

Any Last Words for Our Audience
Exodus 34:6-8a

We set out on this journey eight weeks ago to examine what God has to say about Himself in the context of Israel and the book of Exodus. We hear Pharaoh drop the challenge question that drives the entire book: Who is the LORD that I should obey Him? We see and hear God's response to the challenge not only in what God does for Israel and does to Egypt, but what God says directly to His people about Himself. One of the most significant aspects of God's self-revelation in Exodus is the pronouncement of His name, "I AM WHO I AM."

This morning, as we come to the close of this series and we look for any last words God might want to say to us before we move on into the Advent season, I want us to consider three implications God asserts about Himself by revealing His name to His people, and then I want us to close with this question: What is the appropriate response to God's self-revelation? How should people respond to God when He tells us about Himself?

I. First, let's look at four implications God asserts about Himself by revealing His name to His people, and through them, to the world.

A. The name of the Lord is revealed by God not assigned by men

1. **Exodus 3:13-15 (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.'"* ¹⁵ *God also said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.*
2. Naming customs
 - a. **Korea** - Korean names are written with the family name first. If Yeon Suk has the family name "Lee," his name will be written Lee Yeon Suk. The given name usually has two parts, and it follows the family name. Either part of the given name can be a generation marker: Two- part given names should not be shortened—that is, Lee Yeon Suk should be called Yeon Suk, not Yeon.
 - b. **Spanish** - It's hard to generalize naming conventions for children from Spanish-speaking countries. These students have a given name (often a two-part name) and two surnames: the father's family name followed by the mother's. For example, if a child registers as Ana Lorena López Ramírez, the school should retain both López and Ramírez in the child's records. The child should be called Ana Lorena. Schools often drop the father's name, which leads to confusion.
 - c. **Afghanistan** - Afghan names traditionally consist of only a first name. Last names are often chosen, when needed, using tribal

affiliation, place of birth, profession, or honorific titles. This may result in people within the same family having different last names. Male given names are compound or double names and often include an Islamic or Arabic component such as Ahmad or Mohammad, and women are generally given Persian or Pashto names.

- d. **Somalia** - Somali children have three personal names and no family name. In order to identify someone, all three names must be used. Names are a combination of a child's personal name, the father's personal name, and the paternal grandfather's personal name.
- e. **All of these names, though following cultural convention, have one thing in common, they are given to the child by someone other than the child.**
- f. **When God reveals His name, He reveals the name He gives Himself!**

3. **That God reveals His name indicates that all His name reveals about His nature is absolutely true and utterly trustworthy**

- a. What God cannot do when He reveals His own name
 - (1) God cannot lie
 - (a) **Numbers 23:19 (ESV) *God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?***
 - (b) **Hebrews 6:18 (ESV) *so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us.***
 - (c) Not just that God does not lie, chooses not to lie, it is the fact that because He is Truth and the source of all truth, by His nature, because of Who He is in His Person, it is by definition impossible for God to lie
 - (d) God cannot and will not intentionally or unintentionally misrepresent Himself in any way, shape, or form
 - (2) God cannot deny Himself, His being, His glory
 - (a) **2 Timothy 2:13 (ESV) *if we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.***
 - (b) God cannot and will not present Himself as less than He
- b. Therefore, all that is implied by the name He reveals must have the same character as Himself: absolutely true and utterly trustworthy
 - (1) When God says, "I am your provider" He's not just pulling your leg.

- (2) When God says, “Have faith in me and I will save you and give you eternal life,” God is not holding a carrot before the horse just to get worship.
- (3) Everything God says about Himself, because of Who He is, is absolutely true and trustworthy

B. The name of the Lord reveals the essence of His being

1. **Exodus 34:6-7 (ESV) ⁶ *The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, ⁷ keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.”***
2. Two primary revelations made here in this sentence that first spurred this series
 - a. God is compassionate
 - b. God is just
3. Eight Attributes that Characterize God
 - a. Merciful (Compassionate) - God genuinely cares about human beings and holds toward them a tender attitude of concern and compassion
 - b. Gracious - God does things for people that they do not deserve and goes beyond what might be expected to grant truly kind favor toward people, favor of which they are not necessarily worthy
 - c. Slow to anger - God is immensely patient with people’s less-than-satisfactory behavior
 - d. Abounding in steadfast love - God never deviates from the covenant He makes with His people regardless of how fickle and unreliable humans may be in their relationship with Him.
 - e. Abounding in faithfulness - whatever God says about Himself or anything else is correct and reliable and may be trusted even to the extent of life and death, even eternal life issues.
 - f. Keeping steadfast love for thousands -
 - (1) not just thousands of individuals but thousands of generations
 - (2) Colloquial way of saying that God promises to continue His covenant blessing on His people indefinitely, as long as they remains faithful and do not force him to unleash the covenant sanctions for faithlessness
 - g. Forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin
 - (1) By including this description God reveals that it is in His nature to forgive
 - (2) That means that the promise of forgiven sins and eternal life which we love so dearly
 - (a) flows not merely from a decision God makes,

- though that would be marvelous itself
 - (b) but flows from the very nature of God, it is an essential characteristic of Who He is
 - (c) So, when God forgives the sin of those who put their faith in Jesus Christ,
 - i) God does not reluctantly say, “Okay, since Jesus died for you,”
 - ii) instead He acts with delight to reveal His nature,
 - iii) which means He expresses His glory by saving sinners.
 - iv) And that’s why all heaven rejoices when one sinner comes to faith: God reveals His nature, His glory, and that is why all creation exists, to see and worship God in His glory
 - h. But by no means clears the guilty
 - (1) Corrective against the human tendency to think that sin is not big deal to a compassionate and merciful God
 - (2) What this clause means is that God doesn’t let anyone off the hook
 - (a) Either we pay for our own sins
 - (b) Or Christ pays for sins
 - (c) But all sin is punished
 - i. 3rd and 4th Generation
 - (1) Not that God punishes children for their father’s sin
 - (2) Or necessarily that generational consequences always follow sin
 - (3) Rather, no generation is free to follow the sins forgiven or judged in previous generations.
 - (a) Example: We cannot say that since God punished the sin of homosexuality at Sodom and Gomorrah, we are free in our day to practice that sin because God has already dealt with it
 - (b) These words demonstrate that God’s standard of holiness for human beings is applied to each generation as it comes.
 - (c) Sin will be judged in each generation as it continues to be repeated in each generation.

C. The name of the Lord is the identity of the redeemed -

- 1. Two testaments
 - a. **Deuteronomy 28:10 (ESV) *And all the peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of you.***
 - b. **Revelation 3:12 (ESV) *The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I***

will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name.

2. Wedding decor - He took my hand, so I took his name
3. **God sets His identity on the people of His choosing**
 - a. When God reveals His name to His covenant people, He is showing them how their lives are going to change as a result of their relationship with Him
 - b. Those upon whom Christ sets His name will for their rest of their lives undergo an inside out transformation in which they, through the word and power of God, will become more like the One whose name they bear.
 - (1) True of Christians who become more like Jesus
 - (2) True of sinners who become more like Satan, the god of this world and the Father of lies and liars

II. What is the appropriate response to God's self-revelation?

A. Moses worshiped

1. Moses, in the presence of God, honored him with His thoughts and actions
2. Moses, in the presence of God, worshiped God before appealing to God
3. Moses, in the presence of God, reduced himself and exalted God

B. Potential Responses

1. Put your faith in Jesus Christ as an appropriate response to God's self-revelation
2. Eagerly participate in the Spirit's sanctifying work by abandoning sin and walking in faithfulness to God's word.