

lesson 1

Bible Basis:

Exodus 2:3-10, 15; 3:1-10; Acts 7:22

Focus:

God prepares us to fulfill His purpose.

Get Ready

STEP 1 Connecting with God's Word

Occupations Await: Students talk about career preparation and how to do it.

Occupation cards

STEP 2 Studying God's Word

Getting the Message: Students will study Exodus 2 and 3 and Acts 7 to see how God prepares people for His work.

Bibles

The Rock

“Wandering in the Wilderness” poster from *Middle School Creative Teaching Aids*

STEP 3 Interacting with God's Word

Accepting the Mission: Students will choose from activities that show them how God prepares people for His work.

Paper, markers, pencils or pens, poster board, Bibles or *The Rock*

STEP 4 Applying God's Word

Serving as Prepared: Students will start looking for God's mark on their lives, becoming aware of the plans God has for each of them.

Pencils or pens, paper or index cards, markers

Memory Verse

For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

—Philippians 2:13

Understanding the Bible

The Hebrews originally came to Egypt, in Joseph's day, as honored guests. But over time they were pressed into service as part of Egypt's vast corps of slave workers.

Even though their lot was a hard one, their numbers grew steadily. So as a population-control measure, Pharaoh ordered all male newborns of the Hebrews thrown into the Nile River (Ex. 1:22).

When Moses was born, his Hebrew mother, Jochebed, hid baby Moses as long as she could. By the age of three months his crying had probably gotten loud enough to attract attention. Then, instead of dropping the child directly into the river, she set him adrift in a waterproof basket.

Nobody knows for sure who was pharaoh when Moses was a child or the identity of the princess who rescued him. There are two popular theories though. One is that Rameses II, a very cruel man, was the pharaoh.

The other popular theory is that Hatshepsut, the daughter of Thutmose I, was the princess who rescued Moses. Hatshepsut married her half-brother, Thutmose II. She did not have any children of her own, and Thutmose II wanted to make one of his harem-born sons the next pharaoh. This would have been motivation for Hatshepsut to adopt Moses and groom him to be the next pharaoh. (*The Victor Handbook of Bible Knowledge*, ©1981). As Pharaoh's

—continued on next page

 indicates items you will need to prepare before class

Understanding the Bible —cont'd

daughter's son, he enjoyed luxury and privilege and received one of the finest educations possible at that time. Later, however, after killing an Egyptian man, Moses fled to Midian on the Sinai Peninsula (2:11-22). He married and probably expected to spend the rest of his days there. But God had other plans.

Classroom Tips The "Wandering in the Wilderness" poster from your *Middle School Creative Teaching Aids* packet is used throughout the first seven lessons. It describes the ways that God prepared Moses throughout his life to do God's work. This should help give your students some ideas of how God might be preparing each of your students. As you know, it can be hard to see well down the road. This is a good time to encourage students that God is working in and through them even when they do not recognize it.

Teacher Devo

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:10 (See also Eph. 4:11-13)

God prepared you in advance to teach this lesson! He is about to take your lifetime of experience and use it to bear fruit for His kingdom by influencing the children who have been entrusted to you. Throughout your entire life, He has been preparing you through study, life experiences, teachers, and other instances to bring you to this lesson today. Like Moses in today's lesson, if you are doing what God has called you to do, He has also equipped you to do it. What special preparation has God made in your life to do what you are doing? Communicate to your students your awe and thankfulness to God for this opportunity and preparation.

When Teaching the Bible to Middle Schoolers . . .

Adolescence is a stressful period of life. Young people are in the process of integrating childhood patterns with adolescent changes to form a new concept of who they are and what their roles are to be.

The hard thing for you as a teacher to understand is that most students cannot communicate what is happening in them. Only when students look back will they see what hard work they did.

Most youth this age fail to look beyond this moment in time. Every event is seen as an

isolated moment without connection to anything else in their young lives. Tests at school, troubled relationships, extracurricular opportunities, and family experiences seem to have nothing in common and little to do with the future. Today's lesson should help youth begin to see God's hand working in all the events—both pleasant and difficult—of their lives. As with Moses, God works in the lives of today's youth to shape them for His future plan for their lives.

STEP 1

Connecting with God's Word

Lesson Focus:

God prepares us to fulfill His purpose.

Before Class Option

Bring in a common household object that has many uses, such as a spray bottle. Have youth think of as many uses for this object as they can.

LES. 1

Students talk about career preparation and how to do it.

Materials:

Occupation cards

Before class, write several occupations (doctor, computer help-desk worker, engineer, lawyer, graphic designer, artist, plumber, concert pianist, teacher, actor or actress, missionary, pilot, etc.) on several index cards. Have students pair up, and give each pair a set of cards. One person must try to guess the occupation while the partner gives clues about the preparation needed for that job. Make sure your students do not use words in their clues that are similar to the occupation. For example, they can't say "go to law school" if they are describing a lawyer; they could, however, say "study criminal justice." You might want to make this a race to see which team finishes first.

When most pairs are done, gather the group together to discuss these questions:

- ☉ What are some common ways that people prepare for their careers?** (*Special classes or training, practicing, internships or student teaching, watching others, life experience.*)
- ☉ What is important to know before you begin preparation?** (*Interests, skills, career direction or choice, what is required—licensure, certifications, educational degrees, etc.*)
- ☉ How is our own preparation for a career similar to or different from the way God might prepare one of us for His work?** (*We may or may not know exactly what God has in mind for us. We might have opportunities that lead us into work God wants us to do.*)

Today's lesson is about how God prepared Moses to fulfill His purpose. As we go through the lesson, pay attention to the things God did in Moses' life and how Moses learned what God wanted and followed His purpose.



Free! Downloadable
Options for Steps 1 and 4.

STEP 2

Studying God's Word

Bible Basis:

Exodus 2:3-10, 15;
3:1-10; Acts 7:22



Students will study Exodus 2 and 3 and Acts 7 to see how God prepares people for His work.

Materials:

Bibles

The Rock

"Wandering in the Wilderness" poster from *Middle School Creative Teaching Aids*

Take turns reading Today's Scripture aloud from Bibles or page 5 of *The Rock*. Display the poster map "Wandering in the Wilderness" from Creative Teaching Aids, and use it to point out the places Moses was as God prepared him to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. Ask the following questions to check for understanding:

What did Moses' mother do when she could no longer hide him? (She coated a papyrus basket with tar and pitch, placed Moses in it, and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile River.)

Who found him? (Pharaoh's daughter.)

Why did Moses leave Egypt? (Pharaoh was trying to kill him; see also vs. 11-14.)

What job did God give to Moses? (To bring His people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.)

Today's Scripture

Selected Scripture from Exodus 2:3-10, 15

³But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. ⁴His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.

⁵Then Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the riverbank. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her female slave to get it. ⁶She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This is one of the Hebrew babies," she said.

⁷Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?"

⁸"Yes, go," she answered. And the girl went and got the baby's mother. ⁹Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you." So the woman took the baby and nursed him. ¹⁰When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, "I drew him out of the water." . . .

¹⁵When Pharaoh heard of this, he tried to kill Moses, but Moses fled from Pharaoh and went to live in Midian, where he sat down by a well.

Selected Scripture from Exodus 3:1-10

¹Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ²There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up.

³When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!"

And Moses said, "Here I am."

⁴"Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." ⁵Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

⁶The Lord said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. ⁷So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. . . . ¹⁰So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."

Alternate Method

Assign parts to students and read Today's Scripture dramatically.



Direct students to page 4 of *The Rock* and have them answer numbers 1 and 2.

- 1. Create and fill in a chart about Moses' background so that you can get to know him better. Read Exodus 2:3-10, 15; and Acts 7:22 to fill in information about these areas of Moses' life: family background, education, languages, travel, and dangerous experiences. (See chart for suggested answers.)

Family Background	Education	Languages	TRAVEL	Dangerous Experiences
Levite parents; older sister; raised by Pharaoh's daughter	Educated in all wisdom of the Egyptians	Powerful in speech and action	Fled Egypt to live in Midian	Hidden as a baby; placed in a basket among the reeds along the Nile; hunted by Pharaoh for murder; fled to Midian

Moses In Training
Bible Study

Exodus 2:3-10, 15; 3:1-10; Acts 7:22
God had big plans for Moses. That's why He had Moses spend his first 40 years in the soft life of a palace getting educated. Then God had Moses spend the next 40 years in the rough life of the desert.

1. Create and fill in a chart about Moses' background so that you can get to know him better. **Read Exodus 2:1-10, 15 and Acts 7:22** to fill in information about these areas of Moses' life: family background, education, languages, travel, and dangerous experiences.
2. Moses didn't ask God to make him a leader. How did Moses feel about doing the job God had for him? Did he feel qualified? **Read Exodus 3:11 and 4:10, 13.**
3. God was preparing Moses all along for leadership. Knowing what you know about Moses as a leader and a prophet, what benefits do you think Moses had in later life from his earlier experiences as a native Hebrew? An adopted Egyptian? In Midian?
4. Draw a picture of Moses' recruiting scene in Exodus 3:1-10. Show God's power and what Moses may have felt at that point.

4 Lesson 1

- 2. Moses didn't ask God to make him a leader. How did Moses feel about doing the job God had for him? Did he feel qualified? **Read Exodus 3:11; 4:10, 13.** (Moses did not feel qualified. He asked God to send somebody else to do the job.)

Discuss the following questions:

- Why do you think Moses didn't feel qualified for God's plan? (Let students answer. You may hear some of your students' areas of insecurity.)
- How did Moses' time in Egypt and in Midian prepare him for God's plan? (Pharaoh's daughter saved his life and gave him an excellent education among royalty. He was well acquainted with Egyptian customs and religious beliefs. He was also once considered family. In Midian, his shepherding humbled him and gave him knowledge of the desert.)
- Why did God wait so long to deliver Israel from Egypt? (God's timing allowed Moses to be prepared and taught him to be willing to rely on God to do the delivering.)

Now that we've seen how God prepared Moses to fulfill His purpose, let's explore some ways that God prepares middle schoolers today to fulfill His purpose.

STEP 3

Interacting with God's Word

Students will choose from activities that show them how God prepares people for His work.

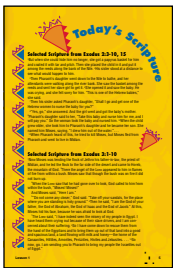
tip Be sure to call the group back together in time to complete Step 4. Allow students a few minutes to share their experiences with classmates.

Have your students choose from the following activities exploring the ways God prepared Moses and is preparing youth today for His work. If your class is small, you may want to prepare just one or two activities. In “Mile Markers” students create a time line for Moses’ life and their own. In “Rebus” your students will use pictures to replace many of the words in this week’s memory verse; in “TV Commercial” students will make up two TV commercials advertising Moses’ job in one and a job God might call someone to today in the other. With all of these activities, students should begin thinking about their own lives and what God might have in mind for each of them.

Mile Markers

Poster board
Markers
Bible or *The Rock*

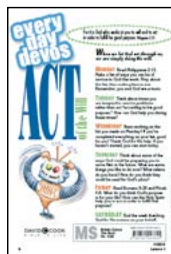
Using art supplies, create a time line with mile markers that describe the events in Moses’ life that prepared him for his future leadership. Opposite each mile marker, write events that might occur in youths’ lives today to prepare them for God’s service.



Rebus

Paper
Markers
Pencils or pens
Bible or *The Rock*

Find this week’s memory verse, Philippians 2:13, on page 8 of *The Rock* or in your Bible. Create a rebus of the memory verse using pictures to replace many of the words. Consider how this verse describes Moses’ experience with God. Then discuss: How do you see God working in the lives of middle schoolers today?



TV Commercial

Paper
Pencils or pens
Bible or *The Rock*

What qualifications did Moses have for the job God called him to accomplish? Act out two TV commercial want ads: one for Moses’ job and one for a job God might call today’s students to do. Consider the qualifications and preparation that would be important for these jobs, as well as the working conditions and benefits.



STEP 4

Applying God's Word

Lesson Focus:

God prepares us to fulfill His purpose.

Students will start looking for God's mark on their lives and become aware of the plans God has for each of them.

Materials:

Pencils or pens
Paper or index cards
Markers

Moses had a very unique upbringing, but he did not continue in the path of his early years because God had a different purpose for his life. Our footsteps don't always lead us to an obvious career or life purpose. Walking in God's will for our lives depends on listening and following His plan.

🕒 **The Bible says, "For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose" (Phil. 2:13). How can we know what His "good purpose" is for each of us?**

Have students think about the following questions and answer them aloud.

🕒 **How can we be sure we are following God's plans for our lives?** (*We can study His message to us in the Bible and follow what He says there. We can talk with other believers about what God's plan might be for us and certainly ask God what His plan is for us. We might have to wait to hear while we take small steps that lead us to learn His plan, but He never leaves us on our own to just figure it out.*)

🕒 **What kind of limits should we expect for God's plans?** (*None. All things are possible with God—the sky is the limit.*)

🕒 **How can we learn God's plans for us and be able to follow them?** (*By maintaining a growing relationship with God. It's like the saying, "Does being in a garage make you a car?" No. It is our relationship with God that shapes our part in His plan—not the specific actions.*)

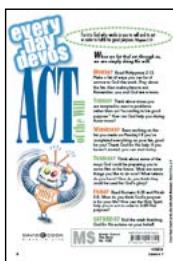
Just as God prepared Moses to fulfill His purpose, He also prepares us. It's not always easy to see God's plan, though—even Moses' life was in danger as a baby. Pharaoh wanted to kill him later, and he spent many years as a shepherd in the desert. But God used all of that to prepare Moses for His own plan. And He does the same with you.

🕒 Seal It!

Have students use supplies to make a reminder card for those times when God's plan seems remote. It may include this week's memory verse, Philippians 2:13.

For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

Ask a few volunteers to close in prayer, committing the lives of your students to God and His plan. Encourage students to keep their reminder cards in a prominent place where they will see them often. Encourage your class to read the "Everyday Devos" on page 8 of the *The Rock* throughout the upcoming week.



Seeing God throughout the Week:

Talk with students about ways God might be preparing them right now to fulfill His purpose.