

"Seeing the Invisible"

Exodus 3:1-6

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by C.W. Powell

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. (Ex 3:1-5 AV)

There are several things this morning about this very famous text from Exodus.

I. The details are easy enough.

A. Moses was now some eighty years of age. In some ways he was in the prime of life. Men lived longer in those days, although God greatly decreased the span of man's life after the flood. His father, Terah, had lived 205 days, and Abraham's Grandfather, Nahor, lived 148 years. The great life-spans that were usually before the flood would be in the pass away, although Abraham lived 165 years. Romans says that Abraham's body was dead and Sarah was too old to have babies at the time of Isaac, so that Isaac was a miracle baby. But God renewed their strength to do the work given them to do and both lived many years after Isaac was born. But by the day of Moses the lifespan was being shortened for men and ages past 100 were becoming the exception rather than the rule.

B. Abraham had worked for Jethro, his father in law, for about 40 years, tending the sheep. Sinai was a particular peak on a range of mountains, called Horeb. There may be evidence that it had been considered a holy range of mountains by the Egyptians from great antiquity, but I suppose that most mountains were worshipped by somebody at some time.

C. The burning bush. Great speculation as to why a bush that burned with fire. I think two things are important:

1. Angels.

a) Angels are made flames of fire. They are pure spirits and could not be seen with the natural eyes, unless God revealed them.

b) I believe that Angels were created in Genesis 1, when God made the heavens. He gave details of the generations of the earth but left us nothing concerning the heavens.

c) Angels are messengers of the Lord of Hosts, and make up principalities, powers, rulers in heavenly places, doing the will of God with great energy and power.

d) A few times in history, for His special purposes, God has peeled back the veil and has enabled certain men to see such things. Ezekiel, Isaiah, Peter, James, John, Paul, John in Revelation.

2. The bush: the fire of God only burns what God intends to burn. Does the bush represent Israel and the church? Perhaps. But it was a real bush, an ordinary bush, until made special by God. The word indicates that it was one of the species of acacia that grows everywhere in that region.

D. When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God spake to him. You can only see Angels and spiritual things if the eyes of your soul have been opened. Two things God said to Moses:

1. Put off your shoes. This is holy ground. Not in itself, but because God is revealed here.

2. I AM the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. Jesus quoted this text to show that He is the living God and there must be a resurrection of the dead, for they live yet in Him.

II. Observations concerning these things.

A. Jesus the Lord is head over all the angels who are messengers. He is the Angel of the Covenant, the Angel of the Lord, and claims the attributes of God for Himself, as the Son of God.

B. He is the Lord over all the messengers of the Lord, for He is mediator, the Son of God from eternity. When sin destroyed the unity between God and man, it was necessary for the Mediator to take on flesh and blood so that He could redeem them from all iniquity. C. There has never been any access to God anywhere, any time, but through the Lord Jesus Christ.

D. This was a test to Moses to further prepare him [Moses] for the great work that he must do. He must be able to see the invisible. See Hebrews 11:27

E. Imagination is the sight of the soul: God sees things before they are; we must be able to see in a creaturely way, things which are not.

F. God cannot be confined to times and places:

1. This is clear, for He is omnipresent, eternal in time and place, so that He does not move in and out of time, or leave this spot to show up over there.

2. The Bible speaks in this way to show that God manifests Himself, reveals Himself.

3. In Him we live and move and have our being, but we are blind to His presence and His power. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." God is invisible in time and space, cannot be identified with any thing or any space, but is present in every time and every space.

4. We are commanded to be holy, for God is holy. This is the special meaning of the 4th Commandment, to remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. We are to devote ourselves to God in the communion with God's people, fellowship with the saints, hearing the word of God, and corporate worship for the glory of God and a witness to all people. Those who are diligent about such things will grow in grace and in the knowledge of God.

5. But the bush did not burn perpetually; it was not burning before, nor is it burning today. This was a special event, for Moses and for the slaves in Egypt.

6. Such places and times are not for all people for all times; but are kept in memory because of the great things that God has done. But God will do other things in other times and other places for other people.

G. God takes ordinary things and makes them powerful in His hands.

1. Moses was a shepherd, excellent preparation for His future work.

2. Parable of the Mammon: Luke 16:1

a) Don't say, "what I do is not important."

b) Be faithful in small things, and God will give you greater things.

Amen and Amen
God bless you.