

Seeing Jesus in the Burning Bush (EXODUS 3:1-15)

Pause & Reflect 

¹ Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ² And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. ³ And Moses said, “I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned.” ⁴ When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” ⁵ Then he said, “Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” ⁶ And he said, “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. ⁷ Then the LORD said, “I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, ⁸ and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. ⁹ And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. ¹⁰ Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.” ¹¹ But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?” ¹² He said, “But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.” ¹³ Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” ¹⁴ God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” ¹⁵ God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.

- 1) **[v.1-3]** After having been drawn out of the Nile River by Pharaoh’s daughter and nursed by her, Moses grew up among the royalty of Egypt. Yet inevitably he discovered that he was not an Egyptian, but rather a Hebrew – and upon seeing an Egyptian beating a fellow Hebrew slave, Moses secretly murdered the Egyptian and hide his body in the sand. When Pharaoh heard of this, he sought to kill Moses. So, Moses fled to the desert of Midian where he remained for forty years. There, God blessed him with a wife and he tended the sheep of his father-in-law (Jethro, the priest of Midian) day after day. It was precisely at this time, after a period of forty years in Midian, the LORD appeared to Moses in a very specific way. How did the LORD appear to Moses?
- 2) **[v.2-3]** The figure of “the angel of the LORD” appears several other times in the Old Testament. Rather than “an” angel, “the” angel of the LORD indicates this figure is different than other angelic hosts. “The angel of the LORD” speaks as the LORD Himself, as He did to Hagar (GENESIS 16:7-12). The same happens when the

angel of the LORD called out to Abraham to stop the sacrifice of his son Isaac and provided a ram in his place, Abraham called that place “The LORD will provide” (GENESIS 22:11-18). Appearances of “the angel of the LORD” are equated with hearing and seeing the LORD Himself, so this is no ordinary angelic messenger, but a manifestation of God Himself, the very Son of God Jesus Christ before He put on human flesh to dwell among us. Many Bible interpreters see this appearance as the pre-flesh/preincarnate Jesus. How does a flame of fire out the midst of a burning bush that keeps on burning a portrait of Jesus Christ?

- 3) **[v.4-6]** When the LORD saw that Moses had turned aside to see Him in the flame of the burning bush, what did He say? What did Moses do? Have you heard the LORD call you by name when you turned aside to look to Him? Like a hot flame of fire that can give you a severe burn, are you coming near to the LORD too quickly and casually that does not consider His powerful presence and glory? When is the last time you have hide your face from the LORD before His glorious flame – that otherwise would be unapproachable unless Jesus Christ made a way to come near?
- 4) **[v.7-12]** The LORD has seen the affliction of His people in slavery by the Egyptians and was set to deliver them out of Egypt by sending Moses as His deliverer. Yet how does Moses reply? How have we questioned God’s calling upon our life, upon our family, upon our church family, upon our careers... etc? How is God’s calling in places where we do not want to go or do? Yet how does God promise us with His presence and His sign – as He gave to Moses that He will bring Him and the people out of Egypt to serve Him on that same mountain?
- 5) **[v.13-15]** Moses wonders how to tell the people the name of the God who sent Him. How does God identify Himself? When we think about God’s name, how the description “I am who I am” or “I exist” help us understand who God is? How does God’s constant call for the people to remember Him as the God of their fathers (Abraham’s God, Isaac’s God, and Jacob’s God) help us understand who God is? Although Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had long passed, how is the LORD still their God?
- 6) What was Pastor Mark Story’s central truth through this message? Have you seen Jesus through the burning bush? How?

Apply & Be Doers of the Word

(1) **POWERFUL HEAT:** Jesus is the flame of the burning bush that gives off powerful holiness, glory, and heat. As He led His people in the wilderness through a cloud for shade by day and fire for heat by night, we ought to take heart again of the powerful, holy and unapproachable presence of Jesus. No one dips their hand into the fire without getting burned. No one should play around with fire. Fire demands respect. It demands distance. Take off your sandals. Hide your face. Be in awe. Have respect. Feel the heat. Fear the burn.

(2) **ILLUMINATING LIGHT:** Jesus is the flame of the burning bush that illuminates darkness, making it repel and making a way for us to approach the burning bush of His presence. Do not cover the light. Let His light shine. Expose the dark corners of your heart. Let the light shine. Let His light shine through you! Stop covering or hiding! Look at Jesus who loves you at your darkest!

(3) **ETERNAL PRESENCE:** Jesus is the flame of the burning bush that never is consumed – that always keeps on burning. Fire always needs more energy to keep it fueled – gasoline, wood, igniter, etc. Yet Jesus is the flame that never burns out. This is His presence with you. When all else fails, when there is no one else to turn to, when everyone else passes away (with time, illness, sin, and death), Jesus’ eternal presence will never burn out to be with you and in you. His presence always remains forever, unto eternity, for you. Seek Him through His shadow on your family, your spouse, your friends, your career. Only Jesus is your eternal presence, always with you to the end!

Holy Spirit Moment & Group Prayer

Take a moment to invite the Holy Spirit to fill you, and pray for one another.

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.
(1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-18)

...do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7)

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. For each will have to bear his own load. (GALATIANS 6:2-5)

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. (HEBREWS 10:24-25)

For the body does not consist of one member but of many... The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. (1 CORINTHIANS 12:14, 21-27)

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