

Sermon Notes

Exodus 3

DAILY DEVOTION - TW

What can you say with certainty?

Our world is in constant flux (thank you Heraclitus).

What was certainly true yesterday, may not be so true today. Sports is in flux. Church is in flux. Even science seems to be on the move.

I wonder, can we even tell our own story with certainty?

This Sunday we wrestle with Exodus 3. It's a pivotal moment in the story of Moses. In some ways, it's when his story begins to move. It's an ordinary story that becomes extraordinary. It's a story of Moses SEEing MORE and DOing MORE. It's a life changing story for him as well as an entire nation. It began with a burning bush, an encounter with God.

Perhaps that's when our story changes. Perhaps our story moves from ordinary to extraordinary when God encounters us. It is the moment we SEE MORE and DO MORE.

What will it take, to SEE MORE and DO MORE is what makes our story interesting and worth telling.

Let's wrestle with Exodus 3

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Sunday's Big Question

What would it take to become aware that God (from the burning bush) is calling you to SEE MORE and DO MORE? And, who is the Pharaoh in your life, that God is calling you to proclaim: "Let My People Go"?

SETTING THE SCENE

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob's descendants following Joseph immigrated south because of a famine.

So Israel set out with all that was his, and when he reached Beersheba, he offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac.

2 And God spoke to Israel in a vision at night and said, "Jacob! Jacob!"

"Here I am," he replied.

*3 "I am God, the God of your father," he said. "Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. 4 I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will surely bring you back again. And Joseph's own hand will close your eyes." **Genesis***

46:1-3

They prospered in Egypt for hundreds of years. Then with the reign of a pharaoh, the descendants (Hebrews) were enslaved.

Moses is a descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He is old, perhaps even 80 years old. His journey to Midian desert began when he was a baby and the Pharaoh ordered all midwives to kill the Hebrew baby boys at birth. Moses was spared and hidden for three months. Then he was placed in a basket of reeds and floated into the Nile. The Pharaoh's daughter found and adopted Moses. Moses was raised as a prince of Egypt. While a young man, Moses witnessed the brutality of the Egyptians over the Hebrew people, who were now all slaves.

Consider how old Moses is at this point. God can use everyone in extraordinary ways. God doesn't say to Moses, you're too old to go. (I am looking at all the 80 year olds. You have a mission. Maybe being 80 year olds prepares one to be called to a significant mission.

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EXODUS 3

(v1) *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 wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.*

Moses is a shepherd to sheep and is about to be called to be a shepherd to the people of God.

(v2) *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.*

Moses has been in the wilderness for 40 years. He's about to see something different.

(v3) *So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up."*

God took an ordinary bush so that it could become an extraordinary bush. Perhaps God can take ordinary people and make them into extraordinary people.

For the Jewish mind, fire and light signify the presence of God. Our Pentecost, tongues of fire.

(v4) *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.**"*

This moment would make a good message for a song. It is reminiscent of the last words spoken by God to Jacob prior to migrating to Egypt (Genesis 46:2)

(v5) *"Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground."*

At this time, removing sandals is a sign of respect. Today it tends to be a sign of disrespect.

(v6) *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.*

Moses is aware of the respect he needs to show and at the same time he is remembering the God of his ancestors.

(v7) *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*

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suffering. (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—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. (v9) And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. (v10) So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”

Genesis 12 & 15 God promised a covenant with Abraham for land and nationhood, and descendants. Genesis 46:3 is God’s proclamation to Jacob that his descendants will return to the Promised Land of Israel.

Imagine

You are Moses, What Do You Do. when God Calls?

(v11) But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

The Reluctant Hero. Thank you Joseph Campbell. Why do you suppose Moses is Reluctant to answer “yes” when God calls? Self Preservation? Fear of Paradigm Shift? or, something else?

Are we reluctant to the call of God? Why?

Maybe God is calling you to something that you thought no way.

(v12) And God said, “I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.”

God is calling Moses to See More and Do More

(v13) Moses said to God, “Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what shall I tell them?”

At this point, Moses is engaging God in an argument. But to the observer, Moses is arguing with a bush.

POINT

God called Moses to GO to Pharaoh and say “Let My People Go!”

THE QUESTION

Are the Hebrews the only people who need to hear

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PRAYER

LORD as Moses was drawn forth from the waters for an extraordinary calling, so we too have been drawn from the waters of our baptism to an extraordinary calling. We are your people sent out into the chaotic world to bring healing to a world n need of healing, we tread water with your spirit, we bring good news to the enslaved, and bring back to the promised land your people. Amen.