

September 29, 2013

Lesson 4: God's Name



Exodus 2:23-25, 3:1-15, 4:10-17

After a long time the king of Egypt died. The Israelites groaned under their slavery, and cried out. Out of the slavery their cry for help rose up to God. God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God looked upon the Israelites, and God took notice of them.

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, 'I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up.' When the Lord saw that he had turned

aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, 'Moses, Moses!' And he said, 'Here I am.' Then he said, 'Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.' He said further, '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. Then the Lord said, 'I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from 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 country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them.

So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.' But Moses said to God, 'Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?' He said, 'I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain.'

But Moses said to God, 'If I come to the Israelites and say to them, "The God of your ancestors has sent me to you", and they ask me, "What is his name?" what shall I say to them?' God said to Moses, 'I am who I am.' He said further, 'Thus you shall say to the Israelites, "I Am has sent me to you."' God also said to Moses, 'Thus you shall say to the Israelites, "The Lord, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you": This is my name for ever, and this my title for all generations.

But Moses said to the Lord, 'O my Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor even now that you have spoken to your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.' Then the Lord said to him, 'Who gives speech to mortals? Who makes them mute or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you are to speak.' But he said, 'O my Lord, please send someone else.' Then the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses and he said, 'What of your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he can speak fluently; even now he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you his heart will be glad. You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth; and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and will teach you what you shall do. He indeed shall speak for you to the people; he shall serve as a mouth for you, and you shall serve as God for him. Take in your hand this staff, with which you shall perform the signs.'

God's Name

Exodus 2:23-25; 3:1-15; 4:10-17

“God said to
Moses,
‘I Am who I Am’”



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The Big Story Truth: God is God for all time! God holds all of us in his arms, even our loved ones who have died. God's faithfulness will continue to every generation and God will provide for God's people! God can even use us, imperfect as we may be, to be that provision!

About This Scripture Passage: Today's lesson skips ahead quite a bit in the story of Abraham's family. God kept the promises that were made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob! God took care of their family by making a way for them to move to Egypt when famine struck the land. (Remember how God provided for Joseph so that what his brothers intended for harm, God used for good in providing a future for the family in Egypt?) A new Pharaoh ruling over Egypt, though, made their family slaves. Nevertheless, they grew strong in numbers!

They cried out to God to remember them and free them from their slavery. God kept his promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and led the people out of slavery to the land he had promised.

The story that we are studying today is of God hearing their plea and raising up Moses as the leader that will lead them out of Egypt and to the promised land. God chose Moses even though he couldn't speak well. God provided for him helpers and tools with which to lead. And

God gave him his name.... I Am and affirmed that he IS the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Making the Connection: This name “I Am” is a name that we will hear again in our studies this year. It means not only “I Am” but also “I Was” and “I Will Be.”

Coupled with the fact that God also says that he IS the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, we realize that God’s promises aren’t even bound to this life. God is still the God of these ancestors even though they have long since died. God’s promises are good for all time!

Kids will especially appreciate hearing how God used someone like Moses to do something so important! Moses had a speech problem, something like a stutter, and yet God used him to make many important speeches, not only to Pharaoh to get God’s people out of Egypt but then to be the leader for God’s people all the way through their journeys. God provided Moses what he needed in order to be able to do this, and God was with Moses.

For Your Reflection:

When have you felt inadequate for the task that God had placed in front of you?

How has God provided you with help, strength, or resources to serve God and your neighbors in daily life now?

Where in the World Are We?

Earlier in the book of Exodus we hear that Moses had left Egypt and fled to the land of Midian. It is while he is outside of Egypt that God speaks to him from the burning bush. We do not know where Midian is, other than that it is not Egypt. It was a rural setting where Moses and his wife’s family cared for sheep. It was far enough away from Pharaoh and Egypt that he didn’t need to fear Pharaoh’s influence.

For this lesson, though, please do show your class where Egypt is on the map and God’s people in slavery there.



Intergenerational Event

Since this is the 5th Sunday of the month, our Sunday School will be an intergenerational lesson. Parents and other adults in the congregation are invited to participate along with students of all ages.

Movie Event: Today all ages are invited to watch the movie “The Prince of Egypt.” Because the movie is longer than you’ll probably have time for during the Sunday School hour, try to get people in and settled into place as quickly as possible and jump right into the movie. Be sure to get to the part where God speaks to Moses through the burning bush. You will probably have to skip ahead through some of the other parts to make it to the end before the end of the class period.

Snack Idea: Edible Burning Bushes

If you’d like to offer snacks and want to get creative, offer one of these “burning bush” snack ideas!

Option 1: Jello Jigglers

Jello jigglers prepared according to package directions and cut out to look like tongues of fire and served on brown paper plates.

Option 2: Graham Crackers and Whipped Topping

Tint some whipped topping with orange or yellow food coloring to look like flames. Give each person a graham cracker and let them add their own “flame” topping!