

## **“Proclaim His Name to Egypt: Moses and the Burning Bush”**

Based on Exodus 3:1 — 4:17 (NIV)

### **King’s Theatre — Storytelling Workshop**

#### **Leader preparation:**

1. Read the Scripture passages prayerfully, asking God to show you what He has to say to you and to those He’s given you to teach.
2. Read the Biblical Explanation and Background, and think about what concepts you need to teach.

#### **Materials:**

Scroll (see below in main body of lesson) with the background & story pasted on. Tied with ribbon or string. Biblical costume for leader.

Welcome the children and open in prayer.

*Dear Lord, thank you for bringing us here today to learn together, in prayer, in worship and in fun. Amen*

Teach about Moses and the burning bush, briefly describing the background from Exodus 1 & 2, and relating Moses’ encounter with God in Exodus 3 & 4, especially Exodus 3:1 — 6. (Your story covers all of Exodus 3 & 4.) Ask the children to relate what they’ve already learned about Moses and the Burning Bush in other workshops. Remember to repeat the two memory verses, Matthew 28:20b and Psalm 33:8 before beginning the other Bible reading, or to post them for the children to read with you at the beginning.

This teaching can emphasize how we experience a “holy place” with God, and how people behave and honor God in a “holy place”. Children can learn that they can call on God anytime, anywhere, for any reason, that God is always with us, and that wherever we meet God is a holy place. Since we hear from God’s word in the Oasis, it can also be regarded as a “holy place”. Ask the children to identify ways that people honor and respect holy places. Use the white board to record their suggestions.

- Kneeling, bowing in prayer
- Dressing appropriately

- Being honest
- Being humble
- Being respectful and kind to other people
- Being a quiet, attentive listener
- Being ready and willing to hear from God and to obey Him

(If you think it would be appropriate, you could have the children leave the room, line up, and re-enter the room as they would enter a holy place.)

Leader can don costume at this point or be dressed as a descendant of Moses from the beginning of the lesson.

**Story:** (You may use the following story, or if you have a better one from another source such as a Bible story book, use that one.) – on a scroll.

*BACKGROUND:* Abraham had a son named Isaac, and one of Isaac's sons was named Jacob. Now Jacob, Abraham's grandson, had 12 sons, and his favorite son was named Joseph. Joseph's brothers were jealous, and sold him as a slave to some traders who took him to Egypt. After several years in which Joseph continued to honor and worship God in spite of his troubles, Joseph went to work in a very high and powerful position for Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Some time later, by God's plan, Joseph's 11 brothers and his father, Jacob, and all their families had to move to Egypt. They met Joseph there, and they all lived in Egypt and prospered. Eventually, Jacob and Joseph and all his brothers died, and their children grew up and had more children so they were very numerous. The Egyptians called these Israelite people "Hebrews".

A long time passed, and a new pharaoh came to power who had never heard of Joseph and of the good things he did for Egypt. He saw that there were a large number of Hebrew people living in Egypt, and he was afraid that if there were a war, the Hebrews would help the Egyptians' enemies. So the pharaoh made the Hebrews, the Israelite people, work as slaves, and the Egyptians treated them very unfairly and cruelly.

Moses was born at a time when the little boy Hebrew babies were in danger of being killed by pharaoh's soldiers, so his mother hid him. When he grew too big to be hidden at home, she made a little floating basket bed for him to float in the Nile river, and she asked his sister Miriam to watch him there. One day the princess, Pharaoh's daughter, came to bathe in the river, and she found baby Moses. Big sister Miriam immediately said, "Can I get you a nurse for him?" The princess said, "yes", and Miriam got Moses' mother to care for him. So Moses was raised by the princess in the king's palace. As an adult, one day Moses saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew slave. Moses killed the Egyptian, but when the pharaoh heard about it, he wanted to kill Moses. Moses had to escape. He traveled far away to a country called Midian and lived there as a shepherd.

He married, had a son, and helped his father-in-law pasture his flocks.

STORY One day Moses took his flock to a place called Mt. Horeb or Mt. Sinai. He saw a bush that was on fire, but it was not being burned up by the flame. He went to look at it more closely, and as he did so, God called his name, "Moses", from out of the bush! Moses answered, "Here I am." God said, "Don't come any closer. Take off your sandals because you are standing on holy ground. I am the God that your ancestors Abraham, Isaac and Jacob worshiped." Moses was afraid to look at God; he hid his face.

God said, "I've seen how my people are suffering as slaves in Egypt, and I have heard them beg me to help them, and I have come to rescue them from the Egyptians. I will bring them out of Egypt into a country where there is good land, a land that is rich with milk and honey. I've chosen you, Moses, to go to Pharaoh and tell him to let my people go. You will lead my people out of Egypt, and then they will all worship me on this mountain."

Moses said, "Who am I to do that?"

God answered, "I will be with you."

Moses said, "What shall I do if my people ask your name?"

God said, "Tell them that the LORD whose name is "I AM" has sent you. This is my name forever. Tell them I have seen how they are suffering and I promise to lead them out of their troubles. The leaders of Israel will listen to you, but when you take them to the pharaoh, he won't let you go. So I will use my mighty power to perform miracles and defeat the Egyptians."

Moses asked, "What if nobody believes you appeared to me?"

God told Moses to throw down the walking stick he was carrying. When Moses did this, the stick became a snake. Moses jumped back! But God said, "Pick it up by the tail." When Moses did, it became a stick again.

Next God told Moses, "Put your hand inside your shirt" Moses did, and when he took it out it had turned all white, as if he had leprosy, a bad skin disease. God told Moses to put his hand back inside his shirt, and when he took it out again, it was normal.

Then God said, "If people see these miracles and still don't believe that you have seen me, take some water from the Nile River and pour it on the ground, and it will turn to blood."

Moses protested, "I am just not a good speaker. I'm slow and I can't think of what to say."

God said, "Don't you know that I am the one who makes people able to speak or not, for I made men's mouths. I make them hear or not hear, see or not see; now go! When you speak, I will be with you and give you the words to say."

Moses still did not want to go. He begged God to send someone else. Finally God said, "Your brother Aaron will go with you; he's a good speaker. He can speak to the people and you can tell him what to say, just as I will tell you what to say. I will be with both of

you, and I will tell each of you what to do. Now go.”

**Questions:** (You may choose to have the children write or draw the answer to one of the questions in their journals if there is time.)

1. Was Moses expecting to be called by God? (No; he was just tending his flock, when he saw the burning bush.)
2. How did Moses respond to God’s call? (He was very reluctant to take on this job. He did not feel adequate to speak to Pharaoh and to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. He tried four different times to tell God that he couldn’t do the job: Exodus 3:11, 4:1. 4:10 and 4:13.)
3. Did God accept Moses’ reasons for not becoming a leader? (No; each time Moses told God why he couldn’t do the job, God answered that He, God, would help Moses.)
4. In what way was the ground near the burning bush a “holy place”? (God was present there to communicate with Moses. Wherever we are present in communication with God is a “holy place”.)
5. Do you ever communicate with God, not just speaking to Him your praises and concerns, but also listening to Him? (Prayer is two-way communication, but don’t forget that whatever we “hear” from God must agree with the principles in God’s word, the Bible. That’s a good reason to get to know the Bible thoroughly!)
6. Before you can really communicate with God, you need to be part of his “adopted” family through Jesus Christ. Talk to a trusted adult at home or at church to learn how to become a member of God’s family.

Prayer : pray in turns as they feel led to do so. Include praises and concerns as well.