CALVARY CHAPEL OF PHILADELPHIA

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

3RD-5TH GRADE

TEACHER'S PACKET

SUNDAY MORNING

Study 4

God's Promise to Moses: Part 1

KNOW GROW SHOW

God's Promise to Moses: Part 1

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

Objective

Just as God promised to free the Israelites from their affliction in Egypt, God promises to free us from our affliction from sin.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

Key Verses

Exodus 3—Main Teaching Passage
Romans 6:17-18
John 8:31-36
Hebrews 12:1

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

Memory Verse - Galatians 5:1

"For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery."

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Hook

Review the memory verse from last week, Isaiah 9:6.

Ask the students, "What is slavery?" and, "What does it mean to be a slave?"

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

In Genesis 15, God told Abraham that his descendants would be enslaved and afflicted in a foreign land for 400 years, and that after that period, God would bring them out of captivity and return them to the Promised Land. Exodus 3 comes at the end of this period of affliction, and God was about to fulfill His Word and rescue the Israelites from their captivity.

When Moses turned aside to see the wonder of the burning bush, God revealed Himself. He introduces Himself as, "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," referring back to the promises that He gave to Abraham in Genesis 15. God then commanded Moses to confront Pharaoh and instruct him to release the Israelites. God promised that He would be with Moses and that Moses would lead the Israelites back to that very mountain to worship God. Following this, God reiterated His promise to "bring you (the Israelites) up out of their affliction in Egypt to the land of the Canaanites… a land flowing with milk and honey." Knowing that Pharaoh would not release the Israelites, He added that He would stretch out His mighty hand and demonstrate His great power by doing great wonders among the Egyptians, not only showing that He is faithful, but that His power knows no bounds.

The interpretation/ exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK

When we read through this passage, we can sometimes lose sight of God's focus, because we are over-awed by the way God revealed Himself. From our perspective, this passage shows us incredible truths about who God is, but God's focus is clear; this conversation with Moses is all about God providing freedom for His people from a slavery that they cannot escape in their own strength.

Even though our physical circumstances are much different, there is much we can learn and apply from what the Israelites were facing. We cannot see it, but we are all prisoners, captives, and slaves. We do not have Egyptian slavers standing over us with whips ready to strike us, we may not have chains binding our hands together, and we may not spend our days locked up in jail cells, but we are all slaves. In Romans 6, God tells us that we are slaves to sin, and that every wrong action, word, and thought actually chains us and holds us captive. Romans 6:16 tells us that sin is, without question, the worst master that we could ever serve. If we are owned by sin, our path leads inevitably to death. God's desire for us is no different than the desire He had for the Israelites. God does not want

LOOK (Continued)

us to live as slaves to sin. He does not want our path to lead to death. God wants us to have life, and to have it to the fullest (John 10:10).

God told Moses that Pharaoh would not willingly let the Israelites go, and in the same way, sin clings to us. It weighs us down and affects the way that we live (Hebrews 12:1). The solution was for God to perform great wonders and mighty works that would convince Pharaoh to let the people go. For us the solution is the same. God set us free by performing a great miracle. Our miracle was not a plague of locusts, or turning the Nile River into blood. The miracle that God performed to free us was sending His Son Jesus Christ to walk on the earth as a man, to live a sinless and perfect life, to die on a cross, paying the penalty for our sin and then, incredibly, three days later to rise from the grave. God wanted us to have freedom, to have life and not death, and He did this by dying in our place. If we have given our lives to the Lord and accepted the gift of eternal life, then we are no longer slaves to sin, but rather we serve a new Master. His burden is easy and his yoke is light. His path leads to life.

TOOK

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

As a class memorize Galatians 5:1.

Have the kids spend a few minutes in silent reflection. Have them ask the Lord if there are any chains or weights that they need to cast off.

Pray: Thank the Lord for the freedom that we have in Christ. Ask the Lord to help us not return to our sin, but to walk in the newness of life.

Family Question: How does sin affect us?

FURTHER STUDY

David Guzik's Commentary on Exodus 3

Exodus 3 - Moses and the Burning Bush

A. God's call to Moses from the burning bush.

1. (1-3) Moses and the burning bush on Mount Horeb.

Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush *was* not consumed. Then Moses said, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn."

a. **Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law**: For 40 years Moses lived as an obscure shepherd in the desert of Midian. At this point his life was so humble that he didn't even have a flock of sheep to call his own - the sheep belonged to his **father-in-law**.

i. **Tending the flock**: "The Hebrew suggests that this was his habitual occupation." (Cole)

b. **The back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God**: Moses brought the sheep to this mountain, also later called Mount Sinai. **Horeb** probably means "desert" or "desolation," and the name gives an idea of the terrain.

c. **The bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed**: It wasn't just that Moses saw a bush burning; apparently, it is not uncommon for a plant like this to spontaneously ignite out in that desert. Nevertheless, two things were distinctive about that bush:

- **The Angel of the LORD appeared…from the midst** of the bush
- Though the bush burned, **the bush was not consumed**.

i. "Though the bush burned with fire, it did not crackle or diminish, no leaf curled and no branch charred. It burned, but was not consumed." (Meyer)

ii. The bush burning but not being consumed was a magnetic sight to Moses - it drew him in for a closer examination. Some think the burning bush to be a symbol of Israel, or the people of God more generally - afflicted but not destroyed, because God is in the midst of them.

iii. Yet we can also say that the burning bush was a picture of the cross. The Hebrew word used to describe this bush is comes from the word "to stick or to prick," this meaning a thorn-bush or bramble. We can think of the cross - where Jesus, crowned with thorns, endured the fires of judgment and yet was not consumed by

them - and be reminded of the cross when we consider the burning bush.

iv. **I will now turn aside to see this great sight**: Whatever exactly Moses saw, it was nothing *normal*. "To explain what happened here as a temporary mirage of reflected sunlight on some red leaves or a campfire of some Bedouin or even the phenomenon of Saint Elmo's fire is to substitute *our* experience for Moses' forty years in that area and his estimate that it was indeed unusual." (Kaiser)

v. Clarke on the **Angel of the LORD**: "Not a created angel certainly, for he is called *Jehovah*, Exodus 3:4 and has the most expressive attributes of the Godhead applied to him…Yet he is an *angel*, *malach*, a *messenger*, in whom was the name of God….And who is this but JESUS, the Leader, Redeemer, and Saviour of all mankind?"

2. (4-6) From the burning bush, God calls to Moses.

So when the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand *is* holy ground." Moreover He said, "I *am* the God of your father; the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.

a. **When the LORD saw that he turned aside to look**: God didn't speak to Moses until He had Moses' attention. Often God's Word doesn't touch our heart the way that it might because we don't give it our attention.

i. The burning bush was a spectacular phenomenon that captured Moses' attention; but it changed nothing until Moses received the *Word of God* that came to him there.

b. **God called to him from the midst of the bush**: Moses didn't see anyone in the burning bush; yet God, in the presence of the *Angel of the LORD* (Exodus 3:2) was there, calling out to Moses from the midst of the burning bush.

i. Undoubtedly, this is another occasion where Jesus appeared before His incarnation in the Old Testament as *the Angel of the LORD*, as He did many times (Genesis 16:7-13, Judges 2:1-5, Judges 6:11-24, Judges 13:3-22).

ii. We say this is God, in the Person of Jesus Christ, because of God the Father, it is said *No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him* (John 1:18), and that no man has ever seen God in the Person of the Father (1 Timothy 6:16).

c. **Moses, Moses!** God's first words to Moses called him by name. This shows that even though Moses was now an obscure, forgotten shepherd on the backside of the desert, God knew who he was, and Moses was important to God.

i. The *double* call (**Moses, Moses!**) implied importance and urgency, as when God called *Abraham, Abraham!* (Genesis 22:11), *Samuel, Samuel!* (1 Samuel 3:10), *Simon, Simon* (Luke 22:31), *Martha, Martha* (Luke 10:41), and *Saul, Saul* (Acts 9:4).

d. **Then He said**: God told Moses to do two things to show special honor to this place because of the immediate presence of God.

- He told Moses to keep a distance (**Do not draw near this place**).
- He commanded Moses to show reverence for God's presence (**Take your sandals off your feet**).

i. **Do not draw near** literally has the sense of "stop coming closer." Moses was on his way for an up-close examination of the burning bush when God stopped him short.

ii. This was a holy place; and because God is holy, there will always be a distance between God and man. Even in perfection man will never be equal to God, though we will be able to have closer fellowship with Him than ever.

iii. **Take your sandals off your feet**: Removing the sandals showed an appropriate *humility*, because the poorest and most needy have no shoes, and servants usually went barefoot. It also recognized the *immediate presence* of God. In many cultures, you take off your shoes when you come into someone's house, and now Moses was in God's "house," a place of His immediate presence.

iv. "As this sole must like in dust, gravel, and sand about the foot when travelling, and render it very uneasy, hence the custom of frequently *washing* the feet in those countries where these sandals were worn. *Pulling off the shoes was*, therefore, an emblem of laying aside the *pollutions* contracted by *walking* in the *way of sin*." (Clarke)

e. **The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob**: God revealed Himself to Moses by declaring His relationship to the patriarchs. This reminded Moses that God is the God of the covenant, and His covenant with Israel was still valid and important. This wasn't a "new God" meeting Moses, but the same God that dealt with **Abraham**, **Isaac**, and **Jacob**.

i. God would reveal Himself to Moses more intimately than He had to any of the patriarchs; yet it all began with God reminding Moses of the bridge of covenant they met on.

ii. Some in the days of Moses might have thought that God neglected or forgot His covenant in the 400 years of Israel's slavery in Egypt, since the time of the patriarchs. Nevertheless, God was at work during that time, preserving and multiplying the nation.

f. **Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God**: God told Moses to do what was appropriate for a creature before their Creator - to revere and recognize His holiness. Moses responded as a man who knew he was not only a creature, but also a sinful creature - he **hid his face**.

i. In his years in the wilderness of Midan, Moses must have often remembered how he murdered an Egyptian and how proud he was to think he could deliver Israel himself. Moses might have remembered a thousands sins, both real and imagined - now, when God appeared, he responded in a way completely different than he might have 40 years before.

B. God's commission to Moses.

1. (7-10) God explains His general plan to Moses, and Moses' place in the plan.

And the LORD said: "I have surely seen the oppression of My people who *are* in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows. So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites. Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt."

a. **I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and large land**: God did not just *then* decide to give Israel the land of Canaan. It was the same land that He promised to the patriarchs some 400 years previous to this.

b. **I have surely seen the oppression of My people who *are* in Egypt, and have heard their cry**: God wanted Moses and Israel to know His compassionate care for them.

i. To this point, Moses' experience emphasized the *separation* between himself and God. Moses could never burn without being consumed. Moses could not speak from the midst of a fire. Moses couldn't keep his sandals on in the divine presence. Moses was not the eternal God of the patriarchs. The separation between God and Moses was real; yet God would soon show His care and compassion to Moses and the people of Israel. God is *separate*, but not necessarily *distant*. God is separate; yet God cares and connects Himself to our needs.

c. **I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people**: In Exodus 3:8 God said, *I have come down to deliver them*. Then at Exodus 3:10 God said, **Come now, therefore, and I will send you**. If God said He would deliver them, whey did He use or need Moses at all? This shows that God often uses and chooses to rely on human instruments.

i. God could do it all by Himself, but it is most often God's plan to work with and through people, as we are *workers together with Him* (2 Corinthians 6:1).

2. (11-12) Moses' answer, and God's reply to that answer.

But Moses said to God, "Who *am* I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?" So He said, "I will certainly be with you. And this *shall be* a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain."

a. **Who am I?** 40 years before, Moses thought he knew who he was: he was a prince of Egypt and a Hebrew, God's chosen instrument to deliver Israel. After forty years of chasing sheep around the desert, Moses didn't have the same self-sure confidence that he once had.

b. **I will certainly be with you**: God's reply is intended to take Moses' focus off of himself and on where it *should be* - on God. Therefore, God never answered the question "**Who am I?**" Instead, He reminded Moses "**I will certainly be with you**."

i. This was a great opportunity to deal with Moses' "self-esteem" problem, but God ignored the solutions we usually use regarding this "problem." Moses only had a self-esteem problem when he was too confident in his own ability to deliver Israel.

ii. **Who am I?** This really wasn't the right question; "*Who is God?*" was the proper question. God's identity was more important than who Moses was. When we know the God who is with us, we can step forth confidently to do His will.

iii. **I will certainly be with you**: After this, Moses had no right to protest further. From here his objections move from a godly lack of self-reliance to an ungodly lack of faith.

c. **When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain**: As Moses tended his flock in the wilderness, it probably seemed totally unlikely that he would lead all three million of his people to this same **mountain** - but God promised that this would be so.

i. The **sign** that God had truly sent Moses may not have been the coming to Mount Sinai (which did not happen for many, many months). The sign probably refers backwards, to the sign of the burning bush and the encounter with God there.

3. (13-14) The revelation of God's name to Moses.

Then Moses said to God, "Indeed, *when* I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What *is* His name?' what shall I say to them?" And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

a. **And they say to me, "What *is* His name?" what shall I say to them?** Rightfully, Moses sensed he needed credentials before the people of Israel. Before, he thought he had the credentials because he was a prince of Egypt. 40 years of tending sheep took away his sense of self-reliance.

i. When God revealed Himself to man in the days of the patriarchs it was often associated with a newly revealed name or title for God.

- Abraham, in the encounter with Melchizedek called on *God Most High* (Genesis 14:22)
- Abraham later encountered *Almighty God* (Genesis 17:1)
- Abraham came to know the LORD as *Everlasting God* (Genesis 21:33), and *The-LORD-Will-Provide* (Genesis 22:14)
- Hagar encountered *You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees* (Genesis 16:13)
- Jacob met *El Elohe Israel* (Genesis 33:20) and *El Bethel* (Genesis 35:7).

ii. So if Moses were to come to the elders of Israel as a representative of God, it would be logical for them to wonder, "By what name did He reveal Himself to you?"

b. **And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM."** It might seem nonsensical to refer to one's self with the phrase, **"I AM WHO I AM."** Yet it reveals something important about God - that He has no equal.

i. "There is no equivalent for God but God. If you place God on the one side of your symbol of equation (=), there is nothing to put on the other but Himself." (Meyer)

ii. The *closest* we come to an equivalent is to say, "God is love" (1 John 4:8, 4:16). Yet that is not exactly an equivalent, because you can't turn it around and say, "Love is God." God is love, but He is also greater than love.

iii. This name **I AM WHO I AM** is connected with the name *Yahweh*. "This pithy clause is clearly a reference to the name YHWH. Probably 'Yahweh' is regarded as a shortening of the whole phrase, and a running together of the clause into one word." (Cole)

iv. *Yahweh* was not a new name, nor an unknown name - it appears more than 160 times in the book of Genesis. Moses' mother's name was *Jochabed* meaning *Yahweh is my glory*. Moses and Israel knew the name *Yahweh*. God did not give Moses a previously unknown name of God, but the name they had known before. God called them back to the faith of the patriarchs, not to something "new."

v. In the English-speaking world, for a time people pronounced *Yahweh* as *Jehovah*. The pious Jews of later years did not want to pronounce the name of God out of reverence, so they left the vowels out of His name and simply said the word *Lord* (*adonai*) instead. If the vowels of the word *adonai* are put over the consonants for *YHWH*, you can get the name "Jehovah." All this came about much later; in the days of the Bible, the name was pronounced *Yah-weh* or *Yah-veh*.

c. **I AM has sent me to you**: God told Moses His name was **I AM** because God simply *is*; there was never a time when He did not exist, or a time when He will cease to exist.

i. The name **I AM** has within it the idea that God is completely independent; that He relies on nothing for life or existence (Isaiah 40:28-29; John 5:26). Theologians sometimes call this quality *aseity*. It means that God doesn't need anybody or anything - life is in Himself.

ii. It is also connected with the idea that God is eternal and unchanging. "Strictly speaking, there is no past or future tense in the Divine Vocabulary. When God appears to employ them, it is by way of accommodation to our limited horizons." (Meyer)

iii. Also inherent in the idea behind the name **I AM** is the sense that God is "the becoming one"; God becomes whatever is lacking in our time of need. The name **I AM** invites us to fill in the blank to meet our need - when we are in darkness, Jesus says *I am the light*; when we are hungry, He says *I am the bread of life*, when we are defenseless, He says *I am the Good Shepherd*. God is the becoming one, becoming what we need.

iv. In this, God's name is both an announcement and an introduction. It announces God's presence, and invites any interested to know Him by experience, to taste and see that the LORD is good.

d. **I AM**: This is a divine title that Jesus took upon Himself often, clearly identifying Himself with the voice from the burning bush.

i. *Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that **I AM** [He], you will die in your sins.* (John 8:24)

ii. *Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that **I AM** [He], and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things."* (John 8:28)

iii. *Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, **I AM**."* (John 8:58)

iv. *Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that **I AM*** (John 13:19)

v. *Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?" They answered Him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "**I AM** [He]." And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. Now when He said to them, "I am [He]," they drew back and fell to the ground.* (John 18:4-6)

4. (15-18) God tells Moses what to say to the elders of Israel.

Moreover God said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This *is* My name forever, and this *is* My memorial to all generations.' Go and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared to me, saying, "I have surely visited you and *seen* what is done to you in Egypt; and I have said I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey."' Then they will heed your voice; and you shall come, you and the elders of Israel, to the king of Egypt; and you shall say to him, 'The LORD God of the Hebrews has met with us; and now, please, let us go three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.'"

a. **Thus you shall say to the children of Israel**: After four hundred years in Egypt, Moses had the job of announcing that *now* was the time for the children of Israel to go back to Canaan, and to take the land God promised to their fathers.

i. This was probably totally contrary to what the elders and people of Israel desired. In four hundred years, you set down roots. They probably had no desire to return to the Promised Land; all they wanted was to be made more comfortable in Egypt.

ii. The first word had to come to the people of God (Exodus 3:16) and then to world (Exodus 3:18). Often God will not speak to the wider world until He speaks to His people and He has their attention.

b. **This is My name forever**: God here referred to the name just previously mentioned in the same verse, the **LORD God** (*Yahweh Elohim*). "**Forever**" emphasizes the eternal faithfulness of God to His covenant.

c. **Then they will heed your voice**: This was a precious promise to Moses. Forty years before, when it seemed that he had everything going for him, the people of Israel rejected him as a deliverer for the nation. Surely, he must be wondering why they would listen to him now, when it seemed he had nothing going for him.

i. But Moses had *God* going for him now; they would indeed listen to Moses' message.

d. **To the king of Egypt; and you shall say to him....let us go three days journey into the wilderness**: God presented the smaller request to Pharaoh first so that the request would be as appealing and as easy to accept as possible. He did this so Pharaoh would have no excuse at all for refusing God and hardening his heart.

5. (19-22) God tells Moses how it will go with the Egyptians.

"But I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not even by a mighty hand. So I will stretch out My hand and strike Egypt with all My wonders which I will do in its midst; and after that he will let you go. And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and it shall be, when you go, that you shall not go empty-handed. But every woman shall ask of her neighbor, namely, of her who dwells near her house, articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing; and you shall put *them* on your sons and on your daughters. So you shall plunder the Egyptians."

a. **I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go**: God knew this from the beginning. He knew what it would take to move the heart of Pharaoh, and the plagues and calamities to come where engineered for a specific purpose and they were not haphazardly planned.

i. Moses asked God about how his fellow Israelites would receive the news of the deliverance from Egypt, but getting the people of Israel behind Moses was only a small part of the struggle ahead - what about the Egyptians? How would they ever agree to let this free labor force leave the country? Without Moses asking, God answered this question.

ii. Clarke insists that the sense of **I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not even by a mighty hand** is better understood as *I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, except with a mighty hand*. The idea is plain enough - Pharaoh would not let go of them easily, so God would bring great judgment against Egypt to persuade him.

b. **I will give this people favor...you shall not go empty-handed**: God promised to arrange things not only to move Pharaoh's heart, but also to move the heart of the Egyptian people so that when Israel did depart, they would be showered with **silver** and **gold** and **clothing**. This was not stealing or extortion, it was the appropriate wages for the years of forced labor.

i. In Deuteronomy 15:12-14, God says that if you have a slave, and his time of service is up, *you shall not let him go away empty-handed*. God was not going to let Israel leave their slavery in Egypt empty-handed; instead, they would **plunder the Egyptians**.