



It's not all Army here!

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. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. 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. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. 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. (Ex 3:2-6)

The issue that screams out to us in this text is the imperative of reverence and truth in worship. It has become a fad in modern churches to shout out demands before the face and ears of God as if the Sovereign of the Universe is obligated to grant every irreverent prayer! Or to repeat from rote the words of the Lord's Prayer and to do so in vain. Do we not know that the place of prayer is Holy Ground. Do we not know that *"where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."* (Matt 18:20) That means the Lord of the Burning Bush is present at every God-honoring worship service. So do you go marching forth to the Lord's Table as if your feet were shod with brogans, or do you approach in the "Beauty of Holiness" all things related to God and the worship of Him in His House?

In my view, there are two major principles expressed here: 1) When God wants your attention, He will find a great means of gaining it; 2) When we are aware of God's presence either at worship, or in prayer, we will shut off our own ridiculous ramblings and hear Him in an attitude of reverence and Holiness. *"Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness. Fear before him, all the earth: the world also shall be stable, that it be not moved. 31 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let men say among the nations, The LORD reigneth."* (1 Chron 16:29-31)

There is a third principle that is a given to the believer's mind: Those who sleep in the Lord have not, nor will yet, see death! *"I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."* (Matt 22:32) He is also the God of those of your loved ones who have gone on beyond Jordan Banks. Are they dead who believed the promise? No, absolutely not!

You will note that Moses, instead of jumping up and shouting demands of God, hid his face for fear of looking upon the Lord. How greatly this contrasts with the

modern concept of worship! When God calls a man to service, He will do so in no uncertain terms. Though the man may seek to flee the face of the Lord, as did poor old Jonah, the Lord will be swift in pursuit. The first verse of Francis Thompson's poem, *The Hound of Heaven*, says it all:

The Hound of Heaven

I fled Him down the nights and down the days
I fled Him down the arches of the years
I fled Him down the labyrinthine ways
Of my own mind, and in the midst of tears
I hid from him, and under running laughter.
Up vistaed hopes I sped and shot precipitated
Adown titanic glooms of chasmed hears
From those strong feet that followed, followed after
But with unhurrying chase and unperturbed pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
They beat, and a Voice beat,
More instant than the feet:
All things betray thee who betrayest me.

Our life boat will encounter storms and blasts upon the sea of life – and perhaps a whale or two – until we are finally driven to relent and answer the call of God upon our lives.

“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; 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. 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. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.” (Ex 3:7-10)

We oftentimes forget that the watchful eye of the Lord is forever upon His people. In our wrenching heartaches, and grave tragedies of life, we are surprised, at last, to see a familiar Figure through the mist of the morning come walking upon the stormy waters of our sea. We are at first fearful of a specter, but then hear that always calming Voice: ***Fear not! It is I!***

“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?” (Ex 3:11) Moses was fearful of the command and mission the Lord has given. Do you blame him? He is now a herdsman dwelling comfortably in Midian. He has all of the comforts of life. Now God wants him to go down and make demands of the most powerful ruler of the known world! That sounds DANGEROUS, doesn't it? But not so **with** God. (note that I said **WITH** God!)

“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.” (Ex 3:12) *“There may be a prophetic allusion here to the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. As Moses received his commands here, so likewise should the Israelites receive theirs in the same place. After all, the Divine Being seems to testify a partial predilection for this mountain, for reasons that are not expressed.”* —Adam Clarke's

Commentary.

If General Orders are to be valid, they must have a signature attached. *“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?”* (Ex 3:13) Moses wants to know in whose name, and by whose authority, he is to tell the Children of Israel the message of God. We cannot be messengers of the Word if we know not the Author.

God gives His Title which is also His Name: *“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.”* (Ex 3:14) It is nearly impossible for mortal man to understand the ramifications of this Name! Our lives are graded on the scale of time, but with God, there is no time scale to encompass His Person. The Eternal NOW is our God! God is a Triune God and, therefore, Three Dimensional. Each dimension is Infinite in its direction. He therefore encompasses all that is. Our one little dimension of the present moment is a gossamer plane that is so fleeting that the moment we think of it, it is gone. But God resides in the Eternity of all that is without past or beginning.

“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.” (Ex 3:15) If you miss all else, please grasp the beauty of the last phrase: *“this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.”* This I AM is a memorial to our generation of those who know and love the Lord. **We ARE** (even in mortal death) because **He IS!** If you do not understand this, please meditate and study on it. If you still lack understanding, please ask me for clarification, for it is important to your joy and faith.

Here follows a great demand of the Lord upon Pharaoh. *“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: 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. 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.”* (Ex 3:16-18) The God of Abraham desires the Children to go a Three Days journey into the Wilderness that they may sacrifice unto the Lord their God. Only the Hebrews would know to connect this demand with that God gave Abraham in telling him to go a three days journey to Mt. Moriah and sacrifice his only beloved son, Isaac!

“And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand.” It is important to observe in this instance that the Lord may tell His servants to impart a message to the people which they may not obey, but the message is important and must be delivered nonetheless, for God’s Word is a Two-Edged Sword that cuts both ways – either to convict of sin and draw to repentance, or to condemn in sin to the fires of Hell. But the Lord has always a known secondary plan. *“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.”* The Lord knows, by His foreknowledge and Providence, when His first appeals will be ignored. So why does He make them? To

demonstrate to the unbelieving world His great Power and Sovereignty!

As the Blessed Virgin said in the Magnificat: *“He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; 55 As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.”* (Luke 1:53-55) The Lord will not turn His people out in barren places empty. *“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: 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.”* (Ex 3:19-22) These were not stolen riches, but only a partial payment on those taken from Israel while in hard bondage.

If you are still in bondage to sin such as greed, lusts, or immoral character, turn to the Great I AM, and He will not turn you away empty!