

# The Burning Bush and the Plagues

## GO

EXODUS 3:1-15; 7:14-12:32

### What's happening in this story?

God calls Moses to return to Egypt and lead God's people, the Israelites, out of bondage. After Moses demands that Pharaoh set his people free to no avail, God unleashes a series of plagues that attack the very heart and soul of Egypt. Despite each plague's pervasiveness, God hardens Pharaoh's heart, and the attacks on the Egyptians continue unabated. The stalemate is broken only when God sends a final plague that kills every firstborn in Egypt.

### What does this story mean for kids?

This is an epic story with "good guy versus bad guy" themes. Kids will be interested in the narrative arc of the story as the plot thickens and finally culminates with the exasperated Pharaoh giving in to God's demands by way of Moses and the plagues. Kids aren't used to hearing about murder in their stories, biblical or otherwise, and some kids will note that God causes the deaths of innocent people and animals in this story. There is no way around it: it's a tough story. While it's good to emphasize to younger kids that God hears the Israelites' cry and intervenes to free them, the final plague is a heartbreaking event—it's okay to name it.

### Why this theme?

Sometimes God calls for us to go places that might seem outside of our comfort zones. For Moses, it's a call to leadership. For kids today, it could be a call to empathy for friends or classmates.

### TEACHING TIP

Many kids love to ask, "Why?" As kids grow older, their questions become more complex, changing from "Why is the sky blue?" to "Why didn't God keep bad things from happening?" It is important not to try to answer them on behalf of God. It's honest to admit that we don't have all the answers.



### GENERAL SUPPLIES

- ~~Tape~~
- Crayons
- Markers
- ~~Pens~~
- ~~Glue~~

### LESSON SUPPLIES

- ~~Crepe paper (red, yellow, orange)~~
- Small, soft ball or flying disc
- ~~Toilet paper tubes~~
- ~~Tissue paper sheets (red, yellow, orange)~~

# WELCOME 15

## Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Invite kids to tear crepe paper into strips and tape them onto one end of an empty toilet paper tube. Then have them talk to one another through the other end, like a talking burning bush.

## Circle up with kids for an opening conversation.

Close your eyes and imagine that you can hear the voice of God. Now imagine that God says one word to you: "GO!" Now imagine where God might be telling you to go. Where would you go, and what do you think God might want you to do? Allow time for sharing responses. Today our Bible story is going to teach us about a time when God spoke to a man named Moses, and God told Moses to "GO" and save God's people.

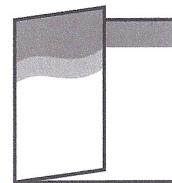
Pray together: ~~Dear God, help us to listen for your voice and to hear your messages from our family, friends, and church community. Help us to follow your will when you show it to us. Amen.~~

Be still and know that I am God...

## Pass out leaflets and crayons.

In our story today, God gives Moses an important job—to tell the pharaoh of Egypt to let God's people

go. But Pharaoh says no, so God sends plagues to Egypt. Pictures of some of the plagues are on your leaflet. Can you tell what they are? (gnats, frogs, flies, locusts, sores, thunderstorm, darkness) Put an "X" in the white triangle next to each of the plagues that you think might be scary. Give kids time to mark the pictures. Invite them to share which pictures they marked. Pharaoh really didn't want to let God's people go, so God sent ten plagues. We'll read about the ones shown on our leaflet, as well as the others, in the Bible story. Collect their leaflets until Respond.



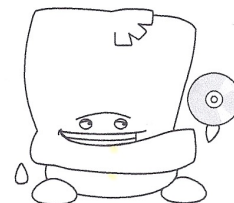
## Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

Today the Whirl kids are having fun playing Five Hundred with a flying disc. Let's watch to see what unexpected thing happens as they play together.

View Episode 3, "Let My Monty Go!," on the Year Blue Fall DVD. (4 min, 36 sec)

Ask kids these questions about the video:

- Why can't anyone catch the flying disc?
- Who is Steve, and what does his mother do?
- Why do you think Otto keeps talking?
- How did Monty's actions help get the discs back?
- When have you solved a problem? What did you do?





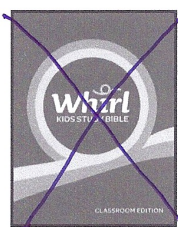
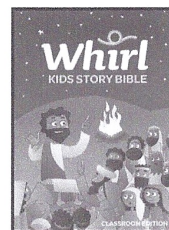
# HEAR 15

## Open your Whirl Kids Story Bibles and Whirl Kids Study Bibles.

Have older kids find a younger buddy. Invite them to find **"The Burning Bush" on page 50** and **"The Plagues" on page 54 of the Whirl Kids Story Bible**. In this story, God did some amazing things to get people's attention. First, God called Moses by speaking through a burning bush. Then God got Pharaoh's attention by sending plagues when Pharaoh wouldn't listen to Moses.

~~In their buddy groups, have kids decide who will be Pharaoh and who will be Moses. While you read "The Burning Bush" aloud, invite Pharaohs to look grumpy and Moseses to look nervous. While you read "The Plagues" aloud, pause after each time you read "Go" or "No," and invite Moseses to repeat "Go!" and Pharaohs to repeat "No!"~~ **God called Moses to do an important job, and God helped Moses along the way.**

~~Read Ada and Otto's questions and comments on each page. Then read the "Ten Plagues of Egypt" chart and what Leo says about it on page 73 of the Whirl Kids Study Bible.~~



Ask these questions after you read the story:

- How did the Hebrew people feel at the beginning of the story?
- Why do you think God chose Moses?
- What would you do if God chose you?
- How did God get Moses' attention? Pharaoh's?
- How do you decide who to listen to?

## Play together! ☆

The Whirl kids had fun playing a game of Five Hundred in today's video. Let's give it a try. Find an open space inside or outside to play. Set rules to keep kids and the play area safe. Invite younger kids to find an older buddy. Pick one buddy group to be the throwers, and give them a small, soft ball or flying disc. Before they throw, one buddy calls out the point value, which can be anywhere from 100 to 500. Then the other buddy throws the ball or disc. Buddy groups work together to catch the ball or disc. If they catch it in mid-flight, they get all the points. If they grab it after it touches the ground, they get half the points. The throwers call out a new number and throw again. The first buddy group to reach 500 becomes the throwing pair, and you repeat the game. **If we lost our ball or disc in a neighbor's yard or room, who would go and get it?**

### BIBLE BIT

The gas plant, or burning bush, is a flowering plant that can burn without being harmed. It produces flowers in spring and summer that emit a lemony scent and flammable oils.

### WATCH IT AGAIN

If you watch the video again, keep an eye out for the world map, the time table, and the blueprint of an airplane. What do you think Otto's plan was?

### OUR CHURCH

Look at a church bulletin and see how many different types of prayers there are in your service. Do some of the prayers include time for listening for God's voice? Which prayers are those?



# RESPOND 10

**Pass out leaflets, pens, tissue paper, and glue.**

Unfold and tear off leaflet square.

1. **God called Moses in an unusual way—through a burning bush. In the flames on the burning bush on your leaflet, write or draw ways God might call you today or what God might call you to do.**
2. **Let's add some more flames to our burning bushes.** Invite kids to tear sheets of tissue paper into 4- to 5-inch pieces.
3. Have kids crumple the pieces into puffy, not-too-tight ball shapes.
4. **Glue the paper ball shapes onto the empty branches of the bush on your leaflet.**
5. **What are some things you wrote or drew on the flames of your bush?**
6. Invite kids to take their bush home and put it somewhere it will catch their attention at unexpected times.  
**The burning bush was something that caught Moses' attention so that he would listen for God. Your bush can remind you to listen for God too.**

# LAUNCH 10

**Circle up with kids for a quick review.**

Moses listened when God told him to go tell Pharaoh to free God's people. Where could you go and help God's people?

**Pass out leaflet panels and markers.** (If there's time.)

**Color in the word "GO!"** On each arrow, write or draw somewhere you could go and help God's people. Help kids brainstorm ideas as needed, like holding the door for someone at the grocery store, or sharing a snack with a friend at school.

**Send kids out with a blessing.** → Help + Thanks prayers

Circle up with kids. **God blesses all of us. And that means me** (place a hand on your chest). **And that means you** (place your other hand on the shoulder of the kid next to you). Each kid passes the blessing by repeating those words and actions. When the blessing makes it back to you, say, **Go and bless the world.**

Thank kids for coming today. Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.