


HOW GOD SAVED HIS PEOPLE

UNIT ONE: God Rescued His People

Lesson 3:**Moses and the Burning Bush****CONTENT:**

1. Moses grew up in Pharaoh's palace, but had to run away from Egypt after killing an Egyptian. He became a shepherd. Once, when he was out with the sheep, he saw a bush on fire, but it was not getting burnt. As he approached, God spoke to him from the bush.
2. God told Moses who he was and gave him a name by which he was to be called: I AM WHO I AM'. He told Moses that he was going to save his people and would send him to lead them out of Egypt to a wonderful new land.
3. Moses realised that God was holy and that he was a God who saved.
4. Many years later, as Jesus was entering the city of Jerusalem, people suddenly realised that he was someone great and that he was from God. They gave him a king's welcome. T
5. At Mass, we too realise that God is great and holy, and has come to save us, so we sing,  'Holy, holy, holy...' 'Hosanna' means 'Save us!'; 'God of hosts' means 'God who has an army of angels'.

ASSIGNMENT: Read handout at home. Learn the prayer-song: 'Holy, holy, holy'

REFERENCES: Exodus 2:11-4:17; Matthew 21:1-11. CCC 203-208; 439; 559.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Handouts, glazed paper of different colours, sticks for flags, markers.

I. STARTER:

- Have you heard the story of 'Snow-white and the Seven Dwarfs'?

Snow-white was all alone in the forest when she found a little house belonging to seven little men. She entered the empty house and saw seven little beds with funny names painted on them: Sleepy, Dopey, Happy, Sneezy, Bashful, Grumpy and Doc.

When the little men came home, she tried to guess their names. One little fellow had a big frown on his face. She said, "You must be Grumpy!" Another kept yawning and falling asleep at the table. She guessed his name was... (?) Sleepy. The smallest one was very shy and kept hiding behind the others, so she said, "Your name must be Bashful!" (Bashful means shy.)

- Do you know any person or any pet animal who matches his or her name? [*Children share.*]

Today we will hear how God gave Moses a name for us to call him. When Moses heard that name, he realised something more about God that he didn't know before.

II. DEVELOPMENT:

STORY: Moses and the Burning Bush

Little Moses grew up in the Pharaoh's palace. He was treated like a prince, but he never forgot that he was really an Israelite and he felt bad when he saw how cruelly his people were treated.

One day he saw an Egyptian beating one of his people. Moses got so angry that he killed the Egyptian. When Pharaoh heard about it he wanted to kill Moses, so Moses had to run away from there. He became a shepherd and lived out in the countryside, looking after sheep.

One day as Moses was leading his sheep up a hill, he saw something very strange. He saw a bush burning. The funny thing was that there was no smoke, and the bush was fresh and green. It didn't get burnt up.

“Let me check this out!” Moses said. He went closer and closer. Suddenly a voice said, “Moses! Moses!” Moses wasn’t sure who it was, but he answered. “Here I am!”

Then the voice said, “Don’t come any closer! Take off your sandals, because you are standing on holy ground!” Moses took off his sandals and covered his head. He was confused, because he had seen many statues and temples in Egypt. “Is it God? Which God is it?” he wondered.

The voice said, “I am the God of your father; the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and Jacob!” Moses thought, “Oh, so this is the real God! He is the one who saved me when I was a baby, and the one who called Abraham. He is the one who showed Jacob a stairway going to heaven... and now he is talking to me!”

Then God said, “I have seen all the bad things that are happening to my people. I have heard their cry for help. I am going to set them free and take them to a wonderful land. Come now, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people out of Egypt.”

“How can I go to Pharaoh? He won’t listen to me!”

God said, “Don’t worry, I will be with you!”

But Moses was still afraid. He said, “If I go to the Israelites and say, ‘God has sent me’, they will ask, ‘Which God? What is his name?’ What should I answer them?”

Then God did something for the very first time. He gave Moses a name for himself. He said, “I AM WHO I AM. That is the name you can give the Israelites. From now on you can call me ‘I AM WHO I AM’”

“I AM WHO I AM.. I AM WHO I AM... The name went round and round in Moses’ head. He thought, “How great God is! He has always been living and will always live forever and ever. He is so great and so holy, and still he has come to talk to me and to save his people!”

Moses bowed down and covered his face.

III. REFLECTION & PRAYER:

- Close your eyes and think of the name. Say ‘I AM WHO I AM... I AM WHO I AM... What does it make you think about God? He is a God who was always there, even before the world was made... He is with us now... and he will be there till the end of time... God is holy, high above us, great and powerful. Let us all bow down before our holy God.

[Children bow and remain like that for a minute.]

[Give out handouts and let children fill in the missing words of God: sandals, holy ground, father, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, cries, free, land, I AM WHO I AM. They could colour the picture if they like.]

NEXT CLASS:

- Last time we heard how God came and talked to Moses and even gave him a name for them to call him. Do you remember the name God gave? *[I AM WHO I AM.]*
- Now we’ll jump to another true story in the Bible, which happened hundreds of years later. It was when Jesus was about 30 years old.

A big crowd of people were travelling to the city of Jerusalem for a big festival. (Like many Muslims go to Mecca for Id, or people go to Vellankani to celebrate Mother Mary’s birthday.) Jesus was also going with everyone else. He was riding a donkey.

Suddenly someone shouted, “Look There’s Jesus! He’s the one who heals people!”

Someone else said, “He’s come from God to save us!”

Then others began to say, “He is someone great. He is the king we have been waiting for! Look, he is entering the city of King David! Let’s give him a king’s welcome!”

The people began to take off their cloaks and make a carpet for Jesus on the road. Some of them climbed the palm trees and broke off branches. They began waving them like flags and shouted,
‘Hosanna to the Son of David!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!’

So King Jesus was treated as a king as he entered Jerusalem. Just for a little while people realised who he was. But Jesus knew that soon they would treat him in a different way. He would soon die for his people and save them.

- Tell me, if Jesus came to our school, what could we do to welcome him? Any ideas? [*Listen to suggestions*] Maybe we could make flags and wave them, or make a carpet of flowers, and sing a welcome song.
- The people shouted “Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!” Does that remind you of anything? Have you heard this anywhere? [*We say these words at Mass.*]
- Just before the most holy time of the Mass, when Jesus is about to come, we realise that something special is happening. Like Moses, we realise that God is very holy and he has come to save us; so we all stand and say: [*Let children try and remember, then read from the handouts*]
Holy, holy, holy
Lord, God of hosts,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory!
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest!
- ‘Hosts’ means an army. God has a great big army of angels. ‘Hosanna’ means ‘save us!’ We know that Jesus is the king who comes from heaven to save us.

IV. ACTIVITY:

[Children are given rectangles of coloured paper. They design their own flags to welcome Jesus. They could write a caption to show what they know about God. E.g. ‘JESUS SAVES!’ ‘GOD IS HOLY’ ‘HOSANNA’ ‘GOD LIVES FOREVER’ JESUS IS OUR KING’ They decorate the flags as they wish, using felt pens or markers. Sticks are attached after they have finished.]

- Let’s imagine that Jesus, our great king is here, and let’s welcome him!

[Children wave the flags and sing an appropriate hymn. E.g. ‘Hosanna! Hosanna!’ or ‘He is the King of Kings!’]

Home assignment: Read handout at home. Learn the prayer-song: ‘Holy, holy, holy’
