**CONCISE NOTES ON**

**MOSES AND THE BURNING BUSH**

**Dr. Stanford E. Murrell**

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**Moses and the Burning Bush**

**Domenico Fetti (c. 1589 – 1623)**

**Italian Baroque painter**

**EXODUS 1**

**1** Now these *are* the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt; every man and his household came with Jacob.

**2** Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah,

**3** Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin,

**4** Dan, and Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

**5** And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls: for Joseph was in Egypt *already*.

**6** And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation.

**7** ¶ And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them.

**8** Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.

1:8. a new king over Egypt. The book of Genesis ends with the Hebrews in the land of Egypt of which Joseph held an important position in government as Prime Minister. Now, circumstances had turned ominous for the Hebrews for there arose a ruler “which knew not Joseph.” Living in the region of Goshen, the population of the children of Israel grew at such a rate it alarmed the new Egyptian ruler.

**9** And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel *are* more and mightier than we:

1:9. *are* more and mightier than we. This is a hyperbole indicating the state of mind of alarm in the new king over Egypt.

**10** Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and *so* get them up out of the land.

1:10. let us deal wisely. let us deal shrewdly. The motive for moving against the children of Israel was twofold. First, the new king believed the Hebrews might unite with the enemies of Egypt in any military conflict. Second, there was fear of the children of Israel leaving the country and returning to Canaan. If this were to happen a cheap source of labor would be lost.

**11** Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses.

1:11. Therefore they did set over them taskmasters. Belief will dictate behavior. Ideas have consequences. Based on fearful reasoning the new king of Egypt decided to oppress the children of Israel with oppressive acts of forced labor in order to enrich themselves. By acting in this manner the evils of social injustice are made manifest. Evil is defined as injurious behavior to self and others.

**Nine Acts of Social Injustice**

* An elite ruling class with no upward social mobility
* Deliberately induced poverty on the masses
* The exploitation of the labor market
* Slavery
* Racial contempt
* Removal of educational opportunity
* Harsh taskmasters or bureaucrats
* Unjust laws
* Treasure cities or supply cities built without sharing the wealth of the nation

**12** But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel.

1:12. afflicted…they…grew. Despite the pain and suffering the children of Israel were forced to endure, in the providence of God, the nation grew.

1:12. And they were grieved. And the Egyptians were grieved. When the evil designs of individuals are frustrated they become angrier and harsher.

**13** And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour:

1:13. with rigour. The actions of the Egyptians set the stage for the need of a divine deliverer.

***Special Note.***

Question. “Who is the most important person in the Old Testament?”

* Was it Eve? She was the first to be tempted and the first to succumb to sin. *Genesis 3:6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.*
* Was it Adam? He plunged all of humanity into sin. *Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:*
* Was it Abraham? To him great promises were made. *Genesis 12:1 Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*
* Was it David who is said to be a man after God’s own heart? He was the sweet singer of Israel who gave the world the immortal words of the psalms. David was also the figure of the Messiah that was to come. *Psalms 110:1 A Psalm of David. The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. Acts 2:34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand.*
* Was it Moses? Not only did Moses lead the people out of bondage, he was the mediator of the Old Covenant as the giver of the Law. *Exodus 24:7 And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. 8 And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.*

Perhaps Moses is the most important person in the Old Testament for without his leadership the Jews would not have been forged into a nation, and Hebrew jurisprudence would not exist. Civilization itself would be radically different if it were not for Moses and his legal, and moral, influence upon the world.

**14** And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in morter, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, *was* with rigour.

**15** ¶And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of the one *was* Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah:

1:15. Shiphrah (brightness).

1:15. Puah (splendid).

**16** And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see *them* upon the stools; if it *be* a son, then ye shall kill him: but if it *be* a daughter, then she shall live.

1:16. upon the stools. upon the birth stools.

1:16. ye shall kill him. There are two great and terrible accounts of state sponsored infanticide in the Bible. The first was in association with the birth of Moses, while the second involved the birth of Jesus.

* Moses. *Exodus 1:16 And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see them upon the stools; if it be a son, then ye shall kill him:*
* Jesus. *Matthew 2:16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. 17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, 18 In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.*

**17** But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive.

1:17. But. This word is one of the greatest words in Biblical redemptive history. But. This word is a conjunction of contrast. The fear of God by spiritual women led them to defy the power of the king of Egypt. This was an act of civil disobedience that was approved by God.

1:17. But the midwives feared God. A principle is established. Those who fear God know the value of human life and will not promote infanticide or abortion.

**Four People said to Fear God**

* The Midwives Exodus 1:17, 21
* Hananiah Nehemiah 7:2
* Job Job 1:1
* Cornelius Acts 10:2

**18** And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, Why have ye done this thing, and have saved the men children alive?

**19** And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women *are* not as the Egyptian women; for they *are* lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them.

1:19. And the midwives said. It is always wrong to lie. However, it is not wrong to provide a wise and careful answer that can be interpreted in a way to protect the person speaking.

***Special Note.***

Question. “Is there such a thing as a righteous lie?” Dr. R. C. Sproul has taught there is such a thing as a righteous lie. Dr. Sproul argues that the Christian is to tell the truth to whom the truth is due. But in other instances, it is permissible to tell a righteous lie. However, if there is such a thing as a righteous lie then the cults find justification for practicing “heavenly deception” and the world finds justification in teaching situational ethics.

**20** Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty.

1:20. Therefore God dealt well with the midwives. God honored those who honored Him with respect to the sanctity of life. *Psalmist 139:14 I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.*

**21** And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses.

1:21. because. One of the most precious words in Scripture is the word “because” for it leads to an expression of divine favor.

* Because Abraham obeyed the voice of God all the nations on earth are blessed. *Genesis 22: 18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.*
* Because the midwives feared God, He gave them families, or households of their own. *Exodus 1:21 And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses.*
* Because Christ suffered souls are called by God to salvation, service, and eternal life. *1 Peter 2:21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:*

**22** And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive.

1:22. And Pharaoh charged all his people. Because the heart is wicked and militant, it demands that all people engage, without question or conscience, in whatever evil machinations are conceived and implemented.

**EXODUS 2**

**1** And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took *to wife* a daughter of Levi.

2:1. And there went a man. The man was Am’ram (high people), the first named of the sons of Kohath, a Levite. He married his father's sister Jochebed (Jehovah her glory), and by her became the father of Miriam, Aaron, and Moses (Exodus 6:18, 20; Numbers 26:59). Am’ram died at the age of 137, probably before the Exodus.

***Special Note.***

The father of Moses married the sister of his father meaning he married his aunt. Later, the Law of Moses would prohibit such an intimate union. "The fact seems to be that where this marriage was contracted there was no law forbidding such alliances, but they must in any case have been unusual, although not forbidden; and this, with the writer's knowledge that they were subsequently interdicted, sufficiently accounts for this one being so pointedly mentioned" (Keil and Delitzsch Commentary).

2:1. of the house of Levi. Levi (joined) was the third son of Jacob and Leah (wearied), the daughter of Laban (Genesis 29:16). While initially desiring to marry Rachael, Laban (white) tricked Jacob into taking Leah to be his first wife. From this union Levi would be born. The Biblical account does not speak well of Levi. He participated in the plot against the life of Joseph (Genesis 37:4), and later travelled with his family to Egypt with Jacob. Jacob cursed Levi, along with Simeon, because of their cruelty. It was predicted that his descendants would be scattered (Genesis 49:5-7). Levi died at the age of 137 (Exodus 6:16).

**2** And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he *was a* goodly *child*, she hid him three months.

2:2. she hid him. The hiding of Moses from slaughter was an act of faith that involved both his mother and his father. *Hebrews 11:23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.*

***Special Note.***

Am’ram and his wife Jochebed engaged in an act of civil disobedience that was approved by God for a moral principle was involved. In such cases it is always better to obey God rather than man.

* *Acts 5:29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.*

**3** And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid *it* in the flags by the river's brink.

2:3. ark. This is the same word used for Noah’s ark. Each biblical ark speaks of safety through gospel obedience.

**Three Arks in Scripture**

* Noah’s Ark Genesis 6:14
* Moses’ Ark Exodus 2:3
* The Ark of the Covenant Exodus 25:10

2:3. slime. bitumen, asphalt.

2:3. the flags. the reeds. The mother of Moses consigned her baby to the providence of God. She put him into the hands of her God to protect him from the wrath of Pharaoh.

**4** And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him.

2:4. And his sister. The older sister of Moses, the daughter of Amram and Jochebed, was Miriam (obstinacy, rebellion). Oh how her heart must have trembled when she saw the daughter of Pharaoh approaching the river bank where her baby brother was floating in his ark. But what could she do?

***Special Note.***

There are moments in life when all a person can do is to *“stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord”* (Exodus 14:13).

**Seven Occasions of Standing Still**

* The nation of Israel at the Nile River. Exodus 14:13
* The men who were defiled by a dead body. Numbers 9:8
* The priests that bore the Ark of the Covenant. Joshua 3:8
* The nation of Israel before Samuel. 1 Samuel 14:1-9
* Job in the presence of God. Job 37:14
* The chariot bearing the eunuch to his baptism. Acts 8:38

**5** ¶ And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash *herself* at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it.

**6** And when she had opened *it*, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This *is one* of the Hebrews' children.

2:6. the babe wept. The three month old baby wept at a providential moment and the daughter of Pharaoh had compassion on him. She did not know that she held the Mediator of the Old Covenant in her arms, and a principle is established. It is important to treat everyone with respect for you never know whom you are with.

***Special Note.***

Compassion is to be a distinguishing mark of every Christian. *1 Peter 3:8 Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:*

**7** Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?

**8** And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother.

**9** And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give *thee* thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it.

2:9. and nurse it for me. It was the intention of the Pharaoh’s daughter not only to keep the child but to adopt the baby as her own son.

**10** And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water.

2:10. Moses (drawing out). It is not unusual for those who are outside the sphere of saving grace to name those who are in a covenant relationship with God. An Egyptian princess named Moses (Exodus 2:10). In derision, the people in Antioch coined the name Christians for those who were followers of Christ (Acts 11:26). Mocking students at Oxford gave the Methodists their name.

* Moses was drawn out of the Nile River. Exodus 2:5,6
* Moses was drawn into the royal family of Egypt. Exodus 2:10
* Moses was drawn to the burning bush and so to God. Exodus 3:2
* Moses was drawn to the court of the Pharaoh. Exodus 5:1ff
* Moses was drawn to the desert. Exodus 13:17-22
* Moses was drawn to Mt. Sinai Exodus 31:18
* Moses was drawn to Mt. Nebo. Deuteronomy 32:50

**11** ¶ And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren.

2:11. When Moses was grown. Forty years are quickly passed over in verse 11 during which time period Moses was reared as a prince of Egypt. As a prince Moses was well educated in all the wisdom of Egypt and skilled in words and deeds.

* *Acts 7:22 And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.*

2:11. his brethren. Sometime during the days of his maturity Moses became aware he was not an Egyptian but was a Hebrew. This is significant because Moses made a conscious decision, by faith, to identify himself with his brethren.

* *Hebrews 11:24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; 26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. 27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.*

**12** And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that *there was* no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand.

2:12. he slew the Egyptian. One of the reasons why Moses killed the Egyptian was because he believed that his brethren would understand that God had raised him up to be their deliverer.

* *Acts 7:23 And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. 24 And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: 25 For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not.*

**13** And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?

2:13. Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? Moses tried to mediate a dispute between two slaves. His interference was resented for several reasons. First, in the judgment of the contentious brethren Moses did not have the moral authority to speak. Second, Moses condemned in them what he condoned in himself which was a spirit of anger. Third, Moses was not in the will of the Lord geographical, occupationally, or in regard to time. Finally, Moses was not the right messenger for this moment. The message was valid but the messenger was not.

***Special Note.***

If a Christian’s witness is not effective then a look must be taken at the root of the matter to see if there is a root of righteousness or a root of self-righteousness. Self-righteousness will always be resented.

**14** And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? Intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known.

2:14. Who made thee a prince. It is a valid inquiry. Those who speak must have authority to speak especially in moral and spiritual matters. The person who would reprove someone else must have a clear conscience.

* *Matthew 7:3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? 4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? 5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.*

2:14. Surely this thing is known. There is no sin which is secret. “It is folly to think we can mitigate our sin by keeping it secret” (Dr. John MacArthur).

**The Sins Which are not So Secret**

* Because God looks upon the heart, the wise person will plead with the Lord for personal cleansing. *Psalm 139:23 Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: 24 And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*
* God will one day judge the secrets of every heart. *Romans 2:16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.*
* One day, every act, be it good or evil, will be judged. *Ecclesiastes 12:14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*
* There is nothing covered which shall not be brought into the light. *Luke 12:2 For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. 3 Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.*

**15** Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by a well.

2:15. Pharaoh (the great house). The term “pharaoh” is a title equivalent to “president.” Amenhotep II (c. 1450 B.C. - 1425 B.C.), son of the famous empire-builder Thutmose III, was probably the pharaoh of the Exodus (The New Unger's Bible Dictionary).

2:15. He sought to slay Moses. This was not the first time, nor would it be the last time, that a Pharaoh would seek to kill Moses.

2:15. the land of Midian.

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**16** Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters: and they came and drew *water*, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock.

2:16. the priest of Midian. The priest of Midian was “Reuel” (Exodus 2:18) which means “Friend of God.” It is given in the variant form of “Raguel” in Numbers 10:29. Sometimes he is called “Jethro”. “Jethro” is the Hebrew word “Yithro” and means “His Excellency” which is a title of respect, not a name (Exodus 3:1; 4:18; 18:1-12).

2:16. seven daughters. One of the seven daughters was Zipporah (sparrow) who became the wife of Moses (Exodus 2:18).

**17** And the shepherds came and drove them away: but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock.

2:17. And the shepherds came. It was not uncommon for there to be range wars and conflict over limited water supplies. When Moses saw the women being pushed aside, his heart once more rebelled against injustice. And so “*Moses stood up and helped them.”* Moses must have been an imposing figure to stand one man against the many.

**18** And when they came to Reuel their father, he said, How *is it that* ye are come so soon to day?

**19** And they said, An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and also drew *water* enough for us, and watered the flock.

**20** And he said unto his daughters, And where *is* he? Why *is* it *that* ye have left the man? Call him, that he may eat bread.

**21** And Moses was content to dwell with the man: and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter.

2:21. And Moses was content to dwell with the man. Moses was content to dwell with Reuel and so he found a home as a stranger in a strange land.

**The Three Homes of Moses**

* The birth home of Am’ram and his wife Jochebed.
* The royal home of Pharaoh’s daughter.
* The refuge home of Reuel.

2:21. and he gave Moses Zipporah. Reuel, the priest of Midian, gave Zipporah to Moses as his wife.

**What is Known about Zipporah**

* Her name means “sparrow”.
* She had six sisters.
* She was the daughter of Reuel.
* Her father was a priest.
* She lived in Midian.
* She bore two sons, Gershom and Eliezer (Exodus 2:21; 4:25; 18:2), c. 1440 BC.
* She resented the circumcision of her sons (Exodus 4:24-26).
* She returned to her father after Moses sent her back (Exodus 18:2).

**22** And she bare *him* a son, and he called his name Gershom: for he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land.

2:22. Gershom (sojourner). He and his brother, Eliezer would one day be included in the Levites. One of his descendants, Shebuel, was appointed to rule over the treasury during the reign of David*.*

* *1 Chronicles 26:24 And Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, was ruler of the treasures.*

**23** ¶ And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage.

2:23. the bondage. The physical bondage of the Hebrews in the land of Egypt was oppressive. In their pain and sorrow the people prayed and cried out to God for mercy and deliverance. Though the Lord tarried in answering the prayers of the Hebrews, “*God heard their groaning*.” From their lips to God’s ears, and the Lord God omnipotent decided to relieve the children of Israel of their pain.

***Special Note.***

The natural man is born into the bondage of sin and death. Sin will cause the soul to cry out to God. Because God is merciful to sinners, He will remember His covenant with His dear Son and will redeem and deliver souls from spiritual bondage.

“Pass me not, O gentle Savior,

hear my humble cry;

while on others thou art calling,

do not pass me by.

Savior, Savior, hear my humble cry;

while on others thou art calling,

do not pass me by.”

**24** And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.

2:24. and God remembered his covenant.

**The Abrahamic Covenant**

*Genesis 12:1 Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*

**The Abrahamic Covenant Repeated**

*Genesis 17:1 And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. 2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. 3 And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, 4 As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. 5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. 6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. 7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. 8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. 9 And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. 10 This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. 11 And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. 12 And he that is eight days old shall be*

*circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. 13 He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. 14 And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant. 15 And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. 16 And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her.*

2:24. and God remembered.

**Four Times God Remembered**

* God remembered Noah Genesis 8:1
* God remembered Abraham Genesis 19:29
* God remembered Rachel Genesis 30:22
* God remembered His covenant Exodus 2:24

**What Christians Should Remember**

* Remember the miracles of Jesus Matthew 16:9
* Remember the teachings of Christ Luke 24:6
* Remember the word of the Lord John 15:20
* Remember the ministry of Paul Acts 20:31
* Remember to give to others Acts 20:35; Galatians 2:10
* Remember the great grace of God Ephesians 2:11-13
* Remember the resurrection of Christ 2 Timothy 2:8
* Remember those in authority Hebrews 13:3
* Remember to repent Revelation 2:5; 3:3

**25** And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto *them*.

2:25. and God had respect unto them. and God acknowledged them.

***Special Note.***

Forty years would pass before God acted upon the cries of the children of Israel. And, for forty years Moses was a shepherd. In this period, the children of Israel suffered. In this period of divine silence a great work of redemption was being prepared, for God was bringing to spiritual maturity a redeemer.

**EXODUS 3**

**The First Encounter of Moses with God**

**Exodus 3:1-4:18**

**1** Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, *even* to Horeb.

3:1. Now Moses kept the flock. For forty years Moses performed a momentous job of attending the sheep of the flock of Jethro his father in law.

***Special Note.***

Sometimes the Lord will place us in a mundane and boring place in life in order to perfect us. Therefore, do not chaff at the place that God has placed you but learn whatever lessons of life the Lord would have you learn.

3:1. Horeb. The Rabbis consider "Sinai" (thorny) and "Horeb" (desert) to be two names of the same mountain (Jewish Encyclopedia).



**2** And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush *was* not consumed.

3:2. And the angel of the LORD. That the angel of the LORD is a reference to God is revealed in v. 4 where the text says that the LORD spoke to him from within the bush. Again in v. 6 text states that the Being in the bush is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. As the conversation continues between these two, the Being in the bush announces His name, “I AM WHO I AM” (v. 14). Therefore, this passage teaches that the angel of the LORD mentioned in v. 2 is clearly identified by Himself and embraced by Moses as the infinite and eternal almighty God.

3:2. the bush. An ordinary bramble bush became an extraordinary bramble bush when taken over by God.

3:2. the bush burned. It is probable that what Moses actually saw was a fire in the bush. The fire burned in the bush but was not of the bush. Dr. R. C. Sproul suggests this possibility in order to say that the fire was independent of any natural phenomena. Is that important? Indeed it is because it helps to understand why the bush was not consumed. God is self-sufficient and He is eternal. Though God is pleased to reveal Himself in a theophany (God, to make manifest), He is always independent of His creation.

***Special Note.***

Theologians call the burning bush an act of *contra naturam* meaning something that is contrary to nature. The burning bush is not a natural phenomenon but a super natural reality. This burning bush is manifestation of the Shekinah (residence, i.e., of God) glory, the glory of God which radiates from His very being. God’s glory is so powerful and so majestic that it overwhelms anything and everything around it.

Throughout history, at critical moments, God manifests Himself to humanity through the Shekinah glory that is communicated, chiefly through fire. While the word “shekinah” is not used in Scripture, the term was used by the Jews and Christians to speak of the invisible divine Presence.

**The Shekinah Glory of God**

* When God spoke to Abraham, the Shekinah glory was present. Genesis 15:9-17
* When God spoke to Moses, the Shekinah glory was present. Exodus 3:2
* When Isaiah went into the temple, the Shekinah glory was present. Isaiah 6:1-5
* When God spoke to Saul, the Shekinah glory was present. Acts 9:1-6
* On the Day of Pentecost, the Shekinah glory was present. Acts 2:1-4
* When the angels announced the birth of Christ, the Shekinah

 glory was present. Luke 2:8-9

* On the Mount of Transfiguration, the Shekinah glory of God

 was present in Christ for where God is, there is His glory. Matthew 17:1-8

**Why is the Bush Burning?**

**3** And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.

3:3. And Moses said. Here is one of the great seminal moments in human history as the curiosity of Moses led him to investigate unusual phenomena. *“I will now turn aside”,* said Moses, *“and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.”* With this simple self-talk and subsequent discovery, all of human history was changed. It is imperative to remember that every moment in life is important.

3:3. the bush is not burnt. The logo of Ligonier Ministries, founded by Dr. R. C. Sproul, is that of a burning bush in honor of the Reformers who used it as a symbol of the importance of the Word of God.

**A Dialogue with the Divine God**

**4** And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here *am* I.

3:4. Moses, Moses. The repetition of a person’s name in Hebrew society shows affection and intimacy. God speaks to Moses on intimate terms.

“How big is God?

How big and wide is his vast domain?

To try to tell these lips can only start;

He's big enough to rule the mighty universe,

Yet small enough to live within my heart.”

Hank Snow

3:4. God called unto him out of the midst of the bush. Conservative theologians speak of God as being both immanent and transcendent in regards to His creation, and this text illustrates that truth. God is transcendent in that He is exalted in His majesty, He is above and beyond His creation, but God is immanent in His creation in the sense that the divine presence is manifested in and encompasses the material world. The immanence and transcendence of God is revealed most strikingly in the incarnation and birth of Jesus Christ.

**5** And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest *is* holy ground.

3:5. And he said. The encounter with God by Moses at the burning bush is not only a theophany but a Christophany. A theophany is a manifestation of God and a Christophany is a manifestation of Jesus prior to the virgin birth. The word refers to a pre-incarnate revelation of Christ.

**Examples of Christophanies**

* Melchizedek (king of righteousness) reflects a Christophany. Genesis 14:18-24
* The burning bush was a Christophany. Exodus 3:5
* The pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire were Christophanies. Exodus 13:21
* The Captain of the Host of the Lord reflects a Christophany. Joshua 5:13-15
* The Fourth Man in the Fire reflects a Christophany. Daniel 3:19-26
* The chariot of fire translating Elijah reflects a Christophany. 2 Kings 2:12
* The wheels within wheels reflect a Christophany. Ezekiel 1:1, 4

3:5. holy ground. What made that ground holy was the presence of God. Anything that God touches receives a radiation from His own transcendent majesty. When the natural is touched by the supernatural presence of God, threshold is established from the secular to the sacred.

**In the Act of Worship**

“We cross the threshold of the secular to the sacred,

from the common, to the uncommon,

from the profane to the holy.”

R. C. Sproul

(St. Andrews Church Bulletin Sanford, Florida)

The command given to Moses would also be given to Joshua. Both stood on holy ground.

* *Joshua 5:13 And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?*

The experience of Moses had been the experience of Jacob. He too crossed the threshold.

* *Genesis 28:12 And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. 13 And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;…16 And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.*

***Special Note.***

Where does the light come from that makes the Shekinah glory? The author of Hebrews answers that it is Christ.

* *Colossians 2:9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*
* *John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

**6** Moreover he said, I *am* the God of thy 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 upon God.

3:6. And Moses hid his face. There is nothing more terrifying than for sinful man to behold the glory of God.

***Special Note.***

First, Moses wanted to look, until he realized who was there. But there was too much to take in and so he hid but face. Later, the time would come when Moses would plead with God to show him His face.

* *Exodus 33:18 And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.19 And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. 20 And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. 21 And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: 22 And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: 23 And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.*

**The Face of God is Revealed in the Face of Christ**

* *John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*

“Face to face with Christ, my Savior,

 Face to face—what will it be,

 When with rapture I behold Him,

 Jesus Christ Who died for me?

Face to face I shall behold Him,

 Far beyond the starry sky;

 Face to face in all His glory,

 I shall see Him by and by!”

Carrie E. Beck, 1898

**7** ¶And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which *are* in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;

3:7. And the LORD said. The French atheist and philosopher Jean Paul Sartre (905-1980) was well known for a play he wrote, *No Exit*, setting forth the proposition that there is no exit from the profane and the hell of humanity. Moreover, the transcendent God cannot be known. In contrast to the wisdom of man is the biblical revelation that while God is transcendent He can be known. The God who is there speaks. “And the LORD said.”

* God is not blind. “I have seen.”
* God is not deaf. “I have heard.”
* God is not ignorant. “I know.”

**8** And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

3:8. the place of the Canaanites.

**The People in Canaan**

* Canaanites (ca'na-an-ite), refers to the inhabitants of the region along the Mediterranean Sea. The Canaanites used a particular cuneiform language, featuring a wedge-shaped alphabet.
* Hittites (hit'-tites), were the descendants of Heth who lived in Asia Minor, on the plateau of Anatolia. They were also one of the seven major tribes of Canaan.
* Amorites (am' -o-rites; mountaineers), were found on both sides of the Jordan. They were descendants of Emor, the fourth son of Canaan.
* Perizzite (per'-iz-zite), refers to a tribe in the Land of Promise, west of the Jordan which the Hebrews encountered when they entered into the land. Abraham and Lot settled in the land where the Perizzite dwelt (Gen. 13:7; 34:30; Ex. 33:2; Deut. 0:17; Judges 1:5; Nehemiah 9:8).
* Hivite (hi'-vite; villagers), was one of the sons of Canaan. The children of Israel were commanded to conquer the tribes of Canaan including the Hivites (Ex. 13:5; 23:23, 28).
* Jebusites (jeb'-u-sites), refers to the descendants of Ham by his son Canaan who inhabited the area around Jerusalem until the days of David (Gen. 10:10; 15:21).

**9** Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

**10** Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

**11** ¶ And Moses said unto God, Who *am* I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

3:11. Who *am* I. This is the second great question in the narrative. It is a question every person should ask when they stand before God, especially as the object of redemptive grace and mercy.

“When I think of how He came so far from glory

Came to dwell among the lowly such as I

To suffer shame and such disgrace on Mount Calvary

Take my place then I ask myself this question, "Who am I?"

Who am I that the King would bleed and die for?

Who am I that He would pray, not my will, but thine Lord?

The answer I may never know, why He ever loved me so

But to an old rugged cross He'd go for who am I?”

Elvis Presley

**12** And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this *shall be* a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

3:12. I will be with thee. The Lord does not answer the question of Moses as to who he is but redirects attention to Himself. The issue is not, “Who am I?” but “Who is God?” God is the Lord God Almighty, the Ruler of heaven and earth, and the One who makes and keeps covenants with men.

3:12. this mountain. Mount Horeb which is Mount Sinai.

**13** And Moses said unto God, Behold, *when* I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What *is* his name? What shall I say unto them?

3:13. What *is* his name? Moses is no longer asking, “Who *am* I?” Now he is asking God, “Who are you?”

**God’s Great Self-Disclosure**

**14** And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

3:14. I AM THAT I AM. It is one thing to know that God is, but who God is remains altogether different. There is the God of imagination and there is the God of revelation. The God of revelation is who God really is.

***Special Note.***

It is not enough to understand God as a “Higher Power” so that men can say, “The Force be with you!” That pseudo “power” is impersonal and amoral and makes no moral demands. God is both personal, moral, and He holds individuals accountable for their attitude and actions. The “god” of imagination, the “god” of secular America and world culture is the “god” who sees no evil, speaks no evil, and hears no evil. But if this is really “god” then there is no One there. There is no love. There is no hope. There is no accountability. There is no Saviour. But the God of the Bible is the One who can see, can speak, can hear and who is personal. His name is Wonderful. We love God because of who He is. When the Christian is asked to tell everything that can be known about God, the proper response is one word, “Yahweh”, which means, “I AM THAT I AM”.

**God’s Memorial Name**

**15** And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this *is* my name for ever, and this *is* my memorial unto all generations.

3:15. this *is* my name for ever. God did not refuse to give His name to Moses. Rather, the Lord spoke in the Hebrew tradition by giving a name that revealed something about His essence.

***Special Note.***

Names in Hebrew usually indicated something significant about them as a person or their character.

 **Name Meaning**

* Adam red, *‘adama*, the ground
* Eve life giver
* Noah rest, quiet
* Moses drawn out
* Abraham father of a multitude
* Sarah a princess
* Isaac laughter
* Jacob heel-catcher, supplanter

***Special Note.***

The term Yahweh is based on four Hebrew consonants, YHWH, known as the tetragammaton, meaning, four letters. The vowels have been added to form the word, Yahweh.

***Special Note.***

Question. “Why do you worship Yahweh?” One immediate answer is that God is worshipped because of what He has done. The heart is grateful for the blessings of divine grace. This is not wrong but a better reason for worship takes place when God is worshipped for who He is. Therein is the majesty of the Almighty. God is the most perfect, and only perfect, Being.

***Special Note.***

Question. “Why is there something rather than nothing?” “Why does anything exist?” It is an important inquiry, for when man looks at the vastness of the universe he shrivels into insignificance until God reminds him that man was made in the image of God.

* *Psalms 8:4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?*
* *Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.*

The simple answer is found in the first verse of the Bible.

* *Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth.*

What this verse teaches is that the sun, the moon, the stars, man, plants, animals, the universe itself had a beginning. There was a time when these things were not and the only thing that was, was God. It was God who decided to create all that is. This truth silences the secular theory of the Big Bang, for behind the seminal moment where the universe sprang into existence there was God. God is the manifestation of the verb: “to be.” God’s name is not “Once Upon A Time I Am.”

God introduces Himself in terms of the eternal presence. “I AM WHO I AM”, the personification of the verb, “TO BE.”

In contrast to God, is man, who is always “becoming” and always subject to “change.” But God does not “become”, He is the same “yesterday, today, and forever.” God does not change.

* *Malachi 3:6 For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.*

The One who changes not makes Him different from men. God alone has Being in and of Himself. Man’s being is transitory, it is dependent, it is derived, it is a subset of the Pure Being.

Without God we could not live.

* *Acts 17:28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.*

Aristotle (384 – 322 BC) understood that anything that moves in this universe has to be moved by something outside and greater than itself. God is that Unmoved Mover. It does not take a leap of faith to believe in God. All it takes is a rational understanding that anything that moves had to be acted upon. Anything that is made demands a maker. Even if something as simple as a pair of glasses exists because they were fashioned and acted upon.

**16** Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and *seen* that which is done to you in Egypt:

3:16. I have surely visited you.

***Special Note.***

The guns of criticism are aimed at the Christian church by the secular world. The specific target is creationism, because the world knows that if it can disprove that creation is by divine design it can destroy the Christian religion. Therefore the world sets forth the concept of “spontaneous generation” up by the “survival of the fittest” within an evolutionary model.

***Special Note.***

The reality is that there are three possible explanations for something to exist rather than nothing.

* That which exists is eternal.
* That which exists is self-created (spontaneous generation).
* That which exists is a created something or Someone who is eternal.

***Special Note.***

Spontaneous generation is a logical absurdity and a logical impossibility, because for anything to create itself it must first exist. It would have to be, before it was. It would have to be, and not be, at the same time. This violates the most fundamental principle of logic, truth, and science which is the Law of Non-Contradiction. Out of nothing, nothing comes.

When spontaneous generation was discredited, the idea arose of a gradual spontaneous generation. The idea was that we cannot get something out of nothing – quickly. We must be patient for nothing to give us something. Once again, the silliness of the argument is immediately seen upon reflection. What is seen are the extremes to which people will go to do away with the God who is there.

***Special Note.***

In contrast to the ideas of spontaneous generation, and gradual spontaneous generation, is the idea of God’s self-existence or aseity. God and God alone exist by His own power. Nobody made Him. Nobody caused Him. No one generated Him. God is self-existence.

The Law of Causality does not say that everything has to have a cause. The Law of Causality says that every effect must have an antecedent cause. That is what is called a “Formal Truth”, it is a truth by definition. A cause can only be a cause if it has an effect. But we do not talk about God as being an effect. God has not been caused by something before Him. He is self-existence. He owes His existence to nothing outside Himself. He has the power of being in Himself.

Question. “What is the difference between self-existence and self-creation?” Answer. Self-creation is illogical while self-existence, or aseity, is very logical though difficult for the human mind to fully comprehend. Just take the idea of Something being eternal, and having the power of being within itself. What rule or point of logic does that violate? Is there anything irrational about that? No, of course not.

Not only is the existence of God possible, God’s Being, unlike any other being that exists, is what Thomas Aquinas called, Necessary Being.

Thomas meant two things. First, Aquinas meant that a Necessary Being is a Being who cannot not Be, by the sheer necessity of its eternal Being, or of its aseity, its self-existent Being. God cannot not Be. He is “I AM”, eternally.

Second, a Necessary Being is logically necessary for creation demands it. This Necessary Being is a Transcendent Being, for God is greater and superior to anything that is found in the created world. Something has to be eternal or nothing could have been created. If this Something is eternal, it is that way because it cannot stop being eternal.

A Transcendent Being is necessary, as opposed to a pulsating principle within the universe from which all things derive, because a pulsating principle would extinguish itself due to the law of entropy which says that everything created goes from order to disorder. And nature confirms that. The sun will one day burn out. The galaxies collapse into black holes. A Transcendent Being is necessary. It is this Transcendent Being that spoke to Moses as the eternal “I AM.”

***Special Note.***

Transcendency does not refer to geography. It is not an inquiry into where God lives, but to His essences, His superiority.

**17** And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey.

**Request for a Three Days’ Journey**

**18** And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.

3:18. And they shall hearken to thy voice. The LORD God was confident of all that was to happen in detail with divine certainty. The certainty of God was rooted in the Divine Imparity. The “I AM” speaks and it is done. Such has it always been.

***Special Note.***

The same God, with the same power that spoke to Moses, is the same God that exists with an eternal plan of redemption for His fallen creatures. Part of that redemption plan is remembered when the LORD says to Moses that He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The mind of Moses was directed back to the covenant God made with Abraham who left all to search for a land of promise. Because Abraham obeyed the LORD, he was given a seed in Isaac who in turn bore Jacob. One of the sons of Jacob, Joseph, was betrayed by his brothers and was sold into slavery. In the providence of God Joseph rose to be the prime minister of Egypt. This led to Joseph being able to help his family, and others, survive the famines of the time. With the death of Joseph, the Hebrew people were enslaved until the time came for God to deliver them through Moses. Moses in turn would be a type of the Lord Jesus Christ.

* *Hebrews 3:1 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; 2 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. 3 For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. 4 For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. 5 And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; 6 But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.*
* *Hebrews 11:23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. 24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; 26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. 27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. 28 Through faith he kept the Passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them. 29 By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.*

 **Moses**  **Christ**

* Mediator of the Old Covenant Mediator of the New Covenant
* Faithful as a servant in all his (God’s) house Faithful in all His house
* Established Israel as a nation Established the church as a new *ekklesia*
* Gave the Ten Commandments Gave the Sermon on the Mount
* The Law came through Moses Grace and peace came through Jesus Christ
* Opposed by Pharaoh Opposed by Satan
* Cried, “Let my people go!” Cried, “It is finished!”
* Redeemed a physical people Redeemed a spiritual people
* Brought them to Canaan Brought them into a more perfect rest
* Heard the “I AM” Was the “I AM”

**19** ¶ And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand.

3:19. And I am sure. God was certain that Pharaoh would harden his heart and not let the children of Israel leave Egypt. And that is exactly what happened.

***Special Note.***

The origin of the hardening of the heart of Pharaoh begins by divine design with God according to Exodus 3:19, and is confirmed in the New Testament by Romans 9:16-18.

* *Romans 9:16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. 17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. 18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.*

 **The Biblical Commentary Number of Times**

* The Heart of Pharaoh was Hardened (by Events) 3
* Pharaoh Hardened His Heart 4
* The Lord Hardened the Heart of Pharaoh 6

***Special Note.***

**The Heart of Pharaoh is Hardened**

**According to Divine Certainty**

**Exodus 3:19 \* Exodus 7:13**

* *Exodus 7:13 And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said.*

**The Lord Confirms the Hardening**

* *Exodus 7:14 And the Lord said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart is hardened; he refuseth to let the people go.*

**The Heart of Pharaoh was Hardened**

* *Exodus 7:22 And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, neither did he hearken unto them; as the Lord had said.*

**Pharaoh Hardened His Heart**

* *Exodus 8:15 But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said.*

**The Heart of Pharaoh was Hardened**

* *Exodus 8:19 Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said.*

**Pharaoh Hardened His Heart**

* *Exodus 8:32 And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go*.

**The Heart of Pharaoh was Hardened**

* *Exodus 9:7 And Pharaoh sent, and, behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.*

**The Lord Hardened the Heart of Pharaoh**

* *Exodus 9:12 And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had spoken unto Moses.*

**Pharaoh Hardened His Heart**

* *Exodus 9:34 And when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants.*

**The Heart of Pharaoh was Hardened**

* *Exodus 9:35 And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, neither would he let the children of Israel go; as the Lord had spoken by Moses.*

**The Lord Hardened the Heart of Pharaoh**

* *Exodus 10:1 And the Lord said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh: for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might shew these my signs before him*:

**The Lord Hardened the Heart of Pharaoh**

* *Exodus 10:20 But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go.*

**The Lord Hardened the Heart of Pharaoh**

* *Exodus 10:27 But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go.*

**The Lord Hardened the Heart of Pharaoh**

* *Exodus 11:10 And Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh: and the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go out of his land.*

**The Lord Hardened the Heart of Pharaoh**

* *Exodus 14:8 And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued after the children of Israel: and the children of Israel went out with an high hand.*

**20** And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go.

**21** And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty:

**22** But every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put *them* upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians.

3:22. and ye shall spoil the Egyptians. The spoiling or plundering of the Egyptians was God’s way of paying back the Hebrews for 450 years of slave labor. It was morally wrong for the Egyptians to exploit the labor of the children of Israel. It was social justice for the people to receive compensation. It was only right.

3:22. every woman shall borrow. Two sources of revenue would finance the departure of the Hebrews from Egypt. One source of revenue was the people for whom the Hebrews worked. Another source of revenue was the neighborhood. Personal wealth and collective wealth was to be taken for compensation, not because the state mandated the confiscation of private property, but because God placed it upon the hearts of the Egyptians to do what was right.

**Egyptian Reparation**

* Jewels of silver
* Jewels of gold
* Raiment
* Redistribution of the wealth of a nation

**EXODUS 4**

**Natural Skepticism**

**1** And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee.

4:1. But, behold, they will not believe me. But, suppose, they will not believe me. Here is a flash of divine humor as God the Holy Spirit allows the natural skepticism of Moses to be remembered and recorded. Moses is suggesting to God some thoughts that perhaps God had not anticipated and thought about. “LORD, just suppose they will not believe me! Then what?”

**The First Sign**

**A Rod**

**2** And the LORD said unto him, What *is* that in thine hand? And he said, A rod.

4:2. And the LORD said unto him. In matchless grace and divine patience the LORD responded to the natural skepticism and doubt of Moses by giving him a sign, the sign of the rod.

**3** And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it.

**4** And the LORD said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand:

4:4. take it by the tail. Normally, a snake is taken, not by the tail but by the base of the neck so there is no room for the snake to coil back and strike. But God has a lesson to teach Moses and that is Pharaoh has no power to strike Moses or the children of Israel any longer. Pharaoh is a defeated foe and is no one to fear.

**5** That they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.

4:5. That they may believe. The miracles of the Bible are not given to prove the existence of God for that is already established. The miracles of the Bible are given in order to impress upon individuals the legitimacy of an agent of revelation.

***Special Note.***

The miracles of the Bible are clustered around Moses, Elijah, and then Jesus. The Law and the Prophets are validated, and so is Christ.

* *John 2:23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.*

Nicodemus knew that Jesus was a teacher sent from God or He would not have been able to do the miracles He did.

***Special Note.***

Satan is not able to perform an authentic miracle. The Bible describes the wonders of Satan as lying wonders.

*2 Thessalonians 2:9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,*

What the devil can do is give the illusion of performing a miracle and that is what impresses and deceives people. A true sign cannot be used for a bad reason, but a false sign can be used for a false reason. Satan cannot perform an authentic miracle which would destroy his kingdom, for a house divided against itself cannot stand. That is the point Jesus was making when He silenced His critics who said that He performed miracles by the aid of Beelzebub.

* *Luke 11:20 But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.*

Satan is not God. Satan cannot do the things God can do. God uses a real miracle to authenticate His messengers and agents of revelation. Only God can bring something out of nothing. Only God can raise people from the dead. Only God can give eternal life. Only God can regenerate the heart. Satan cannot make an ax’s head float. Satan cannot control the laws of nature. He is just a magician. Satan is a capable magician, but a wicked one. This was made manifest when Moses and Aaron had a confrontation at Pharaoh’s court. When the court magicians made their rods become snakes, having hidden their snakes inside a stick, in imitation of Aaron’s rod, his snake consumed them!

* *Exodus 7:10 And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the Lord had commanded: and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. 12 For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods.*

**The Second Sign**

**Momentary Leprosy**

**6** ¶And the LORD said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand *was* leprous as snow.

**7** And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his *other* flesh.

**8** And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign.

**The Third Sign**

**Water Turned to Blood**

**9** And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour *it* upon the dry *land*: and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry *land*.

**The Displaying of False Humility**

**10** ¶ And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I *am* not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I *am* slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

4:10. I *am* not. Moses was engaging in false humility at this moment in light of what is said of him by Stephen. Moses was very capable in words.

* *Acts 7:22 And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.*

**11** And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I the LORD?

4:11. who maketh the dumb, or deaf…or the blind. Here is a text of encouragement for every physically impaired person. Their life is not a cosmic accident. They too are made in the image of God. They are made for His glory.

**12** Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.

**13** And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand *of him whom* thou wilt send.

**The LORD is Angry with Moses**

**14** And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and he said, *Is* not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart.

4:14. the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses. Moses was not the last person that would arouse the anger of the Lord.

**The Anger of the LORD was Kindled**

* Against Moses Exodus 4:14
* Against Israel Numbers 11:10; 12:9; 25:3
* Against the idolater Deuteronomy 6:15
* Against Uzzah 2 Samuel 6:7
* Against Amaziah 2 Chronicles 25:15

***Special Note.***

What aroused the anger of the LORD against Moses was the obstinacy of the man to raise one objection after another despite being told the future and having been shown the power of God. Deliberate unbelief must cease. Faith is the victory that overcomes the world. Faith is pleasing to God.

**15** And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do.

**16** And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, *even* he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.

**17** And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs.

**18** ¶ And Moses went and returned to Jethro his father in law, and said unto him, Let me go, I pray thee, and return unto my brethren which *are* in Egypt, and see whether they be yet alive. And Jethro said to Moses, Go in peace.

**The Second Encounter of Moses with God**

**Exodus 4:19-23**

**19** And the LORD said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy life.

**20** And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the rod of God in his hand.

**21** And the LORD said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go.

**22** And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel *is* my son, *even* my firstborn:

**23** And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, *even* thy firstborn.

**The Third Encounter of Moses with God**

**The Night the Lord Sought to Kill Moses**

**Exodus 4:24-26**

**24** ¶ And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the LORD met him, and sought to kill him.

**25** Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast *it* at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband *art* thou to me.

**26** So he let him go: then she said, A bloody husband *thou art*, because of the circumcision.

4:24-26. sought to kill him. This is one of the most remarkable stories in the Bible. During the journey of Moses to stand before the Pharaoh of Egypt to demand that he let the Hebrews slaves depart the land, the LORD met Moses and sough to kill him. But why?

The answer is that Moses had failed to give his sons the sign of the covenant. Moses had neglected to circumcise Gershom and Eliezer.

Circumcision was the sign of the covenant God had made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and it was to be the sign of the covenant for Moses and his descendants as well. Until that act of obedience was performed, Moses was going to die the sin unto death.

* *Genesis 17:11 And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. 12 And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. 13 He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. 14 And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.*

***Special Note.***

An important spiritual lesson to be learned from this narrative is that no one is indispensable in the plan of God. Gospel obedience is more important than a person’s education, position, or ability.

**The First Encounter of Aaron with God**

**Exodus 4:27**

**27** ¶And the LORD said to Aaron, Go into the wilderness to meet Moses. And he went, and met him in the mount of God, and kissed him.

**28** And Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD who had sent him, and all the signs which he had commanded him.

**29** ¶And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel:

**30** And Aaron spake all the words which the LORD had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people.

**The People Believed**

**31** And the people believed: and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped.

4:31. then they bowed. Heads are bowed and worship takes place when the people of God understand they are going to be redeemed, not just from something, but to something. They are going to be released from a life of oppression, but they are released in order to give honor and glory to God and walk as His people throughout the earth.

***Special Note.***

What is true of national Israel is true for the church. God has not redeemed people to live out a self-interested life of leisure. Souls are saved to reflect God’s glory and grace. We are His called ones to worship Him.

“O worship the King, all glorious above,

O gratefully sing His power and His love;

Our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days,

Pavilioned in splendor, and girded with praise.

O tell of His might, O sing of His grace,

Whose robe is the light, whose canopy space,

His chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form,

And dark is His path on the wings of the storm.

The earth with its store of wonders untold,

Almighty, Thy power hath founded of old;

Established it fast by a changeless decree,

And round it hath cast, like a mantle, the sea.

Thy bountiful care, what tongue can recite?

It breathes in the air, it shines in the light;

It streams from the hills, it descends to the plain,

And sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.

Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail,

In Thee do we trust, nor find Thee to fail;

Thy mercies how tender, how firm to the end,

Our Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend.

O measureless might! Ineffable love!

While angels delight to worship Thee above,

The humbler creation, though feeble their lays,

With true adoration shall all sing Thy praise.”

Robert Grant, 1833