



Church of God Sunday School

THE CALL OF MOSES: THE BURNING BUSH

Exodus 2:11 — 4:20; Acts 7:20-34

Many years after the death of Joseph, a very special baby boy was born to a man named Amram (*AM-ram*) and his wife, Jochebed (*JOK-uh-bed*). God protected this Hebrew baby from Pharaoh, who had commanded all Hebrew (Israelite) baby boys to be killed. Pharaoh's own daughter raised this child as her own. She named him Moses.

Moses was given a good education. He "was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds." This education was God's way of preparing Moses for the great task that was ahead of him.

When Moses was forty years old, "it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel." The Israelites were slaves and had to work very hard. Moses saw an Egyptian hitting an Israelite. Moses quickly went to the slave's rescue and killed the Egyptian, hiding his body in the sand.

The next time Moses went out to watch the Israelite slaves, he saw two of them fighting. When he asked the one in the wrong why he had hit his Hebrew brother, the man asked: "Who made you our ruler and judge? Are you going to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" (*International Children's Bible*). Then Moses was afraid. His killing the Egyptian was not a secret!

When Pharaoh heard what Moses had done to the Egyptian, he wanted to kill Moses; so Moses ran away to the land of Midian (*MID-ee-uhn*). There he sat down by a well. The daughters of Jethro, the priest of Midian, came to draw water. When some shepherds drove them away, Moses defended the women and helped them water their sheep.

When they returned home, their father Jethro (*JETH-roh*) asked why they had come home early. After hearing how Moses had helped his daughters, Jethro sent his daughters to invite Moses to come home and eat with them. Moses came and lived with Jethro. He even married one of Jethro's daughters, Zipporah (*zih-POR-uh*), and they had two sons.

For forty years, Moses lived in Midian. During that time Pharaoh died, but the bondage of Israel continued. It was so bad that the children of Israel "cried, and their cry came up unto God." God heard this cry, and "God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob." God had not forgotten His people! "God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them."

One day as Moses was watching Jethro's sheep on Mount Horeb (*HOR-uhb*), "there appeared to him . . . an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush." The bush was on fire but was not being burned up! When Moses turned to take a closer look, God called to Moses from the fiery bush, saying, "Moses, Moses." And Moses answered, "Here am I."

God told Moses to take off his shoes (a sign of respect) for he was standing on holy ground. When God said "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," Moses hid his face. He was afraid!

The Lord told Moses He had seen how the Israelites were afflicted. He had heard their cry. He was ready to deliver them from the Egyptians and bring them back to the good land, one that flowed with milk and honey: the land of Canaan.

God wanted to send Moses to Pharaoh, as the leader of the Israelite people. Moses said, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" Moses felt unable to do what God wanted him to do.

God promised Moses He would be with him. Then Moses asked what he should tell the Israelites when they would ask the name of the One who had sent him. God told Moses to say, "I AM hath sent me unto you."

Moses continued to have doubts, and he said: "What if the people of Israel do not believe me or listen to me? What if they say, 'The Lord did not appear to you?'" (*International Children's Bible*). So God gave Moses three signs to prove that he was sent by God. The first sign was that Moses should cast his rod on the ground, and it would become a snake. When Moses picked up the snake by the tail, it would become a rod again!

The second sign was that Moses should put his hand inside his clothes, take it out, and it would be covered with leprosy (a terrible skin disease). Then, he was to place his hand inside his clothes again. When he brought it out a second time, it would be the same as his other hand. It would be healed!

If the people did not believe the first two signs, Moses was to do the third sign. He was to take water from the river and pour it on the ground and it would turn into blood.

Then, Moses said he was "slow of speech, and of a slow tongue." Although God promised to tell Moses what to say, Moses begged God to send someone else.

That made God angry, but He told Moses that Aaron, his older brother, was coming to meet Moses. Aaron could do the talking—but he was to say (and do) only what Moses told him to. Moses was the leader of the Israelite people.

So, Moses went to Jethro and told him that he wanted to return to his brethren. Jethro told him to go in peace. Then the Lord told Moses that the men who had wanted to kill him were now dead. Soon after that, Moses took his family and started out for Egypt. "And Moses took the rod of God [which God had told him to use] in his hand," and returned to the land of Egypt.

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**MEMORY VERSE:**

*"And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them."*

*—Exodus 2:25*  
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