

Israel's Call Upon God

by Chuck Smith

Pastor Chuck Smith explores Israel's cry for help and God's promise of deliverance through Moses in the sermon 'Israel's Call Upon God'.

Duration: 25:07

Scripture: Exodus 2:24, Exodus 3:8, Exodus 3:11, Exodus 3:17, Matthew 22:37-39, 2 Timothy 3:1-2

Topics: "Israel"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck Smith discusses the story of Moses and the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt. He emphasizes how God heard the cry of the Israelites and remembered His covenant with Abraham. God then commissions Moses, who is now 80 years old, to go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt. Despite initially hesitating, Moses eventually accepts God's call and prepares to lead the Israelites to the promised land, a land flowing with milk and honey.

Transcript

Oh, let the Son of God enfold you With His Spirit and His love Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul
Oh, let Him have the things that hold you And His Spirit like a dove Will descend upon your life And make you whole
Welcome to The Word for Today, the broadcast ministry of Pastor Chuck Smith of Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, California. Pastor Chuck is currently leading us on a verse-by-verse study through the entire Bible. And on today's edition of Word for Today, we'll be continuing to follow Israel's call upon God as we pick up in Exodus, chapter 2, verse 24.

And now, with today's lesson, here's Pastor Chuck Smith. Their cry came up to God because of the bondage. He remembered His covenant with Abraham, and God looked upon the children of Israel, and God acknowledged them.

So here they are crying to God in Egypt. And several miles away, out in the wilderness, in the area of Midian, Moses was keeping the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, who was a priest of Midian. And he led the flock back to the back of the desert.

And he came to Horeb, or Mount Sinai, which later became known as the Mountain of God because it was upon this mount that the Lord gave to Moses the Ten Commandments. And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, but the bush was not consumed.

Now, many see the bush as a type of Israel. Through the fires of persecution, but never consumed. When you see that all the things that these people have gone through in their history, all of the persecution, all of the attempts to eradicate them, they have been in the fires for years, but never consumed, they remain.

Then Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn. There's a flame there, but the bush is not being consumed. So curiosity draws him over to this phenomena, and when the Lord saw that he turned aside to look, God called him from the midst of the bush and said, Moses, Moses.

And he said, here I am. Then he said, do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.

Now, there was always the tradition coming into a place of worship at all to remove your shoes. In the East today, when you go into a person's home, you remove your shoes. When I spoke in Korea, before you come up to speak, you always take your shoes off.

You don't wear your shoes up to the pulpit. I guess, you know, you're standing on holy ground or something. But it is a custom in Korea, and so we preached in socks.

And it probably traces back to this. Moreover, he said to him, 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 upon God.

Now, when the Sadducees came to Jesus, they did not believe in the resurrection, and they tried to catch Jesus in a trick question. And Jesus responded to them after answering their question. How is it that God said, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

So here's where God declared that. Jesus is quoting it to the Sadducees. And of course, they quit asking him questions after that because he really stumped them.

So the Lord said, I have surely seen the oppression of my people who are in Egypt. Now, in the Psalms 115 and 135, in both of these Psalms, the psalmist speaks of the gods of the heathen, the idols that men had made and were worshiping. But the psalmist said of these idols, their gods are of wood, or of silver, or gold.

Eyes they have, but they cannot see. Ears they have, but they cannot hear. Feet they have, but they cannot walk.

Mouths they have, but they cannot speak. They have noses, but they can't smell. Many people today are worshiping gods that cannot see, that cannot hear, that cannot touch, that cannot feel.

Now, every man has a god. For a man's god is that master passion that governs any man's life. That ideal, that driving force that governs your life, that is your god.

And so they said the gods, plural, of the heathen are many. There are many gods. There is only one true and living God, the eternal creator.

When a person today talks about God, you really don't know what they're talking about many times. The force, the creative force, the energy, an essence, a dynamic. But they're not talking about a personal living

God who can see, who can hear, who feels, who can touch.

But they're talking about some abstract kind of a cosmic force in the universe that is sending out emanations, that sometimes get as far down as this planet Earth. Every man has a god. Now, we find that the Egyptians were polytheistic, and they had many gods that were most of them represented by various animals.

Crocodiles and birds and so forth were their representations of their gods. But again, gods that can't respond. Now, here the Lord said to Moses, I have seen the oppression of my people who are in Egypt.

Again, we so oftentimes feel that we're all alone in our suffering. Nobody really sees, nobody really knows, nobody really cares. There's one thing about affliction.

It does create a very tremendous sense of loneliness. No one can really bear my afflictions, and I feel very alone. But God said, I have seen, I have surely seen the oppression of my people.

Not only that, I have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. They were made and forced to serve, as we read, with harshness. The taskmasters with their sticks constantly hitting them, goading them, pushing them on.

If they would just fall out of weariness and try and lie for a moment on the ground, there would be the rod across their back, up and going. And they wept, they cried, they cried out in pain, and I have surely heard their cry. For I know, God said, their sorrows.

So I have seen, I have heard, and I know. A personal God. Now, sometimes as we endeavor to minister to others who are going through heavy trials, and people come and they begin to pour out their hearts, they begin to tell of their situations, and as they tell what's going on, I say, I see your problem.

And they continue to talk, and I say, I hear you, I hear you, I know where you're coming from. I know what you're going through. I know what you're feeling.

But many times, that's all the further I can go. Assuring them that I can see, that I understand what they're saying. I know the problems you're facing.

But so often, I don't know the answer. I don't have the solution. I can't do anything.

I'm totally helpless to change their situation at all. What can I do? And that's where God takes it one step further with Moses. For God said, verse 8, So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians.

That's so great. God can always go one step further. He just doesn't see and hear and know, but He has come to deliver.

I love that. Because I need more than just your sympathetic understanding many times. I need someone to step in and help me.

I have come, God said, to deliver. To bring them up from that land to a good land. A large land.

A land flowing with milk and honey. So God describes the land that He's going to bring them to. It's large in comparison to the land of Goshen, where they are there in Egypt.

That's only 900 square miles. And they have no doubt really, the way they've multiplied and all, just really packed that land of Goshen. So I'm going to bring them into a large land.

A land that's flowing with milk and honey. The place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites and all. Now therefore behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppressed them.

Come now therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh, that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt. So God is now commissioning Moses. The time has come.

Moses is now 80 years old. He was 40 when he killed the Egyptian and fled. He's been 40 years now in the wilderness watching sheep.

He's now 80 years old. And in the last 40 years, a lot of mellowing has been going on. He's not so impetuous anymore.

He's not ready to jump in anymore. And it is interesting how that when God now commissions him, he begins to backpedal. Don't know if I want to get involved.

And he begins to offer excuses. So Moses said to God, who am I that I should go to Pharaoh? Now you see, obviously he suffers a poor self-image. And so God says, you find the nearest psychiatrist and learn how to love yourself, Moses.

And you need to develop a stronger self-image so that you'll be able to handle the task that you're going to be asked to fulfill. You know, the Bible tells us that in the last days, perilous times will come. Why? What will be the signs? What are the characteristics? Because men will be lovers of themselves.

Oh, wait a minute. That's what they're teaching me I ought to do. I ought to fall in love with myself.

Well, I've been in love with myself ever since I've been able to think. The Bible says no man really hated himself. This business of you don't love yourself is a bunch of baloney.

You say, oh, I hate myself. I'm so ugly. I just hate myself.

I look so ugly. I'm ugly. I hate myself.

I'm ugly. Were you ever angry because someone you hated was ugly? No, if someone that you really hated was ugly, you'd be glad. So if you really hate yourself, you ought to be glad that you're so ugly.

Man, have they got us all screwed up. Moses suffering from poor self-image. What's God's answer? God said, I'll go with you.

You don't have confidence, Moses? All right, I'll go with you. I'm going to send you to the Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt. But Moses said to God, who am I that I should go to Pharaoh? That I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt.

So he said, I will certainly be with you. And this shall be a sign to you that I have sent you. When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will serve God on this mountain.

This will be the sign when you come back to this place. There's Mount Horeb, Mount Sinai. When you get back here, that'll be the sign to you that I really did send you.

You're going to come back here and you're going to worship and serve me here on this mountain. Then Moses said to God, indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and I say to them, the God of your fathers has sent me to you and they say to me, what is his name? What shall I say to them? You see, God is not his name. It's the title, the God of your fathers.

But what's his name? And God said to Moses, I am who I am. And he said, thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I am has sent me to you. I am what? I am all that you'll ever need.

I am to you whatever your need may be. Now, it is interesting as God declares, I am, he is actually speaking of that eternal aspect of his character. He is the eternal one.

The cherubim declare of him who is, who was and who is to come all at once. He's past, present and future. Now, with God, there is no past, there is no future.

It's all now. He dwells in the eternal. I can't really conceive that.

My mind blows a fuse. The circuits all pop when I try to conceive of the eternal now, the I am. Because the moment I say I am, then that's past tense.

I was, I said that 10 seconds ago. But with God, he dwells in the eternal now. I am that I am have sent you.

Describing the eternal characteristic of God and also describing as God will be to you. I am to you whatever your need. The name Jehovah or Yahweh.

Whatever the pronunciation may be. The name for the God of Israel. Literally means the becoming one.

The I am again. Now, it is interesting when Jesus was talking with the Pharisees and they were going through this little bantering back and forth. And they said to him, we have Abraham for our father.

And Jesus said, if Abraham was your father, then you would have believed in me because Abraham rejoiced to see my day and he saw it. They said, what are you talking about? Abraham saw you. You're not even 50 years old.

And Jesus said, before Abraham was, I am. And they took up stones. We're going to kill him.

Stone him. I am, Jesus declared. I am the bread of life.

I am the light of the world. I am the way, the truth, and the life. And before Abraham was, I am.

Heavy duty. Moreover, God said to Moses, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, The Lord 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 this is my memorial to all generations.

This is my name, the I am, the Yahweh, the Jehovah. Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob appeared to me saying, I have surely visited you and seen what is done to you in Egypt. And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites.

The Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, the Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey. Then they will heed your voice and you shall come and the elders of Israel to the king of Egypt and you

shall say to him, The Lord God, or Jehovah, God of the Hebrews, has met with us and now please let us go three days journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to Jehovah our God. But I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go.

Not, no, not even by a mighty hand. So I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt with all my wonders, which I will do in its midst. And after that he will let you go.

And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. And it shall be when you go that you shall not go empty handed. But every woman shall ask of her neighbor who dwells near her house articles of silver, articles of gold and clothing.

And you will put them on your sons and on your daughters. And so you will plunder the Egyptians. They've been serving without wages for a long time.

They've been slaves, but they're going to get their pay. Before you leave, they're going to be ready to let you go. So have them just go ask for some jewelry, gold and silver.

And you're going to plunder the Egyptians when you leave. And so we get into that very interesting encounter in the next chapters where Moses goes before the Pharaoh and where God deals with the Egyptians and delivers the children of Israel. So for a while we're going to be plaguing the Egyptians with all kinds of interesting and horrible things.

We'll return with more of our verse-by-verse study of Exodus in our next lesson as we continue to follow the life of Moses. And we do hope you'll make plans to join us. But right now, I'd like to remind you that if you missed any part of today's message or perhaps you'd like to order a copy for that special friend or loved one, you can do so by simply contacting one of our customer service representatives and they'd be more than happy to assist you with the ordering details.

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And be sure to join us again next time as Pastor Chuck Smith continues his verse-by-verse study through the book of Exodus. That's right here on the next edition of The Word for Today. And now, once again, here's Pastor Chuck Smith.

May the Lord be with you, keep you in His love, watch over you, and fill you with His Spirit. May you have a beautiful week. May you just experience God's power working in your life as you walk in faith and fellowship with Jesus Christ.

The 1960s became one of the most colorful periods in American history. The counterculture was dropping out and turning on. The Summer of Love was the stage for many dramas of change.

And the most popular musical group in the world was singing, But one man in Southern California was reaching out with the answer and the truth began to set people free. Author and pastor Chuck Smith began to share the love of Jesus Christ with a generation that was looking for love in all the wrong places. Now, some 40 years later, the gospel of love is still changing lives.

In his soon-to-be-released new book, simply titled, Love the More Excellent Way, Pastor Chuck Smith expounds upon the love that can change your life now and forever. Find out for yourself why love is indeed the more excellent way. This program has been sponsored by The Word for Today in Costa Mesa, California.

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