

Seen and Heard  
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Exodus 2:23-25; 3:7-15

All human beings long to be seen, heard, acknowledged, and valued. It starts at a young age. [Illustration: Our two grandsons – “Granddad, are you watching? Sit right there!” “You’re NOT watching!”] Seeing and hearing requires paying attention.

There are two questions that strike panic into the heart of any distracted husband: The first question is: “Did you hear me?” Then those five scary words: “What did I just say?”

University of Miami neuroscientist and attention expert Dr. Amishi Jha<sup>i</sup> in her book, “Peak Mind” cites scientific studies that show “...rates of mind-wandering range from 30 to 50 percent.”<sup>ii</sup> She states, that 50 percent of the time “...we are mind-wandering and not fully present in what we’re doing...there’s a fifty-fifty chance you’re really there; anytime you’re talking to someone, even if you’re making direct eye contact, there’s only a fifty-fifty chance they’re hearing you.”<sup>iii</sup> Imagine how encouraging that is to a teacher! Half the room just went, “What did he say?”

The point: The God of the universe does not have a “mind wandering” problem. Because God is omniscient (knowing everything) His mind never wanders, and His focus never shifts from those He loves. Because God is omnipotent (all powerful) He sees, hears, and ACTS for our good and His glory. The challenge: Though His timing is perfect, it does not always line up with our expectations. Trusting while we wait is hard.

As we begin our study in the book of Exodus, no doubt after 430 years being held captive in Egypt, the Israelites wondered if God still saw and heard them. An eighty-year-old shepherd named Moses probably had his own doubts. There was a time when God showed favor to the Israelites’ ancestor Joseph and raised him to a high position in Egypt. That was then, now times had changed.

**(NLT) — 23** Years passed, and the king of Egypt died. But the Israelites continued to groan under their burden of slavery. They cried out for help, and their cry rose up to God. **24** God heard their groaning, and he remembered his covenant promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. **25** He looked down on the people of Israel and knew it was time to act.

- The key verbs: God heard, remembered, looked, and knew it was time to act.
- Those verses are not about distraction, neglect, or inattention. They are about timing. God never looked away or closed His ears. His plan was unfolding.
- The truth to embrace: No matter how silent God seems, He is always watching, listening, and working for the good of His children and for His glory.

- Meanwhile, an elderly shepherd’s attention is drawn to a burning bush. A burning bush was not unusual, but this bush never burned up! As Moses approached, out of the bush came the voice of God. (Talk about a “smart speaker!”)

**Exodus 3:7–15 (NLT)** — **7** Then the Lord told him, “I have certainly seen the oppression of my people in Egypt. I have heard their cries of distress because of their harsh slave drivers. Yes, I am aware of their suffering. **8** So I have come down to rescue them from the power of the Egyptians and lead them out of Egypt into their own fertile and spacious land. It is a land flowing with milk and honey—the land where the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites now live. **9** Look! The cry of the people of Israel has reached me, and I have seen how harshly the Egyptians abuse them.

- Imagine what Moses was feeling! Scripture tells us he was amazed and afraid as he heard the voice of God bringing the great news that Israel’s freedom was coming and His covenant to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was about to be fulfilled!
- Moses was probably about to celebrate when God gave him another news flash:

**10** Now go, for I am sending you to Pharaoh. You must lead my people Israel out of Egypt.”

- Let’s put Moses’ life in perspective. The first 40 years of his life he was the adopted son of Pharaoh’s daughter being trained to be the Prince of Egypt.
- At age forty, his heart was moved with the plight of his real people the Israelites, so he took matters into his own hands murdering an Egyptian.
- He ran for his life and spent the next forty years tending his father-in-law’s sheep.
- By age 80, and after all that, it is likely Moses thought he was washed up.
- Another truth to embrace: God has a purpose for each of His children and sometimes it requires some serious “time out” to be prepared to for that purpose.
- God had not forgotten Moses, but it seems Moses needed a refresher about God.

**11** But Moses protested to God, “Who am I to appear before Pharaoh? Who am I to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt?” **12** God answered, “I will be with you. And this is your sign that I am the one who has sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God at this very mountain.”

- Moses was asking, “*Why pick me to take on this monumental task?*”
- God said, “*I will be with you.*” May I paraphrase? God was really saying, “*Moses it’s not about YOU it’s about Me, the God of the Universe!*”
- Another truth: God sees, hears, and empowers us to fulfill His purpose.
- Even though God promised His presence, Moses still protested.

**13** ...“If I go to the people of Israel and tell them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ they will ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what should I tell them?” **14** God replied to Moses, “I Am Who I Am. Say this to the people of Israel: I Am has sent me to

you.” **15** God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel: Yahweh, the God of your ancestors—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you. This is my eternal name, my name to remember for all generations.

- God never forgets us, but sometimes we tend to forget Who He really is.
- To proclaim His greatness and power, God simply said His name -- “I Am.”
- *Yahweh, Jehovah—“I AM WHO I AM” or “I was, I am, I always will be!”*
- One commentator wrote: *“I AM is the ultimate statement of self-sufficiency, self-existence, and immediate presence. God’s existence is not contingent upon anyone else. His plans are not contingent upon any circumstances. He promises that He will be what He will be; that is, He will be the eternally constant God. He stands, ever-present and unchangeable, completely sufficient in Himself to do what He wills to do and to accomplish what He wills to accomplish.”*<sup>iv</sup>
- When we have doubts about God’s plans, we need to look in the mirror and ask: “So, are you questioning the Great I AM, the Creator and sustainer of the Universe? The same God Who said, *“I have loved you with an everlasting love?”*”
- Confessing our feelings of inadequacy to God is appropriate.
- As that philosopher Dirty Harry said, *“A man has got to know his limitations.”*
- But, every Christ-follower needs to remember that the Great I AM has NO LIMITATIONS. If the assignment is truly from Him (not just our idea) He will empower us to carry it out if we will humbly and dependently rely on Him.
- Moses continued to protest (chapter four) but finally surrendered to God’s plan.
- How does all this apply to you and me?
- The Bible gives us many promises that God sees and hears. Here are three:

**Psalm 33:18 (NLT) — 18** But the Lord watches over those who fear him, those who rely on his unfailing love.

**Psalm 34:15 (NLT) — 15** The eyes of the Lord watch over those who do right; his ears are open to their cries for help.

**Hebrews 4:13 (NLT) — 13** Nothing in all creation is hidden from God. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes, and he is the one to whom we are accountable.

- The challenge: Though God’s timing is perfect, it does not always line up with our expectations. Waiting in the silence is hard and that can make us begin to doubt.
- Question: What are some ways we can keep ourselves trusting in the silence? What works for you as Christ-follower?

- Illustration: Tyson: *“Mom!”* Annie: *“Yes, Tyson!”* Tyson: *“Mom, I can’t see you!”*
- We laugh at the silliness of a three-year-old, but is his reaction that silly?
- Look at Psalm 77. If you ever feel guilty about struggling to trust God in the silence, listen to the words of the psalmist Asaph. He sounds a lot like Tyson:

**Psalm 77:1–14 (NLT) — 1** I cry out to God; yes, I shout. Oh, that God would listen to me! **2** When I was in deep trouble, I searched for the Lord. All night long I prayed, with hands lifted toward heaven, but my soul was not comforted. **3** I think of God, and I moan, overwhelmed with longing for his help. **4** You don’t let me sleep. I am too distressed even to pray! **5** I think of the good old days, long since ended, **6** when my nights were filled with joyful songs. I search my soul and ponder the difference

now. **7** Has the Lord rejected me forever? Will he never again be kind to me? **8** Is his unfailing love gone forever? Have his promises permanently failed? **9** Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has he slammed the door on his compassion? **10** And I said, “This is my fate; the Most High has turned his hand against me.”

- Look at how Asaph’s focus shifted in verse eleven.

**11** But then I recall all you have done, O Lord; I remember your wonderful deeds of long ago. **12** They are constantly in my thoughts. I cannot stop thinking about your mighty works. **13** O God, your ways are holy. Is there any god as mighty as you? **14** You are the God of great wonders! You demonstrate your awesome power among the nations.

- When we are tempted to wonder if God sees, hears, and will act on our behalf, we just need to look in the rearview mirror of His faithfulness.
- We also need to be reminded that He is the “God of great wonders.” He IS the Great I AM and nothing is too hard for Him.

So, What’s the Takeaway?

- The God of the universe does not have a “mind wandering” problem.
- His mind never wanders, and His focus never shifts from those He loves.
- He sees, hears, and ACTS for our good and His glory.
- No matter how silent God seems, He is always watching, listening, and working for the good of His children and His glory.
- When we begin to have doubts, let’s take a page from Asaph and remember God’s “wonderful deeds” from the past and recognize that He is the Great I AM. He’s ever-present, all-knowing, all-powerful, never changing, and He “watches over those who fear him, those who rely on his unfailing love.”

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<sup>i</sup> <https://amishi.com/about>

<sup>ii</sup> Jha, Amishi P.. Peak Mind: Achieve Peak Mindfulness and Unlock Your Full Potential (p. 335). HarperCollins. Kindle Edition.

<sup>iii</sup> ibid

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.gotquestions.org/I-AM-WHO-I-AM-Exodus-3-14.html>