



LINK247

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EDITOR IN CHIEF

Robin Johnston

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

P. Daniel Buford

Lee Ann Alexander

FIELD EDITOR

Evan Zenobia

WRITER

Jonathan Copeland

DESIGNER

Derek Borders

Big Idea — *This series will focus on the various mountain experiences that shaped Moses' walk with God and his development as a Christian and a leader.*

- **Week 1 — Mount Horeb: The Burning Bush**
We all must have a personal burning-bush experience and learn the fundamentals to being used by God.
- **Week 2 — Mount Sinai: Moses' Experience with God**
People who choose to meet God and spend time in His presence will be changed by those experiences and become agents of change among God's people.
- **Week 3 — Mount Sinai: Covenant and Relationship**
What sustains us as believers is our willingness to walk with God, study His Word, and obey, despite what the rest of the world is doing.
- **Week 4 — Mount Pisgah: A View of the Promise**
Even though sin prevented Moses from possessing the promise of God in his life, we can learn from his mistakes and make certain we will take possession of all the wonderful things God wants for us.

LINK247—YOUTH LESSON MAP



Each **LINK247** lesson follows the same lesson map. This map is designed to help you connect students with biblical truth. Each lesson has options to help you tailor the lesson to best fit the group you are teaching. Listed below are the elements in each **LINK247** lesson.

1

LAUNCH

Begin by choosing a Launch option that will connect with the group of students you are teaching.



2

UNLOCK

Next, using the outline provided, walk through the Bible with the students.



3

INTERSECT

Then provide practical applications for students to apply the truth in their daily lives.



4

ARRIVE

To end, conclude the message by choosing one or more of the Arrive options.





ASCEND

THE MOUNTAINS THAT MADE ME

WEEK 1 — MOUNT HOREB: THE BURNING BUSH



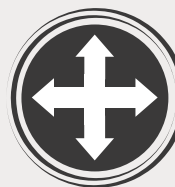
SERIES BIG IDEA

This series will focus on the various mountain experiences that shaped Moses' walk with God and his development as a Christian and a leader.



BIBLICAL PASSAGE

Exodus 3:1–5; 4:1–15



BOTTOM LINE

We all must have a personal burning-bush experience and learn the fundamentals to being used by God.

LESSON OUTLINE



1. LAUNCH

Option 1 — Testimony

Option 2 — Discussion

Option 3 — Trivia

2. UNLOCK

A. Keys to Being Used by God

B. Turning Aside and Unlocking Your Future

C. Barefoot Ministry

D. Putting Our Excuses into Perspective

3. INTERSECT

A. Your Burning Bush

B. I Hope You Have on Matching Socks

C. What Is in Your Hand?

D. Excuses Exterminated

4. ARRIVE

Option 1 — Prayer

Option 2 — Excuse Party

Option 3 — Discussion

1

LAUNCH

Begin by choosing a Launch option that will connect with the group of students you are teaching.



Option 1 — Testimony

- A. *Share your personal experience of the call of God in your life.*
- B. *Be sure to be specific about the combination of fear and excitement when you first heard the voice of God.*
- C. *Be honest about sharing the excuses you expressed to God in thought or in prayer and how He helped you overcome them.*

Option 2 — Discussion

- A. What do you think is necessary for you to be used by God?
- B. Do you have to have complete mastery of the Bible?
- C. Do you have to be independently wealthy or live in extreme poverty?
 - 1. No, you do not.
 - 2. The Bible has examples of both kinds of people being used by God.

Option 3 — Trivia

- A. Let's find out how much you know about mountains. I will ask a question and then call on the first hand I see go up for the answer.
 - 1. What is the tallest mountain in the world? (Mount Everest)
 - 2. Who is credited with being the first person to climb Mount Everest? (Sir Edmund Hillary)
 - 3. What is the tallest mountain in America? (Mount McKinley—aka Mount Denali)
 - 4. What is the closest mountain to us right now? (Answer depends upon your geographic location—may need to be changed to “mountain range” to be more realistic.)
- B. Now, let's find out what you know about mountains in the Bible.
 - 1. I will name a Bible reference. See if you can name the mountain mentioned in that verse. You may use your Bibles if you wish.
 - 2. Exodus 3:1 (Mount Horeb)
 - 3. Exodus 34:4 (Mount Sinai)
 - 4. Deuteronomy 34:1 (Mount Pisgah)
 - 5. All of these mountains had significance in the life of Moses. His experiences at these mountains can teach us many lessons about our own walk with God.

2

UNLOCK

Next, using the outline provided, walk through the Bible with the students.



A. Keys to Being Used by God

1. As we examine what transpired during Moses' first mountaintop experience on Mount Horeb, we will see at least three keys to why he was so mightily used by God.
2. Moses was an eighty-year-old shepherd, living in the desert after fleeing from his home out of fear he would be arrested for murder.
3. *Read Exodus 3:1–3.*
 - a. Notice in verse two, when Moses caught a glimpse of the bush that was burning and yet not being consumed, the first thing he decided to do was look at it.
 - b. His reaction seems very normal. It is likely we would do the same.
 - c. But what happened next changed his life and the course of history forever. In verse three we see Moses made the decision to turn aside.
 - d. He could have shrugged it off and decided the bush was none of his business—that he had too many problems with his sheep to be bothered—but something inside Moses was drawn to this burning bush.
 - e. Something inside of him compelled him to turn aside and investigate.

B. Turning Aside and Unlocking Your Future

1. This is the first key to being used by God. When something supernatural occurs—when you think God may be speaking to you—if you feel led to be involved in ministry or find you are daydreaming about being used by God, then just like Moses, turn aside.
 - a. Don't miss the opportunity for God to use you.
 - b. Don't miss the opportunity for God to anoint you.
2. *Read Exodus 3:4.*
 - a. God didn't open up the windows of Heaven and call down to Moses.
 - b. God didn't cause the clouds to form the letters of his name.
 - c. All God did was manifest His presence in the burning bush, and then He waited until Moses turned aside.
3. I encourage you to be willing to turn aside.
 - a. Turning aside doesn't mean chasing after every wind of doctrine that comes your way or thinking you see God in the shape of your cereal tomorrow morning.
 - b. Turning aside is not about extra-biblical revelation.
 - c. Turning aside means if you believe God is working in your life—if you find yourself drawn to a certain ministry—then turn aside and find out if it is God.



- d. Just like we see in the story of Moses, when he turned aside, God immediately provided confirmation that the bush on fire was indeed God. But Moses never would have heard that voice if he had not decided to investigate.

C. Barefoot Ministry

1. When Moses acknowledged the voice of God, he immediately received a seemingly strange set of instructions.
2. *Read Exodus 3:5.*
 - a. Here we see the second key to being used by God: some preparation will be necessary.
 - b. Typically, there is a space of time between God calling us and God using us. Often we make the mistake of assuming that because we hear the voice of God after we have turned aside, results will be immediate and nothing else is required from us once we show an interest in being used of God.
 - c. If we are to move forward in what God has planned for our lives, we must make some changes to our own lives that result in knowing God on a deeper level.
3. Once we agree to allow God access to our lives, the status quo will no longer be acceptable.
 - a. If we want God to take us to the next level, some things will always be required.
 - b. For Moses the first requirement was to understand that God is holy. In order to show proper respect even for the ground he was walking on, Moses had to remove his shoes.
 - c. Moses had to give up a little bit of comfort.
 - d. He had to sacrifice what was normal for everyone else in order to acknowledge the holiness of the Lord.
 - e. Being a servant comes with a price. As we make the sacrifices necessary to be closer to God, we see the immediate result is knowing Him on a deeper level.
4. As soon as Moses complied with God's instructions to remove his shoes, God began to reveal His identity to Moses.
 - a. God identified Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
 - b. Then God revealed His plans to Moses.
5. After we are called and turn aside, we must make sacrifices to prepare ourselves to be close to God, and we must understand that knowing about God is different from knowing God.
 - a. To be used by God, we must have more than a superficial relationship with Him.
 - b. We must hear His voice and follow wherever He leads.
 - c. It is one thing to say, "I want to be used of God." It is an entirely different thing to say, "I want to be used of God to accomplish *this*," whatever your *this* may be. We must not be afraid to be specific.

D. Putting Our Excuses into Perspective

1. As soon as God gives us a hearty, "Glad to have you on board," and He begins to reveal to us exactly what we have gotten ourselves into, it is very normal for the excuses to come.



- a. Lord, You know I am afraid to talk in front of people.
 - b. I don't have the personality to do something like that.
 - c. Everyone will laugh at me.
 - d. No one will take me seriously.
 - e. People will reject me.
 - f. The list goes on and on. Believe me: God has heard all the excuses before—millions of times.
2. The third key to being used of God is this: God can overcome all our weaknesses and objections by providing us with the proper perspective, the necessary tools, and support from other members of His body.
3. When Moses told God he was not good enough for this job because Pharaoh would never listen to him, God's response was to give Moses the proper perspective. God explained it this way:
 - a. It's not about you, Moses; it's about Me.
 - b. You are not going to convince Pharaoh; I am.
 - c. All I need you to do is allow Me to use you.
4. We have to understand that in our weakness, God is made strong. If we think we are able to do a work for the Lord in and of ourselves, we are setting ourselves up for a huge disappointment.
 - a. Often we think we are being humble when we say things like, "I could never do that." Exactly—that is why God chose you.
 - b. If we think about it, that response to God really is ridiculous. We shouldn't be so prideful to think we can do anything of value without His help. Our job is to allow God to be God and focus on being His servants.
 - c. If we allow Him to be God, He will provide us with the proper perspective to do His will.
5. Moses also told God that the people of Israel would never listen to him. God's response is very instructive for us.
6. *Read Exodus 4:1–2.*
 - a. How often do we delay the work of God because we feel that one day in the future, when God provides us with all the resources we think we need and everything falls perfectly into place, God will be able to use us?
 - b. God is asking each of us right now this simple question: "What is in your hand?"
 - c. Forty years before the burning bush, when Moses fled from Egypt, God knew what He was going to ask of Moses. We may not have many details about what was happening in the life of Moses during that time, but we can be assured his experiences prepared him for what was ahead.
 - d. God was not surprised by Moses' excuse. God knew that with His help, Moses was more than prepared, even with what we would think were somewhat limited resources.
7. As we make up our minds to allow God to use us, we need to understand that He can supernaturally use whatever we have at our disposal right now to accomplish His will.
 - a. God wants to know "what is in your hand?" because He has the ability to use what you know and what you have right now to accomplish His objective.



- b. That does not mean we stop improving ourselves or stop seeking to grow in Him. It does mean we cannot use our lack of resources as an excuse.
8. *Read Exodus 4:3–9.*
 - a. God turned Moses' rod into a snake and back into a rod again.
 - b. Then God turned Moses' hand into a leprous hand and then back into a healthy hand again.
 - c. God even told Moses if the people of Israel didn't believe these signs, then Moses could pour water out on dry ground, and God would turn it into blood. God was telling Moses that the people would believe because of the signs God would work with what Moses already had.
 - d. It does not matter to God how few and pitiful our resources are when we set out to do a work for Him. He can supernaturally take what we know right now, what we possess right now, and use it for His glory.
 - e. All He expects is for us to turn aside—to dedicate ourselves to making the changes necessary in our own lives to get to know Him more—and if we trust in Him, He will eliminate the obstacles.
9. *Read Exodus 4:10–15.*
 - a. The last excuse from Moses was that he was not good at speaking in front of people. God's response was anger.
 - b. Moses was still so caught up in thinking about himself that he refused to understand that the God who had just turned his rod into a snake and back into a rod, the God who had caused his hand to be infected with leprosy and then healed, had the ability to use him to speak.
 - c. God asked Moses, "Don't you understand that I am the one who invented the mouth?"
 - d. Moses still refused to believe that God could use him in that manner.
 - e. What a lack of faith.
10. At this point in the story, it is easy for us to be critical of Moses.
 - a. It is a good thing none of us are God because we might would have caused fire from that bush to consume Moses right then, and we would have looked for someone else to lead our people.
 - b. But instead, God simply asked (a paraphrase here): "Why do you think I placed Aaron in your family?"
 - c. God told Moses that Aaron was already on the way from Egypt to meet Moses, and Aaron would speak for him.
11. God will always provide the necessary help from other members of His body to facilitate His plans.
 - a. God doesn't expect us to do everything necessary for His plans to be realized in our lives.
 - b. He just expects us to be willing to do anything He asks.
12. If all you have is a staff, a speech impediment, and an older brother you haven't seen in over half your life, God is not intimidated by those odds.

3

INTERSECT

Then provide practical applications for students to apply the truth in their daily lives.



A. Your Burning Bush

1. Have you seen a burning bush lately?
 - a. Is there an image in your mind of you doing something to advance God's kingdom?
 - b. Do you have a desire that God has placed inside of you to accomplish something for Him?
2. Perhaps it is something you never thought would be possible. Perhaps you feel unworthy or like you don't have the ability, just like Moses.
3. Moses was not drafted or forced into God's service; Moses was sensitive to spiritual matters and displayed a healthy level of curiosity. The result is that he was called to lead God's people into the Promised Land.
4. I challenge you to turn aside.
 - a. Not tomorrow or one day—turn aside right now.
 - b. Go ahead and boldly make up your mind not just to look at your burning bush, but to move toward it to see what God will do with your life.

B. I Hope You Have on Matching Socks

1. You might have to take off your shoes.
 - a. Things might be a little different, but it will be worth it.
 - b. I cannot tell you exactly what sacrifices will be required, but you might as well get comfortable with seasons of being uncomfortable.
2. Just remember that anything you sacrifice for God's kingdom will be worth it.
 - a. When you are willing to take off your shoes and acknowledge His holiness, things will begin to happen.
 - b. He will start to reveal to you more about who He is and what He desires to do in your life.

C. What Is in Your Hand?

1. Just like He did with Moses, God will use what you already have to perform what He desires, and He will send resources and people your way.
2. He will supernaturally use you to do what He created and saved you to do.
3. Take a moment to think about your life right now.
 - a. What natural abilities do you have that you are willing to allow God to use?
 - b. How can your personality benefit God's kingdom?
 - c. What relationships has God ordained in order to allow you to influence others to live for Him?



D. Excuses Exterminated

1. Consider this simple question: what is stopping you from turning aside, taking off your shoes, and using what God has already provided you to accomplish His will?
2. Let's go ahead and lay our excuses out on the table and examine them in light of Scripture. Sometimes people get strange ideas about what God requires from us to be used by Him.
3. Excuse #1: I do not have the educational background to teach others about God.
 - a. Do we have to have a degree to be used of God?
 - b. Certainly not.
 - c. Remember that the religious establishment of the day referred to the disciples as unlearned men.
 - d. On the other hand, Paul was one of the most educated people of his day.
 - e. These facts tell us education neither disqualifies us from being used of God, nor is it a prerequisite.
4. Excuse #2: My finances do not allow me to do anything for God.
 - a. Do we have to be rich to be used by God? Do we have to be poor to be used by God?
 - b. Certainly not.
 - c. Often people believe being poor is necessary to please God, and they cite the story of the rich young ruler or use the example of the widow with only two mites.
 - d. But we must remember figures like David and Hezekiah, who enjoyed great wealth.
 - e. These facts tell us being rich, poor, or anywhere in between is not the secret to God using us.
5. Excuse #3: I have made too many mistakes in my past.
 - a. Do we have to have lived a perfect life to be used by God?
 - b. Certainly not.
6. Consider these facts:
 - a. Jacob was a liar.
 - b. David was an adulterer and a murderer.
 - c. Abraham tried to take matters into his own hands.
 - d. Elijah acted like a spoiled brat and wished he were dead.
 - e. Samson had more issues than perhaps any other character we read about in God's Word.
7. Yet they were all used by God. Then think for a moment about Moses.
 - a. He had a bad temper.
 - b. He murdered an Egyptian, buried him in the sand, and then ran away from home at the age of forty because of fear he would be found out.
 - c. God sent the death angel to kill Moses because he either refused or forgot to circumcise his son.
8. It is time for us to put away the excuses and allow ourselves to be used by God. It is time to have our own burning-bush moment and allow the lessons God teaches us to sustain us throughout our future walk with Him.

4

ARRIVE

To end, conclude the message by choosing one or more of the Arrive options.



Option 1 — Prayer

- A. Step forward now. Imagine this altar area is a burning bush; physically make a move to turn aside today.
- B. Speak to the Lord and ask if what you are feeling is His will.
 - 1. Go ahead and be bold.
 - 2. Talk to Him as if you are staring into the burning bush of His presence.
 - 3. Be honest; tell Him if you are scared.
 - 4. Go ahead and list all the reasons why it doesn't make sense.
 - 5. Then prepare yourself because God will call you into a closer walk with Him.
- C. Pray a bold prayer right now.

Option 2 — Excuse Party

- A. *Give each student several pieces of paper along with a pencil or pen.*
- B. *Instruct students to write down one excuse on each paper for why they believe God cannot use them to advance His kingdom.*
- C. *Encourage students to take each paper in their hand and hold it up to God, praying honestly about why they are so intimidated by each excuse.*
- D. *Take time to allow God to speak to them about each excuse.*
- E. *When the prayer is finished, encourage students to take each paper and rip it into several pieces. At your word, have all students throw their ripped excuses into the air as a type of confetti or ticker-tape parade.*

Option 3 — Discussion

- A. As we look around today, it is easy to see that no one here is holding a staff. Does that mean God cannot use us to accomplish His will?
- B. Moses had a staff, and each one of us has other physical items, personality traits, giftings, and opportunities.
- C. The idea is not that we all must be just like Moses; the goal is that we all respond to the call of God like Moses did.
- D. What do you think your “staff” could be? What do you already possess that if you were willing to allow Him, God could use to expand His kingdom?