

Exodus 3:13-14

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/exod/exod-3/exodus-313-14/>

In his first objection, Moses asks “Who am I?” His second objection asks God, “Who are you?” Moses wants to be prepared if (and when) confronted by the Israelites concerning where he gets the authority to tell them what to do.

Verse 13 begins Moses' second objection, using the attention-getting word *Behold* to start. Moses seems to be apprehensive about whom he is representing. He also realizes that he is *going to the sons of Israel*, who rejected his leadership forty years ago, and now he is to approach them and *say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you.’* Moses is expecting the Israelites to be suspicious of him and of his motives for wanting to be their leader. He needs God's advice when *they may say to me, ‘What is His name?’ What shall I say to them?’*

Moses is anticipating that the Israelites will confront him about his notion of who the “God of your fathers” is. God provides two answers to the question (14, 15). The first answer is in verse 14 when *God said to Moses I AM WHO I AM.*

Though some scholars prefer to translate the phrase in the future tense (“I will be who I will be”), it seems best to leave it in the present tense. It conveys His continuing presence with His people; He is not limited or bound by time, space, and history. The name also implies that He is separate from His creation and is not dependent upon it. Such a God can fulfill the covenant He made to His people, and indeed He will fulfill it.

God continues His first answer by telling Moses *Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’* I AM is probably a word-play on the name Yahweh (translated LORD) given in the next verse. It speaks of His continuing existence (as opposed to the gods of Egypt). It is also significant because it is the covenant-relationship name of the Creator. I AM has a covenant relationship with His chosen people.

Biblical Text:

¹³ Then Moses said to God, “Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you.’ Now

they may say to me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?'"¹⁴ God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"