



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V24 N7 February 13, 2022

WAY OUT “God Has a Name” Exodus 3:13-15

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Salvation by Grace

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by his grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.”

Ephesians 2:8-9



What is the name of the only God who can save?

When we contemporary Christians hear the words “save” and “salvation,” we naturally think first of *spiritual* salvation expressed in the creed, “I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by his grace, through faith in Jesus Christ,” and expressed in Ephesians 2:8-9, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.” But the terms “save” and “salvation” have a broader meaning, as one theologian explains: “The word salvation has its roots in the Hebrew word *yasa*, ‘to be wide or roomy’ in contrast to ‘narrow or restricted.’ Thus words such as *liberation, emancipation, preservation, protection, and security* grow out of it. It refers to delivering a person or group of people from distress or danger, from a ‘restricted’ condition in which they are unable to help themselves” (Earl Radmacher, *Salvation*, 3). So it makes perfect sense to say that God “saved” the Israelites in that he delivered them from Egypt through the Exodus event.

The New Testament words for salvation are *soteria* and *soterion*. With regard to their meaning another theologian writes: “The meaning of *soteria* and *soterion* is ‘deliverance,’ ‘preservation,’ or ‘salvation.’ Salvation is often used of *physical* deliverance (cf. Luke 1:69, 71; Acts 7:25; 27:37), such as Paul’s desire to be delivered or released from prison: ‘I know that through your prayers and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance’ (Phil. 1:19). *Spiritually*, salvation refers to the process by which God, through the work of Christ, delivers sinners from the prison of sin” (Norman Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3, *Sin, Salvation*, 223, italics added).

An understanding of both aspects of salvation, namely, *physical* deliverance and *spiritual* deliverance, makes the *Exodus* of the Israelites from Egypt following the *Passover* a picture of our salvation in Jesus Christ. Without doubt, the Exodus is one of the most familiar stories in the Bible. From Charl-

ton Heston’s iconic performance as Moses in “The Ten Commandments” to the more creative artistic licenses of “The Prince of Egypt,” this story continues to capture people’s imagination millennia after the events themselves. But it is much more than the awe-inspiring story of a significant historical event. The Exodus is the paradigm for salvation in the Bible – the pattern not only of Israel’s salvation from slavery and death in Egypt, but also of our own salvation from sin and death in Christ.

The parallels between the salvation of the Israelites and our salvation are impossible to miss. They were in bondage in Egypt, unable to emancipate themselves, threatened with death (Ex 1:8-22; 2:11-13, 23-25). We were in bondage to sin, unable to save ourselves, dead in our transgressions and sins (Eph 2:1, 5, 8-9). They were delivered by God through Moses (Ex 3:10-22). We are delivered by God through Jesus Christ, a new Moses, who was threatened by Herod, a new Pharaoh. One commentator explains: “The story of Herod’s fear for his throne and his ruthless political massacre could hardly fail to remind a Jewish reader of the Pharaoh at the time of Moses’ birth whose infanticide threatened to destroy Israel’s future deliverer, while Jesus’ providential escape to Egypt and subsequent return will echo the story of Moses’ escape from slaughter and of his subsequent exile and return when ‘those who were seeking your life are dead’ (Exod. 4:19). Herod’s place in the story . . . sets up the typological model for the newborn Messiah to play the role of the new Moses, who will also deliver his people (cf. 1:21) and through whose ministry a new people of God will be constituted just as Israel became God’s chosen people through the exodus and the covenant at Sinai under the leadership of Moses” (R. T. France, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, NICNT, 63). Finally, they were physically and spiritually saved through faith in the shed blood of the Passover lamb (Ex 12:1-13) as we are through faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ our Passover lamb (Jn 1:29; 1Co 5:7).



EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

Exodus 3:13-15

13 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?"

14 God 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.'"

15 God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers – the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob – has sent me to you.'"

*"This is my name forever,
the name you shall call me
from generation to generation.*

Read in another translation

13 Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" 14 God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" 15 God also said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations. (ESV)

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Underline 'What is his name?' in v. 13.
- Highlight "I AM WHO I AM" in v. 14.
- Highlight "I AM" in v. 14.
- Highlight "the LORD" in v. 15.

What one word would you use to describe the TONE of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the THEME of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____."



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. Read Moses' call (Ex 3:10). *Who* is sending *whom*, *where*, and *why*?
 2. Moses questions God's call (vv. 11-12). Explain the point of his *rhetorical* question and how God answers it.
 3. Moses questions God's call a second time (v. 13). How does he imagine the Israelites will receive him?
 4. Is what he imagines reasonable? Explain.
 5. Explain what the Israelites want to know about God from the answer to their question, "What is his name?"
 6. About himself, God says to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." Comment on what that statement implies about God.
 7. Moses is to tell the Israelites, "I AM has sent me to you." In polytheistic Egypt, how might that *name* address their concerns?
 8. The "LORD" translates the Hebrew name Yahweh. Comment on the significance of that name (see note).
 9. If *name* connotes the true nature rather than mere identity, what does "This is my name *forever*" indicate about God?
 10. **Discussion:** Talk about what you learned about God from this passage.
-

Commentary On The Text

Exodus 3:10 contains God's call to Moses: "So now go, I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt." Verses 11-15 contain his averse response. Initially, he protests by asking the *rhetorical* question, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" (v. 11). Then, he protests by asking the *hypothetical* question, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of you fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?" (v. 13). One commentator summarizes Moses' objections in this pithy statement: "Whereas the first objection Moses brings is, 'I don't think I can do this,' the second objection is, 'No one else will think I can do this, either'" (Peter Enns, *The NIV Application Commentary: Exodus*, 103).

Moses is not wrong to doubt himself, namely, his ability to do what God promised to do *himself* (cf. vv. 6-8). And so God responds not by chiding but by assuring Moses that he will be with him. God does not just dump the deliverance of the Israelites into the lap of a Hebrew, turned Egyptian, turned exile, turned shepherd. God will do through Moses what he promised to do *himself*.

Neither is Moses wrong to imagine that the elders of Israel will question his claim that God sent *him* to deliver them, given the fact that "all the Israelites know of Moses, if they know anything at all, is that he was brought up as an Egyptian, committed murder, and is a wanted man. What credentials does he carry?" (Enns, 101). After all, Moses' authority has been questioned in the past. When he tried to reconcile two fighting Hebrews, the one in the wrong asked, "Who made you ruler and judge over us?" What's more, since "God" is not a name, and the land of Egypt is filled with gods, the elders of Israel will want to confirm which one Moses represents, because they want to be sure that the God who sent Moses is truly able to emancipate them (cf. v. 10). One writer explains: "Moses' fear that the Israelite elders would not accept him is understandable (v. 13). God had not revealed Himself to His people for over 400 years. When Moses asked how he should answer the Israelites' question, 'What is His name?', he was asking how he could demonstrate and prove to them that it was their God who had sent him. Since the Israelites had lived in polytheistic Egypt for over 400 years, and since the Egyptians worshipped hundreds, if not thousands of gods, it seems likely that Moses expected them to ask him which one of those gods was he talking about" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Exodus," 2021 ed., 38, planbiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/exodus.pdf).

Moses' question regarding God's name pertains to both God's *identity* and his *essential nature*—but more importantly his essential nature (v. 13). In other words, Moses is requesting information about God's essential nature in connection with his question about God's name. And in the following verses, God describes his essential nature implied in the name "I AM" (v. 14) and identifies himself as the God of the patri-

archs—"the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob" (v. 15). And what's the point of Moses' question relative to God's essential nature? "What Moses asks, then, has to do with *whether God can accomplish what he is promising*. What is there in his reputation (see Num 6:27; Deut 12:5, 11; 16:2-6; Pss 8:1, 74:7; Amos 5:8, 9:5-6; Jer 33:2) that lends credibility to the claim in his call? How suddenly, can he be expected to deal with a host of powerful Egyptian deities against whom, across so many years, he has apparently won no victory for his people? The Israelites in Egypt, oppressed savagely across many years and crying out with no letup to their God, have every reason to want to know, 'What can *He* do?'—or perhaps better, 'What *can* He do?' (John I. Durham, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 3, *Exodus*, 38, italics added).

The answer God gives to Moses' question, "I AM WHO I AM," sounds little like a name to us because we don't typically use sentence names—but we come close. Ruth and I could have called our son, "the Lord remembers," but instead we named him Zachary, which means the same (cf. Zechariah). The ancients often used sentence names that they in turn reduced to one word. One commentator writes: "If Moses were simply asking for God's name, God's response would be simply: 'My name is I AM,' but that is not God's response. On the contrary, God provides in Exodus 3:14 the etymology of I AM and its meaning by revealing his full-sentence name . . . (glossed in the NIV as 'I AM WHO I AM'). God abbreviates his full-sentence name to a single verb . . . ('I am/will be')" (Bruce K. Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology*, 365). While God's answer to Moses' question sounds little like a name to us, it is "an assertion of authority, a confession of an essential reality and thus an entirely appropriate response to the question Moses poses" (Durham, 38), a question regarding God's ability to do through Moses what he sent Moses to do.

Verse 15 contains what is called the *tetragrammaton*, God's four letter name (YHWH), rendered Yahweh in English, and like "I AM WHO I AM" and "I AM," it is related to the Hebrew verb meaning "to be." Later Jews refused to say this name lest they violate the third commandment, "You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God" (Ex 20:7), so coming across it in the Old Testament, they would say "Adonai." In our English Bibles the tetragrammaton (LORD) is distinguished from "Adonai" (Lord). Regarding the significance of the name Yahweh, one author writes: "The thought of the name, whether in the first person [I AM in v. 14] or the third person [LORD in v. 15] form, is that God is the self-existent One, responsible for all existence, including His own. He would not fail Israel in any of His promises for He knew no contingencies. Nothing could hinder Him in His faithfulness for He controlled all existence, and nothing could exist to affect a hindrance unless He permitted it" (Leon Wood, *A Survey of Israel's History*, 122).

The message of this passage is largely an *upper story* message regarding God. The Israelites feared that the one who sent Moses to them to deliver them might not be able to do what he intended. God's answer to Moses' question put that fear to rest.

Word Studies/Notes

v. 13 *What is his name?* “When Moses asked about the ‘name’ of God, he was inquiring about more than just the identity of God. He was asking a question about the *very nature of God*. Within the world of the biblical text, the name was the expression of the nature of its bearer (cf. 1Sa 25:25). Adam’s naming the animals meant that he was looking at their essential nature—looking, in fact, for a ‘suitable partner’ (Ge 2:20)—the name was an expression of the very essence of the one who bears the name” (John Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 246). “‘Who is your name?’ is used to ask for someone’s name (Judg. 13:17) . . . ‘What is your name?’ seeks the meaning of the name (Gen. 32:28)” (Bruce K. Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology*, 365).

v. 14 *I AM WHO I AM . . . I AM* “The answer Moses receives is not, by any stretch of the imagination, a name. It is an assertion of authority, a confession of an essential reality, and thus an entirely appropriate response to the question Moses poses” (Durham, 38). “If Moses was in fact seeking to know God’s essential nature in asking for his name, then the answer he received from the Lord was precisely that which he sought” (Sailhamer, 246). Full sentence names were often abbreviated in ancient times. “‘I AM WHO I AM’ is not God’s name but a preparatory comment that introduces the following announcement. The divine name, instead, seems to be ‘I AM’: This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you’” (v. 14). What follows in verse 15 is not the divine name itself but an elaboration of verse 14. ‘Say to the Israelites, “The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you”’ (Peter Enns, *The NIV Application Commentary: Exodus*, 103). Note the words of Jesus recorded in Jn 8:58. “Very truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, I am!” No wonder, “At this, they picked up stones to stone him” (v. 59).

v. 15 *LORD* Heb. YHWH, the tetragrammaton. “The Hebrew for this name is Yahweh (often incorrectly spelled ‘Jehovah’; see note on Dt 28:58). It means ‘He is’ or ‘He will be’ and is the third-person form of the verb translated “I will be’ in v. 12 and ‘I am’ in v. 14. When God speaks of himself, he says, ‘I am,’ and when we speak of him, we say, ‘He is’” (*The NIV Study Bible*, note on Ex 3:15). “The name Yahweh, related to the verb ‘to be,’ probably speaks

probably speaks of God’s self-existence, but it means more than that. It usually speaks of His relationship to His people. For example, as Lord, He redeemed them (6:6), was faithful to them (34:5-7), and made a covenant with them (Gen. 15:18)” (John D. Hannah, “Exodus,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, 112).

Other Texts to Consider

Exodus 6:2

God also said to Moses, “I am the LORD. ³I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty, but by my name the LORD I did not make myself fully known to them.

John 8:56-59

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.”

57 “You are not yet fifty years old,” they said to him, “and you have seen Abraham!”

58 “Very truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, I am!” 59 At this, they picked up stones to stone him.



APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Our God is I AM, the self-existent One, who is able to deliver us from the bondage of sin as he was able to deliver the Israelites from bondage in Egypt.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

Kids naturally ask questions. Lots of them! They have inquiring minds and want to know how everything is made. They are creative thinkers and want to know which superhero would win in a duel. They're hungry and want to know what's for dinner every single night. They are curious about everything and expect their mom and dad to have the answers. In our passage this week, Moses continues to ask God hard questions. God directs Moses to go and rescue the Israelites from Egypt, but before he commits to the next step, he needs all the details. Sound familiar? I think if I saw a burning bush, I'd just say, "Yes, Sir." But Moses isn't afraid to ask, and God patiently and gently answers in the best way He sees fit. Sometimes, when our kids ask questions about the Bible or faith, we push them off because we don't know the answer or can't explain on a child's level. It's easy to tell them to believe because you say so; however, wouldn't it be fun to explore the Bible together? What a great way to disciple your child by tackling the hard and random questions as a family. By doing this, we model both Bible study and a high regard for the authority of Scripture. Your children aren't going to learn all they need to know by going to a kids' program one hour a week, no matter how unbelievably fabulous it is. We must intentionally pour into them and stand by their side as we all wrestle with our faith. If you don't know where to start, work through *The Scrolls* this week.

What Does The Bible Say?

Read Exodus 3:13-15.

1. What is God's name?
2. Who sent Moses to rescue the Israelites?
3. What do you learn about God from this passage?

What Do You Think?

Why is it important that God lists Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in verse 15?

What Do You Do?

If someone asked you, "Who is God?" how would you respond? Talk about this at dinner with your family this week.

CORE COMPETENCY: Salvation by Grace

I believe that I become a child of God through faith in Jesus, not because of anything I do.

MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 121:1-2

"I lift my eyes to the mountains – where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth."

KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- _____ I completed my Bible Study
- _____ I memorized this week's verse
- _____ I brought my Bible to church
- _____ I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME _____

GRADE PARENT SIGNATURE _____

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)
I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)
I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)
I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)
I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)
I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)
I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)
I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)
I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)
I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)
I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)
I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)
I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)
I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)
I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)
I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)
I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)
I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)
I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)
I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)
I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)
I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)
I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)
I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)
I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)
I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)
I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)
I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)
I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)
I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)
I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Tom Bulick (M.A. in Educational Leadership, Eastern Michigan University, Th.M. in Old Testament, and Ph.D. in Bible Exposition, Dallas Theological Seminary). For more than forty years, Tom has served as pastor, faculty member, and administrator. Tom was Vice President for Student Life and Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Trinity Western University (Vancouver, B.C.) for 12 years before accepting the position of Spiritual Formation Pastor at Central Bible Church in 1998. He and his wife Ruth have one son, Zach.

Stephanie Thomas (B.B.A University of Texas at Arlington). Stephanie is married to James and they have four children: Elijah, Levi, Ella and Simon. Stephanie has attended Central Bible Church for more than 20 years, has been on staff since 2014, and now serves as Children's Minister.

The Scrolls Bible Study is a spiritual growth resource of Central Bible Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

© 2020 Central Bible Church.

Material researched, written and supervised by Dr. Tom Bulick. All Scripture referenced from the New International Version unless otherwise noted. This resource is freely distributed and may be copied without permission.



**CENTRAL
BIBLE CHURCH**

8001 Anderson Boulevard
Fort Worth, Texas 76120
817-274-1315
wearecentral.org