

# Exodus 3:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

## Analysis

**And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground** (וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־תִּקְרַב הָלֹם שֶׁל־נִעְלֶיךָ, vayomer al-tikrav halom shal-ne'alekha me'al raglekha ki hamakom asher atah omed alav admat-kodesh hu)—**Draw not nigh** (אֶל־תִּקְרַב, al-tikrav) establishes distance—God's holiness demands reverent approach. **Put off thy shoes** (שֶׁל־נִעְלֶיךָ) was customary when entering sacred space; bare feet signified humility and respect (cf. Joshua 5:15). **Holy ground** (אֲדַמַּת־קֹדֶשׁ, admat-kodesh)—holiness derives not from the place but from God's presence. This command teaches that encountering God requires appropriate reverence, humility, and separation from the common. Moses learns here what Israel will learn at Sinai: approach to holy God demands preparation and respect (Exodus 19:10-13).

## Historical Context

Removing footwear before entering holy space was practiced in ancient Near Eastern cultures when approaching temples or sacred sites. The principle of sacred space consecrated by divine presence becomes foundational in Israel's tabernacle/temple theology (Exodus 25-31, 1 Kings 8:10-11). This moment at Horeb establishes the pattern: God's manifest presence creates holy space demanding reverent response.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does the command to remove shoes challenge modern casual approaches to God's presence?
2. What does this verse teach about the relationship between God's holiness and our posture when encountering Him?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיֹּאמֶר	אֵל	תִּקַּח ב	הֵלֶם	שָׁל	נָעֻל יְרֵךְ	מֵעַל ל
And he said	H408	Draw not nigh	hither	put off	thy shoes	H5921
H559		H7126	H1988	H5394	H5275	
בְּגָל יְרֵךְ	כִּי	הַמָּקוֹם	אֲשֶׁר	אֵתָהּ	עוֹמֵךְ ד	עַל יוֹ
from off thy feet	H3588	for the place	whereon	H859	thou standest	H5921
H7272		H4725	H834		H5975	
אֲדָמָת	קִדְשׁ	הוא:				
ground	is holy	H1931				
H127	H6944					

## Additional Cross-References

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**Joshua 5:15** (Holy): And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.

**Acts 7:33** (Holy): Then said the Lord to him, Put off thy shoes from thy feet: for the place where thou standest is holy ground.

**Exodus 19:12** (Parallel theme): And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death:

**Ecclesiastes 5:1** (Parallel theme): Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.

**Hebrews 12:20** (Parallel theme): (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:

**Exodus 19:21** (Parallel theme): And the LORD said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish.

**Leviticus 10:3** (Holy): Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace.