

Stop Making Excuses

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[0 : 00] We're in chapter 4 of the book of Exodus and looking at Moses and God's call upon him and that he discovered at the event of the Burney Bush where he had his first personal encounter with God.

And God spoke to him and assured him that he had a purpose in his life and that purpose was to be used of God to lead his people, the Jewish people, out of Egyptian bondage.

Take them to the land that he has promised them as their inheritance which is the land of Canaan. And I got to thinking about this a moment ago. In all of this and everything we see in the life of Moses and what God does in and through him and to him, it's just a picture of the fact that God is God.

Amen. Amen. God is God and he proves himself to be that so many different times. And so he does that in our lives as well. Recognize it's a progressive thing for us to begin to learn that and begin to understand that.

The events that transpire in Moses' life bring some ups and downs in his heart and his mind. But in all of that, eventually he learns more about God, more about who he is, more about how he operates and begins more and more to surrender to that.

[1 : 44] So it's the same thing in our life, is it not that God does that? Now, after God speaks to him about the fact that he's going to use him to lead Israel out of bondage, Moses has a question.

You remember, if I go and tell the people that you have sent me to them to lead them out, they're going to ask me, who sent you? What is his name? And God determined, God specified to him that when you go to them, tell them, I am, have sent you.

And the idea is, I will be what I will be. I'm the sovereign God, is the picture there. The almighty sovereign God. But then he says, I am the Lord God.

I am Jehovah Elohim of your fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And then he says, it's by that name that I will be remembered and known forever.

That will be my name forever, Jehovah. All right? The almighty God, the self-existent God, always has been, always will be, but more so the God that reveals himself unto man.

[2 : 53] That's the picture we find in the name Jehovah. He said, that will be my name forever and my memorial unto the people of Israel. The memorial is that everything God does or everything he has done is doing at the present time of Moses and does throughout human history.

It's all encapsulated in who he is in the name of Jehovah. So that will be a remembrance for them. Every time they see something God has done, they will remember the name Jehovah.

Likewise, when they think of the name Jehovah, they'll think of the things that God has already done and is doing. So that's the picture there. So Moses, okay, fine.

But they're not going to believe me. When I go, they're not going to believe that you sent me.

They're not going to believe the thing I say. I mean, remember, after all, it's been over 400 years since God manifest himself personally to anybody of the Jews.

Jacob was the last one that God appeared to and spoke to personally like he's done now to Moses. So, okay, Moses, here's what I'm going to do.

[4 : 07] And this is what we began to see last week. I'm going to give three signs here to you. And surely by those three signs, they will believe that I sent you, that I spoke with you.

And I've come to visit my people. The first sign, remember, was the sign of the staff. That shepherd's crook, if you will.

God said to Moses, throw it on the ground. He threw it on the ground and he became a serpent. Remember? What did Moses do? He ran, remember. Okay. He ran from the snake.

God said, well, wait a minute. Moses, come pick that snake up by the tail. I'd love to see anyone. God told him to do that. What his expression was, how long he hesitated. But he finally grabs a hold of the tail of that snake and he becomes the rod again. Okay. Fine. Now, if they don't believe that sign, if they don't believe by that sign that I sent you, here's another sign. [5 : 08] Remember what that was? We saw that last week. Put your hand in your bosom. And so he does. And he pulls it back out. God says, pull it out.

And it was covered with leprosy. God says, all right, put it back in your bosom. He does that. And he pulls it back out and it's clean.

All right. That first sign was intended, if you will, really more so for Moses. And the reality that God really has called him.

And that the people of Israel can see that God is the one that called him. Now, that second sign about the leprosy on the hand and the eventual cleansing was to show more so the power of God, that he has the ability, if you will, the necessary power to execute everything that God tells Moses to do.

All right. He's going to give Moses everything he needs to fulfill that particular calling that God's placed on him.

[6 : 21] Now, if you stop and think about that just a moment, has God not done that throughout the generations, throughout the years when he's called somebody to do that?

Go over to Ephesians chapter 4 just a moment, because we can even pinpoint this for our own selves, if you will. Ephesians chapter 4, first part of it, God calls the church, if you will, to unity, that every, every believer is to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they're called.

Walking worthy is the idea of something holding the same weight as another thing. In other words, our behavior, our walk with the Lord, our walk in life is to hold the same weight as the salvation that God's given us.

All right. Then he tells us you do that with all lowliness and meekness, long suffering, forbearing one another in love, and then endeavoring. And that endeavoring word, that word endeavoring is a word that means a strenuous labor.

All right. Labor hard to maintain the unity that the spirit of God has already created. And you do that in the bond of peace. Now, so he talks about the unity there.

[7 : 38] And then he says in verse 4, there's one body, one spirit, as you are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and father of all, who is above all and through all, and in you all.

All right. Got to be a Texan in you all. All right. So, so picture there, the fact that there's, there's a unity that God has developed. And it all comes from the fact that they have the same Lord, same faith, same baptism, and same God and father of all of them.

So it's a unique thing for the church together in unity. But look at verse 7. He changes that a little bit. Instead of unifying everything and everybody together, he speaks of individuals.

He said, but unto every one of us, individually is the idea there, to every individual is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

So the picture is, yeah, the church in unity works together in unity and God uses that. God blesses that. God accomplishes his purpose through that.

[8 : 53] But as he, in doing that, it's going to require every individual to exercise whatever spiritual gift, if you will, that God has given to that believer.

Those spiritual gifts, according to Paul, when he writes to the church at Corinth, are unique to the individual. All right? There's a uniqueness to those gifts.

Nobody's gift is just like anybody else's gift. Now, the idea here is, when he gives us that gift, God gives and provides the grace necessary for us to be able to exercise those gifts in the body.

Okay? And that's all, the amount of grace given for that purpose is conditional upon what the gift is. And not only what, well, be careful of this. It's not just what the gift is. But what the spiritual development of the one who has received the gift is.

[10 : 06] Okay? Yeah. I mean, let's face it. We're all different, right? Aren't you glad we are? It'd be awfully dull if everybody was like Ted.

Or, let me rephrase that. It'd be dangerous if everybody was like Yolanda. Yeah. That'd be dangerous territory, wouldn't it?

Yeah. But, and all of us are different in the degree of our spiritual development. All right? Some have been, you know, and it doesn't really matter how long you've been saved.

I've known people that have been saved for 50 years that had just begun growing in grace. Known people that have just been saved a few years that are mountains of grace, grown in the Lord.

All right? So, it just depends on where we are in our spiritual development as to the degree of grace. That grace that's needed to exercise those gifts is different for everybody.

[11 : 12] But, the idea is here. God provides that for everybody. All right? God provides that for every single believer. So, you know what that means?

we don't have any excuse. Amen? Not to allow God to use us, how He wants to use us, where He wants to use us, whenever He wants to use us.

Because when He wants to do that, He provides the grace for us to be able to do that. All right? So, here's the spiritual depth of the thought tonight.

Stop making excuses. Amen? Stop making excuses. And we're going to see that in Moses' life here, in just a second. All right? Now, He goes on, if you will, in verse number 9, if you will.

Exodus chapter 4, verse 9. It shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take water of the river, that is, the Nile River, of course, and pour it upon the dry ground, and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry ground.

[12 : 31] Now, remember, He's not, He's not before Pharaoh here yet. God is doing these three things in the presence of the people of Israel, so they could see what's going on here.

So, take water out of the river Nile, pour it on the ground, and it will become blood, upon dry land. Now, there's a significance here.

Everything, of course, God does, is significant. The Nile River was not only held in high esteem by the Egyptians, but it's almost as if they worshiped that.

They gave to it divine honors, if you will, because they believed that it was the source of every good, the source of all prosperity, and all of the natural life of the people of Egypt.

Now, think about this. It was even identified with Osiris, and I thought about that again today when I looked at it again.

[13 : 39] Osiris, you realize how much that sounds like Siri, amen, that you use on your cell phone. Hey, Siri. Anyway, I don't know if there's significance there or not, but it's identified with Osiris, the god of the dead.

His wife, who is also his sister, was Isis. You've heard of Isis. Goddess of motherhood, magic, fertility, death, healing, and rebirth.

So, the Nile River is associated with all of those and all of that. Side note, it was said that Osiris and Isis were deeply in love with each other, even in the womb.

Go figure. Egyptians, right? Now, so, think about this. If Moses had the power to take the water of that river that has supposedly those miraculous elements to it or aspects of it, if Moses could take that water and turn it into blood, that ought to show the people of Israel that, yes, Moses, through Jehovah, has got the power to overcome the might and power of Egypt as well as the gods of Egypt.

and that's what Israel was to see in all of that. So, in this sense, in verse 8, he says, if they will not hearken to the voice of the first sign, they will believe the voice of the latter sign.

[15 : 20] Now, verse 10, Moses said unto the Lord, now, get this, if you will, God has overcome any of the obstacles that Moses has thrown at God, right?

Any excuse that Moses has made, God has overcome them in a practical way by these three signs that he enabled Moses to do.

Turning his staff, his shepherd's crook into to a serpent and back to the rod, the leprosy in the bosom or on his hand through his bosom and then the water of Nile turning to blood.

So, what else can you say, Moses, right? What else can you say? Well, this is what he says in verse 10, and Moses said unto the Lord, Moses said unto Jehovah, O Jehovah, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant, but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.

Oh, here's another objection that Moses raises. I'm not a man. I do not possess the gift of speech. Not a man of words. Literally the idea, but I'm heavy in mouth and heavy in tongue.

[16:49] I found it difficult to use my mouth and tongue. So, it's not quite like stammering, but you get the idea there. All right? And then, both of yesterday and the day before, and also since thou speaking to thy servant.

In other words, I didn't possess the gift of speech by nature. I have not received it either since you have spoken to me. In other words, God, you haven't, even to this point, you haven't given me the ability to speak that I knew you could do.

So, if you have done that, what's the sense of me going? Kind of the idea. Okay? Now look at verse 11 and 12. Isn't it just like God?

Why argue with him? Amen? The Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? Or who maketh the dumb, or the deaf, or the seeing, or the blind?

Have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say. Kind of reminds me of Job.

[18:03] Remember? When he argues with God, and God said, all right, come here. I'm going to put you to the test. Speak up here if you've got an answer. Where were you when I did this, and this, and this, and creation?

Yeah. So, why even argue with God? He said, I'm the one that have made the mouth, have made people not be able to speak, or to hear, to see, or to be blind.

He said, it's me that has done that. So, I will, he said, now therefore go. That's specific. Moses, no more excuses. Go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.

Now, you'd think that was enough, right? But it's not. Now, look, look at the reality of it here.

What's the real problem with Moses here? What is it? Exactly. He just didn't want to do it, period.

[19:12] Amen? You know, and whatever the reason be, you know, God's already demonstrated to him his might, his power. He's spoken to him personally, revealed himself to him as the great I am, met every excuse with the practical demonstration of his power, but he doesn't want to go.

He doesn't want to go. I don't know. Doesn't say why. We can speculate, but whatever the reason, God meets it there.

Moses said, verse 13, he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send. Amplified renders it this way, and he said, O my Lord, I pray you, send by the hand of some other whom you will send to carry out your mission.

So carry it out by whomever you will. Duh! Why do you think I spoke to you in the first place?

Amen? You're the one that I want to do it by.

But, now God didn't say that, but you've got to get an idea here. Now, the anger of God was now kindled here, if you will. Verse 14 says that.

[20:34] When he said, you send by your hand somebody else to do this, to carry out your mission. Now, God realizes something here.

In reality, his opposition to going here was really a part of the weakness of the flesh. All right?

Weakness of the flesh. But in the weakness of the flesh, God's mercy arose.

All right? God's mercy rises up and God does something here in spite of Moses' opposition. So, got to believe something here.

And it's a good, really, it's a good picture. We blame Moses for what he's done here. But, you got any idea what you think may be the real reason why Moses didn't want to go.

I think what really happened to Moses here is a total loss of self-confidence. Think about the contrast here.

[21:40] He was the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Raised in Pharaoh's household. Doesn't say so, but maybe even some degree a part of his court.

Remember, he even acted as if he was a magistrate or ruler when he kind of dealt with some of the Egyptians and the way they were treating the Hebrews.

But now, all of a sudden, he's a shepherd. What a difference there is in being a Pharaoh's son and a shepherd.

I think he's lost total self-confidence. And what God did was bring him to the point of total brokenness in his life and his heart and his mind and his spirit.

Total brokenness. I see that in Moses here. Isn't that what's necessary for anybody that's going to serve God and accomplish what God's purpose is in their life?

[22:45] Sure it is. Sure it is. And I think that's what we see in Moses. And I think God recognizes that, sees that, and so he's going to come and express his mercy and grace to him by helping him

out here.

Verse 14. 14-17 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses. And he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother?

I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee. And when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart. And thou shalt speak unto him and put words in his mouth.

And I will be with thy mouth and with his mouth and will teach you what you shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people. And he shall be even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth. And thou shalt be to him instead of God. And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand wherewith thou shalt do signs. Now, your brother Aaron, he can speak well.

[23 : 57] So, he can address all the people for you and address Pharaoh for you as well. Called the Levite, not because of the fact that down the road the Levites are going to become the people that fulfill the office of priesthood.

but because he's from the tribe of Levi. All right? So, that's the reason there. And that word Levi, by the way, in the original, has the definition to lay beside, to connect oneself.

So, that's a pretty good definition for Aaron to be hooked up with Moses. Now, Aaron is ready to do what God's assigning him to do here.

He's already coming to meet Moses. He's glad to see him. Look at, well, before we get to this, remember, he said, thy brother Aaron shall be thy prophet.

He says that in chapter 7, verse 1. All right? So, it's like, you know, the prophet spoke only what God inspired him to speak.

[25 : 02] And so, for Moses and Aaron, Aaron will only speak what Moses tells him to speak. So, Moses kind of steps in the place of God here to Aaron, which is in part the idea of the prophet here.

And he will know then what to say when Moses tells him. Now, verse 18 through 23, Moses went and returned to Jethro, his father-in-law, and said unto him, let me go, I pray thee, and return unto my brethren which are in Egypt, and see whether they be yet alive.

Jethro said to Moses, go in peace. And the Lord said unto Moses and Midian, go, return into Egypt, for all the men are dead which sought thy life.

Moses took his wife and his sons and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt. And Moses took the rod of God in his hand. Now, notice the change of terminology here.

I think it was Jerry. Jerry, wasn't it you last week that mentioned the idea that it was probably no longer be the shepherd's crook, that it may have changed form as the rod of God when you pick that snake up by the tail?

[26 : 17] May have been. I don't know. We have no indication what the case is. But now it's known as not Moses' rod, but the rod of God. All right? So you get the idea here. He's stepping out of the shepherd's job here.

All right? the identity of a shepherd. He is no longer at this point. He's now the servant of God with the rod of God in his hand, with the calling of God upon his life, and with the power of God resonating through him.

All right? So, and the Lord said unto Moses, when thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand, but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go.

Thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my firstborn. And I say unto thee, let my son go, that he may serve me, and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn.

So, interesting things that God has to say here. Moses now goes to Jethro, his father-in-law, and in essence, you know, he's employed by now, he's getting, you know, get the okay from Jethro to leave, because God's called him to go and do something.

[27 : 52] And so, Jethro gives his okay. I mean, after all, his daughter's married to Moses, so it's good to get the okay. And so, he sends him off.

Later on, we find out in chapter 18 that Jethro begins to realize what this is all about and what Moses is doing here. All right, he goes, and he says, I want to go and see if my brethren are still alive.

You know, brethren here is not just his immediate family. But also the entire Jewish people, whether they're still alive, whether they've been delivered already, which probably is not the case.

Of course, he knows that. That's why God's sending him. But that's the reason why he says he needs to go, and that's what God had told him. Now, as he was leaving, Moses, again, receives more word from God with reference to his mission before Pharaoh.

God appears to him and Midian, of course, Midian, and encouraged him to return and informed him that all the men that sought your life are dead.

[29 : 03] That means Pharaoh. That means the family of the guy, the Egyptian that he slew. All right, all of those are dead. Nobody else is seeking thy life.

So you've really got freedom to go back. All right? What a good thing to encourage Moses and strengthen his faith a little bit here, and the fact that all these guys are dead.

So, in verse 20, Moses sets out on his journey with his wife and his sons, sons still being young here, and so he went on foot, the rest of them rode, he went on foot with the staff of God in his hand, and called the staff of God because that's the staff that was going to be used to perform the miracles that God was going to do before Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

Again, keep in mind here that at this juncture, God has said again, not the first time, but God has once again reiterated the fact that you're going to do some of these things before him, and he's still not going to let you go.

All right? He's not going to let you go. So keep that in mind, Moses, because that's going to be something that will happen, and you could get discouraged as a result of that, but he said, keep in mind that that's going to happen.

[30 : 31] Verse 21, in thou going or returning to Egypt, behold, all the wonders which I have put into thy hand, thou doest before Pharaoh. All the wonders, all the things, not just the idea of the staff becoming a snake, and all of those things, but everything else that God is going to do, that he tells Moses he's going to do, he said, do those before Pharaoh.

Just walk into his court and do them. Don't you imagine Pharaoh got pretty sick and tired of seeing him come? Amen? I can imagine those that informed Pharaoh from day to day who's there, they would come in and say, oh, he's back again, you know, and we'll see later at some point that everything that Moses does, just about, they have a reason for that.

All right? They do not attribute that to the power of God and so forth. So, no matter what Pharaoh does, it's going to harden his heart.

All right? Literally, I will make his heart firm so that it will not move. His feelings and attitude towards Israel will not change.

Now, there's a number of different passages in Egypt, in Exodus that say that same idea. I will make Pharaoh's hard heart or unfeeling.

[32 : 04] I have made his heart heavy or literally obtuse, insensible, and here's the biggest key, insensible to impressions or divine influences. Yeah.

Yeah. Think about that just a moment. God does that when people's hearts are hardened. I think that's one of the reasons why we've got such ungodly people in this generation.

They're just totally insensitive to the things of God and to the work of God and to the power of God even. Yeah. Yeah. So. And that's going to continue until the Lord comes.

Amen. And I think get more and more severe. Now, we'll stop there. The idea of God hardening Pharaoh's heart is interesting. But there are also passages where Pharaoh hardens his own heart. all right. And those kind of balance out really in the number of times those are used and shown in scripture. And so that's an interesting thing we'll try to pick up there next week.

[33 : 13] Let's pray together. Father, again, we're grateful for your love and grace. We praise you for who you are. And Lord, we recognize so many times, even in our own lives, the times and the ways that you've proved yourself to be who you are.

And so we thank you for that. We thank you for, again, your love for us. We thank you for your grace toward us. Not just saving grace, but grace for living as well, day by day through the circumstances that we find ourselves in in life and the grace to accomplish those things you've set for us to accomplish through you and the gifts that you've given us.

So, Father, we just thank you for grace and thank you, Lord, for including us and involving us in your work and what you do. And so, Father, we just thank you and enable us now to maintain a sense, sensitivity to your spirit's direction so that we will know indeed about what you're going to do and what you want to do through our lives.

And we'll thank you and praise you for it now. In Jesus' name, Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
Amen. Thank you.