

The Fire That Didn't Go Out



References

Exodus 3; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 251–255



Memory Verse

“Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground” (Exodus 3:5, NIV).

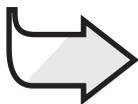


Objectives

The children will:
Know that church is a place to meet with God in a special way.

Feel happy for the opportunity to meet with God at church.

Respond by showing reverence in church.



The Message

We worship God when we are reverent.

Monthly Theme

We tell God we love Him when we worship Him.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

After 40 years of living as a shepherd in the desert, Moses sees a burning bush that does not burn up. When he investigates, God speaks to him. He tells Moses to go back to Egypt and deliver the Israelites from slavery. Moses questions God. God promises to be with Moses and help him succeed.

This is a lesson about worship.

God revealed Himself to Moses in the form of a burning bush. When Moses approached the bush, God spoke to him and told him to take off his shoes, because he was standing on holy ground. Today we show respect and reverence in other ways.

Teacher Enrichment

“Moses’ . . . intellectual greatness distinguishes him above the great men of all ages. As historian, poet, philosopher, general of armies, and legislator, he stands without a peer. Yet with the world before him, he had the moral strength to refuse the flattering prospects of wealth and greatness and fame” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 246).

“Many never attain to the position that they might occupy, because they wait for God to do for them that which He has given them power to do for themselves” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 248).

“The divine command given to Moses found him self-distrustful, slow of speech, and timid. He was overwhelmed with a sense of his incapacity to be a mouthpiece for God to Israel. But having once accepted the work, he entered upon it with his whole heart, putting all his trust in the Lord. The greatness of his mission called into exercise the best powers of his mind. God blessed his ready obedience, and he became eloquent, hopeful, self-possessed, and well fitted for the greatest work ever given to man. This is an example of what God does to strengthen the character of those who trust Him fully and give themselves unreservedly to His commands” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 255).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 5.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Activities	up to 10	A. <i>What's the News?</i> B. <i>Getting the Message</i>	computer, mobile/cell phone, house phone, greeting card, postcard, stationery
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> offering container branch with leaves, bucket with sand, red/orange colored "flames" (see p. 142), hole punch, yarn, pencils
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	adult Bible-times costume, "burning bush" from prayer time, (optional: audio recording and playback device) none Bibles, flame cutouts (see p. 142)
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Visiting the King</i>	dirty clothes, clean clothes, box or suitcase, large sheet of paper, marker, <i>Sing for Joy</i>
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Follow Our Example</i>	ideas from Applying the Lesson

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Listen to last week’s memory verse and encourage the children to share any experiences from last week’s lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

A. What’s the News?

Divide the children into two groups. Tell one group that they are to keep repeating, “What’s the news? What’s the news?” over and over as long as the other group is doing their activity. Tell the other group that they are to send a message by whispering “Jesus loves you” to the person beside them. That person will then pass the message along until everyone in the group has been whispered to. They should say the message only one time and not repeat even if the person didn’t hear. Then have the groups switch roles.

Debriefing

Ask: **How easy was it to hear what the person next to you was saying while the other group was shouting? (Not easy) If you knew the message was coming from your parents or a teacher or the president of your country, what would you do to hear the message?** (Tell the others to be quiet, move to somewhere where I can hear) **God is the most important person in our lives, and church is a special place to meet Him. When we are quiet in church at the right times, it shows that we are ready to listen to God. We show reverence. Today’s message is:**



WE WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE ARE REVERENT.

Say that with me.

B. Getting the Message

Adapt the following to fit with your circumstances.

In advance, have someone write a postcard to your Sabbath School class. Also plan for someone to ring your mobile/cell phone and have someone send a text message to your phone just as you begin this activity. Say: **This week I got a letter from a friend who lives far away. She told me all about what she is doing. Oh, excuse me. Someone is calling on my mobile (cell) phone.** Answer phone. **Sorry I can’t talk right now. I am in Sabbath School. Talk to you later. Goodbye.**

Allow time for discussion as you turn back to the class and say: **This morning there was a postcard here for our Sabbath School. Can someone read it for me? Was that my phone that just beeped? It must be a text message. Let’s read it and see what it says. Oh, and here’s an email message from a friend. How many different ways of communication have we had this morning?** (Mobile/cell phone, text message, postcard, letter, email)

You Need:

- computer
- mobile phone
- house phone
- postcard
- stationery
- greeting card

Alternate activity

Have the actual object or a picture of these objects available: computer, cell phone, house phone, postcard, stationery, greeting card. Say: **What do you see?** (Give time for the children to name objects.) **What do they all have in common?** (You can use all of them to send a message.) **How would we use these to send a message?** Have a child answer as you point to each object. Give several children a chance to answer. (Computer—email, cell phone—text message or call, postcard—short message, etc.)

Debriefing

Allow response time as you say: **There are many ways of communicating. How does God communicate with us?** (He has put His messages in the Bible; He gives messages to others, such as pastors, parents, teachers, and others who are listening to Him; He gives us messages directly when we pray) **How do we communicate with God?** (Prayer) **How does God communicate with us?** (He speaks to us through the Bible; He talks through others, such as our pastor, parents, teachers, etc.) Say: **Church is a special place to meet God and communicate with Him. What are some of the ways that God communicates with us at church?** (He communicates through the Bible reading, the pastor's sermon, the songs, the Sabbath School lesson, etc.) **We participate in these activities by listening when we should and speaking, or singing, when we should. We show respect and reverence when we do those things. And that's what today's message is about:**



WE WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE ARE REVERENT.

Say that with me.

NOTE: Prayer and Praise appears on page 66.



Bible Lesson

You Need:

- Bible-times costume for adult male
- “burning bush” from prayer time
- optional: audio recording and playback device

Experiencing the Story

Characters: adult male dressed as Moses, “voice of God” (recorded in advance, or have someone read God’s words)

Note: If possible, have the same adult male tell the story for lessons 6, 8, and 9.

Have “Moses” sit in the desert. Have someone lead the children to do the following:

When they hear:	They do:
Moses	bend down and pretend to take off a shoe
God	bow head, fold hands

Read or tell the story.

Hello, boys and girls. My name is **Moses**. I live in the desert and work as a shepherd looking after my father-in-law’s sheep. It’s been almost 40 years since I ran away from Egypt. Perhaps you have heard that I killed an Egyptian. I don’t know what I was thinking. I thought I would free my people, the Israelites; instead, I made a mess of things.

God has been my Friend, and even though I made mistakes He was with me and protected me as I traveled through the desert.

I remember the first evening I arrived here. Some shepherdesses came to draw water from the well for their animals. Then some shepherds came and tried to chase them away. That didn’t seem right to me, so I told the men to wait their turn or use another well. Then I helped the women draw water. They invited me to meet Jethro, their father, and I ended up staying here. I married one of Jethro’s daughters,

Zipporah, and now we have two sons.

The pharaoh I ran away from is dead. But my people, the Israelites, are worse off than ever, because the new pharaoh is more cruel than the old one. I really wish I hadn’t taken matters into my own hands and killed that Egyptian! If only I had waited for **God** to show me when to act, my people might be free.

Then one day I noticed something odd. There was a bush on fire! Bushes often catch fire in the desert, but the fire in this one was not going out. I went over to see what was happening, and a voice started speaking to me. It was God! The conversation went something like this:

(God) “**Moses! Moses!**”

(Moses) “Here I am.”

(God) “Do not come any closer. Take off your shoes. You are standing on holy ground.” *(Moses bends down, takes off his shoes, and remains kneeling by the bush.)*

(God) “I am the **God** of your father, the **God** of Abraham, the **God** of Isaac and of Jacob. I have seen the trouble of My people, and I want you to go to Pharaoh and tell him to let My people go.”

(Moses) “But who am I to go to Pharaoh?”

(God) “I will be with you. I promise you that when you leave Egypt you will come here to this mountain and worship Me.”

(Moses) “But what will I tell the Israelites? Who will I say sent me? They will never believe me.”

(God) “Tell the Israelites that the **God** of their fathers sent you. Tell them that I know what is happening and have sent you to rescue them. They will listen to you. I know that the king of the Egyptians will not believe you. But this will give Me the opportunity to do many signs so that everyone will know that I am the One, the true **God**.”

Then all was quiet, and I knew that

God was gone. I could hardly believe what had just happened. I stayed there for a long time and prayed for strength and wisdom to do what **God** wanted me to do. I would go. I would do **God's** will. Next week I'll tell you what happened in Egypt.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask:

Why did God want Moses to talk to Pharaoh?

Why did He let Moses look after sheep for 40 years? (When Moses ran away, it was because he had tried to do things his way. Moses learned patience and how to listen to God while he was in the desert.)

Why did God tell Moses to take off his shoes? (It was a way of showing respect or reverence.) **How do we show respect and reverence today?** (We are quiet at the right times and sing or speak when it is time to. We walk and do not run. We listen attentively and are not distracted by toys, electronic devices, or conversations.)

Our message tells us that:



WE WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE ARE REVERENT.

Say that with me.

Memory Verse

Use the following actions and repeat the memory verse until the children know the verse:

- | | |
|---|--|
| Take off your sandals for the place where you are standing is holy ground. | Take off shoes.
Point to ground.
Point to someone else.
Point to feet.
Fold hands in prayer. |
| Exodus 3:5 | Palms together, then open. |

Bible Study

Have the texts listed below written on flame cutouts, one text on each cutout. (See page 142.) Form five groups and give each group a flame cutout. They are to find and read the texts and look for words or ideas to explain what else is involved in being reverent. Have adults assist as needed.

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Hebrews 13:8 | We show reverence for God because He never changes. He expected reverence from Moses and He expects it from us today. |
| Ephesians 5:21 | We show reverence for God by respecting others |
| 2 Corinthians 7:1 | We show reverence for God by living a pure life. |
| Luke 4:16 | We show reverence when we follow Jesus' example and worship God in church. |

Debriefing

Allow discussion time as you ask:

What does it mean to be reverent?

(We live our lives as if God were with us all the time.)

Why should we follow God's guidelines? (God wants to protect us from sin. When we follow God's guidelines, we are happier.)

Are we reverent only when we come to church? (No. Being reverent is a way of life.) **One way of showing reverence is by being respectful in church.**

Let's say our message together:



WE WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE ARE REVERENT.

You Need:

- Bibles
- flame cutouts with texts (see p. 142)

Prayer and Praise **Any Time**



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing from last week's lesson study and review last week's memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "Psalm 66" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 11)
- "Praise Him, Praise Him" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 12)
- "God Is So Good" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 13)
- "Alleluia" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 16)
- "Philippians 4:4" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 23)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Emphasize worship in the story.



Offering

Say: **It is nice to be able to visit friends. Coming to church is like visiting God at His house. Not everyone has a church building or the opportunity to meet together on God's Sabbath. When we give our offerings, we help others learn about God and help build places for them to worship.**

You Need:

- offering container



Prayer

In advance, punch a hole in the flame shapes (see p. 142) and thread 12-inch (30-centimeter) lengths of yarn through the holes and knot the ends. Say: **God spoke to Moses from a special bush. We are going to create our own special bush. On your flame, write or draw a picture of something that you may be struggling with and/or something for which you would like to thank God. When you are finished, hang your flame on the bush.** Gather the children around the bush and pray that they will succeed in their struggles and praise God for His blessings.

You Need:

- tree or bush branch with leaves
- bucket with sand
- red/orange-colored paper "flames" (see p. 142)
- hole punch
- yarn
- pencils

3

Applying the Lesson

Visiting the King

Allow discussion time as you say:

Imagine that the leader of your country is coming for a visit. Can you pick out some clothes you would want to wear? Allow time.

Why did you not choose the dirty clothes? (Wearing dirty clothes would not show respect.) **When we come to church, we come to meet the King of kings, someone far more important than our country's leaders. Let's talk about ways we can show our respect for God in our church.** Write the suggestions on the chalkboard or large sheet of paper. Save them for the next activity.

Debriefing

Summarize the suggestions from the children. Ask: **Do we always do these things? Why?**

What effect does it have on others when they see us being reverent? (They are quieter, more reverent, can listen to God speaking to them.)

Let's praise God that we have the opportunity to come reverently into His presence by singing "Come Into His Presence" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 14).

Let's say our message together:



WE WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE ARE REVERENT.

You Need:

- some dirty clothes
- some clean clothes
- box or suitcase
- large sheet of paper or chalkboard
- chalk or marker
- *Sing for Joy*

4

Sharing the Lesson

Follow Our Example

Form small groups. Give each group one or more of the suggestions from Applying the Lesson and ask them to work out a skit illustrating why this is important. Allow time for them to do the skits for each other. You may want to have the children do their skits for other Sabbath School classes.

Debriefing

Allow discussion time as you ask:

Why is it important for us to be reverent? (We are able to meet with God and listen for His guidance and instruction. We show respect for God.)

How can you share your discoveries about reverence with others?

(By example. By telling others.)

What can you do if you see someone who is not being reverent? (Encourage them to be reverent by asking them to do something with you. Show rather than tell them how to be more respectful and reverent.)

As you go into the church service and at home today, let people know by the way you act that you want to show reverence in God's house.

Let's say our message together:



WE WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE ARE REVERENT.

Closing

Pray for a spirit of reverence to fill each child's life.

You Need:

- list of suggestions from Applying the Lesson

The Fire That Didn't Go Out

References

Exodus 3; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 251–255

Memory Verse

“Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground” (Exodus 3:5, NIV).

The Message

We worship God when we are reverent.

Have you ever enjoyed sitting by a campfire or by a burning fireplace at home? If you do not add wood, the fire will go out. In our story today Moses saw a fire, but it did not burn anything, and it did not go out.

It had been 40 years since Moses had run away from Egypt. He knew now that he had been wrong. Killing was not part of God’s plan. But God had not left him. He had protected Moses as he traveled over the desert.

Moses remembered the first evening in Midian. While he had rested near a well, some shepherdesses came to draw water. They always watered their animals at that well. But some shepherds came and tried to chase the women away. Moses saw what was happening. He protected them from the shepherds. Then he drew water for the women’s sheep.

The women took Moses home with them and fed him. Their father, Jethro,

hired Moses to work for him. Later Moses married Jethro’s daughter Zipporah, one of the shepherdesses. And now he and Zipporah had two sons.

The pharaoh Moses had run from was dead. But the Israelites were worse off than ever. The new pharaoh was more cruel than the old one. How Moses wished he hadn’t taken matters into his own hands. He wished he hadn’t killed that Egyptian! If he had only waited for God to show him when to act! His people might have been free by now.

God knew that Moses was ready to lead the Israelites. He had learned to be humble. He had learned to wait for God. He had learned patience as he took care of sheep.

One day Moses was caring for his father-in-law’s flocks as usual. Suddenly, he saw a bush burning. Moses saw that the bush kept burning. But it didn’t burn up! The fire was not going out! He decided to have a closer look. As he stood before the bush, he heard a voice.

“Moses! Moses!” the voice said.

“Here I am,” Moses answered.

“Do not come any closer. Take off your shoes. You are standing on holy ground,” said the voice. “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and of Jacob.”

Quickly Moses took off his sandals and bowed low.

The voice continued: “I have seen the trouble of My people. And I want you to go to Pharaoh and tell him to let My people go.”

“But, Lord, who am I to go to Pharaoh?” Moses asked.

“I will be with you,” God promised. “When you leave Egypt, you will come back to this mountain and worship Me.”

Moses answered, “But what will I tell the Israelites? Who will I say sent me?” God replied, “Tell the Israelites that



the God of their fathers sent you. Tell them that I know what is happening. Tell them I have sent you to rescue them. They will listen to you.

“I know that the king of the Egyptians will not believe you. But that will give me a great opportunity. I will do many signs so that everyone will know that I am the true God.”

Moses loved, honored, and respected God. Although he felt unworthy, he would do what God had said. By his deeds Moses would worship God with true reverence and respect. You, too, can worship God with reverence and respect.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- Read your lesson story to your family. What did Moses do for 40 years? If possible, plan a trip to a farm to see some sheep. Sheep are often called silly. Ask your family why. Name some Bible “shepherd” stories you know.
- Use an encyclopedia or the internet to discover five facts about sheep.
- Sing a song about animals; then thank God for people who look after them.

Sunday

- Read and discuss Exodus 3:1–3 during family worship. Use a Bible map to find Mount Horeb.
- Before worship, put a small branch in a jar of sand or dirt. Cut out some colored paper flame shapes and write one word of your memory verse on each. Thread yarn through the shapes and hang them on the branch. Use this to help learn your memory verse and review it every day.
- Ask your mom or dad to help you light a bonfire. Or light a candle and look at the flame. Sing praise songs as you watch the flames.

Monday

- Read and discuss Exodus 3:4–6 during family worship. What did God tell Moses to do with his shoes? Why don’t we take off our shoes at church?
- Try calling to a family member. Be close together and then move further and further apart. How far did you go before you could not hear each other?
- What are the three parts to your ear? (Hint: See a dictionary or research online.)
- Pray that God will help you to listen when He speaks to you.

Tuesday

- Read and discuss Exodus 3:7–12 during fam-

ily worship. Draw a picture or make a model of what you think the Promised Land was like.

- God talked of a land flowing with milk and honey. What did He mean? Survey everyone in your family to find out what their favorite food is.
- On a map measure the distance from Egypt to Mount Horeb. Where would you be if you traveled that distance from your home?
- Ask God to bless people who are traveling.

Wednesday

- With your family, read and discuss Exodus 3:13–15. How did God describe Himself? Find out three things about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. What does your name mean? Ask your parents why they chose that name.
- Sing “Holy, Holy” (*Sing for Joy*, no. 6). Then ask God to help you always to use His name with respect.

Thursday

- For worship today read and discuss Exodus 3:16–22. What treasures did God promise the Israelites would take from Egypt? What is the most valuable thing you own?
- Review your memory verse together. Sing some praise songs; then ask God to help you value the right things.
- Begin to plan what you need to do to get ready for Sabbath.

Friday

- Before sundown, clean your shoes for Sabbath. Think of Moses as you clean them.
- During worship, act out the story of Moses with your family. Suggest that everyone take off their shoes during worship.
- Sing praise songs, then invite God to be with your family on His special day.
- Say your memory verse for your family.