

# Journey to Freedom

## PART 6 - ENCOUNTERING GOD



Welcome to Part 5 of our *Journey to Freedom* study series of the Book of Exodus in the Old Testament!

Exodus is a book about God revealing Himself to humans; making Himself known, making His desires and priorities and plans known, making enough about Him known so that people can approach God and experience interaction and a relationship with Him. This week we're going to look at the first direct interaction between God and Moses and we can learn some fascinating things about how we go about seeking God, about where we stand in relation to God and how we can expect to 'find' God.



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



***Where was Moses when he came across the burning bush?***

***What things can you describe about this location by reading this passage?***

***(was it close to home, was it at work, was it isolated etc?)***

***Do you think the location is significant? Why, why not?***

The first thing that we can notice in this passage is that God revealed Himself through something seemingly INSIGNIFICANT. A burning bush is not an unusual sight in the wilderness; it's hot and dry and things burn. God revealed Himself in the ordinary, the everyday, in the uncomplicated and natural world of Moses.

The second point is that initially we read that the "Angel of the Lord" appeared in the bush and it wasn't until Moses went over that God spoke to him and revealed Himself to Moses. God responded when Moses was INQUISITIVE.

The final aspect of this study is that when God introduced Himself He was INTIMATE. God revealed Himself as the God of Moses' father. He set the boundaries and maintained His holiness but God demonstrated a desire to have an INTIMATE relationship with Moses.

### **INSIGNIFICANT**

Moses grew up in Egypt with all its amazing temples to the various Egyptian gods and all the priests and rituals and sacrifices and worship and ceremonies and wealth and splendour and here he ends up, more than forty years later, on the far side of the desert away from his adopted home and family, hanging out with a bunch of sheep and he finds God in a plain old, boring burning bush.



***Do you think it is significant that God chose something insignificant to reveal Himself by?***



***Can you think of other examples in the Bible of God speaking through or using ordinary, insignificant things and people to reveal Himself or to do amazing things through?***

#### **NIV 1 CORINTHIANS 1:27**

*But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise;  
God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.*

God chooses the INSIGNIFICANT things of the world to speak to those who are INQUISITIVE.

## **INQUISITIVE**



***Read: Exodus 3:4***



***When did God speak to Moses?***

Initially it was the Angel of the Lord who appeared in the burning bush. The meaning of this phrase is quite probably that the Angel appeared in the form of flames in the bush. God revealed a hint of something different, something special in the burning bush, but nothing over-the-top. And when Moses took an interest, when Moses was inquisitive, then God revealed Himself.

### **NIV PSALM 14:2**

*The LORD looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any  
who understand, any who seek God.*



***What does being inquisitive reveal about the heart of a person?  
Is it someone who is seeking more or someone who is content with the status quo?***

Moses had to be observant of his surroundings, aware of his environment. He must have actually spent some time observing the burning bush before realising that it wasn't going to burn out.

When we're talking about the insignificant or ordinary and everyday things in life, this is a hint to us to look closer. There may be 'burning bushes' all around us but either they don't seem special enough to grab our attention or perhaps we don't spend the time actually observing our environment long enough to notice that what seems to be rather ordinary has an air of wonder about it.

A 'burning bush' in this context could be described as a "God intersection", a "God moment" - a 'chance' conversation which opens an opportunity for us, a person or situation that catches our eye and opens doors for us to make God known in that environment or circumstance. Being prepared to seek God and to expecting to find Him and hear from Him in all and any situation often leads to a burning bush that is far more interesting than it first appeared.

## **INTIMATE**



***Read: Exodus 3:5-6***



***How does God introduce Himself to Moses?  
What sense do you get from the 'tone' of the passage? (scary, warm etc?)***

This passage illustrates a beautiful concept of our God who is holy and by nature unapproachable and to be revered, but who also desires to be INTIMATE with us. "Hey Moses, I know your old man" is, in this sense, what God is conveying to Moses. There's a familiarity and security, even though, seemingly paradoxically, there exists this holiness and need to have the utmost respect and reverence of God.



***What comfort can we draw from the fact that God let Moses know how to act? (Ex 3:5)  
From this passage, do you think God wants to be 'distant', or 'close' to us?  
How do we develop intimacy with our friends?  
How can we develop intimacy with God?***

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Ph: (09) 235 7341 Mob: (021) 187 1928 Email: waiukuag@wag.org.nz Web: www.wag.org.nz  
PO Box 196, Waiuku 2341, NZ