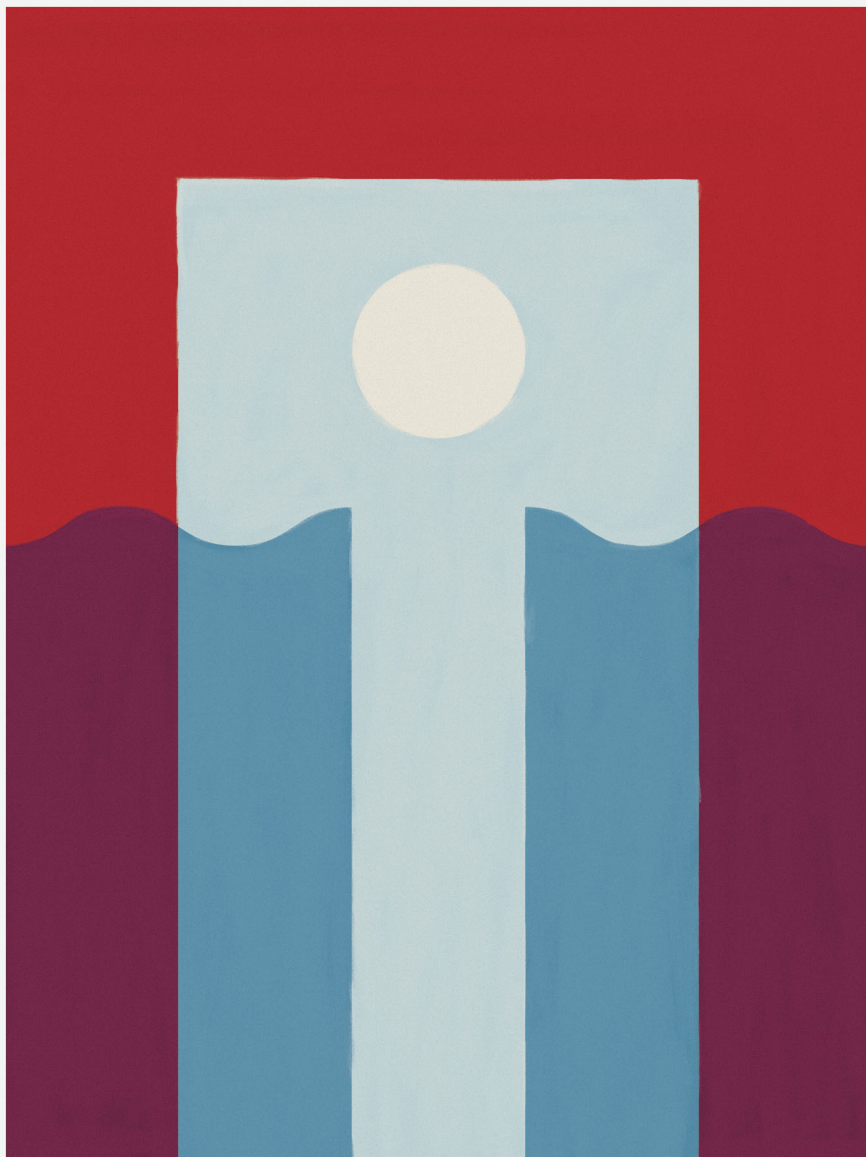


Exodus

Stories of Redemption and Relationship



David Murray

A StoryChanger Devotional

“If you are looking for a daily tool to help you understand the overall story of Scripture while also challenging you to grow spiritually, then *Exodus: Stories of Redemption and Relationship* is exactly what you need. David Murray has eloquently crafted daily studies that are as deep as they are accessible. In fifty days of study, David walks you through one of the most well-known stories in the Bible in a fresh way that will make you grapple with your own need for God and his redeeming work.”

Adam Griffin, Lead Pastor, Eastside Community Church,
Dallas, Texas; Host, *Family Discipleship Podcast*; coauthor,
Family Discipleship

“Exodus is foundational for the story of the Bible and the story of God’s work among his people, and this book is a wonderful companion in your journey through Exodus. In it, David Murray helps us to see clearly how Exodus not only fits into the story of the Bible that culminates in Christ but also how the story continues in us, his church. I am happy to recommend this devotional as a complement to your own reading through Exodus so that you are better equipped both to change your own story with God’s story and help others do the same.”

Chris Bruno, Global Partner for Hawaii and the Pacific Islands,
Training Leaders International; author, *The Whole Story of the
Bible in 16 Verses*

“If you are looking for a biblically based devotional book that is surprisingly accessible to any level of Christian maturity, you have picked up the right book. This particular book on Exodus is uniquely useful because David Murray wrote it. He has a special writing gift that demonstrates his skill as an expositor and his shepherding intuition as a pastor. That gift is wonderfully present in this particular volume on Exodus, and I commend this book to pastors to buy in bulk and distribute to your entire congregation to study together.”

Brian Croft, Executive Director, Practical Shepherding

“We live in a confusing swirl of stories—our own and those presented to us by the world. David Murray has crafted something exceptional in the StoryChanger *Exodus* devotional—brief, energetic, accessible devotions on a critically important Bible book that will help us understand God’s story and, in the process, find transformation for our own!”

Peter Mead, Pastor, Trinity Chippenham; Founder,
BiblicalPreaching.net

Exodus

The StoryChanger Devotional Series

By David Murray

Exodus: Stories of Redemption and Relationship

Luke: Stories of Mission and Mercy



Exodus

Stories of Redemption and Relationship

David Murray

 **CROSSWAY**[®]
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*Dedicated to my twin brother, Kenny, who has taught
me so much about redemptive relationships.*

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Introduction to the StoryChanger Devotionals

Do you want to know the Bible's Story better, but don't know how? Do you want to change your story, but don't know how? Do you want to share the Bible's Story and the way it has changed your story, but don't know how? The StoryChanger Devotional series is the answer to this triple *how*.

How can I know the Bible better? At different points in my Christian life, I've tried to use various helps to go deeper in personal Bible study, but I found commentaries were too long and technical, whereas study Bibles were too brief and not practical.

How can I change my life for the better? I knew the Bible's Story was meant to change my story but couldn't figure out how to connect God's Story with my story in a transformative way. I was stuck, static, and frustrated at my lack of change, growth, and progress.

How can I share God's Story better? I've often been embarrassed by how slow and ineffective I am at sharing God's Story one-on-one. I know God's Story relates to other people's stories and that God's Story can change others' stories for the better, but I'm reluctant to seek out opportunities and hesitant when they arise.

So how about a series of books that teach us the Bible's Story in a way that helps to change our story and equips us to tell the Story to others? Or, to put it another way, how about books that teach us God's Story in a way that changes ours and others' stories?

After writing *The StoryChanger: How God Rewrites Our Story by Inviting Us into His* as an introduction to Jesus as the transformer of our stories, I thought, "Okay, what now? That's the theory, what about the practice? That's the introduction, but what about the next chapters? Jesus is the StoryChanger, but how can his Story change my story in practical ways on a daily basis? And how do I share his life-changing Story with others?"

I looked for daily devotionals that would take me through books of the Bible in a way that explained God's Story, changed my story, and equipped me to tell God's Story to others in a life-changing way. When I couldn't find any resources that had all three elements, I thought, "I'll write some devotionals for myself to help me know God's Story, change my story, and tell the story to others."

A few weeks later COVID hit, and I decided to start sharing these devotionals with the congregation I was serving at the time. I wanted to keep them connected with God and one another through that painful period of prolonged isolation from church and from one another.

I found that, like myself, people seemed to be hungry for daily devotionals that were more than emotional. They enjoyed daily devotionals that were educational, transformational, and missional. We worked our way verse-by-verse through books of the Bible with a focus on brevity, simplicity, clarity, practicality, and shareability. The StoryChanger started changing our stories with his Story, turning us into storytellers and therefore storychangers too.

Although these devotionals will take only about five minutes a day, I'm not promising you quick fixes. No, the StoryChanger usually changes our stories little by little. But over months and years of exposure to the StoryChanger's Story, he rewrites our story, and, through us, rewrites others' stories too.

To encourage you, I invite you to join the StoryChangers community at www.thestorychanger.life. There you can sign up for the

weekly StoryChangers newsletter and subscribe to the StoryChangers podcast. Let's build a community of storychangers, committed Christians who dedicate themselves to knowing God's Story better, being changed by God's Story for the better, and sharing God's Story better. We'll meet the StoryChanger, have our stories changed, and become storychangers. I look forward to meeting you there and together changing stories with God's Story.¹

¹ Some of this content originally appeared on *The Living the Bible* podcast, which has since been replaced by *The StoryChanger* podcast, <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-storychanger/id1581826891>.

Introduction to *Exodus: Stories of Redemption and Relationship*

Exodus tells the story of how God redeemed Israel, entered a covenant relationship with Israel, and provided laws to keep that relationship holy, healthy, and happy.

It commences with redemption by God, climaxes in relationship with God, and continues with moral and religious guidelines that ensure a loving, worshipful friendship with God.

As Moses wrote of Christ (see John 5:46; Luke 24:27, 44), Exodus points to how we are redeemed by Christ, brought into a loving relationship with Christ, and guided into greater enjoyment of Christ (see John 14:15–21).

May these stories of redemption and relationship change our stories and make us storytellers so that we become storychangers too.

**God uses weak
people to fulfill his
strong promises.**



Hear
God's Story

Change
Your Story

Tell
the Story

Change
Others' Stories

1

God's Unbreakable Promise to the Broken

EXODUS 1:1–22

Hard times in God's providence make it hard to trust God's promises. Sometimes we feel broken and God's promises feel broken. We lose a loved one, we're diagnosed with cancer, our daughter's marriage is failing, a friend betrays us, our church is shrinking. And it's only Monday. Hard times in God's providence make it hard to trust God's promises.

How can we trust God's unbreakable promises when they seem to be broken? In Exodus 1, God gives us three helps to trust his promises in tough providences.

God's Promise Is Fulfilled in Surprising Ways 1:1–7

Exodus 1 opens with God's people in Egypt, far from the land God had promised them. Due to famine, the Israelites ended up living in Egypt, where Joseph, his brothers, and the rest of that generation of leaders died (1:1–6).

What a disaster! Despite God's repeated promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob of a multiplied people in the promised land, they are doomed to die in a pagan land.

This is a situation ripe for a heavenly "but," which God sovereignly provides: "But the people of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them" (1:7).

God keeps his promises, even when we can't keep our faith.

*“So, they all lived happily ever after?”
No, God’s promise is always opposed.*

God’s Promise Is Always Opposed 1:8–14

Israel was growing but so was opposition. The new Pharaoh had hard thoughts toward Israel, imposed hard bosses on Israel, and demanded hard work from Israel (1:8–12). “They ruthlessly made the people of Israel work as slaves and made their lives bitter with hard service. . . . In all their work they ruthlessly made them work as slaves” (1:13–14).

God’s promises will be battered, but they will never be broken.

*“So does God raise up a mighty leader at this point?”
Sometimes, but not always.*

God’s Promise Uses Weak People 1:15–21

God’s promise overcomes this opposition by continuing to multiply Israel (1:12). Pharaoh therefore commands the midwives to murder all Hebrew baby boys as they are born (1:15–16), another desperate turn of events. Surely now Israel is finished, the Messianic line is terminated, salvation is lost, and the devil is victorious. If only there were another powerful person like Joseph to deliver them.

Instead, God went to the other end of the scale. He used Hebrew midwives to protect his people and his gospel: “But the midwives feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but let the male children live” (1:17). As a result of their courageous faith, God protected the midwives from Pharaoh and provided families for them (1:18–22).

God uses weak people to fulfill his strong promises.

Changing Our Story with God's Story

God established patterns in the Old Testament narratives to prepare God's national son, Israel, for God's eternal Son, Jesus. From reading this story, what would Israel be primed to expect in God's future Story? They would expect God's promise to be fulfilled in surprising ways, God's promise to be opposed, and God's promise to be fulfilled using weak people.

That's the pattern we see repeatedly in the Old Testament. But nowhere do we see it more clearly than in God's climactic story of Jesus. God kept his promises in the most surprising way in the birth of Jesus to a poor family. God's promise was so opposed that it culminated in Jesus's murder. But Jesus defeated all opposition through the weakness of death and then used weak disciples to fulfill his promises in the New Testament church. Surprise, opposition, and weakness is God's promise pattern. This Story can become our story too.

Summary: How can I trust God's unbreakable promises when they seem to be broken? *Strengthen your faith by remembering that God's normal pattern of promise-keeping is surprise, opposition, and weakness.*

Question: Which broken person can you bring God's unbreakable promises to?

Prayer: Promise-Making, Promise-Keeping God, repair my brokenness with your unbreakable promises.

**Faith makes the
impossible possible
because it's in the
God who makes the
impossible possible.**



Hear
God's Story

Change
Your Story

Tell
the Story

Change
Others' Stories

2

Faith Makes the Impossible Possible

EXODUS 2:1-10

“It’s impossible!” Ever said that? Ever felt that? I have—many times—and I’m sure you have too. God brings us into impossible situations and calls us to face impossible challenges. Perhaps God is challenging you with cancer, or singleness, or loneliness, or depression, or a family conflict, or a career change, or a calling to ministry, or a mission opportunity. Whatever our predicament, we despond and say, “It’s impossible!”

Why does God do this? *Why does God ask us to do the impossible?* Let’s answer this by observing how Moses’s parents responded to God’s impossible challenge in Exodus 2:1-10.

Faith Obeys God More Than People 2:1-2

The king of Egypt issued an edict that all Israelite boys were to be thrown into the Nile. But Moses’s parents knew that the King of kings had issued another edict, to preserve and protect life. Two kings. Two opposing decrees. It was an impossible situation.

What did they do? They hid baby Moses from the king of Egypt, one of the most outstanding acts of faith in the Bible. “By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king’s edict” (Heb. 11:23). Faith enabled Moses’s

dad and mom to obey a holy God rather than an evil person, and God memorialized their faith for all people for all time in the Bible's hall of faith.

*We may never get in the hall of fame,
but we can get into the hall of faith.*

*“Can faith take away the horrible feelings of helplessness?”
Yes, as Moses's parents demonstrate.*

Faith Hopes More Than Despairs 2:3–4

After three months, Moses's parents realized they couldn't hide him any longer. It was impossible. But instead of giving him up to the authorities to be killed, they gave him up to God for protection. They put him in a basket and floated him down the Nile and trusted that God could make this river of death a river of life.

Faith doesn't give up on God but gives over to God.

*“What can we expect if we trust God?”
We can expect to get more than we can imagine.*

Faith Receives More Than It Expects 2:4–10

Baby Moses was floating down a baby-killing river when the king of Egypt's daughter arrived and found him. Of all people! It was an impossible situation. But God put pity in her Egyptian heart. She realized it was a Hebrew boy doomed to die and adopted him as her son.

At this point Moses's big sister, Miriam, jumped in and offered to find a Hebrew mother to nurse the baby. The princess agreed and paid their mother to nurse baby Moses! The river of death became a river of life and the murderous king's daughter became the savior of the King of kings' son!

The princess even gave him the name *Moses*, meaning “drawn out.” This was a description of what she did for him, but in God’s design it was also a prediction of the redemption he would accomplish for Israel from Egypt.

Faith makes the impossible possible because it’s in the God who makes the impossible possible.

Changing Our Story with God’s Story

Is anything too hard for our God? No, as the King’s special Son said, “What is impossible with man is possible with God” (Luke 18:27). Jesus, the greater Moses, the greater Drawn-Out, drew his people out of bondage. He is still redeeming, still drawing us out of bondage.

Summary: Why does God ask us to do the impossible? *God asks us to do the impossible to strengthen our faith in the one who can make the impossible possible.*

Question: What impossible situation are you facing? How will this passage help you out of your helplessness?

Prayer: God of the Impossible, strengthen my faith in you through the impossible challenges you bring into my life for my good.

**Son-glasses help us
see God's people
in a new light.**



Hear
God's Story

Change
Your Story

Tell
the Story

Change
Others' Stories

3

Change Your Glasses to Change Your Choices

EXODUS 2:11–15

How would you like to make thirty-five thousand decisions a day? Believe it or not, you already do! Some of these are simple choices that require virtually no thought (e.g., ice cream or broccoli?). Others are far more consequential and costly.

Sometimes, for example, we must choose between Christ's people and worldly people. That shouldn't be a difficult choice, but it can be. Standing with Christ's people often involves shame, suffering, and loss. Do I really want to choose that?

How do we make the right spiritual choices regardless of consequences? Moses can help us here because when he had to make the biggest spiritual choice of his life, he chose Christ's people over Egyptians. He chose shame, suffering, and loss instead of status, pleasures, and riches.

How did he do that? He changed his choices by changing his glasses. He put on Son-glasses. When he saw Christ by faith, he saw things differently and chose rightly. That's how Hebrews 11:24–26 explains Exodus 2:11–15. Let's pick up these Son-glasses and see what Moses saw.

Faith Chooses Christ's People over Royal Families 2:11–15

Moses was raised in Egypt and was a member of the royal family. But when he saw an Egyptian boss abusing an Israelite slave, he knew he

was at a fork in the road. He could side with the Egyptian boss and keep his royal status, or he could intervene on behalf of the Israelite slave and lose his royal status.

That's when Moses put on his Son-glasses and saw everything differently. Instead of seeing an abused Israelite slave, he saw a child of the King of kings, and so chose God's royal people over Egyptian royalty. As Hebrews 11:24 puts it: "By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." He made the right choice, although in killing the Egyptian, he went about this part of it in the wrong way.

Son-glasses help us see God's people in a new light.

"But won't that result in suffering?"

Yes, and that's where we need our Son-glasses again.

Faith Chooses Christ's Suffering over Sinful Pleasures Heb. 11:25

Hebrews 11:25 helps us see inside Moses's thought processes when he put on his Son-glasses. We see him "choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin." His Son-glasses enabled him to see more glory in suffering with Christ's people than in enjoying Egyptian pleasures and popularity.

Son-glasses help us to see the beauty of suffering for Christ.

"What did faith see that helped Moses make those choices?"

Moses saw the reward at the end of the road.

Faith Chooses Christ's Reward over Earth's Treasures Heb. 11:26

"He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward" (Heb 11:26).

Moses compared the wages—reproach of Christ or riches of Egypt—and chose Christ’s wages even though it involved financial loss. But we know why he did this. By faith Moses saw the gain of the final wage packet, which would more than compensate for all the previous losses.

Son-glasses help us to see the reward at the end of the road.

Changing Our Story with God’s Story

Praise God for giving us these Son-glasses. Without them, we wouldn’t see clearly enough to make the right choices. Praise God for his Son who had perfect vision. By faith, he chose God’s way over the devil’s way. By faith he chose shame, suffering, and loss over worldly status, pleasures, and rewards. Or, to put it positively, he chose heavenly status, pleasures, and rewards over worldly status, pleasures, and rewards.

Summary: How do we make the right spiritual choices regardless of consequences? *Use Son-glasses to choose Christ’s shame, sufferings, and losses and gain heavenly status, pleasures, and rewards.*

Question: How have you used these Son-glasses to change your past choices, and how will you use them to change your present choices?

Prayer: All-Seeing Optician, give me Son-glasses so that I can make right spiritual choices regardless of the consequences.

**When we can't get up,
God comes down.**



Hear
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the Story

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Others' Stories

4

God Comes Down to Lift You Up

EXODUS 3:1–12

Have you ever felt down-and-out? So down-and-out that you've thought you'll never be up-and-in again? You had great hopes and dreams, but now you feel like a nobody, doing a nothing job, with a nothing future. Life is hard, worship is cold, loneliness is your only friend. You're down-and-out. *How do we get up-and-in when we're down-and-out?* I've asked that question more than once in my life. Moses is my favorite elevator.

No one was more down-and-out than Moses. Turn to Exodus 3:1–12, and watch as God helps him up-and-in again.

God Saves by Coming Down in Unexpected Ways 3:1–6

It's been forty years since Moses fled from Egypt in Exodus 2. He was a prince in Egypt, and now he's a poor shepherd in the desert (3:1). But God comes down at the most unexpected time and in the most unexpected way. "And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed" (3:2).

Moses thinks this is a great sight but doesn't realize at first that it is a God-sight. As he turns to inspect this strange bush, God speaks to him out of it: "Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." And he said, '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 at God” (3:5–6).

When we can’t get up, God comes down.

“How is God going to do this saving?”

God has a surprising plan.

God Saves by Sending a Go-Between 3:7–10

Moses had asked many times, “Does God know his people are suffering?” God answers, “I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings” (3:7). He’s coming down to lift his people up out of Egypt and into the promised land (3:8–9).

At this point, Moses is sitting back saying, “Great, I can’t wait to see this!” But God says, “Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt” (3:10). These are the last words Moses expected to hear. Instead of “Come, watch me deliver Israel,” it’s “Come, I will send you to deliver Israel.” God saves through a go-between.

When everything’s broken, God sends a broker.

“What’s God’s aim in sending this broker or mediator?”

His purpose in saving people is to lift up the down-and-out.

God Saves the Down-and-Out for Liff-off 3:11–12

God assures Moses, “When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain” (3:12). When God lifts Israel’s burdens, Israel will lift off in worship.

God takes the down-and-out and makes them up-and-in.

Changing Our Story with God's Story

Where do these truths lead us? They lead us to Christ, the greater Moses. He saved by coming down in unexpected ways. He saved by becoming the go-between. He saves the down-and-out for liftoff. We love Moses for what he did, but we have a greater love for the greater Moses because of his greater doing.

Summary: How do we get up-and-in when we're down-and-out? *Ask Jesus to come down by his Spirit to save the down-and-out and lift us up-and-in.*

Question: Who do you know that is down-and-out and how will you bring this uplifting message to them?

Prayer: Greater-Than-Moses, you can lift those who are most down-and-out and take them higher and closer to you than even Moses did. Thank you for doing that for me. Use me to do it in others' lives too.

**When we remember
God's name,
we reconnect with
God's power.**



Hear
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Change
Your Story

Tell
the Story

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Others' Stories

What a Powerful Name It Is!

EXODUS 3:13–22

One of my weaknesses is forgetting people's names—a bad weakness for a pastor to have. Remembering names means a lot to people as it strengthens our relationship with them. Forgetting fades friendships; remembering reinforces relationships.

The same is true in the spiritual realm. In Exodus 3, we find Israel suffering from spiritual amnesia. They have forgotten God's name, leaving them feeble and fragile.

God's name can fade from our minds too, weakening and undermining our relationship with him. *How do we recover from this spiritual weakness?* In verses 13–22, Moses directs Israel and us to God's name. We rebuild our relationship by remembering God's name.

God's Name Is Memorable 3:13–15

Once Moses gets over the shock of God choosing him to save Israel from Egypt, he anticipates his first conversation with Israel in Egypt: “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” (3:13). Moses knew that after four hundred years in Egypt, Israel will have forgotten the God of Israel. “Who? What's his name? Who's that?” he hears them asking.

What answer does God give Moses? “God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM.’ And he said, ‘Say this to the people of Israel: “I AM has sent me to you.” . . . This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations” (3:14–15).

God reaches into the dark attics of their minds and helps them find dusty recollections from their dim and distant past. As he wipes the dust off his name, he essentially says, “You’ve forgotten my name, so let me help you remember it. It is ‘I AM WHO I AM.’ Who I was to your fathers I am to you. I was who I was, I am who I was, I was who I am, I am who I am, and I am who I will be.”

“This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.”

How can we forget God’s unforgettable name?

“But what does remembering God’s name do?”

It recharges flat spiritual batteries.

God’s Name Is Powerful 3:16–22

Moses is to tell Israel that God has seen Israel’s powerlessness and will flex his muscles for them. “I have observed you and what has been done to you in Egypt, and I promise that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to . . . a land flowing with milk and honey” (3:16–17).

But a powerful promise is weak unless it is believed. Will they or won’t they believe? “And they will listen to your voice” (3:18), and they will demand that the king of Egypt let them go. Although the king will oppose this (3:19), God promises a powerful deliverance: “So I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt with all the wonders that I will do in it; after that he will let you go” (3:20).

*When we remember God’s name,
we reconnect with God’s power.*

Changing Our Story with God's Story

When Jesus came to deliver us from our sins, he said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:58). He also made a number of other “I am” statements (e.g., John 6:35; 8:12; 10:9, 11). He promised great power through his name: “If you ask anything in my name, I will do it” (John 14:14). The apostles made Christ’s name known: “There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12; see Rom. 10:13). What a memorable name! What a powerful name! The name of Jesus.

Summary: How do we recover from spiritual weakness? *Remember, believe, and call upon God’s name to experience an empowering relationship with God and enjoy powerful deliverances by God.*

Question: What can you do to remind yourself of this empowering name of God?

Prayer: Unforgettable God, strengthen my soul by strengthening my memory of your powerful and empowering name.