

MOSES AND THE BURNING BUSH

Exodus 3:1-12

Prepare to Hear the Word

- Mt Sinai is regarded by the Hebrew people as a holy mountain
- Before this event Moses had fled to Midian from Egypt, after killing an Egyptian who was beating an Israelite.
- On his way to Midian Moses rescued seven sisters from some hostile shepherds.
- The burning bush is a messenger or angel of God in the form of a flame.
- The exact location of Mt Sinai is not known but it is thought to be in North West Arabia.

You will need:

- 3D figures of Moses, a few sheep, a small bush
- Sand coloured felt underlay to represent the desert.
- Round piece of darker felt to represent Mt Sinai
- Red felt circle for Burning Bush

When children are seated in a semi-circle ready to listen to the story, place the gold box/bag, containing the materials you will need, carefully beside you.

Begin by introducing the Bible as the source for the story. For example:

This story comes from our special book, the Bible. The stories in this book are very important. We know the story will tell us something about God and God's people.

Lay the Bible in view in a special place: the prayer space or on a cloth beside the story space. Comment on the desert and how dangerous it is.

Place a darker felt circle on the underlay to represent Mt Sinai.

Add Moses and his flock. Move them towards the mountain.

One day Moses was looking after a flock of sheep and goats that belonged to Jethro, his father-in-law. Moses led the flock into the wilderness near the Mountain of Sinai.

Place the bush on the mountain.

On top of the mountain he saw a burning bush, but the branches were not burning up. "I must go and look at this strange sight," Moses said to himself.

Move Moses up the mountain.

As Moses came closer to the burning bush he heard a voice calling to him, "Moses, Moses!"

"Here I am" he answered. "Do not come closer. Take off your shoes; you are standing on holy ground. I am the God of your ancestors; the God of Abraham and Sarah, the God of Isaac and Rebecca, the God of Jacob and Rachael". Moses covered his face. He was afraid to look at God.

Put your hands over your face.

God spoke to Moses, "I have seen the suffering of the Israelites in the land of Egypt. I want you to lead them into a land of freedom, and save them from slavery and suffering."

Point to the distance.

God continued, "Moses! Go to the Pharaoh and tell him to let Israel go. Tell him the Lord God commands him to 'Let my people go!'"

Moses was still afraid. He asked God, “Who am I to go to Pharaoh and bring the people of Israel out of Egypt? This task needs a powerful and strong leader.”

But God said to Moses, “I have chosen you, and I shall be with you.”

Move Moses to face the children.

Moses began to get ready for the great task that God had called him to do.

Moses became one of the greatest leaders of God’s people.

I Wonder

- I wonder what the sheep and goats ate in the desert?
- I wonder if Mt Sinai was very far away from Egypt?
- I wonder what Moses thought when he saw the flames coming from the bush?
- I wonder why Moses was afraid to do what God asked of him?
- I wonder what God meant by “I am who I am”.
- I wonder why God asked Moses to save the Israelite people from slavery in Egypt?

Exodus 3:1-14 Moses at the Burning Bush

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, ‘I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up.’ When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, ‘Moses, Moses!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’ Then he said, ‘Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.’ He said further, ‘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.

Then the Lord said, ‘I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.’ But Moses said to God, ‘Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?’ He 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.’ 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 his name?” what shall I say to them?’ God said to Moses, ‘I am who I am.’

Prepare to hear the Word: Teachers

- The setting for this story is out in the desert near Mt Sinai, Moses is watching his father-in-laws sheep.
- Mt Sinai (Mt Horeb) is a holy mountain where biblical revelations take place.
- Moses sees a burning bush and he removes his sandals because he is on holy ground.
- Moses realises that he has a mission from God to free his people from slavery, he does not want to because he knows it will be dangerous. Moses struggles with this responsibility.
- God promises to help Moses and reveals God’s name to him, “I am who I am” (Ex 3:14)
- God gives Moses powers and appoints his brother, Aaron, to be the spokesperson.
- Still Moses is uncertain. But God suggests that he just do it!
- A great story that reminds us that we do not always want to do what God asks of us but that God is always with us.