Preschool–Grade 6

Moses and Pharaoh

Sunday School Lesson for Preteens (Ages 11–12), 45–60 minutes

Main point: God's power is greater than every other power, and seeing it is not enough: we have to hearken, to listen and obey, with a soft heart.
Bible passage: Exodus 5:1–2 and Exodus 7:1–13. Students read them out loud themselves, then Exodus 4:2–5 and Hebrews 3:15.
Memory verse: "For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods." *Exodus 7:12 (KJV)* and "While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation." *Hebrews 3:15 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each student, paper or a notebook and a pen for each student, a whiteboard and a marker, and one take-home sheet for each student.
Before class: read Exodus 4:1–17, 5:1–2 and 7:1–13. Write both memory verses on the board. Decide who reads which verses, or go around the room a few verses each.

1. Opening game: What Would It Take? (5–10 minutes)

Ask: *If someone told you something hard to believe, what proof would you need?* List answers on the board (see it myself, a video, a friend I trust says so). Then ask: *Is there anyone who would not believe even after seeing proof?* Say: "Today a king asks for proof, sees a miracle with his own eyes, and still won't listen. The problem wasn't the proof. It was his heart."

2. Bible story: Students Read It (15 minutes)

Read out loud: Exodus 5:1–2. Pharaoh's answer: "Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice?" Old words in this passage:

- **Thus saith the LORD** (5:1): this is what the LORD says
- **I know not the LORD** (5:2): I don't know Him, and I won't obey Him

Read out loud: Exodus 7:1–7. God's plan before they went in. Old words in this passage:

- **prophet** (7:1): one who speaks God's words for Him; Aaron would speak for Moses
- **hearken** (7:4): listen and obey
- **fourscore** (7:7): 80; Moses was 80 and Aaron was 83

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Read out loud: Exodus 7:8–13. Old words in this passage:

- **Shew a miracle for you** (7:9): show a miracle to prove who sent you
- **cast** (7:9–10): throw down; **serpent**: a snake
- **the wise men and the sorcerers... the magicians... enchantments** (7:11): the men Pharaoh called to do the same thing. The Bible names them and doesn't explain how they did it.
- **swallowed up** (7:12): ate up, so they were gone
- **hardened... hearkened not** (7:13): Pharaoh's heart was hard, and he did not listen

Read out loud: Exodus 4:2–5. The same rod became a serpent at the burning bush, "That they may believe" (4:5).

3. Questions to ask (15 minutes)

1. In Exodus 5:2 Pharaoh said, "I know not the LORD." How does Exodus 7:8–13 begin to answer his question, "Who is the LORD?"
2. Moses and Aaron "did so as the LORD had commanded" (7:10). Why does it matter that they did it exactly God's way?
3. The magicians' rods became serpents too (7:12). Why do you think God let it go that far before Aaron's rod swallowed theirs up?
4. Pharaoh saw a real miracle and still hearkened not (7:13). What does that show about miracles and hearts?
5. Hebrews 3:15 says, "harden not your hearts." What hardens a heart a little at a time?
6. What is one place where God has spoken to you and you have been slow to listen?

4. Memory verse (5 minutes)

Old words: **cast down** means threw down; **every man his rod** means each one threw his own rod; a **serpent** is a snake; **swallowed up** means ate them up; **To day** means today; the **provocation** was when Israel made God angry by not trusting Him in the wilderness. Exodus 7:12 shows God's power; Hebrews 3:15 shows what to do with it.
Read both verses together. Then students cover one phrase at a time and quiz a partner. Say Exodus 7:12 this week; keep working on Hebrews 3:15 next week too.

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5. What this means for us (5–10 minutes)

Say: "Pharaoh saw God's power and still said no. God is still speaking, and His Word tells us, 'harden not your hearts.' God loves you, and 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, God who came as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV). We obey the gospel the way Peter preached it: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) We **repent**, turning from sin, and our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are buried with Jesus by baptism in His name, all the way under the water. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we rise to walk in newness of life, a brand-new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the Holy Ghost, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, which means as He gives the words (Acts 2:4). Jesus called this being born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5)."
Pray with the students, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

6. Activity: Journal (10 minutes)

Each student writes privately. No one has to share. Write these three prompts on the board:

1. Where have I seen God's power or God's care in my own life?
2. Is there something God has told me in His Word that I keep putting off? What is it?
3. Write a short prayer asking God to keep your heart soft and ready to obey.
   If there is time, invite a few volunteers to share one sentence.

This week: when you read or hear God's Word, do one thing it says the same day. Don't let your heart get hard by waiting.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, You are the LORD, and there is none greater. Thank You for loving us and sending Jesus. Keep our hearts soft. When we hear Your voice, help us listen and obey right away. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a student asks how the magicians did it: read Exodus 7:11–12 together. The Bible doesn't explain it, and we don't guess. It shows the point: whatever Pharaoh's men did, God's power swallowed it up. God told His people to stay away from enchanters (Deuteronomy 18:10) and to trust Him.

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