

# ▶ God Speaks to His People

**IN FOCUS:** *God loves us enough to speak to us.*

When have you felt like God was trying to get your attention?

## LOOK AT OUR WORLD

All kinds of things happen in our world—some we attribute to nature, others we call “acts of God.” How we interpret things depends on the lens through which we view them. One of the most consistent physical realities we encounter is gravity. We don’t argue with gravity or try to ignore it. We adjust our lives to it. Just as we must acknowledge and respond to physical realities like gravity, we must also recognize that spiritual realities are even more foundational. One of the most essential spiritual realities is this: God speaks.

## LEARN GOD’S WAY

**IN FOCUS: God loves us enough to \_\_\_\_\_ to us.**

Exodus 3 introduces the divine commissioning of Moses and reveals profound theological truths. Set in the wilderness of Midian, where Moses is tending the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the chapter opens with the dramatic appearance of God in a burning bush. From within the bush, God spoke to Moses, initiating a conversation that would shape the course of Israel’s history.

**Exodus 3:1-6** <sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, Moses was shepherding the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian. He led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. <sup>2</sup> Then the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire within a bush. As Moses looked, he saw that the bush was on fire but was not consumed. <sup>3</sup> So Moses thought, “I must go over and look at this remarkable sight. Why isn’t the bush burning up?” <sup>4</sup> When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called out to him from the bush, “Moses, Moses!” “Here I am,” he answered. <sup>5</sup> “Do not come closer,” he said. “Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.” <sup>6</sup> Then he continued, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” Moses hid his face because he was afraid to look at God.

**1) God \_\_\_\_\_ the conversation with us.**

Do you believe that God loves you enough to interrupt the routines of your life, arrest your attention, and reorient you to His activity, will, and ways? The story of Moses proves that He absolutely does. God caught Moses’s attention. God called Moses by name. God spoke to him in the middle of his work and routine. It can be tempting to get drawn into arguments about the nature of the burning bush in this passage. But to do so would be to miss the true revelation of God in these verses: God communicated with Moses personally and in a way Moses could understand.

**Exodus 3:11-15** <sup>11</sup> But Moses asked God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and that I should bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” <sup>12</sup> He answered, “I will certainly be with you, and this will be the sign to you that I am the one who sent you: when you bring the people out of Egypt, you will all worship God at this mountain.” <sup>13</sup> Then Moses asked God, “If I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what should I tell them?” <sup>14</sup> God replied to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you.” <sup>15</sup> God also said to Moses, “Say this to the Israelites: The LORD, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is my name forever; this is how I am to be remembered in every generation.

## 2) We must \_\_\_\_\_ God’s voice.

Whether Moses was aware of it or not, God had been working all around him. This created a crisis for Moses: Would he believe God or not? The proof of his spiritual response would be revealed by what he did next. He demonstrated remarkable candor in his question, “Who am I?” (v. 11). This isn’t a philosophical question; it’s a confession of disbelief. This kind of self-doubt can be beneficial and healthy as long as it drives us toward trusting God.

**Exodus 4:28-31** <sup>28</sup> Moses told Aaron everything the LORD had sent him to say, and about all the signs he had commanded him to do. <sup>29</sup> Then Moses and Aaron went and assembled all the elders of the Israelites. <sup>30</sup> Aaron repeated everything the LORD had said to Moses and performed the signs before the people. <sup>31</sup> The people believed, and when they heard that the LORD had paid attention to them and that he had seen their misery, they knelt low and worshiped.

## 3) We must \_\_\_\_\_ to what God says to us.

Moses’s response to God is instructive for us. First, God confronted obstacles to his faith. What were the obstacles? Doubt and limited perspective. Despite all God had revealed to Moses, he seemed to fear that others wouldn’t believe him when he spoke about what he now knew to be true about God and what God was doing (4:1). Moses wasn’t lacking in information. He wasn’t lacking in knowledge. What he needed was to take God at His word and act.

## ENGAGE

What would it look like to approach everyday moments with the reverence Moses showed? Journal your thoughts below.

# Live

## LIVE IT OUT

When God speaks, nothing is more urgent than our response. That response shapes how we relate to God, ourselves, and others. Choose one or more of the following actions you will take in response to today's study.

- **VIEW OF GOD:** Reflect on a time when you sensed God speaking. Consider what that moment revealed to you about His character, purposes, or presence. Journal what you learned about God.
- **VIEW OF SELF:** Trace a sequence of choices you made in response to God. How did your choices shape you? What do they reveal about how you see yourself?
- **VIEW OF OTHERS:** Meet with a friend who is willing to share how God worked in his or her life. What does that person's story reveal about how God works?

## TALK IT OUT

**Want to go a step further? Gather with two or three Christ-followers. Read Exodus 3:1-6,11-15, and 4:28-31, then use the following summary and questions for a deeper discussion.**

The Bible is filled with examples of God speaking—sometimes in thunder, sometimes in a whisper—but always with clarity and purpose. When God speaks, it's not just to inform us; it's to invite us into His work. And His voice demands a response. Many people miss this because they interpret life only through what they can see or touch.

We need a shift in our perspective—a move from a purely physical understanding of the world to a spiritual one. When we align our view with God's truth, we see His voice isn't distant or rare. It's present, active, and personal.

- ❓ **How can we become more aware of "holy ground" moments in our everyday lives?**
- ❓ **When have you felt unqualified for something you sensed God calling you to do?**
- ❓ **What role does obedience play in experiencing God's power?**

► **DAY 1: God initiates a relationship with us.**

**Read Exodus 3:1-6.**

The fact that God initiates a relationship with people and calls them by name is surely one of the most reassuring realities of biblical revelation. God called Moses by name. He calls us by name too. God communicates personally with us. If we somehow forget this, our Christian faith can degenerate into impersonal, performative, and hollow religion.

The result is a life without the warmth of relationship; we start to rely on impersonal rules and repetitive rituals to persuade ourselves that God is pleased. But we don't convince God to condescend to us—He draws us into a relationship with Himself. We're transformed from people who filter our understanding of God through our experiences into people who interpret our experiences through the lens of God's holy and loving character.

When Moses became aware of Who he was encountering, he simultaneously became mindful of the holiness of God—the awe-inspiring “angel of the LORD” (v. 2). He also became aware of his own frailty. His cry, “Here I am” (v. 4), is a declaration of complete exposure before God. Maybe for the first time in his life, Moses was utterly aware of his disorientation to God and His ways—and he was powerless to do anything about it!

Nothing in Moses's life would ever be the same. His eyes were opened; his heart had been made alive. We can have confidence that God will act toward us with the same intentionality.

- ❓ **Consider Moses's burning bush encounter. How would you describe that moment to someone else? What questions or emotions would you include? Journal your thoughts in the margin.**
- 🕉️ **Meditate on and memorize Exodus 3:12 this week as a reminder of God's presence in your life.**

**MEMORIZE**

“I will certainly be with you, and this will be the sign to you that I am the one who sent you: when you bring the people out of Egypt, you will all worship God at this mountain.”

**EXODUS 3:12**

▶ **DAY 2: God reveals Himself to us.**

**Read Exodus 3:1-6.**

In an instant, an encounter with God strips away our human pride. In the best possible sense, we're completely vulnerable before the glorious, awe-inspiring, loving God who speaks to us. Before Moses could focus on the message from God, he had to remember Who was speaking to him. In that moment, God transformed the very ground on which Moses stood into a sanctuary for worship. When God speaks, it's always a holy moment that requires an immediate response.

In my early twenties, I came into a season of life during which I was plagued by anxiety. I faced a series of decisions that required major adjustments and led to significant life changes. My anxiety was rooted in a fear that I would somehow miss God's direction and end up marooned—far from His best for me—miserable and racked with regret.

In the midst of my excruciating crisis of belief, I was gripped by Isaiah 30:21: "Whenever you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear this command behind you: 'This is the way. Walk in it.'" Immediately, I grasped that divine promise like a life raft. My faith became buoyant again. I was anchored, no longer tossed about by waves of doubt. The course for my life was set. That promise has remained a life verse for me and has kept me securely and confidently focused on God through the subsequent decades of my life.

God initiated the experience. It was God who came seeking Moses. This is always the way it is. We don't somehow discover God; in love, He reveals Himself to us. And that experience is very real and very personal. Nothing in our lives will be the same afterward.

- 🕒 **Go for a walk or sit quietly in a peaceful place. As you do, ask God to make you more aware of His presence.**

**"Whenever you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear this command behind you: 'This is the way. Walk in it.'"**

**ISAIAH 30:21**

► **DAY 3: God invites us into the deep end.**

**Read Exodus 3:11-15.**

It may be fine to doubt our own abilities, but it's never appropriate to doubt God. Our focus should be on His character, presence, and activity. We're not paralyzed by the realization that we're inadequate and frail; we're made bold and courageous by God's revelation of His absolute adequacy and unstoppable movement. Lack of self-reliance is good. Lack of faith is sin.

My father had an interesting way of teaching us to swim. His first lessons involved holding me to his chest as he waded into a pool to chest level. I laughed and frolicked in his arms while I learned to enjoy the water. Soon, he would transition to the "deep end." Once there, a depth of ten feet might as well have been fathoms. He invited me to wrap my arms around his neck and lie against his back as we swam across the pool. At the end of each lap, I was encouraged by his words, "You did it! You swam across the deep end!" And in an important sense, I did.

There's something spiritually instructive in that experience. When God speaks to us and invites us to join Him in His activity, He's inviting us to join Him in the "deep end." He makes clear to us what adjustments are necessary in order to stay on His agenda. Then, He enables us to make spiritual progress as we obey and He provides.

Like Moses, we prefer to have proof on the front end of our obedience to God. But very often, it's over time that we realize the truthfulness of what God has said. What we always have in the present is God's name. He promises us His character and presence and then tells us to keep our eyes open for what will unfold in the world around us—and to connect what He does next with the promises He has made.

**?** **How might God's response to Moses speak to your doubts or insecurities when you feel overwhelmed by what you're asked to do?**

**DAY 4: God's name is an assurance of His presence.**

**Read Exodus 3:11-15.**

Moses was keenly aware that his assignment from God couldn't be accomplished in human strength or with human wisdom. God bolstered Moses's faith with the promise of a sign and through the proclamation of His name.

The sign of God wouldn't be immediately apparent. It would only be realized with the passage of time. History would bear witness to this sign. It's often true that the most compelling and enduring proof of the reality of God and His work isn't so much the immediate evidence of His presence as it is the obvious display of His work as it unfolds over months, years, decades, and centuries.

We live our lives based on the promises of God, not on the explanations we crave from Him. The sign would follow faith; it wouldn't prompt it. Moses wanted to know that he would be able to tackle his assignment before he started, but God told him he couldn't know until he was finished. As we live by faith, we become aware of God's activity around us. The sign is the reward for faith; it's not the cause of it.

The name of God in verse 14 might best be conveyed as, "I will be what I will be." In contrast to Moses being tempted to wonder how God could be relied on to keep His promises, God's name is a definitive statement. The name of God is an assurance of divine presence and consistency. It's an absolute promise that God is the same at all times and in all places. He is predictably present and active. The name of God calls for a response of faith.

- 🕒 **Where do you need to remember that God is present, powerful, and unchanging? Write a prayer in the margin, using the name "I AM" to reflect on God's presence in your life.**



*REMEMBER*



## DAY 5: God speaks to call people to Himself.

Read Exodus 4:28-31.

We live in a culture that's addicted to the accumulation of knowledge. We have access to more information today than any other human beings at any other time in history. But as we feast on morsels of knowledge from the internet, social media, and printed media, it's not at all clear that we're being positively affected by it. We gorge ourselves on knowledge, but we're woefully malnourished when it comes to the wise application of all we know. This is a spiritually destructive way to live. God doesn't speak to us so we can accumulate knowledge. He speaks to reveal Himself to us and to invite us to join Him in His activity all around us.

Like Moses, we obsess about "what ifs." Thousands of "what ifs" feed our doubts. We treat an imaginary future as if it were a settled fact. God told Moses not to do that. He assured Moses that the people would believe him. Why not assume that what God says is what God will do? Success is rooted in the activity of God, not in our ability to comprehend *how* He will accomplish the task.

God was on the move, so Moses got on the move. And once he was on God's agenda, he moved other people onto God's agenda with him. The people were afraid that God had forgotten them. They were discouraged. Moses and Aaron contradicted that flawed perception. Often, God will confront our inadequate or incorrect perspectives with a clear and compelling picture of the way things really are. Far from being forgotten, the people were assured that God knew and cared about their suffering, and He was already doing something about it.

"The people believed" (v. 31). They worshiped God. They were filled with joy from the good news Moses preached to them. Has God spoken to you? You can be sure that He intends for you to act on what He has said. Obedience to God is the doorway for you to experience everything He intends for your life.

- 🕒 **Have coffee with a Christian mentor and ask him or her about key moments in life when God was clearly at work and how those experiences strengthened faith.**