

Deliverance Sent - Exodus 4:1-31

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[0 : 0 0] Exodus chapter 4, flying through Exodus, and we interrupted last week Moses' conversation with the Lord. He's continuing to converse with the Lord, and we kind of left him there as we ended chapter 3.

Moses had come to the Lord with all of these reasons, with these questions he had for the Lord, and he's going to continue that conversation today. As Moses was on the backside of the desert at 80 years old, tending the flock, being a good shepherd, and he sees the burning bush. He goes to check it out because the bush burned but wasn't consumed. So it'd be like one of those green bushes out there on fire, but the leaves aren't consuming, the branches aren't being consumed, it's not diminishing despite the fire being there.

And Moses goes to see what it is, the Lord appears to him in the bush, and they begin to have this conversation. And the Lord tells Moses, I have come down because I've seen, I've heard, and I know the sorrow and the suffering of my people, and so I've come down to deliver them.

And Moses is all on board with that. He's like, yes, let's do that, God. You go do that. That's great. And then God drops the bomb on him that, hey, Moses, I'm going to send you. I'm going to send you, as I deliver my people, I'm going to send you to lead my people out.

[1 : 1 1] He didn't ask Moses to be the deliverer, but he said, Moses, you're going to be the one who leads my delivered people. And Moses at that point was like hitting the brakes and trying to throw up as many roadblocks as he can.

And the first one was, well, I'm going to go to them and they're going to ask me and say, who are you, God? Who are you? And that's where we get that wonderful statement. He says, I am that I am. I am the sufficient one.

I will become everything that you need that's sufficient. I was sufficient. Who was and is and is to come. I am sufficient. I was sufficient. I'll be sufficient. I am that I am. And then God tells Moses the game plan.

You're going to go back. You're going to tell the people. You're going to tell them that I've come to deliver them. You're going to go to Pharaoh. Pharaoh is not going to believe you. He's not going to let you go except by a mighty hand. I'm going to use my mighty hand to deliver you.

You will be let go. And when you do, you're going to plunder the Egyptians. All your back wages you are going to take. And I'm going to let you take that as you leave Egypt. You're going to put them on your children.

[2 : 1 0] And then that's where we left him. We left Moses. We haven't heard his response yet. And that's what we're going to hear this week is he's still there at the burning bush. He's still hearing from God. God has given him the game plan. And we're going to see what he says now.

So today we're going to look at deliverance sent. So if you remember, we saw how God has prepared a deliverer. He has called a deliverer. And now he's going to send that deliverer.

Moses has been 40 years being prepared. Well, you could say his whole lifetime being prepared.

But more specifically, these 40 years in the desert, God has prepared him for sending him. He didn't wait two years after Egypt.

He didn't wait three years after leaving Egypt and coming to Midian. He's waited 40 years. He's an 80-year-old man. He's like, woo, retirement. All right. I'm just going to take care of some sheep and hang out in the desert.

My wife, my kids are home. I'll just do the shepherding thing. I've been doing this for 40 years. This is what I know. This is what I'm used to. And God says, perfect. You're ready. I'm going to send you now.

[3 : 07] And so as we pick up in verse 1, Moses answered. And so that's what we were just talking about there in chapter 3, where God has just explained to Moses, here's the game plan.

Moses, I know you're wondering about how this is going to work. Who's sufficient? And remember, he said, I am. I'm sufficient, Moses. And Moses now answers. And he answers and said, but behold, they will not believe me nor hearken unto my voice, for they will say, the Lord has not appeared unto you.

Well, we just talked about it. And if you look back in verse 18 of chapter 3 in Exodus, it says, God says to Moses, and they shall hearken to your voice. Moses, they will hearken to your voice. And Moses says, yeah, but they won't hearken to my voice.

Moses, whose voice is not being hearkened to right here? Moses was not doubting his own voice. Moses was doubting God's word, because God's word specifically spoken to him and said, Moses, they will hear your voice.

And Moses says, I don't believe it. I just cannot understand this. Moses is still thinking there needs to be something within himself that validates God's call upon his life. God, I see what you're doing.

[4 : 16] I see you've even told me you're sufficient, but I just don't see how that works. I still need to see something in me that's going to validate this. He's still trying to find that. We can find ourselves in the same place when God kind of gives us his game plan.

He says, hey, here's what I want to do. Here's how I'm going to include you. Remember, we looked at that last week with salvation. We haven't done anything to earn our salvation. We can't gain our salvation, but we do participate in it. We do have to participate in the receiving of that gift.

And then we participate in this walk with the Lord. Two separate things, salvation and sanctification, right? We receive the gift, and then we choose to participate with the Lord in his call in our life.

And we can think the same thing. There has to be something within me to validate what God is doing in my life. Why would he pick me? To deliver his people? Well, it must be because I have some great quality or something.

Paul addresses that in 1 Corinthians chapter 1. It's not too small. He says, The idea being that God's glory is displayed through weakness.

[5 : 55] Something that is self-sufficient, self-sustaining, and strong, and capable. God's glory is not going to be displayed in that. God's glory is specifically displayed in weakness. Moses is struggling with this.

And so the Lord says unto him, Moses, what's in your hand? What's in your hand, Moses? God meets Moses where he's at. He meets him in his weakness.

He doesn't do some amazing kind of like light show or whatever. He doesn't like yell at him, I am God. He just says, well, Moses, okay. What do you have, Moses?

You want something that's sufficient of yourself? What do you have? Do you have anything? What's in your hand? And he said, a rod, his staff. Now we're going to see, God's going to give Moses a number of different signs.

And kind of the thought that I want us to have going into this before we get into the text is this. If God could miraculously make a plain old stick to be something more than it could be, and if you know the story that's coming, God's going to do that.

[6 : 54] He's going to take Moses' rod and do something amazing with it. But if God could take a plain old stick and make it so much more than it could ever have been on its own, well, then Moses, can I do that with you?

If I can take your staff, your rod, and turn it into something you could never have imagined, can I do the same thing with you, Moses? I think that's the point here, what God's doing. God says to Moses, what do you have?

He doesn't ask him to give what he doesn't have. He doesn't say, Moses, you know, if you would go out and get a golden staff, you know, that would be really cool. Would you go get that, Moses?

Go figure out how to do that. Well, Lord, I've been working as a sheep farmer. I can't afford that. Well, go do that, and then come back and see me. He doesn't ask him of what he doesn't have, does he? It is not what we have to offer that matters, but what matters is, are we willing to offer what we have?

Say that again. It's not what we have to offer that matters, but what matters is, are we willing to offer what we have? When God says, hey, just give me what you have. Remember in Matthew chapter 14, Jesus is teaching the people.

[8 : 02] He's on the side of the hill, and it's getting late, and at this point in time, this is shortly after he had sent out all the disciples, and they come back after casting out demons and spreading the gospel. They're super excited, and so Jesus says, okay, let's go off and have a little disciples retreat.

They're going to go up into the mountain, but the people all follow him, and the disciples are kind of frustrated with this. They're like, oh, this is supposed to be our alone time with you, Jesus. So they come with this pretense. Well, Lord, it's getting late. Send the people away.

Send them away that they can find something to eat. And Jesus says unto them, they do not need to depart. Give you them to eat. And they said unto him, we don't have anything.

We have here but five loaves and two fishes. And Jesus said, bring them hither to me. And Jesus did a whole lot more with those five loaves and two fishes than they could have ever imagined.

He didn't ask of them something they didn't have. He didn't say, well, go take up a collection, guys. We'll go out into the local village. He says, what do you have? Just bring what you have to me. It will always be enough what we have if we bring it to the Lord.

[9 : 02] God will use what we have and us just as we are. The Lord used this scripture in my life when it came to pastoring a church. He's like, hey, I want you to pastor a church. I'm like, Lord, I don't have anything.

What do I have? I don't have any degrees and I don't have a PhD. I don't have a master's in divinity. I don't even know what that is. I think that means the Lord disciplines you a lot and you get a master's in divinity.

You find out who's the master and the divine one. He's like, I don't have anything, Lord. I'm not eloquent. What am I going to do? He's like, what's in your hand? And not to be super spiritual or anything, but I'm like, all I got is the Bible.

I had my Bible. I like my Bible. I know my Bible. I love my Bible. I'm not a good counselor. I'm not good one-on-one with people. All I got is the Bible. He's like, yeah, that'll work. Just give that to me. I can do a lot with that. And so Moses, in his hand, what is he holding? He has something that's super familiar. It's super comfortable. It's understood. It's capable. I imagine there's a spot on that staff that he holds it every time his fingers fit perfectly, that he goes to grab it, they slide right to it every time.

[10 : 03] Man, he's familiar with that. It's comfortable. He understands it. There's nothing about that staff he doesn't understand. And he's capable with it. He knows how to use that thing. He's going to smack a sheep or hit a wolf, or I don't know, if he's bored, he plays baseball with rocks.

He knows how to use that staff. And the Lord says to him, throw it on the ground. Moses, cast it on the ground. And when he did, Moses responds. He's like, all right. It became a serpent, and Moses fled from it.

I just picture like a cartoon in my head, like, wow! And he just turns and runs. There's like the dust trail behind him. Moses is like, this isn't supposed to happen.

I know how this works. This is my staff. And all of a sudden, it becomes something else. And he turns and he flees from it. There is no limit to what God can do with what we give to him.

Man, this is just a lump of clay. What are you going to do with this, God? It's full of sticks and rocks. And he's like, hey, just give it to me. You watch what I can do with that. What are you going to do with this ability, Lord?

[11 : 04] What are you going to do with this, my love for whatever? What are you going to do with that, Lord? There's no limit to what God can do with what we give to him. Our part is to be willing to give what we have to God.

And the Lord said unto Moses, put forth your hand and take it by the tail. Now, I don't know how many of you are snake handlers. We don't do that in this church. But where do you grab a snake? You don't grab it by the tail.

It's going to come around and it's going to bite you. He says, Moses, put forth your hand and take it by the tail. And Moses obeys. So our part is to be willing to give God what we have. But it's also being obedient then to do what God asked us to do with it.

Moses now has to choose if he's going to respond in fear or respond to God's word. God's word says, grab that thing by the tail, Moses. Fear told Moses, run away. And here we see again, participation is required.

God is equipping Moses presently for a future only God knows about. Moses doesn't realize this. He's like, this is kind of crazy. God knows what's going to happen with that rod. Moses has no idea. That thing's going to eat the rods, the snakes of the magicians of Egypt.

[12:11] That thing's going to part the sea. It's going to have flowers and buds eventually. Eventually, he's going to be hitting a rock with it in the desert. And almond flowers and things are going to be flying everywhere.

It's going to end up a piece of it in the Ark of the Covenant. He has no idea that God is equipping him for this in this moment. In Ephesians 2.10, we read, For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them. We don't know what God's equipping us for now, but he is. He's equipping us now for a future he knows about, that he's preparing us for. And so God tells Moses to take this, to throw it forth, and to pick it up.

And he says, here's the reason in verse 5, That they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, has appeared unto you. That I'm your God too, Moses. That they might believe.

And Moses, that you might believe. God is able to validate his servants. He doesn't need any help from us. I think for Moses, God had a plan to use this rod like this already.

[13:15] And in Moses' weakness, God is so gracious, he's like, okay, I'm going to show you what we're going to do now. I think if Moses in faith had responded to God and said, okay, God, I'm going to go back, and I'm going to obey you, just like you asked me to, and as you deliver the people in Egypt, I think as he stood there before Pharaoh, in that moment, and Pharaoh's like, nope, I'm not going to let him go.

God would have spoken to him and said, throw down your rod. Throw down right now, Moses. And he would have, and it would turn into a snake. I think God had already planned that. God's not, like, making this up on the fly. God is responding to Moses where he's at.

And the Lord said, furthermore, that means beyond the limit which has already been established. So Moses, I'm going to do exceedingly abundantly above all you could ask or think. The Lord said, furthermore, put now your hand into your bosom.

And he put his hand into his bosom. And like, if he had a cloak or a coat, you've got to put it in, right? And he put his hand in, and when he took it out, he's probably thinking, is this going to turn into a serpent? Ah! He puts it in, he pulls it out.

Even worse, it's white as snow. Leprous as snow is leprosy. Leprosy is not even called, like, a disease, like being healed. It's called being unclean and being cleansed.

[14:21] It is absolutely a life-destroying and family-destroying disease. Here we see again Moses' hand. Something he's really familiar with, very comfortable with, something he understands, something he knows the capabilities of.

And all of a sudden, he puts it in clean, and it comes out defiled. And he said, put your hand into your bosom again. And Moses is like, oh, yes, please help. And he put his hand into his bosom again, and he plucked it out again.

Isn't that interesting word there? Plucked it out. You know, the first time he puts it in and pulls it out. This time, God says, put it in. He's like, yes, all right. Plucks it out. And behold, it was turned again as his other flesh.

He puts it in defiled, and it comes out clean. Moses' hand was defiled and made clean. Where? In the same place, wasn't it? Where was that? In his heart.

The place of his heart. Jeremiah 17.9 says, The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it? Who can cleanse the heart? The place of defilement. Jesus said in the New Testament, he said, Can a spring bring forth bitter and good water?

[15:26] It's irrational, but that's like what comes out of us. Who can cleanse that? James 4.8, James says, Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

How does a sinner or a double-minded person become clean or purified? It was the first part of that verse, right? Draw near to God. When you draw near to God, God is able to do what we can't do. And the Lord says to Moses in verse 8, It shall come to pass, if they will not believe you, neither hearken to, listen to what he says here, the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign.

A true sign from the Lord will always speak with a voice that sends forth God's truth. A true sign from the Lord always speaks forth, its voice speaks forth God's truth.

And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe, also these two signs. Neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river and pour it upon the dry land.

[16:26] And the water which thou takes out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land. So here we have an if. If they will not believe, then what? It's a sign of judgment.

A sign of judgment of the water being turned to blood. Unbelief results in judgment. But judgment's mixed with mercy, isn't it? You know, God's reason for judgment is mercy.

You think, well, God's going to judge the wicked. He is. But it's because he's merciful. That he won't leave. He won't leave accounts unsettled. But it's also that his desire is that they would turn and repent. Eventually, we'll see in Revelation as we go through it, as God's judgment is being poured out on the world, it's not that he just wants to crush man or destroy them.

It's that man's heart is so hard that they will no longer hear the voice of the Holy Spirit, they will no longer be led to repentance by the goodness of God. So God is pouring out his judgment to say, I am here, you are accountable to me.

And it says that they will cry out, hide us from the face of the Lamb. Hide us from the one who sits on the throne. They know who it is. And then it says specifically, for they would not repent of their sorceries, their idolatries, their murders, and their thefts.

[17:30] They refuse to repent. God's judgment is mixed with mercy. In John 19, verse 34, Jesus is on the cross. And he's given up the ghost, and the guard thrust his spear into his side as he goes back to Pilate.

And he says, is he dead already? We'll go back and make sure. And so they go and they break the legs of the thieves on the side of him, so they will not be on the cross at Passover. And he goes and he sees Jesus is already dead.

So he thrusts in his spear, fulfilling prophecy that said, not a bone of him will be broken. And then out of his side flowed forth blood and water. Judgment is mixed with mercy. The judgment for sin was also God's greatest act for mercy as Jesus hung upon the cross.

But here again, something Moses is very familiar with, very comfortable, something he understands, water. He's like, hello, I was floated as a baby out onto the water. You know, I bet I was boating before any of you.

It's boating, not voting, but we can talk about that later. Something he's very capable in, right? He said, I know water. I know water. So these three signs, what are the voices of these signs?

[18:35] The voices of the signs God gave to Moses. One, God has power over the enemy. Throw down your staff, Moses. What did it become? A serpent. Something Moses fled from. God said, you take a hold of that, Moses.

I have power over the enemy. But you gotta listen to how I deal with him. Two, the voice of the sign God gave him, God has power over uncleanness. I can make that clean, and I can make that unclean.

I have power over that, Moses. And third, the third voice, God has power over judgment. At the cross, God showed he has power. His voice said, I have power over the enemy. Man, this isn't the way you would do it, but this is the way I'm gonna do it.

I'm gonna take power over the enemy. God has power over uncleanness. At the cross, he showed he has power over sin, that he can make clean that which is unclean. And then God has power over judgment. We who are under judgment have now received God's mercy.

And so God gives these three voices, these three signs to Moses. And Moses says, God, you are so good. Thank you. Just tell me when to leave. I'm ready to go. No. In verse 10, Moses said to the Lord, Oh my Lord, I'm not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor sense that was spoken unto thy servant, but I'm slow of speech and of a slow tongue.

[19:45] I read and teach out of the King James, as you all know. So all he's saying here is, Moses is saying, listen, I couldn't speak beforehand, and since you've been telling me all this, you didn't do anything yet to help me. I still can't speak.

I haven't been able to, and I still can't. I'm still not equipped for this. I still have these same weaknesses, these same flaws, and same failures. For as much as Moses complained about being unable to speak, he sure seems to speak an awful lot to God.

He seems pretty eloquent to me. It's like, Moses, just redirect that into obedience. But here it means he's slow. It means he's heavy. His speech is dull. His mouth is just unable to speak.

And some have said, well, maybe he had a speech impediment. Maybe he did. Maybe he didn't. But in Acts chapter 7, if you remember, Stephen telling us about Moses in Egypt, that Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was mighty in words and deeds.

I think what Moses is saying is, God, I don't know how to walk like an Egyptian or talk like an Egyptian or act like an Egyptian anymore. They're not going to listen to me. I don't have the phraseology of the courts of Egypt anymore.

[20 : 51] Moses' encounter with God did not remove his weaknesses like he was hoping it would. But instead, it revealed God's strength and God's sufficiency. Every excuse and every weakness Moses has, the I am is showing him, I'm sufficient for that.

I got that covered. I got that. Paul in 2 Corinthians 12 says the same thing when he tells us about the thorn in his flesh that God gives him. He says, I prayed three times. God, would you remove this? Would you take this from me so that I could have a sufficiency in myself?

And the Lord responded and said, no, I won't because my strength is made perfect in weakness. My grace is sufficient for you. And Moses is needing to learn this.

And so the Lord says to him, Moses, who made man's mouth? Look what I just did with a rod, Moses. Look what I did with your hand. Don't you think I can do that with your mouth? Who makes the dumb or deaf or the seeing or the blind?

Have not I the Lord? Wait, are we saying that the Lord purposely decides, like this kid's going to be deaf when he's born? This kid's going to go blind. This one, is that what he's saying here? No, I don't think so at all. God's not the originator of sin, but he does have sovereignty over it.

[21 : 58] God has dominion over sin. He's not the originator, but he says, I can control all these things. All these things, none of them are outside of my ability. And through the cross, there is no sin and no effect of sin that the I am is not sufficient for.

That's what Moses, he's saying, Moses, none of those things are outside of my control. I am sufficient for all of those. Isaiah 53, 4, we're told about Jesus.

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. He is completely sufficient for all of them.

Now, therefore, go, Moses. Go, I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say.

What more could you ask for? God's sending me to have a speaking role somewhere. Oh, but he told me I don't have to worry about to say. He's going to give it to me. And then when I go to say it, he's going to be with my mouth.

Fantastic. This is great. No, Moses, you do not have what it takes to overcome your weaknesses. Essentially, the Lord's saying, but I do. I have everything that's needed to overcome your weaknesses.

[23 : 04] You see here, the idea isn't that God was going to give Moses a large supply of resources for the future. He wasn't loading his bag up of resources. So as he goes, he can just keep kind of pulling them out. But he was saying the I am would supply that resource in the moment that it's needed.

And that's a challenge for us because that's walking by faith and not by sight. That means I have to walk into something I know I'm not sufficient for. I don't have the resources for. And the only promise I have is what? God's word.

God's word says, I'll be with you. I'll be sufficient. And I'll take care of that. And I have to walk forward into that without holding on to that resource myself. But God, in the moment, his grace is sufficient.

God is responsible to supply the words. And what's Moses' responsibility? To speak them. To speak it. So for Moses, God's word has removed all excuses.

He's come with everything he could. He threw everything he could at this call of God. And God's word removed all excuses. And then he says in verse 13, Oh my Lord, send, I pray you, by the hand of him who you will send.

[24 : 11] He essentially says, send someone else. I've got no more excuses. God's word revealed the true motive of Moses' heart. It cut through all excuses and removed the true motive, just as it promises to in Hebrews chapter four.

For the word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of thunder of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow and is a discerner of the thoughts

and intents of the heart.

It cut through every excuse he had and got to the root of Moses' hesitation. And what was that? It's the same thing when Jesus approached his disciples after he comes off the Mount of Transfiguration and they're there with the father who brings the son, who's got the demon-possessed child, and they're going through everything they know how to cast him out. And they're like, we're just not able. We're not sufficient for this. And Jesus comes and the guy runs to Jesus and says, hey, they couldn't cast him out. And so Jesus takes care of it. And then his disciples came afterwards and they said, why couldn't we cast him out, Lord?

I mean, I thought I did the right process and the right procedure. Did I do something wrong? And Jesus said unto them, because of your unbelief, because of your lack of faith, your unbelief, truly, truly, I say unto you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say unto this mountain, remove hence to yonder place and it shall be removed.

[25 : 28] Nothing shall be impossible for you. Because of what? My giant ability? No, my little mustard seed faith. Faith is determined, your faith is determined by what you have faith in.

Right? So for Moses, it revealed the true reason of his hesitation, which was just unbelief. And now God responds in verse 14. It says, 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 comes forth to meet you. When he sees you, he'll be glad in his heart.

And God's angry. Oh man, we can make God angry at us. We can't project our emotions onto God. Right? This is describing in the language we would understand the way that God is dealing with Moses.

But we can't read into this text and think Moses, God is so frustrated with Moses. He's like, Moses, isn't Aaron the Levite your brother? I know he can speak well. And fine, I'm going to send him to meet you.

[26 : 26] It doesn't make sense because the next phrase is, and when he sees you, he's going to be happy in his heart. Like, well, wait, that doesn't really work. So I don't think God is giving this expression of anger like we think of it.

God was never angry at any of Moses' other questions. He bore with all of his questions. He was gracious. He didn't get angry and frustrated. Why are you asking me this again and again? Not at all. God's anger, or it means the heat to rise in his face, or what caused this response to God, or God to Moses, I mean, from God, was that Moses refused to believe God's word.

Belief in God's word is the doorway to deliverance. How can the deliverer go and be used by God to deliver God's people if he can't believe God's word? Moses, I want you to go to Pharaoh now.

I don't know God. I don't really know about this. God's word is the doorway to deliverance. In Psalm 78, there's a history of Israel being given.

And there's that one point where the psalmist is speaking about when Israel's walking in the wilderness, wandering in the wilderness for 40 years. And he gives us this account where they complained to God and they spake against God and they said, can God furnish a table in the wilderness?

[27 : 37] Behold, he smote the rock that the water is gushed out and the streams flowed. But can he also give us bread? Okay, God gave us water but I don't know about food. Can he give us bread? Can he provide flesh for his people?

Therefore the Lord heard this and was what? He was wroth. He was angry. So fire was kindled against Jacob and anger also came up against Israel. What caused God's anger or a response of anger which seemed like God is keeping us at a distance.

I can't draw near to God. There's something, there's a problem here because they believed not in God and trusted not in his salvation. Wasn't Moses' questions, wasn't even his hesitation, it was the fact he wouldn't believe God's word that put this barrier up.

It was not that Moses was unable to obey God, was it? But that he was unwilling. So what does God do? God said, I'm going to send Aaron, your brother. He can speak well. That means he was very eloquent.

He was able to declare. You know, he could talk a mile a minute. What does this do for Moses? God's solution in sending Aaron moves Moses back to a place of faith.

[28 : 45] Moses says, yes! Oh, you're going to send Aaron? Okay, God, now he'll go. Now he'll do it. All right. It moved him back to a place of faith. Even when God knew that solution would cause problems in the future, Aaron's going to be a big problem down the line.

And God knew that, but God is so gracious that his goal and his heart is to move Moses back to a place of faith. Psalm 103 verse 14 says, for he knows our frame, he remembers that we are dust. God knows. He knows who we are. And God then assures Moses in his weakness and bears with him. And he says in verse 15, you shall speak unto him and put words in his mouth, and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth and will teach you what you shall do.

Aaron could talk well, but Aaron lacks substance. And this arrangement eventually is going to become a stumbling block for Aaron because look at how this arrangement is laid out here. And he shall be, even he shall be to you instead of a mouth, and you shall be to him instead of God. As long as Moses was in view, Aaron's relationship with God held true and held intact.

[29 : 54] When Moses is no longer in view, Moses goes up on the mountain, for 40 days and 40 nights, and the people go, we don't know what became of Moses. What does Aaron do? He doesn't say, hey guys, hang in there. God's got a plan.

They say, Aaron, make us gods like the Egyptians. Okay, sure, bring me your gold. He loses view of Moses. There is one mediator between God and men, 1 Timothy 2.5, the man Christ Jesus. Whenever we add another layer, all it does is muddy the water and create problems. Adding this extra layer to the ministry may have made things more comfortable for Moses. He was much more comfortable with this, but it made things also more difficult in the long run.

God had called Moses. Moses had the opportunity to respond in faith to God's word, and not doing so didn't disqualify him. God didn't say, I'm done with you. He took the steps that was needed to move Moses back to a place of faith, but it also caused a lot of problems later on.

Yet we're going to find out much later on that God is able to take care of that and redeem that as well as he uses Aaron in his special calling. All right, now shall take this rod in your hand, wherewith you shall do signs.

[31 : 03] God's signs pointed to God's power, his favor, and his validation in Moses' life. Take this rod. And Moses went now and returns to Jethro's father-in-law. So he finishes talking to God at the burning bush.

He goes back to his father Jethro, our father-in-law, who he's worked for for the last 40 years. He says, let me go, I pray thee, and return unto my brethren which are in Egypt and see whether they be yet alive.

And Jethro said to Moses, go in peace, go in shalom. Moses didn't use this calling by God to demand or proclaim or to make himself an authority. And it's, Jethro, I'm leaving.

God has called me. There's nothing you can do to stop me. Goodbye. Moses humbly appealed instead of arrogantly demanding. And it's interesting too, I don't think he was trying to withhold anything from Jethro.

Because it's kind of like, well, God told you all this stuff, Moses, and you just went and told Jethro, hey, I'm just going to go back and visit the fam, see if they're still alive in Egypt. Was he withholding something here? I don't think so.

[32 : 00] We know Moses' future. He doesn't. He doesn't have any idea. He has these promises God has given him. He doesn't know how they're going to play out. So I think for him, you know, this was Moses' call, not Jethro's call.

And there is no reason to burden Jethro with unnecessary information. He was giving him enough to graciously leave the situation, but not to overburden him.

Proverbs 29, 11 says, a fool utters all his mind, but a wise man keeps it in till afterwards. You know, a fool is just always talking, but there's a time just to kind of sit on that information.

And the Lord said unto Moses, now God appears, again, speaking to Moses as he's there in Midian in the home of Jethro. He said, go, go, return to Egypt.

So even though Moses has God's calling and God's sending and he goes and tells Jethro it's time that he's going to be leaving, he waits until he hears God's word, go, before he goes. God says, go, return into Egypt for all the men are dead which sought your life.

[32 : 59] And here's God's word confirming Moses' call and assuring Moses in his call. And Moses took his wife and his sons, loaded up the caravan or the donkey, looks like they just had a little car, and returned to the land of Egypt.

And Moses took what? What does it say? The rod of God in his hand. Whoa. Moses, I thought that was your rod. It was Moses' rod. Then God says, take this rod.

And now Moses is taking the rod of God. By turning over to God, what do we have? We don't lose it. We gain it back. But when we gain it back, we now gain back something that's God's. When Jesus says in Matthew 16, 25, whoever will save his life will lose it. And whoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. We don't lose our life. We gain it back. But now all of a sudden it's no longer mine. It's God's. 1 Corinthians 6, 20, for you are bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's. [34 : 01] Moses gave this thing that was comfortable and familiar over to God. And now here he's going to Egypt. To everybody else, what does it look like? Just a staff. Moses knows this is the rod of God. Do you know the potential that's in this?

Do you know what this can do? And that's our lives when we turn them over to God. Everybody else looks and says, oh, you're just a plain old rod. But we know the potential of what God can do. The Lord said to Moses, Moses, when thou goest to return into Egypt, see that you do all these wonders before Pharaoh. Moses, don't chicken out. The deliverance of God's people hinges upon the willingness and obedience of one man.

Moses, see you do exactly what you've been told to do, which I have put in your hand, but I will harden his heart that he shall not let you go. It says here, God will harden Pharaoh's heart, not that he has hardened Pharaoh's heart.

God will harden Pharaoh's heart only after Pharaoh first hardens his heart. And there's a whole section on that in Romans, and we will look at that when we get to chapter 7. Chapter 7 through 11, for your homework, if you want to, go look through and look at all the places where it talks about the state of Pharaoh's heart.

[35 : 08] Being hardened, him hardening it, God hardening it, there's a progression there, and we will look at that. But God doesn't harden Pharaoh's heart arbitrarily. Pharaoh first hardens his own heart.

God is saying to Moses, Moses, victory is coming, but be prepared. For the battle. Verse 22, And you shall say unto Pharaoh, Thus says the Lord, Israel is my son, even my firstborn. And I say unto you, let my son go, that he may serve me instead of you, Pharaoh.

And if you refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay your son, even your firstborn, as Pharaoh had done to God's firstborn. Pharaoh, Israel is my firstborn.

You've been killing my firstborn for years. How long has it been going on? Moses has been gone how many years? 40 years? Past 40 years, are they still throwing Hebrew baby boys into the river? Are they still continuing that practice?

How long will a nation continue to kill its own children? He says, Pharaoh will refuse.

[36 : 13] If Pharaoh, if you refuse to let him go, it means to stand hard against. And so there we already see a picture. Pharaoh, if you choose to stand hard against this, then I will do to your son what you have done to mine.

The enemy is defeated by God's word and God's power. And as we close this out, Moses now turns and heads to Egypt. His journey to Egypt, it came to pass that by the way in the inn, so he stops at the Holiday Inn or I don't know what would be over there, the Israeli inn, and him and his wife and his two sons, and it says, the Lord met him and sought to kill him.

Oh my word. Wow. First God's angry with him, now he wants to kill him. What is going on here? And then Zipporah, his wife, his twittering wife, remember her name means twittering bird, took a sharp stone, that means a ceremonial stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son and cast it at his feet, at Moses' feet, and said, surely a bloody husband aren't you to me?

And so he let him go. She wasn't British. And then she said, a bloody husband art thou because of the circumcision. What is going on here? And then it says, and he let him go, meaning God let him go.

Was God physically there on Moses, ready to kill him? Whatever happened here, Zipporah realized the Lord had showed up to kill Moses. Why? Why? Something so small, so insignificant, so unseen.

[37 : 35] What does it matter? Moses is obeying God. He's responding in faith. Who cares? Who cares about this small thing? In Genesis 17, God spoke to Moses, remember, I mean Moses, Abraham, and said, you shall keep my covenant therefore, you and your seed after you and their generations.

This is my covenant which you shall keep between me and you and your seed after you. Every man child among you shall be circumcised. You shall keep this covenant. Moses, how can you be my

deliverer? How can you be God's deliverer and part of God's deliverance if you're not willing to be part of God's covenant?

God's deliverer must be part of God's covenant. Galatians 4, Paul tells us that Jesus, when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his son Jesus, made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them that were under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons.

God's deliverer must be part of God's covenant for the purpose of deliverance. Moses, how can I trust you to lead my people if you can't even lead your family into God's covenant?

And so Zipporah, she does this deed and it seems like almost at this moment she takes the boys and goes back home because later she's going to meet up with them again after they've left Egypt. But Moses here, something so seemingly small and insignificant, boy, it can have dire consequences, can't it?

[38 : 53] He was about to be killed. He was about to be, God was about to say, I have to take you out because you're not willing to do this. You know, it tells us in 1 Timothy chapter 3, Paul is talking about elders and those who should rule in a church and he says that if a man know how not to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?

Well, that means he must be like, they must do devotions four times a day and I bet they pray as a family every night and I bet the tables always set really nice too and they pass things, they don't grab for things, you know. Well, I think it's in the small things.

I think it's the small, insignificant, little things. Something so small can have such dire consequences. John 3, 36, he that believes on the Son has everlasting life.

He that believes not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides in him, abides on him, sorry. Something so small and insignificant is just believing, that's it?

changes in eternal destiny, can decide my eternity, whether heaven or hell, under God's wrath or God's favor. Something so small as faith can have such a huge, long-lasting consequence.

[40 : 06] And the Lord said to Aaron now, so Moses and Zipporah, they deal with this, Moses continues on now, able to be used by God because he has his heart and his home right with God.

The Lord said to Aaron, go into the wilderness to meet Moses. And he went and met him in the mount of God and kissed him, just as God said. Now remember, Moses and Aaron haven't seen each other for 40 years.

Maybe Moses thought, man, I left home, Aaron's probably mad at me for never contacting the family. Or maybe Aaron and Moses didn't get along in Egypt because Moses was the son of the Pharaoh's daughter and Aaron's over here working in the bricks or whatever.

But either way, God's word is fulfilled here. And Moses told Aaron now all the words of the Lord who had sent him and all the signs which he had commanded him. And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel.

So they're doing what God had told them to do. And Aaron spake all the words which the Lord had spoken unto Moses and did the signs in the sight of the people. What came first? The signs or the word?

[41 : 05] They spoke and then they did the signs. We're told in Mark 16, Jesus says, and these signs shall follow them that believe. And then that's where it talks about taking up snakes and it won't hurt you.

When God's word leads, the signs follow. Signs and wonders may be used by God to support his word but they will never be used to supersede his word. If it's a true sign from the Lord, then it will support God's word.

And God's word leads, the sign doesn't lead. It follows it. And the people, they believed. They believed these signs. When they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, I'm sorry, and the people believed, and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, that he had looked upon their affliction and then they bowed their heads and they worshipped.

They heard, they believed, and they worshipped. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Worship is the natural response to God's deliverance. See, these people, they believed, they believed according to what was spoken forth but also what was spoken before.

God had spoken and said, this is what I'm going to do. He hasn't done it yet. And they believed it.

And they believed what was foretold and foretold. And that would be what we call, Paul calls the gift of prophecy.

[42 : 17] It's essentially speaking forth the truth of God's word, whether speaking forth the truth that's relevant now or the truth that's relevant in the future. Foretell and to foretell.

The people of Israel believed and received God's deliverer at his second coming. This is Moses' second coming. Remember the first time? They didn't believe or receive him. They rejected him. And in the same type, Jesus says he's weeping over Jerusalem saying, oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who stone the prophets, how I would have gathered you as a hen gathers her chicks, but you would not.

Henceforth, you shall not see me until you shall say, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. And so when the deliverer comes, the deliverer comes a second time when Jesus returns, Israel will say, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

They will hear, they will believe, and they will worship. They're deliverer at that time. And the interesting thing here for Moses is, despite all of his fears and misgivings, despite his downright denials, and all of these things he's gone through, God's word was proven 100% true when he chose to walk by faith.

As Moses walked by faith, God's word is 100% true. Does God ever bring up that past again? Moses, remember that time I almost killed you? Don't do this again.

[43 : 35] Does he do that? He doesn't. Despite all of his fears and misgivings when he chose to walk by faith, God's word is proven 100% true. One small act of faith in God can undo a lifetime of sin.

For us, God never brings up again that past, all of our misgivings, all of our fears, all of our failures, all of our flat-out denials. Man, as soon as we choose to step in faith according to his word, if we confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

As soon as we do that, he does never bring it up. One small act of faith, something so insignificant. God's deliverance hung upon the willingness and obedience of one man, didn't it?

As Jesus was in the garden praying, saying, Father, if there be any other way, take this cup from me. Nevertheless, not what I will, but your will be done.

God's deliverance hung upon one man. God willingly sends deliverance, but that deliverance must be willingly received as well.

[44 : 40] God has sent deliverance, but Moses didn't have to obey. Israel didn't have to receive this. They didn't have to respond. God is faithful to send his deliverance.

Our part is to be faithful to respond to that. And just as God's deliverance hung upon the willingness and obedience of one man, so it does again today. And no, I don't mean Jesus. I'm not blaspheming.

I'm going off the rails here. Don't leave yet. Jesus did his part. He did. That part settled. God has made deliverance available. Deliverance today no longer hangs upon the work that Jesus chooses willingly to do or not.

It hangs upon you and I. My deliverance hangs upon one man now, me, whether I choose to participate in that. Romans 4, 5, but to him that works not, but believes on him that justifies the ungodly.

His faith is counted for righteousness. Something so small and so insignificant as choosing to believe opens the door to God's deliverance for me. Jesus has done his part. The deliverer has been sent.

[45 : 41] The deliverer came and has made a way for us all to exit out of Egypt. But now it hangs and hinges upon something so small and insignificant as will I believe.

He who has the Son has life. He who has not the Son has not life. Before we can ever offer anything to God, before we can ever hear God say, what do you have in your hand, we must receive from God.

We must receive God's deliverance first before God ever then says, hey, what do you have in your hand? Give that to me. And then we find instead of something so small and insignificant that allows me to receive God's salvation, now God's asking of me something that seems so small and insignificant and like, God, what am I going to?

How can I do this? This doesn't make any sense. Paul tells us in Romans 12 verse 1, he says, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

How hard is that? Is he asking us to do something? I beseech you by the mercies of God that you go out and do, that you plan, that you have, that you work at.

[46 : 58] Just present yourself a living sacrifice unto God. That's what Moses did. Moses said, here you go, God. I don't know how you're going to use this, but I'm going to give it to you. What's in your hand? What do you have in your hand today that you look at and go, well, God can't really use that.

That's comfortable. I'm familiar with that. I'm confident with its use. I know how that works. I can't do that. God, all I have is a Bible. All I have is a skill set over here. All I have is a hammer.

All I have is a camera. All I have is a heart that loves people. All I have is this life. God, there's so many lives out there. There's so much more worthy. I mean, look at this guy over here.

Wow, he's doing so much. And you want my life? By turning over what we have to God, we do not lose anything, but we gain. We gain back something that is now God's.

All we have to do is just be willing to turn it over. It's so small. It's so insignificant. And yet Moses, for the rest of his life, walked out God's plan by faith with the rod of God in his hand, knowing this has been taken up by God and has so much potential in it.

[48 : 03] As we choose to put our faith in Christ and then choose to follow Christ and be disciples, to choose to willingly lay down our lives so that we may take them up again, we walk the rest of our lives knowing this life has so much potential, not because of me, but because of the God who's taken it up.

Father, thank you, Lord, so much. Lord, not that we are sufficient of ourselves, but our sufficiencies of God, who's made us able ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter, the letter kills, not of trying, working, effort, but of the Spirit, for the Spirit gives life.

Something so small and seemingly insignificant our faith in you opens to us all of the resources of God. No longer do we look to ourselves for our sufficiency.

No longer do I look to my abilities as validation that I'm called by God or used by God. Lord, I pray that we would each hear your voice afresh this morning, that through this text, Lord, through the word, we would hear you saying, hey, what do you have in your hand?

And Lord, we wouldn't go scrounging about looking for something better. Well, hang on, hang on, let me go get something. I got something over here in the drawer, Lord. We would just, as you ask that question, what do you have in your hand? Right now, what's in your hand? What do you have in your heart?

[49 : 26] What do you have in your mind? That we'd be willing to lay them down, to throw them down at your feet, Lord. And then, Lord, we'd also, by faith, respond to the word of God that says, now here's how I want you to use that, how I want you and Lord, we are so blessed to come under your covenant, so blessed to become the children of God by faith, that we have everlasting life because of a moment of faith that we have chosen to put our trust in you.

And so, Lord, we want to give you what is your due, Lord. It's our reasonable service. Would you please, Lord, remove the fear and the hesitancy and Lord, would you turn our eyes to you that we would not look at ourselves any longer and keep putting up excuses and barriers and roadblocks of why I can't do that and well, I don't think I'm ready and we would just give you what you're asking. It's not a lot. It's really small. We would just give you our hearts, Lord. You will do so much more. How we love you, how we worship you and Lord, when we ask ourselves, how do I know?

How do I know this is going to work? Lord, how can we be sure we have the same thing Moses had? You speak to us. We have your word.

Thank you, Lord, for your assurance. In Jesus' name, amen. Just like Moses, God is willing to speak to us and we can hear his voice. If we want to know what he says, if we want to have that assurance, that direction, God, what do you want to do with my life?

[51 : 01] What are you asking of me? Well, read my word and I'll tell you. God, what do I do with this thing that you've given me? Well, read my word and I'll tell you. How do I find assurance, Lord? How do I know that you're going to be with me?

Well, read my word. Got to read it, right? What a blessing. What an amazing blessing to see the truths of God's heart and love through us reflected in the Old Testament as we look back through the cross, the filter of the cross, seeing Jesus and his love for us.

Now, may the Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you. The Lord be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you peace today and this week.

God bless you.