

EXODUS 3-4

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Exodus chapter 3 as we continue our study through the Word of God.

As we began our study in Exodus last week the children of Israel have been down in Egypt for almost 400 years and the climate has changed you might say.

In Exodus 1:8-14 we see what transpired. We are told, **“Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. And he said to his people, ‘Look, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we; come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies and fight against us, and so go up out of the land.’ Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh supply cities, Pithom and Raamses. But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were in dread of the children of Israel. So the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigor. And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage - in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field. All their service in which they made them serve was with rigor.”**

And as that didn't work, they instructed the Hebrew midwives that any Hebrew male child that is born is to be killed!

Well, these two women, midwives and probably the ones in charge of all the Hebrew midwives, did not obey Pharaoh.

So the next plan was to put the burden on the families, that if they have a boy born to them, they are to take that child and drown them in the Nile River!

It was during this time that Moses was born and through a series of circumstances, he is raised in Pharaoh's house and is next in line for the throne in Egypt!

Now forty years pass by and, like I said, he is next in line to the throne, but he has a calling from God to deliver his people from this bondage.

So he tries to do it his way, which didn't work well at all.

He killed one Egyptian who was abusing one of his people, buried him in the sand and only a few million more to go.

Once Pharaoh heard what he did, he was not a happy man and put out a death sentence upon Moses, so he flees to Midian.

There in Midian he becomes a shepherd, marries Zipporah and has one son by the name of Gershom.

As we concluded last time we read, **“Now it happened in the process of time that the king of Egypt died. Then the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry came up to God because of the bondage. So God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God acknowledged them.”** Exodus 2:23-25.

Forty years have gone by, and the children of Israel have been in captivity now for almost 430 years, some 400 of those years as slaves serving with rigor.

Think about this. Moses has been in the deserts of Midian for forty years now.

And, as we are going to see, God is now going to call Moses to be the deliverer, it is time.

We need to remember that. God's timing is perfect. It is not too late, and it is not too soon, it is right on time.

Remember what Paul said regarding the coming of the Messiah in Galatians 4:4-5, “**But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.**”

Make no mistake about it, God’s timing is perfect!

Think about it, God’s timing was the perfect time *politically speaking*.

It was the time of the Roman Empire where they made travel and commerce possible by building roads that linked the empire. Also, there was a darkness that permeated the land. The timing was perfect.

Not only that, but it was the right time *prophetically speaking*. Just as Daniel tells us in Daniel chapter 9, the exact day that the Messiah would come and ride through Jerusalem as Messiah the Prince!

And listen to what Paul tells us here, that at this appointed time, “**God sent forth His Son**” to redeem sinful man who was under the curse of the Law!

Jesus came to “**redeem**” us; EXAGORAZO, (ex-ag-or-ad’-zo) in the Greek, and it speaks of buying back or buying out and was often used of slaves whose freedom was purchased.

Think about that, we were slaves to sin under the Law, but Christ bought us out by His sacrifice and now, instead of being a slave to sin we are an heir of God, sons of God!

So, to go back into the Law is to undo the very work of Christ on the cross! Is that making sense to you? I hope so.

Paul also tells us that Jesus was “**born of a woman**” which speaks of His humanity and the virgin birth.

He was fully God, and He was fully man!

He was born into a society that was in bondage to the Law and yet He kept it perfectly, and only He could, as He said in Matthew 5:17, “**Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.**”

Notice that He did not say we are to fulfill them, because we can't, but He could, and He did!

I like the way that Govett put it. He said, “*Christ, by nature Son of God, became a son of man, that we, by nature sons of man, might become sons of God. Wonderful exchange.*”

Amen to that!

And that is what we will see here in Exodus. Not only was it the perfect timing for the children of Israel to be delivered from their bondage in Egypt, but it was also the perfect timing for Moses to be their deliverer. Remember, forty years earlier he tried on his own and failed. Now, as we will see, Moses knows he can't do it on his own. In fact, he is eighty years old now!

With that said, let's begin reading in Exodus chapter 3, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word.

EXODUS 3

VERSES 1-3

At this point forty years have passed by and what is Moses, the deliverer, doing?

There in the desert, day in and day out for forty years he tended the sheep of his father-in-law Jethro, not even his own sheep.

That is what the Hebrew is telling us here, that it was a habitual occupation and these roads in the desert he kept traveling with these sheep.

And as he came to Mount Horeb, latter to be called Mount Sinai, something he did over and over again, but on this day, something catches his eye!

There was this bush, tradition says it was an Acacia bush, but keep in mind that there were bushes everywhere, but this one was different, this thorn bush of the desert was on fire!

Now, that is not what caught his attention because that did happen. Being in that dry, hot climate these bushes did catch on fire.

What was different here is that this bush burned and yet it was not consumed! What was God showing Moses and us through this?

Think about it like this.

The thorn bush speaks of sin. (Genesis 3:18)

The fire speaks of judgment.

The bush is on fire, but it is not consumed, which is a picture of God's grace and mercy that He extends to us.

What drew Moses to God was this grace that Moses saw!

This bush was on fire but not consumed and with man, sin could be judged, and the sinner not consumed or destroyed!

That is what grace is all about – ***GETTING WHAT WE DON'T DESERVE BECAUSE JESUS PAID THE PRICE FOR OUR SIN!*** In other words, we get eternal life, not because we deserve it, but because Jesus freely gives it to us by faith!

Now I don't believe Moses realized all of that when he looked at the bush, but we understand that as Christians and having the New Testament before us.

Paul put it like this in Romans 6:23, "**For the wages of sin is death, but the [free] gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**"

And isn't it the goodness of God, the grace of God that draws us to the Lord as it did here with Moses?

Of course it is as Paul tells us, **“Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?”** Romans 2:4.

The Amplified Bible puts this verse like this, **“Or are you [so blind as to] trifle with and presume upon and despise and underestimate the wealth of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering patience? Are you unmindful or actually ignorant [of the fact] that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repent (to change your mind and inner man to accept God's will)?”** Romans 2:4.

Not only do we see this thorn bush on fire and not consumed, but **“... the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. . . .”**

Who is this Angel of the Lord?

It is the pre-incarnate Christ!

How do I know that?

Because we are told in John 8:58 that, **“Jesus said to them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.’”**

In other words, Jesus is saying that He is the **“I AM,”** the voice from the burning bush and we will see that more as we get to Exodus 3:14.

But the Jews recognized what Jesus was saying because in John 8:50 we are told, **“Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.”**

Jesus was saying that He is God and the Jews wanted to kill Him for that, but the reality was and is, He is God!

One more point here and that is Moses will see that it is the grace of God that is calling Moses into the ministry just as it is the grace of God that calls us into ministry. We are getting what we don't deserve.

That is what Paul wrote in I Corinthians 15:9-10, **“For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain . . .”**

In other words, Paul did not deserve to be in the ministry. To see that, just look at his life before he was saved! And yet, by the grace of God he was placed into the ministry and the same, like I have said, is true for all of us!

VERSES 4-6

For Moses, all those years in the desert watching over his father-in-law's sheep. Not even his own, as I have said.

He must have been a broken man. Maybe thinking that no one knows about him, and this is what he will do the rest of his life. He basically was a nobody in the desert!

And then this burning bush and the Lord speaks to him, and did you notice that the Lord didn't say, ***“Hey you!”***

No, He called Moses by name, God knew who he was, and he was important to God.

Folks, none of us are Moses, but God still calls us by name, and we are important to Him. We all have our role to fulfill in the body of Christ. None of us should be spectators!

If you doubt that God cares for you and that He even knows you, then listen to what Jesus said in John 10:27-30, **“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one.”**

That is our God. Never forget that!

Here is another important point.

The burning bush that was not consumed was a spectacular sight to see but it did nothing for Moses.

Well, yes, it got his attention, but it wasn't until God spoke to him do we see his life changed.

People today run to and fro looking for signs and wonders but negate the Word of God.

Does God do signs and wonders today?

You bet He does but we have lost the focus. And because of that many have opened themselves up to being deceived by these false signs and wonders that the Devil unleashes.

How can people not be deceived?

By listening to the voice of God, by being in the Word of God and it will set you free from the lies of the Devil. Thus, dig into God's Word!

Now the Lord tells Moses to **“... ‘Take your sandals off your feet for the place where you stand is holy ground.’”** Exodus 3:5.

Why was this holy ground?

Because God was there, that was the only reason.

Think of it like this. There is God and then everything else is creation and thus, He alone is holy and deserves our worship!

Also notice that this is not a new God, but He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob!

You see, the way that God will deal with Moses will be based upon the covenant that He made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

God does not change, and He relates to us based upon the New Covenant that is found in the shed blood of Jesus for our sins.

Thus, there are no new god's, there are no new ways into heaven, it is only through Jesus, the New Covenant!

One more thing that I want you to see here, and that is what God says in Exodus 3:6, “... I am the God of your father – the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. . . .”

Keep in mind that these men have been dead for hundreds of years and yet, the Lord does not say “I was the God” of these men, but that “I am the God of” these men!

My point is this because Jesus picked up on this in Matthew chapter 22.

In Matthew 22:23-31 we see the Sadducees trying to catch Jesus by giving to Him this wild story about a woman who marries a man, and the man dies.

They had no offspring, so the brother of this man marries her, and he too dies.

This happens seven times, they all die! And finally, she dies.

Since the Sadducees don't believe in the resurrection and they are using this story to show how foolish it is to believe in resurrection life, they ask Jesus, “Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her.” Matthew 22:28.

And listen to the response by Jesus. We are told, **“Jesus answered and said to them, ‘You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven. But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, “I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob”? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.’”** Matthew 22:29-32.

Jesus takes them back to this passage here in Exodus chapter 3 to show them that there is resurrection life as He is quoting what God said here in Exodus. ***“I am”*** not ***“I was”*** the God of these men!

VERSES 7-10

I wonder if at times the children of Israel thought that God forgot about them down in Egypt. The hard labor that Pharaoh had placed on them was overwhelming.

Did God forget about them?

Absolutely not and I want you to understand that. No matter what you are going through right now, no matter how difficult it is, God is with you, He has not forgotten about you!

You see, our God is a personal God who sees, who knows, who hears.

Well, if He knew all this, then why did He wait so long in delivering the children of Israel?

Folks, God was not late, He was right on time!

In Genesis 15:13-16 the Lord tells Abraham, **“Then He said to Abram: ‘Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.’”**

Notice, 400 years of affliction down in Egypt but they were down there a total of 430 years because those first 30 years they were not slaves.

And the reason was not only to birth the nation of Israel but also the iniquity of the Amorites was not complete yet and thus, God waited and now it was time.

God gave them the time to repent but they did not and thus, the Amorites were going to be driven from the land and the children of Israel would enter into the land of Canaan, the Promise Land.

One more important point here. I want you to also notice that God not only sees, He not only knows, He not only hears their problems, but now it says, **“... I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites.”**
Exodus 3:8.

And God accomplished this through Moses, that is how He came down to deliver His people.

Could God have done this on His own?

You bet and much better, but He chose to work through Moses.

Folks, He does the same with us.

In I Corinthians 3:9 Paul tells us, **“For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, you are God’s building.”**

And in II Corinthians 6:1 we are told, **“We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain.”**

The Amplified Bible puts it like this, **“LABORING TOGETHER [as God’s fellow workers] with Him then, we beg of you not to receive the grace of God in vain [that merciful kindness by which God exerts His holy influence on souls and turns them to Christ, keeping and strengthening them - do not receive it to no purpose].”**

God works together with His people, you and me to accomplish His will!

VERSES 11-12

Think about what Moses is saying here and what he was like forty years earlier!

Forty years before we see Moses as bold, he thought he was somebody and I guess, in the eyes of man, he was.

He was a prince in Egypt. He was a Hebrew. He was the instrument that God was going to use to deliver the children of Israel from their bondage in Egypt!

But when that failed, he ended up chasing sheep around the desert for forty years and now, humbled, not having that same self-assurance as he did forty years ago, he tells the Lord, **“Who am I . . .”** Exodus 3:11.

This truly is a picture of man. We think we know who we are, we are bold, proud, we can do it until things fall apart and God brings us into and out of those desert experiences so that we can learn from them and grow in them, be broken by them.

And then we respond by saying to God, “*No thanks, I am happy in the desert!*”

Why is that?

Because we have lost that self-confidence we once had and we have not yet learned to trust in the Lord, to put our full weight upon Him – ***FAITH!***

For Moses, he recognized he couldn’t do it. Those forty years in the desert broke him.

But that was not the right question that Moses asked.

It is not “**Who am I**” but “***Who is God***” that he should have asked and that should be the way we face these issues.

We are dust – He is God! That is a great perspective to have but at this point Moses is still focused on self!

But notice the love of God towards Moses and how God encourages Moses here.

He will be with Moses, and He will not only deliver the children of Israel from their bondage in Egypt, but they will gather and worship God on this very mountain! And this mountain is a reference to Mount Sinai, which was not in Egypt but in Arabia according to Galatians 4:25!

It is not an “***if,***” but they will **do** this!

But for Moses, as we will see as we read on, Moses moves from a lack of self-reliance, which is good; to a lack of faith, which is bad.

VERSES 13-14

God wants to use Moses as the deliverer, but Moses is not too sure. He tried forty years earlier to be the deliverer and that did not work out too well. Now he is a nobody, back then he was the prince of Egypt, and he wants something to back him up. Thus, ***“Who should he say has sent me?”***

And the Lord tells him, **“I AM”** or the eternal One, the all-becoming One has sent him!

The Hebrew consonants ***YHWH*** are how it is written because they did not insert the vowels and thus, there is speculation on how it is pronounced.

Some say it is ***Yahweh***, which I believe is correct and others say ***Jehovah***, we are not really sure.

This combination of consonants, ***YHWH*** is known as ***TETRAGRAMMATON*** or ***“four letters.”***

And we see here that God reveals Himself as the great **“I AM”** in the Scriptures. And please understand He is not ***“the great I was”*** or ***“The great I will be.”*** No, He is – ***THE GREAT I AM!***

He is the eternal God as one author put it, ***“He is the self-existent One who always was, always is, and always will be, the faithful and dependable God who calls Himself ‘I AM.’”***

Interestingly enough, this word is actually a verb meaning ***“to be”*** or ***“to become.”***

The point being is that God wants to be or to become to us whatever we need, which is why it is often coupled with a noun.

In the Old Testament we see many names of God, the same God but just how He meets us where we are.

In other words – ***THE ALL-BECOMING ONE!***

Here are a few names of God in the Old Testament:

YAHWEH JIREH: The Lord will provide – Genesis 22:14.

YAHWEH ROPHE: The Lord who hears – Exodus 15:22-26.

YAHWEH NISSI: The Lord our banner – Exodus 17:15.

YAHWEH M'KADDESH: The Lord who sanctifies – Leviticus 20:8.

YAHWEH SHALOM: The Lord our peace – Judges 6:24.

YAHWEH ELOHIM: Lord God – Genesis 2:4.

YAHWEH TSIDKENU: The Lord our righteousness – Jeremiah 23:5-6.

YAHWEH ROHI: The Lord our shepherd – Psalm 23.

YAHWEH SHAMMAH: The Lord is there – Ezekiel 48:35.

YAHWEH SABAOTH: The Lord of hosts – Isaiah 1:24.

Now, look at the New Testament and see how Jesus teaches that He is the great
“I AM” or that He is God.

As you will see, this is very clear so to deny the deity of Jesus is just plain foolishness.

The New Testament speaks of Jesus like this.

I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE – John 6:35.

I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD – John 9:5.

I AM THE DOOR – John 10:9.

I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD – John 10:11.

I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE – John 11:25.

I AM THE WAY, I AM THE TRUTH, I AM THE LIFE – John 14:6.

I AM THE VINE – John 15:11.

BEFORE ABRAHAM WAS, I AM – (voice of the burning bush) – John 8:58.

In fact, if you deny the deity of Jesus you will die in your sins! I know that is a bold statement, but I didn't say it, Jesus did!

In John 8:24 He said, *“Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am [He], you will die in your sins.”*

Keep in mind that the *“He”* was added for clarity, but it was not in the original writings. In fact, it just takes away the point Jesus is making here.

What is the point?

In other words, if you don't believe that Jesus is the *GREAT I AM*, that He is Almighty God, then you will die in your sins! Pretty clear, don't you think?

Thus, Jesus is our all-becoming One, that no matter what we are going through He will meet us where we are.

I believe the Lord was telling Moses this very thing – *“Moses, don't worry, I AM with you, and you have nothing to fear!”*

May we too remember that and apply it to our lives – He is the great *“I AM”* not the great *“I WAS”* or the great *“I WILL BE”*!

VERSES 15-18

God first gives Moses the words to say to the elders of Israel. To let them know that God is aware of their afflictions, their cries have reached His ears and He will deliver them through Moses.

But, before they are released, they are to ask Pharaoh if they can leave the land of Egypt to worship their God, a three-day journey.

Why just this little journey and why are they not leaving Egypt as God had said?

It is possible, as one writer put it, *“God presented the smaller request to Pharaoh first so that the request would be as appealing and as easy to accept as possible. He did this so Pharaoh would have no excuse at all for refusing God and hardening his heart.”*

For these leaders or elders of Israel, they will listen to what Moses is telling them.

But what about Pharaoh?

Let's read on and see.

VERSES 19-22

It was going to take a lot of breaking before Pharaoh will let the children of Israel go free, but he would eventually give in but not completely as we shall see as we go through Exodus.

Now, why did God allow the children of Israel to plunder the Egyptians of their wealth as they are leaving?

I think God was paying them for the 400 years of slavery that Egypt had placed upon them.

They worked for the Egyptians and now it was time to pay the children of Israel back.

And as we will see, as they leave Egypt, they willingly give their wealth to them!

EXODUS 4

VERSE 1

Think about this for a minute. Moses has no problem speaking to a burning bush, but he has a problem with what the bush is saying!

It is good that Moses has no confidence in self. The problem here is that Moses doesn't have confidence in God!

What do I mean by that?

Didn't the Lord already tell Moses back in Exodus 3:18 that the elders in Israel would listen to what he said to them? Yes, the Lord told Moses that they would heed his voice.

So what is Moses doing here?

He is basically saying, "***But God, what if you are wrong?***"

How can Moses do that?

Because we do it all the time!

The Lord said He would be with him, it will happen, and Moses says, "***But . . .!***"

God tells us to take a step of faith and we do the same thing, "***But . . .!***"

May we learn to trust what the Lord has said to us and walk by faith! May we not look at the problems we face and become overwhelmed, but may we look to the great ***I AM*** and just rest in Him as we walk by faith!

VERSES 2-5

Now when Moses expressed his concern that the elders of Israel wouldn't believe that God had sent him to be their deliverer, God gave him three miraculous signs that he could use to prove to them that God had sent Moses to them.

The first sign that God gives to Moses to show that he was sent from God is that his rod will turn into a snake and then back to a rod.

For 40 years Moses carried this staff, this rod through the desert and now this.

What is God is saying?

First of all, God was stretching the faith of Moses because you would never grab a snake by the tail, that is too dangerous. But that is what the Lord told him to do, and he did it!

But I also think the Lord was showing Moses and us that God wants us to use what is in our hand for His glory.

Folks, what is in your hand, what are you doing?

God wants you to use it for His glory!

For Moses, it was a shepherd's rod and God will use that in the life of Moses to shepherd His people!

Shamgar killed 600 Philistines with an ox goad – Judges 3:31.

Samson killed 1,000 Philistines with a jawbone of a donkey – Judges 15:16.

David killed the Philistine giant, Goliath with a sling and a stone – I Samuel 17:49.

And God took five small barely crackers and two pickled fish from the hand of a young boy and fed 5,000 men plus women and children – John 6: 9, 13.

For Paul, it was a pen, he was a scholar and God used that to write a large portion of the New Testament.

For Peter, he was a fisherman and God would use that and make him a fisher of men!

Can God use what is in your hand?

You bet He can if you will let Him!

WHAT IS IN YOUR HAND?

Let the Lord use it in your life to minister to people!

It is as one pastor wrote, *“If you wonder how you can serve God, how you can be used by Him, take a look at what’s in your hand. God gave you gifts when you were born simply waiting to be activated when you were born again. You’re already doing that which He will energize and empower for ministry. What’s in your hand? A computer? A hammer? A basketball? That’s what He will use for His glory.”*

That is our God, and He wants to use us!

Now here in Exodus 5:4, the reason that the Lord is doing this is, **“that they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you.”**

The God of the covenant had not forsaken them, but He has come to deliver them and here is the evidence that Moses is the instrument He will use!

The first miraculous sign was his shepherd’s rod turning into a snake!

VERSES 6-9

The next miraculous sign is that as he places his hand in his bosom and takes it out it will become leprous and when he does it again it will be restored.

What does this mean?

Leprosy in the Bible is a type of sin and maybe the Lord is saying that if we obey Him our hands, our lives will be clean but if we walk in rebellion against Him, they will be unclean as a leper’s hand!

The third miraculous sign will be the water that is taken from the Nile River, as it is poured out on the ground it will turn to blood.

This seems to be a sign of judgment if they don't believe and they continue to rebel against the Lord, if they remain in their wicked ways!

You would think, at this point, Moses is ready to go. The Lord is with Him. The Lord has empowered Him. And the Lord has told him that these things will come to pass, not might.

In spite of all that, look at what we read next.

VERSE 10

Moses keeps coming up with excuses why he can't serve God and this one is not even true.

He said that he couldn't speak clearly, eloquently but in Acts 7:22 we are told the opposite, "**And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds.**"

The Amplified Bible puts it like this, "**So Moses was educated in all the wisdom and culture of the Egyptians, and he was mighty (powerful) in his speech and deeds.**"

It wasn't that Moses couldn't speak, he just didn't trust God and was not willing to walk by faith and allow God to use what he had.

Moses may have had some kind of speech impediment, but did that really matter if the Lord called him to that position? No, it did not because it was going to be the Lord who was going to speak through Moses!

What excuses do we use for not serving the Lord?

Are they just as lame as Moses' excuses?

They are if God has called you and you are not moving!

For me, to speak in front of people was terrifying. And what does the Lord do? He calls me to be a pastor, into a teaching position, where I will have to speak in front of people!

For me, I had to trust in the Lord and walk by faith and now, for some twenty-seven years, He has supplied me with all that I need to do the work He has called me to do. And He will do the same with you!

VERSES 11-12

Let me ask you this question. Does it really matter if you are not articulate with your speech if God has called you?

Absolutely not because God is with us just as He was with Moses.

Let me show you what I mean with this story of D. L. Moody. We are told,

One day during his great mission in London, Mr. Moody was holding a meeting in a theater packed with a most select audience. Noblemen and noblewomen were there in large numbers, and a prominent member of the royal family was in the royal box.

Mr. Moody arose to read the Scripture lesson. He attempted to read Luke 4:27: ***“And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet.”***

When he came to the name of Eliseus he stammered and stuttered over it. He went back to the beginning of the verse and began to read again, but when he reached the word ***“Eliseus”*** he could not get over it. He went back the third time, but again the word was too much for him. He closed the Bible with deep emotion and looked up and said, ***“Oh, God, use this stammering tongue to preach Christ crucified to these people.”***

The power of God came upon him, and one who heard him then and had heard him often at other times said to me that he had never heard Mr. Moody pour out his soul in such a torrent of eloquence as he did then, and the whole audience was melted by the power of God.

- Sunday School Times

God is looking for people that He can work through to show Himself strong through.

Don't try to back out of what God is calling you to do like Moses tried to do.

God knows us better than we know ourselves. He knows our weaknesses and strengths and it is usually through our weakness, what we have in our hand, that He will use to work in us and through us.

God is sufficient for us no matter how inadequate we may feel, be it real or not, God is still God and if He has called, go forward!

VERSES 13-17

Why was God angry with Moses?

Because he was unwilling to serve as God has called him to do. He was not unable because God said He would enable him to do these things.

But Moses asked God to let someone else do it.

How sad a statement that is and how often people do that today. They are just unwilling to serve for whatever reason, whatever excuse they make even though God has told them to go forward.

God's perfect will, I believe was to have Moses go but He allowed Aaron to speak to the people for Moses. God would speak to Moses and Moses would represent God before Aaron and tell him what to say before the people.

But, as we will see as we go through the Scriptures, the Pentateuch, Aaron was a problem for Moses.

He helped to instigate the worship of the golden calf while Moses was getting the commandments from God (Exodus 32:1-6)).

Two of his sons blasphemed God and were put to death (Leviticus 10:1-7).

And Aaron led a rebellion against Moses (Numbers 12:1-8).

Moses should have obeyed the Lord and served as God had instructed him to!

VERSE 18

Before Moses leaves, he asks his father-in-law Jethro if it is okay for him to go. He does not neglect his family or his employer, which in both cases was Jethro.

That is important, that we are a good example to others as God calls.

Now Moses doesn't go into great detail about what God has said, only that God has called him to deliver his people and then, as God blesses it will minister to Jethro and those who have heard what God was going to do.

Folks, as God calls you, you don't have to go into great detail, just explain the call of God and let them see the fruit that God will bring from the work you are doing.

I believe that my call here to Manitowoc is an inspiration to others in how God first calls and then, in His time, He brings to pass what He has promised!

VERSES 19-23

Who hardened Pharaoh's heart?

Sometimes it says that the Lord hardened his heart (Exodus 4:21) and other times it says that Pharaoh hardened his heart (Exodus 8:15).

So which one is it?

It really is both.

You see, God just gave to Pharaoh that which he wanted. He did not want the children of Israel to be set free and God just made his heart firm in what he wanted. God will not make your heart firm, hard unless you want it that way and I believe it is what we are seeing here with Pharaoh.

How righteous, how just would our God be if He made us, forced us to do evil and then punished us for doing it!

You can read Romans chapter 1 on your own, and as you do you will see that man rejects God and God gives them over to do what is in their heart, which is evil. It is a choice that they made! God gives to them what they want and firms their heart in that area!

We are also told that Israel is God's firstborn son and thus, if Pharaoh refuses to let God's firstborn son go, then it will cost them the firstborn sons in Egypt. And that is exactly what will happen because Pharaoh hardened his heart to what God wanted and God just firmed it up. God knew what it would take to let His people go but it didn't have to go that far if only Pharaoh softened his heart to God!

VERSES 24-26

This seems very strange and yet, as you will see, it is very important. Moses was to be God's instrument to deliver His people, to bring them the Law of God and yet, he did not circumcise one of his sons, probably the youngest.

I believe that Gershom his firstborn was circumcised but when Eliezer was born his wife Zipporah refused to let him be circumcised and Moses did nothing about it.

Maybe she was appalled by this idea of circumcision and Moses, ***"Happy wife, Happy Life!"*** did not obey the Lord but gave in to his wife. He was not the spiritual leader of the family! And we see that so much today with Christians. That should not be!

It is as J. Vernon McGee wrote, ***"There is a real danger when husband and wife do not agree completely in spiritual matters. That is the reason Scripture warns against believers and non-believers getting married."***

Why was this so important?

Because circumcision was the sign of the covenant God had made with Abraham and his descendants. In fact, to not be circumcised as a Jew meant you were to be cut off from the people of God and counted as a Gentile.

But now, as they begin to travel to Egypt God is going to kill Moses and he must have been very sick because Zipporah recognizes what is going on and why, and she goes and gets a sharp stone and circumcises Eliezer – ***OUCH!***

And listen to why God was so angry. In Genesis 17:10-14 God told Abraham, **“This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised; and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant. He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.”**

You see, Moses was to represent God before the people, and he is already compromising what God has said.

Is there something in your life that God wants you to cut away so He can use you?

Some compromise in your life that is holding back what God wants to do?

For Moses, before he could deliver his people, he had to correct his error and be the spiritual leader in his family even if his wife didn't agree!

I believe at this point that Zipporah and the children go home, and Moses continues on towards Egypt.

The reason I say that is what we are told in Exodus 18:1-5, **“And Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses’ father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel His people - that the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt. Then Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, took Zipporah, Moses’ wife, after he had sent her back, with her two sons, of whom the name of one was Gershom (for he said, ‘I have been a stranger in a foreign land’) and the name of the other was Eliezer (for he said, ‘The God of my father was my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh’); and Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife to Moses in the wilderness, where he was encamped at the mountain of God.”**

Thus, I think they went back home after Eliezer was circumcised. And maybe Moses sent her home because of this spiritual issue she had. He did not need this in the work that was before him.

VERSES 27-31

Moses and Aaron meet, probably the first time in forty years they have seen each other, and Moses tells him all that God has said and shown him all that God will do.

They are then to go and tell the elders in Israel these things and then the people and as they do this, they all bow before God and worship the Lord – they see the hand of God at work in their lives and in the life of Moses and Aaron.

Isn’t that exactly what God said He would do?

You bet it is.

God brought Aaron to him. They would speak before the elders and the people, and they would believe.

Folks, what God has promised He is more than able to bring to pass. All He asks us to do is walk by faith.

You see, the problem is never with God, but it is always with us. May we learn the lesson and obey the Lord, no matter how impossible it may seem through our own strength and ability and resources and whatever!

God can do it and if He has spoken, He will do it. All we must do is walk by faith and let's see what God can do in us and through us for His glory if we do!

Now as great as this seems to be, the children of Israel are excited, they are worshiping God, we will see that this love for God and for Moses is limited to when things are going well.

When things heat up, they won't want anything to do with God or Moses, as we will see!