

## February 22 – Exodus 3

Lessons abound for the Christian reader in this chapter. From chapter two into three we learn that God had an important work for Moses to do and for this he must be prepared. That work was to lead His people out of Egypt, and lead them into the promised inheritance; for this work Moses was not yet equipped. One can ascertain from chapter two that there is a manmade way to handle a problem that usually does not work. In this case, Moses, back in chapter two, decided to deal with the Egyptians in his own strength (2:11-14). That did not end well. Chapter three begins and we find the once prince of Egypt shepherding sheep in Midian on the back side of the mountain Horeb. It is in these God-ordained places in life where our hearts are changed, molded, and progress is made in spiritual things. It has been said, "The One who is to use the vessel can alone prepare it." From Egypt to "the backside of the mountain", from the palace to the sheepfold, was a radical change for this man who was yet to fill so important a role. Here, for the next 40 years, he was to learn the utter vanity of human resources and the need for entire dependence on God Himself.

Also, before Moses could be sent forth on his important mission he had to first behold the indescribable glory of the Lord; thus, we have the burning bush miracle. The blazing fire within the bush was none other than Jesus Christ Himself. Verse 4 informs us that, "The Lord saw that he turned aside to look and God called to him from the midst of the bush..." Also in Deuteronomy 33:16 in reference to the blessings that would be bestowed upon Joseph it is written, "...and with the favor of Him who dwelt in the bush." In order for Moses to be faithful to his calling, he had to first behold the beauty of the Lord. For believers today that truth remains the same. When we see the grace and glory of the Lord on a day to day basis, obedience becomes easier. At the burning bush we discover that God is a holy God and that is why God tells Moses to remove His shoes (v.5). In this section of Scripture we are reminded of God's covenant relationships (v.6) and his compassion for His people (v.7).

Finally, admire the blessed picture here, a prophetic picture of the divine Incarnation. First, the divine compassion which prompted the unspeakable gift: "I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt"—God contemplated the wretched condition of sinners and their need of deliverance. Second, the Incarnation itself: "So I have come down." Thus, it was fifteen hundred years later, when Yahweh—Jesus left His Father's House on high and came down to these scenes of sin and suffering. Third, the purpose of the Incarnation: to "deliver" His people and "bring them up from the land", which symbolizes the world. Fourth, the benevolent design of the Incarnation: to "bring them into a good and spacious land, unto a land flowing with milk and honey"—to bring us on to resurrection ground, where there would be everything to satisfy and rejoice the heart. (vv. 8-9).

What a monumental task! How comforting it must have been for Moses as it is for us today that God did not ask Moses to go forward alone: an all-mighty One would accompany him (v.12). Who was this One who would be with Him? The same One who said to us from Hebrews 13:5, "I will never leave you nor forsake you - The great I Am. The "I am" of the burning bush (3:14) now stands fully declared in the blessed Lord Jesus who said in the gospel of John, "I am the bread of life" (6:35), "I am the good Shepherd" (10:14), "I am the door" (10:7)." "I am the light of the world" (9:5), "I am the way, the truth and the life" (14:6), "I am the resurrection and the life (11:25)", "I am the true vine" (15:1). He is the eternal "I am"—"the Same, yesterday, and today, and forever." Like Moses, we have been commissioned to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth with the promise, "...and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:20).