

"Send Someone Else, Please?"
Exodus 4

Note: This is one of those times where human literary _____ have interrupted the flow of thought from one section to the next. There should be no chapter division from chapter three to four. It continues the story of Moses' calling and excuses.

Excuse #1 – "_____?"

Excuse #2 – "_____?"

Note: There are four major sections in chapter 4:

vv. 1-17 – Further _____ of Moses and counters from God

v. 18 Family _____

vv. 19-26 – Bridegroom of _____

vv. 27-30 – Brother _____ arrival

v. 1 Q. Moses did not believe the promise of God in 3:18. How was this reflected in his next excuse?

A.

1. They won't _____ me.
2. They won't _____ to me.
3. They will think I'm _____.

Note: The above statements can be reduced to, "They will _____ me...just like they did 40 years ago."

Note: The question could also be posed, "_____?" not only in wonder but also as the one's to _____ if this goes south.

Note: The name "LORD" as discussed is "_____" [Yahweh] and indicates that they did _____ the name that was associated with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" although not _____. [He was known as El _____ or El _____] Cf. 3:15; 6:3. This explains why Moses argues, "they will say, 'Yahweh did not appear to you.'"

v. 2a Q. How did the Lord respond?

A.

1. God does not _____ him but neither does he directly answer him.
2. God looks at what he _____, not what he doesn't have.
3. Moses replied, "My _____." The point here is that it is an ordinary shepherd's key instrument of guidance, correction, and _____.

Note: God gives Moses three signs to _____ his fears regarding the phantom "if's".

v. 3 Q. What does the Lord tell him to do with it? What was the result? [first sign]

A.

1. God _____ Moses to throw it on the ground.
2. It miraculously became a _____ (and apparently not a nice one).
3. Moses got the _____ out of there.

Note: The word for snake is the same as found in Genesis 3 (*nahas/serpent*). A creature that symbolically came to represent _____ and death but also power and _____. [Egyptian mythology].

v. 4 Q. What does the Lord tell Moses to do? How does he response?

A.

1. The Lord directs him to the improbable..._____ the snake's tail.
2. Moses _____.
3. The snake _____ to a lifeless wooden staff.

v. 5 Q. What was the purpose of this?

A. God is addressing his excuse.

1. That they would _____.
2. That the God of _____ actually spoke to you.
3. That YHWH _____ to you.

v. 6 Q. What did God proceed to do? [second sign]

A.

1. God told him to put his hand into the _____ of his garment.
2. Moses _____.
3. God made his hand turn _____ – as white as snow.

v. 7 Q. What did God do next?

A.

1. Take it _____.
2. Moses _____.
3. His hand was _____.

Note: Both illustrations that God uses for proof of his power have to do with _____ and _____ to life.

Note: "Leprosy" in this text and in Leviticus is not the modern equivalent of "_____ " – a disease that kills the nerves, especially in the extremities, causing them to die. The "flesh" is not "_____" like we would assume but is referring to "_____" of dead skin. It was seen as a divine _____ for human disobedience. This is the first time this malady has been mentioned.

vv. 8-9 Q. How did the Lord follow that sign? [third sign]

A.

1. God is addressing the progressive, _____, unbelief of the elders/people.
2. God gives one _____ sign of his power and authority for Moses' sake.
3. God offers to _____ the life-giving water of the Nile into blood [death].

Note: There are several things to note from this sign.

1. It was a sign that did not affect Moses _____.
2. It was to be a _____ sign that Moses would have to embrace by _____. God speaks, but will He act?
3. It was given as a _____ sign for Moses and the Hebrews.
4. It was not _____. God does not turn the blood back into water.

Note: Without Moses' knowledge these will be part of the sign _____ manifested in Egypt (12): the _____ turning into a snake and eating the Egyptian magician's snake, the _____ sign (boils), and the _____ turning to blood.

v. 10 Q. Unbelievably, Moses doesn't give in. What is his next excuse?

A. Moses tries to push off his calling trying to _____ God that a spokesman _____ needs to be able to speak and _____. And he's not the guy...

Note: "Slow of speech and tongue" is literally, "heavy-mouthed and _____" which has led to two options:

1. Moses had a speech defect – connected to some translations, i.e. "_____ tongue" – not cut."
2. Moses had lost his ability to speak _____ or Hebrew.
3. Moses simply wasn't _____ in his ability to speak to the elders or to Pharaoh – which is also possible and probable. He's been hanging out with sheep most of the time.

Note: Stephen's martyrdom speech sheds light on at least one of the arguments - #1.

²² "Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was _____ in speech and action." (Acts 7:22 NIV)

v. 11 Q. How did God respond? (Part 1)

- A.
1. God uses all _____ questions that demand a "You, God" answer.
 2. The internal conflict is that we don't _____ God with creating/allowing people with defects. "Who makes him..."

Note: The point is that God creates for his own purposes and glory, so whether you have a physical _____ or not, God can use you to do great things for the kingdom.

Note: "As [Jesus] went along, he saw a man blind from birth.

² His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?'

³ 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned,' said Jesus, 'but this happened so that the works of God might be _____ in him.'" (Jn. 9:1-3 NIV)

v. 12 Q. How did God respond? (Part 2)

A.

1. God – "I've been _____ but now let's put the excuses aside and get moving.
2. I will _____ you speak (whatever the limitations are).
3. I will _____ you what to say so you don't have to worry about content."

Note: ¹¹ "Whenever you [Apostles] are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the _____." (Mk. 13:11 NIV)

v. 13 Q. Okay. Excuses answered. Moses is satisfied and ready. Correct?

A. I think we get to the _____ of the matter – Moses is 80 years old, _____ in his new life, _____ from past rejection, feeling _____ for the task, and...just simply doesn't _____ to go/obey. "Send someone else..."

vv. 14-16 Q. The end of God's patience and yet grace...how do these two things work out in God's reply?

A.

1. God had had _____ – “[his] anger burned against him.”
2. What if I _____ you up with your brother, Aaron?
Perhaps having a _____ will sway you.
3. Aaron is _____ on his way to see you.
[anticipated]
4. God – “I _____ what his gifts and limitations are as well.”
5. You [Moses] will be the _____ voice, but he will be the mouthpiece.
6. Aaron will serve as the _____.

Note: God's _____ is always related to human response and, in some mysterious sense, also conditioned by human response. In other words, God _____ to accomplish his decretive will in conjunction with willing, unwilling, strong, weak, confident, and uncertain individuals in often _____ ways for His glory and praise.

v. 17 Q. What added command does God give to Moses? Why?

A.

1. Take your _____.
2. It will be used to perform _____ [of power and authority].

Note: This was connected to the third _____ [connected to the hypothetical “they”] – perhaps a reminder of both his lack of _____ and God's _____.

Note: Through all the excuses and responses, Moses was called to do one thing: _____ God. No gimmicks, no magic tricks, no watering down the risks and hardships... "Do you trust me – no matter the outcome?"

v. 18 Q. Moses did not immediately head out for Egypt with his brother, Aaron. What cultural issue was dealt with first?

A.

1. Even at 80 years of age, Moses is still following the rules of patriarchal _____ and seeking _____ from the head of the household (professionally and _____ [the blessing]).
2. Moses does not _____ the full nature of his mission but simply tells him after 40 years he wants to go home to see if any of his family is still living. [Half-truth?]
3. Jethro gives his _____.

vv. 19-20 Q. What narrative information do we receive?

A.

1. God _____ the immediate fear of Pharaonic _____ – he's dead.
2. Moses brings the _____ along.

Note: Zipporah, Gershom and... _____ - not mentioned until Ex. 18:4.

Note: It would have looked _____ to head back for a family reunion without taking your family.

3. Moses _____ and took his staff.

v. 21 Q. What command and prophetic word does God give Moses?

A.

1. When you get before Pharaoh perform all the _____ that you will be empowered to do [unspecified].
2. Prophetically, God is _____ that Pharaoh will not respond favorably. He will not let your people go. [hardened heart]

Note: "Hardening the heart" or "_____ the heart" appears twenty times in the Exodus narrative. Half are connected to the essential _____ of Pharaoh. Half are connected to divine _____.

Note: The "heart" was seen as the seat of the intellectual, moral, and _____ life – the determinant of one's behavior. So, a hardening of heart expresses a state of _____ moral degeneracy, _____ to reason and _____ of compassion. Pharaoh is thus _____ before God of his own sinful trajectory.

Note: It is important to note that the first five signs/wonders are _____ - _____, i.e. "Pharaoh hardened his heart." It is only afterwards that the narrative describes it as divine _____. It affirms that Pharaoh's behavior has become _____ and _____. His character has become his destiny. God is simply _____ what has already been shut.

Note: Part of understanding this issue is to understand that three different words are used for “hardening of the heart.”

1. “To be strong or _____” – 4.21; 7.13, 22; 8.19; 9.12, 35
2. “To be hard or _____” – 7.3
3. “To be _____ or unresponsive” – 7.14, 8.15, 32; 9.7, 34; 10.1

Note: Point number 3 is interesting because it connects Pharaoh to his own divine _____ system.

_____ is the Egyptian god associated with judgment in the afterlife. He plays a crucial role in the process known as the “_____ of the Heart,” where he weighs the hearts of the deceased against the _____ of Ma'at. Ma'at represents truth, justice, and cosmic balance. The feather symbolizes these principles during the judgment process.

The judgment process involves the following steps:

1. Anubis _____ the heart against the feather of Ma'at.
2. If the “heart” weighs _____ than the feather, it is admitted into the afterlife.
3. If the “heart” is _____, it faces destruction by a creature called, “Ammit.”

Note: Pharaoh is being judged according to his own _____ system.

vv. 22-23 Q. What is the prophetic word to be given to Pharaoh?

A.

1. This is the first time we see the prophetic, _____ pronouncement of "Thus saith the Lord." (KJV)

Note: This formula is said to be an _____ of the conventional words of royal heralds to _____ an audience's attention and to emphasize the authority behind it.

2. God calls "Israel" his _____-_____ son.

Note: The term "first-born son" is a poetic but _____ phrase in filial (father/son) terms.

Many will come to be called "sons and daughters of the Most High God" because of their unique, _____, spiritual relationship with Him. But only Israel as a _____ holds a unique status apart from them.

3. The first-born son was regarded as being in a position of great _____ to the family. He would have certain _____ but also _____. It is regarding these obligations that the expectation to go out to _____ God is connected (nationally) and to which Pharaoh will resist _____ his own indentured servant system allowances.

4. _____ Principle (Lex Taliones), i.e., You hurt my kids, I'll hurt yours.

Note: This prophetic word points to the _____ of the signs and wonders – the _____ of the first-born sons of Egypt and the _____ of the first-born sons of the Hebrews through the blood of the lamb.

v.24 Q. There seems to be an interlude here – a narrative time out to tell us something important...on the way. What is it?

A. At a stopping point, the Lord met..._____...to kill them.

Note: The Hebrew does not have "Moses" but rather, "_____." The inference is that it is Moses, but an equal argument can be made from the following verses that it was his son, _____ or Eliezer.

v. 25 Q. What happened and what is the connection to verse 24?

A.

1. Zipporah made the connection between the potential divine _____ and the need to _____ her son.

2. Zipporah placed her son's foreskin at the feet of ... _____.

Note: Most scholars _____ that it was Moses – the next phrase seems to allude to that, but it could equally be her son.

Note: The JPS commentary says that it might also mean, "to place a _____ upon" which will be the same word used for _____ the blood of the paschal lamb upon the _____ of the doorway in chapter 12 [which strengthens the connection].

Note: The blood would have acted as a _____ sign standing against any divine violence against him.

3. Zipporah uses a very _____ phrase to conclude the matter – "You are a bridegroom of blood to me."

Note: "*hatan damin*" – "bridegroom of blood" – there is _____
_____ language found in any Near Eastern literature to help
us understand what this means. But a hint may be found by looking at a
similar Arabic stem denoting "_____" as well as "to
_____."

Note: Various speculations have been posited regarding this passage.

1. It was _____ that Zipporah circumcised. But this cannot be true for two reasons: Moses was brought up in a _____ home and would have certainly been circumcised as a baby. If not, he would have been circumcised as an _____ for they both practiced this act as part of their religio/cultural experience.
2. Moses did not circumcise his son because Zipporah _____ it based upon the above two reasons. But this cannot be true because the Midianites practiced it as well. And...being the daughter of a _____, she knew what to do and how to perform the surgery.
3. Moses should have circumcised his son but because of _____ to Egypt he wanted to wait until things settled. There is _____ of this whatsoever and the fact that God almost killed him over it tells us that the delay was more than recent.
4. The reasons for not circumcising Gershom, the first-born son, was not relayed but it serves as an extreme _____ of the prophetic death of the first-born sons in Egypt. Gershom would have symbolized those "not under the _____" and therefore, in an unprotected place.

5. How could Moses lead the people out of Egypt to a place of _____ relationship, when he neglected his own family? (Gen. 17)

Summation: In the end, the _____ view (perhaps not correct) is that God's divine _____ came upon the very messenger and prophet of God, Moses, probably through a terminal illness of Moses, to the point that Zipporah, understanding the _____ (how, we do not know) took matters into her own hands, brought her son into the blood _____ of Abraham (Gen. 17) through circumcision and thereby saved Moses' life and probably the life of her first-born son.

v. 26 Q. What was the result?

A.

v. 27 Q. What was the command to Aaron?

A.

1. God told Aaron to go meet Moses in the _____.
2. They met at the "_____ of God" where Moses had his personal encounter with God.

v. 28 Q. What did that reunion entail?

A.

1. Moses told Aaron everything he was to _____...because Aaron was also going to be a _____.
2. Moses told Aaron everything that he was going to _____...because Aaron was also going to _____ in it.

vv. 29-30 Q. When Moses and Aaron entered Egypt what did they do?

A.

1. They brought together the _____ (the spiritual and civil leaders).
2. _____...told them what Yahweh said to Moses.
3. _____...performed the signs before the people to convince them. [vv. 8/9 – rod and snake; leprosy; blood and Nile]

v. 31 Q. What was the result?

A.

1. They _____ Moses and Aaron.
2. They became _____ of God's concern and compassion.
3. They responded in _____ and _____.

Application Questions:

Q. The God of the Bible is a God of words before deeds. He speaks and then acts to confirm. How does this give you confidence in studying, memorizing, and applying the Scriptures in your life?

A.

Q. God is the great multi-tasker, moving things into place way before our knowledge or our prayers enter His divine picture. How does this give you comfort and confidence?

A.

Q. God anticipates our concerns, our needs, our resistance? How is that demonstrated in the story? How does that connect to our daily lives and His divine path for us?

A.

Q. Do we still deal with the phantom “they” in our own personal excuses for not doing what God wants us to do? How do we resolve this?

A.

Q. Look at the following excuses that Moses had. Which ones are relatable to you?

1. Age
2. Settled
3. Scarred
4. Feeling inadequate
5. Rebellious

A.

Q. How important is it to pay attention to sins of omission?

A.