

Exodus 3

The end of the beginning



Remembering that his life spreads over three (possibly approximately) 40-year periods, we start chapter 3 with Moses well into what we would nowadays call “retirement age”. Far too late, surely, to undo the mistake of his impetuosity back in Egypt, decades and forever ago?

➤ **Curiosity (1-6)**

So how long has Moses been a shepherd, most likely? What might he have thought and felt about his occupation, after so long?

“The west side” is literally the *back* side of the wilderness – maybe not in a bad sense, as the word could be in English, but many miles from home, and probably not often visited. Why here and now?

So God can direct us even when we’ve given up looking?

... and through just simple curiosity and stuff?

Do you see any symbolism in the “burning bush”?

“The mountain of God” (1), “holy ground” (5) – because of some intrinsic property of the places, or because God was there?

Why “father”, singular (6), instead of the usual plural (eg 13)?

➤ **Commissioning (7-10)**

v7 and v9 hark back to the conclusion of chapter 2, but v8 indicates that God is finally about to answer the “cry of the people”. But why has he waited so long?

There is a new Pharaoh (2:23). Does this make the commission of v10 any easier for Moses?

➤ **Questioning (11-17)**

v11 is probably just (probably commendable) humility. But what do you make of God's answer? Does God agree with Moses' humble opinion of himself? Or does Moses' self-image not matter?

v12: just how does this constitute a notable “sign”?

This special name (14): what has Moses actually asked? And what has God actually answered? Is there new information about God here, or what? A new specific promise and commitment?

➤ **A glimpse ahead (18-22)**

How might it help Moses at this point to have something of the future revealed? How much do we need to know in advance?