

date: __ **11/5/17****Bible Passage: Exodus 1—4**
(Calling of Moses)**God Is I AM****REMEMBER VERSE**

The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.
Exodus 14:14

Inspire

Shares personal stories from fellow ministry leaders about how God has worked in their lives

My pastor once said something about the Holy Spirit that really stuck with me. He said that when God revealed Himself to the people in the days when the Old Testament was written, He chose to speak to His people and dwell among them—in the form of fire in a bush or in the tabernacle at the Israelites' camp. But this wasn't good enough for God; He wanted to be closer. >

My pastor went on to say that when Jesus came to earth as a man, God ate with us, hugged us, and wept with us. But this still wasn't good enough for God; He wants to be closer. God sent His Holy Spirit to fill us—mind, body, and soul. He wants to be closer to us than our own breath!

God—the great I AM—reveals Himself to us in subtle ways. After we spend time in God's presence, we're different. We have a clearer perspective of what really matters, as well as our identity in Him. God may not speak to us through a burning bush, but He still miraculously reveals Himself to us.

Tori Funkhouser
TruStory Team

Equip

Offers perspective and context to the lesson's Bible passage

God revealed Himself to Moses in an amazing way and He called Himself I AM. No one is like Him! Moses lived no ordinary life. During his early years, Moses participated in three cultures: Hebrew, Egyptian, and Midian. As a Hebrew, he was condemned to death; as an Egyptian, he was the adopted son of the princess of

Egypt (and watched his kinsmen slave away in the hot sun); as a Midianite, he was an outlaw who married into a foreign tribe.

Certainly there must have been days, or years, when Moses was greatly distressed about his identity. He even named his first son Gershom, saying, “I have become an alien in a foreign land” (Exodus 2:22). But all along, God knew who Moses was—a Hebrew, one of God’s chosen people. But Moses was also a Levite, a descendent of the priestly tribe of Levi, one of Jacob’s sons. Wow!

Moses was a direct descendant of God’s covenant promise with Abraham. Moses began to understand who he was the moment God revealed Himself in the burning bush. God called Himself the God of Moses’ father and the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. By saying this, God reminded Moses of his heritage, both physical and spiritual.

God called Moses to be the hands and feet to bring about His incredible plan to reveal Himself to His people and save them from bondage. Moses would have remained an alien in a foreign land had God not revealed Himself and reminded Moses of his heritage and given him his true calling: service to the one true God. Truly, Moses found his identity in God.

Support

Provides reflection and assessment through encouragement, prayer, and time in God’s Word

In ancient Egyptian culture, people believed in and worshipped hundreds of gods. When Moses asked for God’s name in Exodus 3:13–14, Moses was trying to understand God’s place in his culture. God responded in an unexpected way—God said, “I AM WHO I AM.”

God doesn’t always fit in our boxes and paradigms. He can’t be constrained by our expectations. What would it look like for us to shift our expectations? After all, God never promises that we will fully know or understand who He is. That would be impossible. Instead, God assures us that He completely knows and understands us. He sees our full and complete identity in Him, and He deeply loves us as His children.

It’s easy to desire to serve and be used by God without ever pausing to receive from Him first. However, we’ll be ineffective in God’s kingdom if we try to participate without receiving His love first. That leads to burnout. As you prepare to serve God this week, take time to meditate on God’s truth about you. Set apart time to simply receive His love. Consider using these Scriptures as a launching pad: Ephesians 3:14–21, Isaiah 61, Psalm 36:5–9, and Psalm 116. As you read, ask yourself what stands out in each of these passages. Spend a few moments in silence, thinking over what you just read. Ask God to continue revealing to you the depth of His love for you.

SMALL GROUP

SECTION

EXPLORE// 10 min.

Small Group Leaders

Children engage in fun, creative activities designed to pique their curiosity

about the day's portion of The Big God Story.

Who Am I?

God created each person to be unique. Children write hidden descriptions of themselves for the group to guess.

SUPPLIES

- Shoe box
- Scissors
- Paper (1 sheet per child)
- Pens or pencils

SET UP

Cut a small slit in the shoe box lid, large enough to allow a folded sheet of paper to pass through.

RELATE

As children arrive, ask them to take a sheet of paper and a pen or pencil. Encourage them to spend a few minutes writing about themselves. Explain that they can write their name at the top of the paper but not in the description of themselves. If kids struggle to think of things to write, suggest they share how many siblings they have, what they look like, what sorts of sports or hobbies they participate in, their favorite colors and foods, etc. Each child should write about four to 10 sentences. When the kids finish writing, have them fold up their papers and stick them inside the shoe box.

Encourage the kids to gather in a circle and listen as you read the answers from the sheets of paper you pull from the box one at a time. After you read each description (but not the name), invite the kids to guess whom they think the paper describes. Continue until you've read every child's description.

God created each of us to be unique; no two people are exactly alike. Today we'll hear a bit more about how God uses our strengths, and sometimes even our weaknesses, as part of His story.

LARGE GROUP
SECTION

DISCOVER// 30 min.

Host/Worship Leader/Storyteller

Children participate in discovering God's Word through Bible Verse memorization, interactive storytelling techniques, and worship as response.

Traditions and Remember Verse

SUPPLIES

- Mementos for your church Traditions (rocks, marbles, gum balls, etc.)

- [Remember Verse image](#) (see Resources)

RELATE

Give the children mementos (such as rocks, marbles, or blocks) for accomplishments such as memorizing the Remember Verse or bringing their Bibles. Have them put the objects into a clear container or add them to a structure, and celebrate when it's complete.

This week's Remember Verse focuses on a character trait of God that's highlighted in today's portion of The Big God Story.

The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still. Exodus 14:14

Connect

Encourage the members of your community to get to know one another through engaging questions, energizing games, and creative activities.

Question

When in your life have you felt most afraid?

The Big God Story

Bible Passage: Exodus 1—4

**Storytelling Technique: Monologue with Props
God Is I AM**

SUPPLIES

- Optional: [Storytelling video](#) (see Resources)
- [Timeline image](#) (see Resources)
- [Images: "I AM WHO I AM," Staff](#) (see Resources)
- Bibles
- Moses costume (suggestion: robe, rope belt, sandals, walking stick or cane)
- Optional: scene of burning bush from *The Prince of Egypt* movie

SET UP

You'll be sharing today's portion of The Big God Story from the perspective of Moses and wearing a costume.

RELATE

Storyteller enters wearing a costume. **You might be wondering why I'm dressed this way. Let me introduce myself. My name is Moses. I was born an Israelite, but an important Egyptian family adopted me. Later in my life I ran away from home and became a shepherd. Talk about identity crisis! But all along God knew who I really was and had big plans to use me in His story. God is I AM. Have you ever heard that name for God before? Repeat slowly and pause. I AM. It is a very special name that God used to reveal Himself to His people. We'll learn more about it as I tell you my about my life. But before we begin, let's pause and ask the Holy Spirit to teach us today.** Lead children in a Prayer of Release to pause, be still, and ask the Holy Spirit quiet their hearts and minds.

Last week we heard how God saved Joseph's family by bringing them to Egypt during a time with little food. Well, the number of Israelites grew and grew until we filled the land. This threatened the king of Egypt, or Pharaoh as he was called, so he made the Israelite people slaves!

God's Word says, "God heard [the Israelites'] groaning and he remembered his covenant ... [He] looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them" (Exodus 2:24–25). My people, the Israelites, were slaves crying out for help. Of course, God heard them. But before He saved us, we needed to know that God is I AM. He is the one true, living, and holy God. God would reveal more of Himself—His love, might, and greatness—so the world would know Him.

One day I was out tending to my flock. I remember that day like it was yesterday. I saw something very strange. I saw a bush on fire, but it wasn't burning up! Then I heard God speak from the burning bush! Can you imagine? God asked me something kind of strange. Let's open our Bibles to Exodus 3:5–6 to see what He said. Encourage older kids to help younger children find passage. God said, "Take off your sandals (take off your shoes or sandals), for the place where you are standing is holy ground" (v. 5). Optional: *Tech: Cue scene from The Prince of Egypt.*

Then God spoke to me again, saying, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob" (v. 6). God was telling me that He is the very same God who knew my relatives many, many years ago! God is I AM. He has always been and will always be. God never changes. I'll admit it—I was terrified! In fact, I hid my face because I was so afraid! I mean, God was right there talking to me from a fiery bush. How do you think that would make you feel? You'd probably feel confused, frightened, and amazed all at the same time.

Let's skip down a few verses to see what happened next. Read Exodus 3:10–15 as kids follow along. I'll be honest, I didn't think I was the right man for the job. But God assured me He would be with me. Still, I asked, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?" (v. 13). *Tech: Cue "I AM WHO I AM" image.* God said to me, "I AM WHO I AM." What do you think that name means? Allow responses. This is a very important name. God is not like anyone or anything else. It shows that God is the *only* one true God. He is over all things, and yet He chooses to be near to us! Then God told me again to go speak to God's people and to go speak with Pharaoh, telling him to let God's people go so they could worship Him.

But do you think I went? Allow responses. Nope! I was too scared! So God asked me, "What is that in your hand?" (Exodus 4:2). I looked down at my staff. *Tech: Cue Staff image,* or show walking stick prop. God told me to throw my staff on the ground. What do you think happened? Allow responses. When I threw the staff on the ground, it turned into a snake! And when I picked it up, it became a staff again. It was amazing! God made it possible to turn my everyday, normal staff into a snake so the people would know God had appeared to me.

You'd think that miracle would make me feel more at ease, right? Pause. Wrong. I gave God even more excuses. Read Exodus 4:10–13 as the kids follow along. I told God, "I am slow of speech and tongue" (v. 10). I was worried that I couldn't do it. But God was patient with me. He told me that my brother, Aaron, could speak for me.

Finally I felt ready to go. I gathered my wife, my sons, and my brother and went to tell the Israelite leaders what I had heard from God. The Israelites were excited and thankful that God had heard them, so they bowed down and worshipped God.

God revealed Himself to me as I AM. He is the living God who heard the cries of His people and came to free them. Every time I responded with fear or uncertainty, God reassured me that He would be with me. He had chosen me, and I belonged to Him.

I bet there are great things about each of you—different personality traits and hobbies you're good at. But let me tell you something I've learned: The *best* thing about you is that God loves you, is with you always, and has saved you. God is I AM, and we can each know Him personally. We may not ever be able to fully understand all that God is, but He knows everything about each one of us! Share a story about a time God showed you more about who He is and your identity in Him.

SMALL GROUP SECTION

RESPOND// 15 min.

Small Group Leaders

Children reflect on what the Holy Spirit is teaching them and respond through creative activities and games.

Reflect: God Is I AM

Encourage the kids to open their Bibles and read the suggested passages.

Questions for Younger Kids

- How did God reveal Himself to Moses on the mountain? Exodus 3:1–4
- Why did God ask Moses to take his sandals off? Exodus 3:5
- What did God tell Moses about Himself at first? Exodus 3:6
- What would you have done or said if you had been there that day?
- What is special about God calling Himself I AM? What does this name tell you about God? Exodus 3:14–15

Questions for Older Kids

- How did God reveal Himself to Moses on the mountain? Exodus 3:1–4
- Why did God ask Moses to take his sandals off? Exodus 3:5
- What did God tell Moses about Himself at first? Exodus 3:6
- When God told Moses to go speak to the Israelite leaders and to Pharaoh, how did Moses respond? Exodus 3:13
- What would you have done or said if you had been there that day?
- How did God respond to Moses after he acted afraid and uncertain? Exodus 3:12, 15–20
- What is special about God calling Himself I AM? What does this name tell you about God? Exodus 3:14–15

BLESS// 5 min.

Small Group Leaders

Children receive a blessing from their leaders and sometimes one another. A blessing may be prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words to encourage and guide.

SUPPLIES

- Stars and Space images (see Resources)
- Remember Verse cards (see Resources)
- Bible

PREPARE AHEAD

Print the four pages of colorful Stars and Space images.

RELATE

Invite the children to sit in a circle. **God is the great I AM. His power extends beyond what we can even imagine and comprehend. God's Word says that God's qualities can be seen in His creation.** Read Romans 1:20 aloud or ask a volunteer to read it.

Let's look at images of some of God's creation to think about who He is. As you look at these images, remind yourself that the living God who created the world and everything in it loves us so much that He also created the way to be in relationship with Him forever!

Pass the Stars and Space images around the circle. Encourage the kids to look at each image in silence, focusing on the powerful creativity of God. Then invite the kids to stand with their hands in front of them, palms up, as you open a Bible and read Psalm 57:9–11:

I will praise you, Lord, among the nations; I will sing of you among the peoples. For great is your love, reaching to the heavens; your faithfulness reaches to the skies. Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; let your glory be over all the earth.

May God show Himself to you more and more this week. May you praise Him as I AM.