

## **2-9-20 Finding Freedom From Fear**

Exodus 3:1-22 & 4:1-16

### SERMON SUMMARY Exodus 3:1-22 & 4:1-16

This message gives a brief background to Moses early life, but then focuses in on Moses' calling which he experienced at the burning bush in the land of Midian. From Moses early life we discover he must have been a pretty strong and confident individual and there may not have been many things he feared in life. However, the burning bush and calling of God experience exposes several areas of Moses life in which he was uncertain and seemed to have some major fears. Chapter three, and the first part of chapter four give details of Moses' interaction with God at the burning bush. From Moses' questions and statements, to God's replies, we discover four fears that most of us have faced at one time or another. Biblical answers to these fears are given and should find practical application for people in today's world.

### FULL SERMON NOTES

"When I think that God His Son not sparing sent Him to die I can scarcely take it in that on the Cross my burden gladly bearing He bled and died to take away my sin. Then sings my soul my Savior God to Thee How Great Thou Art!" Some of you may be here today and your life is filled with all kinds of fear. Maybe you even have a fear that your past sins are beyond and have passed the threshold of God's forgiveness and mercy. Today we're going to discover some things about fear and how to overcome and defeat fear! Let's pray!

Today we're going to begin the Old Testament story of the Exodus which will show us in the coming weeks how God was still setting the stage for God's covenant promise to His people to one day be fulfilled in Jesus the promised Savior! God desired, back then, and still desires today, for people to find freedom and the ultimate freedom is found in a personal relationship with God!!

Let me begin by saying this: If you are following our 260 reading plan and have gotten behind, don't worry about that or get overwhelmed with trying to catch up. Just jump in with us on this week's chapters, week 6 in the reading guide. If you want to go back and listen to the previous podcast, or read previous sermon notes later, that's fine, but don't get discouraged, just join us where we are. And that's the same for those of you who have just started coming. Don't feel like you've got to go back and catch up on 5 weeks of work, just start with week 6 in the workbook. And if you don't have the workbook, you can get one at cost out at the revival display in the foyer or you can get the reading plan for free, same place! Today we're going to look at one of the largest figures in world history, Moses! I'm going to give you a little background and then we'll spend the majority of our time looking at one incident in His life which God used to get him ready for the task of freeing God's people from Egyptian bondage.

### **The Background!**

Exo 1:6 Now Joseph and all his brothers and all that generation died,

Exo 1:7 but the Israelites were fruitful and multiplied greatly and became exceedingly numerous, so that the land was filled with them.

Exo 1:8 Then a new king, who did not know about Joseph, came to power in Egypt.

Exo 1:9 "Look," he said to his people, "the Israelites have become much too numerous for us.

Exo 1:10 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."

Exo 1:11 So they put slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labor, and they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh.

Exo 1:12 But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread; so the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites  
Exo 1:13 and worked them ruthlessly.

And then this happens...

Exo 1:22 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."

Pharaoh was willing to go to any extreme to protect his power, including infanticide! What I'm about to say is not a political statement, but a moral statement. There are politicians and other public figures who are now saying that the right to choose extends beyond the womb and explicitly condone infanticide after birth in some circumstances! So things are not so different today! We have those who are willing to advocate for infanticide to gain power, Pharaoh committed infanticide to stay in power! I truly believe that whether an unborn child was naturally miscarried, or intentionally aborted that God has given them a soul and we will see them again someday in glory. If abortion has been a part of your past please know this, God loves you more than you could ever imagine and he offers forgiveness and healing! God loves us all so much that Jesus, God's one and only Son, His only begotten Son was allowed to come to this earth to die on an old rugged cross, to gain for us grace and mercy!

Okay, Moses was born during this terrible time so his mother hid him.

Exo 2:3 But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile.

Exo 2:4 His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.

Exo 2:5 Then Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the river bank. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her slave girl to get it.

Exo 2:6 She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This is one of the Hebrew babies," she said.

Exo 2:7 Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?"

Exo 2:8 "Yes, go," she answered. And the girl went and got the baby's mother.

Exo 2:9 Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you." So the woman took the baby and nursed him.

Exo 2:10 When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, "I drew him out of the water."

Talk about God working all things for good! God had a divine purpose for Moses so in His sovereign wisdom He makes a way for Moses to grow up. But then this happens...

Exo 2:11 One day, after Moses had grown up, he went out to where his own people were and watched them at their hard labor. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his own people.

Exo 2:12 Glancing this way and that and seeing no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand...

Exo 2:15 When Pharaoh heard of this, he tried to kill Moses, but Moses fled from Pharaoh and went to live in Midian, where he sat down by a well.

Isn't this a lot like the story of Joseph? Joseph grew up the favored son of Jacob, and Moses was raised by Pharaoh's daughter. Joseph was sold into slavery and taken to a foreign land, Moses flees for his

life and finds himself in another land. But God has a plan. While Moses is at the well this happens...

Exo 2:16 Now a priest of Midian had seven daughters, and they came to draw water and fill the troughs to water their father's flock.

Exo 2:17 Some shepherds came along and drove them away, but Moses got up and came to their rescue and watered their flock.

Exo 2:18 When the girls returned to Reuel their father, he asked them, "Why have you returned so early today?"

Exo 2:19 They answered, "An Egyptian rescued us from the shepherds. He even drew water for us and watered the flock."

Exo 2:20 "And where is he?" he asked his daughters. "Why did you leave him? Invite him to have something to eat."

Exo 2:21 Moses agreed to stay with the man, who gave his daughter Zipporah to Moses in marriage.

Boy, talk about a fast moving narrative! Fleeing Egypt, resting by a well, rescuing seven ladies, and getting married to one of them. First of all, Moses must have been a man's man when it comes to strength. He had overcome an Egyptian Slave master and now takes on a bunch of wilderness hardened shepherds and somehow defeats them so these ladies can water their flock. I wish we had more details, right? I'm thinking superhero comic here, PUNCH, POW, WHAM! But remember, who's writing the story...Moses! He's being a bit humble here, and I think there's a reason beyond modest humility. Moses knew who gave him the power to do these things. Listen to this verse from Hebrews 11:27...

Heb 11:27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible.

By faith, Moses knew God was his strength, his power, his protection, and his provision.

While Moses had grown up in Pharaoh's house, he evidently always felt like an outsider, but God had never stopped working in Moses' heart and somehow Moses knew the paganism of the Egyptians was not right! He knew the slavery of the Hebrews was wrong, and rather than bask in his position of privilege he decided to make a choice. I'm sure it wasn't an easy choice, but once he made it, he was committed! In fact three of our memory verses for the week, found in Hebrews, 11 say this...

### **Memory Verses**

Heb 11:24 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

Heb 11:25 He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time.

Heb 11:26 He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.

Now having said all of this, you would think that Moses had a bumper sticker on his camel that said, "NO FEAR!" Right? But sometimes people who have no trouble overcoming fear in the big, obvious things, struggle with fear in other areas of their lives. They may have strong faith in some areas, but wrestle with faith in other areas. Moses could fight a good physical fight with the best, but he struggled with the...

### **Fear of Unworthiness**

#### **Exodus 3:1-6**

<sup>1</sup> 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 wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> So Moses thought, “I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up.”

<sup>4</sup> 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.”

<sup>5</sup> “Do not come any closer,” God said. “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.”

<sup>6</sup> 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.

God let's Moses know he is in the presence of holiness! God let's Moses know who He is, and Moses is afraid to look at God! Even though we know that Moses had already seen God working in His life, looking into the face of God scared Moses! Can you relate? I can. Maybe this burning bush is putting off some pretty intense light, and it seems when you stand in God's light, things that aren't right in your life show up! Things like bad attitudes, wrong priorities, sinful desires, broken promises, unforgiveness, bitterness, anger, addictions, and... you get the picture! But God is not lighting up those things to make you feel condemned or to make you hide your face, but to let you see the infectious sin that will destroy your spiritual life and maybe even your physical life! He's lighting those things up so you can confess them to Him and allow Him to cleanse you and make you whole again!! Some people say they don't come to church because they are not worthy. None of us are worthy in and of ourselves, but God wants us to find our worthiness in Him and in His righteousness! Moses in the Old Testament and Paul in the New Testament had something in

common. They both had turned their backs on the world and chosen to follow God's path. Paul put it this way...

Phil 3:7 But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ.

Phil 3:8 What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ

Phil 3:9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ--the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.

Sometimes we get past the fear of unworthiness, once we realize God has made us worthy by the righteousness of Christ, but along with Moses we sometimes fear other things like the...

### **Fear of Inadequacy**

#### **Exodus 3:7-12**

<sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them.

<sup>10</sup> So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."

<sup>11</sup> But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"



<sup>12</sup> And God said, "I will be with you. 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."

Moses now points to his inadequacy. "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh!" In other words, "I don't have any special clout, social standing, or political power. I haven't been through John Maxwell's leadership training, and I don't have a seminary degree! In fact, I'm a wanted fugitive! I'm not your guy, not the man for the job!" Okay, time for a little honesty. How many of you have ever used the inadequacy card when God has asked you to step up? Here's the good news, "you don't have to be adequate! You only have to admit you are not! I love what God says to Moses..."

<sup>12</sup> And God said, "I will be with you."

As we've seen already in some of our readings, some of the pagan cultures back in the day carried their idols with them so they could have their god's with them. But when God told the Israelites, "I will be with you," it was very different. Listen to these words from the book of Isaiah...

Isa 41:7 The craftsman encourages the goldsmith, and he who smooths with the hammer spurs on him who strikes the anvil. He says of the welding, "It is good." He nails down the idol so it will not topple.

Isa 41:8 "But you, O Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, you descendants of Abraham my friend,

Isa 41:9 I took you from the ends of the earth, from its farthest corners I called you. I said, 'You are my servant'; I have chosen you and have not rejected you.

Isa 41:10 So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

When it comes to the fear of inadequacy just remember, you don't carry God, He carries you!! He's more than adequate!! Moses also struggled with another kind of fear...

## **Fear of Rejection**

### **Exodus 3:13-22**

<sup>13</sup> 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?"

<sup>14</sup> 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.' "

<sup>15</sup> 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 you shall call me from generation to generation.

<sup>16</sup> "Go, assemble the elders of Israel and say to them, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—appeared to me and said: I have watched over you and have seen what has been done to you in Egypt.

<sup>17</sup> And I have promised to bring you up out of your misery in Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites—a land flowing with milk and honey.'

<sup>18</sup> "The elders of Israel will listen to you...

Moses feared being rejected by his own people! He feared they would question his authority to do what he was doing. By the way that had already happened to Moses once. Remember when Moses took up for his own people and killed the Egyptian Slave Master? This happened the very next day...

Exo 2:13 The next day he went out and saw two Hebrews fighting. He asked the one in the wrong, "Why are you hitting your fellow Hebrew?"

Exo 2:14 The man said, "Who made you ruler and judge over us? Are you thinking of killing me as you killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid and thought, "What I did must have become known."

So Moses had some precedence for this fear of how he would be received by his own people. God has already told Moses He would be with him, but now God tells Moses who He is...

<sup>14</sup> 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.' "

"I AM!" In these two words God is letting Moses know the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob is all powerful, all knowing, and ever present! The Psalmist said it beautifully...

Psa 95:1 Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.

Psa 95:2 Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song.

Psa 95:3 For the LORD is the great God, the great King above all gods.

Psa 95:4 In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him.

Psa 95:5 The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land.

Psa 95:6 Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker;

Psa 95:7 for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care...

So if you are struggling with the fear of others, fear of rejection, fear of what they'll say about you, fear of how they may hurt you, remember this: Our LORD is the great God, the great King above all gods and He is with us and for us! However, some folks struggle placing their

trust in God because they fear God has rejected them. If you believe you have been rejected by God then you will have no other alternative but to seek meaning in life and satisfaction by finding acceptance in the world. And here's the tragedy with this: seeking acceptance in human relationships will always leave you wanting. Why? Because no human being can be God for you! Human relationships are not bad, but no human being can fill the God-shaped void in your spiritual heart. In fact, when people decide for whatever reason, that God has rejected them, or they've decided to reject God, they will begin a desperate search for acceptance in places and relationships that will turn out to be a disaster! People who fear rejection in their human relationships will sometimes do desperate things to win acceptance.

However, if you come to a place in your life, in your thinking, in your heart and mind, that you know you have not been rejected by God, but have actually been accepted by Him, chosen by Him, loved by Him, forgiven by Him, and called by Him into a personal relationship, then you will not only find satisfaction in life but you will lose any fear of being rejected by God! When you lose the fear of rejection by God you will also lose the fear of being rejected by others, because...

Rom 8:31b ...If God is for us, who can be against us?

Rom 8:32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

Okay, one last fear. Moses thought he finally had a reason for God not to choose him for the job...

### **Fear of Inability**

#### **Exodus 4:10-16**

<sup>10</sup> Moses said to the LORD, "Pardon your servant, 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."

<sup>11</sup> The LORD said to him, “Who gave human beings their mouths? Who makes them deaf or mute? Who gives them sight or makes them blind? Is it not I, the LORD?”

<sup>12</sup> Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.”

<sup>13</sup> But Moses said, “Pardon your servant, Lord. Please send someone else.”

<sup>14</sup> Then the LORD’s anger burned against Moses 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 he will be glad to see you.

<sup>15</sup> 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.

<sup>16</sup> 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 you need to realize this: When you use fear of inability to try and avoid your God-given calling in life, God already has an answer for your excuse! God knew Moses was going to bring up his speech impediment! God was getting a little tired of Moses excuses, but He already had Aaron on the way! I heard it put this way years ago and I believe it to be so true...

“God doesn’t call the equipped, He equips the called!”

Paul put it this way to the Philippian Church...

Phil 1:4 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy

Phil 1:5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now,

Phil 1:6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Phil 1:9 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight,

Phil 1:10 so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ,

Phil 1:11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ--to the glory and praise of God.

Let's read verse 6 one more time...

Phil 1:6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Paul was confident of three things and I believe Moses' life is a good example of these three things and I believe your life can be too.

1. "He who began a good work in you..." Paul was confident that God is the One who came up with and conceived a good plan for your life in the first place!
2. "...will carry it..." Paul was confident that God is the One who will give you His presence, His power and His provision along the way!
3. "...on to completion..." Paul was confident that God would finish what He had started in your life!

Let's pray!