

LIGHT TO LIFE



ADULT BIBLE STUDY RESOURCE

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FOCUS: God has created all people to be free - moving from darkness to light.

'There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up.' (Exodus 3:2 NIV)

Read: In Exodus 3:2, we understand that it marks the beginning of Moses' divine calling, where God reveals himself through the miraculous sign of the burning bush, representing his holy presence and his plan for the deliverance of his people.

Each of us might have passed through a moment of burning fires in our lives, where God clearly calls for our attention, redirecting our paths. These moments may come while we are serving others, praying, worshipping or even during times of struggle. They may bring clarity about our purpose, illuminate a new direction or deepen our relationship with God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How have you experienced a 'burning bush moment' in your life?
2. Has there been a time when you felt God calling you to step into something new or different?

Read: The bush was on fire, yet it was not consumed. God's omnipresence was revealed, emphasising that there is no place where God is not present. It assures all believers that God is always with them, no matter where they may be or what circumstances they may face, as Jeremiah 23:24 (ESV) confirms: 'Can a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him? declares the LORD. Do I not fill heaven and earth? declares the LORD.' Proverbs 15:3 (NIV) states: 'The eyes of the LORD are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good.'

GROUP DISCUSSION

Read Jeremiah 23:24 and Psalm 27:1 together out loud.

1. Consider how light throughout Scripture often represents and is compared to God's presence.
2. How have we experienced God's presence in a way that brings life and not harm?

LIGHT TO LIFE - WHAT IS MODERN SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING (MSHT)?

MODERN SLAVERY

This is the status or condition of a person over whom rights of ownership are exercised. It's a state of control over a person by use of threats and/or use of violence (physical, mental or emotional). People are exploited in a way that violates their human rights and deprives them of their freedom.

Modern slavery takes many forms and is often in plain sight. Pornography sites, the sex industry, domestic workers, factory workers, farm workers, child soldiers and forced marriages are just a few examples of how modern slavery is all around us. Anybody can be a victim (the young, teenagers, the middle-aged, and even elderly men and women). Traffickers manipulate and exploit individual desires, and promise to fulfil people's dreams. They are liars who veil their authentic self and, before you know it, a person is trapped in an MSHT situation.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

There are three elements of trafficking: the act, the means and the purpose.

The Act (what is done) - It includes recruitment, transport, transfer and harbouring of a person to be employed. The potential victim is **TRICKED**.

The Means (how it is done) - It's achieved by

the use of force, threat, coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, power or the exploitation of vulnerability, or giving payments or benefits to a person in control of the victim. The victim is **TRAPPED**.

The Purpose (why it is done) - Purposes vary, but ultimately traffickers trade and abuse other human beings for personal benefit, which can be financial or material. The victim is **TRADED**.

There is no place in the whole world that does not have or is not at risk of slavery or trafficking. It will look different in different countries, communities and contexts depending on things such as technology, migration routes or the demand for exploitation.

The number of people experiencing modern slavery and human trafficking globally has increased to an estimated 49.6 million on any given day. Approximate worldwide figures indicate that:

- 27.6 million people are experiencing forced labour and sexual exploitation
- 22 million individuals are experiencing forced marriages.

Women and girls make up an estimated 11.8 million of those experiencing forced labour and sexual exploitation around the world.

Children make up more than an estimated 3.3 million of those enduring forced labour and sexual exploitation globally.

SOURCE: Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage - International Labour Organization (ILO), Walk Free and International Organization for Migration (IOM), Geneva, 2022

GROUP DISCUSSION

Read Exodus 3 and 2 Corinthians 3:18 together out loud.

1. Reflect on the theme 'Light to Life' and the encounters that result in life transformations leading to divine missions.
2. As it happened to Moses, how could God's presence bring transformed life, change and/or different priorities in the lives of people with lived experience, traffickers, exploiters and those creating demand?

Light that Guides Through Darkness – The Israelites were later led by a pillar of fire during their journey through the wilderness.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Read aloud Exodus 13:21, Psalm 119:105 and Psalm 25:4-5.

1. Considering the function of light and looking on the victims of MSHT, how can the light guide people who are experiencing human

trafficking, exploitation and violence in uncertainty, while in darkness or chains, to change their perspective?

2. How can we or them trust God to lead when we can't see the whole path?

Read: As in the past, God is still looking for men and women who are boldly ready to raise up their voices to the voiceless, where he is willing to prepare, anoint and attribute the task as he did to the heroes of faith.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Read Isaiah 6:8 together loudly.

1. What has God placed into your heart and mouth to be a voice to those experiencing voicelessness and bring 'light to life' in this area of social injustice, in your community or in your personal life?
2. Have you felt lost about ways you could shine his light in your surroundings?

Read: God's omnipresence means that he is always available to comfort, guide and strengthen believers, and that no one can escape from his sight. It also reassures us that his power and presence are constant and limitless. This light, a manifestation of God's presence, is unlike earthly fire – it illuminates without destruction.

CONCLUSION

God's light, as experienced by Moses seen through the burning bush, brought life to Moses and the Israelites. In turn, it leads to their deliverance and transformation. This same light creates desires in God's people to serve those who are experiencing human trafficking, exploitation and violence, to share the gospel and bring this light that offers life to others.

I boldly invite you to allow God's light to guide you as you bring life to those around you and to those experiencing human trafficking and exploitation.

PRAYER AND SONG

*Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to thee;
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.*

Frances Ridley Havergal (SASB 623 chorus)

God bless each one of us.