

**Getting to Know the Great I Am**  
The Great I AM and the Logos: Series Introduction  
Exodus 3:1-14 and Preview of the Gospel of John

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness does not comprehend it. Yet to as many as who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God – children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision, but born of God. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

One of the more humorous things in life is to have someone come up to you and begin a conversation with you like they known you for the last 30 years. In general terms, they ask about the family, the job, the weather, sports, and/or politics. But somewhere in the course of the conversation, it occurs to you that this cat doesn't even know your name. That's why he calls you "bud." If he doesn't call you bud, he calls you by the wrong name. You may know him by name. But he doesn't know yours, even though he acts like it in the course of a 15 min conversation.

I've been troubled in my spirit about something for a while. It's about what I see developing in the church among the people of God. We mass market what makes our particular ecclesiastical fiefdom stand out from the rest. We spend considerable time and money marketing, much like secular companies, our ministries, music, fellowship, and even our preaching in order to make them stand out from the rest. Consequently, somewhere along the way in that course of that self-promotion, the church's main objective to equip the saints to personally encounter the Great I Am. And then, we have the audacity to implore those who sit in our pews to have intimate spiritual fellowship with the I Am of the Bible that we barely even know ourselves because we are too busy trying to market ourselves to others.

You cannot have a relationship with someone you think you know better than you really do. You cannot experience the goodness of the Great I Am who knows your name as well as you should without becoming familiar with His Name. There is a book in the NT that says: In the beginning was the Word. It says: before Abraham was, I am. It says: I am the bread of life. It says: I am the light of the world. It says: I am the gate. It says: I am the door. It says: I am the good shepherd. It says: I am the resurrection and the life. It says: I am the way, the truth, and the life. It says: I am the true vine. It is the Gospel of John. His sole purpose for writing is so that you will get to know the Great I Am and the Word Made Incarnate. He has a name: Jesus, the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

But getting to know the Great I Am according to John requires that we that we get to know the Great I Am according to Moses. Because that's who the Great I Am first made himself known to in the Book of Exodus. My question to you today is very simple: How to you get to know the Great I Am who knows your name? You are going to see today from Exodus 3:1-14 that getting to know the Great I AM has a divine beginning. It's a burning bush experience. Getting to know the Great I Am has a Divine Intention. Finally, getting to know the Great I AM has a divine purpose. . God gave Moses His name so Moses could evoke and plead the name in the midst of the challenging objectives that God had for Moses to do. We don't discover God. He reveals himself to us. When he does, there is an intention and purpose in it. Exodus 3:1-14 and John's Gospel are in our Bibles so that we can know the Great I Am a little better each time we read them. May we start today.

*Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. <sup>2</sup> There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. <sup>3</sup> So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up." <sup>4</sup> When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!" And Moses said, "Here I am." <sup>5</sup> "Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." <sup>6</sup> Then he said, "I am the God of your father,<sup>[a]</sup> the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God. <sup>7</sup> The Lord said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. <sup>8</sup> So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. <sup>9</sup> And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. <sup>10</sup> So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt." <sup>11</sup> But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" <sup>12</sup> And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you<sup>[b]</sup> will worship God on this mountain." <sup>13</sup> Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?" <sup>14</sup> God said to Moses, "I am who I am.<sup>[c]</sup> This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I am has sent me to you.'"*

**Getting to Know the Great I Am**

**1. A Divine Beginning: A Burning Bush Experience (1-3)**

- **First Experience with a Burning Bush:** (1) Occurred when I was 12. It was also my first experience with Mr. Fireman. (2) In the middle of the summer, during a drought, my brother and I figured it would be a good idea to call the neighborhood boys together and play capture the flag with Roman candles. (3) It turned out not to be such a good idea. (5) Moses didn't set fire to the bush in his experience. God did.
- **Why Moses Needed the Burning Bush:** (1) Felt more at home as far as possible from God and his people – Moses was raised in Pharaoh's palace. He never felt at home there because he wasn't Egyptian. That's why he killed the Egyptian taskmaster. But he didn't feel at home among the Israelites either. They were slaves. He didn't want to be. So his decision, like the prodigal, was to get as far away as possible. (2) Carried the burden of bad sins and bad decisions – 40 years went by from when he fled Egypt to the burning bush experience. That's 14,600 days or 350,400 minutes. That's a long time to carry around the burden of taking the life an Egyptian and hiding him in the sand, and to carry around the words of a Hebrew who told him "are you thinking of killing me as you did the Egyptian" (3) Thought he was autonomous and answerable to no one – Moses was wrong. "Where can I flee from your presence?" (Ps 139) The answer was "nowhere." The burning bush proved it.
- **What It Was:** (1) Divine disruption on an ordinary day – Moses was doing his day job. He was a shepherd and had been for 40 years. He could have collected social security and retirement benefits by now. But everything changed with a divine disruption. (2) Manifestation of God's Presence – the presence of God

is often associated with fire in the Bible. God led the Israelites out of Egypt in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Elijah called down fire from heaven on the prophets of Baal. The Holy Spirit is poured out in the Book of Acts like the sound of a rushing wind and flames of fire. But this is a manifestation of God's presence that says "Moses, you can run but you cannot hide." (3) Foretaste of God's Purposes That Prevail - It's no coincidence that the mountain of the burning bush, Horeb, is the mountain of the 10 commandments. God's going to lead Moses back to the same mountain. But the refiner's fire had to come first of the bush had to come first.

- **There Is a Burning Bush Experience in the Gospel of John:** She was a Samaritan woman who came to Jacob's well every day at midday – the hottest part of the day – because she knew no one else would be there. She felt at home as far as possible from even her people. She carried the burden of bad sins and bad decisions. She'd had 5 husbands and the one she was with now wasn't even her husband. She thought she was autonomous and answerable to no one. That's why she went alone. But she experienced a divine disruption. Jesus showed up at the well. She experienced a manifestation of divine presence: I who speak to you am he. And she experienced a foretaste of God's purpose that prevails. She left the pail at the well, and went back to tell them about Jesus.
- **App:** Jesus loved Moses and the Women at the Well enough to divinely disrupt them and teach them that his purposes are the ones that prevail. The burning bush and the pail still at the well was the classroom of their reeducation. May those divine disruptions be ours as well. It's where we get to know Him.

## 2. **A Divine Intention: He Calls You By Name So You Can Call Him By Name (4-5, 13-14a)**

- **The Old Phone Book:** (1) Before the days of the internet, to find out people's number and address, you had to look in the phonebook. (2) In college, my roommates and I figured it would be a good idea not to put our new apartment address in the phone book. That way our mommas couldn't find out where we lived when they came into town unannounced. (3) Well guess what? All the mommas figured it out and showed up announced. They knew our names and our address. (4) God calls us by name so we call him by name.
- **God's Calling Out to Moses:** (1) Was Personal – Moses! Moses! You are on the run, but your name means "drawn from the water." Now I'm going to use you to draw my people out of Egypt. (2) Transformational – Take off your shoes. You are on Holy Ground! Your life is about to be different and consecrated.
- **So Moses Could Call Him by Name:** "I AM WHO I AM" = A powerful declaration of how God defines himself. It's a declaration (1) of Self-Existence – not dependent on anything outside of himself. (2) of Transcendence – He is beyond our understanding. (3) of Presence and Peace – constant presence with and for his people. (5) of Provision and Healing – provides for those in need and heals those in distress. (6) of Authority and Power – both in all of creation and in your life and mine.
- **He Calls You By Name So You Will Call Him By Name:** (1) For provision (Jehovah Jireh – The Lord of Provider); (2) For battles against darkness and evil (Jehovah Nissi – the Lord our Banner); (3) When people let you down (Jehovah Sabath – The Lord of Angel Armies); (4) For peace (Jehovah Shalom – The Lord of Peace); (5) Vision of His Greatness (El-Elyon – the God Most High); (5) Vision of Eternity – (El Olam – The Everlasting God); (6) An Answer (El Roi – The God Who Sees Me); (7) To Know that Jesus is Enough – (El Shaddai – The All Sufficient One).
- **App:** He calls you by name so you can call him by name. That was His intention. Take him up on it.

## 3. **A Divine Purpose: Evoke and Plead That Name as You Obey (14b)**

- **Greatest Discoveries of All-Time:** (1) In 3500BC, man discovered the wheel. It enabled easier movement of objects and materials. (2) In 1440 AD, Gutenberg invented the printing press. It allowed the mass production of reading materials. (3) In 1752, Benjamin Franklin discovered electricity. It enables us to power our homes and see at night. (4) In 1928, Alexander Fleming discovered penicillin. It made antibiotics possible to greatly reduce the number of deaths from infection. (5) In 1876, Walter Camp invented American football. Now we can get mad at our televisions on Saturdays and Sundays in the fall. (6) But you don't discover God, my friend. He seeks you out and reveals himself to you. When he does, it is always for a purpose.
- **God's Purpose in Revealing His Name for Moses** (1) So Moses could evoke and plead the name in his new assignment from the burning bush (v14): "This is what you are to say to the Israelites 'I AM has sent me to you.'" The phrase "has sent" is passive on the part of Moses. It was God's doing. God only called him to go and evoke the name. (2) So Moses could evoke and plead the name in the challenges that lie ahead – (1) There will be a plague of blood. But you evoke the name and plead with Pharaoh to "let the Great I Am's people go." (2) Then there will be plagues of frogs, gnats, flies, livestock, boils, hail, locusts, darkness, and the plague of the firstborn – In every one, you evoke the name and plead Pharaoh to "let the Great I Am's people go."
- **John's Purpose in Revealing His Name for Us:** (1) So we can evoke and plead the name in what he calls us do: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Before Abraham was, I am. (2) So we can evoke and plead the name in the challenges that lie ahead. (a) For the spiritually thirsty like the Woman at the Well, He is the Living Water. (b) For the spiritually hungry like the multitudes on the receiving end of Jesus' miracle of the feeding of the multitudes, he's the Bread of Life. (c) For those who live in darkness and can't break free from the chains, He's the Light of the World. (d) For those in need of divine protection, he is the Gate and the Door for the sheep. (e) For those in need of guidance, he's the Good Shepherd. (f) For those who need to be born again because they are dead in their transgressions, he is the Resurrection and the Life. (g) For those who go through life wondering how to get to heaven, he is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. (h) For those who wish to bear spiritual fruit in this world, he is the True Vine. (h) It's the name above all names, the Great I Am that needs to be evoked and pleaded as we obey.
- **App:** Your name is a strong and mighty tower. Your name is a shelter like no other. Your name, let the nations sing it louder. Cause nothing has the power to save. But your name. When at our burning bush, calls us by name so we will call him by name. And when he tells us what he wants for us in that burning bush experience, may we evoke it and plead it in every challenging circumstance in obedience and pursuit of it. Do that, and we'll find that His purposes for our lives will be the ones that have the power to prevail. "Say to them, Christian, I Am has sent me to you."