

Morning Overview

Lesson: *Bondage: Moses and the Burning Bush*

Lesson Objective:

This week we begin our study of Moses and the book of Exodus. In our lesson we race through the first few chapters with the Israelites coming under the bondage of Pharaoh, the birth of Moses and then we find ourselves with Moses confronted by the burning bush. Our focus or question, as has been the entire year, is will God be faithful to His promises? We discover that God keeps His promises. In our story though Moses has a hard time trusting and obeying God, but God is relentless in His rescue of His people.

Teaching Points:

- God is faithful and never changes. God keeps His promises.
- God is sovereign (or in control).
- Man is sinful.
- God is kind and merciful.
- God is everywhere all the time.
- God is all knowing.

Scripture: Exodus 1:1 – 4:31

Story: *Vos Child's Story Bible*, Pages 59-64; *Gospel Story Bible*, Pages 54-57
Jesus Storybook Bible, 84-85
The Beginner's Gospel Story Bible, Pages 44-55
The Beginner's Bible, Pages 92-104

Scripture Memory for January: Exodus 20:2 (ESV)

I am the Lord your God (*point index finger upwards toward the sky*)
who brought you out of (*reach down to ground like you are scooping or grabbing something*)
the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. (*wrap hand around opposite wrist like a handcuff*)

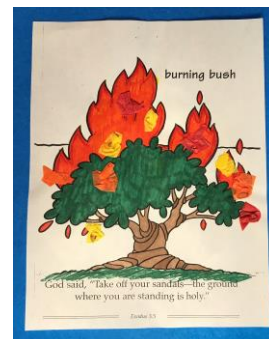
Craft: Burning Bush

Supplies: Cardstock burning bush scene, tissue paper squares, crayons/markers, glue

Instructions:

1. Color burning bush.
2. Crumple tissue paper squares to create flames.
4. Glue tissue "flames" to the burning bush.

If child has already done craft first hour, have them work on a coloring sheet



Story

Review

Our story last week ended with Joseph and his family settling in the land of Goshen. His whole family grew, grew, and grew from 75 people till it was a very large family. Joseph's family had become the nation of Israel, and this was a promise from God (numerous as the stars in the sky and the sand on the shore).

300 years had gone by and in Egypt there were Israelites everywhere, but Pharaoh did not like it. He said, "See! There are more Israelites than there are Egyptians and they're stronger than we are. We must treat them badly. We must act mean to them, so they won't have any more babies."

"If the Israelites keep growing, there will be too many of them and for sure they will fight against us!" Pharaoh went on. Then Pharaoh came up with a plan: "Let's get rid of them by making them work hard." If the Israelites worked hard, then maybe they would leave Egypt. So, Pharaoh called some men "taskmasters" and made them in charge of the Israelites. The Israelites, God's people, had to work all the time. They were slaves. The taskmasters made them work and work and work. From early in the morning to late at night the Israelites worked. They had to make bricks and carry them to different places to build with them. The taskmasters would yell at them, "Work harder!" and they would even hit the Israelites. But God knew what was happening. He saw how sad and hurt his people were. And even though the Israelites had such a hard life, God continued to help the Israelites grow larger and larger. Life became harder for the Israelites. Pharaoh only wanted to hurt them and punish them. But God had a plan through a man named Moses.

A Baby in A Basket

The Bible tells us that Moses was born during a very bad time, and to have a baby Israelite boy was a crime. Moses' mother decided to hide Moses in a basket in a nearby river until she could figure out a way to keep Moses. But one day, an Egyptian princess discovered Moses in the basket in the nearby river! And not just any Egyptian princess - Pharaoh's daughter! The princess took Moses as her own son to live in Pharaoh's palace. But the princess needed help to raise a baby boy, and it just so happened that Moses' mother was a very good helper with babies. God made it possible that the princess asked Moses' mom to help her raise Moses. Moses always had his mom near him. The Bible says Moses' mom told him about God and the promises God had made to his people. And as Moses grew up, he never forgot about God. Moses lived in Egypt in Pharaoh's beautiful palace. He wore beautiful Egyptian clothes and ate the most delicious food. Moses looked, acted, and spoke like he was an Egyptian. But Egyptians didn't believe in the true God Moses knew from his mother. Moses did! Then the Bible tells us Moses refused (or said "no" to) all of those nice things in Pharaoh's palace. Moses wanted to be with God's people, and to follow Him.

Then one day Moses did something that was wrong, and Pharaoh got very angry. Moses ran away into the desert quickly to escape Pharaoh. Moses went to a place called Midian. Pharaoh couldn't find him there, and Moses was safe.

Moses the Shepherd

In Midian, Moses's life was very different than it had been when he lived in Egypt. Moses did not have fine clothes to wear or live in the palace or eat wonderful food. Instead Moses wandered from place to place. He didn't have any friends in Midian. The Bible says he was a stranger. And now he had to work. Moses became a shepherd.

Every day Moses took care of sheep. Even in the desert, there were places where you could find grass. Moses would lead his sheep to places here and there to eat. And He would lead them to water too, so they could get a drink. Moses spent lots of time alone when he was in Midian. He did not have any friends. While Moses was tending to his sheep, the Israelites were still living in Egypt. The Egyptians continued to hurt and be mean to the Israelites. The

Bible says that the Egyptians were so mean to them that the Israelites cried out and prayed to God for help all day and all night. God had promised to make Israel a great nation, and only God could make this promise come true.

Holy Ground

One day while Moses was taking care of his sheep, he was looking around to make sure all his sheep were near. Not too far away, Moses saw something very strange. He looked, he squinted, and looked closer at what he saw. He may have even rubbed his eyes (look and rub). Not too far in the distance was a bush (like a little tree). And the bush was burning with hot fire. But there was something strange about this burning bush. It did not burn up. The bush just stayed the same even though it was burning. When something catches fire, it burns up and goes away. But not this time! The Bible says while Moses was looking at the burning bush, God spoke to him. God spoke right from the middle of that bush. Moses couldn't see God there, but he heard, "Moses, Moses!" Moses said, "Here I am." "Do not come any closer, Moses. Take off your shoes. The place where you're standing is holy ground," God said. When God said that the ground was holy, He meant that the ground near the bush was special to God and set aside for his purpose. Moses bent down and took off his shoes. Then God said, "I am the God of your fathers." Moses was afraid and did not want to look at God, so he hid his face. Then God said, "I see how my people are suffering in Egypt. I have heard their cry. I know they are in pain and how sad they are." Then God gave Moses instructions: "I want you to go to Egypt and deliver them from the Egyptians and bring them to the beautiful land." "Moses," God went on, "I want you to go to Pharaoh and bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt." Moses was very surprised that God had asked him to go to Egypt to deliver the people.

Signs from God

Moses was quick with an excuse. He said, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" Moses was afraid and did not think Pharaoh would listen to him. He was afraid to do something that hard! But then God said some very important words. God said, "I will be with you Moses." And then God told Moses exactly what He wanted him to do. Moses still had a problem though.

Moses asked God, "What if nobody believes me? Suppose the people say, 'God didn't appear to you?'" Moses thought people would not believe that God had given him this hard job. Then God asked Moses, "What's in your hand?" "A rod," Moses answered. (A rod is a great big straight stick that people use to walk with). God said, "Throw it down on the ground." Moses threw down his rod and it became a snake! Moses was afraid of it and he ran away. God had caused that rod to change into a snake. Then God said, "Reach out your hand and pick the snake up by the tail." The Bible tells us that Moses picked it up and when he did, the snake became a rod again. That was a miracle, and only God could do something like that! Then God told Moses to put his hand inside his coat. (If you can, demonstrate.) When Moses took his hand out from his coat, it looked horrible. His hand was covered with a terrible skin disease. Moses could not believe what his hand looked like. Then God said, "Put your hand back into your coat." Moses did and when he took it out, his hand was all better. It looked just like it always had looked. That was another miracle. Only God could change someone's hand like that.

Then God said, "Moses, if the people still do not believe that I sent you to be their leader, take some water from the river, pour it on the ground, and I will make the water become blood right before their eyes! Then they'll know for sure that I have sent you." God was showing Moses his great power, but Moses was still afraid.

Moses did not trust in God's promises; he did not want to obey God either. He said, "Lord, I'm just not a good talker." God replied, "I will be with you and teach you what to say." But Moses whined, "O, Lord please send someone else." Even though God showed Moses His power and promised to be there with him, Moses did not want to obey God. The Bible says that God was angry with Moses. God told Moses, "I will send your brother Aaron to be your helper. I have already promised to be with you (say strongly). Now go and tell Pharaoh, 'The Lord says, 'Let my people go, that they may serve Me.'" After all this, Moses was ready to obey to God.

Questions for Review with Younger Children

Have the kids answer “Yes” if it is true, or “no” with the correct answer if it is false.

- The Israelites stayed a very small family. (No! They grew into a large family.)
- Pharaoh was very nice to the Israelites (No! He was mean to them.)
- Moses’ mom put him in a basket in the river to hide him. (Yes)
- Pharaoh’s daughter, the princess, discovered Moses in the river. (Yes)
- Moses went to live in Pharaoh’s palace. (Yes)
- Moses’ mom ended up helping raise Moses in Pharaoh’s palace. (Yes)
- Moses stayed in Pharaoh’s palace till he was very old. (No! He ran away from Pharaoh.)
- Moses was a shepherd in Midian. (Yes)
- God spoke to Moses through a large parrot. (No! God spoke to Moses through a burning bush.)
- God told Moses to go back to Egypt and help deliver His people. (Yes)
- Moses immediately obeyed God and gave no excuses. (No! Moses was afraid and not obedient.)
- God helped Moses by sending Aaron along with him. (Yes)
- Moses eventually obeyed God. (Yes)