

Burning Bush

'Your love is better than life.'

(Psalm 63:3)

Peter Walker

www.1peter1three.weebly.com

To You

Introduction

In this book I am reflecting on a man named Moses. You can read about the story of Moses in the Bible, in the section or 'book' called ***Exodus***.

Moses was a man called by God to save four hundred thousand slaves from the king of Egypt. Not with weapons, but with the power and authority of God.

When Moses went to the king of Egypt, called 'Pharaoh', and asked him to let the slaves go, Pharaoh said '*No!*' God then brought plagues and suffering on Pharaoh and Egypt, until finally the slaves were set free.

In this book I am reflecting on the man, Moses, and his relationship with God. I am considering what I can learn about God through this, and what I can learn about life and my own relationship with God.

It is my hope and prayer that you,

too, will see deep into God's heart
for you, and feel his love surround
you.

1. Called by Name

‘Moses came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush... though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. God called to him from within the bush, ‘Moses! Moses!’

And Moses said, ‘Here I am.’
(Exodus 3:1-4)

I think this moment when the Lord meets with Moses captures the essence of when the Lord meets with anyone – with you, with me. It is a quiet moment away from other people. It is deep, it is spiritual. It is a revelation that is beyond nature, impossible, but true.

This moment of encounter for Moses looks like an eternal moment, an eternal flame. Something on fire but not burning up or being consumed, is something that can be on fire forever

– a relationship that never dims,
never fades. It is a living relationship.

This is also the purest of moments,
like when a child is born and meets
his or her mother for the first time.
God is calling Moses to a purpose, to
a mission. But *this* moment is just
encounter. It is just God and Moses
together, touching one another.
Being. There has been no mission
yet, no chapters in the book. Just
encounter.

From this point, Moses moves out
into a new season, on mission, a
new person. He is a new person
because the Spirit of God has met
him, the flames of God brightened
his eyes, warmed his soul. No one
else saw it. No one else can see it.
The only one that can see God is the
one God shows himself to.

This is true for you and me, also.

We see and know Jesus as Lord,
because Jesus has opened the eyes

of our hearts.

‘God, who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ made his light shine in our hearts to give us the knowledge of Christ.’

(2 Corinthians 4:6)

God revealed himself to Moses through impossible revelation – seeing something that eyes can’t see, nature cannot display. The same is true for you, for me, when we see Jesus. We know he is true. We see, we know. Others may look and not see. They see only a bush, or a bush on fire and consumed. But we see the King of kings, the Lord of life. This revelation is of God – *your* encounter, where he called you by name.

‘Jesus said, ‘But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear.’

(Matthew 13:16)

2. Staying True

***'Moses used to take a tent and pitch it outside the camp some distance away, calling it the 'tent of meeting.'* Anyone inquiring of the Lord would go to the tent of meeting outside the camp. Whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people rose and stood at the entrances to their tents, watching Moses until he entered the tent... As Moses went into the tent, the pillar of cloud would come down and stay at the entrance, while the Lord spoke with Moses. The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend.'**
(Exodus 33:7-11)

Here the Israelite people are free from Egypt, and years into their journey towards the *'promised land'*. Moses is a revered leader now among the people. He is known. He has influence, authority. And yet he stays true to God. He stays true to

his own self. God met with Moses alone when everything first started. And here, many years on, we see Moses continuing to meet with God alone. He would take time out away from the people, and go into the 'tent of meeting', and be with God.

Moses would not be this leader if God had not called him. He would not have the respect and reverence of the people if God had not favored him. And Moses would never forget this. In a sense he never left that sacred space in the wilderness where he first met God. Although he walked from it, his spirit stayed even as the flame continued to burn.

But let's skip forward for a moment to our time now, the time of '**God with us**' (Matthew 1:23), Jesus Christ.

'In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has

spoken to us by his Son...'

(Hebrews 12:1-2)

Jesus has called you, called me, by name, in the same way God called Moses by name. We see Jesus as Lord. There was a time – maybe a specific time you remember, maybe not – when God revealed himself to you. It's not the time or the moment that is important, it is the spirit of truth that came upon us – the Holy Spirit. We are told that when we believed in Jesus, we were sealed with the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 1:13)

Now, we see time and time again – both in the teaching of Jesus, and in the stories of some people during Jesus' time – that people can walk away from the Light of God. We can distance ourselves from the light of Jesus in the same way we can distance ourselves from a streetlamp. We just drift out of its orb, its rays.

Look at some of these verses, and

what they imply – or directly state – about our ability to distance:

‘Do not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing...’ (Hebrews 10:25)

‘Some people eager for money have wandered from the faith...’
(1 Timothy 6:10)

‘Hold on to faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and so have shipwrecked their faith.’ (1 Timothy 1:19)

This is not about losing salvation after life. This is about losing salvation *in* life. In other words, it is about distancing yourself from the Savior you do have, and so not living the life here and now that you could have - a life strong in faith and to be greatly rewarded! It is about not investing, and so not receiving reward for investment.

Regarding salvation, I believe a

sincere belief in Jesus will save the soul, whether a person builds on that or not. Look how Paul puts it:

‘No one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person’s work. If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved — even though only as one escaping through the flames.’
(1 Corinthians 3:11-15)

So we see that Moses was a man who kept the flame of his ***‘first love’*** burning. No matter how important he became, how effective in ministry, how spiritual, he would find time to be alone with God, and soak in that

space of his *truest* identity.

Jesus calls us to do the same. Look at this powerful admonition of Jesus to a church – a good church – in the early days. Note how much Jesus commends them for! But then look carefully at what Jesus says to them:

‘I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.

Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.’

(Revelation 2:1-5)

We are told earlier in this passage that the *'lampstand'* symbolizes the church. So Jesus is saying that unless this group of Christians fan back into flame their ***'first love'*** of God, he will remove the influence – maybe the actual gathering place – of their church.

God cares about the heart! Jesus – God in the flesh¹ – came and suffered so that our hearts could connect with his. This is our first love. When we first encounter Jesus, that love is on fire. And that is why here Jesus says: ***'Go back and do what you did at first.'***

Moses met with God alone at the very start, and he continued to meet with God alone throughout this life. He never let that flame flicker. He went back continually, daily, and did what he did at first – living in the presence of God.

¹ John 1:1,14

I say *'living in the presence of God'*, not just meeting with him in a tent between this time and this time (or for a *'quiet time'* between this time and this time). God is now poured out by his Spirit and dwells *in* us.

Yes, we can set time aside for dedicated focus and prayer, but the curtain has been torn, Christ is with us every step. A true love relationship, one that burns in the soul, is never just for a set time in a sanctuary; rather it is that ***'first love'*** that makes a sanctuary out of our lives throughout the day, throughout the night, in work, school and the country club.

***'Whom have I in heaven but you?
And earth has nothing I desire
besides you. My flesh and my
heart may fail, but God is the
strength of my heart and my
portion forever.'*** (Psalm 73:25-26)

‘On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night.’ (Psalm 63:6)

We opened this chapter with a passage about Moses meeting with God in the ‘tent of meeting’. This happened at Mount Horeb. Let’s finish this chapter with just a little more from that account.

You see, God was debating with Moses at that time about withdrawing his own presence from the people, and instead sending an angel to guide them the rest of the way. Moses actually contended with God about this. Moses put it this way:

‘If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here.’
(vs.15)

God concedes. He says, ***‘My presence will go with you.’*** Then God adds:

'I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name.'
(vs.17)

Moses sees an opportunity here. God is pleased with him! So he asks God for something:

'Then Moses said, 'Now show me your glory.' (vs.18)

Moses did not ask for provisions for the journey. He did not ask for weapons or more assurances. What he wanted, what his soul longed for, was to be in that presence of God, that presence he had tasted when first God had called his name.

3. Finish Weak

'Then Moses climbed Mount Nebo... There the Lord showed him the whole 'promised land'... Then the Lord said to him, 'This is the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when I said, 'I will give it to your descendants.'" And Moses died there. The Lord buried him, but to this day no one knows where his grave is.'

(Deuteronomy 34:1-6)

Moses finished the way he began – humble, quiet, alone with God. He was alone when he met God. He was alone with God when he died. And he stayed true between the start and finish line.

I think about this space that Moses lived in. It challenges me. He let the flame of his **'first love'** burn continually in his heart, in his mind, in his sense of self. When given a choice, like at Mount Horeb (Exodus

33), when given a request, he would ask God not for wealth or security, but for another taste of his presence: ***'Now show me your glory.'*** (Exodus 33:18)

That eternal flame that encountered Moses alone, was so all-consuming that Moses was prepared to die alone. He had seen God and spoken with him as a man speaks to a man: face to face. Moses allowed God's Spirit to soak into him, so that being alone never meant loneliness; it simply recalled to his mind that moment in the wilderness when God called his name.

Jesus called your name. You are his. His flame and fire burn for you. You are never alone again. Any quietness, stillness, darkness, is just an opportunity to recall, to feel, Jesus with you, Jesus whispering your name.

**Thank you for taking time to read
this book!**

**For more free devotionals, videos
and books, please visit:**

www.1peter1three.weebly.com



Notes

Notes

Notes

Notes