

Moses and the Burning Bush

Exodus 2:11 - 4:31

PPT Title

Moses Listens to God in the Burning Bush

Main Point: We can encounter God anytime, anywhere.

Key Verse: "Come here. Listen to what the Lord your God is saying." - Joshua 3:9b

Props: a walking stick; a toy snake; a robe; cup of clear water; cup of red-tinted water



Say: Last week we learned that Pharaoh's own daughter rescued Moses from the Nile River. This woman actually paid Moses' mother to feed him until he was old enough to drink from a cup. Then Moses went to the palace in Egypt to live as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. The Bible says that after Moses grew up, he went out to where his own people were and watched them as they worked as slaves. It bothered him to see his people being treated so badly! Long before he observed the misery of his people, Moses made a VERY important decision to listen to God and trust God's ways.

*Moses had **faith**. So he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. That happened after he had grown up. He chose to be treated badly together with the people of God. He chose that instead of enjoying sin's pleasures for a short time. He suffered shame because of Christ. He thought it had great value. He considered it better than the riches of Egypt. He was looking ahead to God's reward. - Hebrews 11:24-26*



While Moses was watching his people slave away, he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew (his own people). The Bible says that Moses looked around to be sure no one could see him, and then he killed the Egyptian and hid his body in the sand. Of course, we know that murder is wrong. In this case, Moses was defending the life of his fellow Hebrew (Acts 7:24). This is similar to how a police officer might have to shoot a criminal to save an innocent person's life.

Teacher Note: The original Greek wording of Moses' action in Acts 7:24 tells us that Moses "acted rightly" and "did justice" when he defended this man.

And seeing one of them suffer wrong (to act wickedly toward someone), he defended (ward off someone, aid or assist) him, and avenged (to avenge an injured person, to act rightly) him that was oppressed (afflicted with evils), and smote (cut down, kill, slay) the Egyptian. - Acts 7:24 KJV (definitions from Strong's Concordance)

The very next day, when Moses was walking around, he saw another fight! Only this time, it was between two Hebrew men. This frustrated Moses. He wondered why two fellow believers in God would fight one another. The Hebrews said, "Who made you the boss over us? You can't tell us what to do. Are you going to kill us as you killed that Egyptian?"

As soon as Moses realized that the killing had been discovered, he was terrified. And when Pharaoh heard about it, Pharaoh tried to kill Moses!



That's when Moses ran for his life - all the way to Midian. **Teacher:** Point out Egypt and Midian on the map. He arrived at a well. And guess who was there? SEVEN young ladies! They were there to water their flocks, but some other shepherds were also at

the well, and they didn't want to wait their turn. So they tried to "bully" these girls into waiting. But when Moses arrived, he rescued them and insisted that they water their flocks first. When the girls came home, they told their father, Jethro, that Moses, an "Egyptian", had saved them. Jethro invited Moses to dinner, and there he explained how he came to Midian.



Moses stayed in Midian and married one of those girls: Zipporah. They had a son, and Moses named him Gershom. That meant, "I have become an alien in a foreign land".

It's interesting to note that Moses saw himself as a foreigner. Truthfully, he was a foreigner in the land of Egypt far more than in the land of Midian. Midian was actually very close to the Promised Land (the land that God had promised to Abraham and his descendants, including Moses), but Moses couldn't understand that yet.

And this is very important for you to hear: **God is ALWAYS at work** even when you can't see things clearly. To Moses, it looked like he was in the middle of nowhere. But to God, Moses was exactly where he needed to be! At the same time all of this was happening in Moses' life, the Pharaoh of Egypt died, and the Hebrew people were still crying out to God for His deliverance!



On an ordinary day, while Moses was tending sheep for this father-in-law, Jethro, he noticed a burning bush. This wasn't really that uncommon, but something unusual was definitely going on here, because while the bush was on fire, it was not burning up. Moses walked closer to the bush, and an angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within the bush. Moses heard a Voice calling his name, "Moses". Then he heard it again, "Moses."

Ask: How do you think Moses felt when he heard his name being called from a bush that was on fire? *Scared, surprised, confused.*

Say: After his name was called the second time, Moses answered, "Here I am." Then God warned Moses not to come any closer, and He told Moses to take off his sandals because he was standing on holy ground. The Voice from the bush then said, "I AM the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob". Moses hid his face because he was terrified. He knew that no one could ever see God and live. (Genesis 32:30; Exodus 33:20; Judges 6:22-23; 13:21-22) He probably fell to the ground in awe and worship of God.

When God revealed Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, He was revealing Himself as a covenant-making God. A **covenant** is an unbreakable promise between God and people. When God made a covenant with Abraham, what did He say?

The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your country and your people. Leave your father's family. Go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you. I will make your name great. You will be a blessing to others. I will bless those who bless you. I will put a curse on anyone who calls down a curse on you. All nations on earth will be blessed because of you." - Genesis 12:1-4

Say: The covenant-making God was talking to Moses! When God makes a covenant, He keeps His Word. God ALWAYS keeps His promises! And Moses is about to hear some WONDERFUL NEWS!

The Lord said, "I have seen my people suffer in Egypt. I have heard them cry out because of their slave drivers. I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to save them from the Egyptians. I will bring them up out of that land. I will bring them into a good land. It has a lot of room. It is a land that has plenty of milk and honey." - Exodus 3: 7-8

This land that God promised to Abraham long ago was now going to become the new

home for all the Hebrew people who were suffering as slaves in Egypt. God is not only a Covenant making God, but He is also compassionate. The Bible says that God heard the Israelites cry out and that He was concerned about their suffering. That's what compassion is: to be concerned about someone else.

Ask: Do you feel compassion for people who "cry out"? What are some ways that your friends "cry out"? How do you help them? [Listen for answers.](#)

Say: It's one thing to "feel" compassion, but it's even better to ACT - to do something to help them! And that's just what God intended to do. God was going to help the Hebrew people. He was going to set them free! Let's read what He told Moses:

So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh. I want you to bring the Israelites out of Egypt. They are My people. - Exodus 3:10

WOW! Did you hear that? God was going to send Moses back to Egypt to bring the Hebrews out of Egypt! This would be a very big job!

But Moses spoke to God. "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh?" he said. "Who am I that I should bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"

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God said, "I will be with you."

God said, "I will be with you. *I will give you a miraculous sign. It will prove that I have sent you. When you have brought the people out of Egypt, all of you will worship Me on this mountain."* - Exodus 3:11-12

Moses listened to God call his name from the burning bush, and he listened as God told him that he was going to Egypt. Then Moses asked a very reasonable question, "Who am I?" In other words, Moses was saying to God, "Forty years ago I tried to rescue my people, but look what happened. My people didn't want my help. Pharaoh tried to kill me, and I fled to the desert. I've been taking care of sheep for the past 40 years. Who am I? I've already tried this, and it didn't work."

God answered Moses' "Who am I?" question with an "I AM" answer! Moses asked a reasonable question, but it was the wrong question. It wasn't WHO Moses was, but who GOD was that mattered! God's answer firmly settled the matter:

Tell them that I AM has sent me to you. - Exodus 3:14

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"I AM"

One of God's names is **I AM**. **I AM** may seem like an unusual name to us, but it is the most powerful name of all! **I AM** means that God is the only true God. There were many false gods in Egypt. **I AM** is the God who has always been and always will be (Revelation 1:8). There is no other god besides **I AM**.

Note to teacher: Consider all the I AMs of the New Testament: Living Water, Bread of Life, Resurrection and the Life, etc. Consider, also, the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18 where Jesus tells us to go and make disciples and that *He will be with us* to the end of the age.

Say: Moses needed to focus on God, not himself.

Note to teacher: There is a host of stories in the Bible about people looking to God for deliverance and not themselves. An entire Bible study could be done on this verse alone! God's Word is so rich and so deep. This would be an excellent study for you to pursue on your own).

The Bible says that if God is for you, no one can stand against you! (Romans 8:31) God was with Moses, and that was enough. God told Moses that He would make the elders of Israel **listen**. God also said that the people in Egypt would treat him in a kind way. God promised Moses that He would do miracles along the way to prove His power

and might to the people. Moses heard all the wonderful things that God was saying, but still in his heart, he wondered: "What if no one believes me?"

Teacher: Use props to act this out as you read these verses to your class.

Moses answered, "What if the elders of Israel won't believe me? What if they won't listen to me? Suppose they say, 'The Lord didn't appear to you.' Then what should I do?"

The Lord said to him, "What do you have in your hand?"

"A wooden staff," he said.

The Lord said, "Throw it on the ground."



So Moses threw it on the ground. It turned into a snake. He ran away from it. Then the Lord said to Moses, "Reach your hand out. Take the snake by the tail." So he reached out and grabbed hold of the snake. It turned back into a staff in his hand.

The Lord said, "When they see this miraculous sign, they will believe that I appeared to you. I am the God of their fathers. I am the God of Abraham. I am the God of Isaac. And I am the God of Jacob."



Then the Lord said, "Put your hand inside your coat." So Moses put his hand inside his coat. When he took it out, it was as white as snow. It was covered with a skin disease.

"Now put it back into your coat," the Lord said. So Moses put his hand back into his coat. When he took it out, the skin was healthy again. His hand was like the rest of his skin.

Then the Lord said, "Suppose they do not believe you or pay attention to the first miracle. Then maybe they will believe the second one."



"But suppose they do not believe either miracle. Suppose they will not listen to you. Then get some water from the Nile River. Pour it on the dry ground. The water you take from the river will turn to blood on the ground." - Exodus 4:1-9

After seeing these miracles, Moses STILL wasn't sure. Moses SAID that was not a very good speaker. This was simply not true. How do we know that? Listen what Stephen wrote about Moses in Acts 7:21-22:

Moses was taught all the knowledge of the people of Egypt. He became a powerful speaker and a man of action. - Acts 7:22

Moses knew that it would be hard to lead people if he couldn't speak well. But when Moses tells this supposed problem to God, listen to what God says:

"The Lord said to him, 'Who makes a man able to talk? Who makes him unable to hear or speak? Who makes him able to see? Who makes him blind? It is I, the Lord. Now go. I will help you speak. I will teach you what to say.'" - Exodus 4:11-12

When God gives you a job to do, it is not wise to point out all the reasons why you cannot do the job. God created Moses and already knew what kind of speaker Moses was. God was with Moses, and that was enough. God would help him speak and give him the words to say. If God tells you to do something, He will equip you with exactly what you need to do His work. You don't need to make a list of reasons why you can't do what God tells you to do.

Note to teacher: Share a personal story here if you can.

Have you ever heard the saying, "God doesn't call the equipped; He equips the called"? That means God doesn't choose people who can do great things. God makes those He chooses able to do great things. It is *His* power we depend on (2 Corinthians 12:9-11). But listen to what Moses said next:



But Moses said, "Lord, please send someone else to do it." Then the Lord's anger burned against Moses. He said, "What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you. He will be glad to see you. Speak to him. Put your words in his mouth. Tell him what to say. I will help both of you speak. I will teach you what to do. He will speak to the people for you. He will be like your mouth. And you will be like God to him." - Exodus 4:13-16

Since Moses argued with God about his ability to speak, God allowed Aaron to speak for Moses. But later in this story, we are going to see that Moses should have trusted God and spoke for himself. Moses went back to his wife and father-in-law and told them that he wanted to go back to Egypt to see if any of his own people were still alive. It's interesting to note that he did NOT tell either of them about his encounter with God!

So Moses did what God commanded him to do. He left Midian and went to Egypt. And just as God said, his brother Aaron came out to meet him. Moses told Aaron everything the Lord sent him to say. - Exodus 4:29-31

Then Moses and his brother, Aaron, brought together the elders of the Hebrew people. Just as God said, they believed. Moses and Aaron gathered all of the elders of Israel together. Aaron told them everything the Lord had said to Moses. He also did the miracles in the sight of the people. And they believed. They heard that the Lord was concerned about them. He had seen their suffering. **So they bowed down and worshiped God.** Everything that God said came true. God ALWAYS keeps His promises.

PPT Main Point

Main Point: We can encounter God anytime, anywhere.