

# God Chooses a Leader

**Objective:** Students will be able to identify Moses as the leader God gave to His chosen people.

## **For the Catechist**

The Bible as a whole is a book of promise and fulfillment. In Christ, fulfillment to the promise comes once and for all. He is the only one to whom the Old Testament language of promise refers. Both Old and New Testaments find their meaning in Christ. The ideas that were written about in the Old Testament—"God is with us" and "I will be your God"—are made visible and present in the person of Christ.

The disciples of the early Church explained that the Old Testament was inspired by God, but the fuller meaning, intended by God but not clearly intended by the human author, is now understood in the light of the revelation of the Son of God. For the Jewish people, this teaching was heard as "blasphemous words against Moses and God" (Acts 6:11). One of the disciples of the early Church, Stephen, spoke before the Jewish leaders. He summarized the ways God had been with the Israelites and showed how the teachings of Christ are part of God's plan. The Sanhedrin were threatened and worried that Stephen was speaking irreverently of God. At the end of his discourse, Stephen was stoned to death. Saint Stephen is identified as the first martyr.

Stephen's speech that is found in Acts 7 is the reference in the first lesson in this unit about God's call to His people. Stephen's discourse is used for two reasons. First, since Acts is part of the New Testament, the students will be able to read from their New Testament that they received. Second, Stephen's focus in telling the story is to say that Moses prophesied Christ. We see the Passover experience as containing in a hidden way the promise of the New and ultimate Passover, Jesus Christ.

This unit presents three events that are significant in the formation of the Israelites as the chosen people of God: the call of Moses (lesson 6), the Exodus (lesson 7), and the covenant (lesson 8). As we learn about the Israelites, we also can learn how we should listen to God's call and choose to follow God's Word as did Moses.

## **Lesson Plan Overview**

**Opening:** "Blessed Are You, O Lord"

**Introduction:** Discussion of getting someone's attention **Need:** bell, flashlight, and/or bright-colored paper

**Read Text Aloud:** Have the students volunteer to read the text aloud or have the students read sections silently.

### **Activity Tracks:**

Choose a basic, group, or craft activity (detailed on the pages that follow) to reinforce the lesson.

- *Basic:* Moses Leads God's People
- *Group:* Our Newspaper  
Part 1—Moses
- *Craft:* New Testament Stand

**Closing:** Psalm 123/124

## **Icon Packets:**

*Come Bless the Lord:*  
Saint Stephen

## **Teaching Pics**

## ***Background Reading***

*(Direct quotations from the sources noted)*

### **The Old Testament and Moses**

"Central to the entire Old Testament is the supreme redemptive act of God, by which He led the Israelites out from their slavery in Egypt. This event, called the exodus, begins with the enslavement of Abraham's descendants in Egypt by a pharaoh 'who knew nothing of Joseph' (Ex 1:8). For political reasons, the people were reduced to slavery by a pattern of sinful behavior that sought power for the self and hated those who were different. This injustice was a manifestation of the evil that had entered the human race.

"God looked with compassion on the people so caught and revealed Himself as a redeemer by calling the prophet Moses to lead them out of servitude 'into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey' (Ex 3:8). He identified Himself to Moses, I am the God of your father ... the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob ... I have seen the affliction of my people in Egypt and have heard their cry of complaint against their slave drivers...' (Ex 3:6-7)" (*LLI* 32-33).

### **Exodus: A Proclamation of "Good News"**

"The account of the exodus makes no attempt to glorify the people of Israel, and deliberately underlines the faults and failings of its leaders and of the people themselves. Exodus puts God at the center of the story of Israel, the merciful Lord who hearkens to the helpless and brings them to salvation. A new horizon of light and hope is opened up as the redeemer God encounters His people in their enslavement and suffering. God becomes the chief protagonist of this story, always ready to redeem and rescue. Rather than being a secular history of their origins, Exodus is a proclamation of 'good news' that provides the texture of the whole religious and ethical-social life of the Jewish people. Their religious and moral ideal would remain that of walking with God" (*LLI* 36).

### **The Story of Moses**

"The story of Moses' call to cooperative leadership focuses less on Moses' identity than on God's. Moses had been found and adopted by chance into Pharaoh's household, thus escaping the general decree of death for Jewish baby boys (Exodus 2:1-10). By chance, he met and married the daughter of the priest of Midian (2:16-22). Now, by chance, he happened onto Sinai (or Horeb), the 'mountain of God,' while tending his father-in-law's flocks (3:1-4, 17).

"At Horeb/Sinai, Moses' attention was drawn to a 'great sight,' a bush which burned without being burnt up. Turning aside to see it, he heard God call his name. At his response, 'Here I am,' God commanded, 'Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground' (3:5). God first identified Himself: I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, ... Isaac and ... Jacob' (3:6), thus establishing the continuity of the Exodus story with the event of the Patriarchs' lives. Calling the Hebrews 'my people' and acknowledging that He had seen their affliction, God next announced His intention to deliver them from Egypt and to bring them 'to a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey' (3:7-8).

"Jewish tradition emphasizes Moses' unique intimacy with God and his frequent attempts to mediate and negotiate with Him" (*OTB* 56).

# The Lesson Plan

## Opening

*Today we are going to pray to ask God to help us learn about Him. How can God help us? (Keeping us focused, letting us think about the words, helping us think how we can use His message) [Give each student the handout from the end of this lesson.] Let's pray: "Blessed are You, O Lord,.. . ." What are we asking God? (To teach us to do what is right) We want God to teach us to live according to His way. Let's be silent for a moment before we pray again. [The silence should be long enough to have everyone focused—possibly 10 seconds.]*

## Introduction

*Today I am going to do a little experiment. I want everyone to look straight ahead at the front of the room. Okay, let's see what happens next. [From various corners of the room, ring the bell, flash the light, and hold up the bright paper—use one or all of these.] Let's talk about what happened when I tried to get your attention. What were some questions and thoughts that you had? [Let the children share.] Some of us have bells in our houses. Where are they? (Door bell, timer for cooking, alarm) Why do they ring? (They remind us of something or tell us someone is there.) How about flashlights? What are some other times we use them to get someone's attention? (If someone is lost, we can shine them to show the way.) Why are some signs on really bright paper? (To get our attention) All of these things get our attention because something important is going to happen or someone wants us to help them. They let us know to pay attention to something.*

*Today we are going to read about one way God got the attention of Moses. Does anyone remember anything you learned about Moses from your classes in earlier years? [Let them share.] Today we are going to learn how God gets Moses' attention and what God asks Moses to do.*

6

## God Chooses a Leader



The Acts of the Apostles was written by Saint Luke. He is also one of the four Gospel writers. In the Acts of the Apostles we read about the history of the early Church. We hear the words that the apostles and the disciples spoke about Jesus and His resurrection. We learn that the "word of God continued to spread, the number of the disciples in Jerusalem increased greatly" (Acts 6:7).

We also read about the problems these early followers of Jesus had. One story tells about the disciple Stephen, who was a deacon of the Church. He was preaching about Jesus, but some people became upset. They accused him of talking against God and the teachings of Moses. They took him to the Jewish leaders called the Sanhedrin.

30 God Will Be Your Guide 4 Unit 2: I Will Be Your God and You Will Be My People

## Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

### God Chooses a Leader

Today we are going to learn how God asks Moses to help the Israelites. After Moses says "Yes," God gives him the power to save the Israelites—God chooses a leader. Let's read how Saint Stephen tells the story.

[Students will learn about Old Testament events as they read what has been said about them in the New Testament.]

### They took him to the Jewish leaders called the Sanhedrin.

Who were the Sanhedrin? (Jewish leaders) About whom was Stephen preaching? (Jesus)

[The Sanhedrin said that Stephen was speaking irreverently of God. At the end of his speech, Stephen was stoned to death. Saint Stephen is recognized as the first martyr.]

In Acts 7 we read about Stephen's speech before the Sanhedrin. Stephen told them about the loving way in which God has cared for His people down through the ages. He reminded them of a time when God selected a certain group of people from among all others on earth. These people were known as the Hebrews. At the time these Hebrews were being held as slaves in the land of Egypt, they cried out to God for His help. God heard their cry and chose Moses to lead them to freedom.

Stephen reminded the Sanhedrin about how God called Moses.  
Read Acts 7:30-34 to find out what Stephen said. Then fill in the following blanks:

"Forty years later, an angel appeared to him in the desert near Mount Sinai in the flame of a burning bush. When Moses saw it, he was amazed at the sight, and as he drew near to look at it, the voice of the Lord came, 'I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham of Isaac and of Jacob.'" Then Moses, trembling, did not dare to look at it. But the Lord said to him, "Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground." I have witnessed the affliction of my people in Egypt and have heard their groaning, and I have come down to rescue them. Come now, I will send you to Egypt."

(Acts 7:30-34)

31

### ...chose Moses to lead them to freedom.

About what was Stephen speaking? (About the way God cared for His people; about God choosing the Hebrews to be His people; about God choosing Moses to lead His people)

**... God could do what people could not do.**

*Why was Moses afraid? (Nothing like this ever happened before.) Would you be afraid? What did Moses ask? (He asked God how can he do this.) What did God say? (I will be with you.) Why did Moses say "Yes"? (He believed and trusted God.) What would you have said? Why?*

**... the courage God gives us to follow His Word.**

*We read how God gave Moses courage. Earlier this year we also read that the Holy Spirit gives courage to people.*

*Let's review: What is the name of the feast day that recalls the coming of the Holy Spirit? (Pentecost) Who received the gift of the Holy Spirit that day? (The apostles) What happened that day? (Tongues of fire appeared above the apostles; a strong wind entered the room.) When did we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit? (At our chrismation) People become brave when they know God is with them. We must always remember to be brave because God is with us always.*

**Words to Remember:** [Read the words together, and use them to introduce, summarize, and/or review the lesson.]

**Activity Tracks**

**Basic:** Moses Leads God's People

[This worksheet is in the student text.]

*Today we are going to use our New Testament to find the words that complete the passage. We will be reading more of the speech that Saint Stephen gave. To whom is he speaking? (The Sanhedrin, the Jewish leaders) The second part asks us to write a letter to thank Saint Stephen for being brave enough to talk about Jesus.*

Moses was afraid. Nothing like this had ever happened to him before. The Old Testament Book of Exodus tells us what happened next: "But Moses said to God, 'Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and lead the Israelites out of Egypt?' He answered, 'I will be with you'" (Exodus 3:11-12).

Moses said "Yes" to God because he believed in God's promise and trusted God. Moses knew that God could do what people could not do.

Moses is very important in God's plan to unite God and His people. God called Moses to lead His people to freedom. Moses chose to listen to God. Although Moses was afraid, he felt the strength and courage given to Him by God. Moses knew God was with him.

God calls all of us for a purpose, too. We need to learn to listen to His call and choose to follow God's Word as Moses did. We need to feel the courage God gives us to follow His Word.



**Words to Remember:**  
**Sanhedrin:** A group of Jewish leaders  
**Hebrews:** The chosen people who said "Yes" to God.  
**Israelites or Jews:** Other names for the Hebrews, whom God selected to be His chosen people.  
**Saint Stephen:** A disciple who spoke to the Sanhedrin about Moses and Jesus and the Holy Spirit.  
**Moses:** A very important leader who listened to God's call to lead His people to freedom.

32

**Moses Leads God's People**

I. After Moses said "Yes" to God, he followed everything that God asked of him. Let's read Acts 7:36-38 and complete the following sentences to learn what happened.

"This man (Moses) led them out, performing wonders and signs in the land of     Egypt    , at the     Red         Sea    , and in the desert for forty years.

It was this Moses who said to the     Israelites    , 'God will raise up for you, from among your own kinsfolk, a     prophet     like me.' It was he who, in the assembly in the     desert    , was with the angel who spoke to him on     Mount         Sinai     and with our ancestors, and he received living utterances to hand on to us."

II. Write a letter to Saint Stephen and tell him how much you admire his courage to speak about Jesus. Thank him for reminding us that about the way God chose Moses to lead His chosen people. You might want to tell him you will try to follow his example on how to tell other people about Jesus.

Dear Saint Stephen,

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Sincerely,

**Group:** Our Newspaper  
Part 1—Moses

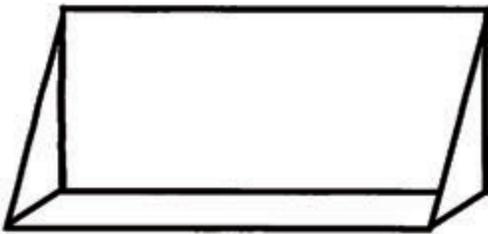
*Materials:* Paper, pens, and markers

*Today we are going to start writing some stories that we will put together for a newspaper that announces the events we learn about in this unit. Let's start with a title for our paper.*

*[Write the suggestions on the board and vote for one.*

*Possibilities: Moses' News; God Is with Us; God and the Israelites] For the next three weeks, we will write articles to put in the paper. Then at the end of this unit, we will put the paper together. What are some stories we can have in this paper? (Interviews with Moses and the people, poems, stories, details)*

*[For this activity have the students choose what they might like to write or even draw. Let them get the details from the lessons. Have them write the stories in class or they could write them at home. Continue working on this activity for the next three weeks. Depending on the class size, the paper might be one or even four pages.]*



**Craft:** New Testament Stand

*Materials:* Heavy cardboard or poster board (backs of old tablets) 8 1/2" x 11" or larger, scissors, stapler, stickers, markers, material

*[Have sample ready to show children.] Today we will make a New Testament stand that we can use in class or take home. Measure 2 1/2" down from the 8 1/2" side of the cardboard and fold down. Measure 3 1/2" down from that fold and make another fold in the same direction. Staple the ends together. Decorate your stand however you want—cut out material and glue it on, use markers, stickers.*

**Closing:**

*Let's pray Psalm 123/124. The psalm we will pray thanks God for saving His people. [At the end of the prayer, ask the students to be quiet for a few seconds.] Let's meditate on all the ways God is with us throughout our days. [Distribute the psalm at the end of this lesson. Add it to your psalm booklet if you are making one.]*

*Sanhedrin*

*Hebrews*

*Israelites  
or Jews*

*Saint Stephen*

*Moses*

The chosen people who said "Yes" to God.

A group of Jewish leaders.

A disciple who spoke to the Sanhedrin about Moses and Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

Other names for the Hebrews, whom God selected to be His chosen people.

A very important leader who listened to God's call to lead His people to freedom.

**Blessed Are You, O Lord**

Blessed are You, O Lord,  
teach me Your statutes.

Melkite  
Greek  
Catholic  
Church

**Blessed Are You, O Lord**

Blessed are You, O Lord,  
teach me Thy Righteousness

Romanian  
Greek  
Catholic  
Diocese of  
Canton

**Blessed Are You, O Lord**

Blessed are You, O Lord,  
teach me Your commandments.

Ruthenian  
Byzantine  
Catholic  
Metropolitan  
Province

**Blessed Are You, O Lord**

Blessed are You, O Lord,  
teach me Your commandments.

Ukrainian  
Catholic  
Diocese of  
St. Josaphat

**Blessed are You, O Lord,**

Blessed are You, O Lord,  
teach me Your commandments.

Ukrainian  
Catholic  
Synod

**Psalm 123/124**

Had not the Lord been with us,  
let Israel say,  
Had not the Lord been with us,  
when people rose against us,  
They would have swallowed us alive,  
for their fury blazed against us.  
The waters would have engulfed us,  
the torrent overwhelmed us;  
seething waters would have drowned us.  
Blessed be the Lord, who did not leave us  
to be torn by their fangs.  
We escaped with our lives  
like a bird from the fowler's snare;  
the snare was broken and we escaped.  
Our help is the name of the Lord,  
the maker of heaven and earth.

**Psalm 123/124**

Had not the Lord been with us,  
let Israel say,  
Had not the Lord been with us,  
when people rose against us,  
They would have swallowed us alive,  
for their fury blazed against us.  
The waters would have engulfed us,  
the torrent overwhelmed us;  
seething waters would have drowned us.  
Blessed be the Lord, who did not leave us  
to be torn by their fangs.  
We escaped with our lives  
like a bird from the fowler's snare;  
the snare was broken and we escaped.  
Our help is the name of the Lord,  
the maker of heaven and earth.