

TEXT Exodus 3:1-15; Isaiah 43:1-2

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to compare Moses' call from God with God's call in their own life, and understand that when God asks anyone to do something, He will be with that one.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.
— Matthew 28:20

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. — Isaiah 41:10

**ANSWER
TITLE:**

A Burning Bush

**SEARCH
TITLE:**

The First Leader

REFERENCE INFORMATION

The Children of Israel were in Egypt from about 1800 B.C. to approximately 1400 B.C. The early part of their stay had been favorable for them. In the latter part of their stay their lifestyle had been reduced to slavery. The cry of their hearts was for deliverance. God heard their prayers and Moses was commissioned by God to lead the Israelites out of bondage.

As the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, Moses received the education of an Egyptian prince. In Pharaoh's court Moses learned arithmetic and how to read and write hieroglyphics, which are messages shown by pictures carved or drawn on monuments of stone. Moses probably also used a reed pen to write hieroglyphics on paper made from papyrus plants. When older, he learned philosophy, higher mathematics, and the study of the stars. Later lessons show how God used Moses' education.

Arab shepherds seldom took their flocks more than a

day's journey from camp but, in this account, Moses must have gone on a journey of several days. God in His plan was leading Moses to Horeb. Sinai and Horeb seem to be the same place. It has been suggested that Horeb is the name given to the entire mountain range, while Sinai denotes the particular mountain where the Law was given to Moses.

God's direction to "put off thy shoes" made sense to Moses. In the East it is an ancient as well as modern way of showing reverence. Egyptian priests observed this custom when they went into their temples to confess personal defilement and their unworthiness to stand in the presence of their gods.

The God Jehovah revealed Himself by the name "I AM." No other words could so perfectly express the truth and mystery of the nature of the true God. It means He is self-existent; He is self-sufficient; He is what He will be.

YOUR OPENER

RESPONSES

1. Moses was in the desert near Mt. Horeb. As your students discuss the second part of the question, they should see that the location wasn't as important as the condition of Moses' heart. The time was right for God to call him. The point should be made that God calls a person wherever he is, in whatever circumstances he finds himself. Each person's responsibility is to recognize God's call, and respond to it.

2. Moses was spared an untimely death in infancy, and was raised by Pharaoh's daughter. He was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and lived there until the age of forty. After avenging an oppressed Israelite by killing an Egyptian, he fled to Midian where he lived for forty years, married, and had two sons (their names are given in Exodus 18:2-4). Ask your students how this history might have affected Moses' ability to carry out God's call on his life. The point should be made that God can use our background, potential, and talents though His call is not dependent upon them. We can rest secure in His almighty wisdom, even when we feel His call is too great for our abilities.

3. Allow time for your students to offer some examples of the ways God calls people today. They may mention such things as, through the inspiration of a portion of Scripture, through a strong impression when seeking the Lord's will in prayer, or through the counsel or advice of the ministry. The importance of the call of God can be seen in many Scriptures. Romans 11:29 reveals that it is unchangeable. Philipians 3:14 associates it with a prize. In 2 Timothy 1:9 we read that it is a "holy" calling, given according to God's own purpose and grace. So, no matter how God's call comes to a person, it is of far greater value than any earthly calling.

4. As your students discuss their answers, you may wish to bring out that this statement may have been made to remind Moses of God's power. Undoubtedly Moses had been taught how God had led, sustained, and worked for the forefathers of his people. In recalling this, he would feel an assurance that God would also be with him. Just so in our day, recounting past blessings and recalling how God was with believers in former days, can reassure us of God's presence with us today.

5. Moses asked the Lord, "Who am I?" He obviously felt insufficient for the task God had set before him. Often today, those who feel that God is calling them to do some task for Him think they are incapable, so they

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The commission Moses received from God, to lead the Children of Israel from bondage in Egypt to the Promised Land, was a huge one. Great issues were at stake and much would depend on him. One cannot blame Moses for saying, "Who am I?" When God calls one to a position of responsibility in His service, that person may not feel sufficient. But God's commands are His enablings; with an order there is given the required strength and wisdom. Surely there was great comfort and reassurance in the promise that God gave Moses: "Certainly I will be with thee."

1. Where was Moses when he heard the call of God? Why do you think God choose that location?
2. God allowed some unusual circumstances to direct the course of Moses' early life. Briefly outline those events, using Acts 7:20-29.
3. God used a supernatural manifestation to call Moses. How does He call people today? How can we know that any call from God is just as important as His call to Moses though it may not be given in such a spectacular way?

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ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

4. Of what importance was it to Moses when God declared Himself to be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?

5. Parallel Moses' response to how some people respond today when they feel the call of God.

6. In verse 12 of our text, God promised Moses a token. What was that token? Does God do this for us today? Explain.

7. In our key verse, God made three promises regarding what He will do for His people. What were they?

8. What did God promise Moses He would do for the Children of Israel? Draw the parallel between the promise to the Israelites and the promise to Christians.

9. Humility is an essential quality of leadership in the work of the Lord. What word is used in Numbers 12:3 to describe this quality in Moses' life?

hesitate. However, the promise to Moses that "Certainly I will be with thee" is extended to every person who answers the call of God and endeavors to work for Him. See Joshua 1:5.

6. God promised Moses that when the people came out of Egypt, they would serve God "upon this mountain." In beginning your discussion of this question, you may wish to point out some other Biblical instances where God gave a visible token or witness to a promise He had made. Some examples might include the sign of the rainbow given to Noah, Gideon's fleece, the promise that "a virgin shall conceive," and the shepherds' search for the Babe in swaddling clothes. Your students may point out that the "signs which follow" the preaching of the Gospel are a witness to the veracity of the call of God.

7. God promised to strengthen, help, and uphold. Encourage your students to relate specific ways these promises apply to each of them today. For instance, the promise to *strengthen* could mean, "to increase physical stamina, to give spiritual strength to defeat the powers of the enemy, to give mental strength in studying and perceiving the truths of His Word, to give strength and courage to be fearless in witnessing for Him." As your students explore the depths of this promise, it should become increasingly apparent what a tremendous assurance they have when they know the Lord is with them. Surely, with the strength, help, and upholding He has promised, they can fulfill the call He has placed upon their lives.

8. God promised to deliver the Children of Israel from Egyptian bondage and bring them into a land that flowed with milk and honey. The Christian's heritage includes the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come (1 Timothy 4:8). Discuss with the students how the Children of Israel went through some hard places before they arrived in the promised land, but God was with them and they were well pleased once they were settled in their new homeland. Christians face difficulties at times too. Ask the students to read some of the Scriptures showing this fact, such as Matthew 10:22; 1 Timothy 6:12; 2 Timothy 2:3.

9. Meek. In discussion with your class bring out that meekness is not cowardice, but in actuality shows that one can be meek and humble and still strong in character. See Luke 6:29. Even though Moses was a meek man, God enabled him to stand before Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and demand that God's people be released from bondage as God had commanded. As we follow the example of Moses and obey God's call, we can prove in our own lives the fact that God will be with us as He was with that first leader of the nation of Israel.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What qualities did God see that caused Him to choose Moses as the leader of the Israelites?

How can we equip ourselves so God can use us?

What are some things God might call young people to do?

Have you ever felt the call of God?

How old was Moses when God called him at the burning bush?

What was Moses' job at the time that he saw the burning bush?

What was Moses' job after God called him?

How did Moses know that it was God speaking to him?

Did God say He would go with Moses?

Will God go with us and help us when we choose to serve Him?

THINGS TO DO

Write the letters B-U-R-N-I-N-G B-U-S-H down the left side of a large piece of paper. Have your students help you fill in things they might be called to do, beginning with each letter. For example: B—Bring a friend to Sunday school, U—Urge people to follow Jesus.

On the left-hand side of a sheet of paper, draw a figure representing Moses. Repeat the figure on the right-hand side but add fire. Title the drawing, "Moses + God's Power." Between the two, list these words: Brave, Dishonest, Afraid, Great leader, Timid, Unkind, Weaker than enemies, Willing, Poor leader, Unhappy, Confident, Poor speaker, Strong. Have students draw lines connecting appropriate words to the picture on the left to show how Moses saw himself, and lines to the picture on the right showing what Moses could be with God's power.

Bring a picture of a fire burning or a campfire. Ask the students if a fire can keep burning without adding more wood. Does a fire stay in one place or does it usually spread out? The burning bush was not consumed. A

campfire or forest fire will burn any wood that it comes in contact with.

Show the students several different timepieces: big clocks, small ones such as wristwatches, new ones, and old ones. Focus on the fact that we all have jobs to do for God. Each part of a clock is important no matter how small it is. We're all a part of the family of God, and each of us needs to do his job. It doesn't matter how old or how young we are; we can do anything with God's help.

Make word-picture review cards of the lesson. To do this, choose 8 to 10 important words from the story that can be illustrated simply (burning bush, shepherd, etc.). The cards should be about 4 x 9 inches in size. Have the students choose a card, pin it to the board, and tell what part of the lesson that word brings to mind.

Answers for ANSWER

