

Exodus Chapter 3 Continued

Exodus 3:12 "And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this [shall be] a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain."

“Certainly I will be with thee”: The divine promise, one given also to the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, should have been sufficient to quell all the chosen agent’s fears and sense of inadequacy for the task.

“Ye shall serve God upon this mountain”: A second divine promise signified the future success of the mission, suggesting that Israel would not be delivered simply out of bondage and oppression, but rescued to worship (Acts 7:7).

The Lord’s words “I will be with thee” were intended to focus Moses on the true Source of his future success.

Here we see God's encouraging reply to Moses. God promised that He would be with Moses. God gave even more encouragement to Moses when He spoke of Moses bringing the children out, as if it had already happened. He even let Moses know that he would live through all of this, in the fact, that Moses would worship on this very mountain. There are no "ifs" at all in any of these statements God made to Moses. This alone should fire Moses up to go. This was God (not man), making this promise and that made it a fact.

Exodus 3:13 "And Moses said unto God, Behold, [when] I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What [is] his name? what shall I say unto them?"

“And Moses said”: Was Moses at this point crossing the line from reasonable inquiry to unreasonable doubt? God’s patient replies instructing Moses on what He would do and what the results would be. Including Israel’s being viewed with favor by the Egyptians (3:21), ought to caution the reader from hastily classifying Moses’ attitude as altogether wrong from the very beginning of the interaction between him and the Lord. A response of divine anger comes only (in 4:14), at the very end of Moses’ questions and objections (see note on 4:1).

“What is his name”: Moses raised a second objection. Israel might ask for God’s name in validation of Moses’ declaration that he had been sent by the God of their fathers. Significantly, the question was not “Who is this God?” The Hebrews understood the name Yahweh had been known to the patriarchs (which Genesis well indicates). Asking “what”, meant they sought for the relevancy of the name to their circumstances. Asking “Who”, sought after title, name and identity. Whereas “What?”, inquired into the character, quality or essence of a person.

There are three primary names of God: Elohim (God), Jehovah or Yahweh (usually printed as Lord in the KJV), and Adonai (Lord). Each of these names emphasizes a different aspect of the nature of God. The name Elohim occurs 31 times (in Genesis 1), where it emphasizes His

strength and creative power. The name Yahweh is most often used to express God's self-existence, particularly in relation to humanity. Adonai means "master" and underscores the authority of God.

When Moses objected to returning to Egypt, one of his excuses was that he did not know God's name. By that he meant that he did not understand enough about God's authority. God solved this problem by revealing Himself as the "I AM", that is, Yahweh. Because God reveals Himself in His names, Christians should understand them to better serve Him.

Here we see Moses, in effect, accepting this awesome job. He was trying to convince himself that they might even believe him, if he only could give them a name that would explain who this God was who had sent him. Why Moses was asking this name is a big question. Perhaps, it was because the Egyptians had many false gods, and they each had a specific name. Up until this time the subject of a specific name for God had not come up.

"El" was one of the names used for God. "Jehovah" was another. Actually, there are 98 or more names for God in the Bible. Each seems to be used according to the working of God at that specific time. Moses wanted to be prepared, and also, wanted to bring them something that they could not deny. In explaining who God was, Moses would probably already know Him as Jehovah, which encompasses so much. He (Jehovah), is self-existent, eternal, separate and independent from His creation, changeless, truthful and faithful to keep His promises

It is interesting that Moses would have to go to the Israelites first. They would have to be willing to be delivered, before he could deal with the Pharaoh to free them. Can you see the symbolism here? We must be willing to give up the world (Egypt), before the Lord Jesus will deliver us. We must repent and turn from this old life of bondage before Jesus can deliver us. The Israelites, just like us the believers, have to want Moses to deliver them.

Pharaoh, in this, was symbolic of Satan. Jesus had to deal with Satan, and defeat him to save us. Moses would have to deal with Pharaoh and defeat him to free the Israelites. Mankind, then or now, cannot be saved without their willingness to be saved. We are a free moral agent. We must "will" to be saved.

Exodus 3:14 "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you."

"I AM WHO I AM": This name for God points to His self-existence and eternity; it denotes "I am the One who is/will be," which is decidedly the best and most contextually suitable option from a number of theories about its meaning and etymological source. The significance in relation to "God of your fathers" is immediately discernible: He's the same God throughout the ages!

The consonants from the Hebrew word *Yhwh*, combined with the vowels from the divine name *Adonai* (Master or Lord), gave rise to the name "Jehovah" in English. Since the name *Yahweh* was considered so sacred that it should not be pronounced, the Massorettes inserted the vowels

from *Adonai* to remind themselves to pronounce it when reading instead of saying *Yahweh*. Technically, this combination of consonants is known as the “tetragrammaton.”

When God said, “I AM WHO I AM”, he declared His eternal, unchanging, uncreated self-existence.

This is probably, the most powerful statement in the Bible. It is a fact that God exists. There is nothing before and nothing after. There is absolute presence. The word "AM" translated is *Hayah*. This verb means to exist, to breathe, and to be. The key to the name *Jehovah/Yahweh* is found in this verb. This tells us of the timelessness of God; the eternity of God. In Hebrews, we see that we all must believe this:

Hebrews 11:6 "But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

My translation of "I AM" is, the One who eternally exists, in the present tense.

Verses 15-22: Having provided Moses with His name in response to his second inquiry, God then furnished him with two speeches, one for Israel’s elders (verses 16-17), and one for Pharaoh (verse 18b). Also included was notification of the elders’ positive response to Moses’ report (verse 18a), of Pharaoh’s refusal to grant them their request (verse 19), of God’s miraculous, judgmental reaction (verse 20), and of Israel’s plundering of the Egyptians, who found themselves responding favorably to the departing nation’s request for silver, gold, and clothing (verses 21-22). The last of these harkens back to God’s promise to Abraham that his descendants would come out of the land of their affliction with great possessions (Gen. 15:14).

Exodus 3:15 "And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this [is] my name for ever, and this [is] my memorial unto all generations."

The identification of the Lord as “God of your fathers” is enormously important. Moses and the Hebrew people needed to know that this was no “new god”, the Deliverer of Israel ever is and ever will be (6:2-3; 34:5-7; Gen. 12:1; John 8:58).

Compare (Matt. 22:23; Mark 12:26; Acts 3:13).

In the original manuscript, *Jehovah Elohim* is the name used for God. This means *Jehovah*, God of your fathers. What this Scripture above was saying, was that God is the God of the present. It speaks of His eternity again. This God will never die. To obtain life everlasting we must obtain Him which is life eternal.

Exodus 3:16 "Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and [seen] that which is done to you in Egypt:"

Literally "bearded ones," which indicated the age and wisdom needed to lead.

When Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were mentioned to these elders, they were being reminded that God had made covenant with this people; and that God keeps His covenant. These elders here, was not elders of a church, but elder in age. This possibly was a group of older people chosen to represent the group.

Exodus 3:17 "And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey."

The Lord's plan was to deliver His children from bondage so they could worship Him and be established as His chosen people.

"Land of" (see notes on 3:8).

Here, Moses must convince them to leave and go to a better land. As bad as Egypt had been, at least they had survived here; and to go for the unknown was a big step. This was especially hard to believe, in that the land is already occupied. Here again, we can easily see symbolism of the Christian walk. There is a world out there for the believer to overcome.

So many times people are reluctant to start a new life in Christ, because they do not want to give up old friends and the worldly pleasure they had together. The believer must believe there is a Promised Land, and must be willing to turn his back on that old life, and go searching for the new. There will be hardships along the way, because we must be tried. The first step is to decide to leave the world (Egypt), behind.

Exodus 3:18 "And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God."

God also equipped Moses with the words for the "elders of Israel" as well as Pharaoh (the king of Egypt). God provides all that is needed to serve Him (2 Pet. 1:3).

"Three days' journey": The request for a 3 day journey to worship, in the light of: (1) direct promises of deliverance from Egypt, (2) worship at Horeb, and (3) entrance into Canaan, was not a ruse to get out and then not return, but an initial, moderate request to highlight the intransigence of Pharaoh. He just would not let these slaves leave under any conditions (verse 19).

Here, God reassured Moses that these people would accept this message of His. You see, as we said before, these Hebrews (Israelites), have to first of all be willing to follow Moses and then the next step was to convince the king of Egypt to let them go. They would go at this slowly. Now, Moses was to gain reinforcement, and take these elders with him when he appeared before the king. These Hebrews really had dropped the sacrifice while they were in Egypt, but God was saying, go out of Egypt and worship again. Here again, we see a symbol of the believers. We cannot serve God while we are caught up in the world (Egypt). We must come out of worldliness to go and worship God.

Exodus 3:19 "And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand."

I know, which is more suitable, since it is God who speaks, and to Him the future is known with as absolute a certainty as the past.

"No, not by a mighty hand": Rather, not even under a mighty hand Pharaoh, even when chastised by My mighty hand, will not voluntarily permit of your departure (see Exodus 14:5-23).

Here, He was telling Moses, it was going to be a battle. Christians too, are in warfare. Satan fights hard to keep us in worldliness, but if we persevere we can overcome Satan and the world and follow God. This king, symbolic of Satan, would fight to keep them (these Hebrews), under subjection to him.

Exodus 3:20 "And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go."

Hands are stretched out to help and save. God promises here more than He had promised before (Exodus 3:12). He shows how He will "be with" Moses. He will lend him miraculous aid, performing in his behalf "all his wonders," and with them "smiting the Egyptians."

"And after that he will let you go": This is said for their encouragement, that their faith and patience might hold out, who otherwise seeing him so obstinate and inflexible, might be ready to despair of ever succeeding.

Here, we see God fighting for these Hebrews. God does the very same thing for us if we will allow Him to. Signs and wonders have been the convincing factors throughout the Bible. This time would be no exception.

Exodus 3:21 "And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty:"

That is, give the Israelites favor in their sight, a little before their departure, who should be ready to do anything for them, or bestow anything upon them. Or lend them what they would desire, being glad to be at peace with them, or to get rid of them. For whose sakes they would perceive all those sore calamities came upon them, that they were distressed with.

"And it shall come to pass, that when ye go, ye shall not go empty": Destitute of what was necessary for them, but even with great substance, as was foretold by Abraham they should, and which prophecy was now about to be fulfilled (Genesis 15:14).

It is not our place to judge God or the commands He gives. Many people believe that deception takes place in this, but let us take a really good look at what it is saying. The very first line says that God Himself had put it into the hearts of the Egyptians to give freely to these Hebrews. After 100's of years of servitude this was justice being done. Probably, some of the people of Egypt had grown fond of these Hebrews. The fight was not with the people; it was with the king. You see, we Christians are not fighting against flesh and blood but against principalities.

Ephesians 6:12, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

These Hebrews were not really fighting against the Egyptian people in general, but against the hard rulership which made them slaves. In many cases, God had given them favor with some.

Exodus 3:22 "But every woman shall borrow of her neighbor, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put [them] upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians."

Because the Hebrews were slaves with no resources, the "jewels of silver" and "gold" were necessary to finance the building of a tabernacle (see note on 12:36).

When we see the results of the tenth plague and the loss of the first born, we will also understand better why these Egyptians would give anything the Hebrews asked, and even want them to leave with whatever they asked for. It is not a natural thing for people to give away their jewelry, but remember God put it in the hearts of the Egyptians to do just that.

Exodus Chapter 3 Continued Questions

1. What token of assurance did God give Moses, that he would be able to accomplish this job?
2. What would make it possible for Moses to do this?
3. Why should Moses believe this?
4. What did Moses ask God for?
5. Moses was trying to convince himself, that they might even believe him, if he gave them his _____.
6. Why did Moses believe this to be important?

7. By what name did Moses, probably, already know God?
8. Why would he have known anything about God?
9. Describe Jehovah.
10. Who would Moses speak to first?
11. Why?
12. What must the Hebrews decide?
13. Who was Pharaoh symbolic of in this?
14. Why must we be willing to be saved, before we can be saved?
15. By what name did God call Himself in reply to Moses?
16. Why was this name so powerful?
17. In Hebrews 11:6, what are we told we must believe?
18. Which three Patriarchs did God say He was the God of?
19. Who did God call Himself in verse 15?
20. To obtain life eternal, what must we do?
21. What was Moses to tell the elders?
22. What was God reminding these elders of by using Abraham's, Isaac's and Jacob's names?
23. What land would God, through Moses, bring them to?
24. What was this Promised Land flowing with?
25. What must Moses convince these people to do?
26. Why is it especially hard for this people to believe God will give them this land?
27. Why do Christians, sometimes, find it difficult to begin a new life?
28. Who would go with Moses to speak to the king?
29. What was Moses to say to the king?
30. What symbolism of Christians do we see in the Hebrews going out of Egypt to worship?
31. What attitude would the king of Egypt have?

32. Satan fights to keep us in _____.
33. What would God do?
34. What had been the convincing factors throughout the Bible?
35. God would give the Hebrews favor with whom?
36. Why was it justice for the Hebrews to spoil the Egyptians?
37. In Ephesians 6:12 we read, we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against what?
38. "_____ every _____ shall borrow of her _____".
39. What shall she borrow?
40. What shall she do with them?