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### **Exodus 2:1–4:17**

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We find in these great inspiring chapters of the Book of Exodus three different phases of Moses' experience being recorded. First, there are his formative years as a child and young man in Egypt in Exodus 2:1–15. Then we see Moses in his years as an alien in Midian, from 2:15 to the end of the chapter. Then thirdly we see God's summons to Moses at Mount Horeb, or Sinai.

We look at each of these in turn.

#### **I. First, Moses in Egypt.**

Verses 1–10 direct us to his birth and childhood. We're struck right away with the love and faith of his parents for him. Here the parents of Moses are not named although later in the text of the Old Testament we learn that the name of Moses father was Amram and his mother's name was Jochebed. They stand out as striking people, for they serve as a symbol of persons who are caught in the denigration of life, caught in a time when it hardly seems that life is worth living. Yet they do not throw aside their godly virtues and qualities. They choose, for example, to love one another. They choose marriage and family instead of license and casualness. The times may be difficult and severe but there is a place for love and understanding and they demonstrate it. In fact, when God calls Moses, He first calls himself "the God of your father" (Exodus 3:6, NIV). Not "fathers" which would identify God also with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But singular—the God of your father, speaking to us in a word some of the character of Moses' father Amram. The severity of the times had not kept this family from having children even though the prospects for their future appear to be very bleak. All that seemingly faced them was years of

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slavery. A life of slavery. In fact we know from comparing other parts of Exodus with this particular opening of Exodus 2 that Moses is the third child born into this family.

He has an older sister not identified in verses 1–10 by name, but simply by presence. She's the girl who watched over him when he was in the little ark floating on the Nile. But later we learn that her name is Miriam. We don't know her age specifically but by the time Moses was born she may have been around twelve.

Moses already had an older brother by the name of Aaron who was three years older than he.

Moses was then the third child born. This family right away demonstrates for us, as did the Hebrew midwives in chapter 1, obedience to the higher law of God rather than Pharaoh. They took means to protect their child so that a basket was formed by his mother. She put a cover over it, put the little three-month child out to float upon the waters. She literally had to cast her child into the care of God. It may be that she knew that close by was the bathing place of Pharaoh's daughter. It could be supposed that she may have hoped for a discovery, which would save his life. We don't know that. It's certain that she had to entrust her child to God's care, for had the waters led the little boat another way, they could have floated beyond the reeds which were growing there in the river and perhaps out of view. So evidently he was placed in a location where that was not likely.

The second point, it seems to me, was she did have to cast her child upon the Lord's care at a very early age. Every parent who's ever had a child has to do the same thing. It might be not so dramatic as putting a child in a basket on the Nile and hoping for his very physical life, but there is a symbol and a lesson in what Amram and Jochebed did that all of us as parents must learn to do as well. Unless God cares for the child the child cannot grow up. Unless God cares for the child the child cannot have meaning. Or he or she cannot really have what is ordained for him in

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life. They cast their child upon the Lord's care. That might be a good lesson to all of us as parents. That we also cast our children upon the care of the Lord.

As Moses' little basket is floating on the Nile, Pharaoh's daughter discovers it. It's striking how God turns the designs of evil into good. You recall when the Book of Genesis ended, what Joseph said to his brothers who were now afraid of Joseph, now that their father Jacob had died. They were worried that Joseph would now do away with them or do something violent to them. Joseph responded to his brothers who had sold him into slavery, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good" (Genesis 50:20). That is the same with Pharaoh's decree here. Pharaoh meant it for evil, but God will translate it into good. Pharaoh meant that his edict of killing the children should obliterate the influence of a coming generation. But God will take that edict and translate it into good because had it not been for the edict there would be no need for the basket to float on the Nile. If there had been no floating basket on the Nile there would have been no discovery by Pharaoh's daughter and no growing up in the court of Pharaoh and that part of training that God had wanted for this person Moses. God is inevitably turning around evil for good. Pharaoh's designs are neutralized by the actions of his own daughter who courageously disobeys her father's edict. The emancipation of the Hebrews is nurtured in Pharaoh's own court. The very thing which he feared was being brought up in his midst. God makes the wrath of men to praise him.

We see that Moses grew and we know from the text of Acts 7, in which Stephen reviews the experience of Moses in Egypt, that Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. He was mighty in word and deed. He was brought up in the schools that the nobility would have been brought up in. He learned the mathematics, the other kinds of things that were a part of the Egyptians' advanced civilization. But he also was brought up a Hebrew. He knew who his

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father's God was. He knew when he came to the age of forty who it was that he chose to identify with. He chose to identify with his people, meaning the Hebrews. Someone had to put that consciousness in him that he was to identify with the people of God. The best suggestion of that I can find was his own mother and dad. It may have been that Moses was with them full time only until the age of three, the time when weaning would normally have been completed in that society. It may have been that they kept him longer or that he periodically was allowed to visit the family. But somehow Amram and Jochebed turned their slave hovel in a court of education for their child. What an example of parents living without a materialistic influence or culture but who in the warmth of their relationship with one another and with God bring a family like this into existence.

I think from Moses' birth and childhood there are implications for us today. One certainly is that death is the strongest weapon the enemy has. God can so easily turn that weapon aside. His weapon was death for the Hebrew children and Moses. But God blunted the instrument and did not allow it to be used. God's power is stronger.

I think another thing we should see is God's greatest works often begin very unimpressive and apparently very vulnerable. It doesn't seem like God would fasten the success of the Exodus on the safety of a three month old child's safety in a basket floating on the Nile. Such is a great risk on God's part to let the deliverance of His people hang on the thin thread of a baby's safety. Yet God is always taking enormous risks from our perspective. He lets everything ride on two helpless midwives, a frail ark's protection from the sea. In contrast the power of the world seems so strong, so invulnerable, so impressive. We must remember that when God's great works begin, they begin this same way. Time after time, unimpressive and vulnerable. When the Lord of glory is born into earth, He is born in very vulnerable situation. Even as there was an edict out

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to get Moses, so there was an effort to get the Lord Jesus Christ, and He was trusted to the safety of a Bethlehem manger and to parents who themselves took Him to Egypt that He might be safe. Very unimpressive, very vulnerable but God's work begins this way. Sometimes we don't see the background to His mighty acts. All we see is the great thing that He does and do not realize that perhaps for years He's been building for that moment in which His presence and glory are revealed.

Another thing that I would like to suggest from Moses' childhood is that God's chosen servants are immortal until their work is done. I know that's good Calvinistic theology. I know that the Puritans in early America believed that. I think there's a great deal of truth to that. No matter how frail Moses' ark is, God has a purpose for that child and he's invulnerable to the enemy's attack because God has a will that is exercised for him. It gives me a great deal of confidence to realize that God will take me when His purposes for me are completed. As long as God has a purpose for me, He will give me breath to exercise that purpose.

The name "Moses" literally means "drawn." He is drawn out as a chosen vessel of the Lord. That word "drawn" in the Hebrew appears elsewhere in the Old Testament only in two places, both written by David, Psalm 18:16 and 2 Samuel 22:17. David says, "[God] reached down from on high and took hold of me; he drew me out of deep waters ." (Psalm 18:16). Literally, "He *moses* me out of many waters." Drew me out. David was saying the same thing. As long as God had a purpose for him when he was in the greatest of his troubles, when he was surrounded by his enemies, God drew him out of the waters. God had things for him yet to live for. Around Moses' frail ark is the shield of God's purpose, a shield which cannot be seen, but it is there.

Moses, as he grows, chooses to identify with the people of God. Verses 11–15 tell us about that identification. Stephen in Acts 7 tells us that when he chose to identify with the Hebrew people

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he was forty years of age. He felt the call of God upon him to be a deliverer. He presumed that deliverance would be granted to him. So feeling that he was to be the deliverer of his own people, one day when seeing an Egyptian mercilessly beating a Hebrew slave, Moses intervenes in the situation, thinking that he was the deliverer. As a revolutionary he took things into his own hands.

As a revolutionary candidate, Moses certainly had the head of a revolutionary, and the heart and the hand. He was a brilliant person. God throughout history has used brilliant people, as well as persons who were not so brilliant, like Peter. He has a Peter and a Paul—one brilliant and one not so brilliant. Both filled with His Spirit, both with unique missions. But Moses certainly, with the Egyptian upbringing and the Hebrew background, with his great knowledge, who feels deeply and has a heart for injustice and wants to do something about it. His hand takes action and yet it is not God's way. His action is accomplished with guilt and without authority. The Scripture says that when Moses went to strike the Egyptian he first glanced "this way and that" (Exodus 2:12). What's he looking for? A witness. Seeing that there are not any witnesses, then he can act.

But God's way is not that he deliver the people in stealth, with guilt. The next day Moses confronted two Hebrews, tried to break up a fight between them, and was accused, "Who made you ruler and judge over us?" (Exodus 2:14, NIV). He did not yet have the authority to act. He acted without God's timing and that occasions his fleeing from Egypt.

The positive thing we can see in the whole instance is that he chose to identify with God's people. The negative element is he acted without authority and wrongly and with guilt.

**II. Then in the middle of verse 15 through the end of chapter 2, Moses' years as an alien in Midian are described.**

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This is the area of the Sinai Peninsula which is kind of a “no-man’s zone” today between Israel and Egypt. Moses would have fled to the south central part of the Sinai Peninsula. The passing of the years brought for Moses some changes. He married actually a descendant from Abraham. We can trace this from other Scriptures. It’s striking how he met her. He comes to a well in the Midian area. There are seven daughters who are drawing water for their flocks. Some other shepherds come in and shove the women out of the way; now the water is drawn. Moses sees and single handedly he drives the other guys off. A “one-on-many.” He’s invited into the family and proves himself a good person and one of the seven daughters is given as wife to Moses. They have a child. Strikingly, Moses names the child “Gershom,” which means “alien,” for that’s what Moses was. He was still feeling his absence from Egypt.

In those years he begins to acquire a knowledge of the desert. Forty years in the desert. That knowledge will become crucial when it comes time for the people of God to be led out.

Meanwhile, there is the passing of the years for Israel. Verse 23 describes that the king of Egypt who oppressed Israel died. A new Pharaoh had come but there was no change. They cried and groaned unto God. There is nothing else significant that is written about these years. If you had been an Israelite during that time you might have felt that God was doing nothing about your situation. *Where is God? Where is the God of our fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?* How often do we assume that since we do not *see* God doing anything that therefore He *is* not. But that is not the case. God is always up to something. When you do not see Him working that does not mean He’s not working. For at that particular moment, when there’s forty years that Moses is an exile in Midian, God is getting a man ready. God is at work. You cannot judge whether God is at work or not on the basis of something external you see because it may be He’s somewhere else in the development of His purpose.

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Like if you're putting on a drama. You spend hours and days getting the thing ready. You get the stage ready. Just because you don't see anything going on, a dramatic presentation, doesn't mean that something isn't going on. Things are being readied so that when the curtain is opened everything is developed.

God is putting a man through school. This man took a lot longer in school than some of you will take. Eighty years all together. Some of you may think you've been in school a long time. Look at Moses. God is doing something. All during the years of Moses' preparation in Midian and the people suffering back in Egypt, God is also noting the passing of the years. Verses 24–25 give four strong verbs which describe how God feels toward His people, "God heard...remembered...saw...knew." There is depth to that word "God knew." It's possible to know something on an intellectual basis but more is involved in that word. It's an experiential knowledge. Suffering is never known simply from an intellectual view. But it is known when it comes out in the relationship we have with someone else. We can know people are in slavery. They can be in slavery today and we can still know it but that doesn't mean we feel anything about it. But when the Scriptures say, "God knows" since God is the guest in every person's life and family, it means that He knows not only of the slavery but He knows individually. Each person is a member of His family and He feels it and He knows it. In that dimension God knows. It has been truly said that the word "masses" does not occur in God's vocabulary. We are not masses. We are individuals. It is as though there were but one child in the Father's house and each of us is that child. He feels and knows our experiences.

**III. God has determined to take action. Thus in chapters 3 and 4 we have God summoning Moses at Mount Horeb or Mount Sinai.**



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In 3:1–10 God introduces Himself to Moses. He reveals Himself in the burning bush first. The bush is not burned up, because God is in it. It is seen as the angel of the Lord appeared in the bush. It's striking that the angel of the Lord is mentioned since this is not a regular angel. The "angel of the LORD" in the Old Testament could even receive worship and speak as God. Some have postulated that here is an appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ before He became a man, a very special appearance that is granted here. Some have seen the burning bush as symbolic of Israel, the fact that it was unconsumed in tribulation. Others have seen the burning bush as a symbol of God's eternal flame. I'll leave the symbols to you.

The purpose of the burning bush was to attract Moses' attention. Then the Lord spoke: "Moses! Moses!" And Moses right away said, "Here I am!" It'll not be quite so easy to say that when He finds out what God wants. But initially "Here I am" and the Lord saying to him, "Take off your shoes, you're on holy ground." In other words, God immediately begins to teach Moses that there is a difference between them. God is holy, God is separate, God is divine. Moses is human. Moses must immediately learn the distinction. Just as we in worship must recognize the distinction between the nature of God and our own nature. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground" (Exodus 3:5, NIV). Then God reveals to Moses that He is the God of his father and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. When Moses learned this, he was not only willing to take off his shoes, he buries his face as well in his garments because he is struck with the majesty and the divine nature of God.

The Lord then promises in verses 7–10 that He will grant deliverance. He says He will act. "I have indeed seen," He says, "I have heard," "I am concerned" and "I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up" (NIV). That's a great phrase—"God has come down to bring them up." If that's true of the people of Israel, coming down to Egypt to

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bring them up to Canaan, how true it is of the work of our Lord Jesus Christ who came down to bring us up. It's great to know you have a destiny. There is a destiny for you as a child of God in Christ Jesus. Jesus came down to bring you up. How striking that when God says "I have come down" in verse 8 He turns right around and says to Moses "Come." God's coming down is expressed in the calling of Moses, because God does not come down Himself in Spirit form to lead the people out without a leader. His coming down is manifested through the calling of Moses, who will lead the people out.

And God is teaching us a principle there. A principle that He works through mediation, that He calls men into His inner circle so that they might soak up His divine character and mirror His actions and thoughts. Then takes these persons whom He draws in and lets them be as mirrors and voices to His people.

Thus Jesus Christ is seen as a mediator. Throughout the entire way of God's working He calls in mediation. In the Old Testament it was prophets, priests and kings. Here it is the call of Moses as prophet.

Moses isn't given any details as to how God is going to accomplish his deliverance at this point. He'll be given that later. It is simply a statement. "Go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt" (Exodus 3:10, NIV). He didn't tell him how. He just told him He was going to do it.

Moses is not quite sure that he wants to do this. It's fine for God to come down—but me? That's another question. So Moses voices to God some objections to his call. His first objection was, "Who am I that you should be calling me? When you're looking over the earth why would you come down in the wilderness of the Sinai just to select me?" Notice when Moses begins to protest, his old self-confidence is gone. Forty years earlier he was ready to be a revolutionary.

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Now—no thanks. The Lord’s response to Moses’ “Who am I” is, “You’re nothing, Moses.” He says, “The Lord will be with you. Moses, don’t worry about who you are. Just remember who I am.”

Moses against Pharaoh is no contest. Pharaoh can do him in. But Moses with God against Pharaoh—that’s also no contest.

“Furthermore Moses, as a sign that I’m with you, some day you’ll bring the people out and you will worship God on this mountain” (see verse 12). Later we see them doing that in Exodus.

That’s quite a sign. Moses has got to go back in Egypt where a death warrant still exists for him, and his only sign is that someday he’s going to worship God back on the mountain. That’s faith to believe that. It hasn’t happened yet. Moses doesn’t quite buy it. Just like we sometimes have difficult time believing God’s promises. We want more evidence.

So Moses comes up with a second objection: This time it’s not, “Who am I?” It’s “Who are *You*? Whom shall I say has sent me?” The Lord responds with a great revelation of Himself. First, He says, “I AM WHO I AM” (verse 14, NIV), or, “I will be who I will be.” It’s possible that the verb could be in the present or future tense. The sacred name for God was Yahweh, so sacred that the Hebrews would not even pronounce the name of God but substitute “Lord” or “Jehovah.” Its meaning is “I am what I am,” or “I will be who I will be.” It’s saying “I’m sovereign and I will reveal Myself how I want to reveal Myself. I will be what I choose to be. You cannot define Me. You cannot circumscribe Me. You cannot put me in a dictionary and say this is what I am. I am. Self-existent. I will be what I have determined to be.”

Jesus clarifies the “I am” when He comes. For Jesus Himself says “I am” in John 8:58, thereby claiming divinity. Jesus shows us how He defines his “I am-ness” to us. I am the Bread of Life, I am the Light of the World, I am the Door of the Sheep, I am the Good Shepherd, I am in the

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father, I am the Resurrection and the Life, I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. I am the Vine. Jesus is saying all of these things. What I find in myself, you will find in your own experience as you come to Me. If we understand the verb to be future—“I will be who I will be,” then what God is saying to the children of Israel is “You will really know Me when you follow Me. The more you follow Me the more you’ll know Me and you will see My great acts and you will see My strong hand. You will see My personality. I will be what I will be. You will only know Me as you follow Me. You will not know Me by trying to get everything in your head before you begin following Me. But it is as you begin following Me that you will know Me.”

Sometimes we wait to make a commitment to Jesus Christ because we feel we need more time or we’ve got to know more. No. You know Him when you’re living in relationship. It’s in that freedom that God reveals Himself so beautifully to you.

Not only does God disclose Himself to Moses as the great “I am,” but He discloses himself as the God of Moses’ fathers—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (verses 15–16). Jesus will use this text in the New Testament when refuting the idea that the body does not rise again from the dead. Or that when a person dies, that’s it. Jesus says to the Sadducees who didn’t believe in resurrection, “God said... ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’” (Mark 12:26). The “I am” is present tense, meaning Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are still living. It was not “I *was* the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.” But I *am*. Indeed it is true, that a man or woman about whom it is once said that God is their God cannot die. Such a bond can never be broken. So I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

God says I am. I’m the God of your fathers. But I’m also the God who will lead you out. God prescribes the manner in which He will bring them out: There is first to be a temporary stage—a

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request for a three-day journey which the Lord knows Pharaoh will refuse (Exodus 3:18). But he will lead Israel out with great signs and wonders.

This is not enough for Moses, however. Now that he knows who is with him, he comes back and says, “Lord, they won’t listen to me. Who’s going to believe me?” The Lord says, “I’ll give you these signs that will cause the people to listen to you.” The Lord does not send us on errands without the power to do them. So the Lord says to Moses in Exodus 4:2, “What is that in your hand?” (NIV).

A great question: “What’s in your hand? What’s God given you to do that you’re just sitting around looking at and aren’t using or developing?” Moses says “A staff.” God says “Throw it on the ground” (verses 2–3, NIV). Moses throws it down and it’s a serpent. He runs just like you and I would run. He Lord says, “Go back and take the serpent by the tail.” Now I like what the Lord does. God doesn’t tell Moses to take the serpent by the head, which would have been the natural place to try to grab the serpent so it wouldn’t bite you. He said, you grab it by the tail. That took faith. Grabbing it by the head is one thing. By the tail is another thing. He grabbed it by the tail, the thing straightened out and it became a rod again.

God said “Put your hand inside your cloak” (verse 6, NIV). He put his hand in his coat, took it out and it was leprous. Put it back in and took it out clean.

Then, as if to say, “If that’s not enough to answer your objection that they will not listen to Me, then when you take water from the Nile and pour it on the ground, it will become blood.” The Lord didn’t demonstrate that one. He demonstrated the serpent and the leprous hand. But He didn’t demonstrate the third one. The third one becomes the first plague that is pronounced on Egypt, the water into blood.

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You would think this would have gotten Moses to say yes. But he comes out in verse 10 with another objection. “Oh, Lord, I have never been eloquent...I am slow of speech and tongue” (NIV). Moses is seen as poor-mouthing himself. In Acts 7, Stephen describes him when he was in Egypt as a person mighty in word and deed. But perhaps forty years out on the backside of the desert with nothing but sheep to talk to had dulled some of his earlier eloquence. He doesn’t feel like he’s all that good a speaker. The Lord is infuriated. He says to Moses “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? Now go, I will help you speak and teach you what to say” (Exodus 4:11–12, NIV). It’s possible that on the one hand we can see this from the standpoint of God creating something that is evil. On the other hand we can see it as God asking Moses a rhetorical question which God is capable of doing. It seems to me that the question really centers around the thing which God is calling Moses to do. God is calling Moses to be a prophet. A prophet must have two things if he’s to prophesy. He must have perception and expression. His perception comes from his ability to see and to hear. And his expression comes through his mouth, through his ability to speak. Up until this time, Moses has not been a prophet. He has not had the perception with the expression. The Lord is saying to him, “I have the capability of calling prophets or not calling prophets. I call you, so therefore I will give you both perception and expression.” It’s great to realize that when God calls a person to a prophetic task He indeed does give these very things. Eyes to truly see. Not as others are seeing but truly seeing as God is seeing. Ears to really hear as God is hearing. And a voice to really proclaim what God is proclaiming.

Moses poor-mouthed himself. His lack of sufficiency, like ours, sometimes is standing in his way of seeing God’s sufficiency. It’s ok to be humble. It’s scriptural to be humble. But you can be humble past being humble.

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It is this kind of humility which gets Moses into problems. The Lord certainly would equip him with perception and expression.

You'd think this would be enough for Moses. You're going to be equipped with perception and expression. Moses has one more. After he knows who he is. After he knows who God is. After he knows that the people will listen to him. After he knows that God will give Him words. Then he says, "Send somebody else." It comes out clearly in the modern translation: "O Lord, please send someone else to do it" (Exodus 4:13, NIV). There are times when God gets angry. Twice he is seen in the Scriptures as getting angry at Moses. Once later on in the wilderness wanderings in Numbers 20:7–13, Moses is told by God to simply speak to the rock, but he smites it twice. The Lord is angry at Moses for disobeying what God had told him to do. He therefore says to him, "Moses, you cannot enter the Promised Land for that." We get upset with God for that and think that's hard. But yet Moses' perpetual problem right from the beginning is in areas of obedience to God. He wants in certain areas to have his own way. As he begins to get older in that wilderness march the Lord says I'm going to have to have fresh leadership to take these people in because you're beginning to waver and not obey exactly what I tell you to do. That last disobedience in Numbers 20 cost Moses his entrance into the Promised Land. Here the disobedience cost him the privilege of being the sole spokesman for God. The Lord answers Moses' objection by saying, "I'll call your brother and he will be your spokesman and you will be to him as God. Whatever you speak to him, that's what he will speak to the people." Here, by the way, we have a great description of prophecy. The word originates with God. It comes to man and it goes from man to other men. It goes from men to writing, the Scriptures. God isn't going to take no for an answer. Moses is going to go. And Moses does go—a very reluctant deliverer, but going nevertheless.

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This is an important story in the Scriptures, for it shows us that the great acts of God do not occur with the initiation of man, nor with man sitting down to devise a scheme or even a willing man. God had to take an unwilling person so that it might be demonstrated for all time that the power and the deliverance belong to God and not to man.

Now that I know the historical, biblical, and grammatical information on this passage, how do I take this and start applying it to my life? It seems to me that as I pondered over the meaning of these words to my life that the Lord gave me certain questions.

1. Do you need faith to keep going? You may feel like Amram and Jochebed, the parents of Moses, in a hopeless situation. There is no future in what I'm doing. There is no future in life. There is no hope and there's no promise of tomorrow. The Lord is saying, "You need faith to keep going." God has a future and God will bring it to pass.

2. Or maybe it's the issue of obedience to God rather than obedience to men. It was the midwives and Moses' parents who decided to obey God rather than man and preserve the life of the infant. We're constantly being tested in this area of obedience to God and obedience to men. Persons tell us to do certain things in the realm of morals or ethics which are wrong—at work, school, your neighborhood, in living. You're constantly bumping up against the standards of the world to cheat on your income tax, to cheat on your business allowances, to cheat on the reporting of your hours that you've worked. To take merchandise home with you. All of these kind of things in the world of business ethics. And in the world of sexual morals. One is asked by God, "Will you be obedient to me or obedient to man?" It's still the same choice today.

3. Do you realize that God is at work even when you see no outward evidences? He may be doing His most splendid act and doing it so behind the scenes that years go by before you see its revelation. Sometimes you wonder, as you go through a dry period in your life, is anything going



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on? Is God at work? I don't feel Him like I used to feel Him. Maybe there's some sin that might be associated with that, but after you've checked all that out you still feel like you're going through a dry spell in your life and you're not going anywhere and you haven't heard from God lately. Moses was in the desert for forty years. That's a pretty long dry spell. God is at work. You can't measure the activity of God simply by watching what He's doing in the outward way. The outward is always preconditioned by His working behind the scenes. He's putting things in your life right now that will stand you in good stead.

4. Do you need to know that God has assurance for you of a purpose and you will stay alive until that purpose is done? God has a purpose for our lives and He will keep us going until that purpose is accomplished.

5. Are you identifying with God's people? Moses, as an Egyptian, chose to identify with the people of God. He made a clear-cut stand which cost him in his relationships. Let Moses' standing of Egypt be a symbol of our standing with the world. And the Hebrews be a standing for the people of God, the church of our Lord Jesus Christ, His body. With what group do you choose to identify with? It's not both. There comes a time in our life when we have to choose a higher identification.

6. Are you trusting God to use you when you feel inadequate? How many things are not done which the Spirit wants done because we feel like Moses? I'm not qualified. I'm not sure you'll be with me if I do volunteer to do it. Send somebody else. The Lord is saying, "Trust Me." The way to really know God is to follow Him. Moses is just getting started. If he's seen God in the burning bush, wait till he goes through the Red Sea! If God has worked splendidly in your life in the past, just wait and see what He's going to do yet to come. You cannot help but see in the Word of God a comparison of the Exodus of Israel and the "exodus" of every person in this life

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from death. That is an exodus, a departure, and it requires a great act of God, a great miracle, to get through it.

What an incredible thing to realize that our highest knowledge personally is going to come in a moment when we see Him present in our future leading us to an exodus. We know it in our conversion. We know it in our Christian life. But to see face to face and to know as I've been known. You will realize as you follow God, more of Him in the days ahead. He will be with you. He will be to you what He will be. You cannot define it. You cannot determine it. But He's free to act, and because He loves you and knows you, He will reveal Himself to you in the turns and the straightnesses of life.

### **Closing Prayer**

Our Father, we want to give You thanks for Your call to us in Christ Jesus, our Lord, who has bid us come. "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). You, Lord Jesus, the one who came down to bring us up. We pray and worship Thee. We thank Thee for Your call upon our lives. For the way in which Your Word speaks to us. Lord, it may be as individuals have listened today that not every area that has been spoken of specifically is relevant to them in this moment. But I'm convinced in Your Spirit that You who break the bread, break it so that each one can partake. There is bread which has been broken in the Spirit to each person who is here this morning. Bread that You want them to take and feed upon by considering it, by meditating upon it, by acting upon it, by praying about it. Let that piece of the word of the bread of life, which we have taken today, fill our lives and give us strength for the specific area which we are facing. We thank Thee that Thou hast revealed thyself to us and that we belong to Thee. Thou art the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses, and Thou art our God and we love Thee and praise Thee that we are in the same community of faith,

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stretching back through the ages. Wherever You have called, men have responded to You and love You and claim You as their very own. We thank Thee that Thou art real and here in our midst even this moment. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.