

The Call of Moses

(Exodus 3)

Pre-Session Warm Up

If God ever asked you to do something that seemed very hard, or even impossible, what would you do? Would you tell God you can't do it? What if God asked you to be kind to someone that was deformed or mentally retarded? What if God asked you to not be angry at someone who was mean to you? Some things seem impossible to do even though you know God would want you to do it.

Our lesson this morning is about a time God told Moses to do something that seemed impossible to him. Do you think Moses obeyed? Let's find out...

Opening Prayer

Father, we want to be obedient to You no matter what You ask us to do. Help us to learn the life lesson You have for us today from Moses' life. Give us good listening ears; help us to listen with our hearts this morning. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. (Philippians 4:13)

Lesson

Moses lived his first 40 years as a pampered son of an Egyptian princess in a palace in Egypt. His next 40 years he lived out in the wilderness in Midian as a shepherd tending sheep and living in a tent. What a contrast! As an Egyptian prince he had everything done for him; as a shepherd he had to do everything for himself. What a humbling experience this must have been for Moses!

Moses probably thought he had ruined any chance he had to deliver his people from slavery. But God was preparing him for leadership. Living the life of a shepherd, Moses learned about the ways of the people he would be leading and also about life in the desert. Moses

probably didn't appreciate this lesson, but God was getting him ready to free Israel from Pharaoh's grasp.

Moses was 80 years old where we pick up the story this morning and God speaks to him from an unexpected place...

Exodus 3:1-2

One day Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian. He led the flock far into the wilderness and came to Sinai, the mountain of God. There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a blazing fire from the middle of a bush. Moses stared in amazement. Though the bush was engulfed in flames, it didn't burn up.

This must have really caught Moses' attention — a burning bush that wasn't burning up. So naturally he went over to examine it.

Exodus 3:3

"This is amazing," Moses said to himself. "Why isn't that bush burning up? I must go see it."

God can speak to us in unusual ways, too. Sometimes God speaks to us through other people or through our own thoughts and dreams. He will also speak to us when we read the Bible, God's Word. We need to listen with our hearts, be curious, like Moses was with this burning bush, and be open to God's surprises.

Exodus 3:4-6

When the LORD saw Moses coming to take a closer look, God called to him from the middle of the bush, "Moses! Moses!" "Here I am!" Moses replied. "Do not come any closer," the LORD warned. "Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground. I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." When Moses heard this, he covered his face because he was afraid to look at God.

How would you react if God appeared to you?

At God's command, Moses removed his sandals and covered his face. He was showing his reverence for the all-powerful God who created all things, the One who is perfect and separate from anything that is sinful. He was standing before God Himself!

God is our friend, but he is also our sovereign Lord. When we come to Him in worship, we need to come as though we were an invited guest before a king with respect and humility. Moses was awe struck when

God spoke to him. He removed his sandals and hid his face to show his reverence for God.

Exodus 3:7-8

Then the LORD told him, "I have certainly seen the oppression of my people in Egypt. I have heard their cries of distress because of their harsh slave drivers. Yes, I am aware of their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the power of the Egyptians and lead them out of Egypt into their own fertile and spacious land. It is a land flowing with milk and honey—the land where the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites now live."

God was telling Moses that He had come to rescue His people and that Moses would lead them out of Egypt to the promised land. Who remembers where the promised land was? [Teacher, point to it on the map.]

This land was not sitting empty, however, it was filled with other groups of people who were not followers of the only true God. As we will learn in the weeks ahead, the children of Israel will have to take the land from these various tribes. But first God has to get His people out of Egypt.

Exodus 3:10

Now go, for I am sending you to Pharaoh. You must lead my people Israel out of Egypt."

At age 40 Moses proudly thought of himself as the man for the job. But then God sent him out to the wilderness to live for 40 years as a shepherd. Finally, when Moses was 80 years old, God called him to be the deliverer. Why wasn't Moses ready 40 years earlier? (He was filled with self-importance and hadn't learned yet to trust in and rely upon God for strength and direction in life.) Moses needed to see his own weakness before God could use him.

Exodus 3:11

But Moses protested to God, "Who am I to appear before Pharaoh? Who am I to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt?"

What a different man Moses was now. 40 years ago he thought he could go in as a mighty warrior and rescue the children of Israel with triumph. Now he was humble and unsure of himself.

Moses knew that freeing the children of Israel from Pharaoh was a big job and that there was no way he could do it by himself. He felt as if he just didn't have what it would take on the inside to do such an important job.

Have you ever faced a situation that seemed like a mountain too large for you to climb? Maybe in your heart you've said, "I can't tell others about God; I don't know how," or "I'm not strong enough to say, 'No' to sin;" or, "I'm not brave enough to live for God in front of my friends." We are not smart enough, good enough, strong enough, or brave enough to do these things for God by ourselves. But God doesn't want you to do anything without His help. He wants you to trust Him to do these things through you. He wants you to trust God to give you power to do what He asks.

The Bible says, *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.* (Philippians 4:13). We aren't strong enough in ourselves, but the all-powerful God is and can do anything. He wants you to trust Him to help you do what He asks.

Moses knew that he couldn't do this big job all by himself. So, God assured Moses that He will be with him...

Exodus 3:12

God answered, "I will be with you. And this is your sign that I am the one who has sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God at this very mountain."

God promised He would go with Moses. But Moses wonders what he could say to the Israelites to convince them that he had actually heard from God. Moses asks God, "What if they ask me what Your name is? What shall I tell them?"

Exodus 3:13

But Moses protested, “If I go to the people of Israel and tell them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ they will ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what should I tell them?”

Did you ever wonder what God’s name is?

Exodus 3:14

God replied to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM. Say this to the people of Israel: I AM has sent me to you.”

God’s name is “I AM.” Who has an idea of what that means? It’s a description of God’s character. God is like a circle. He had no beginning and He will have no end. He just is! He is the eternal, ever-present One. He is always present everywhere. He always was and He always will be. God is everything we need.

God wanted Moses and the people to know that He is the all-powerful God who would be with them to give them the power to follow Him. He wanted them to trust God to give them the power they would need to do what He asked.

When you trust God’s power, you can do anything for Him. God’s word says, *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.* (Philippians 4:13). His name is “I AM.” He is everything you need. He is your wisdom to help you tell others about Him. He is your peace on the inside to help you not to be nervous in front of others. He is your strength to help you say “No” to sin. He is your courage to help you be brave enough to live for Him. Ask God to help you trust that He will give you the power you need.

God was asking Moses to do a hard thing, but He wanted Moses to trust God’s power to help him do it. And God told Moses exactly what He wanted him to do...

Exodus 3:16-17

“Now go and call together all the elders of Israel. Tell them, ‘Yahweh, the God of your ancestors—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—has appeared to me. He told me, “I have been watching closely, and I see how the Egyptians are treating you. I have promised to rescue you from your oppression in Egypt. I will lead you to a land flowing with milk and honey—the land where the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites now live.”’”

Do you think God kept His promises?

Closing Prayer

Father, we want to trust You to give us the power we need to do what You ask us to do. We don’t want to be like Moses who tried to wiggle his way out of doing what You had asked him to do. Thank You for giving us the help we need to do what feels impossible. We love You and want to please You in everything we do. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Game Center

Let the children work on the *Moses and the Burning Bush* word search, or send it home as a “take home” paper.

Or, use the following review questions in a game of your choice:

1. Where did Moses live his first 40 years? (As a pampered son of an Egyptian princess in a palace in Egypt.)
2. Where did Moses live his second 40 years? (As a shepherd out in the wilderness in Midian.)
3. What did the 40 years living out in the wilderness do in Moses’ life? (Living the life of a shepherd, Moses learned about the ways

of the people he would be leading and also about life in the desert.)

4. In what unusual way did God speak to Moses? (From a burning bush that didn't burn up.)
5. What are some ways that God speaks to us? (Through other people, through our own thoughts and experiences, through the scriptures.)
6. Why did Moses take off his shoes and cover his face? (He was showing reverence for the all-powerful God.)
7. In what attitude of heart should we come to God in worship? (We need come as though we were an invited guest before a king with respect and humility.)
8. What did God tell Moses from the burning bush? (That He had heard the cries of His people and had come to rescue them. And, that He wanted Moses to lead them out of Egypt.)
9. Why didn't God send Moses when he was only 40 years old? Why did He wait until Moses was 80? (Moses was filled with self-importance and hadn't learned yet to trust in and rely upon God for strength and direction in life. Moses needed to see his own weakness before God could use him.)
10. Why did Moses feel inadequate to go before Pharaoh and lead the Israelites out of Egypt? (He didn't think the people would really think that he was being sent by God.)
11. What is God's name and what does it mean? (I AM. He always was and He always will be. He had no beginning and He will have no end. He just is!)
12. What is today's memory verse? (*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.* Philippians 4:13)

Moses and the Burning Bush

Exodus 3

Use these clues to finish the acrostic.

1. Moses was living in this land.
2. He spoke to Moses from the bush.
3. It was on fire but did not burn up.
4. Moses was taking care of these.
5. Moses took them off.

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