



Journeys in the Spirit

inward outward upward downward

Children's work edition June 2012 Issue 64



Stories about Moses

Getting ready

Read Exodus, the second book of the Old Testament. You may have children's bibles in your meeting house. These are worth looking at as they will often have sections of the story, summarized into bite size chunks. There are also lots of translations online now. For example: ebible.org and bibleontheweb.com.

As you read the text, have some notepaper and write down anything that strikes you as important. Even if you are very familiar with it, something new might occur to you, particularly since, this time, you are reading it to use with children. Ask those who are going to be running the Children's Meeting(s) with you what they find interesting about Moses. Ask them what they can remember about him when they perhaps came across him in school.

Remember that the ideas in *Journeys in the Spirit* are only meant as a guide or a starting point. Exodus is rich with moral dilemmas and is quite a long and complicated tale. It thus lends itself very well to discussion, role play, art activities etc and is relevant to 21st Century life in more ways than one. Follow the path that appeals most to you.

It is worth noting that there are parts of this story that are about people who were not very strong or not very good – Moses, apparently, had a very bad stammer; his sister was a slave and in real danger when she saved him – but she loved him so much she couldn't do anything else; Moses really didn't want to do what he felt God was asking him; Moses could get so angry that he could hurt people.

Gather

Families

Do try and be aware of any child that may find this upsetting due to divorce, bereavement etc. If you know this will be a difficult activity to do with your group see *Additional Resource 64.E* for some alternative openings. Gather quietly in a circle

- Ask the children to think of their families.
- Ask them to think of the things that the different members of their family do for each other.
- Ask them to think of a time when they were *not* all together, and of a time when they *were* all together.
- Ask them to think about whether *their* family is any different to other families they know.
- Ask them to share their thoughts.



Image: Ambro / FreeDigitalPhotos.net

Journeys in the Spirit offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with children and young people.

This children's work edition comes out monthly. It offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with 5–12 year olds in a Quaker setting.

It provides opportunities for exploring, creating and learning in an atmosphere of worship in partnership on our shared journey in the spirit.

Underpinning references

Advices and Queries 26:

'Do you recognize the needs and gifts of each member of your family.....?'

Advices and Queries 31-33:

'...Seek to understand the causes of injustice, social unrest and fear...'

Engage

On *Additional Resource 64.A* there is a version of Moses' story. Depending on which part of the story you are going to concentrate on read all or part of this to the children first. The activities below each refer to extracts of the story but this is a mega story and having the whole story to refer to can be helpful.

Moses' start in life

Use or adapt the story on *Additional Resource 64.B*.

Ask the children some questions about the story. Some of these could be:

What part of the story did you like the best?

What part of the story was the saddest part?

Which part is the happiest?

Why do you think the Pharaoh's daughter wanted to look after the baby, even though the baby was an Israelite and she was an Egyptian?

How do you think the mother felt at different points in the story?

Are people treated badly today just because they are different in some way?

Punch-Up!

'Moses was a murderer! When he was a young man, he saw an Egyptian treating an Israelite particularly badly. He was so angry that he hit the Egyptian who died and Moses hid the body in the sand.'

The next day two Israelites were fighting between themselves. Moses interrupted their fight and asked them why one had hit the other. The Israelite said, 'Are you now our prince and judge? Are you going to kill me like you killed the Egyptian?'

Moses realised that people had found out what he had done He ran away.'

Make sure the children really understand the story: who was who; the fact that Moses was living amongst Egyptians; what the Israelite's words mean. Talk about what happened next to Moses and the fact that he ran away. What things make you angry? What do you do when you are angry?

Persecution and Plagues. These two activities are for older children.

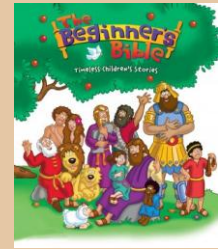
Persecution. In discussion about the words, try and find examples that are relevant to the children's lives. For example, ask them which subject they think is most important at school. Explain that no one has the right answer and that everyone will think (or *believe*) different things. But then ask them to imagine that only those that think (or believe) e.g. reading to be most important are now allowed to go to school because the Headteacher has decided that those children believe the 'right' thing. What about bullying?

Plagues. Children will be very happy to learn about the plagues! They can draw pictures; play a memory game - how many can they remember after you tell them all 10? This is a bit like the Generation Game where people had to remember things that went by on a conveyor belt. Children could talk about plagues happening to punish the Egyptians. What do children think of the idea of a God who hurts people?

The 10 Commandments

Tell the section of the story of God giving Moses the 10 commandments in your own words or use a children's bible. On *Additional Resource 64.C* there is a list of the '10 Best Ways' that are drawn from a Godly Play style story about the 10 Commandments. Go through one, a few, or all of them and try to relate them to the children's lives. There are some suggested questions. Numbers 9 and 10 can be looked at alongside *Advice and Query no. 41*. Older children could compare the difference between the 10 Commandments and Advices and Queries.

References & other resources



ISBN
9781859855546
The Beginner's Bible. Quaker Bookshop on 0207 663 1030

10 plagues on the BBC website:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religion/s/judaism/holydays/passover_1.shtml

The plagues were:
Blood – rivers turned red; Frogs; Lice and flies; Gnats; Illness that killed all the livestock and cattle; Boils; Hailstones; Locusts; Darkness for 3 days; Death of firstborn children

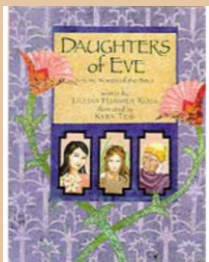
Free, downloadable colouring sheets:
<http://www.coloring.ws/moses.htm>

Additional Resources on this page and Simple plan for all age worship can be found at:
www.quaker.org.uk/resources-children

References & other resources

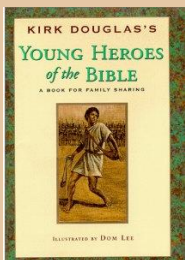
These 2 books are out of print but available online.

Daughters of Eve: Strong Women of the Bible by Lillian Hammer Ross.



ISBN
9781902283821

Young Heroes of the Bible: A book for family sharing by Kirk Douglas.



ISBN
9780689814914

There are some extra ideas for exploring the Old Testament on *Additional Resource 64.E*

Additional Resources on this page and Simple plan for all age worship can be found at:

www.quaker.org.uk/resources-children

Respond

Moses' start in life - retelling the story.

Make cut-out figures to put together a puppet show of the first part of Moses' life (or any part of Moses' life) or use the children, puppets or soft toys.

If any character raised particularly interesting ideas or questions you can make sure that this character has lots to say or that this is emphasised in your retelling.

If one child is particularly keen on one specific character, encourage him or her to tell the story from that character's perspective: Miriam's or the Pharaoh's daughter for example.

'Moses Baskets'

Try some weaving. See *Additional Resource 64.D* for instructions on how to do this. Then, with the shapes the children have produced, you could do the following:

- Turn them into cards to give to members of their family.
- Stick them together to make a 'patchwork-quilt' and put it on display.
- Stick the squares onto a larger, basket shaped piece of card to make a big Moses Basket. It will be a bit rough and ready but fun to do.
- Make a simple lantern.
- If the children manage to make two each then tape them together to make little envelopes. These could then be used later on in the meeting to hold any writing or pictures about Moses.

Babies

Talk about how a family has to prepare for the arrival of a new baby, whether a newborn to the mother or an adopted baby.

What preparations need to be made? How will everyone feel?

The children can draw pictures of all the different things that you have to get ready for the new arrival. Discuss what the children have chosen. If you are following this up another time, ask the children to bring in baby photos of themselves or their siblings/parents. Play a game of guess who the baby is.

You can talk about ethical and environmental choices if you like – cloth nappies vs. disposables, new vs. secondhand. Also ask the children to think about whether the baby is born in this country or in a hotter or colder place. Do they need to prepare different things?



The 10 Commandments

Ask children if they think rules are important. What rules and laws do the children know?

Talk about what children think their own 'best ways to live' might be.

Children can make their own 'tablets' with your rules on them. There do not need to be ten. These could be drawn or written on card or maybe written onto clay or plasticene 'tablets'.

Reflect

Baby reflection

Sit in a circle and ask everybody to imagine that they are holding a young baby in their lap. Pause for a short time – tell everybody to imagine the baby is sleeping. Now ask everybody to think about one or all of the following – leave pauses in between:

Imagine the baby is you – how are you different now? What challenges have you faced? How has your family helped?

Imagine the baby is someone else – maybe a child born today or a child born in another country? How is their life going to be different to yours?

Imagine the baby is Moses – think about all the adventures and challenges the baby will meet. End by shaking hands.



Review

'Where next?' might be the place to start after your first 'Moses' Children's Meeting. There will probably be lots of things that have come up that can be looked at again or that the children might like to look at in more detail.

Involve the children in the review process. Ask them what they would like to do more of or hear more about.

Has your attitude changed or developed?

This issue was written by Rebecca Leek and edited by Chris Nickolay and Howard Nurden. The Topical activity was written by Chris Nickolay with the assistance of Louise Wright and Karl Gibbs in the Quaker Communications team and Recording Clerks office.

Issue 65 offers ways to explore the story of Jesus and the children. This will be available on 2 July 2012

Issue 66 is the first in a new series. The theme for Series 8 is 'Our Senses'. The first of these, Issue 66, has all sorts of ways to explore 'Touch'. Available 1 August 2012

Issue 67 is about ways to explore our sense of 'Smell'. Available 3 September 2012

Materials available online are:

Current issue additional Resources Sheets

An easy to use plan for a Children's Meeting

A simple plan for an all age Meeting for Worship

A topical activity – this features a postcard activity used at Yearly Meeting this year.

Also a 'How to use *Journeys in the Spirit*' guide; a link to special issues; an archive of previous issues; a discussion forum and a link to the *Journeys in the Spirit* Youth edition.

All these are available at:

www.quaker.org.uk/journeyschildren

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Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resources 64.A

Engage

The story of Moses



The whole epic tale!

Once upon a time there was a king in Egypt. He was called a Pharaoh. He wanted his country to be the greatest & the mightiest nation. He noticed that there were a lot of children in Israel. He had fears that Israel would take over Egypt one day he gave an order saying, "Every son that is born in Israel has to be cast into the river".

There was a baby boy born in a Hebrew family – Israeli people were then called Hebrews. The mother hid the child for three months.

When she could not hide her son any longer she put him in a basket in the reeds in the Nile river. His sister stayed to watch the basket to see what would happen to him. The daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river. When she saw the basket, she sent her maiden to get it.

The baby was crying. She knew that it was one of Hebrews' children, but she wanted to keep him. The sister came to her and suggested a nurse. It was the child's mother. The mother got to have her baby back until he was weaned. She was able to teach him about what Hebrew people believed about God.

When it was time, she took him back to the Pharaoh's daughter. The new mother named the child Moses. She was raising Moses as her own son. He was educated, he was an army leader, but in his heart Moses was Hebrew. One day, Moses went out to his people & he looked at how hard they had to work for Egyptians.

Moses saw an Egyptian man beating a Hebrew. Moses was very angry and hit and killed the Egyptian & hid him in sand. Hebrew people did not like this – they thought it would get them into big trouble. Pharaoh was looking for Moses to deal with him. Moses ran away to the desert & he came to the land of Midian. One day Moses was sitting by the well, when seven daughters of a priest called Jethro came to give water to their sheep.

Then some shepherds came. They were mean to the daughters & they scared away the sheep. Moses helped the women: he drove away the troublemakers & helped to water the flock. Jethro was very pleased with Moses. He asked him to stay with them to take care of the flock.

Moses married Jethro's daughter Zipporah & they had a son.

One day Moses came to a mountain that was a very special place – people thought that it was a place where you could hear or feel God. He saw a bush in flames, but it did not burn. Moses was very curious, he came closer. Moses thought he heard a voice of an Angel speaking to him. He heard it say that he should go back to Egypt & ask Pharaoh to let the Hebrews go. He really didn't want to but he did.

So Moses came to see the Pharaoh. He said, "You've been mean & cruel to my people. Let my people go." Pharaoh did not want to let Hebrew people go. He needed them to build palaces and temples. There was a terrible plague. Moses said that it came from God. Pharaoh promised to release the Hebrew people as soon as the plague was over. This happened 10 times and the plagues got worse and worse. Finally, Pharaoh said, "Get out of my country, both you and all the Hebrews, the Jews."

All the Hebrew people quickly packed up their belongings & left Egypt for the new land that they felt God had promised them. By day there was a pillar of cloud, to show them the way, and by night a pillar of fire, to give them light. When Pharaoh & his army came close to the Hebrew people, Moses said, "God shall fight for you, and you shall hold your peace." The pillar of the cloud came between the camp of Israel & the camp of Egyptians. They all came close to a sea.

Again Moses felt as if he could hear God speaking to him, "Lift up your big walking stick and stretch your hand over the sea, and divide it and all of your people will be able to walk on the dry ground in the middle of the sea. Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and there was a strong wind all the night. The sea parted and there was a dry path to walk on. In the morning the Hebrews started to cross the sea. They were walking on the dry path, and the huge walls of water were on both sides of them. The Egyptians were behind the cloud till almost all the Hebrew people were through. They were waiting for the chance to go. As soon as the cloud moved away, Pharaoh and his army started after their slaves. When all the Hebrews crossed the Red Sea, Moses stretched his hand over the sea again and the water fell down over the Egyptians.

Moses and the Hebrew people now went out into the desert. During three days they did not have any water. When they finally came to the river & tasted it tasted bitter. Everybody complained. Moses found a special tree and threw it into the water. The water became sweet!

They came to a place called Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and ten palm trees. What shall we eat with the dates from the palm trees? Everybody was discouraged & complained again. Suddenly, strangely, they found they had lots of flour and everybody made lovely bread. Some people say it fell from the sky like snow. They had enough bread for 40 days. Moses said God was leading them all to a safe place called the Promised Land.

Again they got weary, discouraged & they were very thirsty. People started to grumble and moan about Moses & God again. Moses heard a voice that told him to tell a rock to give water – Moses was so cross with everybody that he hit the rock and water came out of it. Moses was sorry for being angry – he had heard a voice telling him just to ask for water from the rock. Moses was sad – it was then he realised that whilst he was leading everybody towards a special place he was not going to get there himself.

On the third month of their journey, they came to a huge mountain called Mount Sinai. Everybody could rest now, pitch their tents and wash their clothes. Moses, like everybody, was glad of the rest but he also knew, because he had heard or felt it inside, that he had soon to go up the mountain. There was something he was going to find out that was very, very important.

After three days there was lightning, thunder, smoke and fire on the mountain – everybody thought that God was on the top of the mountain. Moses went up the mountain. When he was there he felt that God was there. Strangely he knew God was telling him something about ten very important ways that everybody should live their life. It took a long time for Moses to hear and understand all of this.

He was away for 40 days – more than a whole month. All of the other people felt lost – they didn't know where Moses was and they felt that God had gone away from them. They wanted something to make them feel safe and special. They made a statue of a baby cow, a calf, out of real gold. They worshipped the statue because it was made of gold and it was of an animal that gave them food. They were happy – they had a big party.

But when Moses came back down he saw the golden calf & people dancing. He was so upset that he broke the big pieces of stone on which had been written the 10 ways that people should lead their lives. Moses broke the calf. Everybody was very sorry. Whilst the golden calf was like a God to them they had forgotten that there was something even more special to believe in that could help them more. Moses went back up the mountain for forty days and came back with more big pieces of stone with the special ways to live written on them. This time everybody waited and didn't worry.





Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resources 64.B

Engage

When Moses was a baby



In Egypt there was a group of people called the Israelites. They believed in different things to the Egyptians and the Egyptians treated them very badly. However, the Israelites kept having lots of children so they grew and grew in number.

The Pharaoh, the 'king' of the Egyptians, did not like the fact that the Israelites were getting to be a bigger group of people. Therefore, he said that any baby boy born to Israelite parents had to be killed.

One day a boy was born to an Israelite mother. This mother kept her baby boy a secret so that he would not be found by the Egyptians. But when the baby was 3 months old, he was too big to hide any longer. Therefore, the mother hid him in a basket and put him into the reeds in the river, hoping that someone would find him and look after him. She told her daughter, the baby's sister, who was called Miriam, to watch from a distance to see what would happen.

The Pharaoh's daughter would often come to the riverbank to wash. She caught sight of the basket and asked her maidservants to drag the basket from the water. She saw the little baby inside the basket and started to cry because she felt so sorry for it. She realised that the baby boy was an Israelite baby but she still wanted to look after it.

She saw Miriam standing close by and asked her to find someone to look after the baby until it would not need milk anymore. Miriam went and fetched her mother, the baby's real mother (although the Pharaoh's daughter didn't know this). So the baby's mother nursed the baby until it was big enough to eat food and then the child was brought up in the Pharaoh's palace.

Extra ideas

Divide up a page into four (or more) sections. Ask the children to illustrate the story.

Ask a different child to illustrate a different part of the story. Put them in order.

Find Egypt on a map and/or show the children some pictures of Egypt.

The children could write out the words *Egyptians* and *Israelites* and decorate them. Younger children could colour in the letters that you have prepared in advance. Have some books available that have coloured pictures of ancient Egypt in.



Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resources 64.C

Engage

10 best ways to live



A version of the 10 Commandments

1. Don't serve other gods
2. Make no idols to worship.
3. Be serious when you say God's name.
4. Keep the Sabbath holy (Quakers might say keep each day holy)
5. Honour your mother and father.
6. Don't kill.
7. Don't break your marriage. (Quakers might say look after your special relationships as best as you can)
8. Don't steal.
9. Don't lie.
10. Don't even want what others have.

...and another that Jesus added much, much later:

Love God. Love people. God loves us.

I know. These are all hard. God did not say these are "ten easy things to do." They are Ten Best Ways to Live, the Ten Commandments. They are hard, perhaps impossible, but we are supposed to try.

Some questions to ask to help discussion:

I wonder which one of the Ten Best ways you like the best?

I wonder which one is most important?

I wonder which one is especially for you?

I wonder if there are any we can leave out and still have all we need.



Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resources 64.D

Respond

Weaving activities



There are lots of ideas on the internet for paper weaving activities. Try searching *paper weaving* on YouTube.

Try doing it once with lots of talking and help and then again in a more quiet, contemplative way. Or spend the first 10 minutes with talking and the second 10 minutes in silence. You can talk about how the different ways felt with the children afterwards.

Alternatively try this:

- Fold an A4 sheet of paper in half *lengthways* (so that the fold runs from top to bottom).
- Keeping the paper folded, cut from the fold to about 2 cm from the edge. Cut every 2cm - although this does not have to be exact.
- Unfold the paper.
- Cut a second piece of paper into strips *lengthways*.
- Use the strips to weave in and out of the first piece of paper.
- Secure the ends with glue.
- Something along these lines is demonstrated here: <http://youtu.be/4dhBNMM6x2M>
- You can use two different coloured pieces of paper, old magazines (the covers will tend to work best as the paper is sturdier) or 'salvaged' paper from previous projects.
- You can do this with different sized pieces of paper as long as the two pieces are the same size.
- You can repeat and then stick the two pieces of weaving together to create a sort of envelope or basket.

Alternatively, try making baskets out of rolled up lengths of clay or plasticene.





Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resources 64.E

Engage

Other ways into the stories



Exile

Have a large cloth open on the central table. Have placed on it some of life's essentials (food, drink, some basic first aid, stamps perhaps, matches) and some other things too (like a photograph of your family, something sentimental – a rock you have kept since you were little, jewellery etc).

Let the children look at the objects and take one each and sit quietly for a few moments.

Explain that you have gathered things for going on a long journey and there is no time to pack much. Ask the children whether you have packed the 'right' things. Talk about why you chose what you chose. Are there other things that you should have packed?

What would they pack? How would they feel if they were going to be separated from their home or family?

The Old Testament

Depending on how many children there are and how much you have looked at the Old Testament, you could follow some sort of variation of this. You might find it useful to have available a copy of *Additional resources 59.A* with a picture 'The Big Bible Bookcase' from *Journeys in the Spirit Children's Edition Issue 59*.

Print or write out in larger letters some of the books of the Old Testament. Below are the first five.

Have objects, drawings, people's names that connect up with the books. Cut them up and match them if you can and let the children share what they already know. Have some bibles to look at while you do this.

Genesis

Adam and Eve

Exodus

Desert

Leviticus

Aaron the priest

Numbers

10 Commandments

Deuteronomy

Moses