

# Illuminate Bible Series

Volume 1

# God Our Savior

Discovery Guide | 1st - 6th



For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts  
to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:6



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## GOD CALLS MOSES TO DELIVER HIS PEOPLE

✚ Memory Verse: 1 Peter 1:15-16



## Can you think of a time when you felt out of place?

**Out of place.** It can be a scary thing to feel out of place—like a cat at a dog show. Moses was a shepherd, but he probably felt out of place in this role at first. That is because of his surprising past. He was born as an Israelite slave in Egypt, but he was rescued and adopted by an Egyptian princess. It must have seemed odd to him that he was growing up in a palace while his people were slaves. Secretly he began to hope that God would use him to rescue Israel from slavery to the Egyptians (Acts 7:25). When Moses killed an Egyptian slave master, though, his secret was out. The king of Egypt now wanted to kill him, so Moses escaped to the land of Midian and became a shepherd. Moses had lived in a palace; now he lived in the wilderness with sheep. It seemed that everywhere he went, he felt out of place.



**A holy place.** One day as Moses was leading his sheep in an out-of-the-way place near Mount Horeb, he saw an unusual sight. There were flames of fire burning in a bush on the side of the mountain. That was strange enough, but when Moses saw that the flames did not destroy the bush, he was awestruck. He just had to get a closer look!

Before Moses could get too close, though, the voice of God called to him out of the burning bush. This was the one true God—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God told Moses not to come any closer—because God was there, this was **holy** ground. It was so holy, in fact, that Moses was told to take off his sandals. Now he felt really out of place! He covered his face, too afraid to look at God.

**A new place.** God had arranged this meeting. He cared even more than Moses did about the Israelites, who were suffering in slavery. God was ready to rescue His people from the cruel slave masters of Egypt. More than that, He would give the Israelites their own wonderful and blessed land.

These were actually things God had promised Abraham hundreds of years earlier (Gen. 15:13-16). Not only was God going to punish Egypt, but He would also use Israel to drive out the evil people living in the land God had promised. What a magnificent turn of events this was for both Moses and the Israelites! The next thing God said, however, probably shot fear through Moses' heart: he was to return to Egypt and lead the people of Israel out of slavery. But how could he succeed? The king in Egypt wanted to kill him! Thankfully, this time Moses would have God's power and authority.

### Prayer Point

Pray that God will help us and give us direction.

### Christ Focus

Jesus is our Good Shepherd, which means He cares for us and is also our King.

## GOD CALLS MOSES TO DELIVER HIS PEOPLE

Memory Verse: 1 Peter 1:15-16



# Egypt

Egypt, which is in northeast Africa, is one of the oldest nations in the world. Noah's grandson Mizraim began the nation. In Moses' time, it was a rich and powerful nation because of the Nile River. Its water was used to irrigate crops. When there were famines in other countries, people would go to Egypt to get food. Today, people in Egypt call their country "Misr." Do you see the connection to the name of Noah's grandson?



# How Did the People of Israel Become Slaves?



The people of Israel came from the family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. At first, they lived in Canaan, but they moved to Egypt after Jacob's son Joseph became the prime minister of Egypt. After generations of living in Egypt, the twelve tribes of Israel grew in great numbers. Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, forced them into **slavery** because he feared they might join his enemies in battle. The people of Israel lived in Egypt for 430 years (from about 1875 to 1445 B.C.).

## Who Was Moses?

- Moses was born around the year 1525 B.C. in the area of Goshen near the Nile River in Egypt. Can you find it on the map? It was a good place for raising herds of animals.
- Moses' parents were Amram and Jochebed (Ex. 6:20).
- Moses' brother was Aaron, and his sister was Miriam.
- The name Moses means "taken from the water" (Ex. 2:10).
- Moses was forty when he fled from Egypt and went to Midian—about a two hundred-mile trip!

## Which God?

Egypt had many gods, and some of them had several names. No wonder Moses asked God His name (Ex. 3:11-15); he wanted to be able to tell his people who had sent him to lead them out of Egypt. "I Am" may seem like a strange name, but it means that God has no beginning or end—He has always existed. It means He is the one true God.

### Prayer Point

Pray for the people of Israel and modern persecuted Christians.

### Christ Focus

As servants of Egypt, the people of Israel suffered. Philippians 2:7-8 states that Jesus made Himself a servant and suffered in our place on the cross.

## GOD CALLS MOSES TO DELIVER HIS PEOPLE

 Memory Verse: 1 Peter 1:15-16


**Scripture Connections:** Gen. 15:12-18; Ex. 19:17-24; Mark 12:24-27

**The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.** Have you ever talked to someone on the phone without knowing who it was? That can feel awkward. When God called to Moses from the burning bush, Moses answered. But who was speaking to him? When he learned that it was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, he became fearful and hid his face. This was the God of the Israelites, who were **descendants** of these three men.

Since Moses grew up in the royal palaces of Egypt, he must have been taught about the many Egyptian gods. None of those gods were real, so they often changed over time as people came up with new ways to imagine them. Israel's God was very different. He did not change with time. The God of Abraham was no different from the God of his son Isaac or the God of his grandson Jacob. This is because God is the one true and living God.

Jesus once reminded the Jewish leaders what God said to Moses at the burning bush—He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Mark 12:26-27). And Scripture often links God with these three special men (Gen. 50:24; Deut. 6:10; 34:4; 2 Kgs. 13:23; Jer. 33:25-26). Why is this so important? It is because God had made special promises to these **patriarchs** (Lev. 26:42). One of those promises was that He would rescue Israel after they had spent four hundred years as slaves in Egypt (Gen. 15:13-16). Because of God's faithfulness to the patriarchs, Moses could surely trust Him to bring Israel out of Egypt.

*Last names such as Baker, Barber, or Carpenter show what a person did or what he was known for many generations ago. God was known for His promises and faithfulness to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*

*Many Scriptures talk about God purifying His people as if with fire. He uses "fiery" troubles and problems to make us let go of our sins and become more holy (1 Pet. 1:6-7).*

**A burning question.** As Moses led his flock of sheep in the wilderness, he found that the fire first caught his attention. Why did God use fire in a bush to represent His presence?

While we may not know all the reasons why, we do know that in Scripture, fire is used to represent holiness. When metal workers want to remove the impurities from gold, they use fire to heat it up. It is a refining process that results in purity. Since holiness is the absence of anything bad or impure, fire is a very good symbol in Scripture for our pure and holy God (Gen. 15:17; Ex. 13:21; Deut. 9:3; Heb. 12:29). And think about this: Moses at first saw only the fire in the bush, but when he returned to this place later with the people of Israel, "Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly" (Ex. 19:18). This surely caused the people to recognize God's holiness (see vss. 21-24).

## Prayer Point

Praise God for His promises and His faithfulness to His people.

## Christ Focus

In Revelation 1:12-16, John wrote that Jesus' eyes are like a flame of fire and His face shines like the blazing sun.





# The Invisible GOD Appears

Scripture tells us that God is invisible (John 1:18; 1 Tim. 1:17). So what does the Bible mean when it tells us that God “appeared” to people (Gen. 17:1; 35:9; Ex. 6:3; 1 Kgs. 3:5)? No one could survive if they truly saw God (Ex. 33:20; 1 Tim. 6:16), but the Bible clearly tells us that sometimes people met with God and saw a form that looked human. At other times, people spoke with God while seeing a symbol of God’s presence, such as the burning bush when God met with Moses. No matter what people saw when God appeared, God’s true being remained hidden.

## Sandals

Egyptians made their footwear from reeds or leather. The styles were not much different from the modern sandal. Based on ancient painted scenes depicting everyday life, only the wealthy seemed to wear sandals. Sandals were considered very valuable. Since Moses was wearing sandals even as a shepherd, he may have gotten in the habit of wearing them in the palace before he fled to Midian.



**DID YOU KNOW?**

*Since ancient times, showing the bottom of one’s shoes has been an insult in the Middle East.*

## Mount Sinai Monastery

A monastery sits at the foot of the mountain many claim is Mount Sinai (Horeb) in the Sinai Peninsula. The builders constructed it between A.D. 548 and 565 near a bush believed to be the burning bush. It is still an active monastery.

Mount Sinai Monastery has the world’s oldest continually operating library. The oldest complete New Testament written on parchment is part of a manuscript called the Codex Sinaiticus. This important fourth-century manuscript was located at the Mount Sinai Monastery until the mid-1800s. Today, the monastery’s library contains thousands of ancient manuscripts and early printed books.



## GOD CALLS MOSES TO DELIVER HIS PEOPLE

 Memory Verse: 1 Peter 1:15-16
**Doctrine:** God Is Holy

**Higher and greater.** When the United States president visits a foreign country, there are thousands of people working to keep him safe. With the many police and other guards around him, no one can even get close to the president unless he allows it.

If that is true about a mere man, then we can be sure that no one can approach God unless He allows it. This is not because He is worried that someone might hurt Him; it is because He is holy (Isa. 6:1-3; Rev. 4:8). This means He is set apart and special. There is no one and nothing in the universe equal to Him in power, in purity, in goodness, or in any other of His **virtues** (behavior that is always right) and qualities.

**Holy behavior.** God's holiness is the reason why Moses was told to remove his sandals when he stood at the burning bush. He was standing on holy ground, and the ground was holy because God was present there. Joshua was also told to remove his shoes when he stood before the divine commander of Israel's armies—God Himself (Josh. 5:13-15).

Many Scripture passages teach that people must behave differently when they are in God's presence (Heb. 12:14). People who treat God flippantly or without respect may experience God's wrath (Ex. 19:21; 1 Sam. 6:19-20; 2 Sam. 6:6-7). Why does God demand right behavior? Is He just being stern and strict? No, there is a good reason He expects holy behavior from His people. Since He is perfect, pure, and good in every way, there is nothing better than for His people to be more like Him. Scripture says, "As He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, 'Be holy, for I am holy'" (1 Pet. 1:15-16; see Lev. 11:45).

*The temple of the Lord was holy. Each section—the outer court, the inner court, the holy place, and the most holy place—was more holy than the area just outside it. The temple was a life-size reminder of God's holiness.*

*In Scripture, both the nation of Israel and believers in Christ today are called a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Ex. 19:6; 1 Pet. 2:9-10).*

**A Holy people.** God was calling Moses to lead the people of Israel out of slavery and into a new way of life. His purpose was to make the people into "a holy nation" (Ex. 19:6). Just as God required Moses to respect His holiness, He wanted the whole nation of Israel to behave in a holy manner. Because God had chosen Israel to be His people, they were set apart and special; they were different from every other nation on earth (Deut. 7:6). That is why God's people both then and now are to behave in a way that reflects His holiness (1 Thess. 4:7). But we must remember that we are not holy because of what we do but because Christ made us holy through His sacrifice on the cross (Heb. 10:10; 1 Pet. 1:2).

**Prayer Point**

Thank God for making us holy; ask Him to cause us to live holy lives.

**Christ Focus**

Through Christ's sacrifice on the cross, we are made holy and set apart for serving God (Heb. 9:14).

## GOD CALLS MOSES TO DELIVER HIS PEOPLE

† Memory Verse: 1 Peter 1:15-16



## REVIEW

This week, we learned how **God called Moses to deliver His people, the Israelites.** Let's remember some of the things we discussed:



- Where did Moses grow up? *In the pharaoh's palace.*
- When speaking to Moses, who did God declare Himself to be? *The Holy God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*
- What did God tell Moses? *He was going to use him to rescue His people from slavery.*



- How did the Israelites become slaves? *Pharaoh forced them into slavery.*
- How old was Moses when he fled Egypt? *Forty.*
- What does God's name "I Am" mean? *He has no beginning or end; He has always existed.*



- Why did God tell Moses He was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? *He was reminding Moses of His special promises to the patriarchs, including His promise to rescue Israel, the descendants of these men.*
- What did the fire of the burning bush symbolize? *God's perfect holiness.*



- What does it mean that God is holy? *He is set apart and unlike any other in His virtues and qualities.*
- What did God call Moses, the Israelites, and us to do? *To be holy, following His commands as a people set apart from other nations who serve false gods.*

## APPLY

When we sin, it is like putting on dirty, smelly clothes. God says His people are to be holy just as He is holy. He tells us in Colossians 3:12-15 to "put on" holiness like fresh, clean clothes. Make a sticky note to remind you of this and put it where you can see it each morning.

Did you know that, in a way, a toothbrush is holy? Your toothbrush is "set apart for a purpose"—to clean your teeth (not your brother's or your dog's!). Think of yourself as being like that toothbrush—set apart for a purpose. If you are God's child, you have been set apart to be like Jesus and magnify Him. Think about how you can make God's glory be seen today in everything you do (1 Cor. 10:31).

Put on...

- ⇒ Compassion (care)
- ⇒ Kindness
- ⇒ Humility
- ⇒ Gentleness
- ⇒ Patience
- ⇒ Forgiveness
- ⇒ Love
- ⇒ Thanksgiving



## Prayer Point

Pray for boldness to obey God's calling.

## Christ Focus

When we follow Jesus, God no longer counts our sin against us! He sees us as holy because Jesus took our sin on the cross (2 Cor. 5:21)!