

Exodus 3-4

May 22, 2011

3:1-9: Who can tell us what takes place in chapter 3 verses 1 to 9?

- God speaks to Moses from a bush that is burning but not being consumed. God tells Moses to remove his shoes because he is standing on “holy” ground. God tells Moses that He has heard the cry of His people and that He is going to deliver them from Egyptian slavery.

Horeb (HOR-ib) is located in Saudi Arabia. It is used simultaneously with “Mount Sinai” (SIGH-nigh). Horeb means “wasteland” or “wilderness” and is used when referring to the mountain region. Mount Sinai is used to refer to where God met with Moses here and to give him the 10 Commandments (Exodus 19-20).

Do we have any idea how old Moses is at this time?

- See *Acts 7:30-35* ³⁰ “Forty years later, in the desert near Mount Sinai, an angel appeared to Moses in the flame of a burning bush. ³¹ When Moses saw it, he was amazed at the sight. As he went to take a closer look, the voice of the Lord called out to him, ³² ‘I am the God of your ancestors—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.’ Moses shook with terror and did not dare to look. ³³ “Then the Lord said to him, ‘Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground. ³⁴ I have certainly seen the oppression of my people in Egypt. I have heard their groans and have come down to rescue them. Now go, for I am sending you back to Egypt.’ ³⁵ “So God sent back the same man his people had previously rejected when they demanded, ‘Who made you a ruler and judge over us?’ Through the angel who appeared to him in the burning bush, God sent Moses to be their ruler and savior. *& Exodus 7:7.*
7 Moses was eighty years old, and Aaron was eighty-three when they made their demands to Pharaoh.

How long had Moses been a lowly shepherd in the wilderness? And why?

- Moses had been a shepherd for 40 years. Moses had spent 40 years in the royal Egyptian family, being trained to trust in himself. God had allowed Moses to be a “nobody” for 40 years so that Moses would no longer trust in himself and his own gifts.
- See *2 Corinthians 12:8-10 & 1:8-9.* ⁸ Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. ⁹ Each time he said, “My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.” So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. ¹⁰ That’s why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong. ⁸ We think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia. We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it. ⁹ In fact, we expected to die. But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, who raises the dead. *NLT*

Some are not so weak that God can’t use them; they are too strong for God to use them. As you think of the “holy ground” experience of Moses, when do you think that we have “holy ground” moments?

- We, too, have “holy ground” moments whenever God clearly speaks to us. **Quite time!**

3:10-12: What happens in verses 10 to 12?

- God tells Moses that he is sending him to deliver Israel from Egypt. Moses says, “**Why me? Who am I?**”

Did the self-doubt of Moses disqualify him for the job? Or did it help to qualify him?

- It actually helped to qualify Moses for the job. **1 Peter 5:5-6** says that *GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE. Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time.*

3:13-22: What takes place in verses 13 to 22?

- Moses says that he doesn't even know **God's name**. God tells him that He is "**I AM**", the self-existing one. God tells them that the Egyptians will not listen and that He will strike Egypt with miracles. God also tells Moses that the Jews will "plunder" the Egyptians, leaving Egypt with considerable wealth.

The word translated "I AM" is made up of four Hebrews consonants (no vowels in the original). The name was never spoken after the command not to take it "in vain". The word Adonai (*ADD-oh-nigh*) was spoken instead. Later it was written and pronounced two ways in English: Jehovah (*Jeh-HO-vuh*) and Yahweh (*YAH-way*).

3:13: How does the excuse for not doing what God wants used by Moses similar to what people do today?

- Moses basically said, "What if they ask me questions I can't answer?" It might show itself in our day as "I don't know enough yet" or "I might make a mistake" or "I'm not good/smart/talented enough" to serve God.

Notice in this chapter that God tells Moses what will take place and what He will do...and that is exactly what will take place and exactly what God will do? How can God know what is going to happen?

- He has power to control any circumstance He might chose to control. Being omniscient (all-knowing), God knows everything; He never learns, discovers, or forgets. Being eternal, God already existed in the time that these things would take place and *after* the time they would take place.

4:1-9:What happens in chapter 4 verses 1 to 9?

- Moses asks God, "What if they don't believe me?" God gives Moses three miraculous signs to prove to the people that God had appeared to him. First, his rod became a snake. It became a rod again when Moses picked it back up. Second, when Moses put his hand into his robe, it came out leprous. When he did it again, his hand was restored to perfect skin. God also told Moses that he could pour water from the Nile onto the ground in Egypt and it would become blood.

4:1: How might the excuse for not doing what God wants used by Moses in verse 1 similar to what people do today?

- Moses now fears the rejection of the people. "What if they don't like me? What if they say, 'Who are you to be doing this?'" Many who never serve the Lord fail to do so because of the fear of rejection. Some who have made past "mistakes" use those forgiven sins or failures as an excuse not to do something for God now.

4:10-17: What takes place in verses 10 to 17?

- Now Moses says that he is a poor speaker and is, therefore, not the right guy for the job. God tells Moses that He made his mouth, that He knows what Moses is capable of doing, and that He will give Moses the words to speak. Moses starts to make another excuse and God becomes angry with Him. God tells Moses that his brother Aaron will help him and can speak for him in Egypt.

Has God created us to do something for Him?

- Yes! See **Ephesians 2:10, 1 Peter 4:10, and 2 Corinthians 5:15. Ephesians 2:10** For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

- **Peter 4:10** God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.
- **2 Corinthians 5:15** He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them.

Do you think that God is passive or angry with us when we fail to do what He made us to do?

- The obvious answer is that He is righteously angry.

4:16: Look at the phrase at the end of **verse 16**. What phrase do we use today to speak of how God uses *us* in the lives of other people? (**16** Aaron will be your spokesman to the people. He will be your mouthpiece, and you will stand in the place of God for him, telling him what to say).

- We say that we can be “God with skin on” to other people. He loves, speaks to, and touches them through us.

4:17: The “staff” of Moses is mentioned in all but one of the miracles in Egypt. How does his “staff” correlate with what’s “in our hand” today?

- God used Moses on the basis of what He had given Moses...the staff. In our lives, God uses what He has put in our hands (natural talents, learned skills, spiritual gifts, time, passions, resources, etc.).

4:18-23: What happens in **verses 18 to 23**?

- Moses tells his father-in-law that he is returning to Egypt to check on his people. God reveals to Moses that Pharaoh will harden his heart and that it will eventually cost him the life of his firstborn son.
- Notice how God’s revelation to Moses is progressive. “Go deliver my people. Here are some signs. I will work miracles. Aaron will help you. Israel will plunder the Egyptians. Pharaoh will resist and then lose his firstborn son.” This is how God leads: He gives us some leading / “light” / information. As we follow the “light” that we have, He gives us more “light”. As we *do* the will of God that we know, He reveals to us His will that we don’t yet know.

4:24-26: What takes place in **verses 24 to 26**? And what’s it about?

- God stands *against* Moses. Zipporah, the wife of Moses, then circumcises at least one of their sons and throws the foreskin at the feet of Moses. God then ceased to oppose Moses.
- Moses was a Jew. The sign of a Jewish man was circumcision (**Genesis 17:10-11**). Maybe Moses had circumcised his first son and Zipporah had not allowed him to do it to the second son. Maybe they were both circumcised here. The obedience of Moses had been incomplete.

Is “incomplete obedience” to God obedience or disobedience?

- It is better to do some than none, but a **partial lie is *not* the truth**. God wants full obedience from His people.

4:27-31: What happens in **verses 27 to 31**?

- God speaks to Aaron and tells him to go and meet his brother Moses as Moses travels to Egypt. Moses told Aaron about his encounter and assignment from God and showed him the staff and hand “signs”. They then met with the Jewish elders in Egypt and showed them the signs. The people believed and bowed in worship to God.