

# The Eternal God

Character of God—part 1

July 1, 2018

This week we begin a series on the character of God. This week we look at the essence of His nature, namely, that God is eternal.

## DAY 1: The eternal nature of God

*Genesis 1:1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.*

1. Over and over again, God contrasts Himself with every living and non-living thing in the universe. He is the Creator. Everything and everyone else is His creation.

2. After Sarah gave birth to their long-promised son, Abraham, in his old age, faced a potential danger over water rights for his flocks. Abimelech's shepherds along with the commander of Abimelech's army seemed to have commandeered a well that Abraham's family was using.

3. But God demonstrated Himself to Abimelech. Good will was established. They made a treaty. After that danger passed, noticed what Abraham did.

*Genesis 21:33 Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba, and there he called upon the name of the LORD, the **Eternal** God.*

4. Why do you suppose Abraham was struck with the eternal nature of God after this potentially dangerous episode? (Remember, Isaac had just been born!)

5. At the end of Moses' life, Jacob pronounces a blessing on the twelve tribes. The following excerpt is the blessing given to the tribe of Asher.

*Deuteronomy 33:26 "There is no one like the God of Jeshurun, who rides on the heavens to help you and on the clouds in his majesty.*

*Deuteronomy 33:27 The **eternal** God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. He will drive out your enemy before you, saying, 'Destroy him!'*

6. What character qualities of God are mentioned in this blessing?

7. What strikes you about the eternal nature of God? What is the significance of this?

## **DAY 2: The eternal nature of God.**

1. Under each verse, below, jot down what you see about the eternal nature of God.

*Psalms 119:89 Your word, O LORD, is **eternal**; it stands firm in the heavens.*

*Psalms 119:160 All your words are true; all your righteous laws are **eternal**.*

*Isaiah 26:4 Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD, is the Rock **eternal**.*

*Jeremiah 10:10 But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God, the **eternal** King. When he is angry, the earth trembles; the nations cannot endure his wrath.*

(This verse is in contrast to the idols that the rebellious people worshipped)

*Romans 1:20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his **eternal** power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.*

*Romans 16:26 but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the **eternal** God, so that all nations might believe and obey him--*

*Ephesians 3:11 according to his **eternal** purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

(In God's plan was to take the gospel to the entire Gentile world)

*1 Timothy 1:17 Now to the King **eternal**, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

*Hebrews 9:14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!*

*Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*

2. What struck you about the eternal nature of God? What is the significance of this for you?

### DAY 3: God reveals Himself to Moses at the burning bush

1. Moses spent the first forty years of his life being raised and living in the palace of Pharaoh.
2. He spent the next forty years of his life as a fugitive of the law, for killing an Egyptian who was whipping a fellow Hebrew. He spent these forty years in the desert as a sheep herder.
3. It is at this point that we pick up his story.

*Exodus 3:1 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 desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.*

*<sup>2</sup> 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.*

4. What all did Moses observe?

5. What was curious to Moses?

*Exodus 3:3 So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight--why the bush does not burn up." <sup>4</sup> 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."*

6. Put yourself in the shoes of Moses. You see a burning bush that is not consumed. It has your attention. You go to investigate this unusual phenomenon. And then, a voice emerges from the flames! And **your name** is called! What would be your response(s)?

*Exodus 3:5 "Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground."*

7. To be holy has two meanings.

- a. First, it means to be set apart: set apart from something else, or something that is not like the other, or set apart for God's purposes.
- b. Second, to be holy means to be morally pure.

8. What is Moses learning about God in this episode?

9. What strikes you about God in this episode? (We'll continue this episode, tomorrow)

#### **DAY 4: Moses gets a personal introduction to God**

*Exodus 3:6 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.*

1. When we meet someone, usually the first things that are exchanged are each other's names. God introduces Himself to Moses. Below, jot down the significance of each piece of God's name that is given to Moses:

a. "The God of your father" -

b. "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob" –

c. Notice the effect of this name on Moses. What reasons can you imagine caused Moses to be afraid to look at God?

2. So far, Moses has seen characteristics of God that are grand, majestic, powerful, and eternal. But now, God displays another "side" of His character—His tender love for people. Underline several phrases in the next section of scripture that depict the tenderness of God.

*Exodus 3:7 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.*

*<sup>8</sup> 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.*

*<sup>9</sup> And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them.*

3. Put yourself back in the shoes of Moses. After being afraid to look at God, how would your image of God change, based on these verses? (Ex. 3:7-9)

4. Of course, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob lived hundreds of years prior to Moses. How does the eternal nature of God impact what God is saying?

5. What is your take away from today's passage? (We'll look at the next section, tomorrow)

## DAY 5: A second name of God given to Moses

*Exodus 3:10 So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."*<sup>11</sup> *But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"*

*Exodus 3:12 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 3:13 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?"*

*Exodus 3:14 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.'"*

1. In the Old Testament, many of the Hebrew names given to newborns are names with a **significant meaning**, usually to the parents about their life with God. The same is true here when God introduces Himself to Moses.

2. What God is telling Moses are some things that are true about God's nature. "I AM" is in all capitals. The meaning is "the always existing One." From other scriptures, we confirm these different realities of what God is revealing about Himself, here in these verses:

- a. God is self-existent.
- b. His being is not dependent on anything or anyone outside Himself.
- c. He is self-sufficient.
- d. He is eternal, and unchangeable.
- e. He is true and faithful to His promises.

3. If Moses found this too complex to relate to the Hebrew people, He could also tell the people the first name of God just given to Him.

*Exodus 3:15 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 by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation."*<sup>16</sup> *"Go, assemble the elders of Israel and say to them, 'The LORD, **the God of your fathers--the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob--** appeared to me and said: I have watched over you and have seen what has been done to you in Egypt."*<sup>17</sup> *And I have promised to bring you up out of your misery in Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites--a land flowing with milk and honey.'*

4. Moses went back to Egypt to appeal to the Hebrew people and to Pharaoh to let God's people go. Why did God spend so much time on telling Moses His name?

5. How effect on you could God's eternal nature, described in these two names have on you?