



# Moses and the Burning Bush

**Goal:** To recognize that God knows us by name.

## RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

### . . . In Exodus 3:1-15

When Moses was a shepherd for his father-in-law, Jethro, he saw a strange sight. A bush was burning, but never burned up.

When Moses took a closer look, he heard himself addressed by God. God called to him from the bush: “‘Moses, Moses!’ And [Moses] said, ‘Here I am’” (v. 4). God revealed who God was: the God of Moses’ ancestors. He then gave Moses the mission of delivering the people of Israel from their slavery in Egypt.

When Moses encountered God in the bush, God called him by name. In that sacred place, God was revealed to Moses. He learned who this God was. Then he heard what God wanted Moses to do: Go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt (v. 10). This began Moses’ work as the leader God called and used.

When God calls us to do God’s work, God addresses us by name. God knows us well, and God has work for us to do. It all begins by recognizing God is calling us. This can happen anywhere. We can be thankful God wants to use us. Then we can respond in gratitude and, like Moses, say, “Here I am” (v. 4).

### . . . In Your Children’s Experiences

Moses and the burning bush is a vivid story for children to engage with all their imagination and wonderings. A bush burns but is not consumed. Then God calls Moses by name. And, as if that isn’t enough, God asks Moses to take on a really hard task.

Younger children will have many concrete “why” questions, while older children will be able to wonder about how Moses might have responded. Children will easily get into the role of Moses and express what he might have been thinking and feeling when God called him.

### . . . In Your Relationships with the Children

One way to help children make the connection between the story of Moses and their lives is to invite them to talk about their names and the family and friends who know them by their names. Just like Moses, you can help children know that God knows each one of them by name.

Be aware of children who are new to the group or those with special needs. Also be aware of children who are the first ones to talk and those who are more introverted and quiet. This is a great session to begin a closing ritual by calling each child by name and then saying, “God loves you and calls you by name.”

*O God, you call my name, challenging me to share my faith in you  
with your beloved children. Call me to courage and faith in this task. Amen.*



## Supplies

### Music & Melodies

[bit.ly/GGGMusicMelodies](http://bit.ly/GGGMusicMelodies)

### Stories, Colors & More (SCM) i–iv, 3, 3a, 16

basic supplies  
(see p. vii)

audio stories (optional)  
(see p. vii)

internet-connected  
device

candle

green cloth

red, yellow, and orange  
tissue paper

## Responding

### Claiming

copies of **Grace Notes**  
(GN) 1

### Praying

copies of **GN 2**

### Offering

For 8 servings of  
4 treats : 1 package  
(12 ounces) semi-  
sweet chocolate chips,  
1 package (11 ounces)  
butterscotch chips, 4  
cups crispy chow mein  
noodles, 16–20 pieces  
of candy corn in ziplock  
bags; microwave-safe  
bowl; bowls; spoons;  
waxed paper; ziplock  
plastic sandwich bags;  
copies of **GN 3**

### Extra

copies of **GN 4**

## GATHERING IN GOD’S GRACE

Post **SCM i–ii**, “Your Visual Schedule,” to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM iii–iv** for the key to icons (for example, **LG** **T**) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

“Offering God’s Grace” requires more prep.

### Welcoming and Preparing

**B** **MS** **A**

Play “Bim Bam” as children arrive. Welcome each child with “Grace and peace be with you, (Name).” Prompt the children to respond, “And also with you.”

Invite the children to help prepare the setting as they arrive. Create a worship center with a Bible, a candle, and a green cloth.

Ask some children to help prepare today’s “Responding in Gratitude” activities. Suggest that one or two prepare to lead today’s singing.

Invite children to create a burning bush. Draw the stem and branches of a bush on mural paper. Tell the children to trace their feet on brown or tan construction paper and cut them out. Have the children write their names on the footprints and turn them into sandals by gluing pieces of yarn or ribbon across the sandals. Instruct the children to tape their sandals around the base of the burning bush. Invite the children to cut out flame shapes from red, yellow, and orange tissue paper and glue them to the branches. Place the burning bush in the worship space.

### Singing

**MS**

Welcome the children into a circle near the burning bush. Play, listen to, clap, and dance to “Bim Bam”—**SCM 16**, a traditional Jewish song. *Shabbat shalom* means, “Peace be with you on this sabbath day.”

Stand in a circle and dance to the music. Take turns dancing from one side of the circle through the middle to the other side. Encourage everybody to change sides at least once.

### Praying

**C**

Turn on the candle as a reminder of God’s light in the world through Jesus. Invite the children to share one glad thing (a happy moment) and one sad thing (a concern or worry) from their week. Prompt the children to respond to each happy share with “Thanks be to God!” and to each concern or worry with “Hear our prayer, gracious God.”

Affirm each child’s response and respect those who do not wish to share.



### Preparing to Hear the Story

L M

Since this story of Moses takes place when he is an adult, and the stories leading up to it are not read in this quarter, tell the children a brief story of Moses' earlier life. Show **SCM 3a**. Ask if anyone knows what happened to Moses in this part of his life.

- ▼ Moses was a Hebrew, and Pharaoh had enslaved the Hebrew people.
- ▼ Moses' mother put him in a basket in the river to keep him safe from Pharaoh's soldiers.
- ▼ Pharaoh's daughter pulled him out of the river and raised him as her son.

Explain that today's story is about something amazing that happened to Moses. He had grown up and was married to a woman named Zipporah (zip-POR-ah). Moses took care of his father-in-law's sheep and goats, far away from the place where Pharaoh was keeping the Hebrew people as slaves.



### Hearing the Story

L

Invite a child to find Exodus 3 in the Bible so that the children know the story comes from the Bible. Place the open Bible on the worship table. Read **SCM 3** or listen to the story audio. Conclude by saying, "Word of wisdom, Word of grace," and prompt children to say, "Thanks be to God."

Suggest that the children act out the parts as you read the story again. Have one volunteer act as Moses, one as the voice of God, and the other children as sheep following Moses, making sheep sounds.

- C** Give children time to respond and to share; for some children, listening and speaking may take longer.

### Reflecting on God's Grace

C

Comment that many people have wondered about today's story over the years. Invite the children to do their own imagining about the story. Prompt their imagining with the following:

- ▼ I wonder, "Why did God choose Moses to lead the Israelites?"
- ▼ I wonder, "Why did God choose a burning bush to speak to Moses?"
- ▼ I wonder, "What do you do when your parents or teachers call you?"
- ▼ I wonder, "Does God call us? How does God call us?"

Tell the children that, when God calls us, God will always be here for us.

Today's story can be found in *Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible*, edited by Elizabeth F. Caldwell and Carol A. Wehrheim (Louisville, KY: Flyaway Books, 2018), [www.pcusastore.com](http://www.pcusastore.com).



### Singing



Play, listen to, or sing “Bim Bam”—**SCM 16**. Suggest that the boys sing, “bim bam,” and the girls respond with, “shabbat shalom,” then all sing “shabbat” together. Turn off the candle.

## RESPONDING IN GRATITUDE

Select activities appropriate for your group and for the time available.

### Claiming God’s Grace



Assist the children in cutting out the four finger puppets of Moses, the burning bush, and the sheep from **GN 1**. After cutting out the puppets and taping the tabs to form rings around their fingers, invite the children to retell the story using the puppets. You may want to read the story again, giving the children an opportunity to act out the sequence using the puppets. Encourage the children to wonder:

- ▼ In what ways does God ask us to do something today?
- ▼ We may not encounter God in a burning bush, but in what ways do we see and hear God working in our world?

Encourage the children to tell the story to their family and friends by using the finger puppets.

### Praying God’s Grace



Make burning-bush prayer pockets to help the children remember God’s conversation with Moses at the burning bush. Suggest that one way to think about prayer is a conversation between God and us. Ask the children to remember what God said to Moses. Wonder what the children might hear in a conversation with God and what God might ask them to do.

- ▼ Give each child a copy of **GN 2** and have them cut out the pocket template and strips.
- ▼ Fold according to the picture on **GN 2** and tape each side.
- ▼ Turn over and draw a bush with no leaves, just branches. Tear small pieces of red, orange, or yellow tissue or construction paper and glue them on the branches to suggest the burning bush.
- ▼ Punch a hole where indicated and tie a piece of ribbon or yarn through it for hanging.
- ▼ Give each child three large craft sticks. Instruct them to glue a strip cut from **GN 2** on each stick.
- ▼ Use a marker to number an end of each stick as follows:
  - 1—“God, what do you want me to do?”
  - 2—“God, how can I do it?”
  - 3—“*[Your name]*, I will be with you.”



Demonstrate how to use the prayer sticks as prompts for prayer. For example, imagine a question or problem you have. Pull out and read stick #1 and remain silent. Then read stick #2 and remain silent. Finally, read stick #3 and hear God say your name and promise to be with you.

Suggest they hang the burning-bush prayer pocket in a place at home where they will be reminded to pray in the confidence of God's grace.



### Offering God's Grace



Tell the children that they will make burning-bush treats to eat, remembering God's call to Moses, and to share with others, inviting them to think about God's call.

Use the following directions to make the treats.

- ▼ Give each child a ½ cup of crispy chow mein noodles in a bowl, a spoon, a piece of waxed paper, and three ziplock plastic sandwich bags.
- ▼ In a microwave-safe bowl, melt the chocolate chips and butterscotch chips according to package instructions, stirring until smooth.
- ▼ Place several spoonfuls of the melted chips over the chow mein noodles in each child's bowl.
- ▼ Instruct the children to stir the noodles and melted chips together, coating the noodles.
- ▼ Tell them to drop spoonfuls of the noodles to make four "bushes" on their waxed paper.
- ▼ Have the children place several candy corn pieces on each bush as "flames."
- ▼ Set aside the burning bushes to cool and set. You may wish to put them in a refrigerator for a few minutes.

Hand out copies of **GN 3** and invite the children to decorate the tags. Have them cut the tags apart. After the bushes are set, have the children enjoy one for a treat and place the other three bushes in ziplock bags to share with others. Have the children staple or tape a tag to each bag.

**FA** *Many children have food and other allergies such as peanut, milk, egg, wheat, latex, grass, mold, and others. Be aware of all allergy issues the children may have. Avoidance is the best practice. Provide alternate activities or use options to keep children safe.*



#### Solution to GN 4:

birds, cloud, flower,  
mountain, rocks, sandal,  
sheep, tree, walking stick,  
worm



#### Extra Activity

Tell the children that when Moses was grazing his sheep on the hillside he saw something very different, a burning bush. Hand out copies of **GN 4** and crayons. Challenge the children to find the ten differences between the two pictures. If time allows, let the children color the pictures.

### LOVING AND SERVING GOD

Ask the children to help clean the space.

Gather the children. Tell them that a *litany* is a prayer in which a leader makes a statement and then the people respond. Explain that their response to each prompt is “We give you thanks, O God.”

For calling Moses to do a hard job,

**We give you thanks, O God.**

For the help you gave Moses in doing the job,

**We give you thanks, O God.**

For calling us to do your work,

**We give you thanks, O God.**

For helping us do what you call us to do,

**We give you thanks, O God.**

For promising to always be with us.

**We give you thanks, O God.**

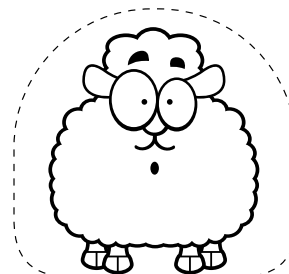
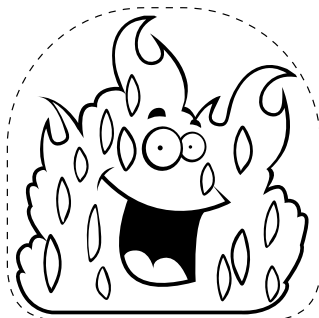
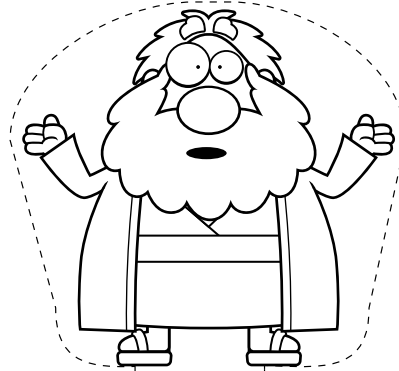
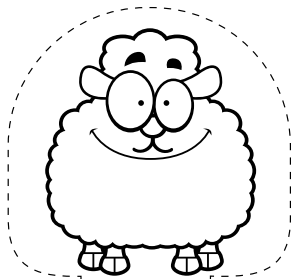
**Amen.**

Send each child by name, saying, “(Name), God is calling you. Go in God’s grace.”

Remind the children about the free e-book and challenge them to read the story during the week.

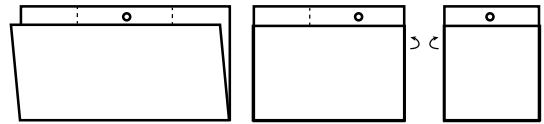


Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so that you can provide them with the link to [www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads](http://www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads), where they can download coloring pages, *Grace Sightings*, audio stories, and songs (see p. vii).









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**"God, what do you want me to do?"**

**"God, how can I do it?"**

**"\_\_\_\_\_ , I will be with you."**  
*Your name*





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Moses from a  
burning bush.

What is God  
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