

05 – First Lesson in God’s Holiness: Very First Lesson

Exodus (Names) – Changing the World

Dr. Leon L. Sanders Exodus 2:23-3:22

During those many days the king of Egypt died, and the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help. Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. And God *heard* their groaning, and God *remembered* his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. God *saw* the people of Israel –and God *knew*.

(Exodus 2:23-25 ESVST)

The Immutable God

- God, by definition, is immutable, unchanging
 - God has nothing to learn, He is the source of all knowledge; therefore, God does not think (process data to form new information)
 - God is Spirit which is beyond our comprehension since we have never been, and will never be – spirit 1Jo 4:19
 - How then can we understand God?

Understanding God

Anthropomorphism

- Anthropomorphism derives from its verb form *anthropomorphize*, itself derived from the Greek *ánthrōpos* (ἄνθρωπος, "human") and *morphē* (μορφή, "form"). It is first attested in 1753, originally in reference to the heresy of applying human form to God.

Anthropopathism

- Anthropopathism (from Greek *anthropos* (ἄνθρωπος, "human") and *pathos* (πάθος, "suffering") is the attribution of human emotions, or the ascription of human feelings or passions to God.

Understanding God

Anthropomorphism

- By giving God "human" characteristics we begin to know God's workings
- These visualizations help us to understand how God works

Anthropopathism

- By giving God "human" emotions we begin to know God's true nature
- These emotionalisms help us to understand how God feels about us

God Remains Immutable

- Do NOT mistake the anthropomorphisms or anthropopathisms for the true nature of God
 - God did not forget then "remember" the Hebrews
 - God did not ignore then "hear" their cries
 - God did not look away then "see" the Hebrews
- These are metaphors helping us understand God

God's Time is Never Delayed

- God was gathering the empires and people groups in preparation for what He would do in Egypt
- God was preparing the Hebrews to receive His teaching of His holiness that would change men everywhere
- Many doctrinal errors arise because men confuse these cues of God for God, rejecting His Immutability



Burning Bush

God begins His instruction in Holiness with Moses
Holiness involves separation between Holy and all else

First Day of School

- Moses' father-in-law was a priest of Midian
 - This is unexplained whether he was a priest of
 - The true God as was Melchizedek (saved) or
 - Any other faith such as pantheism (lost)
 - We do know that their faith was ignorant of Abraham as we shall shortly learn in Exodus



Mount Horeb

Called the "Mountain of God"
 (Before God came to the
 mountain)

Theories of Mount Horeb

- This may have been a "holy" mount for paganism
 - Horeb - (Heat) Western side, Male: Sun god
 - Sin - (Moon) Eastern side, Female: Moon goddess
- May have been added retrospectively during Moses' writing of his earlier experiences
- Thus, God showing His power over Gnosticism

Imagery of the Burning Bush

- This presentation is man's first instruction in Holiness
 - Angel of the Lord - Technical term for Christ (usu.)
 - Christ could have talked to Moses as He had with
 - Adam
 - Abraham
 - Yet, He "appears" as a flame (purifying) that does not destroy (does not harm the bush)

Truth of the Burning Bush

- Christ will present Himself in the OT as the Holy One Who does not destroy but changes His people into holy ones (saints)
- Wherever God is, is holy because He is holy; so, He begins his lesson with Moses (by implications with all mankind)
- The command to Moses to remove his sandals was a token of unholiness that Moses would have understood

Truth of the Burning Bush

- Moses did not seek God, God sought Moses (Ex. 3:10-18)
 - Moses did not *fear* God, he hid in Jethro's faith
 - Moses forgot his people; God "remembered" His people
- God enticed Moses to see Him by presenting Himself as a fire that did not burn the bush
- Antimony in action: God's sovereignty, man's will

God Reveals Himself to Moses

- God identifies Himself as the God of
 - Abraham
 - Isaac
 - Jacob
- Moses responds with fear, beginning of wisdom (Ex. 9:10)
 - God his mother spoke of has come to him
 - His failed mission has found him hiding in the desert

The Mission Defined

- God will send Moses to Pharaoh (not the king) to bring the Hebrews out of Egypt to Canaan
 - Land is divided among several peoples, who are not united, who practice debauchery and reject the truth
 - God is the Judge, He is God so He decides the fate of peoples and nations based on His own will (Dt. 29:16, Ru- 9:19-20)
 - This is the time God has prepared Moses for

The Land Defined

- God describes Canaan as a land *dripping* with milk and honey yet He does not define this idiom
 - The Hebrew word translated as flowing means, *dripping*
 - It may refer to the milk and honey placed in Egyptian tombs as food for the afterlife journey symbolizing God bringing them to a place of "new life"
 - When Moses is successful, he will bring the Hebrews to Mount Horeb to worship (learn of God's holiness)

God Defined

- Curious question: Moses asks how he will describe God to the Hebrews so they will accept his mission
- Moses knew who the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was; would they not have known God by this also?
- Perhaps Abraham's God was not relevant to Moses' time, he (they) needed God, not of Promise but of continuing action or presence

God's Essence - Immutability

- God defines Himself by using the first person singular form of the verb - to be (Yahweh is the 3rd person since man refers to Him in the 3rd person, He is)
 - God is complete in Himself
 - God is always in the present - immutable
 - God is the source of all that is not immutable
 - Man is complete *only* in God (the mutable requires the immutable)

Yahweh Forever

- God also said to Moses, " Say this to the people of Israel, 'The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. ' This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations. (Exodus 3:15 ESVST)
- Yahweh transcends all other "names" of God

Names of God

- God's names usually define some attribute that He is exhibiting at that moment
 - These names are descriptive but not complete
 - All these other names fall short of fully describing God
- Yahweh is complete in defining God as much as we can know of Him in this life: He is source of all that is; but, we are not and never will be whole apart from Him



Christ Has More to Tell Moses

Christ's instruction to Moses, and his responses, set the pattern for the events in Exodus, the Old Testament, and even today.

Are we any different?