



# EXODUS

## GOD CALLS MOSES

### ***Before Life Group***

*Read Exodus 1-3*

*Pray for the voice of God and His call in all of our lives to be made clear and evident.*

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At the end of Genesis, things are looking fairly good for the Israelites. While they may not be in their home land, the hand of provision is upon them and God has provided for them and blessed them during a severe famine. Through the Joseph's obedience to God and a series of circumstances that could only be described as the hand of God, the Israelites were safe. This is the situation we arrive at when we get to the book of Exodus, the second book in the Pentateuch.

As time went on, the prosperity of the Israelite's grew and subsequently they grew in number as well. Yet, time continued on for Egypt and the Israelites. With the death of Pharaoh, new leadership and new Pharaoh's rose to take his place and this meant changes for the culture. *"Then a new king, to whom Joseph meant nothing, came to power in Egypt. "Look," he said to his people, "the Israelites have become far too numerous for us. 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."(Exodus 1:8-10, NIV).* So Pharaoh moved to oppress and enslave the Israelites and ensure they were unable to survive as a people going so far as to mandate the killing of all males.

Enter: Moses.

The circumstances of Moses being called was a strange set of circumstances that it seems that he could not avoid. He was born of a slave mother yet raised as a prince but still having been returned to his slave mother (Exodus 2:1-10). The circumstances behind this left no explanation other than the hand of God. Later in life he murdered someone in defense of Hebrew people thinking he was safe. While he thought he was safe, his crime was found out and he was forced to flee Egypt to Midian (Exodus 2:11-25). It was here in Midian that God appeared to Moses supernaturally as Moses was formed and shaped into the servant of God by first being a shepherd, caring for the flock of Jethro, his now Father-In-Law (Exodus 3:1-3).

The call of Moses spanned his entire life. In fact, the majority of the events of Exodus take place in the last third of Moses' life. Every moment in his life seems to drive him towards the sovereign plan of God for the Israelites. For some parts, Moses seems to attempt to work against the calling of God. During these times, for all his resistance to failure, the plans of God, ultimately would not be derailed.

## God Is Sovereign Over All Situations

There was no series of events strung together that could have been operated by man. Nor was it scattered enough to be specific. The hand of God was upon the Israelites and there was nothing that anyone could do in that process. By the hand of God, Shiphrah and Puah knew to honor God instead of killing the male children. By the hand of God that Moses' mother thought to float her children into the Nile instead of drowning him. It was the hand of God that led Moses to Pharaoh's daughter and by the grace of God saved the child. Through the sovereignty of God's plan, Moses was returned to his mother, ironically for her to raise as her own.

It was the hand of God that led Moses to Midian even despite the terrible situations of threats on his life. It was the courage of God rising up in Moses that protected the daughters of Reuel the Priest. It was the hand of God pushing Moses towards a mountain for one life shattering encounter. We have the privilege of seeing the pieces all come together, woven through the narrative of Holy Scripture. As we start off in the story of Moses and the Israelites, it is unmistakably clear that God is Sovereign over all situations.

Faith is fueled heavily by the sovereignty of God. The narrative that scripture tells shows that fullness of God on display throughout the time of human history. When we understand that there is nothing that can be done to derail the plan of God, having faith becomes easier. God will always follow through with what His promises are simply because it is He who made the promise.

## The Past Is No Disqualifier

Enter: our story.

Much like Moses, we all have things in our past that we feel should probably serve as a disqualifier for serving God. Our past baggage is being lugged around and tied around our feet and thrown into the sea. Or at least that is how we feel. In truth, Christ is not binding us and casting us into the sea. Through His work on the cross, the only thing Christ is putting to death is our sin after detaching it from ourselves. Moses was once a slave, raised as a prince, condemned as a murdered, and ostracized as a shepherd. If there was something that would serve as a disqualifier for God to use a person, Moses undoubtedly had done it at some point.

The story of God throughout human history has not been a story of finding reasons to disqualify people. If that were the case, every last one of us would be disqualified from even the pursuit of our Heavenly Father. Every last one of us has sinned and failed the requirements of holiness. To understand the depths of grace, we must first come face to face with our own personal holiness. Yet, as with Moses, God is not seeking ways to disqualify us but to sanctify us. God has always sought to restore the relationship between Him and His people, created in His image. Whatever we may have done in the past, God is calling and redeeming His people for His purposes. Where we were once defined by our sin, God's sanctification is present. The unholy is made holy. The sinful are made pure. The uncalled are called, despite any past they may have endured.

Furthermore, Moses serves as a reminder to us to be careful in how we judge a person for their past. Jesus is in the business of calling the unqualified and sanctifying the unholy. When a person encounters the True and Risen God, it is transformative from the inside out. While everyone struggles with sin and temptation, mankind has a tendency to be hesitant to forgive. We hold tight to the past sins that someone has committed and refuse to acknowledge that there is redemption in God. When a person begins to feel that there is the constant sting of judgment from their past, any hope of them finding healing from their sins is erased.



God, however, is a God of hope. For the Israelites, the call of Moses represented a coming of hope. For Moses, his calling meant a hope for him as well and a forgiveness of his self-imposed identity of worthlessness. God is greater than our own flawed identity in our actions and establishes us as called according to His purpose no matter what our past is or what we have done. Even the worst sinner can become a servant of the King. A person's past is not a death sentence. With the forgiveness that comes from above we can stand with one another in the calling that God has given to each out us.

## Discussion Questions

Read Exodus 3

1. Where do you see the hand of God in Moses' calling? What are the things that go beyond random circumstance or coincidence to clearly God at work?
2. What excuses did Moses give as to why he felt unqualified for His calling? How did God respond to these reasons that Moses gave?
3. What is the difference between someone who runs from their calling from God and someone who runs towards it? How does God respond to each person?
4. When have you given excuses, or attempted to lean into reasons you couldn't follow the call of God? How do you think God would respond to you, based on how He responded to Moses?
5. How has God redeemed us from our own past?
6. Where do we hold unforgiveness towards a person, towards people, or towards a group of people?
7. How does knowing the extent that we have been forgiven of our past help us to forgive others of theirs?

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### **About the Author.**

*Pastor Daniel Burton lives in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida. In May 2015, Daniel graduated from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary with his Master of Divinity. It was here that he began to explore his passion for Theology and deeper exploration of the word of God. Daniel believes that, at its core, Theology should be fun. Check out more of his work at <http://thegospeloutpost.com>*

