

Introduction

- **Start with the end in mind.**
 - Wednesday are:
 - i. *Touch points* that we hope will overflow into the rest of the week.
 - We create relational connection through shared experiences. There's no way around that.
 - ii. *Time set aside to equip you* with the tools necessary to cultivate a life wide, life long, and life deep faith.
 - I know that there are people in this community across the spectrum of faith. So we won't assume that you're a Christian and sold out for Jesus just because you're in the room.
 - But we will spend our time unapologetically learning *how* to cultivate that kind of faith. Know that if you're still figuring the Jesus thing out, that you have a place in this community.
 - Goals for our Wednesday nights this semester:
 - i. "Grow in our understanding of the Biblical story."
 - ii. "Grow in our ability to read/study the Bible."
 - iii. "Grow together as a community through common practice."

Context

- End of Genesis:
 - God promises to work through the people he chooses. Begins w/ Abraham, Isaac (renamed Israel), and Jacob.
 - Jacob has 12 sons, one of which is named Joseph. Through his narrative, the nation of Israel comes to be established in the land of Egypt.
 - The relationship between Israel and Egypt is initially really good. But the Israelite people begin growing in number and influence.
 - Pharaoh is worried that they will be a threat to his own power, and subjugates them as slaves. This is the story of Exodus 1. (1.8-14)
- Exodus 2 tells the story of a man named Moses, who is born by Israelite parents.
 - The Egyptian midwives were commanded by Pharaoh to kill all of the male Israelite babies. But two midwives — Shiphrah and Puah — deliver them against Pharaoh's wishes. (Ex. 1.15-20)
 - Moses is born, set adrift in the Nile river, and is rescued by Pharaoh's daughter. He is eventually raised in Pharaoh's household.
 - Moses grows up and comes to see how Pharaoh is oppressing his people (2.11). He attacks and kills an Egyptian for assaulting a Hebrew and flees to the land of Midian where he marries and becomes a father. (2.16-23)

God introduces Himself to Moses

Exodus 3 sees Moses shepherding a flock in the wilderness, near Mount Horeb (Hoar-eb). He's tending to a flock that wasn't his (his father-in-law's), and is a fugitive after killing an Egyptian.

Turn or scroll to Exodus 3 in a Bible or Bible app. **Read Exodus 3.1-6 out loud.** Have the group listen at first.

1. Have the group summarize these 6 verses in their own words.

- *Try to focus on the details of the story. Ask people to try sticking to the details of these 6 verses as much as possible.*

2. Look at verse 6: "Then He continued, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Moses hid his face because he was afraid to look at God." **Why do you think Moses was afraid to look at God?**

- You can ask if anyone knows of any other stories in the Bible up until this point that talks about a response of shame or fear.
 - *Shame or Fear: Recalls the response of Adam and Eve after their disobedience in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3.7-8)*

God calls Moses and Israel

Now read **Exodus 3.7-10** out loud.

3. For what reason is God revealing himself to Moses in the burning bush?

- 3.7-8 — *“I have observed the misery of My people in Egypt...I have come down to rescue them from the power of the Egyptians and to bring from that land to a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey...”*

4. What do these verses (3.1-8) tell us about God? (You don’t need to get all of these, but there are a good number of things we can pull from this text. When someone gives an answer, ask them to give a verse for reference.)

- God cares about His people, the Israelites
- God reveals Himself us
- God is Holy
- God desires Justice
- God sees the unjust things that happen and wants them to be made right

5. What does God want Moses to do?

- 3.10 — *“Therefore, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh so that you may lead My people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.”*
- Sent not to the people of Israel, but specifically to Pharaoh. God’s hope is for the Israelites to be freed from their oppression (specifically to *receive salvation*)

Have someone read **Exodus 3.11-15** aloud with the group.

6. How would you describe this passage?

- A conversation between God and Moses; Moses is hesitant to go to Pharaoh and say what God told him to.

7. What do we learn about God in this passage?

- God promises to be with Moses (3.12)
- God will give Moses a sign to Pharaoh (3.12)
- God tells Moses that His name is “I AM WHO I AM” (3.14) or Yahweh (3.15)

8. What is God’s end goal for the nation of Israel?

- To worship God at Mount Horeb (3.12)

Have someone read **Exodus 3.16-18** aloud with the group.

9. What does God promise to Moses in this passage?

- “I have promised to be with you” (3.17)
- He promises to fulfill his promise to give Moses a land for the people of Israel (3.18)

Have someone read **Exodus 3.19-22** aloud with the group.

10. What problem does God anticipate will happen to Moses?

- Pharaoh/the King of Egypt will not allow the Israelites to go worship Yahweh at Mount Horeb.

11. What does God propose to do as a response to Pharaoh?

- *“I will stretch out My hand and **strike Egypt with all My miracles** that I will perform in it. After that, he will let you go. And I will **give this people such favor in the sight of the Egyptians** that when you go, you will not go empty-handed.”* (3.19-21)

Interpretation Questions — Answer these questions however you like, but do your best to come back to the text with the answers you give.

- What do you think is the main struggle of this passage? What makes you think that?
- What do you think motivates God/Yahweh in these passages? How can you tell?
- Is the God in this passage different from your understanding of God? How so?
- If this story is true, how do you think it might shape Israel's expectations of God? What do you think they should come to expect?