



I am Because I Am – Touchpoint for March 19th, 2025

Exodus 3:3-15 , 1Cothenanis 10:1-4 & 1Corinthians 10:12 (NRSVUE) I Am Because I Am

TOUCH POINT

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness and came to Mount Horeb,^[a] the mountain of God. ²There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, “I must turn aside and look at this great sight and see why the bush is not burned up.” When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” Then he said, “Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” He said further, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Then the Lord said, “I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. Now go, I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.” But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” He said, “I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.”

But Moses said to God, “If I come to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” ¹⁴God said to Moses, “I am who I am.”^[b] He said further, “Thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘I am has sent me to you.’ ” God also said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘The Lord,^[c] the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you’:

***This is my name forever,
and this my title for all generations.***

1 Corinthians 10:1-4

New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ²and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ.

1 Corinthians 10:12

¹²So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall.

Grace and peace to you, from the mystery in whom we live and move and have our being

WHERE DO YOU STAND?

These days, when someone asks, “where do you stand?” We naturally wonder the context of the question be it politics, religion or sports, etc.

When the voice coming from the burning bush spoke to Moses. The voice did not ask Moses where he stood. God told Moses, where Moses stood. He was standing on holy ground. A place separate from an opinion or a thesis. Where he stood did not represent a rant or a proposition. When Moses learned he stood on holy ground, the voice of God pierced through the pain of the world and the personal obligations of a shepherd doing his job in one existential moment.

God saw the misery and suffering of his people, and this is when the God of mercy’s gloves come off and Moses’s shoes are removed.

The voice told Moses to remove his sandals while he was standing on Holy Ground.

Why would he need to remove his sandals? Some say because it was a sign of reverence and humility. Others say it was symbolic of one surrendering any earthly claim or ownership. Whatever reason, the voice told Moses he was standing on holy ground.

Holy ground is when we stand where God stands.

Holy ground is not geographically challenged. It is there for anyone who listens for the voice in a world of factory-made Crocs and Cole Haans.

Moses is given an impossible task. No wonder Moses needed to know where God stood. Any footing Moses or us for that matter are standing, is no match for the eternal grounding of all things.

Standing where God stands is the most difficult place to remain when faced with internal and external challenges? Moses for example freaked out when he thought about facing the power of the Pharaoh.

I AM WHO I AM

This is when the voice identified God’s self as I AM. The ultimate authority Moses would need to rely. Just like the children of Israel being brought out of captivity, they have relapses and need to be reminded to stand on I AM.

The very foundations of all our contrived methods of belief and practice will shake in the face of unearthly pain and suffering. In those moments our sandals must come off. When we, the children of God, are tempted to melt our treasures into idols over our religion, politics, opinions, popularity or possessions, we must first remove our sandals and listen to the voice

that burns with intense love for the suffering and for those held captive.

To respond to the voice the way Moses did is to say, "Here I am." An acknowledgement that nothing I build, no false theory I follow, and no god I construct can withstand the eternal flames of God's loving presence. I AM.

I AM. Not the I'm going to be, or the I was, but the I AM.

No controlling methods of survival can survive in the, I AM. Anxiety, that thing that fuels my desire to flee, cannot exist when I remove my sandals and see where I AM is standing. Worry only cares about the future and cannot exist when I remove my sandals and see where I AM. Moses must have felt both anxiety and worry when he asked, "Who should I say sent me." The voice says, "Tell them I AM sent you.

Our existence rests on the name I Am. How brilliant this dialogue between Moses and the divine I Am. Moses cannot separate his own name from I AM. I AM because God is.

Let us stop and rest on the weightiness that rests on the words I AM. The very presence of God stands on the phrase I AM. It needs no assistance from books like, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, or *A Case for Christ* too defend it.

With Moses, the fate of a whole generation teetered on the answer the voice would give to Moses's question "on whose authority should I say sent me?"

God said, "Tell them I AM sent you."

SENT BY I AM

A grammar cop must lay down their correctness. A preacher must be quiet. Even a would-be prophet must relinquish their duties when standing on I AM.

Just witness one man, Moses, who is tasked to lead a whole generation and future generations out of captivity. Moses is being asked to extinguish all ideas and titles of unworthy gods, the god of fear, knowing, certainty, future promise, investment, illusions, and righteous performance in exchange for I Am.

"Tell them I Am sent you."

The, I AM leading Moses always moved the children of Israel back into the eternal present when they attempted to gaze into their future fears and present circumstances.

Paul reminds the Corinthians of this truth. You are not standing! The, I AM is standing in you. This is the eternal presence that our ancestors are standing as well. They have forever moved into the I Am-ness of God and therefore stand with us.

But oh, how the ego compels us to take back control.

Like the Israelites we demand or maybe inadvertently settle for more tangible gods. Gods that give us the illusion we can control all the outcomes.

This place of intimacy and receptivity with I AM, is its own reward. Perhaps this is what it means to be in Christ, to be seated in heavenly places and to stand on holy ground.

Amen

Opening Songs

Be Still

(The London Fox Taizé Choir)

Be Still, know that I am God

Lamb of God

(Salt of the Sound)

Lamb of God, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God (hear our prayer),

Lamb of God, Grant us peace (hear us pray).

This we pray.

Bible Passage

(A passage takes us from one place to another)

Touchpoint

(Where God's story touches our life story)

Come O Lord and Set Us Free

(John L. Bell, The Wild Goose Collection)

Come, O Lord and set us free. Give/Bring your people peace.

Come, O Lord and set us free. Come Lord Jesus, Come.

1. And take our guilt away. Give us your pardon Lord.
2. Free from our self-obsession. Free from each fond possession.
3. Free to affirm each other...as sister and as brother

Reshape the world you made. Let what your hand created...be always celebrated.

The Meal

The Lord's Prayer

(The Scottish Festival Singers)

Benediction

May God Keep and Bless You

(Marty Haugen)

May God keep and bless you, and nothing distress you. May God guard and guide you and friends walk beside you. May God's arms surround you and fear not confound you. May God's

light shine through you and night not subdue you. As you sleep and wake may your prayers arise as love songs for God, whose love never dies, whose love never dies.

Amen