

Good Shepherd, Beaver Dam
March, 2022
Exodus 3:1-15

The day probably started out as usual for Moses. He was tending the sheep of his father-in-law, Jethro. Moses had to move the sheep to water and then lead them to graze; he also had to protect the sheep from the carnivores in the area.

Moses was minding his own business when God called him to action. Moses saw; a burning bush that didn't burn up! Being inquisitive, Moses investigated and had a life-changing meeting with the angel of the Lord. After Moses saw the burning bush, after he hid his face and took off his sandals to stand on the ground God had made holy with His presence, God said to Moses Go, I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring My people out of Egypt. That's quite an honor. But what was Moses' response?

"Who am I to do this? Why do You want me to go? I think You chose the wrong guy!" You get the idea that Moses doesn't want to go! After all, Moses is wanted for murder in Egypt. Moses is happy where he is!

For most of this chapter and the next, Moses brings up one excuse after another to try to convince God that he is not right for the job. How would Moses accomplish what God wanted him to do? We might say to Moses, "Hey, God is speaking to you! Just do what He says!"

But, let's put ourselves in Moses' sandals. It would have been awesome to see a burning bush that never burned up. It would have been great to hear God speak! It would have been wonderful to know that God had confidence in us to go to the greatest ruler in the world at that time and demand that he let God's people, Israel, go to the promised Land!
When we came to church this morning, we heard God speak

to us through His Word! We receive His spiritual gifts every time we receive the Lord's Supper. God is in this place; that's what He promises! We are in the presence of the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob! It's a privilege to be a member of God's family by faith and to be asked to go into the world, and serve the Lord in our lives This is our God who has done and promises to do more wonderful things for us!

But, like Moses, we are not always that excited to do what God wants us to do. "God, look, I would like to serve You but I really think You need to look for someone else! I can't do it. I'm not qualified! I'm too busy! And, I hate to admit it – I'm afraid." You and me and Moses are not so different after all.

But this is not really about Moses, is it? This is about the One who is calling Moses to action! Moses asks, "Who am I to serve You?" God gives a better response, "Let me introduce Myself, Moses, I am God and I am going with you!" Moses asked God, "When I go to the Israelites and they ask me what Your name is, What shall I tell them?"

The angel of the Lord was speaking to Moses. That is the Lord Jesus before He became a human being. Jesus gave Moses a sign as a pledge. He told Moses that when Israel left Egypt they would worship God here in the desert wilderness at Mt. Sinai. And Israel did.

God sent Moses to Egypt with His name. It is the Lord in small caps. In the Hebrew language it would have been pronounced **Yahweh**, "I am who I am." This name describes who God is: timeless and unchangeable. He is the Alpha and the Omega, who is, who was, and who is to come, the Almighty. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

This was the same One who made Himself known to Abraham. This is the God of free and faithful grace. God is

telling Moses that the same One who chose Israel to be His people, was going to keep all the promises He had made to them. He makes things happen!

In words before and after our text, God said that He heard Israel's groaning, He remembered His covenant with Abraham. God saw the people of Israel. God said that He had come to deliver Israel and that He would bring them to a good land. God had come to **save** His people!

When the Lord became flesh in Bethlehem, it was to suffer and die on the cross. Upon the cross we see the Creator of life enter death so that we might enjoy eternal life. The same Jesus saved His people!

God knew who Moses was. Before his mother put Moses in a basket in the river to save him from death, God knew Moses. Before the princess of Egypt had Moses taken from the river and raised him as a prince of Egypt, God knew Moses. When Moses said, "Who am I to lead Your people out of Egypt," God could have said, "Moses, you are the one I prepared for this moment from the day you were born." It wasn't important who Moses was, what was important was that the Yahweh was sending Moses to Egypt in His name!

Yahweh promised Moses, I will be with you. The Lord did not want Moses to go out alone. Moses needed God's help.

The Lord also gives us that same promise in His Son. You may think, "Who am I, Lord? I don't think I can serve you. I am not qualified to do anything for you. I'm too busy. Get someone else."

This is my 50th year in the pastoral ministry. I never thought I could serve the Lord this long. I wanted to be a pastor ever since I was in grade school. The only reason I am privileged to be a pastor is because the Lord was with me all these years

in all the places I was called to serve.

We are the redeemed children of God through Jesus. We had nothing to offer. But through the working of the Holy Spirit who gave us a new life in the water of Baptism, we are the Children of God with a new identity. He washed away our sins and we call ourselves by His name – Christians.

The Lord calls us to action and He sends us out into the world with His name. He might ask us to do something that seems difficult for us to do, but as He helped Moses, so also God promises to help us.

We don't have to worry about who we are. The Lord knows who we are and what we are, and He still wants us to serve Him! And it is **who God is**, our Savior, that makes all the difference.

1168