

## Summer Sermon Series: It's Worth Repeating

# “Moses, Moses!”

(Exodus 3:4)

### Introduction

➤ This summer, for our “summer sermon series”, we are looking at consecutively repeated words in Scripture. Such repetition is intentional (similar to our putting words in bold or all-caps), and it serves to it calls special attention to the occasion or to the person – to the importance of what is about to happen and/or what is about to be stated. Such an emphasis is actually quite rare in the Bible – occurring only about 15 times throughout Scripture [not counting the 25 “*Truly, Truly*” statements from Jesus recorded in John’s Gospel].

So far, in this series, we have preached sermons on the repeated words of “*Abraham, Abraham!*” (Gen.22:11), and “*Holy, Holy, Holy*” (Is.6:3). This morning, we will be studying the scriptural account of the time when God called out from a burning bush, “*Moses, Moses!*” (Ex.3:4).

➤ As always, it is important to understand the context of a verse of Scripture. The context of Exodus chapter three is Israel’s imminent deliverance from Egypt. The Israelites had been enslaved by the Egyptians for four hundred years (Acts 7:6; cf. Ex.12:40). In the book of Exodus, we read that Moses was born in Egypt (to Jewish parents), and that his infant life was miraculously protected by the hand of God (Ex.2:1-10). For the king of Egypt (Pharaoh), in a ruthless attempt to oppress and control the Israelites, had ordered that all male Jewish babies should be killed (Ex.1:16).

By God’s providence, as Moses’ parents (Amram and Jochebed) acted in faith by placing baby Moses in a basket and putting him in the river (Ex.2:1-10; Heb.11:23), Moses lived the first forty years of his life as a prince in Pharaoh’s house (Ex.2:10) – receiving the finest education and experiencing the finest luxuries in the world. After killing an Egyptian who was beating an Israelite slave, which compelled Pharaoh to seek to kill him (2:15), Moses fled Egypt to the land of Midian (Ex.2:15; Acts 7:23-29). He stayed in Midian for another 40 years as a lowly shepherd in a remote desert area (cf. Ex.7:7; Acts 7:30-34).

➤ This brings us to Exodus chapter three. Moses, who was now about 80 years old, had a supernatural encounter with God that changed his life forever. God appeared to him “*in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, in a flame of fire in a bush*” (Acts 7:30). This story unfolds in three massive scenes.

### I. The PRESENCE of Yahweh (Exodus 3:1-6)

**Ex 3:1-3** ~ “Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. <sup>2</sup>And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. <sup>3</sup>And Moses said, ‘I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned.’”

➤ What initially drew Moses to the burning bush was not merely the sight of a small brush fire, but the “*great sight*” (vs.3) of a bush that is on fire and yet “*not [being] consumed*” by the fire (vs.2; cf. vs.3). This was a supernatural (“miraculous”) event. Typically, fire needs fuel to survive. In this case, the fire was not using the bush for fuel (not kept alive by the bush itself) but existed independent from the bush.

For about forty years, Moses had been leading his flock around Midian so they could feed and drink waters (no doubt countless times to this very location; “*to Horeb, the mountain of God*”, 3:1; i.e., Mount Sinai, 19:11). In all those years he had never seen anything like this – and, most likely, never seen or heard anything like this in his 80-year life! This was truly an unusual sight, a miraculous event.

But this was much more than strange or even supernatural event. We learn in these verses, a truth Moses did not initially understand, that the “*flame of fire*” was actually an appearance of “*the angel of*

*the Lord*” (3:2). Notice the definite article “*the*” preceding “*angel of the Lord*” (literally “the angel of Yahweh”), and not *an* angel of the Lord. This is significant as it can indicate a manifestation of God Himself – a “theophany” or “Christophany” – as it clearly does in this passage (see Ex.3:4, 6, 11, 13, 14, 15). The invisible God (who cannot be seen by humans) made Himself visible to Moses through the fire.

**Acts 7:30-32** ~ “Now when forty years had passed, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, in a flame of fire in a bush. <sup>31</sup>When Moses saw it, he was amazed at the sight, and as he drew near to look, there came the voice of the Lord: <sup>32</sup>‘I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob.’ And Moses trembled and did not dare to look.”

➤ Then, after coming to the burning bush, Moses quickly learned that he was in the presence of Almighty God.

**Ex 3:4-6** ~ “When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, ‘Moses, Moses!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’ <sup>5</sup>Then he said, ‘Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.’ <sup>6</sup>And he said, ‘I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.”

➤ This bush is not only unaffected (untouched) by the flame of fire, but it also talks! At first, Moses just heard a voice saying, “*Moses, Moses!*” (3:4). This repetition is a clarion call – one indicating extreme importance or intimacy, or both. Here, God is calling Moses (who is 80 years old) out of hiding and into ministry. Moses would become one of Israel’s greatest leaders, as God would use him to lead the Israelites out of Egyptian slavery and into the Promise Land (i.e., the land of Canaan).

**Gen 22:10-11** ~ “Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. <sup>11</sup>But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, ‘Abraham, Abraham!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’”

**Acts 9:3-5** ~ “Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. <sup>4</sup>And falling to the ground he heard a voice saying to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?’ <sup>5</sup>And he said, “Who are you, Lord?” And he said, ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.’”

➤ To hear an anonymous audible voice coming out from a burning bush would be a bit unnerving, if not outright frightening. However, to hear that same audible voice identify Himself as God is even more terrifying. Notice that Moses did not relax when he heard that God was speaking to him; Moses was not complacent or casual in the presence of God; Moses did not respond by saying, “Oh, it’s just you.” No, Moses hid his face from God and was afraid.

✓ **Illust:** Pastor John MacArthur tells a story of a pastor who once told him that Jesus sometimes appears to him while he is shaving in the bathroom. John asked this pastor, “You mean you are literally in the presence of Jesus Christ? The pastor said, “Yes.” John then asked, “What do you do?” The pastor answered, “I just keep on shaving.” John responded, “Then you did not see Jesus. Because if you truly saw the Son of God, you would not keep shaving but fall on your face in reverent worship.”

**Isa 6:5** ~ “And I said: ‘Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!’”

**Judg 13:21-22** ~ “The angel of the Lord appeared no more to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of the Lord. <sup>22</sup>And Manoah said to his wife, ‘We shall surely die, for we have seen God.’”

**Job 42:5-6** ~ “I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you; <sup>6</sup>therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”

**Mark 4:39-41** ~ “And [Jesus] awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, ‘Peace! Be still!’ And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. <sup>40</sup>He said to them, ‘Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?’ <sup>41</sup>And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, ‘Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?’”

**Luke 5:8** ~ “But when Simon Peter saw it [i.e., the miraculous catch of fish], he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, ‘Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.’”

**Matt 28:2-5** ~ “And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. <sup>3</sup>His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. <sup>4</sup>And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men.”

**Rev 1:17** ~ “When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. ...”

➤ Personally, I am concerned that many Christians have too casual of a relationship with God. In society, God is often irreverently referred to as the “man upstairs” (“the big guy”, or “the guy in the sky”), and Jesus is called “our/my homeboy.” Unfortunately, this informality (and irreverence) has crept into many churches. In all our attempts to make the church more inviting and welcoming to unbelievers (which is good), we can lose a sobering reverence for God (which is not good). Our services must be motivated by, and expressed in, a profound – life-arresting and life-altering – worship of God. Some church “worship services” have very little true worship or service.

Although Christians are commanded to approach God’s throne with confidence (Heb.4:16), we must never act arrogantly or flippantly toward Him. For He reigns sovereignly and eternally as Lord of lords and King of kings. Although, as children of God, we are commanded to call Him our heavenly Father, we must never use His name in vain or refer to Him in any unholy way. For He is absolutely holy, and His name must be held in holy reverence.

**Ex 3:5-6** ~ “Then he said, ‘Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.’ <sup>6</sup>And he said, ‘I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.”

**Acts 7:32** ~ “‘I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob.’ And Moses trembled and did not dare to look.”

➤ God supernaturally appeared to Moses, calling him to be the one who would lead Israel out of Egyptian captivity – to be the human agent of the fulfillment of God’s redemptive promise (to “*Abraham*” and “*Isaac*” and “*Jacob*”; Ex.3:6). God sovereignly chose this specific time and location, this specific man, this specific miracle to reveal Himself to Moses and to reveal His calling upon Moses’ life.

## II. The **PROMISE** of Yahweh (Exodus 3:7-12)

**Ex 3:7-10** ~ “Then the LORD said, ‘I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, <sup>8</sup>and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. <sup>9</sup>And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. <sup>10</sup>Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.’”

➤ The time had finally come, according to God’s sovereign purpose and plan, for God to free His people from their 400-year-long Egyptian captivity (Gen.15:13; Acts 7:6). Moses, however, seemed more concerned about his involvement (in God’s plan) than Israel’s deliverance.

**Ex 3:11-12** ~ “But Moses said to God, ‘Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?’ <sup>12</sup>He said, ‘But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.’”

➤ Moses was less than thrilled with God’s call on his life. Notice that he went from *“Here I am”* (vs.4) to *“Who am I”* (vs.11) very quickly. Although sinful, it is understandable. For Moses has lived forty years as a prince in Egypt, and was currently (over the next forty years) a fugitive from Egypt – with a death sentence on his head.

But we learn that Moses’ question was not innocent. Simply put, he did not want to do what God was calling him to do. In fact, Moses questioned God (Ex.4:1-9), argued with God (Ex.4:10-12), and eventually told God to get someone else (Ex.4:13) – kindling the anger of the Lord (Ex.4:14-17).

➤ God had answered Moses’ question by essentially saying, “It does not matter who you are, it matters only that *‘I will be with you’*” (vs.12). You will hear it often said that “God plus one equals the majority.” While that statement is true, it is also true to say, “God alone equals the majority” (the “plus one” is essentially irrelevant). God does not need *us* – not at all nor for anything. In fact, God does not *need* anything at all. His supernatural nature and power are completely unrivaled, unsurpassed, and unmatched by anything or anyone!

**Acts 17:24-25** ~ “The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, <sup>25</sup>nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.”

➤ This should have been enough for Moses (as it should be enough for us too). Moses seemed to understand what God was saying (*“I will be with you”*; vs.12), because he asked God to clarify His identity. Anticipating that the Israelites would ask him the name of the God who sent him, Moses went from *“Who am I”* to *“Who are you?”*:

### III. The NAME of Yahweh (Exodus 3:13-15)

**Exodus 3:13-15** ~ “Then Moses said to God, ‘If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?’ <sup>14</sup>God said to Moses, ‘I am who I am [*hayah ... hayah*].’ And he said, ‘Say this to the people of Israel, ‘I am [*hayah*] has sent me to you.’ <sup>15</sup>God also said to Moses, ‘Say this to the people of Israel, ‘The LORD [*Yahweh/Jehovah*], 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, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.’”

➤ God’s answer to Moses is incredibly profound. The two-word phrase *“I am”* translates the one Hebrew word (*hayah*) which means “to be.” It is from this Hebrew word that the divine name of God as Yahweh (Jehovah) is derived. When used of God, this word refers to God as the “I am” – the self-existing, eternal God (i.e., always and forever the “I am”, not “I was” or “I will be”).

**John 8:58-59** ~ “Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am [*egō eimi*].’ <sup>59</sup>So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.”

John 10:30-31 ~ “‘I and the Father are one.’ <sup>31</sup>The Jews picked up stones again to stone him.”

➤ To help us better understand this profound name for God, I want to first look at its definition and then its description.

#### A. The Definition of “Yahweh”

➤ “Yahweh” is God’s self-given name. In that sense, it is His “real”, “proper” and/or “personal” name. However, we are no longer certain of the correct pronunciation of this word. In Biblical Hebrew (the

original language of the Old Testament), words were spelled with only consonants and no vowels. The word “Yahweh” is transliterated into four consonants YHWH – known as the Tetragrammaton (which simply means “the four letters”). In English, the word “Yahweh” (or Jehovah”) is used supplying vowels for the sake of pronunciation.

In addition, the Jewish people considered this name so sacred they eventually stopped saying it for fear of using the Lord’s name in vain and breaking the 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment: “*You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain*” (Ex.20:7; cf. Deut.5:11). They would instead speak the Hebrew word *Adonai* (meaning “Lord”) instead of saying YHWH. Consequently, we have lost the definitive (or “correct”) way to pronounce this name of God.

Compounding the pronunciation problem is the fact that centuries later the vowels of the Hebrew word *Adonai* were combined with the letters YHWH to make the artificial/alternate name of Jehovah. Jehovah was popularized in early English translations of the Bible such as William Tyndale’s translation (published early 16<sup>th</sup> century) and the KJV (published in 1611).

- Although the definitive pronunciation is lost, the exact meaning of the word is not. Proper Noun: יהוה (yhwh); The Hebrew name YHWH or “Yawheh,” commonly translated into English as “the LORD” (in all caps or small caps – see Ex.3:2 [first occurrence in Exodus], 4, 7, 15, 16, 18<sup>2x</sup>), or Jehovah. It means “I Am”, “He is” or “the existing One.”

## B. The Description of Yahweh

- The meaning of the word Yahweh conveys a vast description of God – the character and attributes of the one true God. For our remaining time this morning, I want to identify and explain six distinct characteristics of God that are derived from His self-given name of Yahweh.

### 1. God’s aseity – He is self-existent and self-sufficient

God is Creator, not creation. He has never been created. He has always existed, self-existed, as God. He has (self-sustaining) life in Himself. He is the “I Am.” As the one true God, God does not have a time or place of origin. He has always existed.

**Gen 1:1** ~ “In the beginning, God ...”

This also implies God’s self-sufficiency. That is, God has no need(s). He depends on no one, or on anything. Yet all creation is absolutely dependent on God, and all creation has God as its source of life.

**Acts 17:24-25** ~ “The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, <sup>25</sup>nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. ... <sup>28</sup>for ‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are indeed his offspring.’”

**Rom 11:36** ~ “For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.”

While God is ever-present around us, He is not confined to earth or restricted to this universe. God is not one of us, nor is He a created being. He is the self-existing, eternal, Creator, and sovereign ruler of all things. God alone is God. From His perfect holiness, to His supreme power, to His infinite glory, God is absolutely distinct from all creation.

- ✓ Illust: “God was under no constraint, no obligation, no necessity to create. That He chose to do so was purely a sovereign act on His part caused by nothing outside of Himself, determined by nothing but His own mere good pleasure” (A.W. Pink; *The Attributes of God*, “The Solitariness of God”).



## 2. God's eternity – He has no beginning and no end

God has always existed as God. He has no beginning and no end. He has existed from eternity past and will exist for eternity future. God is, as the Psalmist stated, “*from everlasting to everlasting*” (Ps.90:2).

**Ps 93:1-2** ~ “The Lord reigns; he is robed in majesty; the Lord is robed; he has put on strength as his belt. Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved. <sup>2</sup>Your throne is established from of old; you are from everlasting.”

To be the one true God, God has to be eternal. For if God had a beginning, if He had been created, then He would not be the supreme Creator. If He was subject to death (mortality) then all His creation would unravel into chaos, and His promises would forever remain unfulfilled. God is the one and only true God – immortal and therefore eternal.

**1 Tim 1:17** ~ “To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.”

**John 8:53-59** ~ “Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets died! Who do you make yourself out to be?” <sup>54</sup>Jesus answered, ‘If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say, ‘He is our God.’ <sup>55</sup>But you have not known him. I know him. If I were to say that I do not know him, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and I keep his word. <sup>56</sup>Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad.’ <sup>57</sup>So the Jews said to him, ‘You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?’ <sup>58</sup>Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.’ <sup>59</sup>So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.” (cf. Heb.13:8)

**John 1:1-2** ~ “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God.”

God has no body – He is Spirit (Jn.4:24). As the Creator God is free from the limitations of time and space, and therefore He exists for all eternity and remains eternally the same.

✓Illust: “Created things have a beginning and an ending, but not so their Creator. The answer to the child’s question ‘Who made God?’ is simply that God did not need to be made, for he was always there. He exists forever, and he is always the same” (J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*; p.85).

## 3. God's immutability – He never changes and never falters

As humans, we age, we mature, and we die. This is because we are imperfect and finite creatures. God is the perfect infinite Creator. God had no beginning, and He will have no end. He does not change because He is infinitely perfect. He does not die because He is absolutely eternal (i.e., immortal).

**Mal 3:6** ~ “For I the Lord do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed.”

**James 1:17** ~ “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.”

**Heb 13:8** ~ “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”

We know that God’s divine fullness cannot be diminished, but it is also important to note that God’s divine fullness cannot be increased either. Just as God cannot be reduced (even to the slightest degree), so too God cannot be enhanced (even to the slightest degree).

✓Illust: “To say that God is immutable is to say that He never differs from Himself. ... God cannot change for the better. Since He is perfectly holy, He has never been less holy than His is now and

can never be holier than He is and has always been. Neither can God change for the worse. Any deterioration within the unspeakably holy nature of God is impossible.

What peace it brings to the Christian's heart to realize that our Heavenly Father never differs from Himself. In coming to Him at any time we need not wonder whether we shall find Him in a receptive mood. He is always receptive to misery and need, as well as to love and faith. He does not keep office hours nor set aside periods when He will see no one. Neither does He change His mind about anything. Today, this moment, He feels toward His creatures, toward babies, toward the sick, the fallen, the sinful, exactly as He did when He sent His only-begotten Son into the world to die for mankind.

God will not compromise, and He need not be coaxed. He cannot be persuaded to alter His Word nor talked into answering selfish prayer. In all our efforts to find God, to please Him, to commune with Him, we should remember that all change must be on our part. ... We have but to meet His clearly stated terms, bring our lives into accord with His revealed will, and His infinite power will become instantly operative toward us in the manner set forth through the gospel in the Scriptures of truth" (A.W. Tozer; *The Knowledge of the Holy*: "The Immutability of God").

As Christians, we can be assured that we serve a God who does not change. He is not fickle or capricious. He does not morph with the times, or shift with the changes in our culture. God's divine nature and character never changes. Rulers come and go. Kingdoms rise and fall. Generations live and die. But God never changes. He never differs from Himself. He is never less than God. He is Creator and never creation. He is the one and only self-existing sovereign God – and that will never change!

**Ps 102:25-27** ~ "Of old you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. <sup>26</sup>They will perish, but you will remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will change them like a robe, and they will pass away, <sup>27</sup>but you are the same, and your years have no end."

#### 4. God's constancy – He is trustworthy and faithful to His promises

The fact that God is unchanging, implies that God is constant. But God's "constancy" is not merely another way of stating God's immutability. His constancy refers to the fact that God is absolutely trustworthy and faithful. In both His character and His Word, God is always true and never misguided, misinformed or mistaken.

**Num 23:19** ~ "God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?"

Scripture tells us that God not only "never lies" (Tit.1:2; cf. 1Sam.15:29), but that "it is impossible for God to lie" (Heb.6:18). God does not lie because He cannot lie. In addition, God will not – indeed cannot – deny Himself. Which means He always remains perfectly faithful to His Word and to His character.

**2 Tim 2:11-13** ~ "The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with him, we will also live with him; <sup>12</sup>if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us; <sup>13</sup>if we are faithless, he remains faithful – for he cannot deny himself."

God is not like us. He is not impulsive or irrational. He is never preoccupied or absent-minded. God is not aging or maturing. He is not feeble or declining in health, nor is He subject to mortality, disease, arthritis, decrepitude or "senior moments." God is constantly holy, good, loving, righteous, just, loving, etc. without wavering or weakening.

✓Illust: "However unstable I may be, however fickle my friends may prove, God changes not. If He varied as we do, if He willed one thing today and another tomorrow, if He were controlled by caprice, who could confide in Him? But, all praise to His glorious name, He is ever the same. His purpose is fixed, His will is stable, His word is sure" (A.W. Pink; *The Attributes of God*; "The Immutability of God").

## 5. God's supremacy – He is absolutely unmatched and unrivaled

In the Bible, the name YHWH is never used to describe a pagan god or idol, nor is it ever used in regard to any human. Variations of this Hebrew word is used almost 7,000 times in the Old Testament (in every book except Esther and Song of Solomon), but reserved for God alone. YHWH is the distinct, intimate, and proper name for the one true God.

God is matchless and supreme as God. No one is His equal, and nothing can defeat or diminish Him as God. Nothing can make God less God, and nothing can make God more God. He is perfectly, fully, and infinitely God. It is just as foolish to talk about diminishing God as it is to talk about increasing God. God will never be greater than He already is. For He is, and has always been, and will forever be infinitely, perfectly, and fully God.

**Isa 45:5-7, 21-22** ~ “I am the Lord, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; I equip you, though you do not know me, <sup>6</sup>that people may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am the Lord, and there is no other. <sup>7</sup>I form light and create darkness, I make well-being and create calamity, I am the Lord, who does all these things. ... <sup>21</sup>Declare and present your case; let them take counsel together! Who told this long ago? Who declared it of old? Was it not I, the Lord? And there is no other god besides me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none besides me. <sup>22</sup>Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.”

**Isa 40:18-25** ~ “To whom then will you liken God, or what likeness compare with him? <sup>19</sup>An idol! A craftsman casts it, and a goldsmith overlays it with gold and casts for it silver chains. <sup>20</sup>He who is too impoverished for an offering chooses wood that will not rot; he seeks out a skillful craftsman to set up an idol that will not move. <sup>21</sup>Do you not know? Do you not hear? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? <sup>22</sup>It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to dwell in; <sup>23</sup>who brings princes to nothing, and makes the rulers of the earth as emptiness. <sup>24</sup>Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth, when he blows on them, and they wither, and the tempest carries them off like stubble. <sup>25</sup>To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him? says the Holy One.”

**Ps 2:2-4** ~ “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, <sup>3</sup>Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.’ <sup>4</sup>He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision.”

**Isa 66:1** ~ “Thus says the Lord: ‘Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool ...’”

God will not – indeed, cannot – be defeated. Nor can His divine plan be diminished, derailed, or destroyed. God has no counterpart – He is completed unrivaled, unmatched, unsurpassed, incomparable. There is no one like (the Triune) God – not even close – there never has been and there never will be.

✓Illust: In his profoundly insightful and helpful book, *If God is Good...*, Rand Alcorn gives us this important reminder:

“The devil sits on death row. He lashes out against God’s image-bearers, trying to kill God in effigy: ‘He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short’ (Rev.12:12).

Satan is not God’s opposite, fighting a cosmic duel with an uncertain outcome. What’s the opposite of light? Darkness. What’s the opposite of good? Evil. When asked to name the opposite of God, people often answer, ‘Satan.’ But that’s false. Michael, the righteous archangel, is Satan’s opposite. Satan is finite; God is infinite. God has no equal. ...

Satan gathers people for battle and they march. But in the end one suffers not a single casualty, while the other side has not a single survivor. Fire consumes all the enemies of God. The whole conflict ends before it begins. It’s not a battle at all; it’s an execution.



Satan and God do not engage in hand-to-hand combat, with Satan sometimes getting the edge. That's not the Bible; that's Star Wars. Many of us make Satan too big, and God too small" (Randy Alcorn, "If God is Good..."; p.51-52).

## 6. God's sovereignty – He has ultimate power and authority over all things

God's sovereignty refers to His right and ability to rule, govern and preside over all things, according to His divine will alone. God does not need to consult with anyone about anything. He does not need help. He does not need advice. He does not need...anything.

**Eph 1:11** ~ "In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will"

**Rom 8:28** ~ "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

**Rom 11:34** ~ "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?"

God is perfectly, infinitely (space) and eternally (time) sovereign over all things. That means that He possesses ultimate power and authority every created thing – visible and invisible, physical and spiritual, rulers and nations, republicans and democrats, angels and demons, thrones and dominions. He rules over all!

**Ps 22:28** ~ "For kingship belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations."

**Ps 103:19** ~ "The Lord has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all."

**Ps 33:6-9** ~ "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host. <sup>7</sup>He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap; he puts the deeps in storehouses. <sup>8</sup>Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him! <sup>9</sup>For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm."

By the sheer act of His will God created the heavens and the earth, raised the dead, routed His enemies, ruled over nations, calmed the storm, and healed the sick. Nothing is too difficult for Him (Jer.32:27). Without any effort, by His own volition, God can do (and does) whatever He wants.

**Isa 14:27** ~ "For the Lord of hosts has purposed, and who will annul it? His hand is stretched out, and who will turn it back?"

**Job 42:2** ~ "I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted."

**Ps 115:3-8** ~ "Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases. <sup>4</sup>Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands. <sup>5</sup>They have mouths, but do not speak; eyes, but do not see. <sup>6</sup>They have ears, but do not hear; noses, but do not smell. <sup>7</sup>They have hands, but do not feel; feet, but do not walk; and they do not make a sound in their throat. <sup>8</sup>Those who make them become like them; so do all who trust in them."

Furthermore, this means that God's sovereignty is not diminished, delayed, derailed, or destroyed by anything His creation does, or does not do. As the sovereign Lord, God can do (and does) whatever He wants. He alone is Yahweh – the "*I am*" – the one true self-existing and eternal God.

## Conclusion

➤ In the third chapter of Exodus, Moses is uniquely and miraculously introduced to the one true God – by God Himself! And through this chapter we all are confronted with the reality that God alone is God, and He alone is worthy of all praise and trust and love and glory!

✓Illust: “Today, vast stress is laid on the thought that God is personal, but this truth is so stated as to leave the impression that God is a person of the same sort as we are – weak, inadequate, ineffective, a little pathetic. But this is not the God of the Bible!

Our personal life is a finite thing: it is limited in every direction, in space, in time, in knowledge, in power. But God is not so limited. He is eternal, infinite, and almighty. He has us in His hands; we never have Him in ours. Like us, He is personal; but unlike us, He is great.

In all of its constant stress on the reality of God’s personal concern for His people, and on the gentleness, tenderness, sympathy, patience, and yearning compassion that He shows toward them, the Bible never lets us lose sight of His majesty and His unlimited dominion over all His creatures” (J.I.

Packer, *Knowing God*; 83).