

The Burning Bush

Exodus 3:1-4:17

MEMORY VERSE

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.” JOHN 10:27”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

A string and the divided memory verse written on 3x 5 cards.

Markers or crayons, scissors, tongue depressors, tape and as many burning bush activity sheets as the number of children in your class.

Cupcakes in green paper with dyed green frosting and yellow, orange, and red sprinkles.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Un-spin the Web

You will need string and the memory verse written one word at a time on 3x5 cards.

Split your class into pairs. Have your teams untangle the puzzled memory verse by working their way through the maze of a web of string. Let your starting place be your ending place and take a long string and wind it all around the room.

Shuffle the 3 x 5 cards and tape them at intervals along the string. Have the pairs work together by having one person find the words and the other write down the words found by their partner. Have each team work their way through the web until they have gathered all the words or phrases (place pairs at different intervals on the web so they don't “bottle-neck”).

The first team to unscramble the verse correctly is the winner.

LESSON TIME!

In today's lesson, we learn about Moses' encounter with a burning bush. God will speak to Moses and share with him the special plans He has for Moses' life. God had chosen Moses to be the one to lead His people out of Egypt; but, as we will see, it was a pretty scary thing for Moses to think about.

Just as God had a plan and a call for Moses, God has a plan and a call for our lives. He wants to use our lives for His purposes. Sometimes it can be kind of scary for us to step out in new areas and serve the Lord. But as Moses learned through his years of serving the Lord, God will always enable us to do what He has called us to do. **Who God calls, God equips.**

EXODUS 3:1-6

Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, but the bush was not consumed.

Then Moses said, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn."

So when the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am."

Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground."

Moreover He 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 upon God.

Moses had been a shepherd for forty years in the desert. During that long period of time, God was *preparing* him for the work that He had called Moses to do. Moses was now 80 years old and was about to begin the most exciting period of his life. Remember, God's people, the Israelites, had been slaves in Egypt for many years. They cried out to God for deliverance. God had heard their cries and prepared Moses to be His instrument.

God appeared to Moses in a flaming bush that was not consumed. When Moses realized that God was speaking to him, He was afraid to look upon God and hid his face. Can you imagine actually speaking with God?

When God called to Moses, Moses responded, "Here I am." We need to listen and hear God's call to us. May we respond to God as Moses did by saying, "Here I am!" God has wonderful plans for each of our lives. Perhaps God will call you to be a pastor, a missionary, an evangelist, a prayer warrior, or to use the gifts and talents He has given you in ways that will bring glory to Him. Maybe, even now, He will call you to share the Gospel with a friend down the street. Let us listen for the voice of God in our hearts and jump at the opportunity to serve Him. **Who God calls, God equips.**

Animated Burning Bush

You will need markers or crayons, scissors, tongue depressors, tape and as many burning bush activity sheets (provided with curriculum) as the number of children in your class.

Have your class color and cut out the burning bush. Have each student tape a tongue depressor to the back of the fire. Slide the flame through the back of the slit in the bush and move it back and forth to burn the bush without consuming it.

EXODUS 3:9-12

"Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them.

"Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt."

But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?"

So He said, "I will certainly be with you. And this shall be a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain."

Note, God heard the cry of His people. They had been in bondage to the Egyptians for quite some time. Is it possible that some felt God had forgotten them? God sees our difficulties and hears our cries. Although His help may not be immediate or as we would plan, He will not forget—He will help us in His timing and according to His plans.

God revealed His plan to Moses: Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt."

Moses responded, “Who am I to do this thing?” In other words, “You must have the wrong guy!” Moses was a meek—fully aware of his own frailties and weaknesses; yet, who God calls, God equips.

God is patient with Moses and responds, “Certainly I will be *with* you.” God gave Moses a sign: “When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.” This would be fulfilled some time later as Moses led over 2 million Israelites to worship on that very mountain.

We can be certain that, as God was *with* Moses, God is with us! Though we are not capable and adequate in ourselves to fulfill God’s plan in our life, God is our sufficiency. He will enable us. He will accomplish His plans through us.

God assures Moses of His power to help him. **Who God calls, God equips.**

Let’s find out what Moses does next...

EXODUS 3:13-15

Then Moses said to God, "Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?"

And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.' "

Moreover God said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'The LORD God of your fathers, 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 is My memorial to all generations.'"

Moses was concerned that the people would not believe that God had called him and sent him to deliver them. We see, perhaps, a failure of faith.

The name of God, "I AM WHO I AM," means "the self-existent one." God is all-powerful and self-existing. He has no beginning or end. He was not created. He alone is God and has all authority over heaven and earth. This is *Who* was sending Moses. Certainly Moses could trust in God. God can do all things and is willing to use us to accomplish His purposes if we will let Him. God will go before us in any task. He will give us favor just as He did for Moses. **Who God calls, God equips.**

EXODUS 4:1-9

Then Moses answered and said, "But suppose they will not believe me or listen to my voice; suppose they say, 'The LORD has not appeared to you.' "

So the LORD said to him, "What is that in your hand?" And he said, "A rod."

And He said, "Cast it on the ground." So he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from it.

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Reach out your hand and take it by the tail" (and he reached out his hand and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand),

"that they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you."

Furthermore the LORD said to him, "Now put your hand in your bosom." And he put his hand in his bosom, and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous, like snow.

And He said, "Put your hand in your bosom again." So he put his hand in his bosom again, and drew it out of his bosom, and behold, it was restored like his other flesh.

"Then it will be, if they do not believe you, nor heed the message of the first sign, that they may believe the message of the latter sign.

"And it shall be, if they do not believe even these two signs, or listen to your voice, that you shall take water from the river and pour it on the dry land. And the water which you take from the river will become blood on the dry land."

Now Moses begins to bring up some "what-ifs." He asks, "what if they do not listen to me or do what I say?" It seems Moses is preoccupied with considering all the problems that might arise. This was, without doubt, a big task for God to ask Moses to take on. Yet, even at 80 years old, Moses will be learning he, certainly, can depend on God.

We need to learn that lesson as well. If God calls us, He will equip us. He will go before us and be present with us. Rather than look at our circumstances, we can rest, for the great "I AM" is with us. **Who God calls, God equips.**

EXODUS 4:10-12

Then Moses said to the LORD, "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue."

So the LORD said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the LORD?"

"Now therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say."

Moses felt like he was not a very good speaker. He felt like he could not present himself to the people and to Pharaoh. Moses questions his adequacy for the task; God responded patiently, as He did to Moses' other concerns.

God explained to Moses' that it was He who created him; and with certainty, it would be He who could enable him, despite his weakness. God has made us all uniquely and has specific plans for each of us. Our frailties and inadequacies can be opportunities for God to demonstrate His strength in our lives. **Who God calls, God equips.**

EXODUS 4:13-17

But he said, "O my Lord, please send by the hand of whomever else You may send."

So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and He said: "Is not Aaron the Levite your brother? I know that he can speak well. And look, he is also coming out to meet you. When he sees you, he will be glad in his heart."

"Now you shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth. And I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do.

"So he shall be your spokesman to the people. And he himself shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God.

"And you shall take this rod in your hand, with which you shall do the signs."

Does it sound like Moses wanted this special task? Perhaps his life is pretty comfortable out in the desert all by himself. He's just tending sheep for his father in law, no worries or cares. He provides for his family and does not have to deal with too many problems; life is pretty good for him right now. We do not know what was in Moses' heart—perhaps it was fear or the feeling of inadequacy that made him reluctant to go. We do see a failure in faith.

Our own failure to believe and trust in God and be secure in His plans for us can cause us to miss out on God's best in our lives. God wanted to bless Moses and speak through him, now Moses' brother Aaron would be the spokesman. Moses would now miss out on God's best plan. Later Aaron, in a leadership role, would cause problems for Moses and the children of Israel.

God called Moses to an exciting task. God has a plan and a purpose for our lives. In Jeremiah 29:11 God says, "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope." May we obey God fully and see His purposes accomplished in our life. Remember, our weaknesses and inabilities are not a concern to our mighty God, the Great "I AM." **Who God calls, God equips.**

Burning Bushes That Are Consumed

Treat your class to cupcakes in green paper. Dye the frosting green and sprinkle with yellow, orange and red sprinkles.

Explain that these burning bushes are meant to be consumed.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to trust the Lord in everything. Pray that God accomplish His plans and purposes in each life. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity to do so.

Template - The Burning Bush

