

Series: Exodus

Sermon: The Name of God

Scripture: Exodus 3-4 (NIV '84)

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“The low view of God entertained almost universally among Christians is the cause of a hundred lesser evils everywhere among us. A whole new philosophy of the Christian life has resulted from this one basic error in our religious thinking.

With our loss of the sense of majesty has come the further loss of religious awe and consciousness of the divine Presence. We have lost our spirit of worship and our ability to withdraw inwardly to meet God in adoring silence. Modern Christianity is simply not producing the kind of Christian who can appreciate or experience the life in the Spirit. The words, “Be still, and know that I am God,” mean next to nothing to the self-confident, bustling worshiper in this middle period of the twentieth century.

This loss of the concept of majesty has come just when the forces of religion are making dramatic gains and the churches are more prosperous than at any time within the past several hundred years. But the alarming thing is that our gains are mostly external and our losses wholly internal; and since it is the *quality* of our religion that is affected by internal conditions, it may be that our supposed gains are but losses spread over a wider field.

The only way to recoup our spiritual losses is to go back to the cause of them and make such corrections as the truth warrants. The decline of the knowledge of the holy has brought on our troubles. A rediscovery of the majesty of God will go a long way toward curing them.”

A.W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*

Exodus 3:1-15 NIV 84

¹ “Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

² There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up.

³ So Moses thought, “I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up.”

⁴ When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, “Moses! Moses!” And Moses said, “Here I am.”

⁵ “Do not come any closer,” God said. “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.”

⁶ Then he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

⁷ The Lord said, “I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering.

⁸ So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites.

⁹ And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them.

¹⁰ So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”

¹¹ But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

¹² And God said, “I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.”

¹³ Moses said to God, “Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what shall I tell them?”

¹⁴ God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

¹⁵ God also said to Moses, “Say to the Israelites, ‘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, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation.”

A. The Experience of Moses

B. The Name and Nature of God

(1) YHWH = (2) Yahweh = (3) LORD = (4) I AM

Jeremiah 16:19-21 NIV ‘84

O Lord, my strength and my fortress, my refuge in time of distress, to you the nations will come from the ends of the earth and say, “Our fathers possessed nothing but false gods, worthless idols that did them no good. Do men make their own gods? Yes, but they are not gods!” Therefore I will teach them—this time I will teach them my power and might. Then they will know that my name is YHWH.

C. Our Need of This

1. The Incomprehensible **Greatness** of God
2. The Gracious Redemptive **Goodness** of God

O FOUNTAIN OF ALL GOOD,

Destroy in me every lofty thought,
Break pride to pieces and scatter it to the winds,
Annihilate each clinging shred of self-righteousness,
Implant in me true lowliness of spirit,
Abase me to [true repentance],
Open in me a fount of penitential tears,
Break me, then bind me up;
Thus will my heart be a prepared dwelling for my God;
Then can the Father take up his abode in me,
Then can the blessed Jesus come with healing in his touch,
Then can the Holy Spirit descend in sanctifying grace;

In thy fellowship is fullness of joy,

Nothing exceeds thy power,
Nothing is too great for thee to do,
Nothing too good for thee to give.
Infinite is thy might, boundless thy love,
Limitless thy grace, glorious thy saving name.
Let angels sing for sinners repenting, prodigals restored,
Backsliders reclaimed, Satan's captives released,
Blind eyes opened, broken hearts bound up,
The despondent cheered,
The self-righteous stripped,
The formalist driven from a refuge of lies,
The ignorant enlightened,
And saints built up in their holy faith.

I ask great things of a great God.

"The Great God" from "The Valley of Vision"

D. How Can We Know Such a God? Jesus

Philippians 2:3-11 NIV '84

³*"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.*

⁴*Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of the others.*

⁵*Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:*

⁶*Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,*

⁷*but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.*

⁸*And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross!*

⁹*Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,*

¹⁰*that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,*

¹¹*and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."*

How Do We Respond?

Isaiah 57:15 NIV '84

For this is what the high and lofty One says—he who lives forever, whose name is holy: I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.

Isaiah 57:19B NIV '84

"Peace, peace, to those far and near," says the Lord. "And I will heal them."