



S1.Patriarchs, Joseph & Moses: The Burning Bush

Exodus 3:1-15

Multi-age One-Room Sunday School Lesson Plans

Supplies: A (Baby) Name Book that tells the meanings of names; a large blanket/towel/curtain that can't be seen through; a rod of some sort to help you hold up the large blanket/towel/curtain; Construction paper; 1 scissors per student; 1 pushpin (like a thumbtack) per student; a ball of yarn; sharpened pencils; 1 or 2 hole-punchers; (optional: printed out sample pictures [at end of lesson] for students to look at for craft).

OPENING PRAYER

TELL

- For the opening question, I'm going to ask you a question and then we'll go around the circle and say our names and then give our answer to the question.
- I'll ask the question and then I'll answer first, ok?
- Opening question: *Most names have a meaning to them. Like "Israel" means wrestles with God and "Moses" means "pulled from the water." Do you know what your name means? If not, what would you LIKE your name to mean?*

GO AROUND THE CIRCLE

TELL

- During this Session (Patriarchs, Joseph and Moses), we've been talking and learning about Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Moses.
- These 5 individuals had a lot to do with the beginning of who we call the Israelites.
- By learning the stories of these 5 individuals, we are also getting the chance to learn and see how the relationship between the Israelites and God starts, struggles, and matures.
- All of these stories that we're hearing and talking about in this Session are from the Old Testament. This means these things happened well before Jesus was born. Between 1600 to 2000 years before Jesus was born. This means some of these stories are 4000 years old!
- Last week we learned that God's promise to Abraham was coming true, that over 400 years, his family had grown and grown and came to be known as the Israelites (from Jacob whose name was changed to Israel).
- Except the Israelites grew in Egypt, which scared the Egyptians, so they enslaved the Israelites. But that didn't stop the Israelites from growing.
- So then the Egyptians started to kill all the Israelite baby boys.
- Moses was one of those baby boys, but last week we heard how an Egyptian Princess adopted him.
- In this week's story, Moses is close to 80 years old. For 40 years, he was a prince in Egypt. But he made some rash decisions that led him to flee Egypt. Then for another 40 years, he lived in the wilderness as a shepherd. Things are about to change, though, once again, for Moses.

READ Exodus 3:1-15

Moses was keeping the flock of sheep for his wife's father, Jethro; Moses led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. 2 There, an angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in a flame of fire out of a bush; Moses looked, and the bush was blazing, *but it was not burnt*. 3 Then Moses said, "I must stop what I'm doing and go look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not being burned up." 4 When the Lord saw that Moses had stopped see, God called to Moses out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And Moses said, "Here I am." 5 Then God said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." 6 Then God said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

7 Then the Lord said, "I have seen the hurt of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry caused by the Egyptians. Indeed, I know their hurt, 8 and I have come to you to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of Egypt to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of Canaan. 10 So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt."

11 But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" 12 God said, "I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain." 13 But Moses said to God, "If I come to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is God's name?' what shall I say to them?" 14 God said to Moses, "Tell them, 'I am who I am.'" Then God said, "Also, you shall say to the Israelites, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" 15 God also said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'The Lord, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you': This is my name forever, and this my title for all generations.

ASK

- What was Moses doing at the start of the story? (tending to his flock of sheep)
- And what did Moses see while he was tending to his sheep? (he saw a burning bush that was not burnt)
- Did Moses ignore the burning bush? (No)
- What did Moses do about the burning bush? (went to go check it out)
- What did Moses encounter when he went to check out the burning bush? (God's voice)
- How does God introduce himself? (as the God of your father: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob)
- What does God tell Moses to do? (Set the Israelites free)
- Does Moses agree with God? (No, he doesn't want to do it)
- Moses asks God what to call God. What name does God give Moses? (I am who I am)

TELL

- At first this doesn't seem like a very impressive name for God, does it?
- In Hebrew, though, the name "I am who I am" is spelled YHWH which we pronounce in English as "YAH-way."
- But in Hebrew, the letters are all breathy sounds, and some Bible scholars think that the point of God's name is to connect it with breathing. That every time we breathe, we are saying the name of God.

- So Moses will really be telling the people, “The God who gives you breathe is the God who sends me to set you free from slavery.” That’s a lot more impressive isn’t it!?!
- There’s power that comes with names. So we’re going to learn what our names mean. I have a book of names here that I can use to look up your name and tell you what your name means.

DO NAME DEFINITION ACTIVITY

TELL

- One of the powerful things about naming things is that it helps us to better recognize and understand the thing we’re looking at.
- But matching what we’re looking at with the name we’ve given it takes some practice.
- So we’re going to practice learning each other’s names by playing the Name Shout-Out activity

EXPLAIN Name-Shout Out ACTIVITY

- We’re going to split up into two teams.
- I am, or another adult is, going to hold up this large towel/curtain/blanket.
- One team goes on each side of the towel/curtain/blanket
- Then each team, VERY QUIETLY, chooses one person to stand right next to the curtain.
- Once each team has a person at the sheet, on the count of three, I’m going to drop the sheet.
- Of the two people standing at the sheet, the first person to shout-out the correct name of the other person gets a point for their team.
- Questions?

DO Name-Shout Out ACTIVITY

TELL

- It was kind of hard, wasn’t it, to think of the name of the person you were seeing as quick as possible, wasn’t it?
- But with a little practice, I bet you could do think of and say each others’ names pretty quickly.
- The same is true for us with God. The more we practice looking for the ways God is with us (like when we breathe), the faster and easier it’ll be for us to be aware of God’s presence in our lives.
- But this takes practice. So during the week, from time to time, pay attention to your breathing and think of how God is in our every breath.
- Our next activity will be to make a craft that will remind us of another way that God shows God’s self to us: Through light. So just like the burning bush caught Moses attention, we will make a “Pin Light Suncatcher” to remind us of God’s presence in our life.

EXPLAIN CRAFT

- I’m passing out to each of you some sheets of construction paper.
- Pick your favorite color.
- Now trace and then cut out what you imagine the Burning Bush might have looked like.
- In the middle of what you cut-out, you are going to write your name, so make the bush and/or flame fairly decent-sized.
- Once you’ve cut out your bush and/or flame, print your name (you can do first or first and last name).
- Then, take one of these push-pins and outline the letters of your name with holes from the pushpin.
- Finally, punch a hole at the top of the craft and thread it with yarn to hang at home in a window.

TELL

The effect of the craft is that the sunlight will shine around your name, acting as reminder of how God uses light to help us pay attention to God, just like the burning bush helped Moses pay attention to God in the story we read today.

CLOSING PRAYER

