

Day 1: Exodus 3:1-3

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed.

Then Moses

said, 'I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up.

Moses notices that God is calling. Moses has been prepared (by his life experiences) to receive God's summons. The angel never says anything but stands by while God speaks. Moses has spent a number of years learning how to be a husband, father, shepherd, and to work for someone else. He is now ready, after learning all those things, to be a leader of people seeking freedom.

Question: Why is God on a mountain?

Challenge: Can you look back and recall when you have had an experience of seeing an image of God?

Scripture: 1 Samuel 3:1-21, Isaiah 6

Day 2: Exodus 3:4-6

When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, 'Moses, Moses!' And he said, 'Here I am.' Then he said, 'Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.' He said further, 'I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

God spoke to summon Moses now God speaks to alert him that he is on holy ground - ground that is totally filled with the presence of God. In this passage the removal of sandals removes any separation between God and Moses. The voice from the burning bush now identifies who is talking to Moses by stating the history of God's involvement with the people of Abraham. God has been with Moses' family for many generations. Even though there have been a number of years when no one has been receiving God's words still God has remained faithful to his promise to be with the children of Abraham (Genesis 17:6-7).

Question: What made the ground holy?

Challenge: Think of some reasons why a person would be afraid to look directly at the face of God.

Scripture: Joshua 5:13-15, Ruth 4:2-12, Deuteronomy 25:5-10

Day 3: Exodus 3:7-8

Then the Lord said, 'I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey.'

The Lord has seen, has heard, and has known. The Lord has come down is a way of saying that God is now coming to the people and taking a hand in alleviating their suffering. The land of milk and honey is one where both farmers and shepherds can live. Just as in creation God provided the whole world for plants, animals, and people to live, so now God is promising them a land where they can grow and live freely.

Question: Why, if God has seen the people suffering, has God not done something sooner?

Challenge: The words "a land flowing with milk and honey" were hopeful to those in bondage. What words of hope would you offer to persons in bondage to some affliction today?

Scripture: Deuteronomy 26:4-14

Day 4: Exodus 3:9-12

The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.' But Moses said to God, 'Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?' He said, 'I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain.'

Moses receives the bad news that he is the one to act for God to free the people. Moses has five reasons for not sending him to do this task. He, like us, feels unprepared to do a task in God's name. Even though we know that whatever we do in Jesus' name will succeed still we are concerned that maybe we are not up to the task. Just as Moses snatched the daughters from the shepherds so God will snatch Israel from slavery. Reason 1, "who am I?" God does not answer but simply says I am with you and by implication if God is with us who could be against us.

Question: Moses asks God to reconsider sending him. Did Jesus ever ask God to reconsider what God was asking of Him?

Challenge: When have you felt not up to a task you needed to do?

Scripture: Judges 6:11-24

Day 5: Exodus 3:13-14

But Moses said to God, 'If I come to the Israelites and say to them, "The God of your ancestors has sent me to you", and they ask me, "What is his name?" what shall I say to them?' God said to Moses, 'I am who I am.' He said further, 'Thus you shall say to the Israelites, "I am has sent me to you."'

Reason 2, "who are you?" God says I will be who I will be or I am the one who created life and gave it to all creatures. I am the one who has loved you even when you did not realize or appreciate it. Reason 3 is the fear that he will be rejected just as he was rejected by the two Hebrews he tried to help after he killed the Egyptian. God gives him the strategy to talk to both the Egyptians and Israelites. First talk to the elders. Then confront the King and lastly use the power God gives you to demonstrate God's determination to free the people.

Question: Why talk to the elders of the tribes first?

Challenge: What is the reason Moses is to give Pharaoh to let the people go and do?

Scripture: Exodus 5:1-9

Day 6: Exodus 4:10-14

But Moses said to the Lord, 'O my Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor even now that you have spoken to your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.' Then the Lord said to him, 'Who gives speech to mortals? Who makes them mute or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you are to speak.'

Reason 4 and 5 have to do with public speaking. Moses says he cannot talk well and God says it's not you talking but me talking through you. Moses says his speech is halting and not good and God (now irritated) tells him that his brother Aaron will speak for him. This marks a change in the way God will communicate; giving the power for doing God's work to more than one person. Up to this point God has worked with one person at a time. From now on there'll be teams of people that have the power to do God's work. This extends all the way to the New Testament when Jesus sent disciples out two by two. In the 21st century when we want to begin a new faith community we send a team of people to begin the work, not just one person.

Question: Why does Moses say he is slow of tongue? Do you think he gets nervous or does he have a speech problem?

Challenge: What reasons have you given to God for not taking up a task in Jesus' name?

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 4:9-12