

WILDERNESS TO WILDERNESS

Nathan Wicker / General

// INTRO

MEETING JESUS

Exodus 3:1 ESV

¹ Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

MOSES BACKGROUND

Moses' life is broken into three segments:

- a. 40 Years in Egypt
 - b. 40 Years in Midian
 - c. 40 Years in Wilderness
- a Hebrew/Jew born in a time when the Hebrew people were persecuted by Egypt.
 - Moses is placed in a basket and sent down the Nile river where Pharaoh's daughter draws him out of the water and adopts him as her own.
 - As Moses grows up he is distraught that the Hebrew people (his people) are being persecuted and enslaved unfairly.
 - Moses kills an Egyptian, then flees the land out of fear of Pharaoh.

MOSES AS A SHEPHERD

- Moses ends up in Midian and marries the daughter of the high priest of Midian.
- Moses is now about 80 years old and is a shepherd of his father-in-law's flock.

This is eye opening to see Moses at age 80 with no possessions of his own.

He is a lowly shepherd and a shepherd of someone else's sheep.

This man went from Prince of the great nation of Egypt to a lowly shepherd of someone else's flock.

HOREB

Moses came to the mountain of Horeb

Horeb - *desolate, to dry up, be dried, to be in ruins, lay waste.*

THE ANGEL AND THE BUSH

Exodus 3:2 ESV

² And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed.

The Angel of the Lord = Jesus

Colossians 1:15 ESV

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

Whenever we see the angel of the Lord or God in the flesh, it is Jesus!

Whoever has seen Jesus has seen the Father

[John 14:9](#) "...Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. ..."

THE BUSH

A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Greek Testament and The Hebrew Bible 5572. סִבְיָה 5572. סִבְיָה çeneh, sen-eh´; from an unused root mean. to prick; a bramble:—bush.

This is an interesting allusion to the Cross. We have the angel of the Lord, Jesus, burning yet not destroying a bramble bush. A bramble bush or a prick represents the crown of thorns that Jesus wore during his crucifixion.

This is not the first time we see the thorn bush though. When Adam was cursed for sinning, his curse involved having to work the ground and face thorns and thistles. ([Gen 3:18](#))

Where did Adam encounter the thorns and thistles? Outside of the garden, in the wilderness.

Where did Jesus redeem the garden? When he was tempted in the Wilderness.

Could there be a connection between the crown of the thorns on Jesus' head and the wilderness seasons that we go through?

As Jesus is wearing that crown of thorns, he knows that it all part of paying the redemption price for the deliverance of his people.

MOSES ENCOUNTER WITH GOD

Exodus 3:3-5 ESV

³ And Moses said, "I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned." ⁴ When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." ⁵ Then he said, "Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground."

As Moses drawn near to God, God gives him two instructions:

- i. Stop, do not come any closer
 - God is a Holy God and there will always be a separation between a perfect God and imperfect man.
- ii. Remove your sandals, the ground that you are standing on is holy ground
 - removing sandals was an appropriate act of humility or servanthood.
 - In many cultures around the world and probably many of our homes, when you enter the home you take off your shoes.
 - This was Moses accepting that he is now "in God's house"

Exodus 3:6 ESV

⁶ And he said, "I am the God of your 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 at God.

Moses is overcome with the fear of the Lord (reverence) and hides his face.

Exodus 3:7 ESV

⁷ Then the LORD said, “I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings,

OPEN DOOR FOR OFFENSE

Have you ever been in a wilderness season and you have petitioned God on the issue and it seems like He is not hearing you.

Then one day, there is breakthrough.

You have the same choices that Moses has here:

1. Moses could point out to God that he has known this for 40 years and get mad at God because He didn't move on Moses' timing; or
2. Moses can hear God out and trust that God's timing is the right timing.

Exodus 3:8–12 ESV

⁸ and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. ⁹ And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. ¹⁰ Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.” ¹¹ But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?” ¹² He said, “But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.”

God gives Moses a sign for the future, a sign that will show Him that everything that has been spoken will come to pass...

...you will come back to this place and serve me with those that you set free!

Yes, God tells Moses, you will know you made it through this assignment when you meet me again in the wilderness.

BACK TO THE WILDERNESS

So Moses goes to Egypt and incredible story cut way short; Moses ends up with roughly 2.5 million people in the wilderness.

Exodus 19:1 ESV

¹ On the third new moon after the people of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that day they came into the wilderness of Sinai.

So they take three months to get out of Egypt and to Sinai.

Exodus 19:2-4 ESV

² They set out from Rephidim and came into the wilderness of Sinai, and they encamped in the wilderness. There Israel encamped before the mountain, ³ while Moses went up to God. The LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: ⁴ ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself.

“...brought you to myself.”

The intention of God is always to reconcile his children to himself.

He is a jealous God, He wants all of you!

Exodus 19:5-6 ESV

⁵ Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; ⁶ and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.”

The Father calls his children unto himself and says that they will be his treasured possession among all the peoples, because the earth is the Lord’s!

Furthermore, he commissions his children to be a **Kingdom of Priests** and a **Holy Nation**.

1 Peter 2:9 ESV

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

CONSECRATION IN THE WILDERNESS

The Lord calls for Consecration in the wilderness.

- The People agree to do all that the Lord speaks
- Cleanse Yourself:
 1. Wash your clothes
 2. Prepare for Three Days
 3. Boundaries are set; the penalty for breaking those boundaries is death

Consecration - *removed from common use, set apart, to be made ceremonially or morally clean*

It is out of **consecration** that God speaks...

THE WORD OF THE LORD IN THE WILDERNESS

When God speaks to you in the wilderness, it is a deep word.

It is the kind of word that **pivots** your life, **shakes** you to your core, and **realigns** you with his word.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

God opens his mouth and makes ten statements (commandments) to his children.

These statements are to be the guiding principles that will lead to a whole and healthy relationship with God and with man.

When Jesus asked which of the 613 laws were the most important, he stated two of them:

- Love the lord your God with your heart, mind, soul, strength
- Love others as you love yourself

TWO TABLETS

The original 10 were written on two tablets, which naturally divide them into two categories.

I was listening to a teaching on the ten commandments recently and he made a joking question, couldn't God have just written smaller, did he really need two tablets?

Yes he could've fit everything in one tablet, but he intentionally made them on two tablets.

- i. The first five are our relation to God
- ii. The last five are our relation to Men

That said, I cannot do the last five, if I don't have the first five down.

I have to Love God first, foremost, and utmost!

I AM THE LORD

But all of the commandments can be summed up in the first statement that God makes to his people...

“I am the Lord your God...”

More than anything that I want to hear in the wilderness season, I want to know one thing...that “I am the Lord your God...” is with me.

When Moses first encountered the Lord in the burning bush, he asks about God's name...

Exodus 3:13–14 ESV

¹³ Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” ¹⁴ God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’ ”

God is saying to his children, saying to us, saying to you in the wilderness...**I am all that you need.**

What we are talking about here is, **Faith.**

Having the ability to believe for something even when it seems impossible.

If I AM is with you, you have everything you need.

Romans 8:31 ESV

³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

CLOSING

Psalm 40:1-3 ESV

¹ I waited patiently for the LORD; he inclined to me and heard my cry. ² He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure. ³ He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the LORD.

Psalm 27:13-14 ESV

¹³ I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living! ¹⁴ Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!

Psalm 130:5-6 ESV

⁵ I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; ⁶ my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning, more than watchmen for the morning.

Psalm 37:3-7 ESV

³ Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness. ⁴ Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. ⁵ Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act. ⁶ He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday. ⁷ Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil devices!

Psalm 81:6-7 ESV

⁶ “I relieved your shoulder of the burden; your hands were freed from the basket. ⁷ In distress you called, and I delivered you; I answered you in the secret place of thunder; I tested you at the waters of Meribah. *Selah*

In our wilderness season is the time to draw closer than ever to the Lord.

James 4:8 ESV

⁸ Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Lamentations 3:55–57 ESV

⁵⁵ “I called on your name, O LORD, from the depths of the pit; ⁵⁶ you heard my plea, ‘Do not close your ear to my cry for help!’ ⁵⁷ You came near when I called on you; you said, ‘Do not fear!’

Zechariah 1:3 ESV

³ Therefore say to them, Thus declares the LORD of hosts: Return to me, says the LORD of hosts, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts.

The Wilderness is not a place of abandonment but a place of atonement and reconciliation with our Father.