

Whom Shall I Say Sent Me?  
Exodus 3:1-15

## I. Challenge Questions

### A. The Nature of a Challenge Question

1. NSFCU Account - Two stage security
  - a. Challenge question
    - (1) Provide an answer which only I would know
      - (a) The middle name of your great grandfather's cousin's uncle's daughter's on your mother's side
      - (b) The height of the chin up bar on the playground of Winterfield Elementary in 1969?
    - (2) Once you prove you are who you say you are and have a right to access the account you get to give your password
  - b. No right answer, no requested response
2. Two parts to a challenge question
  - a. Prove your identity
  - b. Receive a response
3. Challenge Questions provide the key to understanding the book of Exodus

### B. Moses' and Pharaoh's Question:

1. Pharaoh's Challenge Question
  - a. **Exodus 5:2 (ESV) *But Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and moreover, I will not let Israel go."***
    - (1) All the events and assertions of Exodus, and in fact, of the entire Bible are the answer to this question!
    - (2) Every plague, every miracle, experience corresponds to the question, "Who is the LORD?"
  - b. Two parts
    - (1) Identity: Who is the LORD
    - (2) Response: That I should obey his voice
2. Moses' Challenge Question
  - a. **Exodus 3:1-15**
    - (1) Moses in the remotest of the desert pasturing his sheep
    - (2) Encounters an unusual physical phenomenon: burning bush
    - (3) Encounters a clearly supernatural phenomenon: God speaks
      - (a) God calls Moses by name: a personal encounter
      - (b) God sets the conditions for the encounter:
        - i) holy ground
        - ii) introduces himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
      - (c) God describes the intent of the encounter (verbs)
        - i) I have surely seen
        - ii) I have heard their cry
        - iii) I know their sufferings

- iv) I have come down to deliver them out . . . and bring them in
- v) Come, I will send you
- (4) Moses raises objections in the form of challenge questions
  - (a) Who am I that I should go? **v. 11**
  - (b) Who are you that I should go? **v. 13**
- b. **Exodus 3:13–14 (ESV) 13 Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers 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.” And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’ ”**
- c. Two parts
  - (1) Identity - Whom shall I say has sent me?
  - (2) Response - that I should go, that Pharaoh should relent, that Israel should leave Egypt, that the world should suddenly be different than it has been for 400years?

**T.S. Before we examine God’s answer to the challenge question, let’s acknowledge our own challenge questions.**

**C. Our Challenge Question**

1. Who is this God whom the gospel calls me to serve amidst a secular and increasingly unbelieving and hostile culture?
2. Who is this God who sets as my life priority to know and love Him and to love others because of Him?
3. Who is this God really, when you take away all the bad theology and worldly distortion, (the devil is still misrepresenting God to the people of God and we are still being deceived by his lies) who wants my life to be a reflection of His person both for His glory and my good?

**II. God’s Answer to Moses’ Question: “I AM WHO I AM”**

**A. What does the name mean?**

1. The translation (Victor Hamilton, 9 Possible Translations)
  - a. ESV: I AM WHO I AM
  - b. Other Possibilities
    - (1) I am who I was
    - (2) I am who I shall be
    - (3) I was who I am
    - (4) I was who I was
    - (5) I was who I shall be
    - (6) I shall be who I am
    - (7) I shall be who I was
    - (8) I shall be who I shall be
2. That God is self-existent;
  - a. he has his being of himself, and has no dependence upon any other:
  - b. God says absolutely—and it is more than any creature, man or angel, can say—I am that I am.

- c. Being self-existent, he cannot but be self-sufficient, and therefore all-sufficient, and the inexhaustible fountain of being and bliss.
- 3. That God is eternal and unchangeable,
  - a. He is always as He has been
  - b. he will be what he will be and what he is
  - c. **Isaiah 6**: “Who was and is and is to come”
- 4. That we cannot by searching find him out: knowing Him adequately requires revelation and allows exploration but God cannot be fully understood simply by human investigation or rationalization.
  - a. This is such a name as checks all bold and curious enquiries concerning God, and in effect says, Ask not after my name, seeing it is secret, Jdg. 13:18; Prov. 30:4.
  - b. Do we ask what is God? Let it suffice us to know that he is what he is, what he ever was, and ever will be. How little a portion is heard of him! Job 26:14.
- 5. That he is faithful and true to all his promises, unchangeable in his word as well as in his nature, and not a man that he should lie. Let Israel know this, I AM hath sent me unto you.

**B. What are the implications for us?**

- 1. **Human beings must understand that God is the God of our past, present, and future; there is no one else to turn to, no one else to trust**
  - a. **The God of our Past: The God of Covenant**
    - (1) **The God of Covenant Promise Made & Kept**
      - (a) The eternal, unchangeable God invites into covenant relation with Himself people of His own choosing
      - (b) Neither Abraham, nor Isaac, nor Jacob nor anyone else posed such personal merit that they deserved the grace of God
      - (c) God chose and loved and rescued because of who He is, then and now
        - i) You do not earn the grace of God
        - ii) You receive the grace of God and that grace, freely given, produces the fruit of the covenant in us
    - (2) “God’s covenant-relation to his people is what he will be ever mindful of, what he glories in, and what he will have us never forget, but give him the glory of:” (Henry, M. (1994). Matthew Henry’s commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume (p. 100). Peabody: Hendrickson.)
  - b. **The God of our Present: The Seven “I AM” Saying of Jesus**
    - (1) **The 7 sayings (in John)**
      - (a) **6:35** “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me

will never be thirsty."

- (b) **9:5**"I am the light of the world."
- (c) **10:7, 9**"Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep"
- (d) **10:11, 14**"I am the good shepherd."
- (e) **11:25-6**"I am the resurrection and the life."
- (f) **14:6**"I am the way, and the truth, and the life."
- (g) **15:1, 5**"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower."

(2) Jesus's point: Jesus Christ is I AM WHO I AM come in human flesh

(3) The implication for us

- (a) Jesus is God in human flesh
- (b) We, by divine election and realized faith, do not merely gain an effect through faith and faithfulness, but God Himself
  - i) We do not merely appropriate a commodity called favor, or blessing, or grace, or forgiveness, or wisdom, or strength as a response to faith in Christ
  - ii) We gain Christ
- (c) **If through faith we gain Christ, then in Christ, we gain God Himself living and loving in and through us!**
- (d) All that God declares Himself to be is with us and in us for His glory and for our joy, in Christ

c. The God of our Future

- (1) The same yesterday, today, and forever
- (2) Lo! I am with you to the end of the age.
- (3) I go to prepare a place for you that where I am you may be also.

2. **I AM - has led you to this moment, sustained you for this moment, and if you will give your life to Him, will be powerfully present in your life for all the moments to come into glorious eternity forever.**

3. "Moses asks after God's name . . . Yahweh responds by providing not a label but a theology. God will always be there for His people! He will always be whatever His people need Him to be in any given moment, in any given place. If they need a Deliverer, that's Yahweh. If they need grace and mercy and forgiveness, that's Yahweh. If they need purifying and empowerment, that's Yahweh. If they need rebuke and chastisement, that's Yahweh. If they need guidance, that's Yahweh. For God is a "I will be what I will be" God and a "I will be what I need to be for you" God.

a. Victor Hamilton, Exodus

b. More than being the God who *has* what you need, He is the God who *is* what you need!

- c. God does not give merely what He has to His people, He gives Himself to His people!

### **III. Relating to “I AM”**

#### **A. Core Components**

1. Faith - the personal commitment of confidence in God’s self-revelation and the implications for human life and living
  - a. Without faith it is impossible to please God
  - b. Faith is the gift of God
2. Worship - the physical/emotional/intellectual/spiritual recounting of God’s name and the implications of His glory and a relationship to Him.
3. Service - the practical activities of life that result from authentic faith and genuine worship.

#### **B. Invitation to “Know”**