

Week 11

Exodus 1 – 4 (Egyptian Captivity and Moses Called)

Sunday (Exodus 1)

Blessing during Bondage in Egypt

1:1 These are the names of the sons of Israel who entered Egypt – each man with his household entered with Jacob: 1:2 Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, 1:3 Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin, 1:4 Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher. 1:5 All the people who were directly descended from Jacob numbered seventy. But Joseph was already in Egypt, 1:6 and in time Joseph and his brothers and all that generation died. 1:7 The Israelites, however, were fruitful, increased greatly, multiplied, and became extremely strong, so that the land was filled with them.

1:8 Then a new king, who did not know about Joseph, came to power over Egypt. 1:9 He said to his people, “Look at the Israelite people, more numerous and stronger than we are! 1:10 Come, let’s deal wisely with them. Otherwise they will continue to multiply, and if a war breaks out, they will ally themselves with our enemies and fight against us and leave the country.”

1:11 So they put foremen over the Israelites to oppress them with hard labor. As a result they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh. 1:12 But the more the Egyptians oppressed them, the more they multiplied and spread. As a result the Egyptians loathed the Israelites, 1:13 and they made the Israelites serve rigorously. 1:14 They made their lives bitter by hard service with mortar and bricks and by all kinds of service in the fields. Every kind of service the Israelites were required to give was rigorous.

1:15 The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, 1:16 “When you assist the Hebrew women in childbirth, observe at the delivery: If it is a son, kill him, but if it is a daughter, she may live.” 1:17 But the midwives feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them; they let the boys live.

1:18 Then the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this and let the boys live?” 1:19 The midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women – for the Hebrew women are vigorous; they give birth before the midwife gets to them!” 1:20 So God treated the midwives well, and the people multiplied and became very strong. 1:21 And because the midwives feared God, he made households for them.

1:22 Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, “All sons that are born you must throw into the river, but all daughters you may let live.”

PRAYER

Lord, those who do not know You have always been jealous of those who do, may we be fearless in living righteously before You no matter what the world may say or do.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

The Lord God blessed the Israelites and they multiplied and prospered.

The blessing that Joseph was to Egypt was soon forgotten by a new king (Pharaoh) who was fearful of the rapidly multiplying foreigners in his land.

He decided to make them slaves, like much of the rest of the population, and he decided to oppress them with the heaviest labors. The Lord continued to bless them and so they continued to multiply.

Pharaoh decided that genocide was the solution, so he ordered the two midwives (or, as the NET translator’s observe, more probably the two who had oversight of the midwives to the Hebrews) to drown all of the newborn male children of the Hebrews.

Because they honored the Lord God above Pharaoh they did not do so and when challenged gave the excuse that the Hebrew women were stronger than the Egyptian women and gave birth before they could arrive.

The Lord blessed them with families of their own as a result of them refusing Pharaoh’s barbaric and anti-God order.

Pharaoh then gave the order that “all” must drown their male children and only allow the females to live.

Note1: The designation “Hebrew” was generally a derogatory term used by others to refer to these nomadic people, including but not exclusively the Israelites. Not all of the descendants of Abraham were nomadic. Not all were all members of one of the Israelite Tribes, though if nomadic, they were labeled ‘Hebrews’.

Note 2: The text says “all” but the context is the control of the Israelite (Hebrew) population only, so it is probable that his genocidal edict was directed at them. Pharaoh presumably threatened to kill any adult among the Hebrews who disobeyed, hoping that generalized fear would motivate obedience, which it likely did among the more-faithless. He also expected his people to assist with the killing, but clearly they did not, and even his own daughter ignored the order.

Note 3: Had the Hebrew midwives answered Pharaoh’s question fully it would have resulted in their deaths for disobedience. Because Pharaoh’s order was in direct contradiction to the will of the Lord God (all life belongs to him, not a pagan leader), and was also an attack upon His people, Pharaoh had no right to expect cooperation or truth.

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

Pharaoh, like many who find themselves in positions of power, made fear-driven and irrational assumptions about the Israelites and then acted upon them.

DISCUSS

Do we have integrity and a work-ethic to honor the Lord God that allows Him to bless us despite oppression? Is the modern day abortion industry (both customers and providers) the moral-equivalent of those who obeyed Pharaoh’s unconscionable order, and the political forces that benefit from their donations the moral-equivalent of the “thirty pieces of silver” paid in rebellion for the betrayal of Jesus?

REFLECT

How different are leaders today, often making foolish decisions - and when challenged they escalate rather than repent of them – thus failing to learn from their mistakes and bring harm to those over whom they have authority?

SHARE

When have you been confronted with a person of power who pressured you to do things that the Lord God says you must not? How did you respond?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you any place where you are obeying man in contradiction to God.

ACT

Today I will seek the prayerful wisdom of one who is Biblically qualified as an ‘elder’ as I determine how I will respond to a worldly-challenge to disobey the Lord's commands in my life. It may be in a hobby or sports, at school or at work, at home or in the neighborhood. Doing what is right before God often triggers a negative reaction by those in power, and whose idols are in and of the world, so I must pray and choose wisely my course of action.

Be Specific _____

Monday (Exodus 2:1-10)

The Birth of the Deliverer

2:1 A man from the household of Levi married a woman who was a descendant of [Levi](#).

2:2 The woman became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw that he was a healthy child, she hid him for three months. 2:3 But when she was no longer able to hide him, she took a papyrus basket for him and sealed it with bitumen and pitch. She put the child in it and set it among the reeds along the edge of the Nile. 2:4 His sister stationed herself at a distance to find out what would happen to him.

2:5 Then the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself by the Nile, while her attendants were walking alongside the river, and she saw the basket among the reeds. She

sent one of her attendants, took it, 2:6 opened it, and saw the child – a boy, crying! – and she felt compassion for him and said, “This is one of the Hebrews’ children.”

2:7 Then his sister said to Pharaoh’s daughter, “Shall I go and get a nursing woman for you from the Hebrews, so that she may nurse the child for you?” 2:8 Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Yes, do so.” So the young girl went and got the child’s mother. 2:9 Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Take this child and nurse him for me, and I will pay your wages.” So the woman took the child and nursed him.

2:10 When the child grew older she brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, “Because I drew him from the water.”

PRAYER

Lord, the ways that You provide are often a mystery to us, but we are grateful and trusting that You know all things and love us dearly.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Moses was born of descendants of Levi, those of the priestly tribe of Israel.

His mother hid him from Pharaoh’s murderous edict and when he was too big to hide she technically did as Pharaoh said – she put him in the river – but according to the Lord God’s way, not Pharaoh’s.

She placed him in an ‘ark.’

Note: According to the NET translators notes the descriptive terms used to describe the Ark, and the papyrus basket, are similar.

Her sister, the aunt of Moses, observed as the attendants to Pharaoh’s daughter discovered the basket and brought it to her. She recognized the blanket as Hebrew. Her sister stepped forward and offered to find a Hebrew nursemaid for the child and Pharaoh’s daughter agreed.

She brought Moses’ mother, her identity remained unknown to Pharaoh’s daughter, and Moses’ mother was paid by Pharaoh’s household to care for Moses!

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

What an amazing way for God to provide for the deliverer of Israel to be protected and cared for, in-Egypt but not of-Egypt – cared for as a baby by his own mother on the Pharaoh's payroll.

DISCUSS

Is it possible that Moses' mother's three-month wait to place him in an 'ark' not only is explained by her inability to continue to hide him but also provided time for her to no longer appear to the daughter of Pharaoh as one who had recently given birth?

REFLECT

The Lord God used an 'ark' to save Moses from the water and to deliver him to the place (palace) where he could be raised and later deliver His edict to Pharaoh so that the Hebrews/Israelites could be set free – as He prophesied.

SHARE

When has it been necessary for you to use a creative solution to honor the Lord God despite efforts of His enemies to block your path?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you an opportunity to 'rescue' a child whom He has placed in an 'ark' of safety.

ACT

Today I will seize the opportunity placed before me; it may be to adopt a child, to assist someone else to do so, to provide foster care, or to support someone who does, to donate funds to a responsible God-honoring organization that cares for children, to pray against abortion and perhaps to donate to organizations that educate and provide alternatives, or to do so in some other way. And I will give God all of the glory.

Be Specific _____

Tuesday (**Exodus 2:11-22**)

The Presumption of the Deliverer

2:11 In those days, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and observed their hard labor, and he saw an Egyptian man attacking a Hebrew man, one of his own people. 2:12 He looked this way and that and saw that no one was there, and then he attacked the Egyptian and concealed the body in the sand. 2:13 When he went out the next day, there were two Hebrew men fighting. So he said to the one who was in the wrong, "Why are you attacking your fellow Hebrew?"

2:14 The man replied, "Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? Are you planning to kill me like you killed that Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid, thinking, "Surely what I did has become known." 2:15 When Pharaoh heard about this event, he sought to kill Moses. So Moses fled from Pharaoh and settled in the land of Midian, and he settled by a certain well.

2:16 Now a priest of Midian had seven daughters, and they came and began to draw water and fill the troughs in order to water their father's flock. 2:17 When some shepherds came and drove them away, Moses came up and defended them and then watered their flock. 2:18 So when they came home to their father Reuel, he asked, "Why have you come home so early today?" 2:19 They said, "An Egyptian man rescued us from the shepherds, and he actually drew water for us and watered the flock!" 2:20 He said to his daughters, "So where is he? Why in the world did you leave the man? Call him, so that he may eat a meal with us."

2:21 Moses agreed to stay with the man, and he gave his daughter Zipporah to Moses in marriage. 2:22 When she bore a son, Moses named him Gershom, for he said, "I have become a resident foreigner in a foreign land."

PRAYER

Lord, sometimes people in the Bible got out ahead of You and You had to slow them down while You prepared them, and perhaps others. May I be careful to patiently look for places where You are already acting, assess how You have prepared me to be a useful instrument in that work, and then join in with You.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

As a grown man Moses observed an Egyptian attacking a Hebrew and seeing no one watching he stuck and killed him and buried him in the sand.

The next day he confronted two Hebrew men fighting and asked why they would attack a brother, to which they challenged his ruler-judge like behavior and asked if he planned to kill them too.

Pharaoh heard of what Moses had done and sought to have him killed for the murder of an Egyptian – so Moses fled to Midian.

The daughters of a priest in Midian were harassed by other shepherds and Moses intervened, then he watered their flocks for them. They returned home earlier than usual and when questioned told their father what had happened. He told them to bring the man to him and invited him to remain as their guest.

Moses was given the priest's daughter Zipporah in marriage and their firstborn son was named "Gershom," for he said, "I have become a resident foreigner in a foreign land."

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

There appears to be a pattern of impetuous conduct early in the life of Moses; killing the Egyptian who was attacking a Hebrew, confronting fellow Hebrews, coming to the aid of the Midianite women at the well.

DISCUSS

There are multiple echoes or types of Jesus already apparent in the life of Moses; protected from a murderous king, he lived in Egypt for a time, he returned home, he assisted the women at the well, he lived a quiet life - until his time for ministry arrived.

Do you see the relationship between Moses-the-deliverer at the well and Jesus?

REFLECT

When have you sensed a need to act boldly, and have done so, only to be confronted with challenges as a result?

SHARE

What is a circumstance when you had to leave a familiar place with familiar people and traditions and found yourself in an unfamiliar place – where you needed to become a part of their social system?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you places in your life where you are, like Moses, divided between two worlds – the world-system (like pagan Egypt) and the Kingdom of God (like God-fearing Midian).

ACT

Today I will carefully and prayerfully make and execute a plan to separate myself from any associations, habits, or lifestyles that bind me too-closely to the world-system. It may be people who constantly influence me to sin, or habits and lifestyle choices (e.g. adultery, gambling, lying, risk-taking/adrenaline-junky behavior, substance abuse, etc.).

Be Specific _____

Wednesday (Exodus 2:23 – 3:10)

The Call of the Deliverer

2:23 During that long period of time the king of Egypt died, and the Israelites groaned because of the slave labor. They cried out, and their desperate cry because of their slave labor went up to God. 2:24 God heard their groaning, God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob, 2:25 God saw the Israelites, and God understood....

3:1 Now Moses was shepherding the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to the mountain of God, to Horeb. 3:2 The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire from within a bush. He looked – and the bush was ablaze with fire, but it was not being consumed! 3:3 So Moses thought, “I will turn aside to see this amazing sight. Why does the bush not burn up?”

3:4 When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to look, God called to him from within the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And Moses said, "Here I am." 3:5 God said, "Do not approach any closer! Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." 3:6 He added, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Then Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

3:7 The Lord said, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt. I have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows. 3:8 I have come down to deliver them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up from that land to a land that is both good and spacious, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the region of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. 3:9 And now indeed the cry of the Israelites has come to me, and I have also seen how severely the Egyptians oppress them. 3:10 So now go, and I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt."

PRAYER

Lord, You dwell in us through Your Holy Spirit and You speak to us from Your Book, find us as humble and respectful in Your presence as was Moses.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Moses was working as a shepherd and came to Mount Horeb (aka Mount Sinai, the place he would later go for the Commandments) and there he saw a burning bush that did not appear to be consumed by the fire.

In an almost humorous turn of a phrase the English translation renders "3:3 So Moses thought, "I will turn aside to see this amazing sight. Why does the bush not burn up?""

The Lord informed Moses that He was both aware of the struggles of Israel, perhaps to avoid any Job-like confusion, and that He intended to intervene.

The Lord God called to Moses and instructed him as to his new calling as the deliverer of His (and his) people out of Egypt – as He had long ago promised.

The Lord ordered Moses to remove his sandals as he was standing "on holy ground", establishing clearly the nature of His presence.

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

Why was Egypt wealthy, let alone even still a kingdom? Because the Lord God blessed Joseph and that blessing overflowed to the indirect benefit of Egypt so that there would be a provision for the Israelites.

DISCUSS

There is a linkage in all things in God's plan - here Moses was greeted by the Lord God on Mount Horeb, the same place where God will later give him the 10 Commandments – twice. Can you recall other linkages within the Old Testament or between the Old and the New?

REFLECT

Egypt turned on the Israelites and enslaved them – stealing the product of their forced-labor. Egypt owed their survival of a terrible famine to God, via Joseph, and their wealth to Joseph's skilled leadership. They owed a huge debt to God's people.

SHARE

When have you been confronted by the Lord God in an unusual way, so unusual that you knew that He really wanted your attention?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you something you may do to serve Him in a very special way.

ACT

Today I will go and I will do whatever the Lord asks of me. I will confirm what I believe that the Holy Spirit is telling me through prayer, in consultation with someone qualified to be a Biblical elder, and in careful study of His Word.

Be Specific _____

Thursday (Exodus 3:11-22)

3:11 Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, or that I should bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" 3:12 He replied, "Surely I will be with you, and this will be the sign to you that I have sent you: When you bring the people out of Egypt, you and they will serve God on this mountain."

3:13 Moses said to God, "If I go to the Israelites and tell them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' – what should I say to them?"

3:14 God said to Moses, "I am that I am." And he said, "You must say this to the Israelites, 'I am has sent me to you.'" 3:15 God also said to Moses, "You must say this 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, and this is my memorial from generation to generation.'

3:16 "Go and bring together the elders of Israel and tell them, 'The Lord, the God of your fathers, appeared to me – the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – saying, "I have attended carefully to you and to what has been done to you in Egypt, 3:17 and I have promised that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey.'" "

3:18 "The elders will listen to you, and then you and the elders of Israel must go to the king of Egypt and tell him, 'The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. So now, let us go three days' journey into the wilderness, so that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God.' 3:19 But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go, not even under force. 3:20 So I will extend my hand and strike Egypt with all my wonders that I will do among them, and after that he will release you.

3:21 "I will grant this people favor with the Egyptians, so that when you depart you will not leave empty-handed. 3:22 Every woman will ask her neighbor and the one who happens to be staying in her house for items of silver and gold and for clothing. You will put these articles on your sons and daughters – thus you will plunder Egypt!"

PRAYER

Lord, You are The One Who existed before time-itself, without beginning or end. May I stand in awe, may I know that Your presence is holy ground, and may I listen and obey so as to be a useful instrument in Your great plan of redemption.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Moses asked how he should describe or identify the Lord God to the people to which the Lord replied "I am that I am." And he said, "You must say this to the Israelites, 'I am has sent me to you.' This has been interpreted many ways; consider this "I AM Who has always been, I AM Who is now, and I AM Who will always be."

He then instructed Moses "Go and bring together the elders of Israel and tell them, "The Lord, the God of your fathers, appeared to me – the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – saying, "I have attended carefully to you and to what has been done to you in Egypt, 3:17 and I have promised that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey."

God instructed Moses that the elders were to go to Pharaoh and demand their release - but that Pharaoh would refuse. He then prophesied His escalating plagues upon Egypt until Pharaoh finally relented, and of the plunder of Egypt as Egyptian neighbors give gold and silver and jewels to them as they leave.

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

Since Joseph saved Egypt and the Israelites suffered the theft of their labor for 400 years in order that Egypt grew rich – they had a right to plunder Egypt.

DISCUSS

How would you explain the meaning of the Lord God's identification as "I am"?

REFLECT

God saw to it that there were few surprises for Moses, prophesying many of the key events to come in the great exodus.

SHARE

What is a circumstance where you had to inform a person in authority that something important had changed – and you did not anticipate a positive reaction?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you an opportunity to explore and share an awareness and celebration of the amazing and unique attributes of the Lord God.

ACT

Today I will seize the opportunity to share in study and celebration of the Lord God with fellow believers.

Be Specific _____

Friday (Exodus 4:1-17)

The Source of Sufficiency

4:1 Moses answered again, “And if they do not believe me or pay attention to me, but say, ‘The Lord has not appeared to you?’” 4:2 The Lord said to him, “What is that in your hand?” He said, “A staff.” 4:3 The Lord said, “Throw it to the ground.” So he threw it to the ground, and it became a snake, and Moses ran from it. 4:4 But the Lord said to Moses, “Put out your hand and grab it by the tail” – so he put out his hand and caught it, and it became a staff in his hand – 4:5 “that they may believe that the Lord, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you.”

4:6 The Lord also said to him, “Put your hand into your robe.” So he put his hand into his robe, and when he brought it out – there was his hand, leprous like snow! 4:7 He said, “Put your hand back into your robe.” So he put his hand back into his robe, and when he brought it out from his robe – there it was, restored like the rest of his skin! 4:8 “If they do not believe you or pay attention to the former sign, then they may believe the latter sign. 4:9 And if they do not believe even these two signs or listen to you, then take some water from the Nile and pour it out on the dry ground. The water you take out of the Nile will become blood on the dry ground.”

4:10 Then Moses said to the Lord, "O my Lord, I am not an eloquent man, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant, for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue."

4:11 The Lord said to him, "Who gave a mouth to man, or who makes a person mute or deaf or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? 4:12 So now go, and I will be with your mouth and will teach you what you must say."

4:13 But Moses said, "O my Lord, please send anyone else whom you wish to send!"

4:14 Then the Lord became angry with Moses, and he said, "What about your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he can speak very well. Moreover, he is coming to meet you, and when he sees you he will be glad in his heart.

4:15 "So you are to speak to him and put the words in his mouth. And as for me, I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you both what you must do. 4:16 He will speak for you to the people, and it will be as if he were your mouth and as if you were his God. 4:17 You will also take in your hand this staff, with which you will do the signs."

PRAYER

Lord, when You give me a task to do may I respond without question, and when Your truth is spoken may people believe in You.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

The Lord God instructed Moses to tell his people what He wanted him to do and Moses questioned the Lord's choice of him, trying to pass-off the task to his brother-in-law Aaron. God was displeased but made Aaron the spokesman for Moses-the-prophet.

The Lord God gave Moses some small miracles, in addition to His name I AM that I AM; the rod which could become a snake, the hand that could become leprous and not leprous, and the turning of water to blood.

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

The Lord God made Moses His instrument of deliverance to his people and Moses looked for a way out, to the point that the text says that he angered God.

DISCUSS

Do we have a long list of excuses, like Moses, when the Lord God asks us to do something challenging?

REFLECT

Might Moses have been a little cautious due to the bad outcome of his prior adventures in Egypt?

SHARE

While Moses is a type of Jesus, a deliverer sent by God to set His/his people free, he is unlike Jesus (and more like Peter) as he resisted the call to dangerous and sacrificial ministry.

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal a special task that God has prepared for you.

ACT

Today I will pursue whatever the Holy Spirit asks of me, while I am sensitive to His prodding for me to deal with anything that might interfere with His work through me, and I will deal with those things so that I may be as valuable and undistracted as I can be.

Be Specific _____

Saturday (Exodus 18-31)

The Return of Moses

4:18 So Moses went back to his father-in-law Jethro and said to him, "Let me go, so that I may return to my relatives in Egypt and see if they are still alive." Jethro said to Moses, "Go in peace."

4:19 The Lord said to Moses in Midian, "Go back to Egypt, because all the men who were seeking your life are dead."

4:20 Then Moses took his wife and sons and put them on a donkey and headed back to the land of Egypt, and Moses took the staff of God in his hand.

4:21 The Lord said to Moses, "When you go back to Egypt, see that you do before Pharaoh all the wonders I have put under your control. But I will harden his heart and he will not let the people go.

4:22 You must say to Pharaoh, "Thus says the Lord, "Israel is my son, my firstborn, 4:23 and I said to you, 'Let my son go that he may serve me,' but since you have refused to let him go, I will surely kill your son, your firstborn!"

4:24 Now on the way, at a place where they stopped for the night, the Lord met Moses and sought to kill him. 4:25 But Zipporah took a flint knife, cut off the foreskin of her son and touched it to Moses' feet, and said, "Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me." 4:26 So the Lord let him alone. (At that time she said, "A bridegroom of blood," referring to the circumcision.)

4:27 The Lord said to Aaron, "Go to the wilderness to meet Moses. So he went and met him at the mountain of God and greeted him with a kiss. 4:28 Moses told Aaron all the words of the Lord who had sent him and all the signs that he had commanded him.

4:29 Then Moses and Aaron went and brought together all the Israelite elders. 4:30 Aaron spoke all the words that the Lord had spoken to Moses and did the signs in the sight of the people, 4:31 and the people believed. When they heard that the Lord had attended to the Israelites and that he had seen their affliction, they bowed down close to the ground.

PRAYER

Lord, You choose to use us in Your great plan, but often You have to clean us up along the way. May I stay the course in Your ministry despite challenges along the way.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

The Lord prophesied the resistance of Pharaoh and His intention to overpower his resistance with incrementally more devastating plagues up to and including the death of Pharaoh's son.

The Lord God told Moses that He would further-harden the already-hard heart of Pharaoh so as to move the process along – He knew the heart of Pharaoh and that he would never agree to release the Israelites.

The story of “... the Lord met Moses and sought to kill him” is much like Jacob’s story of wrestling with the angel/man. Moses, both a man of the flesh (impulsive) and a spiritually-sensitive man, to create a deeper sense of dependence upon and obedience to the Lord God. Moses had not been obedient in circumcising his own son – so his wife did so (bringing Moses back into a right-relationship with God).

Aaron agreed to serve with Moses and the people heard and believed what Aaron told them from what Moses told him.

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

Jethro seemed excited by the adventure, perhaps because he had Moses with him, or perhaps that was just his personality – plus his training and experience as a priest.

DISCUSS

When have you found yourself on a mission for the Lord God and He has blocked your way because you were doing what He had asked you – but you had left something important in your relationship with Him incomplete – and He saw that it was necessary to His pouring blessings through you into others? (An example might be during planning and preparations for a short-term missions trip He required you to divert attention to deal with a place of unforgiveness or unrepented sin or bad doctrine – that you might pass-on to others.)

REFLECT

Moses-the-deliverer returned to Egypt with his wife and sons on a donkey. Later, Joseph would travel with Mary-about-to-deliver-Jesus on a donkey, then Jesus-the-deliverer would enter Jerusalem on a donkey.

SHARE

What are some ways that you have experienced or observed where those called to leadership were refined by the Lord God?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a place in your life which you need to address prior to Him entrusting you with greater responsibilities.

ACT

Today I will confess and repent of that which might compromise my value as His instrument. I will ask a fellow believer to walk alongside me in prayer, and otherwise, as I clean-up my walk – rather than persist in rebellion and force the Lord to clean me up the hard way.

Be Specific _____

All Bible text is from the NET unless otherwise indicated - <http://bible.org>

Note 1: These Studies often rely upon the guidance of the NET Translators from their associated notes. Careful attention has been given to cite that source where it has been quoted directly or closely paraphrased. Feedback is encouraged where credit has not been sufficiently assigned.

Note 2: When NET text is quoted in commentary and discussion all pronouns referring to God are capitalized, though they are lower-case in the original NET text.

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