

Sent: Thursday, October 8, 2020 2:12 PM
Subject: Tuesday Nite's MOB Session on Exodus 3

Jesus said, in John 5:46-47, "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

Moses wrote the five books of the Pentateuch--the foundational books of the entire Bible--and is arguably the most prominent figure in the Old Testament! His role in the Old Testament, in delivering the children of Israel from captivity in Egypt, is a type and "foreshadowing" of the role Jesus would play in the New Testament, in providing redemption for all mankind! Moses wrote, in Deuteronomy 18:15, that "the Lord God would raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen" (speaking of Jesus), and that "you shall listen to Him!"

In Tuesday nite's lesson on Exodus 3, we see the amazing story of how God called, and commissioned, Moses, written by Moses himself--about God, whom he came to know in a way perhaps like no other man throughout all of history!

Don't you find it interesting that that Moses, now approaching 80 years of age, would "just happen" to be leading the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, to the "west side" of the wilderness of Midian, and come to Horeb (another name for Mt. Sinai), "the mountain of God"! The place where God would appear to Moses--for the very first time--in "midst of a burning bush, that was not consumed"! This would be the very place where, years later, God would "come down" to the "top of the mountain," to meet with Moses again, in dramatic fashion, with a display of great majesty and power (as recorded in Exodus 19)--at the "sound of a trumpet," in a "thick cloud with thunder and lightning flashes," to manifest His presence and His requirements for people living this life--the so-called Mosaic law! But more of that to come as we continue our study of the book of Exodus, and the writings of Moses!

So why would God appear to Moses "as the angel of the Lord" in a "burning bush that was not consumed" (Exodus 3:2)?

It certainly got Moses' attention! Constable says it "symbolized the nation of Israel, the fire symbolizing the affliction of Egyptian bondage"! Moses would write in Deuteronomy 4:20, "But the Lord has taken you and brought you (the children of Israel) out of the iron furnace, from Egypt, to be a people for His own possession...! (The fire would also symbolize God dwelling among His people, with the "pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night")!

Although the children of Israel were suffering greatly, God did not allow them to be "consumed," or become extinct, throughout all of history, even to this day! He was with His people in their affliction and has a plan and purpose for them (and us!) today!

Exodus 3:4-9 says that God "called to Moses from the midst of the burning bush," and told him to "remove his sandals from his feet, for the place on which he was standing was holy ground"! (God's "holiness" will become a central theme in the remainder of the book of Exodus, as we'll see portrayed in His giving of the law, and in tabernacle worship, among other things! (Bob Jones used to say that, for the Christian, all ground is "holy ground"!)

Then God identified Himself, and His reason for coming, with these words: "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob...I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt, and have given heed to their cry because of their taskmasters, for I am aware of their suffering. So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. Now, behold, the cry of the sons of Israel has come to Me; furthermore, I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians are oppressing them!" ("Enough is enough," said God, according to John Neal!)

Note the "anthropomorphisms"! God's actions and attributes in words usually associated with mankind! God "seeing," and "hearing," and "knowing," and "being concerned about," and "coming down" to deliver them!

Then He comes right to the point! "Therefore, Moses! I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt!" Oops! Imagine Moses' reaction! Read about it!

"Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?" (Good question!)

God's response should be encouraging to all of us! "Certainly, I will be with you!" Wow! But then He gives a second promise, signifying the success of his mission to come! "And this shall be the sign that it is I who have sent you: when (not "if"!) you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this (this very!) mountain"!

Still Moses wavered! "What shall I say to them (the people) when they ask me the name of the One who sent me?"

"I AM WHO I AM!" "Thus, you shall say to the sons of Israel, I AM has sent me to you!! And He repeats it! "Thus, you shall say...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, and this is my memorial-name to all generations!" (The "covenant" name of God! "Yahweh!" The name God revealed in the context of redemption for His people from bondage!)

Then, as MacArthur notes, having provided Moses with His name, in response to Moses' second inquiry, God "furnishes Moses with two speeches--one for Israel's elders (in verses 16-17), and one for Pharaoh (in 18b). And He even foretells how each will respond! (How great is our God!)

"Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, 'The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, "I am indeed concerned about you and what has been done to you in Egypt. (Enough is enough, right?) So I said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite (Whew!), to a land flowing with milk and honey!" And (guess what?), "they will pay heed to what you say...!"

Then God's words for Pharaoh! Basically, "Let My people go...! But I know that he will not permit you to go, except under compulsion! So, I will stretch out My hand and strike Egypt with all My miracles which I shall do in the midst of it; and after that he will let you go!" (God knows not only the present, but also the future!)

But there's more! "I will grant this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and it shall be that when you go, you will not be empty-handed...! (Fulfilling the promise of God to Abraham, in Genesis 15:13-14, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. But I will also judge the nations whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with many possessions!")

Wow! What does this passage tell us about our great God?

Among other things, He knows all about what's going on in our world! And He cares and has a plan for our deliverance! And He has revealed Himself to us through His Word! And, although omnipotent, He calls and commissions men (and women)--imperfect people--to be His "instruments"! To carry out His plan! As someone has noted, "God doesn't call the qualified! He qualifies the called!" The real issue, then, was, and still is, who God is! And He deserves our worship and praise!

Jesus said, in John 15:5, "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing!"

Jesus said, "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me! But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

On to Exodus 4, and more writings of Moses!

May His presence be with you this week, men!

Lowell