

Further Hesitation: Honest Excuses or True Fear?

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 25 May 2022

Preacher: Willard Lyons

[0 : 00] All right, we're in the last part of Exodus chapter 3 on our series on the story continues.

! Moses has had his first encounter with God at the burning bush as he's taken his father-in-law's sheep to pasture.

! So, God has met with him and God has manifested himself to him for the very first time in Moses' life.

And so, God begins to express to him what his purpose for Moses is going to be, what his calling was in his life, and how that was going to be accomplished.

And so, in that, of course, was the reality that God said, I'm going to use you to go talk to Pharaoh and demand that he let my people go.

[1 : 07] So, he, of course, begins to raise questions. And the first question was, Lord, if I go and tell the people of Israel that you sent me, they're going to ask me, what's his name?

Tell us the name of the guy that sent you. I know it's a reasonable, right, thing. But remember, in that was the idea that we want to know the character of the one that has sent you.

Because the name expresses the character, the manner in which he operates in particular. And so, he said, they're going to want to know that. God said, tell them that I am hath sent you.

I am that I am. And that spoke, of course, of his sovereignty. He came to be known as, I will be what I will be.

That's how he was to identify who spoke to him and gave him this charge. But it's interesting here because it could be kind of confusing, you remember.

[2 : 13] In verses 13 through 15 is where all of that is happening. Tell him that I am hath sent you. But then he also goes on and says, thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I am hath sent you.

And God said, moreover, unto Moses, thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel. So, you know, God, in reality, what's happening here is God is going to explain what that means.

I am that I am. I am the sovereign God. Well, still, who is he? And so God tells him. And so he says, I am. Tell the people of Israel that thou shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, the Lord God.

Remember, that's Jehovah Elohim of your fathers. The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob hath sent me unto you.

This is my name forever. Forever. And this is my memorial unto all generations. Now, it's not the name I am.

[3 : 21] That is his name forever. That is his name forever. Forever. Although, that's what he is forever. Sovereign. And so, but what his name is forever is the name Jehovah.

That's his name forever. That's the name that's going to be his memorial throughout all generations. That name Jehovah, the self-existent God who reveals himself to man.

He's eternal. But the idea here is that he, as that, reveals himself to man. That's the characteristic of the name Jehovah. Part of it, anyway.

And so he said, that's going to be my name, my memorial for all generations. The idea there is everything that God does. In reality, everything he's done in the past, everything he does from this point forward in Moses' life and on through eternity, everything he does is going to be an expression of the name Jehovah because that's how he operates.

Now, there are other names, of course, that have been given to God in lieu of how he has expressed himself or operated in the life of his people.

[4 : 44] We see that in Abraham, see in Isaac and Jacob as well. But it's the name Jehovah that is the characteristic name that he possesses. All right.

So he said, tell them that's who it is that has sent you and that has appeared to you and going to do these things through you.

All right. Now, verses 16 through 20. It's kind of where we left off. I think we'll look at some of this, but let's remind ourselves over here just a moment. Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say unto them, the Lord God of your fathers, there it is, the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, appeared unto me saying, I have surely visited you and seen that which is done to you in Egypt.

And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites unto a land flowing with milk and honey.

And they shall hearken to thy voice. Thou shalt come and thou and the elders of Israel unto the king of Egypt. Now, they shall obey your voice is the idea.

[5 : 59] It's the elders. OK, that are going to be the ones that listen to what he has to say and will believe him and obey him. And so he says, thou shalt come, thou and the elders unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, the Lord God of the Hebrews have met with us and now let us go.

We beseech thee three days journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice unto the Lord or to the Lord our God. And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go.

No, not by a mighty hand. And I will stretch out my hand and smite the Egypt with all my wonders, which I will do in the midst thereof. And after that, he will let you go.

Now, keep that little phrase in mind here. When he says, you're going to go, talk to Pharaoh, tell him what I want, but he's not going to let you go.

So he tells him that he's not going to let you go. So I'm going to demonstrate who I am by the things that I do in the days ahead to the people of Egypt, in essence, is what he says here.

[7 : 06] We get indication here down the road a little bit that Moses forgot that aspect of it all.

Because he begins to complain and whine and mine, whine and mine and dying and all that before God.

So keep that in mind, if you will, what God has already said to him. So now I have surely visited you. We looked at this last week.

The idea that that should be a reminder here of something in their past. Now, of course, a lot of time has passed from the day of Joseph to the day of Moses.

But still in the annals of their history, which they always keep in mind from generation to generation, Joseph said, remember, as he was about to die in Genesis chapter 50, verse 24, Joseph said unto his brethren, I die and God will surely visit you.

All right. So here God said that when God said that, he said that as a reminder to them of what Joseph had prophesied. God will surely visit you.

[8 : 16] Joseph said, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. And then, of course, he made them swear that they will take his bones with them when they go into the land.

All right. So he has met with us, gives us that idea that God will surely visit you. Now, when he says King James Version, I think a lot of the other ones do to the Lord of God of the Hebrews.

When he talked to Pharaoh, the Lord God of the Hebrews have met with us and now let us go, the true rendering of that ought to be, we will go then. All right. It's not, it's not a request per se.

He said, so we will go, you know, we need to go and, and, and sacrifice and worship the Lord, our God, away from this place for three days.

We'll be back. All right. So it was framed with the idea here of putting this all in perspective. Yes, they're in the land of Egypt.

[9 : 22] They were brought there a long time ago under a different Pharaoh. And were granted permission to settle there for however long.

Now, the new Pharaoh now knows nothing about all of that. It doesn't want to know. But it's the idea here that it's going to be put in perspective.

Pharaoh in reality has no right to demand that they stay there. Why? These are God's people.

Amen. They're not Egyptian.

They're Hebrews. They didn't capture them in war. They allowed them to come in to keep them out of the famine that was going to be in Canaan.

And so God has a purpose in doing it this way. All right. And the purpose of God is this. If he demanded harsh things, you know, yeah, right now at the, at the beginning, right now, you're going

to let us go out of here.

[10:31] You know, what would Pharaoh have done? He would have done what he already did, but more severely. He would have bristled up like a cat that's mad. Amen.

So what God does, God, in essence, condescends here a little bit, not to get his permission, but to get his approval, to let his people go, knowing that he was not going to do that.

And so what does God end up doing? As we'll see, as we get down the road, God uses Moses and Aaron to deal with Pharaoh in bringing great plagues, progressively more severe upon the people of Egypt.

The way God handles this at the beginning, let us go worship and we'll be back.

What's the real kind of justify what God does to Pharaoh down the road? Because it opens up and begins to peel back the curtain of Pharaoh's heart and mind toward God and the people of God.

[11:50] Not just to Israel, but to the Egyptians as well. To reveal down the road that God's justified in doing what he does to Pharaoh when he does it.

All right. So isn't God smart? Amen. Isn't it amazing for some reason that he has such wisdom? Now, verse 21 and 22.

And I will give this people favor in the sight of God. All right. And again, in verse 20, he said, at first he will not let you go. But when I do all the things and reaching out my hand upon him, then he'll then let you go.

So in verse 21, he talks about when they do go. I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. And it shall come to pass that when you go, you shall not go empty.

Amen. You'll not go empty. But every woman shall borrow of her neighbor and of her so her that sojourneth in her house jewels of silver, jewels of gold and raiment.

[12:56] And you shall put them upon your sons and upon your daughters and you shall spoil the Egyptians. All right. So he's not only going to spoil Pharaoh and compel him to go, but he's going to let the people of Israel depart with all the goods from the household of the Egyptians.

Because remember what God said way back in Genesis 15. Remember that event again when when God put a deep sleep upon Abram and the fowls of the air came and lit upon those pieces before that sleep was was done.

And Abraham shooed them away. And God said, that's a picture of what's going to happen to your people. OK, they'll be brought into bondage by a people of another kingdom.

But they will be brought out. And when they come back out into their land, they will have great substance. And so this is what God is saying to him here.

This is what's going to happen. Now, I will give this people favor in the eyes of the Egyptians. Kind of gives me the idea here.

[14:16] You know, again, we get the picture here that they weren't living separate from the Egyptians in Egypt. They were mingled with them around them. So they probably made some pretty good neighbors with them from time to time to the extent that God melted the hearts of the Egyptians toward the Israelis.

And when they went and said, I need to borrow. I need to borrow this ring right here. Can I borrow that ring right there? They'd say, sure, you could have that here.

Here's something else you can have. You know, enough that they put it on their their wrists and arms and whatever else. And they did that with the children, too.

They were loaded when they came. They had to get extra camels, John, to come out of Egypt because of the weight of all that stuff. Let me ask you this while we're here. Why? Why?

Why did they do that? Why did God? Why did God make that happen? What was significant about them leaving Egypt with all this gold and silver?

[15:22] These are the things that they will be using meltdown and use. To build the tabernacle. But before that happened, what did they do with it?

Made a golden calf with it, didn't they? Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. They have to break that calf part and melt her down again.

Yeah. And by the way, remember, always keep in mind about that golden calf. That golden calf was not erected as a representation of a God from Egypt.

That was a representation of Jehovah. Jehovah. You know. And so, but still, it was not right. It was Sid.

It was idolatry. Okay. God's not represented by those type of things. So, let every woman ask of her female neighbor.

[16:19] That's her female neighbor. And of her that sojourn in her house. So, that's how God was going to do this. Now, that brings us to chapter 4. Okay.

It's amazing to me. Well, no, not really. It's not. You know, people are people, right? Of every generation. They're the same. God said, Moses, this is what I'm going to do with you. He doesn't say, this is what I would like to do with you. In essence, he said, this is what I'm going to do with you and through you. Now, after God gives him all of that information about his call, about what's going to be, take place in his calling, how I'm going to use you.

Moses now raises some objections. All right. And that's what we begin to see here. But keep in mind again, this is the first time Moses has had any personal encounter with God.

Never had that before. This is the first time. He has likewise then not ever come to the point in his life where he had to put God to the test.

[17:47] All right. I think it's interesting over in Malachi. Remember that? Malachi chapter 3, that God determines that I want you to put me to the test.

All right. To trust me. No, that's what the song says. Trust me, try me, prove me herewith, saith the Lord of hosts. But he says, try me. You know, bring you all the tithes into the storehouse and see if I will not put out a blessing that you cannot number them.

You can't grasp it, comprehend it. But he said, try me. Put me to the test is the idea here. And the purpose, what would be the purpose for that testing?

Why did God invite the people of Israel in Malachi 3 to put him to the test? If the idea is put me to the test and see if I'm not who I say I am or what I am.

Yeah. Yeah. Put me to the test. Have you ever done that? Put God to the test? Jacob did.

[19:01] Amen. Remember the story? Jacob did and found out that God was a faithful. He was just exactly like he said he was and would do and did what he said he would do.

Put him to the test. And the way we put him to the test is to remember who he is and what he is.

Amen. And we discover that through his word that has spoken to us about who he is, what he is.

And then we see, go back and look in our lives and see what God has been to us personally. And what characteristics of himself he has demonstrated to us in our lives.

You know. And come out and recognize that God is faithful. Now, you've got to be careful with that.

That idea of putting him to the test. You don't put him to the test unless he gives you the wherewithal to do that.

And the, I'm not going to say permission, but tells you to do it. All right. It's not the idea of blind faith. I'm going to go put God to the test and go do that. Go out and do some silly thing and expect God to honor that.

[20:16] Without him instructing you to do that. Amen. But I think even in Moses case here, God has already said to him, here's what I'm going to do with you.

It's not necessarily here's what I want you to do. Here's how I'm going to use you. You're going to do this. You're going to do that. And here's what's going to happen. All right. But Moses has not yet come to the place of being able and knowing to put God to the test to see that he is indeed faithful. Verse 1 of chapter 4. Moses answered and said, But behold, they will not believe me nor hearken unto my voice, for they will say the Lord hath not appeared unto thee.

All right. Again, it's been over 400 years since God's personally expressed himself or manifest himself to somebody like this.

Last one was Jacob. All right. So naturally, Moses thought was, They're not going to believe me.

You know, they're going to think I'm wanting to be just like Jacob.

[21:28] But they won't believe me. Now, what does God do? He removes any reason for the objection here. And he does so by giving him three signs.

All right. Now, notice. And these three signs are going to be used to prove to the people that God has indeed commissioned Moses here.

So. But also, they were going to be something that God would use to strengthen the faith of Moses, which we saw before. He's going to have to need to carry out all this that he's going to do.

Now. Exodus 14 later on, and all this takes place, shows one of the reasons for these signs. And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians.

And the people feared the Lord and believed the Lord or Jehovah and his servant Moses. So these signs are going to be a means by which Israel also recognizes that, yes, indeed, not only has God spoken to Moses, but Moses now is the servant of God.

[22 : 35] God has commissioned him here. Verse 2 through 5. The Lord said unto him, said to Moses, Moses, what is in your hand?

And he said, a rod. Now, that literally is a shepherd's crook. Remember, he's a shepherd at this point. He's taken the people of the people. He's taken the sheep of his father-in-law to graze. So that's what he's doing when he meets God at the burning bush. He's got that shepherd's crook in his hand. And he said, cast it on the ground. Probably seemed like a crazy thing for Moses to think of.

And so he cast it on the ground and it became a serpent. What did Moses do? He ran. Smart guy, huh? Yeah, smart guy.

He fled. All right. And the Lord said unto Moses, put forth thine hand. And take it by the tail.

[23 : 41] Now, it doesn't say whether or not Moses thought about this for a minute before he did it. I almost believe that he did. And finally came to the point that he reached down and caught it.

And it once again became a rod in his hand. That they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob hath appeared unto thee. Now, there's a significance to this idea here as well. Now, more than just the idea of this being seen by Israel so that they would recognize, yeah, God's in this.

Why do you suppose God told him to take that shepherd's crook and throw it on the ground and made it become a serpent?

The picture is this. Throwing that shepherd's crook down is a picture of him no longer being a shepherd.

[24 : 48] Relinquishing that work of being a shepherd, herding sheep. And doing that now in the new occupation, if you will, as God's messenger, was going to bring to him some great danger.

All right? Danger from which he's going to want to run and flee from. And it doesn't take him long to really want to do that.

And it wasn't because, well, never mind. We'll get there later. But what does God do? God says, in essence, Moses, confront your fear here.

Confront your fear. Reach down and pick that thing up by the tail. I just have to believe that God said that in such a way to Moses.

That Moses didn't hesitate. You know, God's able to do that. You know. I don't know about you guys. I knew when my dad said something in a certain tone of voice.

[25 : 59] I didn't have any questions. I knew I would do it right away. Same thing with God, I think. When he spoke to Moses. So Moses reaches down and picks it up.

And becomes a shepherd's crook once again. God's showing to Moses. God's showing to Moses. God's showing to Moses. What God is able to do. In the midst of his fear.

He's going to need to know that. He's going to need to see that. When he begins to confront Pharaoh as well as the people of Israel.

All right. Now. Verse 6. The Lord said furthermore unto him. Put now thine hand into thy bosom. All right. If the people of Israel.

The Israelites. We're not going to believe. The first sign. The shepherd's crook. God gives a second sign here. Moses.

[26 : 59] Put your hand. In your bosom. All right. How he was going to do that. Don't know. He put his hand into his bosom.

And when he took it out. Behold. His hand was leprous. As snow. And he said. Put that hand into thy bosom again. Put his hand into his bosom again.

And plucked it out of his bosom. And behold. It was turned. As this other flesh. In other words. The leprosy was gone. It shall come to pass. If they will not believe thee.

Nor hearken unto the voice of the first sign. That they will believe the voice of the latter sign. All right. Picture here. They say. It was a picture of white. What they call white leprosy.

It's when the leprosy becomes to a certain degree. The hairs. In fact. In fact. There's a picture in Leviticus 13. When the hairs inside that wound.

[27 : 56] Begin to turn white. Then you know it's leprosy. And the white leprosy is the idea of it. Having white scales upon it. All right. And it would spread all over the entire body. To Israel.

It was the most disgusting. But also the most contagious and progressive illness that there was. All right. And they believe there was no cure for it whatsoever.

The heathens. The Egyptians in particular. Kind of believe the same thing. That it was. That it was indeed from God. From their God. One of their gods. Caused that to happen to whoever had that. And it was only their God that can. Cleanse that. And free them from that. Now. Israel as well. The people of Israel as well.

Kind of took on that same idea here. That the gods have to be the ones to heal that. And nobody else could. And that was pictured back in 2 Kings.

[28 : 55] Do you remember the general. Named Naaman. That contracted leprosy. In 2 Kings 5. You know. And of course.

They thought. He was. He was a goner. Only. Their. Their gods could do that. Could. Remove that from him. And so. There was a little servant girl.

Little servant girl. An Israeli girl. In the household. That heard about this. And told them. They need to send. To the Israelites. There's a man there.

Among the Israelites. That can heal him. And so. Where. I got to. That came to their king. And so they sent him.

To the king of Israel. And this is what the king of Israel said. He said. Am I. God. To kill. And to make alive. This man.

[29 : 51] Cloth. Send unto me. To recover. A man of his leprosy. See. So they had the same idea. Only God could cure. That leprosy. Now.

The picture here. That leprosy. Pictured. The people of Israel. In the servitude. Of Egypt. And all the treatment.

They had. In that servitude. By the Egyptians. But also. Of the impurity. That falls upon.

The Israelis. As a result of their captivity. And in particular. What we recognize. Is that impurity. Being the attitude.

All right. Complaint. Irritation. Frustration. Expressed outwardly. And it even. You know.

[30 : 48] Affects. Moses. And we'll see that later on. How contagious. A silly little attitude. Can be. Amen. Yeah. Yeah. But that's kind of.

A picture of the contamination. Of Egypt. Upon. The people of Israel. But again. God can cleanse that. God can free that. And. The picture here is.

God has given. Moses. The power. Now. Because of the healing. Of the leprosy. From the hand. God has given him. Power. To free. Israel. If you will.

From the containment. And contamination. Of the people of Israel. But it also spreads. You know. And Moses. Finds more about that. Later on.

As the people complain. As well. All right. Let's pray together. Father again. We're grateful. For your love and grace. And your goodness.

[31 : 42] To us today. And the blessing. Of being able to come back. This evening. And look together. In your word. And again. Father. We thank you. For what you show us. In this.

Thank you. That you more and more. Reveal your faithfulness. To us. As something. That we can look back upon. In scripture. But also. In our own lives. To remember.

Your faithfulness. Throughout the years. So we thank you. For your loving kindness. Thank you. For your faithfulness. To us. Even in times. When we don't. We're not as faithful.

As we need to be to you. You are always faithful to us. So we rejoice. And thank you. That you are the God. That you are. And all the characteristics. You possess. So take us away.

From this place now. And enable us. To focus. And our attention. Upon what you've shown us. This evening. And we'll thank you. And praise you for it. All in Jesus name. Amen. Thank you.