

Advancing The Kingdom

Exodus 3:1-14

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Would it be safe to say that those of us represented here are proud to be Americans?

Q: What is so great about being an American? What types of things come to mind?

I think near the top of our lists would be things like Freedom.

Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Being able to say ‘Merica! Guns, Bibles, and Chick-fila!

In all seriousness though, I think it is about Freedom. America the land of the FREE!

Q: But what makes that so special? Why is that so great?

It is special because of the fact that Freedom is not some ***built-in, default position.***

So easily we can take our freedom for granted – the same way we take a lot of things for granted.

LIFE: Sometimes it takes going to a funeral to really appreciate the gift of life.

FREEDOM: sadly, sometimes, it takes a wake-up call like **9/11** to appreciate the gift of freedom.

We can get so caught up in our little **freedom-bubble** that we forget there are those lurking around out there that want to burst-that-bubble.

So easily we can forget the cost that past generations paid for our freedom.

“They paved the way, in the currency of their life’s blood.”

Going back to the very origin of our nation...Don’t FORGET it was the

Tyrannical King George the 3rd from overseas, looked toward us and thought we had life too good.

So he started taxing our people, he ruled with intimidation and oppression which led to the **infamous Boston Massacre.**

This King was bent on financial, ideological, and even physical domination!

In the face of **death squads** sent by sea, the patriots stood firm in their resolve through their blood, sweat, tears and determination they rebelled against tyranny and oppression.

Embodying the cry: “Give me liberty or give me death!”

Many gave all, even unto death, in pursuit of freedom for their families and future generations.

That freedom became ratified and penned into history as our “Declaration of Independence.”

Since that time, our nation’s enemies have lurked and prowled about with a watchful eye overseas.

At times, attacking us on our own soil with a ***fanatical desire to steal, kill and destroy.***

Q: Does that sound familiar? It should because that is the Devil’s mode of operation.

Steal, kill and destroy. He wants to bring his attacks through terrorists and tyrannical rulers.

It is the same old tricks since the very beginning, dusted off and repackaged for each generation.

And each generation needs its patriots to stand firm and act when called upon.

We have seen this pattern play out in the history of our great nation.

The same pattern is found in the story of Israel’s Exodus from Egypt.

When God would use a man by the name of Moses as a true patriot for the “children of Israel.”

Moses would be the one to proclaim to Pharaoh a “Declaration of Independence”

Those famous words “LET MY PEOPLE GO!”

Let’s turn to Exodus chapter 3 where we can dive into some key passage.

While you turn there allow me to provide you will some context that puts Exodus 3 in perspective.

I imagine most of you know the backdrop to the story of Moses, but I will try to assume nothing.

But just to kind of a gauge where everybody’s biblical understanding is... quick Bible trivia.

It is a really basic question for you all and I want you to shout out the answer as it comes to mind.

Q: “How many animals of each kind did Moses take on the ark?”

Ok, I see I have my work cut out for me. LOL.

It all goes down in Egypt, the land of the Egyptians, but it wasn't just Egyptians occupying the land, they were co-existing with some strangers amongst them.

Namely, the “Children of Israel” aka the Hebrews; and things were going pretty good for the Hebrews and it had pretty much everything to do with what God was doing through one of their own.

A child of Israel by the name of Joseph.

Joseph was a huge success, a genuine *rags to riches* life story.

From slave/prisoner to prince, Joseph rose to the top of the ranks, 2nd in Command over all of Egypt.

2nd only to the very King himself, Pharaoh!

God's hand of blessing was on Joseph, he found favor in the Kings sight and the children of Israel were beneficiaries of Joseph's rise to prestige.

The Hebrew people flourished and multiplied through the land, all was so good and well.

But like many good things, it didn't last forever. Eventually Joseph grew old and died.

Then the gracious King that knew Joseph died and a new King rose to power **the Bible says:**

Exodus 1:8 “He knew not Joseph”
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And so, the children of Israel lost their *charitable King* for a new *genocidal King*. He was a racist.

He did not follow in his predecessor's footsteps; far from it.

He saw how good the children of Israel had it and he said, “no, no, no, no, Nooo!”

They have it too good, look at those Hebrews just flourishing and multiplying on my soil.

Their good times are coming to an end... **He was a Grinch!** He wanted to rain on their parade.

He decided to attempt to make life miserable for the *children of Israel*, assigning taskmasters,

back breaking work, hard physical labor, they were treated like animals.

They literally slaved away for Pharaoh and yet in spite of all the adversity they thrived and flourished.

But things went from bad-to-worse as Pharaoh had all the newborn male children thrown into the river.

It was genocide in full affect.

And then a child that would come to be known as Moses was born.

His mother couldn't bear to allow him to be thrown into the river, she hid him as long as she could.

Eventually she devised a master plan that led to the King's daughter discovering Moses amongst the reeds of the Nile and adopting him.

Moses literally went from being pulled out of the Nile reeds to royalty! He became a prince.

The first 40 years of his life, was in the palace, living the life of prestige, eating at the king's table.

Meanwhile, the children of Israel continued to be oppressed, enslaved, and beaten.

One day Moses saw an Egyptian beating a child of Israel and he basically said, enough is enough.

He had a heart for justice, and he went full vigilante taking matters into his own hands.

But he went too far, he killed the Egyptian and tried to cover it up by burying him in the sand.

A day later, Moses sees two of his countrymen fighting with one another.

He decides to intervene, ***"Boys, boys, come on why are we doing this?"***

Spshh... Who do you think you are?

And Moses said, "I am Batman" Lol.

Who made you prince and judge? What are ya gonna kill us like you did the Egyptian?

Pharaoh heard about what Moses had done and he *put a hit out* on him.

Pharaoh wanted Moses dead... So Moses went on the run, he became a fugitive.

He arrived in a dessert land called Midian.

Moses' Dessert Life (40 years)

Along the way he picked up a wife... **Moses had a heart for justice... "Well story."**

40 years into it now!

Exodus 3:1

Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

Can you just try to imagine the feeling of a wasted life, wandering around in the dry wastelands.

Transient, low-life, shepherd in a strange land, dry desert land.

Maybe you can relate, perhaps you are going through the desert.

Perhaps like Moses, you feel that your best years are behind.

Now you are just wondering, stumbling through life, going through a rough patch, a dry season at work, a dry season with your kids, your marriage, your relationship with God.

Like, God, where are you? What is going on here? Where am I?

How did I get way out here in the back of the desert?

Sometimes the desert, is exactly where we need to be before God can take us to the next stage!

There does seem to be a biblical precedent and pattern that God uses in this regard.

Moses, Elijah, John the Baptist, Paul (off in Arabia), Jesus 40 days and nights.

All these spent time in the desert, dry, wilderness wastelands, where God prepared them.

A poem for us, attributed to an anonymous source: When God wants to drill a man

When God wants to drill a man, and thrill a man, and skill a man, When God wants to mold a man, To play the noblest part; When He yearns with all His heart, To create so great and bold a man, That all the world shall be amazed, Watch his methods; watch His ways. How He ruthlessly perfects

Whom He royally elects! How He hammers him and hurts him, And with mighty blows converts him

Into trial shapes of clay Which only God understands; While man's tortured heart is crying,
And he lifts his beseeching hands! How God bends but never breaks When his good He
undertakes. How He uses whom he chooses, And with every purpose fuses him; By every act
induces him, To try His splendor out -- God knows what He's about!

Are you going through the desert lands of life? Watch His methods, watch His ways.

We read on.

Exodus 3:2-4

2 And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush *was* not consumed. 3 Then Moses said, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn."

4 So when the Lord saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!"

Look at the beginning of verse 4 again.

"When the Lord saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him."

The greater the need the greater the result.

Exodus 3:9-10

9 Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. 10 Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt."

Moses we are gonna **MAKE ISRAEL GREAT AGAIN...** You are gonna be my **frontman!**

I'm sending you, to deliver the message to Pharaoh, a Declaration of Independence, Let my People GO!

Exodus 3:11

11 But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?"

At that stage of his life, he had been on the run for 40 years, essentially he was a fugitive.

After 40 Years later of the desert and wandering, wasted life in the wastelands, Moses gets the call.

He wasn't exactly feeling so qualified.

Probably thinking God should have come to him earlier...40 years ago!

You should have seen me then God! I was a royal, I had power and prestige, I was extraordinary!

I used to be somebody, now I am a nobody... nothing special, just a common man.

The common man is exactly who God uses!

This “**Who Am I**” attitude!

It is a victim of reality, self-pity, toxic mindset that has plagued many to this very day.

So many people have their philosophy all wrong, they think you need to come from greatness

They write themselves with a “Who Am I” attitude, I could never do that...

This is a lot of people’s view on becoming a Navy SEAL, I hear it all the time.

SEAL Creed: “**Common man with uncommon desire to succeed!**”

If we are being honest, the majority of us feel ill-equipped to be used in a great way.

We all have our flawed lives, and if that is not you, everything in your life is perfect? Bravo!!!

I got bad news for you, if you read through the Old and New Testament, you don’t find God using men and woman cut from the impeccable mold. God says the opposite!

1 Samuel 16:7

For *the Lord does not see, as man sees*; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

2 Chronicles 16:9

The eyes of the Lord go to and fro throughout the whole earth to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose hearts are loyal to Him.

“Who Am I” Moses asks... Don’t worry about your résumé Moses... Just check your heart!

Moses, you have been asking yourself the wrong question for the past 40 years!

The last thing you were asked in Egypt was a challenge to your identity “Who do you think you are”.

Here you are 40 years later, still stuck on that question “Who am I” when it doesn’t matter!

It is not “Who am I” that you should be asking; **The right question is: who is your God?**

God responds

Exodus 3:12-14

12 So He said, **“I will** certainly be with you. And this *shall be* a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.”

13 Then Moses said to God, “Indeed, *when* I come to the children of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘What *is* His name?’ what shall I say to them?”

14 And God said to Moses, **“I AM WHO I AM.”** And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, **‘I AM** has sent me to you.’”

I can’t over emphasize how significant this passage is...

“I AM” has become one of the most revered names for God in Judaism.

What is your name? **“Say...I AM has sent me to you!”**

“The GREAT I AM”

That is significant because Jesus would later use this passage, this very name to ID himself.

In preparation of this message: JW’S at the Door

Just thinking about how this is the perfect passage to share with cults like JW’s cuz they deny Deity.

Exodus 3:14; John 8:58

Now I want to read from John 8:57-59

Jews: Who do you make yourself out to be? Pressing Him... Who are you?

Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and He saw it and was glad...

57 Then the Jews said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?”

58 Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.”

Critical point to make, Jesus claim was not lost on them... Just look at their reaction!

59 Then they took up stones to throw at Him...

Now I reminded the JW’s about my initial point of capital punishment.

2 Chapters Later in John 10:32-33 ESV

32 Jesus answered them, “I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?” **33** The Jews answered him, “It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you **but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God.**”

The prospective JW was astonished. The leader decided it was time to go.

Unquestionably Jesus revealed Himself as God in a body, He is the “Great I AM”.

Now catch this, that same “I AM” that commissioned Moses has commissioned YOU and me.

Moses: The commission came to liberate people from the slavery/captivity of Egypt under Pharaoh.

Today: The commission came to liberate people from the slavery/captivity of sin under Satan.

Israel in Egypt

Egypt is captivity

God is Deliverer

Moses is messenger

The ultimate suicide bombing terrorist

C.S. Lewis

...“Enemy-occupied territory, that is what this world is but, Christianity is the story of how our rightful King [that’s Jesus] has landed you, you might say in disguise and now He is calling us all to take part in His great campaign of sabotage.”

The same Great I AM commissioned you and I to deliver a message

The Great Commission

Matthew 28:18-19

18 And Jesus [The Great I AM] came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations

So what is our message that makes disciples?

You can call it a ***weaponized message***. What is that weapon?

Greg Laurie

There is no greater weapon to charge the kingdom of darkness with than the Gospel

Now I gotta ask this question: **Why on earth are we so afraid to share the Gospel?**

Why don't we do it? What is holding us back?

Look at what Cult groups like the Jehovah Witnesses are willing to do for a lie...

And yet are we willing to put forth that same type of effort for the truth?

Safe to say we aren't the only ones noticing our own blemishes in this area.

Penn Jillette: Gift of a Bible

"I've always said that I don't respect people who don't evangelize. I don't respect that at all. If you believe that there's a heaven and a hell, and people could be going to hell or not getting eternal life, and you think that it's not really worth telling them this because it would make it socially awkward ... **how much do you have to hate somebody to not evangelize? How much do you have to hate somebody to believe everlasting life is possible and not tell them that?**

"I mean, if I believed, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that a truck was coming at you, and you didn't believe that truck was bearing down on you, there is a certain point where I tackle you. And this is more important than that."

Remember that is coming from the mouth of an atheist!

He is challenging us, saying look I don't believe your message but if you do...

You should be sharing it!

Motivation to share the Gospel can come from some pretty unexpected places.

Let's briefly talk about this weapon we have... the Gospel.

In presenting the Gospel, I find it critical that you communicate it in a contagious way.

The way you share and the way you carry yourself matters!

That becomes very obvious in extreme examples... it's not just content.

Ability to control emotions and actions regardless of circumstances.

Moses did some prior training, God rehearsed with him, his coming encounter with Pharaoh.

Prior training gives us confidence in delivering the message.

Joshua 1:9 Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble

2 Timothy 2:5 Study to show thyself approved.

The very idea of discipline is rooted in the word Disciple.

Confidence comes through prior preparation and real world experience.

So what prior preparation, or as we call it in the SEAL Teams, SOP's.

Standard Operating Procedures

Your SOP's are the 4 R's and 3 assessment questions:

1. Realize 2. Recognize 3. Repent 4. Receive

You get the conversation going... Maybe Pen Gillette?

Assess

Did you hit the target or are there obstacles and barricades to belief?

3 Assessment questions to ask:

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Do you believe what I have just shared with you is true?2. Is there any sin in your life that is worth going to hell over?3. Can you give me a good reason why you shouldn't get right with God right now? |
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Leading them in a prayer is essentially the 4 R's

Assessment question #1 is where you are going to identify barriers, barricades and determine the tools and tactics to be employed.

We do this out of love for others.... "What is on the inside of you hat?

Theodore Roosevelt

CT Studd said:

<p><i>"Only one life, 'twill soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last. And when I am dying, how happy I'll be, if the lamp of my life has been burned out for Thee."</i></p>

It is not about ourselves, it is about Him!

Let's burn out not for ourselves in the end...

Let's live a life that burns out for our LORD!

Love God and Love People