



LENTEN DEVOTIONAL MARCH 12, 2016

SCRIPTURE

EXODUS 2:23-3:15

23 After a long time the king of Egypt died. The Israelites groaned under their slavery, and cried out. Out of the slavery their cry for help rose up to God. 24 God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. 25 God looked upon the Israelites, and God took notice of them.

3:1 Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. 2 There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. 3 Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up." 4 When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." 5 Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." 6 He said further, "I am the God of your 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 at God.

7 Then the LORD said, "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, 8 and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. 9 The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. 10 So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt." 11 But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" 12 He said, "I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain."

13 But Moses said to God, "If I come 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 shall I say to them?" 14 God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." He said further, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" 15 God also said to Moses, "Thus you shall say 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, and this my title for all generations."

DEVOTIONAL

How to be remembered: A step by step guide.

First, learn your own name. Let the syllables carve your name's existence on your tongue. Begin slowly pressing ink or pencil to paper in awkward strokes and slashes. Practice over and over till it is legible to more people than just you yourself. Write your name on everything—every assignment, every paper, every note, every book. "Graffiti" it on walls and empty spaces to ensure that when people encounter the particular item upon which your name has been scrawled, they 1) know the object is yours, and 2) that you exist.

Second, introduce yourself to all. Have a firm handshake and look them directly in the eye. Take a chance and be someone's friend. Or, better yet, fall in love. Make yourself a home and build a family.

Third, build great big things. Melt and mold steel and wield it into edifices that pierce the sky and make people stare up, mouths gapping open and minds overcome by its daunting magnificence. Scheme, plot, plan—harvest all the money you are able to, and conquer every land. Place statues of your likeness on the borders with your hand extending outward in the unspoken promise of where you have yet to go.

Fourth, plan for someone else to write your name for the last time on a slab of granite. Make sure they understand that your full name is to be used. Request the letters to be large and clear.

And fifth and finally, understand that metal rusts, stone erodes, and memory fades—and so will your name. Understand that the sandcastle towers of your achievements will crumble. Understand that there will be dark days in which you are utterly invisible. And understand and trust that the God of Sarah, Rebekah, Hagar, Tamar, and Rachel has remembered you, has heard your cry in the desert, and will bring you into a land flowing with milk and honey.

PRAYER

Almighty God, you saw us before our seeing could even be. Grant us the strength and wisdom to trust not in our own achievements and accomplishments but in your steadfast love and faithfulness, as perfectly revealed in Jesus the Messiah, in whose holy name we pray, Amen.

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