

God promised His presence would go with Moses. And that he would return with the people to that mountain to worship. In fact, it was on that mountain that Moses returned and received the 10 commandments.

*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. - Exodus 3:13-15 NIV*

Moses asked for confirmation of who God was. God identified Himself as I AM (hāyâ) and the LORD (y'hōvâ). Both these titles speak to the eternal existence of God. This is truly His name forever.

*We don't often pause to recognize that our God is the eternal God of the universe, preeminent over all things, who was and is and is to come. Yet He is our loving Father who sees us and hears our prayers and comes down to set us free and lead us into His presence for eternity. Pause for a moment to praise and thank and worship the great I AM.*

### **WRAP-UP**

*We often long for clarity through unmistakable signs, yet God most desires to draw us into His presence and invite us into His greater purpose. Rather than relying on our own abilities or placing ourselves at the center of the story, we are called to respond with humility, trust, and obedience, confident that God's presence is enough to guide, strengthen, and sustain us in whatever He calls us to do.*

### **MEMORY VERSE**

*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.' " - Exodus 3:14 NIV*

### **Challenge –**

*As you spend time with God this week, let the goal be to experience His presence. Don't allow your focus to be drawn inward to your needs, seek to hear His voice and be formed by the time you spend in nearness to God.*

## **The Oldies- Week 4 Moses- The Burning Bush**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This week we continue to take a fresh look at familiar characters of the Old Testament. The story of Moses' life is rich and complex, filled with foreshadowing of the Messiah and the eternal story of God's plan for mankind. One of the most significant events in his life was Moses' encounter with God in the burning bush. After living as royalty followed by the humble role of shepherd, at about the age of 80 Moses encountered God on an ordinary mundane day, out on the mountain where his sheep were grazing. Why then, why there, and why did God wait so long?

### **Ice Breaker**

*What, if any, are your retirement plans or expectations? At what age do you think you should stop working?*

### **Key Passage**

*3 So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight--why the bush does not burn up." 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. 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. - Exodus 3:3-8 NIV*

### **STUDY QUESTIONS**

#### **1. God Shows Up**

After 40 years as a shepherd Moses was not expecting a visit from God. But God was watching Moses and His people Israel, and it was time for God to come down and give Moses his commissioning. At Mount Horeb

(also known as Mt. Sinai) Moses saw a bush engulfed in flames that didn't consume it. That got his attention. As Moses drew near, God revealed Himself.

*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." - Exodus 3:4 NIV*

*9 But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" 10 He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." - Genesis 3:9-10 NIV*

The double call to Moses echoes the call of God to Abraham (Gen 22:1), Jacob (Gen 46:2) and Samuel (1Sa 3:4) at their commissioning by God. In all 4 cases the response was the same, "Here I am" (Heb. hinnê), a reply that shows ready obedience. Why do you think Adam replied differently? If you heard the voice of God calling your name, how do you think you would respond?

*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. - Exodus 3:5-6 NIV*

*6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ. - 2 Corinthians 4:6 NIV*

The holy, eternal, almighty, God of Heaven and Earth was present, and His presence made that place holy ground. Why was Moses afraid to gaze upon the face of God? What does Paul explain in 2Cor 4:6 that enables us to see God's glory directly now?

When God identified Himself to Moses, He referred to Himself as the Father of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God had made a covenant with them to bring His people into the Promised Land. And Moses was going to play a pivotal role in that covenant promise. But first Moses needed to recognize God for who He was. Then it was time for Moses to join God in His mission.

## 2. A Bigger Story

We might imagine this kind of encounter would provide the answers to the big questions we all have. But God wasn't doing this to answer Moses'

questions, He was inviting Moses into His story, a bigger picture that the one Moses previously saw.

*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. - Exodus 3:7-8 NIV*

*11 One day, after Moses had grown up, he went out to where his own people were and watched them at their hard labor. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his own people. 12 Looking this way and that and seeing no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. - Exodus 2:11-12 NIV*

When Moses saw the injustice of Egyptian slavery, he struck down the oppressor. In what ways did God's plan extend beyond ending Israel's oppression? What does this reveal about God's relationship with His people? How does that relate to what God wants in our lives?

## 3. Not on Our Own

Moses had struggled with his identity over the course of a lifetime. From his birth as a doomed Hebrew infant, to adopted Egyptian royalty, to a murderer and finally as a shepherd, now, late in his life, God was calling him to be the liberator of a nation.

*10 So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt." 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." - Exodus 3:10-12 NIV*

Clearly, Moses had missed an important detail in God's commissioning. Based on his response, what—or whom—was Moses using as the measure of whether this mission could succeed? Where should Moses be focused instead? If God opens the door to a challenging ministry opportunity, what can you do to rely on God's ability rather than your own for undertaking the mission?

*20 The LORD descended to the top of Mount Sinai and called Moses to the top of the mountain. So Moses went up - Exodus 19:20 NIV*