

Encounter with God
The Mark of Greatness

Introduction:

We have entered a 40 day adventure as a church entitled Engage the Word

How many are praying daily for the church and nation? I know this is a sacrifice but one well worth it.

Text: Exodus 3 -

What do you want on your Tombstone? Pizza Company that I think has since gone out of business – you might say they’ve been “laid to rest”

Famous or interesting tombstones - all in the same idea of leaving a mark an evidence of existence –

As we explore this idea of a personal **encounter with God** - We will touch on the three “Great Questions of life – Who am I? How did I get here? and Why am I here?”

→ Our life begins with a dream a desire to do something or be something

Some here today some are looking to the years ahead with anticipation of realization of that dream - but also trepidation – what if I’m not good enough, what if I fail?

Others believe time and circumstance has destroyed their dreams – that its too late that they and have resigned themselves to be realistic. To accept things for what they are – and just live out each day the dream died years ago.

I think that is exactly what happened to one of the Bible’s greatest heroes – a guy on today’s Engage the Word reading list - **MOSES** a one time Egyptian prince was reduced to working as a common everyday shepherd - Dream gone – washed away with in the sands of time and desert

Read Exodus 3:1-15

Overview of the life of Moses (Exodus 2)

Moses was born in Egypt at the worst possible time – Egypt’s Pharaoh declared **infanticide** on the Hebrew children living in Goshen in Egypt

Every new born boy was to be killed by throwing them into the water – they would either drown or become food for crocodiles

Bad timing? I don’t think so – Moses had been chosen by God to be the deliver to bring His people out of Egypt and back to the land He promised to Abraham – Issac and Jacob.

This action by the Pharaoh was really the plan of the Devil to kill one child and disrupt God’s plan. This is a glimpse of behind the scenes spiritual warfare – Chess game Satan trying to disrupt or destroy God’s plan

He pulled the same thing at the birth of Jesus the Messiah

King Herod ordered infanticide of every Jewish baby boy three years old and younger

But if you've been reading the passages this week – you will have noticed that its not so easy to disrupt God's plan – in fact its impossible!

Moses mother's desperate put him in a waterproof basket and placed him in the river near the reeds He was discovered by an Egyptian princess who named him Moses – means to lift out of the water

Moses grew up in two worlds, nursed and taught by his real Hebrew mother, adopted and nurtured by his Egyptian mother –

His head was filled with the special purpose of God for him by his real mother –

While his adopted mother promised him he'd be great as a member of Pharaoh's house hold

Moses must have had dreams of greatness

But at the age 40 he was running for his life with a price on his head after killing an Egyptian slave-trying to help his own people. Not quite what you see in the Movie Ten Commandments

At the age of 80, 40 years later, he's living in a remote region of the desert near Mt Horeb (Mt Sinai)

His dreams what ever they were - long gone –just a sad memory –

He's a married man tending the flocks of his father-in-law the Priest of Midian.

A forgotten man ... or so he thought

But God **had not** forgotten Moses – and so *the encounter* begins

Exodus 3: 1-15

God's amazing ways of getting our attention – evidenced in this weeks readings

Noah - Jacob –Joseph – Moses each one had a unique experience or encounter with the Lord

In Moses case God used a miracle - revering the laws of physics –

The **burning bush** is the picture of *Grace - fire* is always a symbol of *judgment* –cleansing but in this case the fire doesn't destroy the bush – It a Old Testament picture of Jesus

The Command -

Take off your shoes your on Holy Ground!

Those words appear in one other place in The Bible - The book of Joshua -

Joshua encounters what he thinks is an angel with a fiery sword who reveals himself as

“Captain of the Hosts of the Armies of God” – only one individual fits that description in the Bible - Jesus - **John 14** Jesus refers to himself as I Am seven times

Camp Encounter Teenage retreat at Camp Champion - The Awesome power of God – The Incredible grace and love of God

Moses dream hadn't died it was about to begin at age of 80

Read [Genesis 3: 13-15](#) again

God calls Moses – then begins to answer those eternal questions telling him who he who he really is and why he is here – his purpose in life

Interesting – Moses is frightened and responds – Who am I – do something like this?!

God responds by telling Moses who He is – **I Am Who I Am**

The expression “I AM” literally means EXISTENCE-- all that is, all that ever was, all that will ever be

We find out who we really are when we find out when we have an encounter with the Living God – The Great I AM!

Now Let’s build the bridge from Moses encounter to your encounter

Matthew 6:9 Jesus’ reply to how should we pray “... *This, then, is how you should pray: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name...*’ (NIV)

Think about this prayer of instruction again from Jesus

It is the elements of the Burning Bush experience -

Personal – just for Moses a revelation of grace and at the same time the awesome presence of God – existence itself

Address God as your Father (personal up close) but in the same phrase Jesus adds **Hallowed** – Holy is your name –the great I Am the awesome God of the universe.

Proverbs 4 says with all of your getting get understanding!

When you begin to grasp this, it’s the beginning of understanding that lead to new opportunities
But they will God’s design not yours

→ Friday’s Daily Bread reading was entitled “Least Powerful People”
Let me read you the first paragraph of this reading –

We spoke earlier of dreams and leaving a mark

This might come as a surprise to some but people will not judge us on what we did for ourselves!

There are many awards but one you’ll never see is self centeredness

“...and this year’s selfish man of year award goes to ...”

Nothing wrong with outstanding individual achievement – something we should strive for ...

But others will always judge the value of your work by the affect and impact it has had on others.

It always comes down to what you have done for others – not self!

It took Moses eighty years to get out of his own way – but God never gave up on him – and He hasn’t given up on you!

Our church has entered a new chapter, a new adventure and God wants you to be an integral part

If you're confused about where you are or where you're headed – If you think its too late and that the dream is dead it time for a fresh encounter with Him

It starts with response to His call ... Like Moses – **Here I am**
But it will develop into a conversation – once again prayer

When He calls your name – like he did with Moses – give the correct response – Here am I