

Priscilla Calzada

BIB331 – Hermeneutics

Professor: Jency Acosta

April 18, 2023

Final Project

Introduction:

In Exodus chapter three, while Moses was attending the flock of Jethro – his father-in-law, an angel appears to him, and he sees a burning bush lit on fire, but the bush is not being consumed by the fire. As he approaches the bush lit on fire, he realizes that it is God who is in the midst of the fire, and He wants to speak to Moses. Moses hears God’s voice calling him and he immediately acknowledges God and presents himself unto God. Moses gives God reverence as he feels an almighty presence. God speaks to Moses and wants him to lead his people the Israelites into the promise land that He had promised many years ago. The time has come where God’s people would get to go to such place and be free from the oppression that they had under the Pharaoh and the Egyptians. God has heard their prayers and their cries and wants to bring deliverance to His people from the Egyptians. Moses felt somewhat doubtful of himself in taking on this mission or leadership from God, and he thought he wouldn’t be able to do it or even how he would do it. But God reaffirms to Moses that he chose him to lead His people out of Egypt, He would be with him leading the Israelites to freedom from slavery and oppression that Egyptians cause them to have, and the abuse and torture that they had faced had reached to God that “NO MORE” would the people of God be under such tumultuous oppression. God had enough with abuse and maltreatment of His people and saw what they are going through. And Moses was the chosen individual that was going to help free the Israelites and lead them into the

promise land that was once promises to them and when God promises, He never fails even if it may take many years, but it will one day come to pass just as He decided when the Israelites were going to be led into their freedom. As God told Moses in Exodus chapter 3 verse 8 that His people were going to be in a “into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey.” (NIV, The MacArthur Study Bible)

Exodus Chapter 3:1-3 God’s Calls Moses:

“Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. So, Moses thought, I will go over and see this strange sight – why the bush does not burn up.” (Exodus 3:1-3, NIV, The MacArthur Study Bible)

Moses was married to Zipporah, Jethro’s daughter who was the priest of Midian. Moses who lived and worked for Jethro while tending his flock was walking in the wilderness when he came to a place called Horeb. “Moses worked as a shepherd while living with his father-in-law an occupation quite different from the privilege and prestige associated with his life in Pharaoh’s court.” (MacArthur, Pg. 99) This place called Horeb is also known to be Mount Sinai as it mentioned in The MacArthur Study Bible, NIV “Horeb. An alternative name for Mt. Sinai. Traditionally, this mountain has been identified with Jebel Musa, “the mountain of Moses.: “Horeb” is the Heb. For the non-Semitic place-name, Sinai, located in the southern part of the Sinai Peninsula.” (MacArthur, Pg. 99) As Moses was walking the flock, he saw an angel that appeared, and he drew his attention to where he saw the angel. And in that direction, he saw that there was a bush that was inflamed but was not consumed by the flames of the fire. “The angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush.” (Exodus 3:2, NIV, The

MacArthur Study Bible) Moses was attracted of seeing the bush inflamed with fire and he drew to close to it. It was an amazement of having to see such a thing occurring right in front of his eyes that he made him want to go closer to the bush. It's a way of God calling onto Moses so that He could deliver His message to him. "The bush burning but not being consumed was a magnetic sight to Moses – it drew him in for a closer examination." (Guzik - Enduring Word) As Moses draws close to the bush, he heard a voice call out his name.

Exodus 3:4-6 God's Message:

"When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And Moses said, "Here I am." "Do not come and closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God." (Exodus 3:4-6, NIV, The MacArthur Study Bible)

During that moment when God sees that Moses is close enough to the bush, he calls out his name. "When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses, Moses!" (Exodus 3:4, NIV, The MacArthur Study Bible) I have to be completely honest it's one of the many favorite scripts when God out Moses' name, I can feel such a delicate moment in the presence of God whenever I come across this scripture. It shows how precious and delicate God is with His children. Also, God called him by his name twice in other words there was a sense of urgency from God wanting to deliver his message and having Moses's full attention onto Him. Moses replied, "Here I am" (Exodus 3:4, NIV, The MacArthur Study Bible) Moses replying "Here I am" shows his humbleness to God as a he presented himself as servant to Him. God chose Moses because He knew that Moses would accomplish what he commanded

him to do. As Moses drew closer to the bush God told him to remove his sandals because the place where he was standing was holy ground and Moses did as he was told. It shows Moses reverence that he had towards God as he obeyed in removing his sandals off his feet and it's also a showing his humbleness. "A sign of reverence in a holy place, one set apart from the norm because God was present there. These commands prevented Moses from rashly intruding, unprepared, into God's presence." (MacArthur, Pg. 99-100) In verse 6, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob..." (Exodus 3:6, NIV, The MacArthur Study Bible) God's introduction to Moses, is just confirming who He is, that He is God, who speaking to him, and in that moment, Moses felt fear as it says in the scripture, "At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to at God." (Exodus 3:6, NIV, The MacArthur Study Bible) but in my opinion I don't see it as fear, rather it was more reverence because he wanted to give God respect. "Moses hid his face. A fitting reaction of reverent fear in the presence of the Divine was modeled b Moses." (MacArthur, Pg. 100)

Exodus 3:7-10 God Sees the Oppression

The Lord said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So, I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey – the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt." (Exodus 3:7-10, NIV, The MacArthur Study Bible)

Here in verse 7, God tells Moses what he has seen His people going through, as they have been in the hands of the Egyptians and being oppressed by them. He has seen the pain and suffering that the Israelites have been enduring for a very long time. The Israelites had been enslaved by the Egyptians as they've been abused and maltreated and God had, had enough seeing the His people suffer with much anguish. He had heard their prayers and cries out to Him, and the time had come for them to have their freedom that they deserve to have after many years of slavery. When God spoke to Moses about how He had seen the Israelites cries, I can feel that God felt compelled, and moved to do something for the people of Israel. As it says, in Enduring Word, "God would soon show His care and compassion to Moses and the people of Israel. God is separate, but not necessarily distant. God is separate; yet God cares and connects Himself to our needs." (Guzik – Enduring Word)

As much as God people suffered, they never stopped trusting in God, they continued having their faith even when time was rough or difficult, they remained faithful because they knew deep down that He would come to liberate them from their oppression but in His timing. The time had finally come, and God says the following to Moses in Exodus 3:8 "So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians..." and "into a good and spacious land flowing with milk and honey." (NIV, The MacArthur Study Bible) This was a promise that God had said His people would have someday and the Israelites were going to get to see this promise come to pass. In verse 9 God, explains to Moses the cry of the Israelites has reached Him and He has seen how the Egyptians have been oppressing them. And in verse 10, God commands Moses to go the Pharaoh and let His people go free. "So now go, I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt." (Exodus 3:9, NIV, The MacArthur Study Bible) God

chose Moses as a human instrument to lead the Israelites out of the hands of the Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

Exodus 3:11-12 Moses Doubts Himself

“But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” And God said, “I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you; When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.” (Exodus 3:11-12, NIV, The MacArthur Study Bible)

In verse 11, Moses tells God “Who am I” or rather he felt like he wasn’t capable or sufficient to lead God’s people. Moses saw himself as a simple shepherd that took care of his father-in-law’s flock and he felt like he wasn’t worthy enough to take on such a role of helping to free God’s people. But God reassures Moses that he is chosen to lead His people into the promise land. In verse 12, God tells Moses that He will be with him every step of the way even when he must go speak with the Pharaoh. In this verse how God spoke to Moses was done in a divinely manner and God’s assurance is felt when reading this verse. “The divine promise, one given also to the patriarchs. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob should have been sufficient to quell all the chosen agent’s fears and sense of inadequacy for the task.” (MacArthur, Pg. 100) When God tells Moses that He will be with him, it was an affirmation to him that he would complete God’s ordinance. Once the Israelites were set free by God out of Egypt, Moses and all the Israelites were to serve to God and praise Him in the very same mountain that God spoke to Moses. That was a second promise that God gave to Moses. In many ways Moses must have doubted how that would happen with the many Israelites that were in Egypt. But for God there’s nothing impossible.

Exodus 3:13-14 – God Reveals His Name to Moses

“Moses said to God, “Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what shall I tell them?” God also said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” (Exodus 3:13-14, NIV, The MacArthur Study Bible)

In verse 13, Moses seemed to find himself once again in doubt that God’s people wouldn’t believe that he had been chosen to lead them out of Egypt. And Moses questions God asking Him what he shall say to the people of Israel to make them believe that God chose him to lead them into the promise land. In the commentary in The MacArthur Study Bible it says, “Was Moses at this point crossing the line from reasonable inquiry to unreasonable doubt? God’s patient replies instructing Moses on what He would do and what the results would be.”

(MacArthur, NIV, Pg. 100) In many ways Moses felt that no one would believe that he was the chosen individual to bring God’s people out from Egypt. And right after Moses ask God what he shall say to the Israelites, that would make them believe that he would help them, He wasn’t so sure of what he would tell them.

God replies to Moses, in verse 14, from The Holy Bible. From The Ancient Eastern Text, Translation from the Aramaic of the Peshitta the verse says, “And God said to Moses, I am AHIAH ASHAR HIGH (that is, THE LIVING GOD); and he said, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: AHIAH has sent me to you.” (Lamsa, Pg. 168) I used this version because in my opinion it’s a more profound response from God to Moses and he will say to the Israelites who sent him, and they will rest assure that is indeed God who sent Moses to deliver them from their oppression. Also, “God told Moses His name was I AM because God simply is; there was never a time when He did not exist, or a time when He will cease to exist.” (Guzik - Enduring

Word) All the Israelites were all going to know that God was going to fulfill His promise that He once promised many years ago.

Conclusion:

In this passage, Exodus 3:1-14, NIV, many interesting factors that occurred during the interaction between God and Moses. First, when Moses sees the angel appear to him and seeing a bush lit with fire, but the bush was not consumed by the fire. It attracted Moses in such a way they he drew to closer to it, because that's just how God is once you draw close to Him, you become so fascinated with His presence, you want to draw more and more closer to the Lord. This is what happened to Moses as he drew closer and when he heard God's voice he immediately responded back to the God "here I am" in such a humbling manner. God asked him to remove his sandals because the place where he was standing was holy ground and Moses did as God told him to do. Once again, Moses showed his humbleness and reverence to Him as a servant does to his master because God is worthy of our humbleness and reverence. Then God spoke to Moses telling him that he chose him to lead His people the Israelites out of the hands of the Pharaoh and the Egyptians because he had heard and seen their cries and how they have been oppressed for so many years. The Israelites were going to be finally freed from being abused and maltreated for many years by the Egyptians. They were going to get to see the promise that God had many years ago to the patriarchs where God would have a big spacious land flowing with milk and honey for all His people. But Moses had doubts on how he would face the Pharaoh and would God's people believe him. God, seeing Moses being doubtful of himself gave him assurance that he chose him and that He would be with Moses every step of way leading the Israelites to freedom and was to fulfill His promise allowing them to enter "The Promise Land."

References:

Guzik, D., (2018). Exodus 3 – Moses and the Burning Bush. Enduring Word.

<https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/exodus-3/> Local View Digital Marketing.

Lamsa, G.M., (1968). *Holy Bible from The Ancient Eastern Text. George M. Lamsa's Translation from the Aramaic of the Peshitta*. New York, NY. Harper One.

MacArthur, J., (2013). *The MacArthur Study Bible New International Version*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Inc.