

Exodus 3: Deliverance

Exodus is the book of epic liberation!

It begins with Abraham's descendants now enslaved in Egypt when God 'comes down' to their rescue, thus keeping the 'covenant' promises He made to their ancestors back in Genesis.

The Lord appoints as His spokesman and leader an exiled Egyptian prince called Moses, who was actually born a Hebrew. Moses thinks he has put his troubled past behind him and found peace with marriage and shepherd duties far from his birthplace but the adventure is only beginning!

This chapter 3 is his first encounter with his ancestors' God Who will humble the 'gods' of Egypt with plagues, open the Red Sea like a curtain, rain bread for His people from heaven and justify the modern catchphrase 'biblical proportions'!

Memorable details instantly grip the unsuspecting future leader:

A bush 'burning but not consumed'. Fire in the Bible often represents the intimidating presence of God in His holiness. Moses is instructed to stay back and show reverence and he instinctively 'hides his face'. He is 'on holy ground', not because the location is special, but because God is tangibly present.

A name, 'I am who I am'. Theologians tell us the language suggests One Who is eternal, without beginning or end. Some also see implied One Who is all-powerful, Whose purpose cannot be thwarted. Jewish scribes copying a passage like this had to observe elaborate rituals to show reverence for this name. Interestingly when Christ used it of Himself some people tried to stone Him for blasphemy!

A Deity Who is compassionate and active on behalf of His people and all-powerful to overthrow and punish those who worship false 'gods' or act like little tyrannical 'gods' themselves. People shouldn't mess with the real thing!

We also see here a reluctant *prophet*. If you read on into the next chapter Moses tries to get out of his commission, prompting wonderful if daunting reassurances from the Lord. Apparently God uses real human beings like Moses to further His purposes on earth. Real people like us.

We should perhaps brace ourselves for some epic adventures of our own!