

I AM WHO I AM

SMALL GROUP NOTES

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Scriptures

Exodus 3: 1-16

Scripture context

Moses has been a fugitive for forty years. Wanted by the Egyptians and rejected by the Israelites he has run away and is hiding from his problems. He's become a shepherd, has got married and is seemingly content with his life. Then one day, everything changes. He encounters 'the God of his father' (v6). Seeing a bush that is on fire but is not being burnt up, Moses turns aside to take a closer look and God speaks to him. God commissions Moses to go back to where he is hated and tell Pharaoh, the most powerful man alive, to let the Israelites go. Moses is understandably a little daunted by this prospect. Worried that neither the people of Israel or Pharaoh will listen to him, he asks for God's name so he can tell them who had sent him. God reveals his name as "I AM WHO I AM" or "I WILL BE WHAT I WILL BE."

Did you know?

- The place where Moses encounters God is called 'Horeb, the mountain of God' (v1). Elsewhere in Exodus this same mountain is called Mount Sinai. The description of Horeb as 'the mountain of God' is retrospective because it was the place where God appeared.
- This passage is the first time in the bible the word 'holy' is used as a noun (v5).
- God reveals his name to be 'Yahweh' (I AM) which is a form of the Hebrew verb 'to be'. 'Yahweh' corresponds to the four Hebrew consonants YHWH. Wherever you read 'the LORD' in the bible it is YHWH in the original Hebrew.

Question for study and discussion

1. God spoke to Moses because he 'turned aside to see'. Are we conscious of what God may be saying or doing in our every day? How often do we 'turn aside'?
2. Read verses 7-12. What encouragements do we find about God in this section?
3. What does the name 'I AM WHO I AM' reveal to you about God's character?
4. Why was Moses reluctant to obey God's voice? What excuses or objections did he raise? What objections do we raise when God calls us to do something?

Digging Deeper

Think about why God reveals himself to Moses as 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' Why is this significant and what does it communicate? Read Matthew 22:31-32 to see how this description of God relates to resurrection.

Resources for further study / devotion

Incomparable; Explorations in the character of God, by Andrew Wilson.

I am not but I know I AM by Louie Giglio

Exodus: Understanding one of the Bible's major themes by Desiring God:

<http://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/exodus-understanding-one-of-the-bible-s-major-themes>