

## Exodus 3:1-15 Discussion Questions

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### A Little Context

The episode of the burning bush is one of the most important passages in Scripture about the nature and character of God. But it is important to keep several things in mind when looking at the passage.

First, the last few verses of the previous chapter set the stage for God calling Moses. Israel groaned in their slavery and cried out to God. God heard them and remembered his covenant with Abraham (Ex. 2:23-25).

Second, Exodus 3 lists two legitimate questions Moses asks of God but the dialogue continues through 4:17 where Moses asks an additional three questions eventually angering God. The last two in particular reveal Moses' reluctance to take on the task.

Third, in four of the five responses to Moses' questions (4:1 is the exception), contains a play on words with "I AM." God responds "I will be with you... I AM... take your staff... I will be with your mouth... I will help both you and speak."

Forth, the divine name is Yahweh (Y-H-W-H) and is similar to the first person form of the Hebrew verb for "to be." Hence there is a connection with the statements that the Lord will be with Moses, who is "I AM." Two things in particular are important about the divine name. It communicates God's eternal unchanging nature and intrinsically connected to his mighty acts. Meaning, God's name and his works must be understood together.

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### Questions

1. What is at stake if God does not intervene (Ex. 2:23-25)?
2. Why do you think Moses hid his face when God spoke to him from the burning bush? Do you think being afraid of seeing God is a good thing? Why or why not?
3. What does God say he has come down to do? Why is it important that God not only speaks but that he also acts?
4. Moses does not think he is up for the task. What is God's response to Moses? When you feel overwhelmed by a task, what difference does it make to know the Lord is with you?
5. Moses, knowing he may be rejected as a leader for Israel, asks how will Israel know if God can do it. God's response is profound. What difference does it make in daily life, and dire circumstances, that God is infinite, eternal, and unchanging?
6. God's awesome nature is not considered a barrier to Moses speaking with him. What can we learn from how Moses engages God? How would you characterize how you speak with God?