephesians 3:20

**CURIOSITY**

**BELIEF**

**FAITH**

- Puppet Intro and Curiosity Questions
- Declaring God's Wonder
- Prayer of Invitation
- Worship: Mighty God, You Are With Me
- God's Big Story
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- Prayer and Blessing





## LESSON 1 FOR LEADERS

### INVITATION

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

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** God Cares about Our Needs

**SCRIPTURE:** Exodus 17

**WORD OF WONDER:** From Ephesians 3:20

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.

—Christina Embree

Founder and Director of ReFocus Ministry and Minister of Generational Discipleship  
Contributor to Wonder Ink

**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)!



## LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

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## Welcome

### Slide: Series Welcome Loop

#### As kids arrive...

Walk around the room and welcome as many kids as possible by showing excitement that they have joined you. Give high-fives, fist bumps, encourage them to sit on the floor in their spots, and ask questions about their week.

#### Video: Countdown

Welcome kids to worship time. Introduce yourself by name.

## Puppet Intro and Curiosity Questions

Introduce the kids to Tac, the curious cat

**Leader:** Look, it's Tac the Cat! Let's wave hello to him!

**Tac the Cat:** Hello, friends! I'm mad today.

**Leader:** Why are you mad?

**Tac the Cat:** My dad said we ran out of cat treats! And I want some right now!

**Leader:** Does your dad know you need more cat treats?

**Tac the Cat:** Yes, but I have to wait until he gets back from the store! What if he forgets?

**Leader:** Has your dad ever forgotten to buy more cat treats before?

**Tac the Cat:** No, but he might forget. And I'll never eat yummy cat treats again!

**Leader:** It can be hard to wait, and sometimes difficult things happen in life. But your dad cares about you.

**Tac the Cat:** How do you know he cares about me?

**Leader:** Does he make sure you have food and water?

**Tac the Cat:** Well, yes.

**Leader:** Does he pet you and play with you?

**Tac the Cat:** Well, yes.

**Leader:** You already know your dad loves you! You have so much to be thankful for!

**Tac the Cat:** You're right! My dad is so nice! I guess I just need to trust he'll be back with my cat treats.

**Leader:** This reminds me of a story from the Bible when God's people—the Israelites—complained and forgot how God always helped them. We'll hear the story today in God's big story!

**Tac the Cat:** Now I'm curious to hear what happened! Oh! I think I hear my dad! Cat treats, here I come!

**"Have you ever been curious about something? Let's take a moment and think: Why do we complain? Allow the kids to respond. How do you know your family cares for you? Allow the kids to respond. We all see and hear things that make us curious. Did you ever stop to think about how God cares for our needs?"**

### **SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH**

Today's Wonder Truth is **GOD CARES ABOUT OUR NEEDS**. Today, we'll discover how God is always with us and helps us!"

## **Declaring God's Wonder**

### **SLIDE: DECLARATION**

Encourage the kids to say the statements and do the motions with you.

**"Let's say these words together."**

**Thank You, God, that You made me!** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Make prayer hands, then point up to God and to yourself.

**And I am Your kid!** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Put your hands on your hips.

**Jesus loves me so much;** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Spread your arms out wide to your side one at a time, then pull them in for a hug around your chest.

**His love for me is big.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Hold your arms up high and wide above your head.

**The Holy Spirit leads me,** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Bring your arms down from the sky, making a path in front of you.

**And I can follow You.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

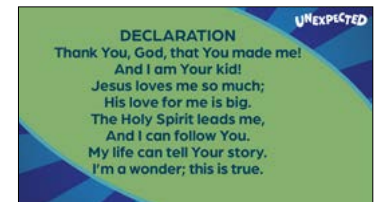
March like you're following the leader.

**My life can tell Your story.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Hold your hands in front of you like an open book.

**I'm a wonder; this is true.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Put your hands up, shaking your fingers, celebrating ("praise hands").



## Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use your own words, with this prayer as an example if needed **God, thank You for giving us everything we need—the Bible, family, friends, food, water, and a home. Help us hear from You today. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

## Worship

**'Today, we'll learn that God cares about our needs. Let's sing together about how God cares about our needs!**

**WORSHIP VIDEO: Mighty God, You Are With Me**

## God's Big Story

**SUPPLIES:** Bible

Hold up a Bible and show the kids. Tell them today's story comes from the book of Exodus in the Bible. Open a Bible and show them where the story is found.

### Bible Time Rhyme

Say the Bible time rhyme (with motions) each week before the Bible story to remind kids that what they're about to hear is part of God's big story.

**I open my Bible and what do I see?** (*Hold your hands together, then open your palms, as if opening a book.*)

**God's big story, waiting for me!** (*Point to yourself.*)

**"Let's watch part of God's big story, which comes from the book of Exodus in the Bible.**

**VIDEO: GODS BIG STORY**

# GOD'S BIG STORY SCRIPT

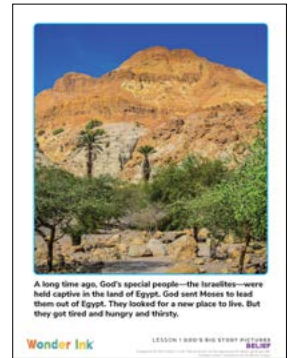
**SUPPLIES:** Bible, blanket, full water bottle, snack, rock (optional), small stick (optional), water blaster or filled spray bottle (optional), small cup of water (1 per kid, optional)

**RESOURCES:** [God's Big Story Pictures](#)

Ahead of time, print the God's Big Story Pictures front and back and set out a blanket, full water bottle, and a snack.

**"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 the Israelites complained, and God still cared for them!**

Hold up first God's big story picture and read the corresponding text on the back. The God's big story script is provided below as well.



Hold up Picture 1—a desert. **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. They looked for a new place to live and wandered in the wilderness. They got tired and hungry and thirsty.** Hold up a blanket, snack, and filled water bottle.

Hold up Picture 2—a tent in the wilderness. **They camped in the wilderness, but there was no water to drink. The Israelites complained to Moses, asking why he brought them there** (Exodus 17:3).

Hold up Picture 3—praying hands. **Moses could hardly believe what he was hearing! God had saved His people from being held captive in Egypt. But they were still unhappy! Moses asked God what to do** (Exodus 17:4). **Did God get angry and tell the people to go back to Egypt? No!** Shake your head no and encourage kids to do the same.

Hold up Picture 4—a heart. **God cared for them and loved them even though they grumbled. God could see they needed water. He helped the Israelites even though they were not thankful for what He had already done for them. God told the Israelites He would take care of them, and He did! God always does what He says.**

Hold up Picture 5—a large rock. **God told Moses to stand in front of a rock with his walking stick. Then God told Moses to hit the rock with his stick and water would come out of the rock for the people to drink** (Exodus 17:5–6). **Does that sound impossible? Water from a rock? Would you hit the rock with a big stick?** Let kids respond briefly.

Hold up Picture 6—water. **Moses obeyed God. He hit the rock with his walking stick.** Hit the ground with your hand. **And guess what? 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. Even when things seem impossible, God shows up in unexpected ways. God loves us and always keeps His promises. Just like God cared about the Israelites and their needs, God also cares about our needs."**

**Leader Tip:** If you have space (or a waterproof tarp), to make the story even more fun, you could have a kid hit a rock with a small stick and then have a volunteer squirt water from a spray bottle or water blaster. You could also give all the kids a small cup of water to drink at the end of the story as they imagine the Israelites drinking.

## Connecting the Wonder Truth

Ask the following question to kids to help them connect the Wonder Truth to God's big story:

**Our Wonder Truth today is GOD CARES ABOUT OUR NEEDS. Where did you see our Wonder Truth in the story?** Allow kids to answer freely.

**God's provided water for the Israelites even when they complained. Many years later, He sent the living water—Jesus—for all of us, which is the greatest way He shows His love and care for us!**

## Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them, thanking God for caring about our needs.

**God, thank You for always knowing what we need. You never forget us. Thank You for Your love. Help us trust You and to be thankful this week for how You provide and care for us. 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.



