
“Exodus”

Fall Series 1

Lesson 3

“Exodus 2:23-4:31”

Objective: To examine the account of the exodus from Egypt and to learn as much as we can about the nature of God, His mercy and what He desires for His creation. We will seek to do this by examining the historical background of the Exodus account, the interpretive history of Exodus amongst both Jewish and Christian scholars, where helpful. We will seek to understand the message of Exodus for us as Christians living in the 21st century American context.

Materials: The Bible, Ancient translations, Commentaries, both ancient and modern, Books, journal articles, dictionaries, the internet, and other resources as may be appropriate.

Procedures

1. To explore the message God of hope that the original audience will have understood from this text.
2. To understand how this text has inspired, challenged, and educated people down through the centuries guiding them not only in their personal lives, but the destinies of governments and nations.
3. We will seek to find out how these beliefs have played a role in the history of Christianity and how they continue to impact our existence and service to Jesus Christ today.
4. We will provide a sheet to take home as a reminder of what has been examined and to provide additional opportunities for consideration of these truths and their application in our daily living out of our eternal destiny beginning now. This sheet can be used as a discussion guide for small group discussion. We have several groups using this effectively.

At 2:23 there is change in the narrative, which is signaled to the audience by informing them that the “king of Egypt died.” There is a redirection in the story of attention to the plight of the Israelites, who were groaning under their slavery in Egypt and crying out. That cry rose up to God and it is heard by Him and will trigger the remembrance of the covenant that He made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This will then lead to Him directly, and actively, intervening on behalf of Israel in the history of men. This will be highlighted quite emphatically as there is a fivefold reference to God in just three verses.¹ We are told that God “took notice;” this is what the NRSV has, but the Hebrew text literally says “He knew” (יָדַע) them. This is a significant word within the Hebrew context and is often used to express more than simply a surface knowledge it express a greater intimacy.

For some reason, the *New English Translation* wants to change the focus on to the Israelites coming to know God, but this is an improper translation and an improper interpretation due to the fact that the verb used here is singular and the “sons of Israel” (בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל) is plural, and definitely not standing as the

¹ Nahum M. Sarna, *Exodus*, in the JPS Torah Commentary series (Philadelphia PA: The Jewish Publication Society, 1991), p. 13.

subject of this second clause. In addition, this phrase actually carries the direct object marker linking it back to the previous verb (ראה - to see) indicating that God is the one performing the action here; this is not a passive verb. In addition, the usage here is in line with what is common in ancient Arabic and Aramaic (Kindred languages to Hebrew) idioms meaning something along the lines of “He took cognizance.” “The four consecutive clauses that begin with a verb followed by the subject *’Elōhīm* [‘God’] (‘and God heard’, ‘and God remembered’, ‘and God saw’, ‘and God knew’), form a harmonious parallelism with each other, and describe stage by stage, the Divine response to the groaning of the children of Israel: first He hears the groaning, then He remembers the covenant, thereafter He considers the position of the Israelites, and finally He decides to intervene in the matter.”²

We turn then to chapter three with Moses keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro. This new section begins by narrating the start of God’s taking action on behalf of His people. We are made very much aware that this action takes place because of His covenant with the patriarchs; God is keeping His promises. This

² U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Exodus* (Skokie IL: Varda Books, 2005), p. 29.

introduction of Moses to God is one of the most fateful encounters in all of Jewish history, it is when Moses meets Yahweh for the first time.³ Moses is tending the flock near Mount Horeb, which is also called the “mountain of God.” The name of this mountain indicates that possibly it had already been the location of previous appearances of God, but if it is, it appears that Moses has no awareness of this, at this point in time. Another possibility is that, because of this incident, this mountain came to be known after this encounter as the “mountain of God.”⁴ The demoralized and enslaved people, the Israelites, need a leader to represent them before the Egyptian authorities, and the appointment of that leader (Moses) will be God’s first act of intervention on behalf of the Israelites.⁵

In 3:2, we are told that an “angel,” or a “messenger,” (מַלְאָךְ) of *Yahweh* (יְהוָה) appeared to Moses in the flame of the bush. The covenant name *Yahweh* is used here even before it is revealed to Moses in the narrative sequence. In our English Bibles the

³ Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, *Exodus: the Book of Redemption*, in the Covenant & Conversation series (Jerusalem: Maggid Books & The orthodox Union, 2010), p. 35.

⁴ U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Exodus*, p. 31.

⁵ Nahum M. Sarna, *Exodus*, in the JPS Torah Commentary series, p. 13.

convention of Judaism is used which substitutes the word LORD for this covenant name, *Yahweh*, or the Tetragrammaton as it is sometimes known (יהוה). This is due to the desire never to take this sacred NAME in vain, and because of the perception in the second Temple period that this was a name of power. The Old Greek text uses the word *Kurios* - Lord (κυρίου - *Kurios* in the nominative case) here likely in deference to this same tradition. This can be important information for us to know as when we come to the New Testament it becomes difficult to know when the covenant Name of God is used (YHWH), and when the text actually is referring to someone using this word as a title of respect (*Lord*). In 3:3 Moses notices the fire in the bush, but he also notices that it is not consumed and he indicates a desire to turn aside and see it.

When God sees Moses (3:4) He calls to him out of the bush. It is important to notice that it is God who speaks to Moses and not the angel. God calls out his name twice and then He tells him to remove his sandals (3:5) because he is standing on “holy ground.” The vicinity surrounding the burning bush is sacred, like a temple, or tabernacle. According to Numbers 5:16-31 even the dust on the floor of the tabernacle is considered sacred and it is

used in a process to prove the fidelity of a woman suspected of adultery.⁶ God proceeds to reveal who He is; He is the God of the patriarchs of Israel. We are told that Moses was “afraid” (אָיַד) to look at God. In this first encounter with God Moses hides his face from Him. This is an experience that is shared by numerous other characters in the Bible. Perhaps there is even some reminiscence here of the hiding of Adam and Eve from God in the Garden of Eden after their rebellion against God. Later on, Moses will become more familiar with God and even request a glimpse of His Divine Presence.⁷

At 3:7 God gets directly to the point, He has seen the misery of His people, heard their cry and He “knows” (יָדָע) their “sufferings.” 3:8 makes clear His intent, God has come down to deliver them from the Egyptians and to bring them into another land; the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and Jebusites. In God’s moving from observing, and remembering to action we see that God does not remain passive. We observe here the nature of God, who seeks to

⁶ William H. C. Propp, *Exodus 1-18*, in the Anchor Yale Bible series, Vo. 2 (New Haven CT: The Anchor Yale Bible, 2010), p. 200.

⁷ Exodus 33:18. Nahum M. Sarna, *Exodus*, in the JPS Torah Commentary series, p. 15.

bring justice and deliverance to His people. God has come down “to deliver” His people. God will bring them into a good land flowing with “milk and honey” (חֶלֶב וְדָבָשׁ). It is perhaps the case here that our image of a land flowing with milk and honey today is very different from their image of what this meant. They will have been accustomed to receiving their milk from goats and not from cows (the little man’s cow). This indicates that there would be ample pasture for numerous goats. “Honey” in the Bible is predominantly the thick, sweet syrup produced from dates. Apiculture (the keeping of bees) seems to have been unknown in Palestine, with the few explicit references to what we call honey, in the Bible, pertaining to the wild variety.⁸

The list of those currently occupying the land of Canaan introduces us to the complexity of many issues in that place. There is great variance in the ethnic makeup of these occupants, which is in some ways also a reflection of the great variety in the land of its topography and its climate. There is a coastal plain which gives way to the central mountain region, which in turn yields abruptly and impressively to the Jordan Valley, only to then

⁸ Nahum M. Sarna, *Exodus*, in the JPS Torah Commentary series, p. 16.

be succeeded by the plateau of the Transjordan. The extremes in altitude are truly astonishing. The mountains of Lebanon rise to a height of 8,880 feet above sea level, and the deepest point of the Dead Sea lies about 2,500 feet below the level of the Mediterranean. The intensity, and the direction, of the winds, the seasonal rainfalls, the deposits of dew, and the widely fluctuating variations in temperature are also quite dramatic.⁹

Another factor of major importance for our understanding of this land is that the major overland routes of the ancient world passed through this land. The internal disunity of the people of this land, that was promoted in part by nature, was further intensified by the powerful and the diverse cultural forces that passed regularly through the land. There were also pressures placed on the people of this land by the continual struggles for control of these overland routes of travel. This would lead to the fact that throughout the long history of the country it was usually ruled by foreign powers. Its fate was seldom tied to the fortunes of any one people within it, with the sole exception of Israel during the biblical period, the Second Jewish Commonwealth, and

⁹ Nahum M. Sarna, *Exodus*, in the JPS Torah Commentary series, p. 16.

today.¹⁰ In so many ways this is a land that is difficult to defend from invasion and highly desirable to foreign invaders. God is seeking to place His people in a location where they will constantly need His help and assistance and where they have the opportunity to influence many people and many cultures with whom they will have regular contact.

At 3:10 God comes to His point with Moses telling him that He will send him to Pharaoh in order to bring His people out of Egypt. Moses objects to this, expressing that he is unworthy to do such a thing. This response of humility and inadequacy for the task draws and immediate response back from God. God tells Moses that He will be with Him. The issue of the giving of a sign here is problematical. Usually, in the context of the Bible, a sign is given to encourage, or to assure people that something was from God. Here the English translation makes it look like the sign will be given at a later time, when the people come out of Egypt to this mountain. This is an incorrect understanding of the Hebrew here. The sign is to be understood as either being the sign of the burning bush, or it is to be found in the fact that Moses will have

¹⁰ Nahum M. Sarna, *Exodus*, in the JPS Torah Commentary series, p. 16.

God with him as he negotiates with Pharaoh. The sign is certainly not to be found in the following clause that speaks of Israel coming to the mountain to worship.¹¹ It seems to me that it is most probable that the sign is to be seen in the fact that God will be with Moses as he negotiates with Pharaoh.

At 3:13 Moses offers his second objection to God. This time he indicates that the people are not likely to lend to him authority to act on their behalf based simply on saying that “the God of your fathers” has sent me. Such an epithet was widely used in the Near East and could be considered applicable to any of the pagan gods without providing any real specificity. In asking the question that he does, Moses appears to implicitly deny knowing the name of the God of Abraham.¹² 3:14 introduces us to the moment when God begins revealing His name. For us today, this is not nearly as significant a moment as it would have likely been for them.

Knowing the name of a god was thought to give one power over that God. In Ancient Egypt there is the legend that the god Ra had a great name by which he ruled over the world and all things in

¹¹ William Johnstone, *Exodus 1-19*, in the Smyth & Helwys Commentary series (Macon GA: Smyth and Helwys Publishing Inc., 2014), pp. 79-80. Nahum M. Sarna, *Exodus*, in the JPS Torah Commentary series, p. 17.

¹² Nahum M. Sarna, *Exodus*, in the JPS Torah Commentary series, p. 17.

full power. His name was unknown to the other gods, to kings, and to all humankind. This name was never spoken and remained hidden so that no magician would have power over him. The legend is, that one day, the magician-goddess, Auset created a plot and tricked Ra into revealing his name. He consequently lost his dominance.¹³

Knowing a name was understood as giving power to the one who knew the name and who proclaimed it. It was thought, by the Egyptians that the great name of the god Ra was used in order to bring about all things at the creation. Subsequently, it was thought that the only way that a person could come into existence on the earth was by pronouncing “a name.” Without a name a person could not be identified at judgement. Use of a name could be used to bring a curse to its owner, or perhaps healing, or a blessing. The name of a person was thought to be a part of their very being as much as their soul, or their body. Names were often kept secret in order to keep the owner of that name safe from manipulation by magic.¹⁴ It will almost certainly have been the

¹³ Eleanor L. Harris, *Ancient Egyptian Divination and Magic* (York Beach ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1998), pp. 100-101.

¹⁴ Eleanor L. Harris, *Ancient Egyptian Divination and Magic*, p. 101.

case that Moses will have been aware of the significance of a name in that cultural setting.

As one might expect there is a great deal written regarding the “name” that was revealed to Moses, but in reality the translation and understanding of the name given to Moses is clouded in mystery and intense speculation. Whatever was the intent of the name given there is still a great deal of mystery left and maybe even new mystery created. The name “Yahweh” as it has come to be understood by most today: in the past was often referred to using the very incorrect designation “Jehovah.” *Yahweh* meant something along the lines of “I am,” or “I will be.” The pronunciation of this name as “Jehovah is certainly incorrect as there is no “J” in Hebrew to start with, not in Greek, nor Latin for that matter, and the vowel pattern of “Jehovah” is an artificial construct. The word Jehovah then is of Germanic origin with the vowels borrowed from *Elohim* (the Hebrew word for God) and *Adonai* (the Hebrew word for Lord). In the Old Greek Translation (the Septuagint), the words used here for the NAME are rendered using the phrase *Egō eime ho ōn* (Ἐγώ εἶμι ὁ ὢν - “I am the one being, or existing).

The fact is no one living today knows with certainty how to pronounce this name, but *Yahweh* is in my opinion the best guess. It was during the Second Temple period that the Tetragrammaton (יהוה) came to be regarded as charged with a metaphysical potency and therefore it ceased to be pronounced. It was then replaced in pronunciation by the Hebrew word for Lord (*adonai* - אֲדֹנָי).¹⁵ Some speculate that the name revealed to Moses was never known before that moment when God revealed it on the mountain, which in some sense seems illogical to us today. The whole point of asking for the name was so that the people would know who had sent Moses. It therefore seems logical to us that they would recognize the name that Moses gave them. The problem with this line of reasoning is that it is both a Western and a Modern line of reasoning, which does not fit with the context of this text at all. We simply know that a name was given, everything else is speculation, and debatable. Some speculate, I think with good reason, that the name given to Moses by God was not really a name at all as we know it. It was meant to tell people that God will be what He chooses to be and He is unpredictable and beyond

¹⁵ Nahum M. Sarna, *Exodus*, in the JPS Torah Commentary series, p. 18.



comprehension.¹⁶ God refused to be manipulated, summoned, or commanded. He is free, and He chooses to do what He does because He truly has the freedom to do so as no one, or no other thing, has the same degree of freedom.

At 3:15, the emphasis is upon the unvarying dependability of God who was in the past the faithful God known to the patriarchs and He will be faithful for all eternity.¹⁷ Then at verse 16 Moses is told to go and assemble the “elders of Israel” and pronounce to them that God had appeared to him (Moses) and to let them know that He (God) has heard the outcry of the people and has given “heed” to them. At 3:17, He then promises to bring them out of their misery in Egypt to the land of Canaan, a rich and fertile land. At 3:18 God indicates that the elders will listen to him and then they (Moses and the elders) are to go before the king of Egypt and ask that he let them go on a three day journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to “*Yahweh* our God.”

God lets Moses know (3:19) that this request will be refused by the king and he will need to be compelled by a “mighty hand.” God will then stretch out His hand and perform mighty wonders

¹⁶ William Johnstone, *Exodus 1-19*, pp. 82-83.

¹⁷ Nahum M. Sarna, *Exodus*, in the JPS Torah Commentary series, p. 18.

(4:20) and after these wonders Pharaoh will let the people of Israel go. God will also cause the people of Egypt to be favorably disposed toward them so that they will not leave Egypt empty-handed, but they shall “plunder Egypt.” They shall leave with much wealth. This dignified departure from Egypt was foretold in the original covenant with Abraham.¹⁸

As we come to chapter 4, Moses continues to offer objections to being the chosen agent of God for the deliverance of His people. This time, God does not refute the argument that Moses gives that the people may not believe that He is sent from Him. God then gives Moses the first sign that can be used to convince the people of Israel, and Pharaoh. At 4:3 Moses is told to throw down the staff that was in his hand onto the ground and when he does it becomes “serpent” (שָׂרָפָה).¹⁹ The immediate response of Moses is to draw away from the serpent and then God tells him to reach out his hand and take hold of its tail. He does so, which demonstrates at least a modicum of trust in God at this point. At 4:6 Moses is told to put his hand into his cloak and when

¹⁸ Genesis 15:14 **but I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions.** NRSV.

¹⁹ This is the same word used in Genesis 3:1 when the serpent that was involved with Eve is first mentioned.

he took it out we traditionally find the translation of what he saw as “leprous.” The description given here, and at Leviticus 13-14, are in fact incompatible with Hansen’s disease, which is what we today generally refer to as leprosy. His hand was white and encrusted with a flakiness. This is commonly seen as an ominous sign of divine punishment and may refer to a variety of skin disorders other than just leprosy.²⁰

Moses is told to put his hand back into his cloak at 4:7 and when he withdraws it this time it is restored to health and appearance. At 4:9 God gives instructions about turning water from the Nile into blood. He is to dip the water from the river and pour it onto dry ground, where it will become blood. At 4:10 Moses continues to put forward yet another objection, this time that he is not eloquent, and that he is slow of speech. After an initial rebuke to Moses with God telling him that it is in fact God that gives speech to mortals, through a series of questions: God tells Moses that He would be his mouth and teach him what to speak (4:12). Finally at 4:13 we arrive at Moses’s true desire in objecting, which is that God would send someone else.

²⁰ Nahum M. Sarna, *Exodus*, in the JPS Torah Commentary series, p. 21.

At 4:14 we are told that the anger of Yahweh was then kindled against Moses and so he asks him about his brother Aaron, who he says can speak fluently. The solution then is that Moses will put the words to Aaron and that he will speak on behalf of Moses (4:15-16) the words given to Him by God. At 4:17 Moses is dismissed by God being told to take his staff in his hand. At 4:18 Moses then goes back to his father-in-law Jethro and asks for his leave to return to Egypt telling him only that he wishes to return to see if his kin are still living. At 4:19 we are told that Yahweh once again instructs Moses to return to Egypt, and He tells him this time that those who were seeking his life are dead. So Moses loads up his wife and sons on a donkey and departs for Egypt carrying the staff of God in his hand.

At 4:21-23 the message that Moses is to give to the Pharaoh was laid out again along with the statement that God would harden the heart of Pharaoh and that he would refuse to let the people go. We will deal with this issue of the “hardening of the heart” of Pharaoh more later on in the narrative that follows. What we have in these verses is a brief synopsis of a larger narrative that encapsulates in a general fashion the ten plagues



that will come. At 4:24-26 there is an account that seems utterly strange and confusing to us. This unexpected episode stands out in a way that perhaps reflects the nature of God that is described in His name. He is truly mysterious and unpredictable. It is human nature that we seek to understand the reason for this incident and we seek to learn what we need in order to avoid such an encounter with God. Such threatening divine visitations are not without precedent in Scripture. Divine visitations threaten the survival of Isaac at Genesis 22:1-8, and Jacob at 32:23-33. These incidents happened to the first two generations of ancestors who were the only direct descendants of Abraham. They were essential for the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham from God with regard to progeny and land.²¹ Without them it seems inconceivable that the promises of God could be kept, at least from a human perspective. So this narrative stands in much the same tradition as those accounts.

There are considerable differences in the accounts given in the Hebrew Text (Masoretic Text) and this same account given in the Old Greek Text (The Septuagint). The text for this section of

²¹ William Johnstone, *Exodus 1-19*, pp. 112-115.

Exodus is heavily damaged in all the manuscripts found near the Dead Sea (The Dead Sea Scrolls). It appears that the son of Moses had not been circumcised and that this mysterious account seeks to make it clear that circumcision is of critical importance for the people of Israel as a sign of covenant loyalty. Beyond this, there is a great deal of speculative material as one might expect, but in reality it is all highly speculative and there is much disagreement between both Rabbis and scholars regarding any additional meaning here.

Immediately after this account (4:27), we have Yahweh speaking to Aaron telling him to go into the wilderness to meet Moses. He does this and when he meets Moses (verse 28) Moses tells Aaron what God had told him and about the signs he was to give in order to convince the people of his authority to speak on behalf of Yahweh. Moses and Aaron call together the “elders of the Israelites” (verse 29) and spoke the words of God and performed the signs before the people (verse 30). The response of the people was that they believed, and when they realized that Yahweh had seen their misery and given heed to it they responded by bowing

down and worshiping (verse 31). Surely this is always a fitting and proper response to the words of God.

The stage is now set for the great encounter between an enslaved people's God and the gods of the greatest superpower of this era. In the next several chapters this great battle of power will unfold, between Yahweh and the gods of Egypt.

Synopsis

In this section we are introduced to the groaning of the people of Israel because of the oppression of Pharaoh and now that Pharaoh dies, and it is made clear that God has heard the groaning of Israel. Not only has He heard this groaning, He has remembered His covenant with the patriarchs and He has taken notice. His first action then is to call a leader to be a spokesman before the new Pharaoh. Moses is called by God; He uses a burning bush that is not consumed to get his attention. Moses is called by name by the very voice of God.

Moses responds and approaches God and when God conveys that He wants him to be his representative before Pharaoh he responds with a series of objections which disclose details about the nature of God. Moses asks for God's name and is given powerful signs to use to demonstrate His authority to speak on behalf of Yahweh. God promises to deliver Israel to a rich land that would allow them to prosper and grow. He also reminds Moses that the promise that He made to Abraham that He would

bring judgement on the nation oppressing them would be kept too.

Moses goes back to Jethro and asks for his permission to leave for Egypt. He does so with his sons and wife on a donkey and on the way has a near fatal encounter with Yahweh that is corrected through Zipporah's quick action to circumcise her son and touch the foreskin to Moses thus averting the death of Moses. Moses then meets up with Aaron, they meet with the elders of Israel who respond with belief and in worship of Yahweh. The stage is now set for the conflict to begin.

Questions

1. When you think of great stories of people keeping their word to others what part of those stories inspire you the most?
2. What causes you to notice that other people need help?
3. What are some ways that you let other people know that you need help?
4. Notice that God heard the “groaning” of the Israelites and this is what elicits a response from God. What do you think this means for us today?
5. Why do you think the story of the “burning bush” is so memorable to us and to previous generations?
6. What are some ways that you have sensed the calling of God in your own life?
7. What are some ways that people today try to hide from God?
8. What are some ways that we might be more empathetic to those who are suffering?
9. Why do you think God sends a man to Pharaoh to initiate His deliverance of His people rather than just simply doing it Himself?
10. How do you think God’s using of a man to initiate His deliverance of people should challenge us today?
11. What are some of the excuses that you give to God for not answering His call on your life?
12. What are some things that help you to believe, and to trust in God? Why?
13. What are some of the excuses that people give to God when they do not want to follow Him, or when they are afraid to follow Him?

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14. Do you believe that God is predictable? Why? How do you deal with Exodus 4:24-26?
 15. Why do you think God is mysterious to us?
 16. Why do you think there is a tendency to dispel the mystery of God among people?
 17. How do you think the words of God should affect people that believe in Him?
 18. Why do you think God puts up with the reluctance of Moses?
 19. How do you think the account of how God deals with Moses should challenge our view of God?

To Take Home

What is Important to know?

It is important to know that God keeps his promises. Often we have some idea of how promises should be kept, but God is not bound by the limited options that we might be able to imagine. It is important to know that God seeks to involve people in His acts of deliverance and that He expects them to trust Him even when they cannot see how things might work out. When is a time in your own life that you have received the benefit of an unanticipated outcome that blessed your life?

Where is God in these words?

God is in these words hearing the groans of His people and remembering his promises to the patriarchs. God is not absent, or distant, He responds to the needs of His people. God selects people to be His agents and He empowers them to be a part of His powerful acts of deliverance. God listens to each of the objections of Moses and responds to them with a solution. Mostly that solution is to recognize that he (Moses) is not alone and that God will be with him. Where do you hear the words of God in your life challenging you?

What does any of this mean for how I live my life?

I suspect that Moses would have been perfectly content to tend sheep and raise children in Midian and yet God had something different that He wanted him to do. Maybe God is not calling you to be Moses, but I am certain that God has things that He wants all of us to do that demonstrate our trust in Him and our desire to be a part of His redemption of the world. What are some ways that your life is changed by realizing that God is calling you to be a part of His plan and His Kingdom?

What is the word of God calling us to do?

I think very often we would love to see a burning bush and hear the voice of God distinctly speaking to us. At least I think we sometimes think that. I think sometimes we think if only we had lived in the time of Moses, or in the time of Jesus we would be more faithful. The truth is we live in a very special time when so much more of the revelation of God's plan has come. We live on this side of the exodus, and on this side of the coming of the Messiah. God has continually revealed His nature and His will to those who would listen. He has shown us so much about His nature and His plans. What are the doubts that people today hold in their hearts that keep them from being obedient to the words and the will of God?