

Now Go!
Exodus 1-4
September 27, 2026

Please open your Bibles today to Exodus 1. The elder Pres Bush died and met Moses in Heaven. Eager to meet such a famous Bible character, Bush tried over and over to initiate a conversation and each time Moses ignored him. Finally, and greatly annoyed, Moses turned around and said, "Leave me alone, would ya? The last time I talked to a bush, I spent 40 years wandering in the desert!" Today, Moses will talk to a bush, but not George.

Last Sunday we brought our Genesis sermon series to a close that we started back in January. Over the last several months, with some exceptions, we went from Creation to the Fall to the Flood to Babel. We listened in as God blessed Abraham with 7 promises and waited with him for a son. We then rejoiced when he came and watched as Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice on Mt. Moriah only to be rescued by God's grace. We followed Isaac and his sons, Jacob and Esau before picking up Joseph's saga of riches to rags to riches to rags to riches. Last week we saw Joseph extend undeserved forgiveness and extravagant grace to his brothers and how he was reunited with them as he proclaimed one of the greatest themes of the Bible: You meant to harm me but God meant it for good! Praise God for His power and sovereignty to bring all things together for good for those who love Him. I do pray you love Him and that you love Him enough to obey Him even as Jesus said we would. Last Sunday's message was the crowning pinnacle of this series and one that you really need to listen to on Youtube if you missed it. Today we'll see God continue to bring good from bad.

We also journeyed with Jacob and all of his sons' and their families last week as they moved to Egypt to enjoy Joseph's hospitality during a famine that affected the Middle East. Droughts, pandemics, disasters, crop failures and such have been happening ever since the Fall but praise God for His mercy in sparing a remnant and often many more.

At the end of Gen 49, father Jacob dies at the age of 147 and all of Egypt mourns 70 days for this Hebrew patriarch. It's really quite remarkable. And in Chapter 50, Joseph eventually dies at what the Egyptians considered the ideal age of 110 after seeing his grandchildren and great grandchildren. Before he passes, he promises his relatives, "... God will surely come to your aid and take you up out of this land to the land he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." And he made them promise to take his bones with them when they left.

That was then. In Ex 1, we pick up this story **many** years later. Please stand if you are able as we read from Ex 1:1 These are the names of the sons of Israel who went to Egypt with Jacob, each with his family: 2 Reuben, Simeon, Levi and Judah; 3 Issachar, Zebulun and Benjamin; 4 Dan and Naphtali; Gad and Asher. 5 The descendants of Jacob numbered seventy in all; Joseph was already in Egypt. 6 Now Joseph and all his brothers and all that generation died, 7 but the Israelites were fruitful and multiplied **greatly** and became **exceedingly** numerous, so that the land was filled with them. 8 Then a new king, who did not know about Joseph, came to power in Egypt. 9 "Look," he said to his people, "the Israelites have become much too numerous for us. 10 Come, we must deal shrewdly with them or they will become even more numerous and, if war breaks out, will join our enemies, fight against us and leave the country." 11 So they put slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labor, and they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh. 12 But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread; so the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites 13 and worked them ruthlessly. 14 They made their lives bitter with hard labor in brick and mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields; in all their hard labor the Egyptians used them ruthlessly.

Say slaves. They came to Egypt in freedom. Initially just 70 of them plus Joseph and his family who were already there, so 74. They lived in Goshen, which was 900 square miles of the best agricultural land in Egypt. It was excellent for grazing and crops and so the Israelites began to grow and thrive and grow and thrive and before you know it, they'd gotten too big for the new Pharaoh to trust. Changes in leadership lead to changes in policy which is why it's important for you to vote! The new Pharaoh turns all the Israelites into slaves and oppresses them bitterly. But the more harshly they were treated, the more they grew.

So Ex 1:15, The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, whose names were Shiphrah and Puah, 16 "When you help the Hebrew women in childbirth and observe them on the delivery stool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, let her live." But these ladies feared God more than Pharaoh and did not kill those children, praise God. Vs 22 Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people: "Every boy that is born you must throw into the Nile, but let every girl live." Infanticide is nothing new nor is government sponsorship of it. Killing off the next generation. Like we are doing with abortion. Praise God for Crisis Pregnancy Centers and ministries that help protect life and please vote no on Ballot Question 1 that would allow a baby to be killed up to the moment of birth. Only for the Israelites, this was after birth and it wasn't voluntary. Imagine the horror of being a Jew in Egypt at that time. Imagine what your prayers would sound like every day. For mercy, for deliverance, for endurance, perhaps for death. Imagine the prayers **today** of persecuted Christians in Nigeria and Iran and other places and the prayers of the 28 million slaves India, China and other countries who make our clothes, shoes, tech gadgets and more. God have mercy. As Christians, we should pray for them and speak for them and not exploit them by buying the cheap goods from those countries that do permit, or even promote slavery.

In Exodus 2:23, we hear a snippet of the Israelites' prayers. "During that long period, the king of Egypt died. The Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out, and their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God. 24 God **heard** their groaning and he **remembered** his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. 25 So God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them." God always hears your groaning and cares about you. Even if it seems He's not doing anything, He is, even as He was for the Israelites in Egypt.

Earlier in chapter 2, we meet baby Moses and you know the story of how his mom and dad, Amram and Jochebed hid their son until he got too big. They then set him afloat on the Nile in a basket, the Hebrew word is ark, a place of safety and deliverance, while his big sister Miriam watched from the bank. The story takes a frightful turn when a Nile crocodile shows up. No. When Pharaoh's daughter finds the baby. Will she kill it as her father has commanded? She doesn't. Instead, she tells Miriam to find a nurse for the baby and Moses goes back home to mom and dad until he's weaned at maybe 3 or so and then moves into the palace, probably as an adopted son of the Egyptian princess.

Finally, God is preparing someone to lead His people out of their misery! A deliverer! God uniquely positioned Moses to help his people. He placed him in a position of influence. Until at age 40 he loses his temper and kills an Egyptian who is beating one of his fellow Israelites. Even though Moses thought no one had seen him, the truth always comes out. Pharaoh finds out and Moses, the well-positioned potential deliverer has to hightail it to save his life. (s) He settles down in Midian, marries a local girl, has 2 sons and tends sheep for his father-in-law, Jethro. Not the one on Beverly Hillbillies.

Life is good. His problems and his past are behind him as he lives comfortably in Midian day after day. Say until. Until that day on the mountain. Ex 3:1 Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. 2 There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. 3 So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight - why the bush does not burn up." 4 When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!" And Moses said, "Here I am." 5 "Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is **holy** ground." 6 Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God." Yes, I'll bet. Not only because he had murdered a man but because he, like all of us, was a sinful man now in the presence of a holy God. If we had such a face to face encounter with God, we would be scared out of our minds too. We treat Him so casually, relaxed, even flippant. We ought to enter worship each week with the understanding that we are on holy ground because the holy God is here, as we sang. (take off shoes) We get used to Him, take Him for granted. Oh my friends, I pray

that we can catch just a glimpse of His greatness, His grandeur, His power, His holiness, that we might, like Moses, humble ourselves before Him in hushed silence. In awe and wonder. In reverence and holy fear. We are here today on holy ground!

Vs 7 The Lord said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am **concerned** about their suffering. 8 So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey - the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. 9 And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. 10 So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt." Had God heard their prayers? Absolutely! Had He see their misery? Absolutely! And He was now moving, when the time was right, to rescue them. And you, Moses, are the man for the job! Yippee! I get to go be the answer to these people's prayers! Not exactly.

Vs 11 But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" 12 And God said, "I will be with you..." God said, "You're nobody. But it doesn't depend on you. It depends on me!" "...And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on **this** mountain." 13 Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?" 14 God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" 15 God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The Lord, the God of your fathers — the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob — has sent me to you.' This is **my** name forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation."

This is not just a mountain in Midian, it is a mountain in Scripture and a mountaintop in all of human history. For on this day, the eternal Creator God revealed His own holy, personal name to a human being. Say Yahweh. God is generic but Yahweh, I am who I am, is His personal name by which He is to be known. Holy ground, holy God, holy name. The verb to be, that which is. God is the ever existent One, the Alpha, the Omega and everything in between! He is, He was and He is to come. God, by self-revelation, by self-definition, is that which is! The essence of all that is really real. And His name is holy. Never to be taken in vain. The Jews eventually quit using it so they wouldn't misuse it and forgot how to pronounce it. But they knew the Great I Am which is why they plotted to kill Jesus when He said, "Before Abraham was, I am!" Jesus was clearly claiming to be God, to be Yahweh. And if He wasn't, it was blasphemy. But if He **was**, He was the Messiah! And He had the words, deeds, miracles, and resurrection to back that up!

Then God tells Moses to go back to Egypt, speak to the Israelite leaders and then to Pharaoh. “He will fight you tooth and nail,” God said, “but in the end, I will prevail and he will set you free and when he does, have your people ask the Egyptians for all their valuables. They will be happy to give them.”

So Moses agrees, right? No. He’s already balked once back in vs 11. Now when he suggests that his fellow Israelites might not listen, God gives him a few signs to convince them. Still not persuaded, Ex 4:10: Moses said to the Lord, "O Lord, I have **never** been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue." “I can’t talk to pain. I’m slow on my feet. This ain’t my gift!” Moses might have stuttered or had a speech impediment. Vs 11 The Lord said to him, "Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the Lord? 12 Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say." So there! God refers back to creation affirming Genesis 1-2, but also indicates that if He made our mouths, and He has, He can help us use them for to way what He wants us to say! Any of us who worry about having the right words when we witness at work or school, repeat after me, “Now go/ I will help you speak/ and will teach you what to say." God said to Moses, “It’s not about you!” and He says the same to us! You’d think that would settle it.

Unfortunately, Moses still resists. Vs 13 But Moses said, "O Lord, **please** send someone else to do it." God, don’t you know I’ve killed a man? I’ve got a record. Moses could never pass a background check, nor a faith check either. Vs 14 Then the Lord's anger burned against Moses..." Why? Because of Moses’ lack of faith. Friend if God calls you to do something, don’t trust in yourself, trust in the God who called you! God spoke of this deliverance in no uncertain terms. It **would** happen. It was as good as done! But Moses was doubting God and like us today, he didn’t want to get involved. God said, “You **WILL** get involved! Vs 14 and he said, "What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and his heart will be glad when he sees you. 15 You shall speak to him and put words in his mouth; I will help **both** of you speak and will teach you what to do. 16 He will speak to the people for you, and it will be as if he were your mouth and as if you were God to him.” So God, in His grace, instead of rejecting Moses, agreed to involve his brother Aaron, who would, by the way make a golden calf idol for the people to worship. Don’t bargain with God.

We’ll pick up this story again next week, but at the burning bush that day, God reveled His holiness, He reveled His name, which reveals His character, He revealed His plans to rescue His people, all of which reveal something far greater, God reveals Himself! The Great I AM! When we gather for worship each week, we should remember this encounter with God.

But we also discover that He hears our prayers, sees our misery, knows our deepest needs and He wants to set us free, not just from Egypt, but from something far

worse, our sin. And praise God He has sent someone to deliver us named Jesus Christ who didn't say find someone else. Heb 10 tells us that when Jesus entered the world, He said, 7... 'Here I am...-I have come to do your will, O God.'" And He did. It cost Him His life, but God raised Him up and today He calls us to join Him. Will you? When God called Isaiah, he said Here I am Lord, send me." As we sang today. Moses however, said, "Here I ain't, send someone else!" We find out later that Moses was 80. At that age, He wasn't looking for a second career. He was likely looking for retirement and relaxation. Do a little traveling. Go to Sheba, Persia, Mt. Nebo (he'd eventually get there). God said, no, travel to Egypt, not for retirement, but for reirement! Not me, Lord. Send someone else. What will you say? Will you accept Jesus' call and fulfill it? Of course you're not able. Of course you're not qualified. None of us are! Of course you're not looking for that kind of job. Who is? But God's looking for you! He's calling you! Accept His call and claim His promise! "Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say."