

Moses Sees a Burning Bush

Moses Sees a Burning Bush.....	1
Scene Summary	1
Scripture.....	1
Players.....	3
Special Props.....	3
Script – Moses Sees a Burning Bush	4
Supplemental information.....	7
Reflection questions.....	7

Scene Summary

Moses sees a burning bush presents the story of how God called Moses to lead the Hebrews out of Egypt. Scenes include: Moses caring for Jethro's sheep...he sees a bush on fire which isn't consumed...God speaks to him and tells of the Hebrews' hardships in Egypt...He asks Moses to lead them out...God changes Moses' staff into a serpent, then back into a staff as a sign that He is with him...Moses is reluctant, so God promised that Aaron will speak for him...Moses and his family leave for Egypt...he meets Aaron...and they go to the king with God's message.

Scripture

(Exo 3 NIV) Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. {2} There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. {3} So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight--why the bush does not burn up." {4} When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!" And Moses said, "Here I am." {5} "Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." {6} Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God. {7} The LORD said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. {8} So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey--the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. {9} And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. {10} So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt." {11} But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" {12} And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain." {13} Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say

to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?" {14} God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" {15} God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the 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, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation. {16} "Go, assemble the elders of Israel and say to them, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers--the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob-- appeared to me and said: I have watched over you and have seen what has been done to you in Egypt. {17} And I have promised to bring you up out of your misery in Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites--a land flowing with milk and honey.' {18} "The elders of Israel will listen to you. Then you and the elders are to go to the king of Egypt and say to him, 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. Let us take a three-day journey into the desert to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God.' {19} But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless a mighty hand compels him. {20} So I will stretch out my hand and strike the Egyptians with all the wonders that I will perform among them. After that, he will let you go. {21} "And I will make the Egyptians favorably disposed toward this people, so that when you leave you will not go empty-handed. {22} Every woman is to ask her neighbor and any woman living in her house for articles of silver and gold and for clothing, which you will put on your sons and daughters. And so you will plunder the Egyptians."

(Exo 4 NIV) Moses answered, "What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, 'The LORD did not appear to you?'" {2} Then the LORD said to him, "What is that in your hand?" "A staff," he replied. {3} The LORD said, "Throw it on the ground." Moses threw it on the ground and it became a snake, and he ran from it. {4} Then the LORD said to him, "Reach out your hand and take it by the tail." So Moses reached out and took hold of the snake and it turned back into a staff in his hand. {5} "This," said the LORD, "is so that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers--the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob--has appeared to you." {6} Then the LORD said, "Put your hand inside your cloak." So Moses put his hand into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was leprous, like snow. {7} "Now put it back into your cloak," he said. So Moses put his hand back into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was restored, like the rest of his flesh. {8} Then the LORD said, "If they do not believe you or pay attention to the first miraculous sign, they may believe the second. {9} But if they do not believe these two signs or listen to you, take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground. The water you take from the river will become blood on the ground." {10} Moses said to the LORD, "O Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue." {11} The LORD said to him, "Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the LORD? {12} Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say." {13} But Moses said, "O Lord, please send someone else to do it." {14} Then the Lord's anger burned against Moses and he said, "What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and his heart will be glad when he sees you. {15} You shall speak to him and put words in his mouth; I will help both of you speak and will teach you what to do. {16} He will speak to the people for you, and it will be as if he were your mouth and as if you were God to him. {17} But take this staff in your hand so you can perform miraculous signs with it." {18} Then Moses went back to Jethro his father-in-law and said to him, "Let me go back to my own people in Egypt to see if any of them are still alive." Jethro said, "Go, and I wish

you well." {19} Now the LORD had said to Moses in Midian, "Go back to Egypt, for all the men who wanted to kill you are dead." {20} So Moses took his wife and sons, put them on a donkey and started back to Egypt. And he took the staff of God in his hand. {21} The LORD said to Moses, "When you return to Egypt, see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders I have given you the power to do. But I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go. {22} Then say to Pharaoh, "This is what the LORD says: Israel is my firstborn son, {23} and I told you, "Let my son go, so he may worship me." But you refused to let him go; so I will kill your firstborn son." {24} At a lodging place on the way, the LORD met Moses and was about to kill him. {25} But Zipporah took a flint knife, cut off her son's foreskin and touched Moses' feet with it. "Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me," she said. {26} So the LORD let him alone. (At that time she said "bridegroom of blood," referring to circumcision.) {27} The LORD said to Aaron, "Go into the desert to meet Moses." So he met Moses at the mountain of God and kissed him. {28} Then Moses told Aaron everything the LORD had sent him to say, and also about all the miraculous signs he had commanded him to perform. {29} Moses and Aaron brought together all the elders of the Israelites, {30} and Aaron told them everything the LORD had said to Moses. He also performed the signs before the people, {31} and they believed. And when they heard that the LORD was concerned about them and had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshiped.

(Exo 5:1 NIV) Afterward Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the desert.'"

Scripture quotations marked (NIV) are taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. NIV®. Copyright©1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved.

Players

- **Narrator** – The play's "catechist" or teacher should be a good reader with a clear voice.
- **Moses** – This person should be played with great authority and presence.
- **God** – Strong offstage voice.
- **Jethro** – Moses' father-in-law, played as an older person.

Special Props

- Normal items from the prop box such as cloaks, veils, robes and headdresses.
- A staff for Moses.

Script – Moses Sees a Burning Bush

Narrator: For many years, Moses lived in a land called Midian. He took care of sheep that belonged to his wife's father Jethro. One day, Moses saw a bush on fire. He had seen other bushes catch fire when the hot sun beat down upon them and usually the bush burned quickly.

Moses: [to himself] This is strange. The bush is on fire, but the bush is not burning up.

Narrator: Moses walked closer to this strange bush to see why it didn't burn up. The LORD called to him out of the burning bush.

God: Moses. [pause] Moses.

Moses: I am here.

God: Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.

[Moses takes off his shoes]

God: I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. [pause]

Narrator: Moses was afraid. He covered his face.

God: I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey. [pause] So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.

Moses: Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?

God: I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.

Moses: Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?

God: I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" [pause] Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the 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, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation. Go, assemble the elders of Israel and say to them, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers--the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob-- appeared to me and said: I have watched over you and have seen what has been done to you in Egypt. And

I have promised to bring you up out of your misery in Egypt into the land flowing with milk and honey. The elders of Israel will listen to you. Then you and the elders are to go to the king of Egypt and say to him, 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. Let us take a three-day journey into the desert to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God. But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless a mighty hand compels him. So I will stretch out my hand and strike the Egyptians with all the wonders that I will perform among them. After that, he will let you go. And I will make the Egyptians favorably disposed toward this people, so that when you leave you will not go empty-handed. Every woman is to ask her neighbor and any woman living in her house for articles of silver and gold and for clothing, which you will put on your sons and daughters. And so you will plunder the Egyptians.

Moses: What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, 'The LORD did not appear to you'?

God: What is that in your hand?

Moses: A staff.

God: Throw it on the ground.

Narrator: Moses threw it on the ground and it became a snake, and he ran from it.\

God: Reach out your hand and take it by the tail.

Narrator: Moses reached out and took hold of the snake and it turned back into a staff in his hand.

God: This is so that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers--the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob--has appeared to you. [pause] Put your hand inside your cloak.

Narrator: Moses put his hand into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was leprous, like snow.

God: Now put it back into your cloak.

Narrator: Moses put his hand back into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was restored, like the rest of his flesh.

God: If they do not believe you or pay attention to the first miraculous sign, they may believe the second.

Moses: O Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue.

God: Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the LORD? Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.

Moses: O Lord, please send someone else to do it.

Narrator: Then the Lord's anger burned against Moses.

God: What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and his heart will be glad when he sees you. You shall speak to him and put words in his mouth; I will help both of you speak and will teach you what to do. He will speak to the people for you, and it will be as if he were your mouth and as if you were God to him. But take this staff in your hand so you can perform miraculous signs with it.

[scene change as Moses leaves the burning bush and returns to his father-in-law]

Moses: Let me go back to my own people in Egypt to see if any of them are still alive.

Jethro: Go, and I wish you well.

Narrator: So Moses took his wife and sons, put them on a donkey and started back to Egypt. And he took the staff of God in his hand. They met Aaron on the desert. Moses told Aaron everything the LORD had sent him to say, and also about all the miraculous signs he had commanded him to perform. In Egypt Moses and Aaron brought together all the elders of the Israelites, and Aaron told them everything the LORD had said to Moses. He also performed the signs before the people, and they believed. And when they heard that the LORD was concerned about them and had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshiped.

The End

Supplemental information

When Moses left Pharaoh's court in Egypt, he traveled east. He soon met some people called Midianites. These people were descendants of Abraham and Keturah. They lived in tents. They roamed, with their flocks, along the edge of the desert from Mt. Sinai in the South to Moab in the North.

One of the men Moses met was Jethro. Moses stayed with Jethro and took care of his flock of sheep. Moses married one of Jethro's daughters. Her name was Zipporah.

Moses probably traveled all through the wilderness area as he led the sheep to grassy areas to feed. Since he lived with the Midianites for about 40 years, he must have learned much about the wilderness. He knew where the grassy areas were, and he knew many good places to set up his tent where he and his family would stay.

Even though Moses did not know it, God was helping Moses get ready for a special job. When it was time for the Hebrew people to leave Egypt and go back to their own country, God chose Moses to lead them. God knew that people would have to go through the wilderness where Moses had been tending sheep. Moses already knew the good places to camp. And he knew the best ways to travel to Palestine, the land God had promised to the Hebrews.

Reflection questions

- Many years before this story took place, Moses had lived as a prince in the palace in Egypt. But he had displeased the king, so he ran away to the land of Midian. Here he got a job taking care of sheep for Jethro. What did Moses see? What was unusual about this burning bush?
- When Moses walked over to see the bush, he heard a voice. Who was speaking to him? What was the first thing the voice told him to do?
- Moses was surprised and afraid. Why do you think he was afraid?
- God told Moses that he had seen Egyptian slave masters making people work very hard. Do you remember who the workers were? Why do you think God was interested in the Hebrew people?
- God wanted Moses to go to Egypt and talk to the king. What did He want Moses to ask the king? How did Moses feel about going?
- At first, Moses said he didn't want to go because he wasn't a very important person. Can you think of another reason why Moses might not want to go back to Egypt?
- God told Moses He would go with him. Then Moses asked: If I go, and the people ask me who sent me, what shall I say? Do you remember the name God called Himself?
- God told Moses to go to Egypt and tell the Hebrew leaders what God had said. Moses was sure the people would never believe him. When Moses obeyed God and threw his shepherd's staff on the ground, what happened?

- When he picked up the snake, what happened then? Then God asked Moses to do something else. What was it?
- What happened to Moses' hand? God turned the staff into a snake and then turned it back into a staff again. And he had caused sores on Moses' hand and made it well again. What was the special reason God did these things?
- Moses still didn't want to obey God, so he said he couldn't talk well enough to go to the king. What did God tell Moses? What did Moses decide to do?
- Moses and his wife and children left home and started toward Egypt. Why do you think he decided to obey God?
- On the way to Egypt, they met a man. Who was he? What do you think Moses told his brother?
- God had asked Moses to do a very hard thing. When Moses and his brother obeyed God, how do you think they felt? Do you think God can help people do hard things today? Do you think God can help you do right things?