

“God Will Redeem You”
Exodus: The Redeemer and The Redeemed
Exodus 3:1–12

Exodus 3:1–12 ESV

¹ 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. ² 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. ³ And Moses said, “I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned.” ⁴ 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.” ⁵ Then he said, “Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” ⁶ 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. ⁷ 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, ⁸ 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. ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.” ¹¹ But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?” ¹² 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.”

God will interrupt the course of your life to redeem you and set you on mission.

“Prosperity,” wrote C.S. Lewis, “knits a man to the world. He feels that he is finding his place in it, while really it is finding its place in him.” [Thank Stephen Murphy]

God will redeem you by coming down to his people

First, let’s talk about this fire in the midst of a bush.

We have a leg up on him: Fire is an important symbol in the Old Testament and represents the all-consuming presences of God.

- In [Genesis 15:17](#), God mediates his presence as the smoking pot and flaming torch which passes through the cut animals.
- In [Genesis 19](#), God’s angels call down fire from heaven to judge the city of Sodom and Gomorrah.
- Throughout Exodus, fire will be a constant representation of the presence of God.
- In Isaiah, it is a fiery coal which purifies the prophets unclean lips and makes him fit to speak for God.
- Of course, John the Baptist talks about Jesus Christ baptizing with *fire*.
- And when God’s presence comes to rest on the people of God at Pentecost, “tongues as of fire” rest on the people.

Why a bush? Commentators have no clue. Some have suggested that it represents the nation of Israel, but the only places where the Bible uses this word is here and later in [Deuteronomy 33](#) when Moses poetically stylizes

God as the one “who dwells in the bush.” Only six times. Who knows. Its healthy for you to hear me say, who knows.

The focus is on the fire. This fire can suspend the forces of nature, and this fire talks. God has come down to save his people.

Second, lets talk about the fire that talks.

Exodus 3:4 “4 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.””

Yet again, the Holy Spirit wants us to see how Moses is playing a part in a plan he was destined to take up. This refrain happens often when God wants to get people’s attention and commission them.

- Genesis 22:1 “1 After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.””
- Genesis 46:2 “2 And God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, “Jacob, Jacob.” And he said, “Here I am.””
- 1 Samuel 3:10 “10 And the Lord came and stood, calling as at other times, “Samuel! Samuel!” And Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant hears.””

But there are even echos in the New Testament, can you think of one?

- Acts 9:4 “4 And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?””

God has called out to him, yet tells him to not take one more step. Why? Because the ground is holy.

God’s holiness is related to his otherness, most certainly. But it is not a cool detachment. Instead, to talk about God’s holiness is to talk about who he is and how he acts.

John Webster helps us here: “Talk of God’s holiness denotes the majesty and singular purity which the triune God is in himself and which which he acts towards and in the lives of his creatures.”

Or as Psalms 145 states: “The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. The Lord is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made...My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord, and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.”

Ordinarily in the Old Testament, the wilderness is seen as unclean. Its where one sends the scapegoat who carries away the sin of the people. The wilderness is the place outside of the city of God. But, this wilderness to which Moses has come to shepherd is holy? Why?

This God who comes down to save his people and has something to say *sanctifies* things by his very presence. Victor Hamilton pointed this out: “if God can transform unholy ground into holy ground by the glow of his presence, might he not also be able to transform an unholy life “(Hamilton, 49).

Third, this is not fire; it is the Lord God who can suspend nature but is known by his act of making relationships.

God will redeem you through a mediator of his people

We are about to learn here the ordinary pattern of deliverance which God will use, but lets review what Moses has learned about God:

- He has learned that God can come down. He's not confined to heaven, but he's something more powerful than the false gods of Egypt because he can control elemental forces like fire.
- He has learned that this God speaks and expects people to listen. He's not like the false gods of Egypt who demand but never tell what they want.
- And he has learned that this God knows names. Moses will not be another piece in a game of fate, like the worldview in Egypt. This God knows who he is, and who his fathers are.

God will redeem you to serve him on mission.

All of the promises God lists out here in [Exodus 3:7-9](#), he will also do for Egypt, and that is because the God of Abraham, Issac, and Jacob does not discriminate in his deliverance. [Psalm 145:18-19](#) "18 The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. 19 He fulfills the desire of those who fear him; he also hears their cry and saves them."

[Isaiah 19:20-25](#) (ESV)

²⁰ It will be a sign and a witness to the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt. When they cry to the LORD because of oppressors, he will send them a savior and defender, and deliver them. ²¹ And the LORD will make himself known to the Egyptians, and the Egyptians will know the LORD in that day and worship with sacrifice and offering, and they will make vows to the LORD and perform them. ²² And the LORD will strike Egypt, striking and healing, and they will return to the LORD, and he will listen to their pleas for mercy and heal them. ²³ In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and Assyria will come into Egypt, and Egypt into Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians. ²⁴ In that day Israel will be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, ²⁵ whom the LORD of hosts has blessed, saying, "Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my inheritance."

What kind of God is like this?

- Not one who is capricious, vindictive, or despotic.
- He is a God who "comes down" to visit his people in their sadness and moves towards them in deliverance.
- He is a God who speaks and expects us to listen.
- He is a God who knows names and desires his creatures.

Discussion Questions

1. Reflect on a time when you felt your life was interrupted for a God's mission. How did you respond, and what was the outcome?
2. C.S. Lewis mentions that "prosperity knits a man to the world." In what ways have you seen comfort and safety affect your or others' decisions and life paths?
3. Does the idea of God as "dangerous" towards sin inspire confidence or fear in your heart? Why?
4. The sermon emphasized the nature of the true God with that of pagan gods. What implications does the personal, relational aspect of the true God have on the way you conduct your life? Or live on mission before Him? What do we lose if we abandon the biblical witness that God is personal and all-powerful?