

The 'I AM' God Exodus 3:14

If it is, as we saw, impossible to know ourselves without knowing God then most don't know themselves; because, most die destitute of the knowledge of God and self.

Life's greatest possible discovery is God, who He is, what He's like and what He offers. Thankful He is not far from us. One just has to be told where to look and then receive it with an honest and open heart. **"Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is to bring Christ down) or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? 'The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart' (that is the word of faith that we proclaim).**

This is the great lesson that was made available to Israel and thankfully it's available to us today.

Tell the Story:

Exodus 3:14 answers the second of two questions put to God by Moses. The questions are as vital to us today as they were to Israel when they were first asked.

The first question was answered in **vv. 11-12**. The translations struggle to convey the emphasis on the personal pronouns contained in both the question and the answer. Moses asks, **"Whom am I that I should go to Pharaoh?"** God's answer is, **"But I will be with you."** The point is, **"I am with you, I have sent you."**

The question that follows is more penetrating. **"... 'What is His name?' 'What shall I say?'"** The question has

little to do with *identity*. It is primarily concerned with *capability*. The question Moses anticipated wasn't about who God was, but what can God *do*. Things were very different from the times of **"the Fathers."**

Today many are tempted to ask the same question. What can this God do, what difference can He really make in a world like this?

God's answer to Moses is also His answer to us. **"I AM WHO I AM."** Let me draw your attention to three things:

1. **The name that's more than a name.** hy<h.a, rv,a] hy<h.a, **"I AM WHO I AM."** It is from the Hebrew imperfect verb *hyh* "to be" connoting continued unfinished action, eternal self-existence. In Greek it is *evgw, eivmi*.
 - a. **It is a name.** **Cf. V. 15.** It was given as the personal name of God regarded as so sacred it was feared to be uttered. **Cf. Ex. 20:7.** Translated LORD in most English versions.
 - b. **It's more than a name.** This was more than a designation for God. It was first and foremost the disclosure of God's most essential and basic attribute. It is an awful assertion of authority, a declaration of an essential reality.

This is why God so often **"Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of Hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last.'" Isa. 44:6.**

2. **The theological implications of the name.** God is the eternal self-existent one. **It means four things:**

a. **He is pure underived being itself.** In the east a number of terms were used to describe this. “(qeoj anarxoj), God, without beginning or cause, unbegotten” and “(autogennhtoj) the self generate, (autofuhj) self-begotten, (autousioj) self-existent, (autoqeoj) self-divine, (autofwj) self-luminous, (autosofia) self-wise, (autoareth) self-virtuous, (autagaqoj) self-excellent. The Scripture puts it.... **Ps. 90:1.**

b. **He is utterly independent of His creatures.** He *is*; the creature *exists*. He is absolute. He has need of nothing outside Himself. He depends on no one or anything. **Cf. Acts 17:25; Ps. 50:12.** He is utterly independent in His counsel, mind, will. **Cf. Ro. 11:33-36.** He is therefore worthy of whatever worship and service He is pleased to require.

c. **His creation is utterly dependent upon and subject to Him.** The created order is entirely dependant upon God for original and continued existence. **Cf. Ps. 104:24-35; Da. 5:23.**

d. **God is absolutely sovereign.** **Cf. Ps. 115:3.** God is has a right and is able to do whatever He pleases with His creatures. **“For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In His hands are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains are His also.” Ps. 95:3-4. “The LORD kills and brings to life; He brings down to Sheol and raises up.” 1Sa.**

2:6. This is true of the salvation and damnation of sinners. **Cf. Ro. 9:14-24.**

3. **The practical relevance of the name.** It is relevant in **three awesome ways:**

a. **We have this God.** Note that two times the name is stated as equivalent to the God of the Fathers. **Cf. Vv. 15, 16.** There is continuity between Abraham, Moses and us.

b. **The name is most fully revealed in Jesus.** Jesus took this designation upon His lips and calls us to embrace His as its ultimate fulfillment. **Cf. Isa. 52:5-12; Jn. 8:48-59.**

c. **He is more than enough for His people.** God extended a ‘sign’ to Moses that required faith. **Cf. V. 12.** He would manifest His presence and power to Moses day by day and moment by moment as needed until he and his people were free to worship Yahweh at the foot of His glorious mountain throne. So Is it true of Jesus:

i. **I am the way, the truth, and the life.** **Cf. Jn. 14:6.**

ii. **I am the good shepherd.** **Cf. Jn. 10:11, 14.**

iii. **I am the door of the sheep.** **Cf. Jn. 10:7, 9.**

iv. **I am the bread of life.** **Cf. Jn. 6:35.**

v. **I am the light of the world.** **Cf. Jn. 8:12.**

vi. **I am the resurrection, and the life.** **Cf. Jn. 11:25.**

vii. **I am the true vine.** **Cf. Jn. 15:1, 5.**