

# Knowing God's Ways and Himself

Versus

## Knowing God's Acts As Seen in Exodus:

*A comparison of four categories of people represented  
in the book of Exodus:*

- Moses
- Aaron
- The children of Israel

# Moses

- God appeared to Moses personally in a flame of fire out of the midst of a thornbush

*And the Angel of Jehovah appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush (3:2a)*

- In the Bible, no one who follows the Lord does so because he merely follows someone else who follows the Lord. In the Bible, people are caught by the Lord by receiving a direct revelation from Him. It is that vision that then governs their lives. Only those people who receive such a vision struggle to pursue the Lord and fight for His interest.



# Catching Moses' Attention Through a Supernatural Act

- God appeared in a burning thorn bush that was not consumed by the fire

*So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed (3:2b)*

# Moses paid attention to the miracle

- Moses was intrigued by the fact that the bush was burning, but was not consumed. This miracle caused him to determine to turn aside and examine this unique phenomenon.

*Then Moses said, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn" (3:3)*

# God trained Moses to pay attention to who He was

- God responded to Moses' interest by drawing him to realize that He (God) is holy or sanctified

*Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground" (3:5)*

# God trained Moses to pay attention to who He was

- This means that God redirected Moses' attention from the ground and bush to His own holy presence. Without God Himself, the bush and the ground had no meaning.

*God revealed Himself as the God of Moses' father, indicating that Moses needed to realize his source (3:6)*

# God trained Moses to pay attention to who He was

- God further revealed Himself as the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob

*Moreover He said, "I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (3:6)*

- Moses hid his face, indicating that in such close proximity to God, he realized how poor, inadequate, and sinful he was. He had known God from his youth, yet once he was able to see God face to face, he was not able to look at Him. The more we touch the Lord, the more we sense how low and unworthy we are.

# Training Moses to pay attention to His purpose

- Revealing to Moses His purpose to deliver the children of Israel from the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them into the good land, i.e. from the captivity of Satan into the enjoyment of Christ

*So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites. (3:8)*

# Moses' wrestling with God

- Moses did not take anything that God told him for granted. Rather, he challenged God with five questions or issues.

# First question

- Who am I?

*But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?”(3:11)*

## God’s Response

*Surely I will be with You, and this will be the sign for you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will serve God upon this mountain (4:12)*

- God is with Moses
- Moses will serve God

# Second question

- Who are You?

*Then Moses said to God, “Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?” (3:13)*

## God’s Response

*I am Who I am (or I am That I am) (3:14)*

- The ever existing, self existing, and all sufficient One

# Third Question

- What if the elders of Israel do not believe Moses or listen to his voice, or question the validity of God's appearing to him?

*Then Moses answered and said, "But suppose they will not believe me or listen to my voice; suppose they say, 'Jehovah has not appeared to you'" (4:1)*

## God's Response

- Three signs
- The rod becoming a serpent
- Moses' hand becoming leprous
- The water turning into blood

# An Objection

- I am not qualified

*Then Moses said to Jehovah, “O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue” (4:10)*

# God’s Response

- God is the creator of Moses’ mouth, and He will be with his mouth.

# A proposition

- Please send someone else!

*But he said, "O my Lord, please send by the hand of whomever else You may send" (4:13)*

# God's Response

- God provides Aaron

# Aaron

- The Bible never reveals that God personally appeared to Aaron, as He did to Moses.
- How does the Bible introduce Aaron in Exodus?

## Aaron's Introduction

- Aaron is chosen by God to be Moses' mouthpiece, after Moses' request that God send someone else to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt.
- Aaron is able to speak well.
- Moses is to speak to Aaron to give him the words to speak.
- God will be with Aaron's mouth.

# Aaron's Introduction

- *Aaron will be Moses' mouthpiece, and Moses will be God to Aaron.*

*So the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Moses, and He said: "Is not Aaron the Levite your brother? I know that he can speak well. And look, he is also coming out to meet you. When he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. <sup>15</sup> Now you shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth. And I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do. <sup>16</sup> So he shall be your spokesman to the people. And he himself shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God (4:14-16)*

*Jehovah said to Aaron, "Go into the wilderness to meet Moses." So he went and met him at the mountain of God and kissed him. And Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD with which he had sent him to speak, and all the signs that he had commanded him to do (4:27-28).*

# What can we infer from Aaron

- Did he experience God's calling?
- Did he really know God?
- Like Moses, he had grown up in a godly family, knowing God
- He was suddenly thrust into a position of authority, based on Moses' reluctance to speak
- All the words that he would speak would come from Moses, who would be God to him.

*And Aaron spoke all the words which the LORD had spoken to Moses. Then he did the signs in the sight of the people (4:30)*

# What can we infer from Aaron

- It appears that his speaking to Pharaoh may not have come from God's revelation to him directly.
- God does speak to Aaron:

*And Jehovah said to Aaron, "Go into the wilderness to meet Moses" (4:27a)*

- However, in his meeting with Moses, it is Moses who relates everything that God had told him:

*So Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD who had sent him, and all the signs which He had commanded him (4:28).*

- There is no record in Exodus of Aaron verbally responding directly to God's speaking, as Moses did.

God's Speaking to Moses and to Aaron  
during the 12 Conflicts between God  
and Pharaoh

# The First Conflict, Concerning the Increase of Oppression of the Children of Israel on the Part of Pharaoh

- God's speaking is mainly to Moses, though He does also speak to Aaron.
- God's speaking is sometimes to Moses and Aaron together:

*And Jehovah spoke to Moses and to Aaron and gave them a charge for the children of Israel and for Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt (6:13).*

- Moses dialogues with God, indicating the freedom and intimacy he enjoyed with God:

*Then Moses went back to Jehovah and said, Lord, why have You mistreated this people? Why is it that You have sent me? Ever since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has mistreated this people, and You have not delivered Your people at all (5:22-23).*

# Second Conflict Concerning the Rods Becoming Snakes

*Jehovah speaks to Moses and to Aaron (7:8)*



# Third Through the Fifth Conflict

- Jehovah speaks only to Moses
- However, Jehovah tells Moses to tell Aaron to stretch his staff out over the waters of Egypt, and eventually to strike the dust of the lice in order to produce lice for the third plague.

## Sixth and Seventh Conflicts

- Jehovah speaks to Moses uniquely.
- Pharaoh calls for Moses and Aaron during the sixth conflict, or fourth plague of flies, telling them to sacrifice to their God in the land of Egypt:

*And Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron and said, Go, sacrifice to your God in the land (8:25).*

# Eight Conflict

*Jehovah speaks to Moses and to Aaron, telling them to take handfuls of ashes from a furnace and to let Moses sprinkle it toward heaven in the sight of Pharaoh (9:8).*



# Ninth Conflict

- Jehovah speaks to Moses:

*Then Jehovah said to Moses, “Rise early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh, and say to him, ‘Thus says Jehovah God of the Hebrews: “Let My people go, that they may serve Me (9:13)”*

- However, Pharaoh calls for Moses and Aaron to entreat God to stop the hail:

*And Pharaoh sent and called for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, “I have sinned this time. Jehovah is righteous, and my people and I are wicked (9:27)”*



# Tenth Conflict

- God speaks to Moses:

*Now Jehovah said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants, that I may show these signs of Mine before him (10:1)*

- But it is Moses and Aaron who appear before Pharaoh:

*So Moses and Aaron came in to Pharaoh and said to him, “Thus says Jehovah God of the Hebrews: ‘How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me? Let My people go, that they may serve Me (10:3)*

- Again, Moses and Aaron return to deal with Pharaoh, but it is Moses who speaks:

# Tenth Conflict

*And Moses said, “We will go with our young and our old; with our sons and our daughters, with our flocks and our herds we will go, for we must hold a feast to Jehovah” (10:9)*

*It is Moses, and not Aaron, who stretches his staff over Egypt to bring up the locusts (10:13)*

- Pharaoh hurriedly calls for both Moses and Aaron:

*Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste, and said, “I have sinned against the LORD your God and against you (10:16)*

# Eleventh and Twelfth Conflicts (Ninth and Tenth Plagues in Chapter 10)

- God speaks to Moses
- Moses only seems to be directly involved with Pharaoh in these two final plagues.
- However, when God reveals the Passover to the children of Israel in chapter 12, He speaks to both Moses and Aaron.
- Pharaoh, in response to the death of the firstborn son in Egypt, calls for both Moses and Aaron:

*Then he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, “Rise, go out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel. And go, serve the Jehovah as you have said (12:31).*

*God continues to speak to Moses and Aaron concerning the requirements of the Passover (12:43- 49).*

# Where Can We See Evidence That Moses Knew God's Ways in His Dealing with Pharaoh?

- In the way in which he responds to Pharaoh's wheeling and dealing.
- Pharaoh's first bargain with Moses represents Moses' first major challenge in his confrontation with Pharaoh during the plague of the flies:

*Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, "Go, sacrifice to your God in the land" (8:25)*

- Moses' response:

## Where Can We See Evidence That Moses Knew God's Ways in His Dealing with Pharaoh?

*And Moses said, "It is not right to do so, for we would be sacrificing the abomination of the Egyptians to Jehovah our God. If we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, then will they not stone us? <sup>27</sup> We will go three days' journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to Jehovah our God as He will command us" (8:26-27)*

- Moses was not just someone carrying out divine orders, living according to commandment. If so, he might have agreed to Pharaoh's proposition.
- Rather, Moses was a man of revelation, living according to revelation. He realized who God was: holy, sanctified and separate. Any corporate sacrifice offered to Him in Egypt would be an insult to His person and His nature.

# Pharaoh's Second Bargain During the Plague of Locusts

*So Moses and Aaron were brought again to Pharaoh, and he said to them, "Go, serve Jehovah your God. Who are the ones that are going?"*

*And Moses said, "We will go with our young and our old; with our sons and our daughters, with our flocks and our herds we will go, for we must hold a feast to Jehovah."*

*Then he said to them, "Jehovah had better be with you when I let you and your little ones go! Beware, for evil is ahead of you. Not so! Go now, you who are men, and serve Jehovah, for that is what you desired." And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence (10:8-11)*

## Pharaoh's Second Bargain During the Plague of Locusts

- Moses was clear concerning who should go to hold a feast to Jehovah. It was everyone, or no one. No one could be left behind.
- Moses realized that this tactic of Pharaoh was more subtle than the first. If only the men went, and the women and children remained, God's testimony would never flourish.



# Pharaoh's Third Bargain During the Plague of Darkness

- Then Pharaoh called to Moses and said, “Go, serve Jehovah; only let your flocks and your herds be kept back. Let your little ones also go with you.”
- But Moses said, “You must also give us sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice to Jehovah our God.

*Our livestock also shall go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind. For we must take some of them to serve Jehovah our God, and even we do not know with what we must serve the LORD until we arrive there” (10:24-26).*

## Pharaoh's Third Bargain During the Plague of Darkness

- This is the most subtle of Pharaoh's tactics. He will let the people go to the right place to worship God. He will even allow the children to go, i.e. all the people to assemble before God. But his last resort is to withhold the content of the worship or feast (the sacrifices and burnt offerings), signifying Christ, without which any kind of worship is meaningless and dissatisfying to God.
- Moses, by revelation, was able to respond to Pharaoh in a way that indicated that he thoroughly knew God's heart. All the flocks and herds of the children of Israel were there to be offered up to God for His satisfaction. Without consecration and our being laid on the altar, God cannot ultimately gain His testimony and expression.

Aaron's Operation  
During the Sojourn of  
the Children of Israel in the Wilderness  
Before the Building of the Tabernacle

# Accompanying Moses and Witness to God's Mighty Acts

- *Aaron and Moses bear the brunt of the people's complaint concerning the lack of food (16:2)*
- *Moses and Aaron answer the people, telling them that in the evening they would know that God had brought them out of the land of Egypt, and in the morning they would see the glory of God (16:6-7)*
- Aaron is with Moses.

## Accompanying Moses and Witness to God's Mighty Acts

- He is manifested as a leader with Aaron.
- He is witness, as well as the children of Israel, to all the miracles and acts of God.
- However, it is Moses who has direct revelation from God, and it is Moses who handles Pharaoh's wheelings and dealings, as someone who knows God's ways.

Accompanying Moses and Witness to God's Mighty Acts

Being called by God to come up the  
mountain, and to worship at a distance  
in Exodus 24

Moses	Aaron	Nadab&Abihu	Hur	70 Elders of Israel	All the People	The Young Men
Could alone come near to Jehovah	Could not come near	Could not come near	Could not come near	Could not come near	Could not come near	Could not come near
Relates to the people all the words of Jehovah and His ordinances	Were able to go partway up the mountain	Were able to go partway up the mountain	Were able to go partway up the mountain	Went partway up the mountain	Respond that they will do all the words that Jehovah has spoken	Sent by Moses to offer burnt offerings and peace offerings to Jehovah
Writes down all the words of Jehovah	Saw the God of Israel	Saw the God of Israel	Saw the God of Israel	Saw the God of Israel	Did not go up the mountain at all	
Builds an altar to Jehovah early in the morning	Beheld God	Beheld God	Beheld God	Beheld God	Motivated by a natural desire to keep the law	
Erects 12 pillars for the 12 tribes of Israel	Ate and drank	Ate and drank	Ate and drank	Ate and drank	No realization of their inability to keep God's words	
Sprinkles the blood on the altar	Was committed by Moses to take care of anyone with a cause		Was committed by Moses to take care of anyone with a cause	Were told by Moses to wait until he and Joshua returned	Sprinkled with the blood by Moses, indicating that we are sinners and need redemption	
Reads the book of the covenant to all the people						
Sprinkles the blood on the people: the blood of the covenant that God made with them						
Takes Joshua with him						
Privileged to spend 40 days and nights alone with God						
In the presence and glory of God						
Receiving the testimony of God, the 2 tablets of stone						

# Aaron being Put to the Test in Chapter 32

- Moses delays to come down the mountain
- The people gather against Aaron
- The people demand that Aaron make a god for them to go before them
- Aaron is confronted with a crisis for the first time without his brother Moses.

## Aaron being Put to the Test in Chapter 32

- Did he really know God?
- Was God his God?
- God had spoken to him several times, mostly together with Moses.
- Aaron had laboured with Moses, stood with Moses, and confronted Pharaoh together.
- Aaron had witnessed all the miracles and acts of God.



# Aaron: No knowledge of God

- Yet at this critical juncture, he meekly gives in to the opinion of the people.
- He comes up with a plan to use the gold rings worn by the wives and children, to fashion a golden calf. This was the very gold plundered from the Egyptians and intended to be used as material for the construction of the tabernacle.
- He even builds an altar before the calf, and proclaims a feast to Jehovah.
- Aaron is a brother in the church life who has been around for a long time, has seen God's blessings, but has his own concept of God. He will easily fashion a god to fit the mood and desire of the people, rather than stand up for who God is and what His nature is. He will engrave his own god with his own hand.

## Aaron: No knowledge of God

- This is in contrast with the testimony or law of God, engraved with God's own hands and given to Moses.
- Allowing the people to live without restraint:

*Now when Moses saw that the people were unrestrained (for Aaron had not restrained them, to their shame among their enemies) (32:25)*

- In the church life, it is very easy to satisfy people to make them happy, rather than bring them to God and to know God Himself.

# Aaron: Blaming the People

- When challenged by Moses as to what the people had done to him to lead them to sin, Aaron transfers the blame from himself to the people:

*And Moses said to Aaron, “What did this people do to you that you have brought so great a sin upon them?”*

*So Aaron said, “Do not let the anger of my lord become hot. You know the people, that they are set on evil.*

*For they said to me, ‘Make us gods that shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.’*

*And I said to them, ‘Whoever has any gold, let them break it off.’ So they gave it to me, and I cast it into the fire, and this calf came out” (32:21-24).*

- *Minimizing his own role in the matter (23:24)*

# Moses' Knowledge of God's Ways

- Referring to the people as God's people (this is in contrast with God's description of the people as Moses' people in 32:7):
- Not even entertaining God's offer to make of him a great nation.
- Appealing to the fact that it was God Himself who had brought His people out from captivity.
- Appealing even more convincingly to God that His enemies would gloat over the destruction of His people, rather than their salvation.
- Charging God to repent of this ill towards His people.
- Finally, appealing to God's covenant made with Abraham, Isaac and Israel, highlighting two vital promises, namely the multiplication of their seed, and the inheritance of the good land, neither of which would be accomplished if God executed His intended punishment.
- Moses' intercession for the people is according to God's heart and purpose.

# Moses' Further Intercession for the People

- Then Moses returned to Jehovah and said, “Oh, these people have committed a great sin, and have made for themselves a god of gold!

*Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written” (32:31-32)*

- Willing to bear the punishment for the people by having his name blotted out by God from His book.
- Interceding for Aaron, with whom God was angry enough to destroy:

*And Jehovah was very angry with Aaron and would have destroyed him; so I prayed for Aaron also at the same time(Deut.9:20)*

# Moses No Longer Interceding that God Spare the Lives of the People, but Rather Interceding for His Presence to Accompany Them

- Then Jehovah said to Moses, “Depart *and* go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, ‘To your descendants I will give it.’

And I will send *My* Angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanite and the Amorite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite.

*Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; for I will not go up in your midst, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people” (33:1-3)*

# Moses Desperate for Four Things

- Who would go with him
- To know God's ways
- To have God's presence
- To see God's glory

## Moses Desperate for Four Things

*Then Moses said to Jehovah, “See, You say to me, ‘Bring up this people.’ But You have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, ‘I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight.’*

*Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation is Your people.”*

*And He said, “My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.”*

*Then he said to Him, “If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here.*

*For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us? So we shall be separate, Your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth.”*

*So Jehovah said to Moses, “I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name.”*

*And he said, “Please, show me Your glory” (33:12-18)*

# Who Would Go With Him?

- Moses was not so anxious to get to a better land and enjoy the flowing milk and honey.
- Rather, he was more anxious to know who would accompany him.

# To Know God's Ways

- Moses prays for God to show him His ways. This is a high prayer. It is not a prayer asking for blessings, even spiritual blessings. It is a prayer that seeks to touch and know God's heart.

# To Have God's Presence

- Moses was determined that if he did not have God's presence, it would be pointless to enter the good land.
- This indicates that he cared more for God than for the things that God would give him and the people.

# To Know God's glory

*Then He said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."*

*But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live."*

*And Jehovah said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock.*

*So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by.*

*Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen" (33:19-23)*

# The Children of Israel

# From God's Side

- Loved by God
- Treasured by God

*And Moses went up to God, and Jehovah called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: <sup>4</sup> 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. <sup>5</sup> Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. <sup>6</sup> And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel" (chapter 19)*

# Positive Characteristics

- Oppressed by Pharaoh
- Under bondage
- Delivered from bondage
- Leaving their homes and their old manner of life in Egypt
- Keeping the Passover
- Consecrated to follow the Lord into the wilderness
- Led through the Red Sea by faith
- Into the wilderness to feast unto Jehovah
- Joyfully praising the Lord, led by Miriam

# Negative Characteristics

- Murmuring
- Blaming Moses for having brought them into the wilderness to die
- Regretting having left their life of fleshly enjoyment in Egypt.
- Recognizing God's acts, but having very little, if any, realization of who God was and God's way.
- Eager to fulfill all of God's words.
- No realization of who they were, and their inability to please God.
- In the absence of Moses, their leading one, they right away fell into the worship of another god.
- Very little knowledge of Jehovah as their God.

# What Can We Learn From All This?

- Everything that I do in the church life must be in response to God's speaking.
- All my service must be based on God's speaking to me.
- I am not merely engaged in activities, but while I am exercising, I am willing to let the Lord touch my person and disposition.

# A Threefold View

- Everything I do must be with a view to know God Himself and His ways.
- Everything I do must be with a view to know myself.
- Everything I do must be with a view to know the saints.