

## **Moses' Story**

Israelites were slaves in Egypt for over four hundred years as prophesied by God to Abraham (Genesis 15:13-14). Moses, a Hebrew, was raised in Pharaoh's household for forty years (Exodus 1-2) until, in an attempt to be a self-made deliverer of the Israelites, he murdered an Egyptian. Instead of this becoming a catalyst to freeing the Israelites, he had to run to save his own life. Fleeing into the wilderness, as a failed would-be hero, he ends up marrying into a shepherding family and lives for another forty years as a lowly shepherd. At the age of eighty, God confronts Moses with a call to serve him in a spectacular way.

### **Exodus 3:1-10 (NIV)**

*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 desert 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.*

*<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."*

**What is the good news in this story?**

**What, from Moses' perspective, is the bad news?**

**Have you had one of these "good news-bad news" experiences where you sensed God telling you to do something good, but you did not want to follow through. Why? What fears did it evoke in you?**

## **MOSES' OBJECTIONS**

### **Objection #1**

*Exodus 3:11 (NIV)*

*But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"*

**What is Moses' concern?**

**Have you ever held back from doing something God called you to do because you questioned your own abilities?**

**What do you think God would want to say to such thinking?**

*Exodus 3:12 (NIV)*

*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."*

**God's Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What is God's answer really saying?**

**If we truly reflect on what God has said here, how does it take some of the pressure off us?**

**Did God need Moses?**

### **Objection #2**

*Exodus 3:13 (NIV)*

*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?"*

**What is Moses' concern?**

Is the question of “What god?” a tension relevant for us today?

**Exodus 3:14-15 (NIV)**

*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 by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation.*

**God's Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**The Name: I AM**

What does God mean by the name “I AM”?

What does the name “I AM” convey to you?

**SIDE NOTE:**

**The Hebrew writing for the name of God in this passage is YHWH.**

Because the Hebrews feared using the name of God inappropriately they determined they should never pronounce it at all. Instead they would use the name **Adonai** (Lord or Master) whenever YHWH occurred. As a result, no one really knows how to pronounce God's name.

In an attempt to come to an understanding of the pronunciation some have added vowels to YHWH to create:

**YaH-WeH** or

**Ye-Ho-VaH** (Jehovah – the W in YHWH is often expressed by a V)

Many Bibles simply translate the name YHWH as “**LoRd**” using small capital letters.

**Why might the name “I AM” be a comfort to Israel?**

**A few of the names of God**

Yahweh Jireh: \_\_\_\_\_  
Genesis 22:14

Yahweh Shalom: \_\_\_\_\_  
Judges 6:24

Yahweh Sabaoth: \_\_\_\_\_  
1 Samuel 17:45

Yahweh Ro'i: \_\_\_\_\_  
Psalm 23:1

Yahweh Tsidkenu: \_\_\_\_\_  
Jeremiah 23:6

Yahweh Shammah: \_\_\_\_\_  
Ezekiel 48:35

Which name of God speaks the most strongly to you? Why?

Which name of God might give you confidence to do what he calls you to do?

**Objection #3*****Exodus 4:1 (NIV)***

*Moses answered, "What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, 'The Lord did not appear to you'?"*

What is Moses' concern?

Have you had times when you feared whether or not you would be able to convince others to follow God?

How would God want to respond to that concern?

**Exodus 4:2-9 (NIV)**

Then the Lord said to him, "What is that in your hand?" "A staff," he replied.

<sup>3</sup> The Lord said, "Throw it on the ground." Moses threw it on the ground and it became a snake, and he ran from it. <sup>4</sup> Then the Lord said to him, "Reach out your hand and take it by the tail." So Moses reached out and took hold of the snake and it turned back into a staff in his hand. <sup>5</sup> "This," said the Lord, "is so 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."

<sup>6</sup> Then the Lord said, "Put your hand inside your cloak." So Moses put his hand into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was leprous, like snow.

<sup>7</sup> "Now put it back into your cloak," he said. So Moses put his hand back into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was restored, like the rest of his flesh.

<sup>8</sup> Then the Lord said, "If they do not believe you or pay attention to the first miraculous sign, they may believe the second. <sup>9</sup> But if they do not believe these two signs or listen to you, take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground. The water you take from the river will become blood on the ground."

**God's Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_

Have there been times when you've seen God work in ways you could have never anticipated to bring about the results he wanted?

Have you seen people become convinced by God in ways that you could never have influenced them?

**Objection #4****Exodus 4:10 (NIV)**

Moses said to the Lord, "O 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."

Does anyone here struggle with the idea of public speaking? Can anyone relate to Moses?

Have there been times when your fear of not being able to communicate clearly has kept you from speaking God's message to others?

What would God want to say to you at those times?

**Exodus 4:11-12 (NIV)**

*The Lord said to him, "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?" <sup>12</sup> Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say."*

**God's Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_

How does God respond to Moses?

**Objection #5****Exodus 4:13 (NIV)**

*But Moses said, "O Lord, please send someone else to do it."*

Have you ever told God clearly that you didn't want to do what he was calling you to do?

How do you think God feels at those points in time?

**Exodus 4:14-17 (NIV)**

*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 his heart will be glad when he sees 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. <sup>17</sup> But take this staff in your hand so you can perform miraculous signs with it."*

**God's Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_

Why does God relent and send Aaron?

Have there been times when you chose to obey, even though you felt afraid or insecure?  
What happened?

When God calls us to action, what are the truths we need to remember?

- 1) God is \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) God is \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) God will \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) God will \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) When God calls us to action what is the one thing we need to do? \_\_\_\_\_

**MOSES' FINAL DECISION:**

***Exodus 4:18 (NIV)***

*Then Moses went back to Jethro his father-in-law and said to him, "Let me go back to my own people in Egypt to see if any of them are still alive." Jethro said, "Go, and I wish you well."*