

God Wonders Me  
Exodus 3:1-15 – Psalm 19

The story goes that on a perfect summer morning during Vacation Bible School, with music playing, balloons swaying, joyous children playing, a four-year-old ran up to her pastor, looked him in the eye and said, “*God wonders me.*”

Have you ever asked yourself, “*What wonders you?*” It’s not a bad question.

Moses has done fairly well for himself for someone living in the desert around 1300 B.C. He is married, in the will of a of a rich sheik, and he feels good about himself. At least I think so. “*Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.*”

Notice the verb led. Moses took his sheep past the wilderness to the other side of the desert into God’s ground. Moses did not spin around like a Whirling Dervish, and stop at one of the cardinal points of the compass to decide where to go. Moses went looking for a connection, for uniqueness, for amazement and wonder.

We relate with many things: Music, landscapes, art in various forms, simply because awe and wonder wander around our souls. Like Abraham. Passion and worship both touch us.

“*Moses led his flock to the far side of the desert.*” Moses must have had unlimited peripheral vision because he saw something unfamiliar. Or maybe he wanted to be sidetracked. Whatever, he becomes enthralled by it. A burning bush that is not consumed. What shepherd would not want an unending source of fuel and heat? So, Moses climbs the mountain.

We climb mountains most days. Except this far side of the desert, finding an inconsumable burning bush is done in our ordinary, everyday events. We ‘veg’ or ‘space-out.’ We sleep late. Take vacations. We long for stillness and solace. We are easily distracted because, as with Moses, we are searching.

Moses hears THE Voice, not the program on TV. The voice that turned chaos into cosmos. The voice that spoke to Adam in Eden. The voice that caused Sarah to

laugh and father Abraham to have faith. The voice says, "*Moses, Moses, don't come any closer! Take off your sandals because you are standing on holy ground.*" (Common English Bible)

It is at this point that many of us have a crisis of faith. Our search for God, for the Holy, often ends here. Like Moses, we come close to God but when God commands, "*Take off your sandals,*" much too often we leave.

Why do we do this? Do the sandals symbolize something in us? Perhaps they represent our ego or our self-image. Maybe the things we put in or on our lives thinking it is these things that will make us comfortable, dare I say controllable, perhaps these are our sandals. When we remove our sandals, when we expose the 'real' me, we become vulnerable. This is scary business.

Jesus says, "*Unless you become like a little child you cannot see (or enter) the kingdom of God.*" Becoming sandal-less means being naked before God like a just born child: Exposed and dependent. "*Moses, Moses, take off your sandals.*"

What is the significance of bare feet on holy ground, then? Is our search for God simply curiosity or do we want transformation? Culturally, we are obsessed with spirituality. It has become the buzzword in business, politics, film and literature. Are we drawn to God or is it mere enchantment? Is our culture 'playing' with God, wanting a feel-good experience for two hours and nine dollars? Or, is there genuine courage to walk from fascination to faith?

The same God who called Moses, Moses; the One who asked this man to be exposed, vulnerable, then transformed his life, is the same God who speaks to you today. Could it be that you are searching today? Life is often so crowded, so stress-filled that we find it difficult to hear God's voice. Today and the days of Lent are perfect days to listen and respond to God.

God wonders me. "*And Moses led his flock to the far side of the desert, to Horeb, the mountain of God.*" Loosen the strap on your sandals, take them off, and experience the transforming, renewing presence of the Holy One. Alleluia. Amen.