

RELISHING THE ESSENCE AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

Part I: The Essence Of God

A. Treasuring The Aseity Of God In His Essence (Exodus 3:14 in context)

I. Introduction

- A. One of the difficult trials one can face is seeing entities around him upon which he has come to trust **fully**, be it people, things, institutions, etc. become unreliable as an unsure, failing help in time of great need. Such a "letdown" can lead him to great fear and insecurity.
- B. God **ALONE** has **aseity**, the ability to exist "failure-free" **solely** on His **own**. This quality adheres in His essence, the "stuff of which God consists" (for lack of better words), and it is revealed in Exodus 3:14 with a lesson of comfort and direction for us who need to rely on something that cannot and will not fail:

II. Treasuring The Aseity Of God In His Essence, Exodus 3:14 in context.

- A. When God appeared to Moses in the burning bush and announced He was to be identified to Israel as the God of their fathers whose **name** was, "**I AM WHO I AM**" (Exodus 3:2-4, 14 NIV, ESV), these words were given in the setting of the utter failure of Israel and her patriarchs to **CONTINUE** to function in blessing on their own efforts relative to **alleviating a dreadfully oppressive situation** for Israel:
 - 1. When God as the Great "I AM" appeared to him, Moses had spent the last forty years convinced he was a failure as a deliverer for Israel, and was herding sheep on the back side of the Sinai wilderness from having failed to convince Israel he was God's man to lead them out of Egypt, Exodus 3:1; 2:1-22.
 - 2. Then, according to Steven's sermon in Acts 7:17-36, 51-52 with Exodus 2:1-22, the nation Israel had faithlessly failed to accept Moses as God's leader to deliver the nation out of Egyptian bondage.
 - 3. The sons of Israel could not deliver themselves, but only groan and cry out to God, Exodus 2:23 NIV.
 - 4. Israel's past great leader and influential Hebrew, Joseph had died and another pharaoh who had not known him had taken advantage of Israel to oppress her, Exodus 1:8-11; Genesis 45:4, 8.
 - 5. God had predicted this oppression to Abraham four hundred years before in a context where Abraham himself was shown to be powerless to help Israel out of her future Egyptian bondage, Genesis 15:7-21:
 - a. God predicted to Abraham that Israel would suffer terrible oppression by a foreign nation 400 years before that nation would be judged and Israel would leave it with much possessions, Gen. 15:13.
 - b. At the time, Abraham was powerless to affect Israel's future welfare: (a) he had received this prophecy in a vision from God after wondering how he would know he would inherit the land God promised him, Gen. 15:8 NIV. (b) God then made an unconditional covenant with him: though Abraham provided the sacrifices and positioned their carcasses accordingly (Gen. 15:9-10b), and though he tried to protect these carcasses from birds of prey that came down upon them (Gen. 15:10c-11), God put him into a deep, **HELPLESS** state with a **great darkness** to indicate **Abraham's POWERLESSNESS to deliver his seed** from the future **horror** of Israel's coming Egyptian bondage (Ryrie St. Bible, KJV, 1978 ed., ftn. to Gen. 15:12); then, God **ALONE** passed between the animal parts to show **HE ALONE** would fulfill the prophecy of Israel's coming release from Egypt, and of God's giving Abraham's seed the land, Gen. 15:17-21; *Ibid.*, ftn. to Gen. 15:17.
 - 6. Since then, Abraham and his seed, Isaac and Jacob had passed away (Genesis 15:15-16 with 25:8 re: Abraham; 35:28-29 re: Isaac; 49:33 re: Jacob) and so were unable to deliver Israel from Egypt.
 - 7. In summary, Israel's patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph were all powerless to lead Israel out of Egyptian bondage as they were now deceased, and Moses, the man God raised up to lead them, had been so rejected by Israel and thus become so convinced he was a failure as Israel's leader that he had spent the last 40 years tending sheep in the far side of the desert, and Israel could only cry out to God!
- B. In this setting of utter human weakness and failure, God revealed **HE** had **ASEITY**: **He** had "dynamic and active self-existence" as the "**I AM**" that could not be altered by mortality or sin! (*Ibid.*, ftn. to Ex. 3:14)

Lesson: *Though God's people from Abraham to Moses were helpless to deliver Israel from Egypt due to their own mortality or unbelief, GOD with ASEITY eternally existed of Himself to deliver Israel!*

Application: *May we rely on GOD as our SOLE, "FAILURE-FREE" Source of Help as He ALONE has ASEITY, or "dynamic active self-existence" that CAN NOT FAIL Him OR US! (*Ibid.*)*