

I AM WHO I AM

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Scripture: Exodus 3: 10-15

Exodus 3:10-15 – this is Moses' encounter at the burning bush.

The Mission of Moses

¹⁰ Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt.” ¹¹ But Moses said to God, “Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?” ¹² And He said, “Certainly I will be with you, and this shall be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God at this mountain.”

¹³ Then Moses said to God, “Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you.’ Now they may say to me, ‘What is His name?’ What shall I say to them?” ¹⁴ God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM”; and He said, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” ¹⁵ God, furthermore, said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the sons 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 this is My memorial-name to all generations.”

The last time we were in the nook of Exodus, probably a couple of years back, we ended with that powerful reminder that God saw the people of Israel in their bondage, that He heard their cries and groaning, and that He was deeply aware of their suffering. And from that place of compassion, God began to act.

Then we move to ch.3, where we saw the burning bush, Moses drawing near and God calling him by name. and in that moment, God made His intention very clear. He was going to deliver His people, and He was going to do it by sending Moses.

But today, I want to shift our focus, not so much on what God is doing, but on how Moses responds. Because this is where the story becomes very real for us.

When God says, go, Moses does what many of us would do. he hesitates, he questions, and he pushes back. and his first response is this: Who am I that I should go? And I believe that is not just Moses' question; that is our question as well. Who am I to do what God is asking me to do? Who am I to step into something that I may feel is beyond me? Who am I to represent God in places that feel unfamiliar or even uncomfortable?

And often what rises up within us is a deep sense of inadequacy. We feel unqualified, we feel uncertain, we feel afraid because God is calling us into something unknown. And that is exactly where Moses finds himself.

So today, I want to look at this passage through three movements or three questions, and one of them is implied that Moses asks; and three answers that God gives.

- 1) Who am I that I should go?

- 2) Who is sending me? And that is the implied question here.
- 3) What is His name?

In these three questions, we see the struggle of the human, and in God's responses we find the foundation for obedience.

And as we walk through this, I want us to do more than just understand Moses's story. I want us to locate within that story and ask ourselves, as we go through, where is God calling me to step out in obedience? Where am I pushing back saying, Who am I? And where am I unsure of what to say or how to explain why I'm doing what I am doing? Because ultimately, I believe this is not about Moses alone. It's about what it means for us to go, not in our strength, not because we feel we're ready, but because God is the one who sends us.

The question we must wrestle with is this: Is what God says about Himself enough for me to trust Him and go or do what He is asking of me to do?

So, let's walk through these three questions that Moses asks.

1. Who am I that I should go?

When God says "Go!" Moses immediately responds with this: Who am I? And if we are honest, that's exactly where we begin. Who am I to step into this? Who am I to take responsibility? Who am I to speak or to lead or to serve?

And Moses is looking at his past, his failure in Egypt, his years in obscurity, and his own limitations that came to the fore when he was trying to help the children of Israel and then realized that he had failed miserably. But God doesn't answer that question by building up Moses. He doesn't say, "Moses, you're strong. You can do it." or He doesn't say, "Moses, you're a capable person." He simply says: I will be with you.

And that's the answer. Because in God's kingdom, the issue is never our inadequacy; it's always God's presence with us through and in that inadequacy. So the question always shifts from 'Who am I?' to 'Who is with me?' And God says, "I will be with you."

2. Who is sending me?

Moses then asked, "When they ask me who sent me, what do I say?" And that's a question of authority. Because if Moses is going to stand before Pharaoh, he cannot go in his own name, and neither can we. We can't do that either. We don't go because we feel like it. We don't go because we are confident. We go because God sends us.

There's a difference between being self-appointed and being God-sent. And when you know that God has sent you, then it changes everything. It gives you courage, a courage that is rooted not in your own strength, but in the assurance of His presence. You no longer shrink back in fear of opposition or uncertainty, because you know that you don't stand alone. You stand backed by divine authority.

You also have clarity. There's a steady sense of direction that cuts through the confusion and the noise. And even when the circumstances seem complex or overwhelming, you're anchored in purpose, able to discern what truly matters, and move forward with conviction.

Then it gives you a sense of endurance, the strength to keep going when the journey grows long and difficult. You're not easily shaken by setbacks or delays, because you trust that the one who sent you will sustain you until the work is complete.

3. What is His name?

I believe that we now come to the deepest question of all. Moses asks: What is His name? in other words, who are you really? And God answers with one of the most profound statements in all of scripture. He says, "I AM WHO I AM."

That's kind of a cryptic response, isn't it? It's not like Moses could say: "Ah, okay. Now I understand. You've made things very clear." In fact, he must have stood there and said, "Hmmm, okay. You care to explain that a little more? A little puzzling! What does 'I am who I am' mean? I think it's important for us to unpack that because it kind of feels very mysterious, almost abstract.

But this answer that God is giving is supposed to do something incredibly powerful in us. It's not expected to be vague. It's expected to be foundational. In fact, it answers Moses at two levels:

- It reveals who God is,
- It assures Moses how God will act.

How does knowing who God is, His character, His traits, all the things that He is made up of, how does that help me in the situations that I am in? How does it help me knowing that, Moses could have asked, as I go into this kind of conflict zone of meeting Pharaoh and trying to get the children of Israel out? How does all that help me?

So, I want us to unpack that this morning. I AM WHO I AM. If we look at that statement, what we see is God is simply saying, I Am. End of story. It completes God.

When we look at ourselves, we depend on things. We depend on oxygen. We depend on food. We depend on time. Creation depends on a cause. And then, creation must be sustained. Everything we see around us, everything changes. It's constantly evolving. It grows. It fades. It eventually passes away.

God does not. **He is self-existent.** I AM. He doesn't come from anywhere. Nobody made Him. Nobody sustains Him. He is not drawing life from some outside source. Everything else that we can think of runs on borrowed power, but not God. He simply is. Self-sustaining. Self-existent.

It's a bit like this. Everything in our homes needs a power source. Your phone needs charging. Your lights need electricity. Appliances need to be plugged in. Take away the source and everything shuts down.

But God is not like that. He's not plugged into anything. He is the power source, which means He's never in a position where He lacks something or needs something in order to act. He doesn't run out of resources to help us in the situations that we are in. He doesn't need to recharge because He's so depleted by looking after billions of people. He is the source of everything and not dependent on anything.

And not only is He self-existent, **He is unchanging.** He doesn't become something else. He doesn't morph into something else so that He can be better for us. God doesn't grow into a better version of

Himself. He doesn't have phases. He doesn't walk up one day different from the day before. Who He is today is exactly who He has always been. Everything else shifts. People change. Opinions change. Even we change, sometimes from one day to the next. But not God. He's not affected by trends. He's not shaped by circumstances, which means that His character is steady. His promises are reliable, and you never have to second-guess Him. There is no unpredictability in God; only consistency.

He's the one constant in a changing world.

Everything around us is moving. Time is moving. People change. Circumstances shift. Seasons come and go. Even we are not the same people we were yesterday. We've changed. It's like trying to stand in the middle of the ocean and everything is moving under your feet. Have you stood on a beach in a receding wave and felt you are on shifting sand? But God is like the rock that is beneath us. He stands outside of all that movement. He holds you strong because He is solid. He is not being carried along by time; He holds time. He's not shaped by history; He governs history.

So, when everything else feels uncertain, God is the one thing you can stand on that doesn't move. Steady, present, absolutely reliable. That's why thinkers like Augustine of Hippo and Thomas Aquinas saw this as one of the deepest revelations of God because it sets Him apart from everything else. God is not part of creation. He is the one on whom creation depends.

Sometimes we can just look at that phrase 'I AM WHO I AM' and think that it means He is a great God. But unless you know what that statement means, you cannot apply it to your life. you can't take something abstract and say: this is going to help me through a trial I'm going through. You have to unpack what it means when God says, "I AM WHO I AM".

So, it reveals who. God is – self-existent, unchanging, and constant.

It assures Moses how God will act in his situation and circumstances.

So yes, God is completely beyond creation, but He doesn't leave us standing there in awe of Him, at a distance. He draws near and makes it personal. The Hebrew word behind I AM can also be understood as *I will be what I will be*.

Just one verse earlier, God had already told Moses, "I will be." And you can take that little phrase *I will be*, and fit it to anything that you're going through, because that's how God approaches us.

I will be with you was what He told the children of Israel. That's not theology. It's an assurance that God is with us in everything that we do. God is saying, "As you go, I will be there. As you face what comes, I will be enough."

He doesn't give Moses a detailed plan. He just says, "Here's My presence." And you remember later on, Moses was saying, "God, if You don't go with us, if Your presence doesn't go with us, I'm not taking another step."

That's how important His presence meant to Moses, because he understood through the way God acted in everything that he did, when he went into Egypt, of what God's presence meant. Without Your presence, I will not take another step.

So, what does God's presence with us mean? it means that who God is becomes how we know that we can lean on Him.

As we unpack who God is, then we realize that these are the attributes that we can lean on Him, because they come and work in our lives. His character is not abstract. It's something that we can draw from, something we can hold on to, something we can interpret our own circumstances through.

Wo, when we say God is with me, we're not just saying he's nearby. We're saying I can trust Him in my situation. I can face what's in front of me. I will have what I need when I need it, because His presence means that His nature, all of His attributes, are active in my life. it means we are not left to figure things out on our own. We don't face uncertainty empty-handed. We don't walk into difficulty without resources. His presence means there is strength for what I am facing, wisdom for the decisions that I need to make, grace for the season that I'm in.

So, let's take that and make it practical, and say: How do we now take those attributes and say how does that work in my situation and in my circumstances? If we were to say that He is self-existent, we're saying God doesn't run on borrowed power, which means that your situation doesn't in any way weaken Him. Your needs don't exhaust Him. He is never running low on strength or wisdom or provision.

Exodus 3:14 says, "I am who I am."

Acts 17:25 might amplify this because it says He is not served by human hands as though He needed anything. What we do doesn't fulfil Him or satisfy Him. He Himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else.

God never runs on low. Whatever you're going through, whatever the world is going through, God is eminently capable of meeting those particular needs. So if you think that you're alone and you don't have the resources, you need to turn to Him and say, "Lord, I need help in this particular area," and He meets you in that situation.

God never runs low on the things that He needs to give us. he's unchanging in who He was, He still is, which means what He did before, He can do again. in other words, if He has done something wonderful in your past, He can do that again in your present. You don't have to think, "My goodness, what am I going to do in this situation?" Look to the past and say, "He helped me there. he's the same unchanging God and He will help me in this as well. He's here. He has shown me what He can do and He can do it again."

So we need to trust that He already is what we need in the situation.

Malachi 3:6 says, "I, the Lord, do not change."

Hebrews 13:8 "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever."

He's the same God who worked through a difficult phase in the past for you. He will do it again in your present, and whatever you may face in the future.

So God has not changed, doesn't change. He's ever present. He says, "I will be with you," which means there is no place where God is absent. He's not absent in your pain, nor in waiting for something to happen. you feel like you're in a kind of a limbo. Things are not moving forward. What's going on? God is with you in that waiting. He's with you in uncertainty. You're not sure of what to do, how to act, what to say. God is with you in your uncertainty. He's there.

His promise of presence is constant.

Joshua 1:9 "The Lord, your God will be with you wherever you go."

Psalm 139: 7-10. The whole psalm really. "Where can I go from Your presence? Nowhere. Wherever I go, You will be there. You will be present."

God is already there in whatever situation you're going through right now. And He's sovereign. He's free. In other words, He's not tied down to anything. God cannot be controlled or manipulated.

In Moses' world, people believed that they could manage god's through rituals. That's why they asked for a name. if I know your name, then I know that I can manipulate you. I can say things to you. I can do things to you.

But God says, "I AM WHO I AM." God rejects that. Not going to give you a name, which means that you can't in any way, not even prayer can manipulate God. We don't pray and say, "Lord, because I'm praying, You've got to do this for me." God is above that. He's sovereign. We don't bend God to our will. We entrust ourselves to His wisdom.

Isaiah 46 "I am God and there is no other. My purpose will stand and I will do all that I please."

Daniel 4 "He does as He pleases. No one can hold back His hand." So, God is in control, not you.

So, whatever it is that you're going through, even right now, maybe you walked into this place, and just said, "I want some time to let go of the things that are just hovering around in my head. I feel so out of control." You may feel out of control. God never is.

Then **He's all sufficient**. *I will be*, which means that He will be with you in your weakness. His strength will be made available in weakness. He can be your wisdom in the midst of confusion. He can be your peace in the midst of anxious thoughts.

He can be your provision when you're lacking something. God does not fit into just one role. He is enough for all of it.

2 Corinthians 12:9 "My grace is sufficient for you." Always sufficient.

Philippians 4:19 "My God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory." God is enough.

He is faithful. God reveals His name in the context of action. God was moving Moses into action. "Go and do something about the children of Israel." So it's not theoretical. It's proven in action that He is faithful in the things that He asks us to do. You don't just learn His name. You experience His faithfulness as you take steps in obedience to Him.

His faithfulness affirmed again and again in Scripture.

Lamentations: "Great is Your faithfulness."

1 Corinthians 1:9 "God is faithful who has called you." So, God will come through with whatever you're going through.

He's a personal God. God does not give Moses a formula. He gives Himself, which means this is not a system to master. This is a relationship to walk in.

Jeremiah 9:23-24 "Let the one who boasts, boast in this, that they understand and know Me. Boast on that, that you understand and know God." Jesus Himself said, "This is eternal life, that they know You, the only true God." And God invites us to get into a relationship, a growing relationship with Him.

The knowledge of all of this was enough for Moses. He began with 'Who am I?' But God shifted everything. He said to Moses, in effect, it's not about your ability, Moses. It's not about your confidence. It's not about your past. It's about My identity. Because the mission that God was sending Moses on was God's. the authority with which He went was God's. and the outcome that God was hoping for was God's. And all of it rests on this I AM.

So, when we begin to let this filter down into our own situations and circumstances, I wonder how it touches you. Maybe you've come in here asking those questions. Who am I, Lord, that You want me to do? I AM is already everything you need Him to be where you are in your situation.

So, the question shifts. It is no longer "do I have what it takes?" It becomes "Will I trust the One who does?" That's where faith begins. Not in having clarity, not in feeling confident even, but in taking a step forward, a step that is anchored in a God who says, "I will be with you."

So as we come to a close, let me take you right back to the beginning where God said, "I have seen my people, what they are going through. I have heard their groanings, and I am sending you, Moses." And when Moses hesitates, when he pulls back, when he says, "Who am I?" God responds with that powerful declaration: I AM WHO I AM. In other words, you can go without fear. You can go without hesitation. Not because of who you are, but because of who I am.

I can't help but wonder today whether some of you are sitting here, and God has been nudging at your heart, knocking kind of incessantly on your heart's door, maybe quietly, maybe persistently, but saying, "I have a need. I have heard the cry and I want to send someone." You have a sense that God is speaking to you, that He's talking to you. Maybe, like Moses, your response has been, "Me? oh no!" or "I can't do this," or "Lord, I'm not capable of this. I don't have what it takes."

So, maybe you've stepped back. maybe you've delayed getting involved with it. you've said "No! Maybe just not yet, Lord." but maybe today, in the light of what we've been speaking about, maybe God is saying, "I'm enough. I'm enough to take you through whatever I'm inviting you to do." And maybe today the no needs to change to a yes. Maybe today is your day to say "Yes, Lord. not in my strength, but in Yours I will go. Not because I feel ready, Lord, but because You are with me. I'll do what You want me to do."

Maybe, it looks different for each one of you. It could be that God is asking you to go somewhere. It could be that God is asking you to step into some situation. It could be that God is asking you to write something to speak to someone, to show up in a place that you have been avoiding. I don't know, but you do. you know exactly what God is requiring of you. Maybe today, God is saying to you, "I AM WHO I AM, so go. I will be with you."

Here's the question for us. would you be willing to say yes to Him? Not because you feel capable, but because you trust that He is. And beloved, if that kind of resonates with you, and you're saying, "Yes, Lord. I will trust You. I'll step out and do what You're inviting me to do, then I want to pray for you this morning.

Amen.