

The Covenant God of the Fathers

Exodus 3:1-15

This passage is typically discussed in terms of “theophany”—the manifestation of God Himself prior to the coming of Christ. But it also has application to “theodicy”—what is God’s role in times of evil and trouble? As we consider the troubles around our world, most recently the hurricanes in the Caribbean, we might wonder where God is in it all. In Exodus 3, we get a glimpse of God’s response in a time of His People’s trouble.

God **Hears** — and He *Calls Moses*. (Vss 1-4)

God **Remembers** — and He *Establishes Hierarchy* (Vss 5-6)

God **Sees** — and He *Gives Moses Something to Do* (Vss 7-11)

God **Is** — and He *Gives a Sign and a Memorial Name* (Vss 12-15)

God **Accompanies** — and He *Commissions Moses* (Vss 15ff)

Communion Meditation:

When God told Moses His Name, He said, “This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.” But this word “remembered” is the word for “remembrance” or “memorial”. God says the covenant Name of Yahweh would be His remembrance, His memorial, forever. As the I AM, recall that there is no name that can adequately stand above His existence. And yet, in His dealings with His people, He has revealed Himself as Yahweh.

In Exodus 28, when they built the tabernacle and all of the garments and utensils, part of the High Priest’s get-up was a turban with a gold flower on his forehead. On that item, they inscribed, “Holy to Yahweh”. So Aaron, when ministering in the tabernacle, very literally carried God’s name with him. Now, working in the tabernacle is lonely business. He wasn’t speaking in front of thousands of worshipers (in general), but ministering within the tabernacle all alone. So the message “Holy to Yahweh” on his forehead wasn’t for the people, it was for God.

God’s covenant Name, Yahweh, is the memorial before Him of what He has promised to do for His people. And likewise, this meal is a memorial before God, reminding Him what He has done and what it means.

God IS, and so He—and only He—is able to bear the chastisement that brought us peace. Only He is able to go into the heart of the earth, and return. As we consume this bread and wine, we proclaim that the fire of judgment cannot consume us, because we are in Christ...we are united to I AM.

Therefore, this meal is for those in union with Christ, which is sealed by baptism in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and maintained by union with His Body the Church. For those that this describes, this table is open! This is the joyful feast of the People of God.

Word of Commission:

“Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt,” God said to Moses. Moses answered, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?”

Later in chapter 4, Moses gives a few more doubtful answers: “But behold, they will not believe me or listen to my voice, for they will say, ‘The Lord did not appear to you.’”

“Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue.”

“Oh, my Lord, please send someone else.”

But of course, none of that mattered. To the first question, “Who am I?” God said, “Doesn’t matter who *you* are. Ill be with you.” And He repeats similar things throughout. “I will be with your mouth and teach you what to say.”

You are commissioned to inhabit the land the Lord your God has given you—that whole *Earth*. And wherever He leads and directs you, He says “I AM...with you.”