**Youth Sabbath School Ideas for April 15, 2023**

**Lesson Plan 1: Privilege or Promise**

**SCRIPTURE PASSAGES**

Exodus 1:22

Exodus 2:1-5

Exodus 2:9-10

Exodus 2:23-25

Exodus 3:7-10

**OVERVIEW**

One of the most recognized stories in scripture is story of Moses’ origin. For this lesson we plan to go deeper on Moses’ path from poverty to privilege to purpose. It is a story arc that many of us will experience in our lives economically, socially, and spiritually. Even though it isn’t the end of Moses’ story, how he found his purpose and calling is something we can all learn from.

**OPENING ACTIVITY: WHO DID IT?**

(Leader: This game is similar to the 2019 hit mobile game “Among Us,” or perhaps your group has played the game “Mafia” before. If those games are familiar to your group then this game will be as well. Finally, this game will work best with a medium to large group of students. If you have only two or three students, you will need to get creative.)

Make slips of paper and number them with the number of people in your group. Give each student a number, randomly, and then call out a number. That number will be the person who is “It.” The point of this game is for the group to figure out who is eliminating people. The role of the person who is “It” is to get rid of everyone from the group without getting caught.

Have all of the students stand up and start walking around. There is only one thing they can say while walking around. They should go and shake hands with another player and say “Howdy, Howdy!” Most handshakes will be normal, but the “It” person will eliminate people by tapping the inside of the palm while shaking someone’s hand. If a student’s palm gets tapped they should silently count to three and then sit down. They are out and cannot speak any more.

If a player thinks they know who the “It” is, they can yell “I know who is it!” and the game immediately pauses. They then can make an accusation about who they think is “It.” The person who is “It,” along with everyone still in the game, can join the debate, and the person accused can defend themselves and try to convince the other players that they are innocent. Eliminated players do not have a voice in this process. Have all non-eliminated players vote on the accusation. If they are right, the game is over. If they are wrong, the person they wrongly accused is eliminated and the game continues.

**DISCUSSION**

* What did you like or not like about this game?
* What was hard or easy about this game?
* What role did you like better, being “It” or not it?
* When you got eliminated, how did it feel not to have any more voice in the game?

**FINAL QUESTIONS**

* If the person who was “It” won the game, how did you feel?
* Does the bad guy sometime win in real life? What is that like?
* If *you* caught the person who was “It,” how did it feel?
* When have you seen “the good guy” win this week?

**TRANSITION**

This is a silly game. But sometimes the stakes are higher. Sometimes leaders (“It” people) make really bad and harmful decisions.

* But what happens when someone who has made bad decisions in their life is able to make good changes?
* Do their previous bad decisions disqualify them from leadership?
* Can you think of some examples of famous leaders who made really bad decisions?
* How about reformed criminals who made a positive difference in the world?

Today in our study we are looking at a Bible story almost everyone has heard about. Holly wood has made several blockbuster movies about Moses. Some of you might remember watching the *Prince of Egypt* as a kid. Moses is important because he becomes the patriarch that really is the person who brings the Jewish religion into existence. So, his origins and how he became a great leader are something that are important to us! Much like we study Abraham Lincoln, Gandhi, or Martin Luther King, Jr. and how they discovered their “Why?” we study Moses. Today we are going to look at how Moses found his “Why?”!

**BIBLE STUDY GUIDE**

Today in our lesson we are going to go through three P’s in the life of Moses that perhaps many high school students can relate to in their lives as well. Poverty, Privilege, and Purpose. Let’s start out with poverty.

* What would you consider poor?
* If I told you that there are quite a few countries in the world where people live on under $1000/year would you consider that poor?
* But what other types of poverty are there?
* Jesus talked about the poor in spirit. What does that mean?
* Are there areas in your life where you are poor?

Read Exodus 1:22 through 2:5.

22Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people: “Every Hebrew boy that is born you must throw into the Nile, but let every girl live.”

**The Birth of Moses**

**2** Now a man of the tribe of Levi married a Levite woman, 2and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him for three months. 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.

**DISCUSSION**

* When you think of Moses, do you think of poverty?
* What are some ways that Baby Moses might have been considered poor?
* Do you think there was an income gap between the Egyptians and the Hebrews?
* How difficult do you think it was for Moses’ mom to make the decision to hide him in the reeds? What would drive a mom to do that?

I want us to shift back to today. Many of us have had things stacked against us in life. Perhaps we don’t come from the perfect family background. Maybe we have experienced prejudice. And sometimes it feels as if there is no way forward.

* What might the story of Moses’ origin teach us about pushing forward?
* How did his family and community contribute to his survival?

Moses was one of the lucky kids, actually. Not everyone got plucked from the river by a princess. Moses went from poverty to privilege and it wasn’t anything that he did. He was at the right place at the right time (what we often call God’s providential working).

Read Exodus 2:9-10.

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.”

We don’t get a lot of detail about Moses’ teen years, but it seems that he spent them in the palace of Pharaoh. We can guess that he went to the same schools as the other upper class Egyptian children. He was trained in the way of the court. Remember this was one of the greatest empires of its time, and Moses had everything going for him. His life was 180 degrees different from the other Hebrews.

**DISCUSSION**

* Do you think that Moses had continued interaction with his birth family? Why or why not? What would you have done?
* Would you say that Moses was privileged?
* What privileges do you have? Consider your schooling, your family bringing you to church, a great Sabbath School teacher . . .
* Do you appreciate your privileges?
* Does your privilege get in the way of recognizing that others might not share your privilege? How?

Moses, it seems, did have some sympathy for his family of origin because he lost his place in the palace to protect a Hebrew slave and even ended up committing murder to protect them. This sends Moses on the run and back to a humble life where he once again becomes a nobody, at least as far as making an impact on a large group of people.

That changed when God decided that it was time for Moses to become a leader.

One of the great scriptures that shows God’s willingness to be involved with humanity is Exodus 2:23-25.

23During that long period, the king of Egypt died. The Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out, and their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God. 24God heard their groaning and he remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. 25So God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them.

God hears and acts. And his action came through helping Moses find his “Why?” or his “Purpose.” God appears to Moses at the burning bush; most of you are familiar with this part of the story. But sometimes we forget to actually read the story because we are so caught up, as Moses was, with the craziness of a bush that doesn’t burn. Let’s read what God says to Moses.

Read Exodus 3:7-10

7The 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. 8So 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. 9And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. 10So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”

**DISCUSSION**

1. Who is going to deliver the people of Israel, Moses or God?
2. Why would God use a person like Moses to be his instrument of salvation?
3. This is one of the great “calling” stories of Scripture. How does God reveal His purpose to us today? (Leader: This is a good time to have students share times when they have felt a calling from God to do something. Please share your story of finding your calling here too.)

Moses was called to be the leader of Israel, but we will see throughout the rest of the Bible that people get called to do all sorts of things, such as to be builders, soldiers, prophets, craftspersons, business people, etc. God can use you and your talents to build the kingdom of God in ways that might not always include being a pastor at a church. Every one of you has a God-given purpose.

**BIG QUESTION**

* What are some ways that our Sabbath School group can be intentional in helping students discover their purpose?

**APPLICATION**

Did you know that one of the ways that you can discover your calling is to identify your spiritual gifts? The Youth Ministries Department of the Seventh-day Adventist church has created a spiritual gifts test just for students! Why not take some time during Sabbath School to take the assessment? Once you’ve shared the results with your leader, you all can find ways to start experimenting with your gifts! This is a great first step towards finding your purpose!

[Spiritual Gifts Questionnaire - Adventist Youth Ministries (gcyouthministries.org)](https://www.gcyouthministries.org/resources/spiritual-gifts-assessment/spiritual-gifts-questionnaire/)