

ONLINE SERVICE

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30 August 2020

Welcome and Notices

Amanda Fairs
viola

Call to Worship

Prayer of Invocation

Young at Heart
Christine Bradbeer

Bible Reading: Exodus 3:1-15
Sonya Rutherford

Great Texts of the Bible #3
Nec Tamen Consumeatur
Burning but not consumed

Prayers of Intercession
and
The Lord's Prayer

Benediction



NOTICES

30 August 2020

Wednesday 2 September 1.30 pm Sweet Hour of Prayer
Sunday 6 September 11 am Great Texts of the Bible #5.

For your prayers this week:

Congregational member: Grant MCCARTHY.
and



Greg & Jayni
MANNERS, although
based in Melbourne,
serve ORBUS Ministries of Malawi,
Africa, in an administrative role.

MEMBERS who wish to continue their freewill offerings may use the banking details at the bottom of this page or post to our Treasurer. Vic Ansell, 59 Queen St Kangaroo Flat Vic 3555.

GARDENIA ST
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
53 Gardenia Street,
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BSB: 013-328. Account number: 2970 40694

GARDENIA ST. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BLACKBURN

30 August 2020

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.'"

Exodus 3:14



Lectern Drop Tapestry, detail,
Littlejohn Memorial Chapel

WELCOME



Legislation was used to limit freedom of expression and enable security forces to carry out arbitrary arrests while a series of draft laws were proposed which would introduce even more restrictions to this right. Onerous registration requirements were imposed on civil society organisations, and their work was subjected to unnecessary monitoring by government bodies. Efforts toward securing justice and reparations for thousands of victims of human rights violations committed during the conflict which ended in 2006 were inadequate. One protestor was killed as a result of excessive use of force by security forces. There were several allegations of extrajudicial executions. The use of torture and other ill-treatment was widespread. Dozens of families were forcibly evicted from their homes. Migrant workers were subjected to abusive and illegal recruitment practices. Sexual violence including rape and other gender-based violence continued with impunity. Discrimination based on gender continued in both law and practice. Amnesty International 2019

Persecution stems mainly from Hindu extremists who are seeking to make Nepal a Hindu state, with ethnic tensions adding to the pressure. Threats have forced some Christians to flee their homes and villages. Extremists have attacked believers and even bombed churches. Authorities do little to stop threats and attacks against Christians. Laws restrict freedom of religion and anti-conversion legislation places limitations on sharing the gospel. In the last year, several Christians have been arrested for sharing their faith, and others have been abducted and severely beaten. Converts from Hinduism are put under the most pressure as they are viewed as dishonouring the faith of their ancestors. They experience pressure from their family, friends, community and local authorities to return to their former faith. Open Doors 2019

Great Texts of the Bible #4 Exodus 3:1-15

Sermon
Notes

Today we are looking at the Burning Bush. This passage has been especially significant for Presbyterians who have used the image of a Burning Bush as their preferred logo over centuries.

This is the commissioning of Moses whose name appears hundreds of times in the Bible and 85 times in the New Testament, often on the lips of Jesus.

We will look at two things are revealed about the character of God (יהוה), and two things about Moses.

1 YHWH, the Holy God.

The four-letter Hebrew word יהוה (YHWH, just four consonants) is the name of God translated into English as "LORD" (all capitals), or Yahweh. The whole experience is 'strange' and mysterious, and despite attempts to explain the phenomena in natural terms there is no satisfactory explanation.

The strange phenomena surrounding the 'messenger' and the call to Moses to "come no closer" and to remove his sandals, for the LORD is holy, remind us that God is transcendent. We are human, he is not.

In chapter 6 the name יהוה is explained as I am who I am (3:14, 15). At its simplest this means that God is eternally self-existent.

This is not a title. It is the personal name of God.

2 YHWH, the personal God.

The significance of a Hebrew name is vastly more than a label. The name signifies the character of the person. The "Name" of God signifies his "presence in the fullness of his revealed character".

In this short passage alone we notice that he has *seen, heard, knows and remembers* certain things.

By using these anthropomorphic terms the messenger invites Moses into a relationship, God calls (6:4) him by his name "Moses, Moses".

He sees the oppression of the Hebrews who have become slaves in Egypt. The experience of the people there is described as "miserable" and the injustice perpetrated as "cruel" (Exodus 1:13, 3:7).

He remembers his covenant with Abraham and his descendants (3:6, 6:4). This remembering results in his "mercy" or "steadfast love" (Exodus 20:6) described as a typical 'covenant' characteristic" which occurs many times in the Hebrew Scriptures.

What does all this mean for Moses?.

3 The Call to Moses.

It is a call to action. But to action that he does not want to take.

God is going to set the prisoners free. He has come to reveal his purpose to rescue people and set them at liberty. This is the great theme of the book of Exodus.

'Moses' name has come to be synonymous with the giving of the Law to Israel. John 1 tells us "the law was given through Moses".

The nation was to be a holy people, with the Tabernacle of God at the centre of their camp. To achieve this God is about to send Moses to Pharaoh.

God's call to all of us is to be his special people, revealing his love and mercy within the wider community. Today it comes through the one to whom the Law and the prophets bear witness, Jesus Christ. Have you heard him call your name?

3 The Role of Moses.

But God's purpose included Moses' cooperation and activity. Moses involvement in the plan was crucial, he had the background to access the Pharaoh.

But Moses didn't want to do this. He lists numerous reasons why he is a poor choice beginning with (3:11) "I am nobody".

Today Jesus calls to us to follow him if we would be set free as God's children. What decisions might that force upon us? What might we have to change? Give up? Risk?

Like Moses we might prefer that God's message had not come to us. Were we not comfortable as we were? Why should we be tasked with easing misery and ending cruelty? Peacemakers are too easily caught in the crossfire...

But then again, what did Jesus give up to redeem us and set us free? What risk did he run and what price did he pay?

What role is God asking of you to achieve his purposes?