

DESERT LESSONS

CALLING

Exodus 3:1 – 15

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March 21 – 22, 2020

NOTES

Verse 3:1

Horeb means “wasteland,” and it seems to be the name of the same mountain Sinai (where God will give Moses the law). 2 things.

1) The Hebrew seems to denote that this is a distant and unknown land to Moses. He (Moses) is in search of new grazing land for what seems to be a large herd, and he is far from home. God often seems to speak to us BEST when we are in unfamiliar situations or feel far from home. What a great reminder to take calculated risks, God may be waiting for you there. 2) The location described matters little, except that if Moses had gone East instead of West, God would have been waiting on Him there. You are not powerful and wise enough to thwart the will of God; He pursues you. So rest in the knowledge that you are RIGHT WHERE YOU are supposed to be; stay sensitive to Him for what’s next!

Verse 3:2 – 4

It is so interesting how fire is both terrifying and inviting at the same time! God is not a flame but appears to him IN IT. God often uses a flame in the OT, ratifying the covenant with Abraham as fire, leading the nation of Israel in fire at night, and, here, calling Moses to a new task. What struck Moses was that although the bush burned, it was not consumed, and he walked over to investigate.

Verse 3:5

Genesis introduced us to sacred time, Exodus to sacred space. This place is holy, and so Moses is to remove his sandals, symbols of convenience and comfort. Moses, “do not confuse my desire to speak with you as an admission of equality. I am the Holy Creator and you are My creation. And to listening to me will often require the removal of comfortable things and convenience. God’s voice is often there. So if you are in a season where you feel inconvenienced or uncomfortable, good! God is there!

Verse 3:6 – 8

- 6 I am the God who can be trusted, because I have a resume. I am the God who was good, protected, and provided for your ancestors, that is who I am!
- 7 “I am concerned about their suffering.” Or another translation is “I know their sorrows.” Friends, do not be misled, God is not unaware of what you are going thru. God is not so distant that He pays no mind or so weak that He is unable to help. NO, His work, like all beautiful things, takes time. He is aware; keep coming back to Him listening.
- 8 I want to bring them OUT into a good and spacious (broad) land, flowing with milk and honey. God’s goal for exodus is always a “creational end” to bring His people into a land of possibilities, a land of what could be! When God brings you out of something, as a result of being obedient, it is always into something better — eventually! But far too often we think God simply wants to REFORM our ways or our relationships or habits, when REMOVAL is what He wants, to bring us to a place where He can create something NEW.

Verse 3:9 – 10

God’s Revelation almost always precedes some kind of sending, and this is where you and I are expected to be obedient. Have you heard from God, and, if so, what is your response? Moses is told, “I have seen this pain and suffering, I am sending you Moses, go!” Moses is going to offer three questions or excuses at God; we only have time to look at two.

Verse 3:11 – 12

Listen, obedient people can still find excuses, they just refuse to allow those excuses to rob them of God’s goodness. Moses says, “I’m not sure I heard you God, I am NO ONE, unequipped and powerless. You should go find another bush to light up, you can do better.”

Verse 3:13 – 15

Moses first concern is, “Did I hear you correctly? I’m probably not what you are looking for.” But interestingly his second is still not about the huge EMPIRE and military complex of Egypt, it is “what will other people think of me?” What should I say to them when they are ridiculing me? God’s response is “I AM” has sent you. Moses, you don’t go on your own authority, but based upon the reality that I EXIST. The Hebrew literally translates: tell them “I will be what I will be” has sent me. Because He IS, you will obey. This is helpful in a few ways.

Obedience might look like:

- apologizing
- saying “I was wrong”
- seeking help or guidance from a mentor or therapist
- making a family decision that is hard
- making a job decision that looks like sacrifice
- taking a break or cutting out an unhealthy habit or relationship
- giving up something you really like to improve or repair a relationship

Do not be afraid to trust God utterly. As you go down the long corridor you may find that He has preceded you, and locked many doors which you would fain to have entered, but be sure that beyond there is one which you will find yourself face to face with, a bend in the river of opportunity, broader and deeper than anything you had dared to imagine in your sunniest of dreams. — F.B. Meyer

Four questions to you for your consideration about an area of your life God may be calling you to obedience:

1. Is there a decision to be made? Is it yours to make?
2. Have I been feeling like God is calling me to something, and I have been avoiding it or excusing his voice?
3. Are the lives of the people around me better off because of my life, and, if not, what needs to change?
4. Am I avoiding a person or decision because of fear?

Obedience isn't a spiritual gift, it is a choice of the heart. What do I love more?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the themes about the book of Exodus that stick out to you already?
2. Considering what our world is going through right now, specifically Coronavirus, what has this series made you think about in responding appropriately?
3. What themes or points about this week's message stuck out you and why?
4. Brian talked about God's timing for Moses and how a time of isolation in the desert was necessary for God to prepare Moses. Talk about a time you have felt isolated or "In a desert" and what you learned in that time that God later used.
5. Brian said, "Obedience isn't a spiritual gift, it is a decision of the heart. What do you love more?" Talk about a time where you were obedient and it was costly for you.
6. Talk about a time you were not obedient and you regretted it.
7. Brian said that often God will remove comfort and convenience in your life to call you to a new season or ministry. How do comfort or convenience lull you into disobeying God?
8. One of Moses greatest concerns was how he would look in front of other people. Does this ever play a role in your obedience?
9. Brian proposed Four Questions to consider when listening to God. Is there a question below you have a specific answer to that God may be asking you to be obedient to?
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 2. Have I been feeling like God is calling me to something, and I have been avoiding it or excusing His voice?
 3. Are the lives of the people around me better off because of my life, and, if not, what needs to change?
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