

MOSES AND THE BURNING BUSH

Narrator: This is the story of Moses and the Burning Bush, which you can find in your bible in the Book of Exodus, Chapter 3. In the story, Moses is a shepherd guarding his sheep in the fields and he comes upon a bush that is burning. But the bush never is burned up, it just keeps burning. This is the beginning of the story in which God tells Moses, the shepherd to go to Egypt and free his people who are enslaved by the Pharaoh or king of Egypt. Here to act out our story, are Bob, who will be the Voice of God, and Judith, who will be Moses.

Moses: *(Moses enters wearing sandals and with a real or imaginary stick in his hand.)*

Well, would you look at that. It's a bush and it's on fire but it's not burning up! Wish I had one of those in the tent – I wouldn't have to chop so much firewood. What a great source of energy – I wonder how it works.

VOG: Moses, Moses!

Moses: Uhhhh... Who what when where why?

VOG: Moses!

Moses: Uh, present.

VOG: Do not come any closer. Take off your sandals.

Moses: You want me to take off my shoes? But what if there are stickers?

VOG: Take off your sandals for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.

Moses: I don't see any holes.

VOG: That's not funny. I am the God of your fathers, the god of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

Moses: I'm sorry about the jokes, Lord. I didn't realize who you were. *(He throws off his sandals and hides his face.)*

VOG: What are you doing?

Moses: I'm averting my eyes oh Lord.

VOG: Well, stop it. I have something to tell you. I have seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cries. I am going to deliver them from their slavery and take them to a land flowing with milk and honey.

Moses: Wow, that's great! You know, I was thinking the exact same thing, the way they're treating those poor Israelites. Just the other day I was thinking of writing a letter and petitioning the Philistines to see if they would send an army...

VOG: I will be sending you.

Moses: (*shocked*) What, you've got to be kidding. But, then, you don't joke, do you? I mean, do I look like one of the Patriarchs? You want me to march into the heart of the Egyptian Empire... the Egyptian, we own the entire known world and then some, Empire and just tell them to release the Israelites?

VOG: Exactly. You will say, "Pharaoh, let my people go!"

Moses: Hey, (*to himself*) that's kind of catchy, let my people go, I like that, yeah (*pause, shake head, arms in the air*) no... this is crazy, I'm crazy, you're... wait a minute, if I were to go, who am I going to say has sent me? I can't just walk in and say, "Hey, Pharaoh, on the authority of this burning bush that I stumbled across on the side of the mountain I want you to let the Israelites go."

VOG: Tell them (*pause*) I AM has sent you!

Moses: (*Unrelieved by answer*) Great, just great. Okay, this is never going to work. Umm, all right, Mr. I AM, so I'm supposed to go to Egypt and say I AM has sent me, right? You've got to have something better than that.

VOG: Moses!

Moses: Well, what if they don't believe me?

VOG: I will give them signs.

Moses: A giant star in the sky?

VOG: No.

Moses: How about raising the dead?

VOG: No.

Moses: Walking on water?

VOG: No.

Moses: Ooooh, I got it, how about...

VOG: What is that in your hand?

Moses: What, my hand? Oh this. This is my sheep stick. When my sheep are bad, I hit them on the head and say "bad sheep, bad sheep."

VOG: Throw it on the ground.

Moses: *(throws stick on ground.)* Oh, look, it's moving! It's a snake! Ooooh, I don't like spiders and snakes! *(Backs away in fear.)*

VOG: Now, grab it by the tail.

Moses: *(Moses looks up and mouths the command.)* Here, snakey-snakey... here, boy. Hey, snakey-poo, you're going the wrong way... come this way. No, no, no go that way. *(He motions for it to go away from him and sneaks up behind it and grabs it.)* Phew, it's a stick again.

VOG: Now, put your hand in your pocket.

Moses: *(Moses does so and pulls it back out.)* Leprosy! Oh, Lord, I'm sorry about all the jokes... I'll do anything you want. I'll even go talk to Pharaoh...

VOG: Put you hand back in.

Moses: Clean again, thank goodness!

VOG: This is so they will believe you. Now, go forth and let my people...

Moses: Wait! I take back what I said...

VOG: About going to Pharaoh?

Moses: Yes... there's another thing...

VOG: (*annoyed*) Yes?

Moses: Well, I can't really talk. I'm a horrible speaker and, well, I'm illiterate and, and I have this stutter problem that comes and goes...

VOG: (*voice rising*) Who made man's mouth? Who makes him deaf or dumb or seeing or blind? Is it not I the Lord? Now GO, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what to say.

Moses: (*whining*) But Lord, can't you see I just don't want to go?

VOG: I can see that.

Moses: Then why don't you send someone else? There's got to be someone out there who's just dying to see Pharaoh.

VOG: All right, you asked for it. I'm going to send Aaron as my spokesman.

Moses: My brother Aaron? I, um, well, I dunno, God. See Aaron, well I think he might not be so good after all, you know, and he's really busy with the other flock and, well I just don't think you would be happy. Isn't there anyone else?

VOG: Moses!

Moses: OK! OK! I was just asking. I'll go... (*he reaches for his sandals.*)

VOG: Stop talking. Get walking!

Moses: Yes, Lord. (*He exits.*)

VOG: Now why didn't you say that in the first place?

Narrator: Moses said, "Not me" many, many times, but in the end, he went on to do great things. The story goes on to tell us that he did lead his people out of Egypt, and he parted the Red Sea, and brought us the Ten Commandments. And all because, eventually, he said "Yes" to one great task and then to another and another.