

April 27, 2003
AM Service
Patchogue Church of the Nazarene

God is Calling You!

Ex 3:1-10

3:1 Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. 2 There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. 3 So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight--why the bush does not burn up."

4 When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!"

And Moses said, "Here I am."

5 "Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." 6 Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

7 The LORD said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. 8 So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey--the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. 9 And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. 10 So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."

These Scriptures indicate that God does exist and that God reveals Himself to us, calls us to Himself, is involved in our lives and uses us to accomplish His purposes:

1. (v. 2- 4) God reveals Himself and even calls us by name, but at the same time we must also seek Him and answer His call. Moses saw a bush on fire but it did not burn up. This speaks of the Almighty sovereignty of God who will, in time, destroy all that is contrary to His nature (Deut 4:24) "For the LORD your God is a consuming fire..." yet we also see in this bush that is not burned up that God is loving, patient, merciful and full of grace. For though the Lord is a consuming fire (Matt 12:20 "A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out...") So we see these two things in the burning bush that is not burned up (A God of all-power and love).

Moses saw this burning bush that is not burned up and went to look into it. Then God called out to him, and Moses said, "Here I am." God uses many means to call us to Himself we ought to seek Him and answer His call. The words, "Here I am" were not

just Moses answering God when God called him but the words also indicate an attitude of submission.

2. (v. 5) God reveals Himself as Holy and we must respect Him as holy. From the burning bush God says to Moses, "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." In those days to "take off your sandals" was a sign of respect and submission. We ought to approach God with reverence and worship. The ground was holy because of God's presence. God makes people and things holy when they are used specifically for His purposes.

3. (v.6) God reveals Himself as a God of the living – "He said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had long died by the time of Moses; yet, God speaks of them as still being alive. Jesus was once asked a question about the resurrection from the dead. Is there life after death? To those who did not believe in life after death Jesus said to them that they were in error because they didn't know the Scriptures or the power of God. Then Jesus said to them (Matt 22:31-32) "But about the resurrection of the dead-have you not read what God said to you, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not the God of the dead but of the living."

4. (v7 –10) God reveals Himself as a God Who is involved with His people – as seen in these 5 statements:

a. I have indeed seen (v7 – "I have indeed seen the misery of my people..."). The verb used here has the sense of looking with a watchful eye and with a sympathetic feeling of love. When we go through difficult times we often wonder, "Where is God?" God sees, knows and cares about what we are going through. And in *His* time He will act. Israel had been slaves in Egypt for many years. God had indeed seen and choose a specific time to act. After Adam sinned God had a plan for man's redemption. But waited until the specific and appointed time to send Jesus. Ps 34:15 "The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry..." God may have waited many years, but He was attentive all the while.

b. I have heard (v7 – "I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers..."). God hears our prayers. Don't give up praying and hoping. God does hear our cry and will act. God knows we want to be set free from things that oppress us. When it seems that God is not hearing your prayer ask yourself is there any known sins that must be confessed. We can argue that willful sinning can keep God from hearing prayer. But this does not mean that if God does not seem to be hearing your prayer that there must be sin. To believe *that* would be a great mistake. All who sin must suffer, but not all who suffer have sinned. At times in the absence of sin and when faith has remained strong, still a spiritual darkness may descend upon a soul. This was the case when David uttered the words echoed by Jesus on the Cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me (Ps. 22:1; Matt 27:46; Mark 15:34). There is a testing that all must endure here on earth. Pray for patient endurance in those times. Heb 10:35-39 - So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly

rewarded. 36 You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. 37 For in just a very little while, "He who is coming will come and will not delay. 38 But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him." 39 But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.

There is an ancient legend about a king who ordered a servant to make a ring with a motto engraved on it that would tone down the king's happiness when he enjoyed good fortune, and lift him in spirit when he would descend to the depths of despair. The workman had no difficulty with the making of the ring, but could not think of a motto that would do what the king demanded. Finally he went to a wise man and asked, "What can I put on the ring that will temper the king's ecstasy and at the same time lift him when he falls into despair?" The wise man said, "Inscribe upon the ring, 'This, too, shall pass.' When the king gazes upon it in triumph, it will humble his pride. When he looks at it in despair, it will lift his hope."

c. I am concerned (v7 – "and I am concerned about their suffering.") We don't always understand why things happen. We can't explain why life is terribly hard on most people some of the time and on some people most of the time. We often wonder if God cares. God *does* care. God *is* concerned because God *is* good (all the time...even when He doesn't look so good sometimes). And don't let anyone convince you otherwise. Some would make us think, "If there is a God He wouldn't let His people suffer." Many of God's people (some of His greatest saints) have suffered terribly. Have you ever heard of Anne Johnson Flint? She was an author of so much inspirational verses. Miss Flint planned to become a concert pianist. But before she was 20, she had arthritis in one of its most crippling forms. Within 5 years she was hopelessly crippled. Many of her most inspiring verses of faith and hope were written in great pain with a pencil she could hardly move- written on a writing board suspended over her bed while she lay flat on her back. It was under these conditions that she wrote:

God hath not promised
Skies always blue,
Flower-strewn pathways
All our lives through;

God hath not promised
Sun without rain,
Joy without sorrow,
Peace without pain.

But God hath promised
Strength for the day,
Rest for the labor,
Light for the way,
Grace for the trials,

Help from above,
Unfailing sympathy,
Undying love.

“When you get to the end of yourself, you step out – not into darkness and the void- but into the strong arms of God.” (W. T. Purkiser, *When You Get To The End of Yourself*).

d. I have come down (v8 – “So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey...”). God is always acting in the world, “For in Him we live and move and have our being.” (Acts 17:28). However, He moves into history at special times to make Himself known and to accomplish His will. God had seen the misery of His people; He had heard their cry and had come down to deliver them. The very reason God came down on this mountain, spoke to Moses from the burning bush, and revealed Himself to Moses was to deliver His people from those who enslaved them. For you see, ultimately, it was not Moses but God who would be their Savior. Yet, here is the amazing thing, God uses people to accomplish His purposes.

e. I am sending you (v10). 40 years earlier Moses appointed himself deliver of Israel. He failed. Now he was to go and lead Israel under God’s direction. God reveals Himself to us as all-powerful, all knowing and always present. God reveals Himself as holy *and* loving. He calls us into a living, personal relationship with Him. He assures us that He is a God who is involved in the lives of His people. And He is calling you to minister to others in His name under His direction.