

Listen When GOD Speaks
Exodus 2:23-3:6

It is good to be with you this week, thanks for joining us on our journey through Exodus. Exodus is the 2nd book in the Bible, and it follows the children of Israel for most of the book. Since it is God's Word there is truth for us on every page. Each part of the Bible is relevant, lets listen to the Spirit and see what God has for us from Exodus today.

Psalm 19 tells us the Heavens declare the glory of God, verse 3 says there is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. God's creation is constantly telling everyone of God's greatness. Some people hear it and worship Him; others go on with life as usual. They miss God's voice.

Our title for today's lesson is *Listen When God Speaks*. Moses clearly heard God speaking to Him. What has our attention? What are we listening to? Let's go with Pastor J Mark as he teaches us from Exodus 2 and 3.

This world would be an entirely different place if everybody would listen to God when He speaks. It would be wonderful if everybody were concerned enough to turn pay attention to what God is doing when He appears to men. But so many are pressing on and pursuing the worthless things of earth. They don't have time to stop and listen when God speaks.

Have you ever wished you could hear God, that He would speak audibly to you? Well, He doesn't do that very often today, perhaps once in a while. But His Word is His voice to us now. In this message we will meet this challenge: LISTEN WHEN GOD SPEAKS. The Bible portion for this exposition is **Exodus 2:23-25 and 3:1-6**.

23. And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage.

24. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.

25. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them.

3:1. Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.

2. 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.

3. *And Moses said, "I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.*
4. *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.*
5. *And he said, draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.*
6. *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.*

This is a beautiful Scripture portion because here we can see the WAYS God used to speak to Moses. In the same ways we also may hear God speak.

I. God Showed Mercy

The children of Israel cried to God in their bondage and their cry came up to God. They were under extreme bondage in the land of Egypt. God heard their groanings.

Something more God did: He remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. That's a beautiful thought because, you see, it had been 400 years earlier that God had made this covenant. God looked upon the conditions of the children of Israel. He knew exactly what they were undergoing. And He also knew His plans for them.

You see, this time of hardship they were experiencing was really an act of God's mercy too. I'm sure they didn't see it that way. But God knew how difficult it was going to be for the children of Israel when they left Egypt and travelled through the desert to the Promised Land. So, He mercifully put them through a rigorous physical training plan to prepare them for that journey! Otherwise, they wouldn't have been able to endure those hardships along the way.

I'm so glad we have these verses in the Bible because they assure me that God is mindful of your needs and mine. Maybe you are going through some trial of affliction. Maybe you are crying out to God. If you are, God hears you and He is remembering His mercy toward you. He understands all of your needs just like He understood their needs so many years ago. God will show mercy to you if you cry out to Him in your need. Like the Hebrew slaves, you might need to go through some hard training, but God's mercy is there to sustain you.

II. God Used a Method

God had a way, a method, to get Moses to listen to what He had to say. See how the Lord met Moses right where he was--that's the location. He was on the west side of the desert and near the mount of God which is called Horeb. In the normal processes of life, the life of a shepherd, Moses was taking care of the flock of sheep that his father-in-law Jethro had. God met him right there, you might say, at the crossroads of everyday living.

That's a very important truth to keep in mind. Some people think that you have to make a pilgrimage to this place or that place where some great prophet may have lived. Or maybe they think you need to bathe in some holy river. But no, God met Moses right where he lived in the normal, everyday experiences of life. God still uses that method of meeting people today.

He used a certain method to attract Moses' attention. He appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the middle of a bush. There is a bush that grows in the Sinai Desert. It has flame-like seed pods which get red and gold as they dry, which the natives have called "the burning bush." But according to the Bible record here, that would not have been what Moses saw. God came to him in a flame of fire in the midst of that bush and the bush was not burnt. In our minds it might seem like a strange way to come to Moses. But God used that method to get Moses' attention. And it worked! Yes, it worked because the Bible tells us that Moses said he would turn aside and examine this unusual sight.

So, he turned aside to see what was going on; God had his attention. Moses' curiosity was aroused, and he turned side to see what was going on. He made an examination of what was happening. God used a common method of coming to Moses in the location where he was. By an uncommon method He caught his attention so that Moses made the examination.

God can come to you in a similar way. He wants to meet you right where you are. It may not be quite so spectacular as a bush burning, yet not being consumed, but it will be just as real. Perhaps all God wants you to do is just look around you and see what is going on in ordinary experiences of life. Be assured, He has a method to gain your attention.

III. God Showed Himself

When Moses turned aside to see what was happening to this bush that was burning, but not burning up, God called him. God called him by name, twice, "Moses, Moses." Believe me, God knows your name. Yes, He knows you personally. That surprised Moses when God called him by name and he responded in Hebrew, "*Hineni!* Here I am."

Moses' response is a good example for us. The first thing we must do when God speaks is to say, "Here I am, I'm listening." Remember, that's what the boy, Samuel, did in First Samuel chapter three. You

can read it for yourself. After he awakened Eli the prophet a couple of times, Eli realized that the Lord was calling Samuel. So, he told him, when God calls again, you say, “speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.” When Samuel responded that way, God had a special message for him. I urge you to listen carefully and give God your full attention when He speaks.

Then the Lord cautioned Moses how to respond because he was on holy ground. God said, “Don’t come any closer. Take your shoes off because the ground that you are on is holy ground.” There is a certain respect and reverence which we must show towards God if we are going to hear Him. If He reveals Himself to us then we must exercise a certain caution and reverence for Him, for God, for His person. We cannot take His Name in vain. We cannot be casual or rude in our approach to Him, but we must be cautious and reverent.

God then explained to Moses that He was the same God He had always been, the God of his father. He said, “I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” Now Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had lived some 400 years before Moses, but God identified Himself and said, “I am the same God.” His continuity was assured.

Some teachers of the Bible think that Moses just had a daydream. He just thought he saw this. He didn’t know what was going on until God said, “I am the God of your father the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” Then Moses hid his face for he was afraid to look upon God.

I can’t tell you how God may show Himself to you. I know how He has spoken to me from the Bible, from circumstances in life, and through other people. I can’t tell you exactly how He is going to show Himself to you, but I know He will, if you will simply take time to stop and listen. He wants you to hear what He has to say to you, and you can hear Him in His Word.

By these ways God spoke to Moses: by showing him mercy to those Moses cared about, by using a method that Moses couldn’t ignore, the burning bush, and by showing Himself personally to Moses in the flame of fire.

Like Moses, we too need to listen when God speaks to us. Today, He speaks primarily to us by His Holy Spirit through the Word, the Holy Scriptures. If we want to experience God’s blessing on our lives and to fulfil His plans for us, we must listen when God speaks.

Thanks, J Mark, for this teaching from Exodus and thank you for joining us. It is a privilege to study God’s Word and grow in our understanding together. Now let’s take what we’ve heard and allow it to affect our lives. As James tells us, we are to be “doers of the word and not hearers only.” If we just hear

the Word, it's like seeing ourselves in a mirror, then going away, and forgetting what we just saw. Don't let that happen, allow Gods Word to change you from the inside out.

We bless you as you walk with Jesus and put His teaching into practice. If you have any questions or if you would like today's teaching, please contact us, and ask for it by title or passage. We also have a study guide available designed to help you learn more from each of these lessons in Exodus. It is called the Hope Herald and if you would like one, we would be happy to send one to you.

Here are a few ways you can reach us. The quickest and easiest way is through email. Our email is mail@heraldsofhope.org. If you don't have email, you could send us a letter, send it to Hope for Today, Box 3, Breezewood, Pennsylvania 15533. Another way you can contact us is through our website. Our website is heraldsofhope.org. While you are there, please look on our website for this teaching and other similar teaching. There you will also find other resources available from Heralds of Hope. Again, the website is www.heraldsofhope.org.

We thank you again for joining us for today's program. I encourage you to join us again next week as we continue our journey through Exodus. We look forward to being with you then and will leave you with this thought from II Thessalonians 3:16, "Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way. The Lord be with you all."