

Moses and the Burning Bush

Teacher Pep Talk: 400 years is a long time to wait... for anything. But that is how long the children of Israel had been waiting for God to deliver them out of slavery in Egypt. Hope can be an elusive thing. It is ever before us, but often seems just beyond our grasp. When our hope is rooted in God, however, it is rock-solid, whether we realize it or not.

Hope came to Moses in the wilderness during an encounter with God... one that was heralded by a burning bush which was not consumed. God would rescue His people out of slavery in Egypt, and He would use Moses to lead them out of bondage. God gave Moses a sign and told him His name. Hope in God is never futile.

You will need: Bible
Other items depending on the activities chosen

Major Points: Moses Saw a Burning Bush
Moses Approached and God Spoke to Him
Moses was on Holy Ground
God Told Moses His Plan
God Told Moses His Name

Scripture Ref: Exodus 3

Memory Verse: Exodus 3:14 God said to Moses "I AM WHO I AM".

Lesson: **Moses Saw a Burning Bush**

- *[Be sure to start with your Bible sitting on your lap.]*
- *[Review the Timeline in the classroom, if available.]*
- Moses had grown up in Pharaoh's palace. He had been treated very well, because he was Pharaoh's daughter's adopted son.
- But Moses' people (the Israelites) were NOT treated well. They were slaves in Egypt.
- When Moses grew up, he found that he wanted to help his people... But what could he do? In the end Moses got in trouble trying to help. He had only made things worse. Moses left.
- Moses went to a place called Midian. There he met a priest of God, named Jethro. Jethro gave Moses a job and let him marry one of his daughters. Jethro was kind to Moses and taught him.
- One day, after Moses had been there for 40 years, he took Jethro's herd of sheep across the desert to a mountain.
- There on the mountain Moses saw something amazing! He saw a bush that was burning... but it didn't burn up!! What would you do if you saw something like that? *(Wait for answers.)*

Moses Approached and God Spoke to Him

- Moses did what any of us might have done if we had seen a burning bush... He went up closer to look at it!
- When Moses got closer, Moses heard God calling his name.
- God said “Moses! Moses!” What would you do if you heard God calling your name like that? (*Wait for answers.*)
- Would you answer God? If you did, what would you say? (*Wait for answers.*) Maybe you would say... “Here I am!”
- Well, that’s just what Moses did! Moses answered God and said “Here I am!” (*How about that!?!*)
- Then God said something really amazing...

Moses was on Holy Ground

- God told Moses not to come any closer.
- And He told Moses to **TAKE OFF HIS SHOES** because the place where he was standing was Holy Ground.
- Oh, my! How amazing! God said that it was holy ground and that Moses wasn’t to come any closer AND he was supposed to take off his shoes. [**OPTIONAL:** I think we should take off our shoes right now... Just because we are telling this story.]
- [*Invite everyone to take off their shoes. Take some time to let them take off their shoes and to line them up against the wall. After everyone is seated again, tell the rest of the story.*]
- Look at all those wiggly toes! Those toes are a-mazing!
- Moses took off his shoes because he was on Holy Ground.

God Told Moses His Plan

- God told Moses to take off his shoes. But that is not all God told him. God told Moses his plan! God had a plan to rescue the Israelites and bring them out of Egypt and into a new land He had for them: A Promised Land flowing with “milk and honey.”
- *That’s great! The Israelites wouldn’t be slaves anymore! Moses must have wondered how God was going to do this.*
- Then God told Moses “I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people (the Israelites) out of Egypt.”
- Wow! I wonder what Moses thought about that? God says, “OK... Now, go... Go on... Get on down there to Pharaoh’s house and tell him to let my people, the Israelites, go.” And Moses is just sitting there wondering things like... “Why did I ever come up here? What was I thinking? Why did I come to see this burning bush? Or even... “Where did I put my shoes?”
- Ever had a job you weren’t sure you could do? (*Wait for answers.*) Moses seemed really worried about this new job.
- So, Moses says to God... “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

- But God told Moses, “I will be with you.”
- That’s really comforting, isn’t it? God promised Moses that He would be with him. And God can do anything!

God Told Moses His Name

- People had worshiped God. But no one had known His name.
- God had made Himself known to Abraham, and to Isaac, and to Jacob (Moses’ ancestors) but God had not told them His name.
- On this special day... on the burning bush day... when He talked to Moses... God did something very special. He told Moses His Name.
- Moses told God that if he went to talk to the Israelites they would ask for God’s name. He asked Him what to tell them.
- God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” Tell the Israelites “I AM has sent me to you.”
- Wow! That’s a great name... I AM. God is simply first and all powerful. He started everything. There was nothing before Him. There is nothing greater than Him. So, His name is I AM.

Let’s pray and thank God that He is all-powerful and the beginning of everything!

Prayer: Dear God,
Thank you that you are the great I AM!
Thank you that you are all-powerful and the beginning of everything!
Thank you that you care about us and that you love us!
We love you back!
Amen.

Suggested Activities: *(Choose 1-2 that you think will work well with your group.)*

Take Off Your Shoes – *The children will take off their shoes, just like Moses did.*

Before Class: Consider whether or not it is warm enough in your area at this time of year for the children to take off their shoes and be barefooted in class for a while. Ask permission from your supervisor to do this activity. Consider notifying parents as well. You may want to bring things like a large flat container of sand, a sheet, and towels. Consider bringing paper, pencils, and crayons so they may trace their feet and toes.

During Class: Either during the lesson, or after the lesson, tell the children that “God told Moses to take off his shoes because he was standing on holy ground. Moses took off his sandals. We are going to take off our shoes, just like Moses.” Invite the children to take their shoes off. Have the children place their shoes somewhere specific in your classroom (EX: lined up against a wall, or in a basket, etc.) Have the children come back and sit down. Do some exercises together with your toes... wiggle them, count them, make just your big toe point up, etc. If you have a box of sand, place a sheet on the floor under the box, and take turns standing in the sand and wiggling your toes. Brush your feet off on the towels. Use large pieces of paper to trace your feet and toes. Write the numbers of toes (1-10) on the paper. Eventually put your shoes back on!

Painting Fire – *The children will create a painting of the “Burning Bush”*

Before Class: Provide a copy of the activity sheet for each child. Also provide crayons and markers, or paints, brushes, and water and rags (to help clean up.) If using paints, cover the tables with either newspaper or plastic tablecloths. Make a sample of the finished project for the children to see. Have aprons or old shirts for the children to wear over their clothes, if you decide to use paints.

During Class: Remind the children that God spoke to Moses from a Burning Bush. Explain the project to the children and tell them that you are all going to paint (or color) the Burning Bush. Pass out papers, crayons, markers, or paints, brushes, and water. Try and make your paper seem that the bush is really on fire.

Techniques:

- One idea is to use the tip of the brush to make dots of different colors around on the Burning Bush (yellow, red, orange, brown... even some blue or green.)
- Another idea is to paint all of the bush one color, which you mix together, that looks like the color of fire (probably bright red or orange).
- Another idea is to paint individual flames on some of the branches of the bush or to make the whole bush appear to be one big flame with different colors in it.

Memory Verse – *The children will learn the memory verse and draw the name “I AM”*

Before Class: Provide a copy of the activity sheet for each child. Also provide crayons or markers. Older children may cut pieces of yarn to glue in straight lines on the letters. Do a sample of part of the activity sheet ahead of time and the rest in class.

During Class: Remind the children that in the Bible Story that Moses asked God what he should tell the Israelites if they asked him what God’s name is. God responded “I AM WHO I AM.” God then told Moses that he was to tell the Israelites “I AM has sent me to you.” *(That’s sort of a funny name, isn’t it? I AM. But if you are God and you were here before anything else, and you created everything that was created, that’s a really good name. In fact, it’s the perfect name! “I AM!” Because, after all, God IS.)* Now practice the Bible verse with the children: God told Moses “I AM WHO I AM.” You say “God told Moses...” and the children respond “I AM WHO I AM.” Show how to do the activity. To make the words “I AM WHO I AM” just connect the dots along the lines.



