



Some of you know this story, but in high school I was a terrible driver (haha, still am). I started driver's ed late and was one of the last people in my class to get my license. To make matters worse when I finally got my license, the only car my family had was the big white 12-passenger family van.

One day, I was driving home after work, got distracted, and ended up crashing the van. I was terrified. I knew I had to tell my dad, and I figured he would be angry and chew me out. Not that he had a reputation for that, but I was ready for it. To my surprise, when my dad found out, I wasn't standing face-to-face with a tyrant. I was standing face-to-face with a father who was kind, loving, and compassionate, even when I didn't deserve it. That day, I saw my dad's true character.

In our chapter today, we get one of the most real encounters Moses had with God, and we are given an incredible glimpse into who God is.

He is a God who hears and knows the affliction of His people. He is a God who comes down and sends a Deliverer to set them free. He is a God who is faithful to fulfill all His promises.

Throughout the rest of Scripture, the Exodus serves as a picture of God's salvation of people enslaved to sin. Rather than inserting ourselves into this story as Moses, searching for our own "burning bush moment," we should see our place in the story as the Israelites, who are enslaved and oppressed, crying out for help and deliverance. And like the Israelites, God heard our cry and sent a greater Moses, Jesus, to save us from our sins. Their story is our story, but the bigger story is God's. It is the story of how He saves His people.

ICEBREAKER

What's the most unusual thing you've ever seen that made you stop and take a second look?

DAILY DEVOTIONS

DAY 1

READ IT

Read Exodus 3:1–22.

EXPLORE IT

- 1. What first captured Moses' attention, and what caused him to turn aside to investigate? (vv. 1–3)**
- 2. How did God identify Himself to Moses, and how did Moses respond (vv. 4–6)?**
- 3. What reasons did God give for intervening on behalf of Israel (vv. 7–10)?**
- 4. What concerns or objections did Moses raise when God called him (vv. 11–13)?**
- 5. How did God answer Moses' questions and reassure him (vv. 12–17)?**
- 6. What did God tell Moses would happen in the future (vv. 18–22)?**

DAY 2 — TODAY'S THEME: WHEN GOD FEELS SILENT

Read Exodus 3:1–12.

In *The Lion King*, there is a tragic event that leads to the death of Mufasa, and Simba believes that he is responsible. Overcome with guilt, Simba runs away from home and spends years living in the jungle. He has run from his past and seems to have forgotten who he is supposed to be.

Eventually, he runs into Rafiki, a mandrill who serves as a spiritual mentor to Simba. Rafiki helps Simba realize that he can't keep running from his past. He reminds Simba of who he is and helps him see that there is a **bigger story than what he currently sees**. Simba is the son of Mufasa and the rightful king.

In a much more real and powerful way, God uses seasons of our lives to sharpen us, mature us, and prepare us for what He has called us to do.

God is never absent. Even when we can't see what He is doing, He is still present and still working. And here in Exodus, we see that God had never forgotten His people.

In Exodus 2:24, we read that God heard the people's groaning, He remembered His covenant, He saw the sons of Israel in their slavery, and He knew them. Then in Exodus 3:7, God tells Moses, "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 sufferings." In case Moses missed it, God repeats (v. 9) that He has heard the people's cry and seen their oppression.

Why did God wait hundreds of years while Israel suffered before He delivered them? As we've seen, one reason was God's patience and mercy: the iniquity of the Amorite was not yet complete (Gen. 15:16). He allowed His people to suffer in bondage while He patiently withheld judgment on the corrupt Canaanites. There may have been other reasons that we don't know. **His timing is not our timing**. But we should never conclude that God's silence when we suffer implies that He doesn't hear our cry for help or that He doesn't care. As someone has said, "Never interpret God's love by your circumstances. Rather, interpret your circumstances by His love." **We can't serve God effectively if we doubt His goodness, love, and care for us and for others.**¹

7. Have you ever been in a season where it felt like God was silent or absent? What did that season teach you about trusting Him?

8. Looking back, can you identify a difficult season that God used to grow, mature, or prepare you? How did you see God working through it?

9. If you truly believed that God sees you, hears you, knows you, and is working even when you can't see it, how would that change the way you approach your current season?

¹ Steven J. Cole, "How God Saves His People, Part 1 (Exodus 3:1–22)," *Bible.org*, February 18, 2018, <https://bible.org/seriespage/3-how-god-saves-his-people-part-1-exodus-31-22>.

DAY 3 — TODAY'S THEME: NEVER CHANGING

Read Exodus 3:13–15.

Have you ever revisited something years later and realized that you don't like it as much as you used to? Growing up, my family would go to Wisconsin every summer. We would rent a lake house and spend a week together as a family, on the beach and in the water. It was a magical time. We would swim, fish, and just do whatever you do on the northern lakes. It was a lot of fun. But then my family stopped going for about ten years. We stayed away from it for so long that the memory and nostalgia of that place continued to build up in our minds. Well, last year, we went back to the same beach for the first time in many years, and let's just say it was more sad than anything else. The beach was rundown and gross, and what I remembered as this magical place was just...well, a place. Nothing magical, just kind of sad. You see, in the years that had passed, the camp had stayed mostly the same. Same cabins, same docks, same beach. But what had changed was me and my perspective. I had grown, and the reality of that "magical place" was different than what I remembered.

And that's the reality of being human: we change, whether we want to or not. The hobbies we enjoy, the food we like, the music we listen to, even our perspectives. Things come and go in seasons. But in our text today, we hear God drop the name, "I AM WHO I AM." (Yahweh in Hebrew). Moses is standing on holy ground when God reveals something incredible about Himself. This name reminds us that God is completely independent. He doesn't need anyone or anything to exist. He has always existed and He always will.

It also reminds us that God never changes. People change. Circumstances change. Our feelings change. **But God remains the same.** He is faithful and consistent. And this is important because the God who is eternal and unchanging is also a personal God. He knows His people, keeps His promises, and cares about them.

The same God who revealed Himself to Moses is the God who knows you, hears you, and is with you today.

F. B. Meyer wrote (Devotional Commentary on Exodus [Kregel], p. 53):

There is no was or will be with Him, but always the present tense. All that He was to the fathers, He is today; and all that He will be to their children, He is now. Nothing to learn: nothing to acquire: nothing to become. He alone is Reality, as contrasted with the vanities of heathen deities.²

10. What is something you used to enjoy but have changed your mind about over time?

11. What does "I AM" teach us about God? How is God different from you and me?

12. Why is it a good thing that God never changes? What are some things about God that you can always count on?

² Cole, "How God Saves His People, Part 1."

13. When life changes or gets difficult, how can knowing that God never changes help you trust Him?

DAY 4 — TODAY'S THEME: THE GOD WHO GUARANTEES

Read Exodus 3:16–22.

Guarantees are nice because they give us assurance. My brain goes to all those mattress ads I see. (Maybe that's just me, my algorithm thinks I need a new bed, I guess). They basically say, "If you don't like this mattress, you can return it and get your money back." I don't end up buying them because my bed is pretty sweet, but that's comforting. It gives you confidence when you make the purchase because you know there's something backing up the promise. Guarantees are nice.

When it comes to God, His guarantees are so much stronger than any guarantee a company can offer.

Why? Because every guarantee from a company ultimately depends on the company. Companies can change. Policies can change. People can fail to keep their promises.

But God cannot fail. His promises are perfect because He is perfect. When God says something, we can trust it completely. His guarantees don't depend on how strong we are, how faithful we feel, or how well everything is going in our lives. They depend on who God is. And God is faithful.

In Exodus 3:8, God tells Moses what He (God) intends to do: "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." God did that literally for the Israelites who had been enslaved in Egypt for centuries.

But He does that spiritually for those who are enslaved to sin. As Paul says (Col. 1:13–14), "For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." That's the best news in the world!³

14. What are some ways sin can control a person's thoughts, choices, and actions? What does a life controlled by sin look like?

³ Steven J. Cole, "How God Saves His People, Part 2 (Exodus 3:1–22)," *Bible.org*, February 25, 2018, <https://bible.org/seriespage/4-how-god-saves-his-people-part-2-exodus-31-22>.

15. Read Romans 6:15–23. The world often says that freedom means “I can do whatever I want.” According to Romans 6, is that real freedom? Why or why not?

16. What is one area of your life where you are tempted to let sin control you? What would it look like to choose obedience to Jesus instead?

God’s plan cannot fail. What God promises, God will accomplish. Israel would leave Egypt exactly as God said, with God’s purposes fulfilled down to the smallest detail. Our confidence is not in our ability to make God’s promises happen, but in the God who guarantees them.

17. If you truly believed that God is always with you, never changes, and always keeps His promises, how will that change the way you live and trust Him this week?

This study was written by Ethan Wentzlaff, based on the adult study written by the VBC Pastoral Team.