

Moses

Part 4

Exodus 3

4 When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, “Moses! Moses!”

And Moses said, “Here I am.”

5 “Do not come any closer,” God said. “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.” 6 Then he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

1. **God gives Moses Orientation - Vs. 5** “Do not come any closer,” God said. “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.”

This is the Humble, Servant position

- **“Do not come any closer”** - 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.

“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.” (Guzik)

- **“Take off your sandals”** - **First** - the removing the sandals shows an appropriate humility. Like that of a servant in their day, the poorest and most needy had no shoes. By God telling Moses to remove his shoes he is telling Moses, **First** - in my presence you

must be a humble servant. **Second** - you are in my house. In many cultures, you take off your shoes when you come into someone's house, and now Moses was in God's presence and in a sense God's house. Like when Jacob encounters God in a dream and names the place El Bethel meaning the House of God in Genesis 28. Now Moses has just stepped into God's house.

2. God introduce himself to Moses - Vs. 6 "Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God."

This is the Attentive position.

- God gets Moses's attention. He reveals Himself to Moses by declaring His relationship to the patriarchs. This reminds Moses that God is the God of covenant, and He 100's of years later looks over His covenant with Israel.
- Israel has been in Egypt for 400 years. Their time began as a blessing but has since turned into a burden of slavery. I'm sure many Israelites wondered if God had forgotten his promise to Abraham. This proves that he has not forgotten, rather the last 400 years in Egypt allowed Israel to grow from a family of 70 to a nation of millions.

3. God gives Moses the reason for the encounter

Vs. 7-10

7 The Lord said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. **8** So I have come down to rescue

them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey —the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites.

9 And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. **10** So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”

This is the Hearing and Obedience Position

- As important as Moses is in the story of the Exodus and in Israel’s History, Moses is not the reason for the encounter, Israel is. Moses as a person and leader is a great example but he is not the point. God responding to Israel’s cry and fulfilling His promise to them is.

There is a huge take away for everyone in ministry or hoping to do ministry. As much as we love God and desire to do his work, we are not the point of the Calling, a lost and dying world is. The call of God is not about the minister but about the heart of God to reach and rescue the lost and dying.

- God could have taken on the task himself, but he didn’t. God could have sent angels to do the work, but he didn’t. God chooses, in his divine wisdom, to use humble, inadequate people like you and I. The fact that He chooses people (like Moses), is something that we should always see as a great honor.

Vs. 11-12

11 But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

12 And God said, “I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.”

- Moses says to God, **“Who am I that I should go...”**
- 40 years ago Moses was a Prince in Egypt and obviously believed he could help his people living in slavery. Now after 40 years in the desert, he doesn’t seem so confident. Perhaps the last 40 years has reminded him he failed and now God is calling him back.
- Moses says, **“Who am I that I should go...”** God said, **“I will 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.” (Guzik)

- God makes a promise to Moses that will prove to be the greatest gift Moses will ever know when he says “I will be with you.”
- We will see later in **Exodus 33** - God tells Moses to go to the Promised Land without him, he will send an angel in his place because they are a stiff-necked people. Moses then pleads with God and says **Vs. 15** “If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here.

Vs. 13-15

13 Moses said to God, “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?”

14 God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

15 God also said to Moses, “Say to the Israelites, ‘The Lord, the 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,
the name you shall call me
from generation to generation.

- What strikes me the most about this text is it shows how unfamiliar Moses is with God... He doesn't even know God's name
- Moses at this point is the most uneducated, unprepared person that God could have possibly chosen... Yet the Lord still chooses him...
- Moses to our knowledge has no real knowledge of God...
- For most of us; we would think surely God wants someone who has met the basic academic qualifications needed to be a licensed Assemblies of God Minister... But God doesn't do that...
- Interestingly enough it doesn't seem like God is that concerned about Moses's theological shortcomings. The only thing God needs is an obedient servant who is willing to stand in his presence.

So far in Genesis the names given for God are:

1. YAHWEH - "He Brings Into Existence Whatever Exist
2. ELOHIM - "Mighty Creator"
3. EL SHADDAI - "God Almighty"
4. ADONAI - "Lord" or "Master"
5. EL ELYON - "Most High God" or "God Most High"
6. EL OLAM - "The Everlasting God" or "The Eternal God"
7. EL ROI - "The God Who Sees"
8. JEHOVAH JIREH - "The Lord Will Provide"

- Many of these names given to God come from a revelation of Him and His Character. So it would be logical for the elders to wonder, “By what name did God reveal Himself to Moses?”
- Now God gives his own name to Moses when he says “**I AM WHO I AM**”
- The name might seem odd at first Yet it reveals something important about God – He has no equal, He has no beginning and he has no end. He existed before time, space and matter. God is the beginning and the end, the creator of life and the universe.

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

- The closest we come to an equivalent is to say, “God is love” (**1 John 4:8, 4:16**). You can say “God is Love” but you can’t turn it around and say “Love is God” because God is greater than love alone.
- This name I AM WHO I AM is connected with the name Yahweh.

“This concise 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)

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.” (Guzik)

Jesus uses the phrase in describing himself when he says:

I am the bread of life (John 6:35) – He sustains our spiritual hunger just as physical bread sustains the body.

I am the light of the world (John 8:12) – He guides humanity out of spiritual darkness.

I am the door of the sheep (John 10:7) – He is the exclusive entry point for salvation and protection.

I am the good shepherd (John 10:11) – He lays down His life willingly to care for His followers.

I am the resurrection and the life (John 11:25) – He holds power over death and offers eternal life.

I am the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6) – He is the sole path to the Father.

I am the true vine (John 15:1) – He is the spiritual source enabling believers to bear fruit

Before Abraham was born, I am! (John 8:58) – Spoken to the Pharisees who questioned His age and authority

John 18:4-6

Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, “Who is it you want?” “Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied. “I am he,” Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) When Jesus said, “I am he,” they drew back and fell to the ground.

Vs. 16-17

16 “Go, assemble the elders of Israel and say to them, ‘The Lord, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—appeared to me and said: I have watched over you and have seen what has been done to you in Egypt. **17** And I have promised to bring you up out of your misery in Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites—a land flowing with milk and honey.’

- **Here is an interesting Thought:** The Israelites have lived in Egypt for 400 years (We just celebrated 250 years for America). We are not sure that all the Israelites were initially interested in moving. They had set roots, made memories, become accustomed to the traditions of Egypt. It's possible some didn't want to leave, they just wanted the work load lightened.
- It's much the same way with people living in spiritual slavery today. They are not all interested in getting out, some just want the load lightened. They don't all want a total overhaul, change of address or removal of the past.
- It's interesting that the tension between God and Pharaoh had to intensify to the point that it does. Is it possible that God needed the conflict to elevate to the point of all the plagues and ultimately the Passover so that Israel could see who this Pharaoh really was. If the Israelites hadn't seen the evil claws of Pharaoh many might have opted to stay.

Vs. 18-

18 “The elders of Israel will listen to you. Then you and the elders are to go to the king of Egypt and say to him, ‘The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. Let us take a three-day journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to the Lord our God.’ **19** But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless a mighty hand compels him.

20 So I will stretch out my hand and strike the Egyptians with all the wonders that I will perform among them. After that, he will let you go.

21 “And I will make the Egyptians favorably disposed toward this people, so that when you leave you will not go empty-handed.

22 Every woman is to ask her neighbor and any woman living in her house for articles of silver and gold and for clothing, which you will put on your sons and daughters. And so you will plunder the Egyptians.”

- God says by the time I am through with Pharaoh and the Egyptians, they will bless you in doing my will.

Closing: