

THE BURNING BUSH.

TEXT: EXODUS 3 & 4.

THEME:

The calling of Moses and of how God promised to be in his mission when he undertakes it.

This week in the preaching of the sermon, because of the E100 Series; the theme for this Sunday is the 'Story of Moses'. A very wide area indeed to cover, so Pastor Tim narrowed it down to a few choices and headings to choose from and the one I chose was "The Burning Bush" which is written in Exodus chapters three and four. In choosing this particular story; it appeals to me because I like the 'Call and Mission' aspect of the narrative that takes place.

Let us pray: Heavenly Father, as you have called Moses to be your representative in Egypt, you have also called each and every one of us to be your presence here; which is in and around Murray Bridge and its surrounding districts. Encourage us in our daily lives to remind people that you are Lord of all who created everything that exists, and that without your presence in the world; nothing would exist. Amen.

Prior to '**The call in the desert**' Moses lived a fortunate but privileged life up until the age of forty. Born of Jewish parents, the law of the land threat of Hebrew males to be killed, the Reed Basket, Princess bathing, fell in love with him; he grew up in Pharaoh's palace. Moses learnt of his heritage as he grew up, saw a fellow Israelite being mistreated by an Egyptian, slew him, witness saw him do it, became a wanted man, then fled into the desert for the next forty years. Then he has this encounter with God at the Burning Bush.

During the course of the conversation as Moses becomes aware of what God is requiring of him, I guess that many unwelcome thoughts invade Moses mind because he starts to come up with all sorts of reasons why he may not be the right and proper candidate for the job description God is displaying out in before him. One of the questions Moses has is, under whose authority he will he be authorised to approach Pharaoh and make his requests known.

After all; he will be approaching the highest authority in the land, and he wants all the back up he can muster in what he is about to embark upon. And, isn't that so human of him to feel this way [human nature]. We worry about the daily grind in our lives; also of what possible future consequences could be thrust upon us; simply because we can't see too far into the future. We worry that we'll mess things up real bad and end up in a screaming heap. This is why **God's ways are not our ways**; he knows what is going to happen because he has it all under control. We only need to trust and obey. God even openly explained to Moses what will take place, hardening Pharaoh's heart and so forth.

By the way, when God brought the plagues upon Egypt, the spiritual battles that occurred took place in three realms. They were in the heavenly places, upon the earth [which we read about] and under the earth. In the end, the magicians in Pharaoh's court could not duplicate, counteract or undo anything that God had done, because when all is said and done; God is still Lord of all. Yes, God is still on the throne this very day; even though many human beings, who populate this planet, don't even give this reality a second thought.

So God reveals a special name to him; which is, **"I AM"** has sent me. God also reaffirmed to Moses that the staff he has in his hand will signify that God is with him because through it, he will be able to perform miraculous wonders. God reaffirmed this by telling Moses to put the staff down, and it turned into a snake. God also instructed Moses to put his hand into the opening in his clothes and he pulled out a withered leprous hand which he restored to show his great power. God was with Moses and all Moses had to do was to obey God and carry out his instructions!

God assures Moses and provides for him, even with Aaron his brother as a spokesperson, as further backup for him. Even when everything is set in concrete with God, there's a blockage in the back of our heads that still wants us to doubt [human nature, Devil at work?]. How many times are we tempted to rely on our own abilities instead of trusting completely in God: that yes, he is with us [right now]; and he will keep us because of our **baptism, Holy Communion; fellowship; faith, trust, obedience in him**, until we meet him face to face in heaven! We are his and he loves us more than we will ever know, and his thoughts about you as an individual, are more than the grains of sand on a beach.

As God's beloved children, we all have the right to live in his warmth and glow of his love for us. And in this day and age of Post Modern Enlightenment, where would be occasion [a call to arms] to stand up for God/Jesus to defend his cause? What would you say if someone was very vocal about God being irrelevant in the world today? Especially when you hear people say, 'there is no God'. Or that even if there is one, why he doesn't respond to peoples cries of help. What about some nations desperate cries and calls for justice in their countries; there are a lot of atrocious things going on in the world today! The media currently has been giving same sex marriages wide coverage; how would you respond?

We know that if we want to say something about God and it is in his will, he will back us up to do so. Moses was instructed to talk; then God would back him up with his acts of mighty power. On this occasion the people who first needed to be convinced that God had heard their cries of mistreatment are God's own chosen people. They must believe Moses as **Moses must believe God** has a divine plan to free them from the Egyptians and become a nation in their own right; and given a land of God's choosing, a land flowing rich in milk and honey.

The mouth of Moses may well have been heavy and clumsy, slow in speech, but Aaron was there to help him. God will take responsibility for both the message and the messengers. And the message? It is that God is, and is actively present in a world that belongs to him. God also wants us to take initiatives' as well, to be involved where possible to correct injustices occurring to defenseless peoples and situations. On this occasion God heard his people's cries and he sent someone to do his will, which he backed up through his mighty acts of power.

We know that as God's children he has a special plan for each and every one of us. You may think that you may not be able to do what he is requiring of you. Moses thought that way too, but look what happened when he let go, and let God have his way. We know what happens when we do things our way, which may be good in our eyes, but is it what God want.

We may even feel trapped into doing what God requires, but God could also be freeing us from a fear [some form of bandage] that may have us under its control [fear of public speaking, singing, performance, death, etc]. Give it all to Jesus. God requires our obedience to release us from bondage. Amen.