

THE GOSPEL PROJECT – CHRONOLOGICAL

GOD DELIVERS

GOD THE REDEEMER

The Redeemer Responds

In our last study, we learned how God the Covenant-Maker worked through the trials and tribulations of the life of Joseph, the son of Jacob, to bring the family through whom He planned to bless all the earth into the land of Egypt. The LORD had explained to Joseph's great-grandfather, Abraham, in **Genesis 15:13 (ESV)** ¹³ ... *"Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for **four hundred years**."*

We studied how the LORD prepared Joseph to rise up to take a position for the purpose of bringing about 70 descendents of Abraham **into** Egypt for their preservation and growth. The book of Exodus tells how the LORD prepared another descendent of Abraham, Moses, 400 years later for the purpose of bringing the descendents of Abraham, now numbering 600,000 men and their families, **out** of the land of Egypt and back into the land God had promised Abraham would belong to his descendents.

Since the tiny family had grown into a mighty nation of people over that 400 years in Egypt, the Pharaoh came to fear their power. To control them, he launched an official policy of oppression. When the oppression failed to curb the population growth of the Israelites, the Pharaoh devised a new plan for limiting that growth. **Exodus 1:22 (ESV)** ²² ... *"Every son that is born to the Hebrews you shall cast into the Nile, but you shall let every daughter live."* In the midst of this horrific time for the Hebrew a baby was born to a Hebrew slave. Instead of allowing him to be cast into the Nile by Pharaoh's men, his mother made the daring choice to place her baby in a basket in the Nile River. By the providence of God, baby Moses was drawn out of the water by Pharaoh's daughter. What caused an Egyptian princess to take notice of a Hebrew slave baby? It can only be explained by the Providence of God. And once again I must quote **Romans 8:28 (ESV)** ²⁸ *And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.*

The Egyptians at that time in history had a very developed civilization. Just as we saw the LORD working together for good in the life of Joseph, we see the LORD directing the events in the life of Moses to prepare him for a special task ahead. **Acts 7:22 (ESV)** ²² *And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in his words and deeds.*

Beside the knowledge and skills Moses received from the Egyptians, the LORD also provided the young Moses with contact with his own blood family. This meant that he would learn of the spiritual heritage of his forefathers. **Proverbs 22:6 (ESV)** ⁶ *Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.*

As we see the LORD working in the life of Moses, it serves as assurance of how our God continues to work in the events of our own lives just as He promised in **Jeremiah 29:11 (ESV)** ¹¹ *For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.*

According to **Acts 7:23**, Moses was 40 years old when he fled from Egypt to Midian fearing for his life for having killed an Egyptian who was hurting a Hebrew. Moses' Egyptian education was concluded and Moses was destined to spend the next 40 years of his life in the land of Midian experiencing another stage of the LORD's preparation in his life.. What type of preparation did Moses gain in Midian? He worked as a shepherd! During his years as a shepherd, Moses became familiar with the wilderness of the Sinai Peninsula, learning much about survival in the desert. He also learned patience and much about leading sheep which we have learned recently are a lot like humans in nature! This experience provided Moses with the know-how to lead the descendents of Abraham home to Canaan while going through the "valley of the shadow" along the way.

In the experience of the Israelites' bondage, we see how God listens to the prayers of the oppressed and responds to those prayers.

Read Exodus 2:23-3:6 (ESV) ²³ *During those many days the king of Egypt died, and the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help. Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God.* ²⁴ *And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.* ²⁵ *God saw the people of Israel—and God knew.* ¹ *Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led his flock ... to Horeb, the mountain of God.* ² *And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed.* ³ *And Moses said, "I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned."* ⁴ *When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!"* *And he said, "Here I am."* ⁵ *Then he said, "Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground."* ⁶ *And he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."* *And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.*

In the depths of our misery, we too can cry out to God just like the children of Israel did and just like David did when King Saul pursued him. **Psalm 57:2 (ESV)** ² *I cry out to God Most High, to God who fulfills his purpose for me.* Remember this: It is better to be in the will of God in a cave than out of His will in a king's palace.

Moses was going about his sheep business when something spectacular occurred – the Angel of the LORD appeared. The identity of the Angel is revealed in verse 6 as being: *the God of your father...* What occurred at the burning bush was a theophany – a time when Moses experienced a manifestation of God Himself. I believe the appearance was more specifically a Christophany like we studied previously in Jacob's experience – a manifestation of Jesus before His physical birth in New Testament time.

Some would suggest that Moses was under the influence of some hallucinogen when he saw the burning bush which is another of the devil's lies. The burning bush was a literal bush that burned but was not consumed. **Hebrews 12:29 (ESV)** ²⁹ *for our God is a consuming fire.*

Fire is a symbol of God's presence. Later as Moses would lead the Israelites we read in **Exodus 13:21 (ESV)** ²¹ *And the LORD went before them ... by night in a pillar of fire to give them light....* On the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came to earth the Spirit is pictured as fire. **Acts 2:2-3 (ESV)** ² *And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind...³ And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them.* The GREAT I AM takes ordinary lives and ignites them with His Power and His Presence.

What we do with the fire is up to us but God's Word says in **1 Thessalonians 5:19 (ESV)**¹⁹ *Do not quench the Spirit.*

Removing the sandals was a symbol of reverence that worshipers still practice today when entering Near Eastern holy places. What makes the ground beneath our feet holy? It is the same now as it was for Moses – the Presence of God. **1 Samuel 2:2 (ESV)**² *“There is none holy like the LORD...As followers of God, we must walk with Him reverently and in holiness. 1 Peter 1:16 (ESV)*¹⁶ *since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”*

Read Exodus 3:7-10 (ESV)⁷ *Then the LORD said, “I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings,⁸ and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey...⁹ And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them.¹⁰ Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.”*

The LORD not only HEARS our prayers but He ANSWERS our prayers. **1 John 5:14-15 (ESV)**¹⁴ *And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.¹⁵ And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.*

Also, the LORD sometimes uses people to answer the prayers of others. Most often when we think of prayer, we think of having our own prayers answered. Possibly we should focus more on allowing God to use us in answering the prayers of others. **Isaiah 6:8 (ESV)**⁸ *And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Then I said, “Here I am! Send me.”*

Read Exodus 3:11-15 (ESV)¹¹ *But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?”¹² He said, “But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.”¹³ Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?”¹⁴ God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”¹⁵ God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel, ‘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 thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.*

Instead of being like Isaiah when he heard God's call, we are most often like Moses – thinking up excuses to give to God why we can't answer!. Let's examine the two excuses that are used in today's focal passage.

Excuse 1: I'm a nobody. God's answer was: *I will be with you*. When God is with us, that is sufficient. **Romans 8:31 (ESV)**³¹ *What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?*

Excuse 2: I don't know your name! God's name had already been known for centuries. **Genesis 4:26 (ESV)**²⁶ *To Seth also a son was born, and...At that time people began to call upon the name of the LORD. And the LORD had already explained to Moses that He was the God of Moses' forefathers.*

God said to Moses, *"I AM WHO I AM."* The most common and the most important name for God in the Old Testament is a name that most English versions of the Bible do not translate. Instead the translators use the word LORD in all capital letters. Yahweh is God's proper name in Hebrew. The importance of it can be seen in the frequency of its use. It occurs 6,828 times in the Old Testament. God wants to be known as a specific Person with a name that represents His unique character: *I AM WHO I AM*. He Everything! He is LORD! In the New Testament God the Son would reveal Himself through seven I AM specific statements.

God's response to the cry of His children with the promise of redemption.

Read Exodus 3:16-22 (ESV) ¹⁶ *Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers... has appeared to me, saying, "I have observed you and what has been done to you in Egypt,"¹⁷ and I promise that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land ... flowing with milk and honey.'"* ¹⁸ *And they will listen to your voice, and you ... shall go to the king of Egypt and say to him, 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; and now, please let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.'* ¹⁹ *But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless compelled by a mighty hand.* ²⁰ *So I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt with all the wonders that I will do in it; after that he will let you go.* ²¹ *And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and when you go, you shall not go empty,* ²² *but each woman shall ask of her neighbor, and any woman who lives in her house, for silver and gold jewelry, and for clothing. You shall put them on your sons and on your daughters. So you shall plunder the Egyptians."*

Moses was concerned about going to his own people and having them reject him. In His foreknowledge, the LORD knew that the Israelites would not reject Moses in this instance. However, God in His foreknowledge also knew His own Son would later be rejected by the Israelites.

The next hurdle in the Israelites' deliverance would be Pharaoh Himself and the LORD knew that Pharaoh would not comply. **Jeremiah 32:27 (ESV)** ²⁷ *"Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is anything too hard for me?"* Moses was to request to take the people just as far as Mount Sinai to worship God. This was a reasonable request. Anyone who prohibits us from worshipping our God deserves to be deserted completely. **Exodus 20:3 (ESV)** ³ *"You shall have no other gods before me."*

It is natural to wonder if it was wrong for the Israelites to plunder the Egyptians. The Israelites had been slaves without pay. God is simply instructing them to collect their back wages! They would leave Egypt recompensed for years of toil. **Luke 10:7 (ESV)** ⁷ *... the laborer deserves his wages...*

Just like He kept His promises in the time of Moses, our God will keep His promise to deliver us **Job 19:25 (ESV)** ²⁵ *For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth.*